

# *Spanish Missions, Cultural Conflict and the Pueblo Revolt of 1680*

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Historians who try to understand encounters between red men and white men in the seventeenth century are immediately confronted with a problem: Indians were not literate, and they left no records of the sort we are accustomed to studying. For centuries the only information about aboriginal populations in the Americas was derived from European narratives, conditioned by viewpoints that harbored an outsider's values. Archaeology added some indigenous references, but the evidence has usually been too meager for adequate generalization. Historians have pursued the goal of avoiding white men's biases and viewing Indian cultures as having an integrity all their own, but that goal has remained an ideal, causing more despair than hope of eventual success. As far as the history of early New Mexico is concerned, the situation is worsened by the fact that most church and government archives were burned during the fighting of 1680-1696.

In the twentieth century contributions of anthropological field workers have provided a wealth of new learning about Indian life. This scientific information is less distorted by culturally conditioned biases, and its disclosures are not tied to European source materials. Our modern data afford independent perspectives, new sources of information and opportunities for revising historical knowledge. A discriminating use of anthropological materials can free us from the narrow vision of a single cultural viewpoint and allow us more adequately to interpret past events that involved separate cultural units. Students of history now have the opportunity to work with new tools and ask new questions in addition to applying familiar methods to fresh data.

From an anthropologist's perspective, we can utilize a more comprehensive definition of religion and study its functional qualities in a particular cultural setting.<sup>1</sup> That kind of inquiry makes it possible to understand the content of any

1. The main strength of the contribution made by certain anthropologists is in the way religion can be viewed not as abstract rationalization of ideas and symbols but rather as an effective element in the culture where it flourishes. One of the best statements of this useful viewpoint is the following:

In anthropology, it has become customary to refer to the collection of notions a people has of how reality is at base put together as their world view. Their general style of life, the way they do things and like to see things done, we usually call their ethos. It is the office of religious symbols . . . to link these in such a way that they mutually confirm one another. Such symbols render the world view believable and the ethos justifiable, and they do it by invoking each in support of the other. The world view is believable because the ethos, which grows out of it, is felt to be authoritative; the ethos is justifiable because the world view, upon which it rests, is held to be true.

See Clifford Geertz, *Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), p. 97. For other instructive discussions see Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (New York: Free Press, 1965, fifth printing), pp. 463-464; Robert Redfield, *The Primitive World and Its Transformations* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1953), p. 14; Robert N. Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion: The Values of Pre-Industrial Japan* (Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press, 1957), pp. 59-60; Robert N. Bellah, "Religious Systems," in E. Z. Vogt and E. M. Albert, eds., *People of Rimrock: A Study of Values in Five Cultures* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1967), p. 227; Clifford Geertz, "Ethos, World-View and the

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people's world view, the unifying and normative place which religion has in the society's ethos and, most important, those aspects posing fundamental contrasts to alien cultures. The selection of Spanish missionary efforts in seventeenth-century New Mexico may be especially fruitful for a new interpretation of certain historical events because it provides a context in which the religious focus was apparent and significant for both cultures. The Rio Grande Pueblos organized most of their activities around a well-articulated system of religious symbols and practices; the Spaniards had long been conscious of religious motives behind many of their heroic efforts. An analysis of what was really at issue between Spanish and Pueblo cultures on the religious level can shed light on their similarities, antipathies and reasons for armed conflict between them.

Of course anthropological information is not a panacea to be used uncritically, and one must confront the difficulties involved in a study that proceeds from present observations back into the past. It may be that contemporary reports of Pueblo rituals, calendar cycles, social structure and so forth, represent patterns that did not exist in the same configurations during the 1600s.<sup>2</sup> It is also possible that an analysis of conflicts between the religions of Indian and Spaniard could highlight tensions disproportionately. Points of conflict in a specific context will indicate what was cherished enough at that time to defend against external pressures for change. But such conflicts do not show us the relative value of those cultural elements in a setting where they were unchallenged and allowed to seek their own level. The best we can hope for in studying two cultures is to identify their salient features in the limited context of their confronting each other. One should not conclude from comparative study that the controverted issues were categories of major significance within a society, relative to their own hierarchies of values.<sup>3</sup> Another pitfall to avoid is that of attributing awareness or deliberate motives to people when they may not have been conscious of the issues in the way we describe them. Historical events must be interpreted with ideas based on as much information as relevant sources provide, but we can never go on to say that those specific categories and definitions were in the minds of the protagonists at the time.<sup>4</sup> Despite these difficulties, it is still fair to say that facts and insights from anthropologists provide new avenues in

Analysis of Sacred Symbols," *Antioch Review* 19 (December 1957): 424-425; Clifford Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural System," in M. Banton, ed., *Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1966), pp. 3-4, 40-41; and Alfonso Ortiz, "Ritual Drama and the Pueblo World View," in A. Ortiz, ed., *New Perspectives on the Pueblos* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1972), p. 136.

