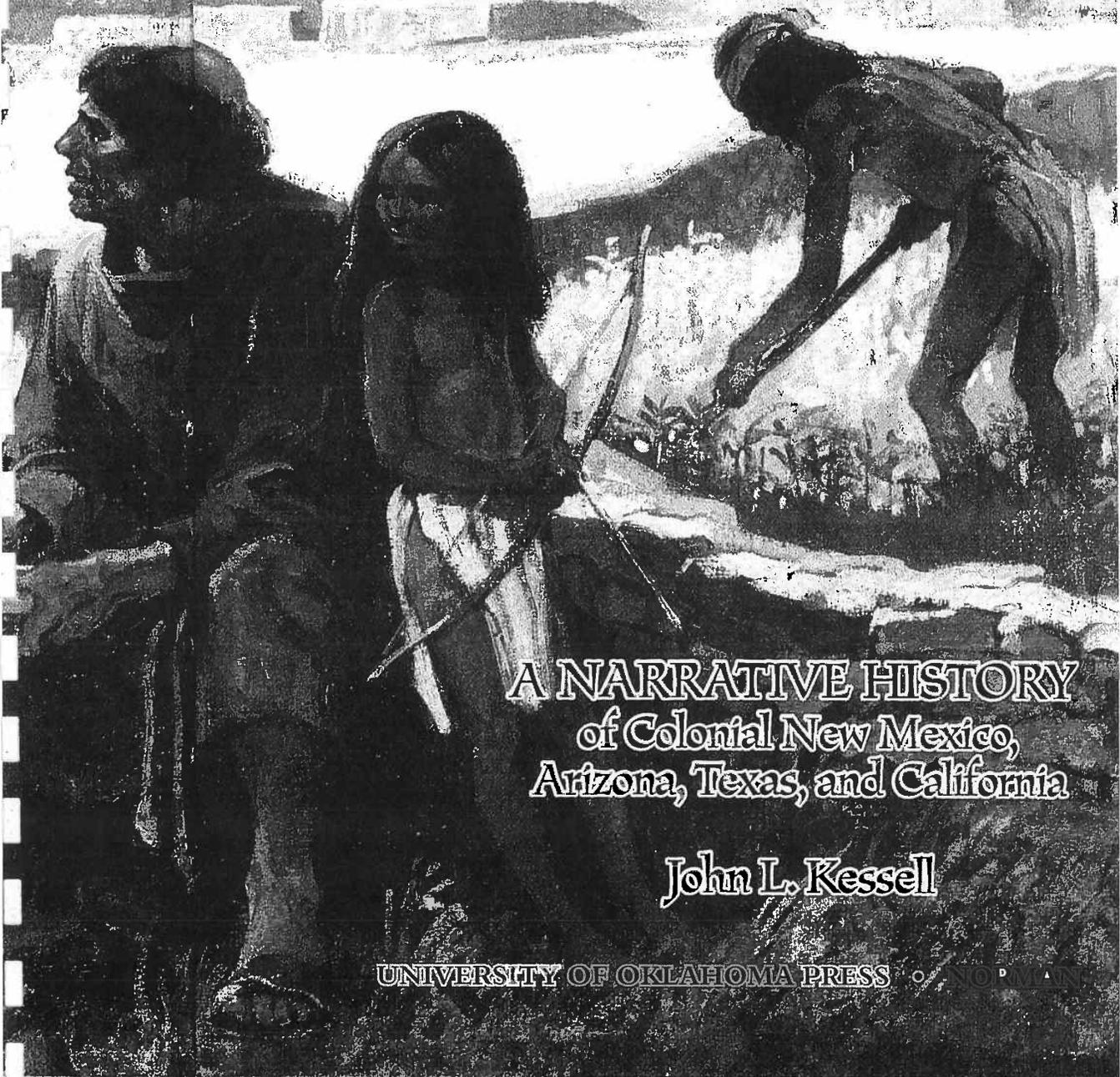


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Spain in the Southwest



A NARRATIVE HISTORY
of Colonial New Mexico,
Arizona, Texas, and California

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de Garaycoechea of Zuni and rebuilt the Franciscan convento in 1700 or 1701, other Hopis exterminated the community. Rodríguez Cubero's expedition to punish them failed utterly. Thus, while Jesuits of Pimería Alta and Franciscans of New Mexico crossed paper swords over the honor of bringing these apostates back into the Christian fold, the independent Hopis, while holding out the prospect from time to time, took counsel on their own terms to bid or not for Spanish aid.⁴⁵

