Fort Marcy: Power, Pots, and Privies

Fort Marcy served as the administrative Center for a half dozen frontier forts from 1846 to 1886. 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.

Varied forms produced at Tewa villages, were widely collected.

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.

PNM Monitoring (Federal Oval Area)

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.

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 disfranchised and cut-off from the American market that began to completely dominate the regional economy.