2. This is one possible methodological problem which the student must face. It does not however, present insuperable difficulties when he studies peoples who place (d) strong emphasis on the cohesion and continuity of their culture's values. Many groups of Indians of the American Southwest are striking in this regard and therefore are not likely to have changed substantially between the sixteenth century and our own. For discussions of the problem, see William N. Fenton, *American Indian and White Relations to 1830: Needs and Opportunities for Study* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1957; reprint New York, 1971) and Edward P. Dozier, "Making Inferences from the Present to the Past," in W. A. Longacre, ed., *Reconstructing Prehistoric Pueblo Societies* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1970), pp. 202-213.
3. It is wise to remind ourselves that we are involved in studying vigorous, living cultures in a specific context. We are not trying to move from this data to generalizations about the processes of acculturation, alienation or compartmentalization. The aims of this essay are not to produce theory in either sociology or theology. This self-conscious limitation has the value of following the concrete orientation of historical studies.
4. This is always a problem for historians in every field, but as long as modern evidence and new insights correspond to the activities and statements of people at the time, one can use more recent categories to advantage and not distort the factual identity of past events.

the historian's search for an adequate understanding of red-white contact and the role religions played in the process. What follows is an attempt to demonstrate the results of such a study conducted within a limited area.

In 1598 the upper Rio Grande valley was viewed as an outpost of Spanish civilization, an opportunity for colonizing, mining and missionary exploits. By that time it had been the home of Keresan- and Tanoan-speaking Indians for over three hundred years. Under the leadership of Juan de Oñate an initial force of 400 persons, including 10 Franciscan friars, made their way upriver to the territory where approximately 30 to 40 thousand Pueblos inhabited an estimated 75 to 80 permanent towns. The first decade was a time of mismanagement and unsteady beginnings for both churchmen and civilians, but in 1609 the crown stabilized the colony with strong financial and administrative support, largely for the sake of its missionary enterprise.<sup>5</sup> With Santo Domingo and Santa Fe established as bases of operations for church and state respectively, the prospects for growth were bright.

Missionary work among the Indians seemed to go well from the outset. As village leaders of the six tribal groups became acquainted with the friars and their message, they are reported to have welcomed them, expressed polite interest in their ideas and asked to know more.<sup>6</sup> The district was soon divided into mission stations, and though the manpower shortage spread them thinly, priests were assigned to cover each area. Congregations were formed; catechetical instruction was begun; slowly a number of churches and chapels were built adjacent to the major pueblos. Various statistical reports of this period are not very reliable, but a

5. For the best estimates on population distribution, see Edward H. Spicer, *Cycles of Conquest: The Impact of Spain, Mexico and the United States on the Indians of the Southwest, 1533-1960* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1962), pp. 153-155; Edward P. Dozier, "Rio Grande Pueblos," in E. H. Spicer, ed., *Perspectives in American Indian Culture Change* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), pp. 99, 136; and Albert H. Schroeder, "Rio Grande Ethnohistory," in A. Ortiz, ed., *New Perspectives on the Pueblos*, p. 48.

For the fascinating and still puzzling story of attempts to abandon the mission and then to secure royal support, see George P. Hammond, "Don Juan de Oñate and the Founding of New Mexico," *New Mexico Historical Review* (hereafter cited as *NMHR*) 2 (April 1927): 139-141, 175-177; issued as a single volume, Santa Fe, 1927. See also France V. Scholes and Lansing B. Bloom, "Friar Personnel and Mission Chronology, 1598-1629," *NMHR* 19 (October 1944): 329-330; Frank D. Reeve, *History of New Mexico* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1961), 1: 137-139; Edgard L. Hewett and Reginald Fisher, *Mission Monuments of New Mexico*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1943), p. 74; and Lansing B. Bloom, "Fray Estevan de Perea's *Relacion*," *NMHR* 8 (July 1933): 221-222. The last mentioned author summarized the government's activities in the following manner:

. . . it must be acknowledged that they poured out, during the seventeenth century hundreds of thousands of pesos from which they could expect no commensurate material returns. Perhaps it was not pure altruism . . . , and doubtless the Spanish monarchs counted on rich stores of spiritual treasures being laid up to their credit from the work of the church. But the point is that missionary work in New Mexico could not have been carried on without the financial support of the king, and that support was given in astonishing measure.

