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Placemaking on the Northern Rio Grande A View from Kuaua Pueblo

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Chapter 4 of *Archaeologies of Placemaking: Monuments, Memories, and Engagement in Native North America* by Patricia E. Rubertone

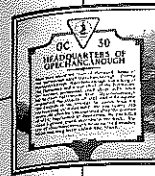
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Comments

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CHAPTER 4

Placemaking on the Northern Rio Grande A View from Kuaua Pueblo

Robert W. Preucel and Frank G. Matero

Digging to make a “showplace”—that was Hewett.
Marjorie Lambert, March 12, 1985

In his book *The Myth of Santa Fe*, Chris Wilson offers a provocative analysis of the history of Santa Fe, New Mexico. His central thesis is that Santa Fe is an invented community, the product of the interaction of ethnic identity formation and tourist image making (Wilson 1997:7). He documents how Santa Fe’s mythic origins are intimately associated with New Mexico’s pursuit of statehood from 1848 to 1912. During this period, two contradictory images emerged. The first image was of Santa Fe as a thriving, economically prosperous American city located at the end of the Santa Fe Trail. The second was of an ancient and colorful village with distinctive Indian and Spanish roots. After achieving statehood in 1912, the latter image was co-opted in support of the former. As Wilson (1997:95) puts it, “The romantic image of the city became the central vehicle for economic resurgence and the blueprint for its physical transformation.”

It is in this context that Edgar Lee Hewett, the Director of both the School of American Research and the Museum of New Mexico, established the New Mexican historic preservation movement. Inspired by the successes of the California Mission Revival pioneered by Charles Lummis in the 1880s, Hewett proposed a similar program to restore New Mexican historic buildings and missions and thereby promote tourism. Hewett’s first project was the restoration of the Palace of the Governors, supervised by Jesse Nusbaum, from 1909 to 1913. This restoration required the removal of the nineteenth-century “Territorial” renovations in favor of a new local style, quickly named the “Santa Fe style” to distinguish it from its California counterpart. Hewett’s interest in historic preservation also extended to prehistoric sites. His excavation and stabilization of Balcony House in 1910, with Nusbaum as supervisor,

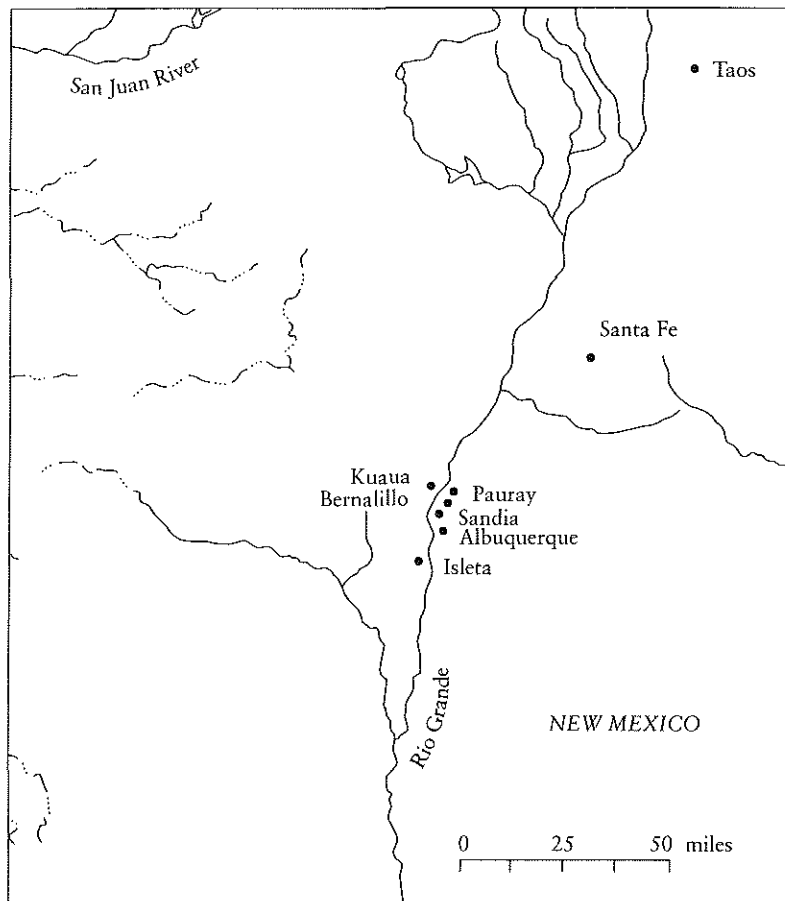


Figure 4.1 Location of Kuaua Pueblo (Coronado State Monument), New Mexico.

brought the first systematic work of historic preservation to Mesa Verde, and his restoration of the ceremonial kiva in Frijoles Canyon (Bandelier National Monument) expanded that vision to include full restoration using ethnographic and archaeological analogy.

