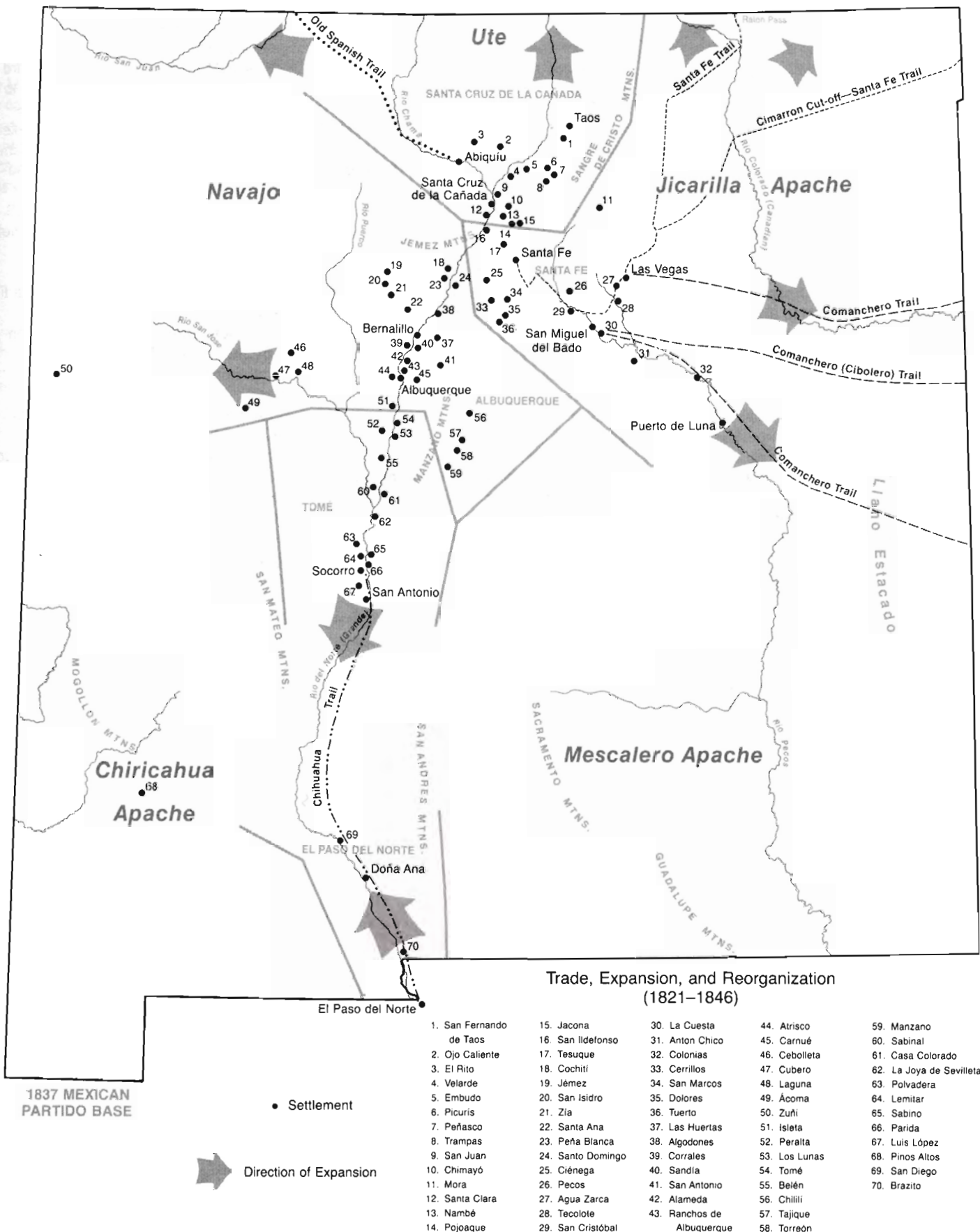


# Trade and Expansion, 1821–1846



From *New Mexico in Maps*, 2d ed, edited by Jerry L. Williams, 1986.  
For educational purposes only. Used with permission of the University of New Mexico Press.