6. Hubert H. Bancroft, *History of Arizona and New Mexico* (San Francisco: The History Company, 1889), pp. 133-134; Hammond, "Oñate and the Founding of New Mexico," pp. 98-99; and Edward H. Spicer, "Political Incorporation and Cultural Change in New Spain: A Study in Spanish-Indian Relations," in H. Peckham and C. Gibson, eds., *Attitudes of Colonial Powers Toward the American Indian* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1969), p. 124. This last reference points out that much more than Christianity confronted the Indians. While the friars were preaching, the times were also characterized by "the introduction of the standard institutions of Spanish dominance, namely, *encomienda*, *repartimiento* and tribute, *corregimiento*, missions and ecclesiastical tribunals, the Spanish town, and the Spanish blueprint for reorganization of Indian communities."

realistic estimation is that an average of less than thirty Franciscans labored among colonists and natives during the seventeenth century and ministered to a baptized population of approximately 20,000 Pueblos.<sup>7</sup>

One cannot discern a pattern of constantly increasing growth. There was a great deal of internecine strife between ecclesiastical and governmental authorities, and missionary efforts seem to have been hampered as a result.<sup>8</sup> By 1630 the missions had spread numerically and geographically as far as they could in view of their problems with secular opposition, replacement difficulties and delays in supply and communication.<sup>9</sup> After that, their history is one of trying to maintain the level of achievement rather than pursuing larger and more ambitious objectives.

Converting more people to Christian practices was, nevertheless, the reason for New Mexico's existence, and the friars performed their tasks with singleness of purpose. That zeal led them to concentrate on restricting Indian religious activities, especially during the 1670s. There had been some conflict between native and Spanish priests from the start,<sup>10</sup> and sporadic outbursts of hostility had occurred at intervals,<sup>11</sup> but in 1675 the clash of cultures became more pronounced on each side with resentment and bitterness increasing proportionately. Native ceremonies and liturgical articles had long been outlawed by Spanish officials, but those injunctions were suddenly enforced with renewed vigor. Essential ceremonial chambers (*kivas*) and many altars were seized, dances were strictly forbidden, masks and prayer sticks were destroyed, priests and medicinemen were imprisoned, flogged or hanged.<sup>12</sup> Throughout the decade there was a determined action by both arms of Spanish culture to eradicate every vestige of Indian life, world view as well as ethos.

In August 1680 a general uprising of native peoples put a stop to those

7. For highly inflated figures, see the report in F. W. Hodge, G. P. Hammond and A. Rey, eds., *Fray Alonso de Benavides' Revised Memorial of 1654* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1945), pp. 35, 99. More sensible estimations can be found in Scholes and Bloom, "Friar Personnel," p. 330; Reeve, *History of New Mexico*, 1:146-147; France V. Scholes, "Documents for the History of the New Mexico Missions in the Seventeenth Century," *NMHR* 4 (January 1929): 46-50, 51-58; Spicer, *Cycles of Conquest*, pp. 157-58; Edward P. Dozier, *The Pueblo Indians of North America* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1970), p. 49 and Bancroft, *Arizona and New Mexico*, pp. 160-161.
8. For the best discussion of this particular aspect, see two essays: France V. Scholes, "Church and State in New Mexico, 1610-1650," *NMHR* 11 and 12 (January 1936 to January 1937) and France V. Scholes, "Troublous Times in New Mexico, 1659-1670," *NMHR* 12 through 16 (April 1937 to July 1941 but not appearing in regular installments; issued as a single volume, Albuquerque, 1942). Reeve, *History of New Mexico*, 1:196, also has a measured analysis.
9. France V. Scholes, "The Supply Service of the New Mexican Missions in the Seventeenth Century," *NMHR* 5 (January 1930): 114 discusses all the ramifications of keeping in touch with a farflung outpost that never became self-sufficient. There is a sample packing list for one of the three-year wagon train expeditions in Benavides' *Revised Memorial of 1634*, pp. 111-122.
10. For some specific examples of personal conflict gleaned from the sketchy records, see Scholes, "Troublous Time," (April 1937): 144 and (October 1937): 408-412.
11. References to earlier, less unified, indications of violence can be found in Bancroft, *Arizona and New Mexico*, pp. 167-168; Ralph E. Twitchell, *The Leading Facts of New Mexican History* (Cedar Rapids, Iowa: Torch Press, 1911), 1:346-47; Reeve, *History of New Mexico*, 1:144-146; Schroeder, "Ethnohistory," p. 55; and the translated documents themselves in C. W. Hackett and C. C. Shelby, eds., *Revolt of the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico and Otermin's Attempted Reconquest, 1680-1682* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1942), 2:299.
12. The primary documents are to be found in Hackett and Shelby, *Revolt*, 1:xxii and 2:298-301. A dated but still useful narrative based on them is Bancroft, *Arizona and New Mexico*, p. 170.