In our chapter, we examine some of the ways in which Hewett conjoined archaeology and historic preservation to craft a distinctive New Mexican identity. In particular, we examine the case of Kuaua Pueblo, also known as Coronado State Monument, an ancestral Tiwa Indian village located just north of the town of Bernalillo, New Mexico (Figures 4.1, 4.2). We suggest that Kuaua's "placeness" is largely defined by the successive attempts by Hewett and others to resolve the multiple

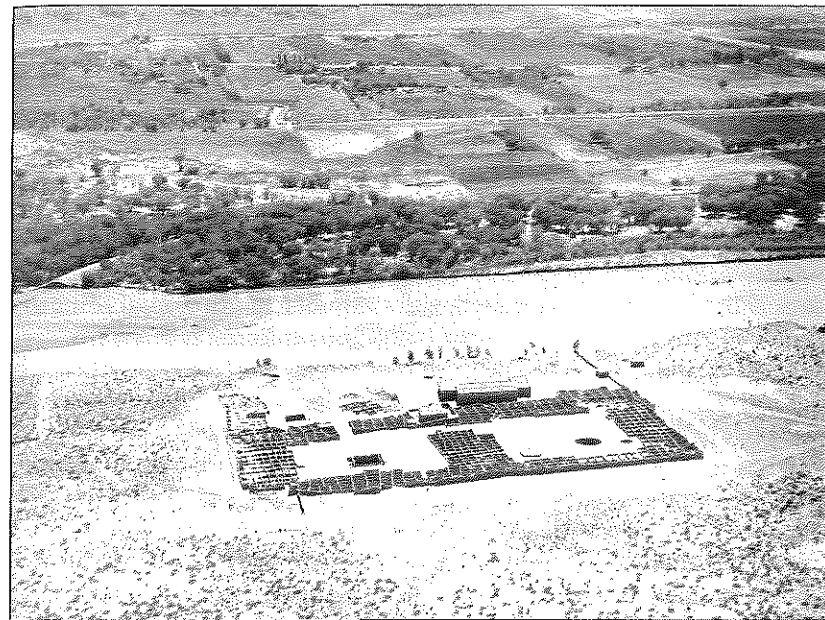


Figure 4.2 Aerial view of Coronado State Monument showing the reconstructed village and the museum. (Courtesy of the Palace of the Governors, MNM/DCA, Photo Archives, Neg. 36176.)

tensions and contradictions between its Pueblo Indian heritage, the historical event of the Coronado *entrada*, and its status as a state monument. By identifying Hewett's strategies to present Kuaua to the general public, we hope to provide some specific insights into how the invented traditions of New Mexico were created.

PLACEMAKING

If we are to identify and understand the nature and implications of past and present human relationships with physical locales, we must do so through the study of *place*. Places are contexts for human experience, constructed in movement and memory, encounter and association (Tilley 1994:15). This notion of the landscape as memory and experience has enjoyed increased attention as demonstrated through the rise in popularity of historic preservation and public history (Schama 1996). Preservation of individual monuments as icons of cultural and historical identity began early in the late eighteenth century with the formation of modern European nations based on the consolidation and segregation of different ethnic groups. As early as 1903, these preservation interests

reached such extremes that Alois Riegl described the trend as a “modern cult” in which historical monuments served as the primary vehicles for both the transmission and reception of changing cultural ideas and values over time (Riegl 1996). Monuments and places, like rituals, are ways in which societies remember, where the function of memory and commemoration is the joining of past with present (Bradley 1993:3). While the act of remembering is acutely human, what associations specific memorials and places have at any given time will change.

Placemaking can be defined as the social practices of constructing place and is intimately associated with the public inscription of collective memories. It is as characteristic of Indigenous cultures as it is of modern Western capitalist societies. Because the making of place is an inherently political process, certain places may be incorporated into sanctioned views of the social imaginary. Places of resistance, such as battlefields, may be sanitized and depoliticized as they are incorporated into specific narratives emphasizing the continuity of past and present. Alternatively, they may be recuperated and used to deny continuity as a means of challenging the dominant social order. What is and is not considered to be a place is thus part of an ongoing dialogue and the site of contestation and negotiation. The refashioning of space into place is a technology of reordering reality, and its success depends upon the degree to which this refashioning is concealed in the details of material culture and site plan (Boyer 1994).

Not all places are of the same representational order. Some places possess certain qualities or features that distinguish them hierarchically from all other places by virtue of the fact that they comment on, or refer to, other places within the cultural landscape. These qualities allow such places to be considered metaplaces, or heterotopias, since they help shape the interpretations of other culturally significant places. The term *heterotopia* was introduced by Michel Foucault in a 1967 lecture entitled “Of Other Spaces” that was published posthumously (Foucault 1986). Heterotopias refer to places common to every society where “all other real sites that can be found within the culture are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted” (Foucault 1986:24).

Foucault identified six principles of heterotopias. First, while they are found in all cultures, there is no universal model. It is possible, however, to distinguish “crisis heterotopias” (privileged or sacred places reserved for individuals who are in a state of crisis in relation to the society in which they live, such as adolescents, menstruating women, pregnant women, the elderly, etc.) from “heterotopias of deviation” (places such as rest homes, psychiatric hospitals, and prisons that house individuals whose behavior is considered deviant). Second, heterotopias can change in function and meaning over time according to the synchrony of the

culture in which they are found. Third, heterotopias typically juxtapose several spaces that are themselves incompatible in a single place. Foucault provides such examples as the theater, the cinema, and Oriental gardens. Fourth, heterotopias are places of all time that are, simultaneously, outside of time. Here Foucault identifies museums, which represent the desire to contain in one place all times, all epochs, all forms, and all tastes. Fifth, heterotopias typically regulate public access in ways that seem natural, but actually “hide curious exclusions” (Foucault 1986:26). Sixth, heterotopias function in relation to all spaces that exist outside of them. By virtue of the fact that they mark a culturally definable space unlike any other space, they also act as microcosms reflecting larger cultural patterns or social orders.

