1994

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Olivia Arrieta

UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87131

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By
Olivia Arrieta, Ph.D.
University of Colorado, Boulder

Southwest Hispanic Research Institute

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A Seminar Paper Presented At:

Summer 1994 Seminar
"Hispanic Expressive Culture and Contemporary Public Discourse"

Hosted By:
Southwest Hispanic Research Institute
The University of New Mexico
1829 Sigma Chi Rd., NE
Albuquerque, NM 87131-1036

(505)277-2965

Funded by a grant from:
Humanities Fellowship Program
Division for the Arts & Humanities
The Rockefeller Foundation

The Alianza Hispano Americana, 1894-1965: An Analysis of Organizational Development and Maintenance

c Olivia Arrieta

Introduction

The Alianza Hispano Americana was the first national organization for people of Mexican descent in the United States. The purpose, structure, and maintenance of this organization are examined in terms of significant historical developments and the analysis of the inception and maintenance of the Alianza is informed respectively by a conceptual frameworks presented by Morris (1984) and Tirado (1970).

The Alianza originated in Tucson, Arizona, as a local mutual aid society in 1894, became a fraternal insurance society in 1896 and continued as such until 1965. At its peak in 1939 it had expanded to 300 lodges with more than 17,000 largely Mexicano members in the United States and Mexico. The Alianza Hispano Americana was started by elite members of the Mexicano[1] community in order to maintain their leadership role in that community, and to secure a place for themselves in the new political-economic structure imposed on all Mexicanos by the arriving wave of Anglo Americans. The Alianza continued to maintain a centralized, hierarchical structure which at the locus of control appeared to include a middle-class leadership oriented towards the philosophy of individual progress and later, more openly, towards the accretion of political influence.

Mutual-aid societies were widespread in the nineteenth

century in the United States among different ethnic groups, and were particularly popular among Mexicanos in the Southwest (See Rivera 1984). The major stated function of these organizations was to provide in some form, grass-roots, cooperative economic security for their members, and most provided burial insurance. Fraternal insurance societies, which served the same basic economic function, have also existed in this country since the nineteenth century. However, they have had the more over-arching purpose of uniting its membership under a common philosophy in addition to a more sophisticated organization, a number of affiliated lodges, and special rituals. At the turn of the century, fraternal insurance societies were more likely than mutual aid societies to be officially registered as non-profit organizations and as such were directly under the purview of governmental rules and regulations.

The impetus for the emergence of self-help voluntary organizations probably came from increasing urbanization and the accompanying social and economic pressures affecting migrants to cities, particularly at the turn of the century. Mutual aid societies, or sociedades mutualistas occurred in great numbers among the Mexicano population of the Southwest at the turn of the century and undoubtedly played a major role in the social and economic adaptations of this ethnic group to industrialization in general and to American society specifically. Prevailing notions about the emergence of voluntary associations suggest that they are organized by immigrants to cities (CITATIONS). However, in

many cases, sociedades were not organized in urban centers or by immigrants. This is particularly true in the case of New Mexico, where stable Mexicano rural communities predated the occurrence of this type of organization by one to three centuries. Thus, existing explanatory frameworks are not useful in accounting for the emergence of the Alianza and its lodges in rural areas of the Southwest and organized by non-immigrants. Furthermore, an analysis of the Alianza requires considerations of ethnicity, a context of political-economic domination of the ethnic group, and adaptations of ethnic group members to domination.

Theories of social movements and collective action provide another perspective for analyzing the development of the Alianza, particulary in its initial phase. Morris (1984) has presented the main points of three major theories including classical collective behavior theory, Weber's theory of charismatic movements, and resource mobilization theory. He assesses these theories in light of his findings on the civil rights movement and then presents "the outlines of an indigenous approach to movements of the dominated" (Morris 1984:275).

Key factors common to long-lived organizations identified by Tirado (1970) in a study of Mexican American political organizations will be used to address the question of how the Alianza Hispano Americana was maintained. Tirado attributes organizational maintenance to: multifunctionalism of the organization, inclusion of the entire family, single-issue approaches, decentralized organizational structure, personalistic

and consensual leadership, and effective use of ethnic symbolism (Tirado 1970:53-78).

This discussion begins with a description of the founding principles of the Alianza followed by an overview of the process and structure of the Alianza in its development from 1894 to the mid-1960s. Since the functions of the organization are intrinsically linked to its maintenance, the discussion of these two aspects in the section that follows is couched in terms of the framework presented by Tirado (1970) for the assessment of the durability of Mexican American organizations. I conclude with an analysis of the Alianza using Morris'(1984) interpretive framework for assessing the conditions for the initiation and sustainability of collective action and social movements; and comparing the Alianza analysis with his findings on the African American civil rights movement.

Guiding Principles of the Alianza Hispano Americana

The fundamental principles of the Alianza Hispano Americana were summarized in the motto Proteccion, Moralidad, e Instrucción (Protection, Morality and Instruction). The meaning of each of these principles, described in the Crónicas of the Alianza by Tomás Serrano Cabo (1929), is expressed in the very formal and dramatic style of Spanish common in Mexicano public discourse at the turn of the century. Protección was seen as the primary principle and foundation of the organization, whose significance went beyond insurance benefits to include visits to the sick,

help for the needy, and attendance at members' funerals (Serrano 1929:27).