repressive measures. Every pueblo from Acoma to Pecos, from Taos to Isleta rose to destroy the Spanish presence north of El Paso. Of the 2,500 colonists approximately 380 were killed, including 21 of the 33 resident friars. All survivors were forced to retreat south, taking what few possessions they could carry while fleeing for safety.<sup>13</sup> The successful Indians methodically rid themselves of every reminder of Spanish intrusion. They destroyed a great deal of property, including churches with their records, images and ceremonial paraphernalia. Renouncing the alien faith, Pueblos bathed to cleanse themselves from the effects of baptism. They abandoned foreign dress, stopped using Spanish names and left their Christian wives. Their rejection of Hispanic cultural patterns and the restoration of revitalized native ways was as thorough as the united efforts of chiefs and people could make them.<sup>14</sup>

Why did the revolt occur? What were the primary factors leading to bloodshed at that particular time, and what can account for its deliberately anti-ecclesiastical character? Ranches and government buildings were also hit, but almost every church in the territory was demolished. Colonists of all types were killed when unfortunate enough to be caught in vulnerable positions, but the clergy were usually the first to die in every pueblo. Why did the spokesmen and symbols of Christianity receive the concentrated fury of Pueblo vengeance? The answer to these questions can be sought in a study of religions, their nature and place in the two cultures whose conflict rose to such an overt level. Religion was a factor at the core of each way of life, and if we can understand what contrasted at the center, we will be in a better position to interpret conflicts in the wider circles of cultural interaction, even to the point of seeing reasons for war.

During the initial stages of red-white contact there were enough similarities between their religions to allow for a degree of mutual understanding. On the tangible level, each side used altars, religious calendars, aids for prayer (feathered sticks or rosary beads), luxurious costumes for a distinct priesthood which presided over regularly appointed ceremonies, ritual chants in languages somewhat removed from everyday usage. Christian baptism corresponded easily to the Pueblo practice of head washing and the giving of a new name when one was initiated into special organizations. Catholic saints elevated from the ranks of men and

13. Standard accounts of the main events can be found in Charles W. Hackett, "The Revolt of the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico in 1680," *The Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Association* 15 (October 1911): 99-100, 130-131; Twitchell, *Leading Facts*, 1:361; Spicer, *Cycles of Conquest*, p. 163; and Dozier, *Pueblos of North America*, p. 59.

While these deaths of white people are usually called a massacre, the Spaniards' conquest of a single pueblo was often more ruthless in loss of life and property. The reduction of Acoma in 1599 brought death to between 600 and 800 Indians, caused the enslavement of 500 others and the utter destruction of the pueblo; see Reeve, *History of New Mexico*, 1:124-125. Another example taken from many is the reconquest of Sia in 1689 which cost another 600 native lives, many of whom "were burned to death in the flames which destroyed a portion of the pueblo rather than submit to captivity at the hands of the Spaniards." Twitchell, *Leading Facts*, 1:390.

14. Hackett and Shelby, *Revolt*, 1:13 and 2:247-248, 251; Twitchell, *Leading Facts*, 1:368; Bancroft, *Arizona and New Mexico*, p. 184. Some authors like Robert Silverberg, *The Pueblo Revolt* (New York: Weybright and Talley, 1970), p. 132, go so far as to say that the Pueblos even refused to continue using melons, fruit trees, wheat, horses and cattle because of their alien origin. There might have been some sentiment expressed along that line, but I doubt that an eminently practical people would destroy easily assimilable aspects of material culture which could benefit their economy and diet. Until such an overreaching assertion can be substantiated further, it seems more reasonable to place the anger of nativist reaction on human presence, not on objects of the natural order.

women formed a parallel with Pueblo heroes who once lived among the people in human shape, now petitioned as powerful spirits. Spaniards were wont to experience visions, demonic as well as beatific, and this too provided a link with a people who saw horned snakes, cloud people (*shiwanna*) and witches. The use of incense and holy water was close to Pueblo priests who made "clouds" with yucca suds for rain or sprayed consecrated water on an ailing patient. Kissing the hand of a friar was likened to the practice of "drawing in the breath" of a native priest or a loved one.<sup>15</sup>

More intangibly, each religious system was based on beliefs that the world was ordered according to divine sanctions. The wills and wisdom of dominions beyond human making were thought by adherents of both cultures to be actively engaged in directing the weather, fortunes of war, personal fate and national destiny.<sup>16</sup> Conversely both interpreted disease, drought and famine as either the result of malevolent spirits or the displeasure of gods who would not overlook human frailty. Within these positive and negative emphases it would be difficult to say whether the love of good or fear of evil predominated in the day-to-day actions of either people. But each religion in its own way emphasized divine power as that which gave order and meaning to their adherents' identity and mode of life.