The geographer Edward Soja (1996) has offered what is perhaps the most systematic engagement with Foucault’s notion of heterotopia. He notes that while Foucault’s ideas are frustratingly incomplete, they provide valuable glimpses into what Soja calls “Thirdspace,” the geohistories of otherness. He suggests that most critical evaluations of Foucault’s work have missed a fundamental point, namely that his alternative envisioning of spatiality directly challenges all conventional modes of spatial thinking (Soja 1996:163). Heterotopias are not simply other spaces to be added to previously existing spaces in our analyses, but rather foster radically different ways of conceptualizing space. For Foucault, we need to engage with heterotologies and heterochronologies because they allow us to highlight the spatio-temporal dimensions of power-knowledge relations (Soja 1996:170). In what follows, we discuss the heterotopic features of Coronado State Monument by focusing on naming, representation, authenticity, and performance.

NAMING

Naming is not a neutral practice. To give a place a name is to situate it within a knowable universe and to assert a form of possession. The knowable universe is itself historically constituted, a palimpsest of the knowledge of all previous generations. It is also the subject of potential contestation and negotiation since who has the right to name a place, to single it out from all other places in the landscape, reveals the historically specific dynamics of power relations operative in a particular society. Naming is thus the preeminent act of placemaking and a technology of domesticating peoples and lands by making familiar what might otherwise be foreign and threatening. The politics of naming are particularly evident in the colonial context of land acquisition when the names of the colonizers are used to appropriate the place-names and, by extension, the lands of the colonized.

The first Spaniard to engage in placemaking in the Southwest was Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, who named the villages of the Zuni district the “Seven Cities of Gold.” Cabeza de Vaca was shipwrecked off the coast of Florida in 1528 and made his way overland back to Mexico in 1536 (Weber 1992). On his return, he related tales of the “Seven Cities of Gold” that possessed limitless riches. In 1539, Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza authorized Fray Marcos de Niza to lead an expedition to discover the truth of these claims. De Niza returned with his own stories of the wealthy cities of Cibola and Quivira. In 1540, Mendoza authorized Francisco Vasquez de Coronado to lead an entrada to locate these riches. Coronado followed de Niza’s route and attacked the Zuni village of Hawikuh, but found no evidence of wealth. He then moved on to the upper Rio Grande where he established a winter base camp. In the process of pacifying the area, he and his men killed more than 200 Indian men, women, and children. In 1541, he led a party north and east, across western Texas and Oklahoma, arriving at the Arkansas River. There, he found only a Wichita Indian village, clearly not the opulent city of Quivira.

The first permanent acts of Spanish placemaking occurred after 1609 when New Mexico was established as a mission field (Espinosa 1988:14). By 1616, there were nine mission centers and Christianized pueblos (Espinosa 1988:18); at the time of the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, this had expanded to 39 missions (Escalante in Twitchell 1914:269). Each Pueblo Indian village was given the name of the patron saint of its mission. For example, the village of Ohkay Oweenge became San Juan Pueblo, Kewa became Santo Domingo Pueblo, and Tamaya became Santa Ana Pueblo.¹ The renaming of Pueblo Indian villages was a means of situating them within a global Catholic ecclesiastical landscape stretching from Santa Fe to Mexico City and from Sevilla to Rome.

The earliest historically documented Indigenous name for Coronado State Monument dates to Francisco Vasquez de Coronado’s entrada in 1540. When Coronado entered the south-central Rio Grande Valley, he learned that the province was called Tiguex and that the largest village had the same name. Several scholars have proposed that Coronado’s Tiguex Pueblo was in fact Coronado State Monument (Schroeder 1979). In 1582, Antonio de Espejo visited the same village and learned that its Native name was *Guaqua* (Hammond and Rey 1966[1940]:203 n. 116). This name is linguistically identical to the modern Tiwa name, *Kuaua*.

In the late nineteenth century, Adolph Bandelier gathered several names for Coronado State Monument in his ethnographic research. He visited the site on June 5, 1882, with Juan Trujillo of Sandia Pueblo (Lange and Riley 1966:310). Bandelier described it as a predominantly adobe pueblo, quadrilateral in form and open to the east, and noted

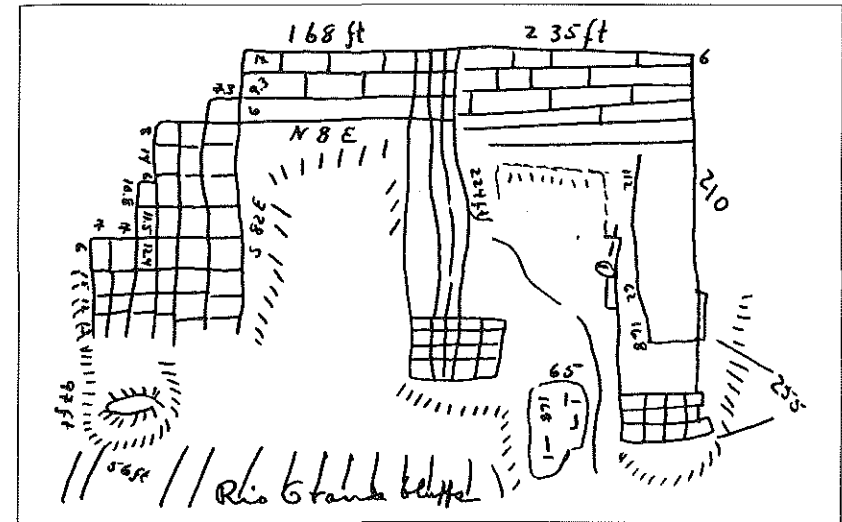


Figure 4.3 Adolph Bandelier’s sketch map of Kuaua Pueblo in 1882 (from Lange and Riley 1966:312). (Courtesy of the Palace of the Governors, Fray Angélico Chávez History Library.)