## Trade and Expansion, 1821–1846

With Mexico gaining independence from Spain in 1821, new political and economic policies in New Mexico provided the basis for dramatic changes in trade, land use, and relations with Native Americans in the province. In the same year, the Spanish policy of excluding foreign traders from New Mexico was reversed by the Mexican administration and the first wagons loaded with American-made goods arrived in Santa Fe, marking the “opening” of the Santa Fe Trail. Over the next few years many more caravans traversed this mountain route, from western Missouri towns, across Kansas and along the Arkansas River, through eastern Colorado and south across the Raton Pass, and along the southeast slope of the Sangre de Cristo Range to Santa Fe. A shorter but more hazardous branch of the Santa Fe Trail bypassed the Raton Pass and became known as the Cimarron Cutoff. Not only did these cheaper American goods break the monopoly of Chihuahua merchants over the New Mexico trade, but they also reversed the flow of goods from the province to Chihuahua. Thus, the old Camino Real or Chihuahua Trail became an extension of the Santa Fe Trail into the old northern mining area of Mexico.

Coincidental with the opening of New Mexico to foreign trade and traders was an increased interest in fur trade along the westward advancing Anglo frontier. As word of the new fur area was carried back out from Santa Fe and spread eastward, the number of Anglo and French trapping parties entering New Mexico via Taos and Santa Fe sharply increased. Some merchants who brought goods over the Santa Fe Trail in the spring and early summer stayed and trapped in the area until the winter. Other

traders returned to the States in late summer or fall with wagonloads of furs. By the early 1830s the depletion of beaver populations and the collapse of the beaver fur market ended this phenomenon. New Mexico merchant Antonio Armijo opened the Spanish Trail to California in 1829. He and other merchants moved sheep, woolen items, and other products over this route to Spanish markets on the west coast during the 1830s and early 1840s.

In 1821 the Pueblo population in New Mexico totaled 9,034 and lived in 20 villages. As there was less interference now from government authorities, the Pueblos conducted open performances of religious ceremonies which they had continued secretly in postrevolt colonial New Mexico. During this period there was encroachment by non-Indians onto Pueblo grant lands, and litigation battles over land and water rights became

common. Some disputes were intense, such as the one between Laguna Pueblo and Spanish ranchers over the east drainage of the Río Puerco.

Political elitism and bureaucracy caused poorer Spaniards and Pueblos to join forces to combat social injustices perpetrated by Governor Albino Pérez and other government officials. In 1837 and early 1838, armed engagements occurred between New Mexico militia and Hispano villages combined with some Keres and Tewa pueblos. Troops from the Río Abajo, led by *rico* Manuel Armijo, defeated the insurgents in a skirmish near Santa Cruz. Subsequently, Armijo was confirmed as the new civil and military governor of New Mexico.

Armijo issued a number of large land grants totaling over 5 million acres during the late 1830s and early 1840s. Many community grants were added during the period, as the Spanish population

Political Subdivisions: Mexican Territory, 1837

District I		District II	
Partido A:	Santa Cruz de la Cañada	Partido C:	Albuquerque
<i>alcaldías:</i>	Abiquiú	<i>alcaldías:</i>	Cochiti
	Ojo Caliente		Jemez
	Taos		Sandia
			Laguna
			Isleta
Partido B:	Santa Fe	Partido D:	Tomé
<i>alcaldías:</i>	San Miguel del Bado	<i>alcaldías:</i>	Valencia
	San Ildefonso		Belen
			Sabinal
			Socorro
		Partido E:	El Paso del Norte
			(annexed to Chihuahua State in 1824)
		<i>alcaldías:</i>	Isleta del Sur
			San Lorenzo del Real

Census Data, 1837

Total population (excluding Indians)	43,433
Leading settlements:	
	Santa Cruz de la Cañada 6,508
	Santa Fe 5,759
	Taos 3,606
	Abiquiú 3,557
	San Juan 2,915
	San Miguel del Bado 2,893
	Albuquerque 2,547
	Tomé 2,043