These similarities were not appreciated by the Franciscans in New Mexico as an avenue for introducing their mission program. Unlike the Jesuits in Arizona and northwestern Mexico, they did not begin by utilizing aspects of existing religion and move from them to Christian formulations. Instead they were convinced either that the Indians possessed no religion at all or that they had been lured by the Devil into a repugnant congeries of idol worship and superstition. These spiritual conquerors matched their military counterparts in holding that the natives were barbarians who lacked any civilized notion of law or legitimate authority.<sup>17</sup> Indian settlements were not viewed as properly organized communities; their forms of body covering were not considered true clothing; their sexual practices were judged to be disgracefully unregulated. So from the outset the friars set themselves the goal of stamping out every particle of native religion and substituting Catholic doctrines and practices, using force if necessary.

In keeping with these attitudes the Franciscans' behavior toward the Pueblos' religion conflicted sharply with tangible aspects of local custom. Almost without exception they did not try to master native languages or translate Christian ideas into them. They insisted that Indians learn Spanish. To supplant misguided native beliefs and ceremonial patterns, the missionaries operated on a policy of compulsory attendance at mass—for all baptized Indians but not all Spaniards. They made native officials (*fiscals*) punish their own people for failure to conform to this rule. With the aid of governors and soldiers they raided ancient ceremonial chambers and tried to prevent their future use. Masks and ritual

15. Schroeder, "Ethnohistory," p. 51; Leslie A. White, "The Pueblo of Santa Ana, New Mexico," *American Anthropologist*, n.s., 44 (October-December 1942): 66; Elsie Clews Parsons, *Pueblo Indian Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), 1:453-455, 2:1075.

16. For examples in which Christian doctrines were actually applied to physical needs like rain making, toothache and pregnancy, see *Benavides' Revised Memorial of 1634*, pp. 53, 58; see also Bloom, "Perea's *Relacion*," p. 233.

17. Edwin E. Sylvester, Jr., "Motifs of Franciscan Mission Theory in Sixteenth Century New Spain Province of the Holy Gospel," (Ph. D. diss., Southern Methodist University, 1970), pp. 114-117, 124, 228-229, 253-254.

paraphernalia of all kinds were periodically confiscated and burned. Traditional leaders who persisted in continuing the old rituals were arrested, and the gentle sons of St. Francis directed that they be whipped or executed as a menace to this life and an obstacle to the next.<sup>18</sup>

These areas of tension in physical confrontations were symptoms of more fundamental conflicts that lay beneath the surface. No one at that time seemed to realize how different their cultural orientations were, but modern anthropology has helped us see that there were serious contradictions between Pueblo and Spaniard in the categories of world view, personal identity and moral obligation.

Pueblo views of the world were diametrically opposed to western European ones. The underworld rather than heaven or the sky was their locus for sources of life. There was no reference to a primal god, an *ex nihilo* creation of matter, or any transcendental direction over the affairs of the natural world. Gods, men, animals and plants emerged through an opening in the underworld's roof (seen as a navel or *shipapu* from earth, the middle stratum of the cosmos), and all of them came from below to dwell on the surface of this world.<sup>19</sup> In the time of beginnings many gods or *katsina* had lived with the people and taught them how to cope with their new environment. Patterns and procedures thought to stem from that time and from those sources carried the sanction of ultimate authority:

Thus the Indians got their culture—their houses, weapons, tools, and cultivated plants, their clans, priests and societies, their songs, prayers, ceremonies and paraphernalia. That is why they live, work and worship . . . as they do: because their ways of life were established by the gods long ago. . . . To ignore or violate, to lose the customs of the old days . . . [would be] to bring misfortune . . . even extinction, upon themselves.<sup>20</sup>

Compared with the Spanish notion of a heavenly creator who guided his people from above, the Pueblo view derived strength from the opposite direction, and it was much more explicit about divinely instituted patterns of activity.

Instead of beginning with a belief that the natural world was the Lord's footstool and man's economic resource, Indians of the Rio Grande gave the earth a sacred status of its own. In comparison with Europeans who felt free to use natural materials for any secular purpose they fancied, Pueblos had a more profound respect for the basically sacred constitution of natural objects. Their place in this world was what really mattered to them, and sacred space radiated in concentric circles from the center, which was either the local village or a nearby place of emergence.<sup>21</sup> Everything in the cosmos had its place by reference to this center. Everything from points on the compass to changing seasons was bounded

18. Spicer, *Cycles of Conquest*, p. 282; Edward P. Dozier, "The American Southwest," in E. B. Leacock and N. O. Lurie, eds., *North American Indians in Historical Perspective* (New York: Random House, 1971), pp. 246-248; Dozier, "Rio Grande Pueblos," p. 126; Reginald G. Fisher, "An Outline of Pueblo Indian Religion," *El Palacio* 44 (1938): 172-173.

