

# Potters and Traders: Preserving Tewa Pottery Traditions in a World with Railroads and Markets (1870 to 1920)

New and distinct combination of traits noted for native pottery recovered from Late Territorial period sites in downtown Santa Fe indicate the growing influences of American traders and consumers on vessels produced by Tewa Pueblo potters. The establishment of a railroad system in the New Mexico territory during the late 19th century had major impacts on the production and distribution of Pueblo pottery. This resulted in the widespread availability of affordable ceramics and other industrially manufactured containers to most households as the barter system through which most pottery was earlier distributed was replaced by cash-based markets often mediated through merchants or curio traders. As Pueblo pottery became less needed for domestic purposes, the very long tradition of Pueblo pottery making was largely able to survive as the result of a new market for Indian pottery created by the mass arrival of new American consumers carried by the railroad. Recent archeological projects by the Office of Archaeological Studies, that have resulted in the analysis of a wide range of Pueblo pottery forms from late 19th and early 20th century Anglo and Hispanic sites in Santa Fe, may provide new insights concerning the nature of the shift away from Pueblo pottery produced for daily use for both Hispanic and Pueblo households and to forms geared to the tastes of the arriving masses of American tourists and collectors. The eventual syntheses of distinct but complimentary studies of both earlier collected vessels and archaeological data will provide new opportunities to understand the nature of this important transition.

## Fort Marcy: Power, Pots, and Privies

Fort Marcy served as the administrative Center for a half dozen frontier forts from 1846 to 1896. Excavations of privies and discard pits in downtown Santa Fe indicate consumption patterns associated with a well supplied garrison. Native pottery is present but occurs in much lower frequency than in earlier contexts. New and distinct traits reflect the initial impact of American tastes on Pueblo pottery.



Excavated privy at Fort Marcy. All vessels illustrated directly below were recovered from a single privy.



Powhoge Polychrome jar. Similar jar forms, long produced at Tewa villages, were widely collected.



Tesuque Polychrome flowerpot. Production of this form was extremely short and limited.



Effigy probably made at Tesuque Pueblo reflects one of several distinct forms produced at the suggestion of Santa Fe curio traders.



Tewa Black miniature pitcher

## New Forms for New Markets: Art and Knickknacks

The diverse range of new forms and styles noted in vessels that began to be produced in different Tewa Pueblo villages during the late 19th century indicate a series of creative responses to the cash-based American markets. These include the production of well-decorated jar forms that may reflect a revival of more traditional and intricate polychrome styles made for more discerning collectors. Other pottery produced during this period reflects the production of new non-traditional "curios" for growing masses of American consumers who desired cheap souvenirs or collectibles.



Skilled artisans from San Ildefonso Pueblo began producing increasingly distinct and well made decorated jars highly prized by collectors that set new standards for Tewa Pueblo pottery.



San Ildefonso Polychrome sherds from the upper deposits of the Palace of the Governors. While this type is commonly described and illustrated in overviews of pottery from collections, it tends to be extremely rare at archaeological contexts in Santa Fe.



"Tesuque rain gods" refer to non-traditional forms that have long been produced exclusively for the curio market.



Small simple forms in Santa Fe contexts reflect cheap "knickknacks", that were commonly purchased by locals and tourists alike, but seem to have been ignored by serious collectors or scholars.

PNM Monitoring (Federal Oval Area)

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## All That Glitters: Poverty and Perseverance

Variability noted for native ceramics and other artifact types from late 19th century contexts attests to both the profound prosperity and inequity of the Gilded Age as manifested in the American Southwest Frontier. While almost all contexts are dominated by industrial goods brought by the railroad, such goods tend to be rarer at poor Hispanic households with little access to cash. Simple native utility ware vessels, similar to those acquired and consumed on a much larger scale during the preceding period, tend to be more common in Hispanic contexts. These may reflect vessels obtained directly through barter with Pueblo potters as well as from surrounding Hispanic communities who adopted pottery making from the Pueblo. This may have provided a means of survival and a source of goods to some Hispanic families that became increasingly disenfranchised and cut-off from the American market that began to completely dominate the regional economy.

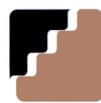


Capital Parking Project Judicial Complex Project  
Micaceous and Polished Black Utility Ware from late 19th century Hispanic contexts. It is often difficult to determine the affiliation of the potters who produced such vessels.



### Micaceous ashtrays?

Unpainted utility ware technologies, that earlier formed the basis for cooking and serving vessels, were applied to forms tailored for American consumers.



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