that although there were no standing walls, the adobe foundations were easy to trace (Figure 4.3). Trujillo informed him that the Tiwa name of the village was *To-re-una* (Lange and Riley 1966:310–311). Bandelier was apparently skeptical and wrote that “it sounds rather too much like the Spanish Torrejón [tower]” (Lange and Riley 1966:311). In his *Final Report*, he states that Sandia Pueblo informants gave the name Kuaua for the ruin (Bandelier 1892:225). This name is usually translated as “the evergreen pueblo” (Elliott 1995; Sinclair 1951). Presumably, it refers to the fir trees which are venerated by Pueblo peoples and whose boughs are used in their ceremonies.

The most recent act of placemaking took place on March 7, 1935. On this date, Frank Vesely, the New Mexico state and land commissioner, officially designated Kuaua Pueblo and neighboring Puaray Pueblo as Coronado State Monument by public proclamation. Vesely justified the founding of this new state monument on historical grounds, noting that Puaray and Kuaua were the largest villages on the Rio Grande at the time of Coronado’s entrada and that Kuaua was probably the site of Coronado’s winter headquarters between 1540 and 1542 (Anonymous 1935:111). This designation was the first official act of the Coronado Cuarto Centennial celebration scheduled for 1940 and was part of Governor Clyde Tingley’s master plan to boost New Mexico’s tourist economy (Montgomery 2002:219).

REPRESENTATION

Any investigation of place must also engage with the issue of historical representation. Since the Enlightenment, the dominant view has been that statements about the past must correspond to the events to which they refer and the narrative as a whole must correspond to the general sequence of events (White 1987:40). It is the content alone that has truth value. As poststructuralists have shown, this correspondence theory of representation is incomplete since it fails to acknowledge that there is no single narrative sufficient to capture the past. Rather, there are always multiple narratives that come from different political interests and viewpoints (see Chapter 3). Moreover, the specific forms of these narratives also convey important meaning. It is the variety of the relevant narratives both in content and form that creates place. To represent a place thus requires a consideration of all prior cultural representations of that place.

Hewett saw the archaeological sites of Kuaua and Puaray as an opportunity to represent the rich Spanish and Indian history of New Mexico to the nation. New Mexico, in fact, possessed an older history than Arizona or California, but lagged behind them as a tourist destination. He considered Coronado's entrada of 1540 and Juan de Oñate's colonizing expedition of 1598 to be among the most vivid moments in New Mexico history. Coronado's army established a winter camp at an Indian pueblo, which some scholars had speculated might be Kuaua. Oñate reported visiting Puaray where he saw wall paintings showing the martyrdom of the three priests—Fray Agustín Ruiz, Fray Juan de Santa María, and Fray Francisco Lopez—who had been left behind during the Rodríguez-Chamuscado expedition (Espinosa 1935:142). Both of these events were of considerable public interest and could be potentially linked to specific sites through archaeological investigation.

Hewett proposed to excavate Kuaua in order to establish the location of Coronado's encampment and to excavate Puaray to look for the famous wall murals. He intended to accomplish this work in time for the celebration of the Coronado Cuarto Centennial in 1940. In June 1934, he began a five-year excavation project sponsored by the University of New Mexico, the Museum of New Mexico, and the School of American Research, and funded by federal monies from Federal Emergency Relief Administration, Works Progress Administration, and Nation Youth Administration relief programs. A year later, Gordon Vivian, the site supervisor, made the dramatic discovery of painted murals in Kiva 3. There was an immediate hope that they might represent the martyrdom of the priests. This turned out not to be the case, but the murals were immediately recognized as an invaluable resource for the presentation of

an Indian aesthetic and worldview. Vivian's team eventually excavated 1,200 rooms along with three above-ground ceremonial rooms and six kivas.

Hewett also embarked upon an ambitious museum construction project. This project was originally conceived on a grand scale. Extant drawings include plans for a large museum building to be built adjacent to a massive bridge spanning the Rio Grande. A colossal statue of Coronado, approximately 40 ft. tall and facing east, was to surmount its top. Visitors would park their cars in front of the museum and then climb a formal staircase to an observation deck at the base of the statue from where they could look out upon the pueblo.

In 1939, because of financial difficulties, Hewett settled on a scaled-back version of the museum. He contracted John Gaw Meem, the famous New Mexico architect and early preservationist, to undertake the revised design. The building was a small U-shaped structure of earthen construction and oriented east to face the Sandia Mountains. For reasons that are not documented, it was placed within the archaeological site, immediately adjacent to the south plaza. A smaller statue of Coronado was planned for the south plaza of the pueblo and Eugenie Frederica Shonnard, a prominent New Mexico artist, was selected to be the sculptor. This statue, however, was never executed, presumably because of financial difficulties.