Fraternalism as an integral aspect of the meaning of Protección in the Alianza expresses the general philosophy of mutualismo and reads in Las Cronicas (Serrano, 1929:28) as follows:

> El hombre fraternalista . . . esta siempre dispuesto a sacrificarse por su projimo. Es el que imparte el bien a los demas, sin detenerse en detalles, ni examinar a las personas, a las que protege o ayuda.
>
> Se debe a todos en general y en particular a los mas necesitados. Y no hay vez que se le llame que no responda, que se le busque y no se le halle y que se le pida y no de lo que pueda.
>
> El fraternalista sufre con los que sufren y llora con los que lloran, alegrandose con los que se alegran.
> . . . . . .
> No es el interes el que guia al fraternalista, ni tiene por finalidad la alabanza propia, ni el prurito de exhibirse ante los demas; tiene por objetivo el bien por el bien mismo.
>
> Translation:
>
> The fraternal man ... is always ready to sacrifice himself for his neighbor. It is he who imparts benefits to others, without hesitating on details, nor assessing those persons whom he protects and assists.
>
> He is beholding to all in general and in particular to the most needy. And there is no time when he is called upon that he does not respond, that one looks for him and he is not found and that a request is put to him and he does not give what he can.
>
> The fraternal person suffers with those who suffer and cries with those who cry, rejoicing with those who rejoice.
> . . . . . .
> It is not self-interest that guides the fraternal person, nor is self glorification his goal, nor the desire to gain the attention of others; he has as his objective right for the sake of right.

An example of the enactment of this principle was the "Alianza Service Car" of Tucson Lodge 100 featured in a 1950 Alianza issue. This car was used to deliver food, clothing and toys to a needy family as that lodge's good deed for Christmas. Another example was the annual award of a Trofeo de Oro [Golden Trophy] for the Logia Ideal [Ideal Lodge], established in 1944 as an incentive for affiliate lodges to become more service oriented. It was first awarded to the Benson, Arizona, lodge; then to lodge 136 of Douglas, Arizona, in 1945 and to lodge 37 of Albuquerque, New Mexico, in 1946 (Alianza March, 1947).

The second major principle was Moralidad, or morality, which was defined in a social sense rather than a religious sense. Although most sociedades, including the Alianza Hispano Americana, expressly forbade the inclusion of religion or religious debate within the organization, one of the requirements for membership was usually a belief in God. Most generally Las Cronicas presents Moralidad as social norms to be followed by worthy members of the community.

The third part of the Alianza motto, Instrucción, or education, was interpreted in the Crónicas in terms of the general value of acquiring knowledge as a means of self-improvement and becoming a good member of society (Serrano 1929:34-37). Tomás Serrano Cabo, the author of the Crónicas, felt that it was the obligation of the Alianza to instruct its members in these ways, in addition to encouraging them to learn the organization's statutes and rituals, and their particular

lodge's rules (1929:35). With special reference to "our people," "our race," he adds that acquisition of basic knowledge on how to live will prepare them for living in a foreign land (i.e. the United States), and to become better citizens (Serrano 1929:35). The activities of the lodge in Metcalf, Arizona, a copper mining town, give a good indication of how the principle of Instruction was put into effect. In the early 1900s, this Alianza lodge sponsored after-school classes in Spanish for Mexican American students who were taught solely in English in the public school. Spanish lessons were taught by two teachers who were members of the Alianza, and who, at one point in about 1918, coordinated with the public school teacher the presentation of an Alianza play promoting the three aspects of its motto (Arrieta 1988).

The Alianza also promoted Spanish-English bilingualism nationally. An article in a 1943 edition of the magazine Alianza announces an English-Spanish language survey to be conducted by the Alianza among the membership of the Southwest. The purpose of this survey is stated as follows:

> The object of the survey is to determine as nearly as possible the educational needs of this great area; to crystallize our bi-lingual policy in order to stress the need for the increased teaching of Spanish in all public schools. We believe the teaching of English alone is not sufficient to answer the living problems in this area. In the light of present and future world developments and the growth of the Pan-American idea, we believe formal education must realize the necessity of teaching Spanish in the early school years. (Alianza January, 1943:12)

In sum, it is apparent that the Alianza Hispano Americana was organized with the express purpose of providing for Mexicanos

in the United States an institutionalized means, not available to them in Anglo society, of assuring some stabilized economic base for social mobility while maintaining cultural identity. The unstated purpose of the organization has been characterized, at least for the initial period, as being a means of maintaining the political power of the Mexicano/Hispano elite within the Anglo dominated system in Tucson (Officer, 1964; Briegel 1974). Although through this preliminary overview, we do not pretend to provide definitive answers to the question of the unstated purpose of the Alianza, particularly with regard to subsequent political efforts, the material does suggest some leads to follow in future research. For example, there are indications that the degree to which Alianza efforts were aimed at benefiting the membership and ethnic group standing or the leadership, varied at different points in time and under different administrations.