19. Some nations, for example the Tewa, have emergence tales where the people first appear by coming from under a lake; others, such as the Keres, mention no lake. But the basic concurrence is an underground origin and ultimate return. For variations of the emergence myth, see Alfonso Ortiz, *The Tewa World: Space, Time and Becoming in a Pueblo Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), p. 122; Leslie A. White, *The Pueblo of Sia, New Mexico* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1962), pp. 115-131; Dozier, *Pueblos of North America*, pp. 203-204; and Parsons, *Pueblo Indian Religion*, 1:182.

20. White, "Santa Ana," p. 88. See also White, *Sia*, p. 236.

21. Ortiz, *Tewa World*, p. 23; Fisher, "Outline of Pueblo Religion," p. 171. For a striking example of the contrast between these two orientations, see the sermon recorded in Bloom, "Perea's *Relacion*," pp. 229-230.

and controllable because the earth was an orderly environment that circumscribed the harmony of all good things. Instead of wishing to escape this world or destroy it through exploitation, Pueblos affirmed their existence in it and husbanded their lives along with nature as parts of a single sanctified life system. It was a complete, substantial and satisfying world, and one could know enough about life, death and proper conduct to feel gratified by living in it according to established ways.<sup>22</sup>

Another point at which the two cultures stood in striking contrast to each other had to do with personal identity; that is, their worlds were different, and they thought of the people in them differently too. The European view enhanced the role of the individual, his free choice and opportunities to distinguish himself from others. Whether by valor or charity, by deeds of might or sacrifice, personal merit was a virtue to be prized and cultivated. For Pueblos, however, personal identity was always defined by reference to the community, not at its expense.<sup>23</sup> The self as any Spaniard would have defined it was submerged, and all of Indian society's values emphasized the well-being of the collectivity rather than that of the individual. Personal distinction was shunned, not sought; innovation was discouraged. Anyone who strove constantly to distinguish himself from his fellows was more likely to be ostracized and charged with witchcraft than to receive admiration from his townspeople.

The antithetical nature of this cultural trait is fairly easy to see when measured against Christian doctrines of salvation and the church. From its beginnings Christianity has almost always conveyed the assumption that its adherents were a separate people, sheep separated from the goats, wheat from the chaff, a faithful remnant saved from destruction by a merciful God. This salvation of separate individuals has usually included some degree of voluntary belief and personal morality, a combination of faith and works in which the responsibility of the believer played an important role in securing the final result. In Pueblo life there were no such thoughts. Everyone belonged to the group, and everyone was certain to reach the afterworld (enter *shipapu*), regardless of his merits or demerits. The only qualification on this cultural universalism was the idea that those failing to lead a good life would have a more difficult time reaching the place of emergence/reentry. There was no place of reward for the good and another of retribution for those less virtuous. As one valuable description put it, "to die in a pueblo is not to become dead but to return to the only real life there is; one 'changes houses' and rejoins the ancestors. . . ."<sup>24</sup> Just as there was no community-separating heaven and hell, there was no concept of atonement, no vicarious sacrifice, no redemption—none of these because there was no need.<sup>25</sup>

Christianity came to the Pueblos preaching doctrine that required a psycho-

22. Some of the main sources for these two paragraphs are White, *Sia*, p. 320; Ortiz, "Ritual Drama and Pueblo World View," pp. 142-143; and Elsie Clews Parsons, *The Pueblo of Jemez* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1925), pp. 124-125.

23. The best discussions of this significant aspect of Pueblo psychology can be found in Ortiz, "Ritual Drama and Pueblo World View," pp. 153-154; Wigberto J. Moreno, "The Indians of America and Christianity," *The Americas* 14 (April 1958): 413-414; Florence H. Ellis, "Authoritative Control and the Society System in Jemez Pueblo," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 9 (Winter 1953): 392; Leslie A. White, "The Pueblo of San Felipe" *Memoirs of the American Anthropological Association* 38 (1932): 11, 43; and Parsons, *Pueblo Indian Religion*, 1:107-108.

24. Ortiz, "Ritual Drama and Pueblo World View," p. 145. See also Ortiz, *Tewa World*, pp. 50-56, 123-124; and Parsons, *Pueblo Indian Religion*, 1:63-64.

25. Parsons, *Pueblo Indian Religion*, 1:216; 2:1102.

logical sense of separation from the aboriginal group. The missionaries saw the church as an institution composed of believers gathered in anticipation of ultimate rescue out of this life. The church thus embodied a community-dividing thrust. Not all members of society would be saved, only the baptized. Not all Indians or Spaniards were expected at mass (and incidentally punished for failure to attend), only those gathered into the communion of saints. The church cut through families and clans, through moities and secret societies.<sup>26</sup> Its contrast with native religious forms was stark enough when it stood simply as a competitive institution; but its major threat to native life stemmed from a disruptive capacity to offer salvation only to individuals.