There were three main exhibits, each located in its own area of the museum building (Figure 4.4). The south wing contained the "Hall of Tiguex Life," which presented a picture of Pueblo Indian culture flourishing in the Rio Grande Valley at the time of the Spanish entrada. It included exhibits of artifacts of daily life as well as ceremonial objects used in ritual activities. As visual illustrations, Hewett commissioned a series of paintings by leading Native American artists, including José Rey Toledo of Jemez Pueblo. The central gallery was called "Coronado Hall" and was devoted to objects of Spanish manufacture and use pertaining to the Coronado period. Hewett commissioned paintings by Gerald Cassidy to depict different aspects of the entrada. The north wing was called the "Archaeology Hall" and was devoted to the artifacts from the excavations of Kuaua and Puaray.

The museum and its exhibits thus provided the visitor with a snapshot in time. Hewett (1940:178) wrote, "We are endeavoring to restore, at Coronado State Monument, a picture of native life in the Rio Grande Valley as it existed in Coronado's time and to interpret in the light of what we are learning from the study of the sciences of man." Coronado State Monument thus became a "type-site"—one site standing for all other Rio Grande villages of the same time period—an idea pioneered by Jesse Walter Fewkes many years earlier at Mesa Verde.

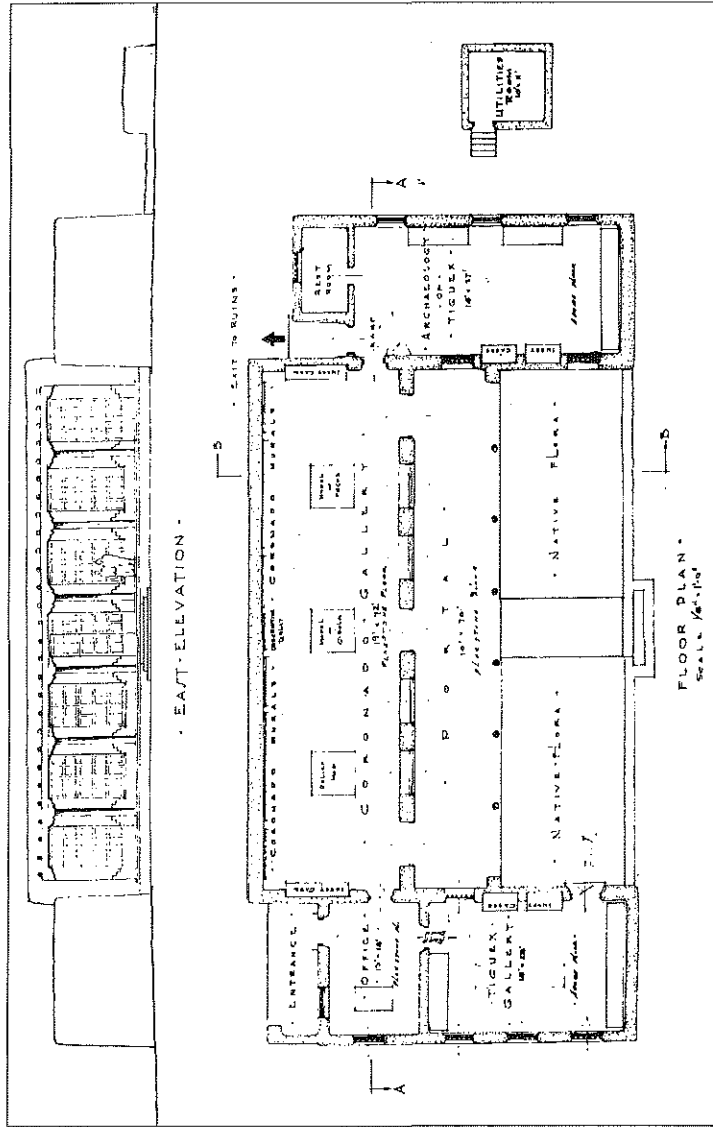


Figure 4.4 Design for the museum at Coronado State Monument by John Gaw Meem with locations of exhibits. (Courtesy of the John Gaw Meem Drawings Collection, John Gaw Meem Archives, Center for Southwest Research, University of New Mexico.)

Hewett also used the museum to highlight the distinctiveness of New Mexico's cultural heritage. He wrote that "the Coronado museum at Kuaua, therefore, illustrates one of the most significant episodes in the history of New Mexico, namely, the coming together, at or near this spot, of the three elements destined to shape the future of the state—the Indian, the Conquistador, and the Church" (Hewett 1940:180). Hewett was long committed to representing this unique and still visible confluence of cultural traditions in New Mexico as evidenced by his earlier invention of the Santa Fe Fiesta, which physically reenacted the reconquest of New Mexico by the Spanish crown after the Pueblo Revolt of 1680.