At century's end, on the Gila River above its junction with the Colorado, Lieutenant Manje recorded what he believed was a sighting of the mystical Franciscan nun María de Jesús de Agreda, much as fray Damián Massanet had in east Texas a decade earlier. Father Kino demurred. The widely read Manje appeared fascinated by New Mexico, the colony his uncle Domingo Jironza had twice governed. He had brought chronicles from Mexico City to Sonora with him, and he married into the local branch of the Pérez Granillo family, kin to Diego de Vargas's childless lieutenant governor, Mre. de campo Luis Pérez Granillo. Not only did the cultured Manje recall María de Agreda's miraculous ministry from the 1630 Benavides *Memorial*, but like Vargas in New Mexico, he also had access to the *Mística Ciudad de Dios*, Mother María's life of the Virgin Mary.⁴⁶

Unable to confirm the "monstrosities" described by fray Francisco de Escobar, chaplain on Juan de Oñate's exploration west from New Mexico in 1604 and 1605, Manje and Kino did coax from Yuma oral tradition in 1699 the memory of armored Spanish soldiers on horseback. Their informants, they reckoned, must have been eighty years old. Manje attested,

And they added (without our having asked them), that, when they were boys, a beautiful white woman, dressed in white, gray, and blue to her feet, with a cloth or veil covering her head, came to their land. Carrying a cross, she spoke to them, shouting and haranguing them in a language they did not understand. The tribes of the Colorado River shot her with arrows and left her for dead twice, but, she, coming back to life, vanishing into the air, without their learning where she lived.⁴⁷

The devil, offered Manje, must have addled their memories. Surely God, who had arranged the greater miracle of María's appearance in such remote parts, would have given her the lesser gift of tongues. Because they had collected essentially the same story five days earlier from Piman-speaking Natives, the two Europeans paid special heed. Rumors had cast the Yumas as fierce cannibals, yet camped among them, they felt perfectly safe. Lieutenant Manje attributed their friendly reception to the influence of the Franciscan nun.

Perhaps, allowed Father Kino. But Jesuits could take care of their own. "Others," he pointed out, "have been of the opinion that the blessed blood of the venerable father Francisco Javier Saeta is fertilizing and ripening these very extensive fields."⁴⁸

the San Jacinto Mountains—took the three dozen riders only twenty weeks. En route back from a visit to Monterey, Anza had met Father Serra.

His pathfinding feat earned the captain of Tubac a hero's reception at the viceregal palace in Mexico City. Anza accepted promotion to lieutenant colonel and command of a touted migration of families from Sinaloa and Sonora over the same route to California. The plan was to people the splendid harbor of San Francisco, still known only from shore.

It was August 1775 before a Spanish ship, the San Blas packetboat *San Carlos* under command of Juan Bautista de Ayala, finally followed its longboat in through the Golden Gate to chart the outspread bay within. Not even Bucareli questioned its strategic import.

Garcés favored a more northerly route to California up the Colorado River and via the Hopi pueblos of New Mexico, which he rightly reckoned lay at near the latitude of Monterey but wrongly placed farther west than they actually were. The friar won over Sonora's energetic new governor, Spanish career officer Lt. Col. Francisco Antonio Crespo. Why not conquer the Hopis militarily, Crespo asked Bucareli, and open a road between Sonora and New Mexico, thereby facilitating communication between those provinces and Nueva California? Let Anza convey the colonists the only way he knew. Crespo gambled on a new route.²⁸

Franciscans in New Mexico, through their superiors in Mexico City, also conferred with Viceroy Bucareli. One in particular, zealous, young fray Silvestre Vélez de Escalante, took it upon himself to visit the Hopi pueblos and inquire about the way west. The experience shook him to the core.

Just after midday on July 2, 1775, as an uneasy guest in the castellated Hopi pueblo of Walpi, he had sensed a commotion and, without thinking, hastened outside. "I had already heard," he admitted later, "about the idolatrous abominations associated with their most solemn dances." Now, the blue-robed friar became a reluctant eyewitness.