Differing ideas of moral obligation comprised a third general category of conflict. For Spanish preachers ethical guidelines were thought to derive from biblical and theological traditions, sources transcending any particular cultural group. Pueblos derived their sense of duty and propriety within an understanding of the community and its needs. The missionaries defined good and bad actions on a standard possessed by the church, seen as a divine institution that did not, in ideal terms at least, coincide with the totality of any cultural unit or their various civil offices. Natives based their model of ethical judgment on a standard that comprehended all facets of their society and did not see any reason for going beyond them. Europeans thought that sanctions against improper conduct would apply in the afterlife, usually in addition to, not in place of, temporal effects. Indians expected ultimate sanctions, like death for witchcraft, to apply in this life with no rewards or punishments reserved for the future.

The more important differences between Indian and European emerged in actually trying to live by these divergent views of right conduct while attempting to convert one's opposite number. The friars stressed attendance at mass, morning and evening prayer, monogamy with no divorce and obedience to Spanish magistrates as fundamental elements of moral life. Pueblo activities were aligned with the order of nature and had been organized into an elaborate system of societies which presided over a cycle of ritual ceremonies. The Indians' central obligation was to participate in and to perpetuate those rites which insured a well-ordered life for the pueblo and its circle of physical needs.<sup>27</sup> Most village adults belonged to at least one of many societies, usually from eight to twenty in a pueblo, that presided over vital functions like planting, irrigation or rain making, hunting, harvesting, rules enforcement and curing physical ailments.<sup>28</sup> Existence itself, the very elements that gave meaning and structure to Indian life as a cultural unit, depended on cycles of corporate activity grouped rationally around an agrarian calendar year. Social structures conformed to the works necessary for cooperating with natural rhythms. Ritual activities were orchestrated to facilitate these works; food, shelter and health followed as a result of attention to ceremonial obligations.<sup>29</sup> If this combination of activities and moral obligations were ever

26. For a concrete example of the strain placed on existing ties in Pueblo communities, see *Benavides' Revised Memorial of 1634*, p. 78.

27. Dozier, *Pueblos of North America*, pp. 151, 200.

28. The best discussion of this essential aspect of Pueblo life is Ortiz, *Tewa World*, pp. 80-81, 98, 103, 127. Other important ones are Dozier, "Rio Grande Pueblos," pp. 112-113; Fisher, "Outline of Pueblo Religion," pp. 176-177; and Parsons, *Jemez*, p. 58.

29. This is the heart of the Pueblo value system in a concrete manifestation, and a great deal of information can be found in Ortiz, *Tewa World*, pp. 98, 104, 116; William Whitman, *The Pueblo Indians of San Ildefonso* (New York: AMS Press, 1969), p. 118; W. Krickeberg, H. Trimborn, W. Müller and O. Zerries, *Pre-Columbian American Religions* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1968), p. 206; and Parsons, *Jemez*, pp. 74-75.

suppressed to a serious degree, the threat to Pueblo existence would be quite serious indeed.

None of the standard interpretations of Spanish activity and Pueblo resistance in the seventeenth century have noticed the important role religion played in the tensions between the two cultures. They have usually stressed disputes over land and water rights, abuses in the *ecomienda* labor system or the obtrusive presence of a military *entrada* in another nation's territory. The major theme in historical writing for well over a century now has been to interpret Indian rebellion as an expression of economic and political self-determination. Discussions of the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 thus parallel other patriotic revolutions in the western hemisphere against a familiar archetype of tyranny and oppression.<sup>30</sup>

But is this an adequate explanation? It does not account for why the uprising occurred when it did, that is, why the various nations were desperate enough at that particular time to combine their strength and cooperate as never before. It does not explain why a war ostensibly over land, labor and personal freedom should have taken such an overtly anti-Christian turn. It implies that Spanish civil and ecclesiastical authorities would have been successful if their means had been less harsh. It fails to realize how antithetical the two cultures really were in the seventeenth century and how deeply the Pueblos were committed to maintaining the integrity of their cultural system, one that grounded their existence in realities they knew always to have pertained. Interpretations of the conflict offered thus far have overemphasized the political and economic factors, leaving several important questions unanswered and omitting consideration of relevant information about the values and motivations of people actually confronting a rival culture.