AUTHENTICITY

Authenticity is perhaps the most significant, but elusive and debated, quality to be associated with cultural works and their interpretation. In common parlance, the word *authentic* means having an undisputed origin, worthy of trust, reliance, or belief. It comes from the Greek *authentēs*, meaning author, and in its earliest uses its connotations were original, genuine, or firsthand as opposed to copied, counterfeit, or imaginary. The concept of authenticity is a cultural construct of the modern Western world, which, from Rousseau to Trilling, has ultimately had to do with the definition of our true self, our individual existence. Authentic objects, buildings, and sites are those original to their creators or possessors; they are unique to their time and place. As cultural property, they therefore stand for the people who made and used them. And in their collection, display, and interpretation, we appropriate their authenticity into our personal experience.

Hewett's grand vision was to transform Kuaua into an outdoor exhibit by means of an authentic restoration. Although generally rare as a practice at sites in the American Southwest, other contemporaneous examples of full reconstruction can be found at Tuzigoot, Kinishba, and the Great Kiva at Aztec. This combination of excavated site, restored buildings, and a site museum began to appear during the 1930s as part of a national trend toward interpreting historic sites for the American public. Hewett's ambitious attempt stands out because of its application to a large-scale, earthen site. It can only be compared to Fewkes's earlier and more modest efforts to excavate and interpret Casa Grande to the public in 1906–1907.

Hewett's main motivation was to restore the village so that the public would have an intimate experience of Pueblo life at the time of Spanish contact. He instructed his restoration team to follow the excavation team and build up stabilized adobe brick walls on the remains of the original puddle adobe walls. The project was pressed for time and it seems that, in some cases, excavation took a back seat to restoration. In 1938, Hewett

reevaluated the project and determined that it was going much slower than planned and was running over budget. Accordingly, he decided not to restore Kuaua to its full architectural form, but rather to build up wall foundations to give the site the “look and feel” of a ruin. He justified this strategy on the grounds of authenticity, writing, “The adobe walls as they were disclosed by the excavations, have been rebuilt from a few inches to several feet in height, so that, without any misleading or doubtful restoration, the original plan may be understood” (Hewett 1940:178).

In fact, Hewett’s reconstruction did considerably more than mark out the original pueblo plan. It created a false aesthetic of age. Hewett deliberately gave the reconstructed wall foundations a weathered appearance as though they themselves had undergone the natural processes of decay. He did this by raising up the corners of the walls in a stepped fashion and by using crude plasterwork on their surfaces. Wesley Hurt (1938), the site supervisor, wrote, “We tried to give this (the north) wall more of a ruined appearance by plastering the wall in a rougher manner than before and by raising the corners considerably higher than the other portions” and “we are having the (east) walls built lower than the other walls at Dr. Hewett’s suggestion.” This reconstruction also required reworking some of the already completed walls. Dorothy Luhrs (1938), a project archaeologist, wrote that “the entire south wall has been altered during the past week to give the effects of extreme weathering. The southwest corner has been raised 10 feet; the lowest height from the ground is approximately three feet. The outline of the wall is varied by a series of square block, V-cuts, and broken line wall edges.” When this was not enough, Hewett had water hosed onto the walls to instantly give them a weathered appearance. The desirability for discerning original fabric and the preference for an aged aesthetic was clearly on Hewett’s mind during these years as suggested in his published guidelines for ruins preservation that appeared with his monograph on Chaco Canyon.

Hewett, however, was committed to restoring fully one major architectural feature: Kiva 3 with the famous kiva murals. The kiva was 17 ft. square with a floor 10 ft. below the ground surface (Sinclair 1951:213). The north, west, and south walls were relatively well preserved while the east wall was largely destroyed. Due to moisture conditions, the mural was immediately treated with shellac and celluloid as a stabilizer (Dutton 1963). Wesley Bliss supervised the removal project. The murals were first protected with paper facings upon which strips of plaster of paris and burlap were affixed and reinforced by lath. The interior jacket was made in removable sections that interlocked by means of special joints that could be sawn in two without injuring the murals. The entire unit was strengthened and made rigid by a timber framework. These were then removed using a block and tackle and taken to the University of New Mexico for documentation and analysis.

The kiva walls were found to contain 85 thin layers of plaster, of which 17 were decorated with paint. The layers were all removed one by one and then mounted on wallboard. There were 364 individual figures representing aspects of Pueblo religion including “masked katchinas, flowing springs, cloud symbols and rain, the river, seed and corn, life on earth and afterlife, [and] the animals prized by the hunters” (Sinclair 1951:214). Hewett (1940:179) termed them the “finest examples of aboriginal fresco [*sic*] decorations that have been found in America” and published them several times over the course of the project in the pages of *El Palacio*.

Albert Ely of the University of New Mexico supervised the restoration of the painted kiva. The walls were rebuilt in concrete to above ground level and then roofed with vigas. An entrance hatchway was provided along with a ladder. The firepit, ventilator, and deflector complex were all restored in their original locations as identified by the archaeologists. A niche was built in the west wall where a slat altar may have been placed. Indian artists then painted one full-scale set of color reproductions on its walls (Figure 4.5). According to Sinclair (1951:214), “The whole restoration shows the kiva as it was when in use.”