Deep, resonant drumming filled his ears. Native women, their dark hair in characteristic swirls, amid children and old men, lined the street and flat roofs watching. Ceremonial masked dancers, males all but naked, cavorted before them. The friar noted in rapt disgust that each one wore at the end of his penis "a small and delicate feather subtly attached." He felt a profound nausea.

The frightful and gloomy painting of their masks and the height of indecency with which they ran in view of many people of both sexes were very clear signs of the foul spirit who has their hearts in his power. . . . This horrifying spectacle saddened me so that I arranged my departure for the following day.

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Vélez de Escalante understood perfectly well that the preferred method of bringing non-Christian peoples into the fold, or returning apostates, was friendly persuasion. Yet these proud, obstinate Hopis had repeatedly repulsed such overtures. Since 1680, owing largely to the isolation of their craggy mesas, they had maintained a haughty independence, accepting visits, aid, and offers of alliance from Spaniards only when it suited their purposes.

Chagrined by the episode, fray Silvestre delayed six weeks before sending his Hopi diary to Mexico City. Bucareli addressed a copy to Garcés who, because of his wanderings, did not get it for a year. By then, fray Francisco could empathize. The viceroy also forwarded the governor of Sonora's Hopi plan to the governor of New Mexico. The latter wanted to know what Father Vélez de Escalante thought of it. Yes, came the answer; he agreed with Crespo. By force of arms, let the Hopis be brought down off their heights "to a flat and convenient site. And let all other steps be taken that may be considered necessary to hold them in due subjection."

The Franciscan might as well have called for a gentle, soaking rain. Few people in embattled, eighteenth-century New Mexico shared the missionary's evangelical concern. Year after year, defending homes and crops from Gila Apaches and Comanches, the fatalistic Hispano and Pueblo Indian farmers and stockraisers of the Rio Grande Valley could have cared less about distant Hopi apostates. Moreover, don Pedro Fermín de Mendinueta, the colony's veteran governor, protested that any show of force against the Hopis would scare off Navajos and Utes inclined to peace. "My feeling is that three or four missionaries, known and chosen for their ability and truly apostolic zeal," should go with trade goods as gifts for Hopi chieftains "who (as sons of their own interests) would permit them to teach the mysteries of our religion."

The governor's words stung. As if the friars, repeatedly and at the risk of their lives, had not tried to do just that. Rather than confront Mendinueta directly, Vélez de Escalante complained in confidence to his superiors from the colony's isolated, westernmost mission of Zuni. Not all laymen were such insensitive boors as the governor.²⁹

No more engaging personality rode out from Santa Fe to confer with Father Escalante at Zuni than the jaunty retired Capt. don Bernardo de Miera y Pacheco, long-term resident of the colony, former district officer, wholesaler, and maker of maps, paintings, and religious images. Although Vélez de Escalante was only half Miera's age and not as well born, kinship grew between them. Both men were *montañeses* from the green mountains and valleys of Santander in the far north of Spain.

Had the priest heard about the viceroy's letter to Governor Mendinueta inquiring if there were pelicans in New Mexico? If there were, the governor was to capture and cage some of the big, gangly birds, then send them to Mexico City for

first night out, the wife of Vicente Félix died giving birth. Garcés buried her at San Xavier while a companion baptized the baby.

Garcés's Franciscan companion later stayed on among the Yumas, while Anza led the colonists for San Francisco west and fray Francisco explored down the Colorado. He said he would return, but did not. Instead, he found his way again to mission San Gabriel, stayed only briefly, then set out on his own initiative to test the route eastward from Nueva California via the Colorado River to New Mexico.

Relying on a succession of Indian guides and unaccompanied by other Europeans, the trusting Franciscan on muleback had ridden an uncharted course into the southern San Joaquin Valley, across the Tehachapi Mountains, Mojave Desert, and Colorado River, and through the canyonlands to the Hopis, who, one year to the day after offending Father Vélez de Escalante, made Garcés even less welcome. They gave him neither water nor shelter. On July 2, 1776, "before the sun rose, the cacique proclaimed that he did not want anyone to become Christian, that he would punish anyone who went near the father." Garcés, hunkered down in a plaza "full of rubbish and ordure, etc.," tried for hours to get someone, some mother or child, to accept a gift from him. None would.