Suggestions for a more adequate historical interpretation would build on the physical and non-material cultural differences already discussed and then concentrate on events beginning in 1667. From that year to 1672 there was an extended drought and crop failure. Most of the population, Indian and colonist alike, was reduced to eating "hides that they had and the straps of the carts, preparing them for food by soaking . . . and roasting them in the fire with maize, and boiling them with herbs and roots."<sup>31</sup> In 1671 a great pestilence carried off many people and livestock. By 1672 the nomadic Apaches and Navajos, also pinched by dwindling food supplies, increased their raids on the settled areas and brought more ruin. One of the Spaniards' feudal promises had always been to protect their charges from such raids; now that promise was seen for what it was worth. By 1675 at least six pueblos had been wiped out, and most others were in desperate straits.<sup>32</sup>

In the light of such conditions it is not surprising to see that the Pueblos began to abandon Spanish habits and return to their folkways. In the past they had been willing to accept the advantages of Spanish technology and even the externals of the new religion, as long as imported items served material and social ends. When missionaries insisted that acceptance of Christianity forbade any retention of aboriginal beliefs and required denial of native rituals, there were prob-

30. Hackett and Shelby, *Revolt*, 1:60-61; Bancroft, *Arizona and New Mexico*, p. 14; Twitchell, *Leading Facts*, 1:354-357; Reeve, *History of New Mexico*, 1:249-253; Dozier, "American Southwest," pp. 248-249; Fray Angelico Chavez, "Pohé-Yemo's Representative and the Pueblo Revolt of 1680," *NMHR* 42 (April 1967): 86.

31. Hackett and Shelby, *Revolt*, 1:xix. See also Spicer, *Cycles of Conquest*, p. 162.

32. Twitchell, *Leading Facts*, 1:348-350; Reeve, *History of New Mexico*, 1:251-252.

ably some opportunists willing to go even that far. But when all of them realized that the new ways were no better than the old ones in bringing rain, curing disease or preventing invasions—indeed, when they seemed to be the cause of so much suffering—then a massive return to the more trusted patterns of ancient teaching was in the offing.

Ironically enough, at the same time Indian practices were being revitalized, the Spanish mounted an energetic campaign to extinguish them altogether. Relations between church and state had been stormy throughout most of the century, but in the person of Juan Francisco de Treviño, arriving as governor sometime after 1670, the missionaries finally found a civil magistrate willing to enforce their suppression of native religion with wholehearted cooperation.<sup>33</sup> As the Indians were moving in one direction, Spanish forces tried with increasing brutality to move them toward the opposite pole. In 1675 forty-seven ceremonial leaders were arrested. Three were hanged, another committed suicide, and the others were released after being whipped only because the Indians made a show of force. Plans for a wider and more effective revolt were not long in forthcoming, and most of the central figures, including el Popé, came from among those leaders publicly humiliated.

The fighting of 1680 caught the Spanish by surprise, and their evacuation left the Indians free to follow pre-contact standards of conduct as they wished. There was an abortive attempt to reconquer the land in 1682, but for the better part of fifteen years the Pueblos had little molestation from soldiers or friars. New Mexico was conquered again by 1696, and Indian resistance took two new forms. Thousands moved west to live with a similar but more remote culture, the Hopi; those who stayed in the river valleys compartmentalized their lives into outward conformity to the dominant culture and inner loyalty to their own.

In piecing together the best possible historical interpretation of these events it is important to notice that political, economic and personal factors did play a role, but they do not tell the whole story. The cultural antagonism between Spaniard and Pueblo had fundamentally religious roots, and an adequate understanding of the 1680 hostilities must give them priority. In the last analysis the Indian war was an attempt to preserve the kind of life which they thought the gods had ordained and which aliens were obviously destroying. The tribes united voluntarily to expell the Spanish because their coercive tactics were preventing a life based on true beliefs and conduct—an ethos seen not only as proper, but as the one way to stave off the disease and famine confronting them. The Pueblo Revolt was an act of people determined to reject Christian civilization because it posed a direct threat to their culture and religion, to their integrated structures which embodied indispensable elements for Pueblo survival.<sup>34</sup>

This study of a particular cultural conflict may be useful in shedding more light on one set of concrete historical circumstances and in providing a more comprehensive interpretation of all the factors that were in operation there. But

33. Scholes, "Troublous Times," (April 1937): 149, (July 1941): 321-322.

34. Ortiz, "Ritual Drama and Pueblo World View," put it well when he wrote on page 136 that "as long as there is a reasonably good fit between world view and religion, between reality as it is defined and as it is lived, world view can be defined as, in the main, expressive. When there is no longer this fit, we have reactions ranging from millennial dreams to violent revolution, all designed to establish a reasonably integrated life." For a modern example of the tensions between white dominance and Indian ways, with the disastrous results that often follow, see Parsons, *Jemez*, pp. 9, 60.

it stands as only one case study in a field that needs a great deal of attention. Historians are now in a position to capitalize on sophisticated treatments of religion in cultural contexts and blend them with more standard surveys of missionary activity. The day has come when we can adjust one-sided interpretations of red-white relations, correcting them with a wealth of new material and a more comprehensive understanding of Indian life. This new awareness is the key to better history of hundreds of cultures whose integrity and richness we are just beginning to appreciate. Once this is under way, the scope and quality of Christian missions can be more realistically viewed within specific contexts.