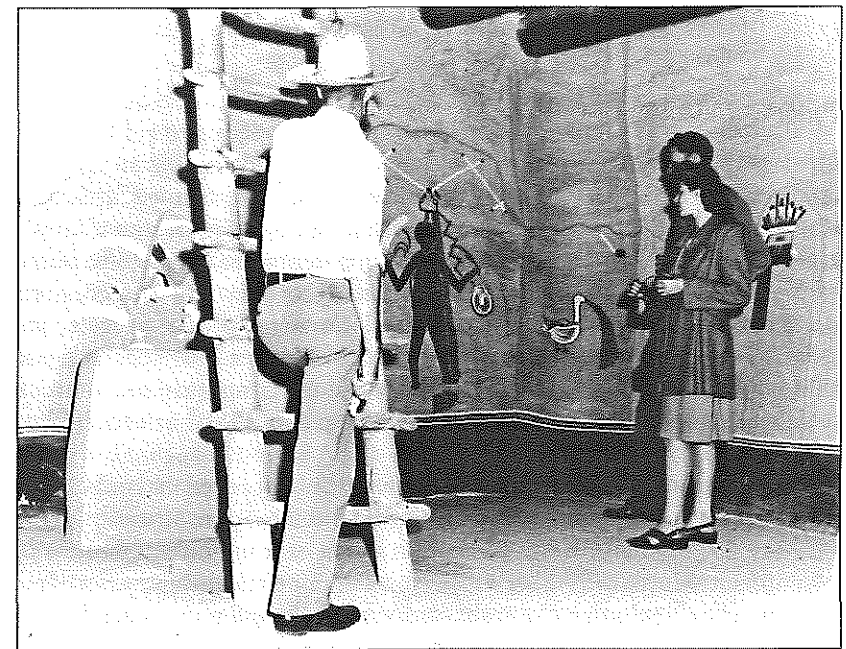


Figure 4.5 Restoration of Kiva 3 with a copy of one of the original mural sequences. (Courtesy of the Palace of the Governors, MNM/DCA, Photo Archives, Neg. 57807.)

Not everyone found the project to be successful, and elements of a counterdiscourse were present almost from the outset. For example, Erik Reed (1940:x), a leading archaeologist, regarded the museum building to be “splendid,” but the exhibits to be “mediocre.” He singled out for praise the restoration of the painted kiva where the roof, altar, and murals had been carefully restored. However, he criticized the reconstruction work of the pueblo village, saying that the “rebuilding of walls is generally regrettable, and the placing of the museum and the custodian’s residence in the midst of the ruins is unfortunate” (Reed 1940:12). In fact, Reed considered the site so problematic that he advised the Park Service against acquiring it on the grounds of its lack of authenticity. He wrote, “The extensive rebuilding and development of Kuaua makes it more interesting than [Puaray] to the casual visitor, but because of the nature and quality of the rebuilding and development, less so to the National Park Service. True and proper rehabilitation of Kuaua would entail removal of a vast quantity of adobe brick walls, even if complete restoration of a portion of the site were attempted” (Reed 1940:12). Moreover, because so little of the site remained unexcavated, he was skeptical that it held any additional research potential. He offered the damning statement, “Very little, in short, can be done about Kuaua” (Reed 1940:12).

PERFORMANCE

One of the ways in which places and events become instantiated in cultural consciousness is when they are publicly performed in historical dramas and pageants. Such performances have more than simply entertainment value, in that they have the potential to trigger emotional responses among participants and audiences. They are the contexts par excellence where existing power relations are alternatively established, celebrated, mocked, and subverted. Theater and spectacle are thus metadiscursive commentaries about the contemporary social order, which selectively highlight certain aspects of the past that are deemed foundational or original.

The Coronado Cuarto Centennial celebration incorporated public performances as well as museum exhibits. The celebration officially began on May 29, 1940, with the dedication of the still unfinished Coronado Monument Museum (Figure 4.6). Numerous political dignitaries were in attendance, including the ambassador of Spain and governmental officials from Mexico. A series of laudatory speeches were given. Only a handful of Pueblo people were present, and several respectfully expressed their disapproval of the celebration. Governor Agapito Abeyta of Isleta

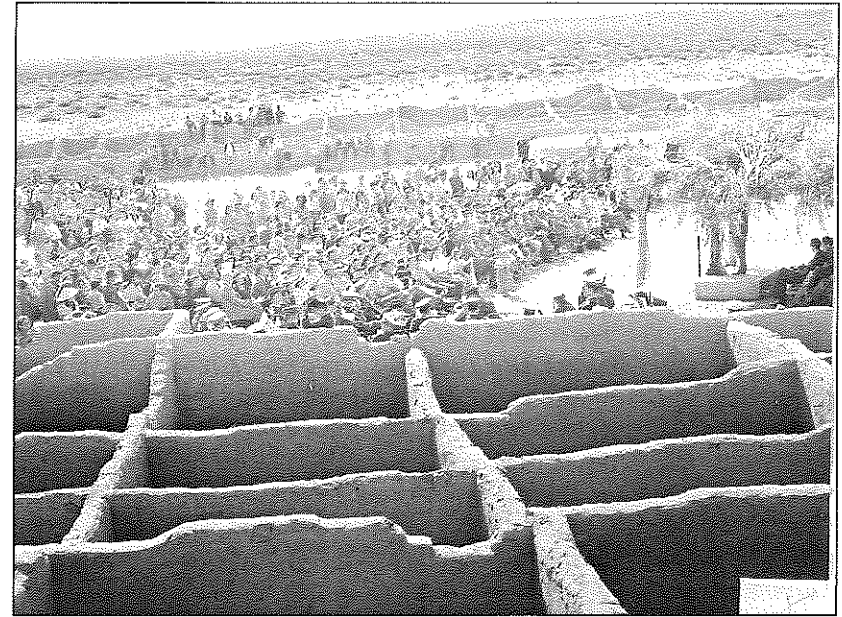


Figure 4.6 Opening of the Coronado State Monument in 1940. (Courtesy of the Palace of the Governors, MNM/DCA, Photo Archives, Neg. 57813.)