Before turning back the way he had come, the lone explorer wrote to his Franciscan brother at Zuni, whose name he did not know, entrusting the hasty note to a Native of Acoma called Lázaro. "I would gladly have gone that way [i.e., to New Mexico]," Garcés assured the recipient, "but since these Moquis are displeased, it would be necessary to return with troops and Christian Indians and to bring gifts. Therefore I should have had to wait for a reply from the lord governor."³²

Receipt of the letter from Garcés only confirmed their choice of route. The little corps of discovery finally left Santa Fe on July 29. Twelve members in all, led by Father Domínguez, with Father Vélez de Escalante as diarist and Captain Miera as cartographer, they rode northwest along the pleasant Río Chama past Abiquiú. Then the scene swallowed them up.

Ushered again into Governor Mendinueta's presence on January 3, 1777, they had a story to tell. In their wanderings, they had traced an enormous, irregular, eighteen-hundred-mile circle around today's Four Corners of New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, and Arizona. Moving through some of the most rugged and dramatic country in North America, they saw landscapes beyond the Gunnison River and met Native peoples no Europeans had before. They did not see Monterey.

In the wild and desolate country of west-central Utah, on the feast day of Santa Brígida, October 8, they had suffered a falling-out. It had snowed heavily. A bitter north wind swept over them, and the distant mountains showed white. None of the bearded Utes they encountered had heard of Spaniards beyond. For these good reasons, the friars decided to turn back, but Miera protested. Knowing nothing of

assembly had already debated and published the progressive Spanish Constitution of that year. Pino nevertheless presented to his fellow delegates—who nicknamed him “The Abraham of New Mexico”—his memorable, fifty-one-page *Exposición sucinta y sencilla de la Provincia del Nuevo México*, also issued by the government printing office in Cádiz in 1812.

His European readers turned most eagerly to what don Pedro had to say about wild—that is, non-Christian—Indians. The Gila Apaches he characterized as “a traitorous people, cruel, thieving and always naked.” No other Apache group, not even the Mescaleros, were as bad. Out of respect, Pino reserved his fullest description for “the honorable Comanches.”

Enlightened Europeans equated civility with dress. Comanches wore modest clothing of tanned animal hides exquisitely embroidered with porcupine quills in animal and floral designs. Pino commented on the Comanches’ religion, government, hunting, funeral practice, and their firm alliance with Spaniards since Anza’s defeat of Cuerno Verde. A party of Comanche warriors visiting Coahuila had even joined in the capture of Father Hidalgo.

Navajos had resumed warfare with New Mexicans at the turn of the century and only recently had sued again for peace. On orders from Commandant General Salcedo, a force from Sonora had penetrated Canyon de Chelly, the very heartland of Navajo country, in the dead of winter, January 1805. Seasoned Lt. Antonio Narbona of Fronteras, who had trekked to Zuni a decade earlier with Captain Zúñiga, sallied forth in the snow from that western pueblo with presidial regulars, Opata auxiliaries, Zunis, and New Mexican militiamen under Lorenzo Gutiérrez, Bartolomé Baca, and Antonio Armijo. Their hard-won, two-day fight on the floor of the eight-hundred-foot-deep, red-walled chasm had broken Navajo resistance, at least for a time.

Besides Indians, what held the attention of his fellow delegates in Cádiz was don Pedro’s ringing exposé of New Mexico’s spiritual backwardness. Pino likely exaggerated to make his point. Admitting that the population was not precisely known, he guessed it to be forty thousand. A mere 22 Franciscan friars and 2 secular priests ministered to all of them: residents of the El Paso district and the 3 upriver villas (Santa Fe, Santa Cruz de la Cañada, and Albuquerque); 26 Indian pueblos; and 102 scattered defensive plazas. That made each pastor responsible on average for the care of 1,667 souls.

None of them had seen the bishop of Durango’s face in more than fifty years, not since the visitation of don Pedro Tamarón in 1760. Hence, ecclesiastical requirements had been ignored. “No one born in the last 50 years,” Pino avowed,

has been confirmed. And the poor who wish to marry relatives and need a dispensation cannot get it, owing to the high cost of traveling the more than