Pueblo, for example, criticized the honoring of Coronado who was so brutal in his treatment of Indian peoples (Lambert 1985).

The evening of the dedication marked the premier of the Coronado pageant, performed at the University of New Mexico stadium. This pageant, written by Thomas Wood Stevens (1946), was an elaborate reenactment of the Coronado entrada by a cast of more than 20,000 players on a 300 ft. portable stage (Montgomery 2002:220). There were 18 acts, each of which depicted a different location on Coronado’s journey. Stevens had previous experience in organizing historical outdoor spectacles at Fort Niagara, New York, and Yorktown, Virginia. The pageant was scheduled for 50 performances at twelve locations in New Mexico, three in Texas, and two in Arizona. Other events scheduled as part of the celebration included folk festivals, rodeos, frontier days, old trail days, local fiestas, county or local fairs, and pageantry of cavalcades (Sherman 1940:13).

Not surprisingly, the Coronado pageant portrayed the Coronado entrada in a heroic light. It ignored the plunder of Tiguex Pueblo and the rape of the Indian women. Instead, it characterized the entrada as “one of the great adventurous exploits of history,” which paved the way for “other conquerors and colonizers; brave men and women who spread

the Spanish folk, their faith and their language so widely and rooted them so deeply that they modify the life of the entire Southwest even today" (Ferguson 1940:67–68). Despite his sympathy for Indian peoples, Hewett also advocated the thesis of the inexorable spread of civilization. He wrote, "he [Coronado] opened up to permanent European civilization, both Hispanic and Anglo, the land of the Pueblo Indians of the upper Rio Grande Valley, a land theretofore unknown to the outer world, but rich in cultural life reaching back into immemorial time" (Hewett 1940:177).

Unfortunately for the organizers, neither the pageant nor the folk festivals drew the expected crowds (Montgomery 2002:221). The Coronado commission attributed this to the turbulent national and international conditions of 1940. However, Montgomery (2002:221) has suggested that a more likely reason was the indifference of the Anglo community, which had little interest in celebrating the Spanish roots of New Mexico. This reaction had an immediate effect on the finances of the Coronado State Monument museum. On June 1, 1940, Fischer was informed that no further funds would be made available.

CONCLUSIONS

Edgar Lee Hewett established the New Mexico historic preservation movement with the twin goals of furthering scientific knowledge and establishing New Mexico as a historically and culturally distinctive state. He viewed the archaeological record as a "vast treasury of information" and held that every site "is an object that can contribute something to the advancement of knowledge" (Hewett 1904a:722, 1904b:4). Central to his strategy for creating a distinctive New Mexican identity was the construction of a compelling narrative that showcased "the Indian, the Conquistador, and the Church" as "the three elements destined to shape the future of the state" (Hewett 1940:180). Accordingly, he restored the Palace of the Governors and excavated, repaired, and stabilized Spanish Missions and Pueblo Indian villages (Hewett and Fischer 1944; Hewett and Mauzy 1947).

Kuaua Pueblo is a particularly informative case study. Hewett initially planned to restore the village in its entirety to provide an "authentic" visitor experience for the Coronado Cuarto Celebration in 1940. However, he quickly scaled back his plan in the face of cost overruns and chose to rebuild the village as a ruin. In making this decision, he exploited the popular Romanticist aesthetic associated with ruins. Because his excavations failed to identify evidence for Spanish contact, he decided to treat Kuaua as a type-site for the kind of village that the Spaniards encountered

during their *entradas*. But in doing this, Hewett deemphasized Kuaua's own specific history and its relationships to contemporary descendant communities. The story of Kuaua is thus a powerful reminder of how place is constructed through the selective presentation of history to justify the cultural and political hegemonies of the emerging Anglo culture of New Mexico.

Kuaua is thus a heterotopia, a place where New Mexico's history is simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. It redounds in ironies. For example, Coronado State Monument stands today as Coronado's principle legacy memorialized in architecture. However, there is no archaeological evidence that he ever set foot in the village.² The Pueblo village visible today is, in fact, a pseudoruin, an artificial reconstruction lying on top of an actual Pueblo Indian village. The reconstruction is now over 60 years old and experiencing substantial degradation due to the processes of erosion (Figure 4.7). Decisions need to be made whether to stabilize it or to return it as closely as possible to its original preexcavated condition. It thus affords a remarkable opportunity to investigate the meaning of cultural landscapes in all their complexity as both transmitters and receivers of memory and cultural identities. As a place of memory, Kuaua endures, serving to connect the present to various pasts, both "authentic" and contrived. As a place of cultural and historical significance, it continues to be subject to interpretations by various stakeholders, expressed through ongoing interventions.



Figure 4.7 Wall erosion at Kuaua, 1997. (Photograph by Frank Matero.)

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NOTES

1. In 2005, San Juan Pueblo officially changed its name back to Ohkay Oweenge.
2. Vierra (1989) has suggested that Coronado established his camp at Santiago Pueblo.

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