Process of Organization

In Tucson, the creation of the Alianza was initiated by a group of Mexicanos and Spaniards with a substantial political and economic base, mainly operating in the freighting business. With the coming of the railroad in 1880 and the accompanying surge of Anglo settlers, entrepreneurs and investors, the socioeconomic and political status of the Tucson Hispano elite began to be eroded. Underlying the material pressures were Anglo attitudes of social superiority current at that time in the form of "American nativism." These attitudes coalesced in the

organization of a branch of the American Protective Association in Tucson in 1894, and the Alianza was organized shortly thereafter that same year, apparently as a counter-measure.

However, the Alianza Hispano Americana was not the first sociedad mutualista among Mexicanos in Arizona. In 1875, there were two already in existence in Tucson: the organization known in English as the "Mexican Society for Mutual Benefit," and the Club Unión (Sheridan 1986:108-109). For the period of 1886-1893, the following sociedades mutualistas have been identified in other Arizona communities:

Date	Organization	Community
1886	Sociedad Hispano Americana de Beneficiencia	Florence
1888	Sociedad de Beneficia Mutua de la Raza Latina	Phoenix
1889	Sociedad Hidalgo	Solomonville
1893	Sociedad de Proteccion Mutua	St. Johns

The seeds of mutualismo had been germinating in Tucson for almost twenty years before the establishment of the Alianza. Carlos Velasco, who was the principal founder of the Alianza Hispano Americana, had ties with these organizations, being an honorary member of the sociedades in Solomonville and Clifton, and honorary president of the one in St. Johns (Sheridan 1986:109). These contacts no doubt provided him with the experience and knowledge for launching the Alianza.

Also, it may not be a total coincidence that the first affiliated lodges of the Alianza were established in two of these

communities. In 1895 the first affiliated lodge was established in Florence, Arizona (Alianza ledger 1894-1900: 301), and the second in 1896 in Clifton, Arizona (Alianza ledger 1894-1900:341). By 1902, Alianza lodges had been established in twenty-five other communities ranging as far north as Flagstaff, as far east as Morenci, and as far west as Hedges (Tumco), California (Serrano 1929:64-65; Alianza ledger 1894-1900:387). In New Mexico, the earliest lodges were established in 1904 in the mining towns of Silver City and Hillsboro near the southeastern Arizona border, and by 1913, twenty-one Alianza lodges had been established. Table 1 lists the Alianza lodges in Arizona and New Mexico that had been established by the early 1900s.

Table 1
Alianza Hispano Americana Lodges in Arizona and New Mexico

Arizona - 1902		New Mexico - 1913
Tucson	Clarkdale	Silver City
Florence	Prescott	Hillsboro
Clifton	Douglas	Los Lunas
Tempe	Winslow	Belen
Nogales	Mesa	Santa Rita
Phoenix	Hayden	San Marcial
Yuma	Glendale	Montecello
Metcalf		Socorro
Morenci		Albuquerque
Jerome		San Juan
Benson		Mogollon
Pirtlesville		Alamogordo
Sonora		Tularosa
Williams		Magdalena
Superior		Peña Blanca
Solomonsville		Kelly
Tolleson		Frisco
Litchfield Park		Velarde
Miami		Lincoln
Flagstaff		Elefant
Porterville		Hurley

By 1942, 35 lodges had been started in Arizona and 45 lodges in New Mexico (See Figure 1. Map). In Arizona, early lodge organization correlates with the existence of mining enterprises or other sociedades mutualistas. In New Mexico, the greatest concentration of early Alianza lodges occurred in communities in the southwestern mining section of the state, with almost none occurring in the northern part of the state where Mexicanos maintained a rural farming lifestyle. Most Alianza lodges in New Mexico appear to have coincided with railroad stations or other non-farming local economies. This supports the notion that the socioeconomic forces conducive to establishing sociedades mutualistas follow upon industrialization of the Southwest, and not necessarily as a result of urbanization. The concept of organization based on the concept of mutualismo or mutual aid had existed in New Mexico for centuries preceding the nineteenth century form of Mexican sociedades mutualistas, thus providing a ready social terrain for this new form.[2]

Classic nineteenth-century burial and illness mutual aid organizations similar to the Alianza have not been identified much earlier than the 1890s in the areas of New Mexico where Alianza lodges were later established. The Asociación de Mutua Protección y Mutuo Beneficio, which was incorporated in 1885 for Cerro de Guadalupe in northern New Mexico, (Sanchez 1979:25) appears to have functioned principally as an acequia and land rights organization rather than as a mutual aid society like the Alianza. The Orden de Protección Mutua (La Voz del Pueblo,

1892), and the Sociedad Nuevo Mexicana de Mutua Protección have been identified as sociedades mutualistas in the organizational tradition of the Alianza. The first was organized in Alamagordo, New Mexico, in 1891, the second in Albuquerque in 1896.

The arrival of the railroad in New Mexico brought with it disruptions of the established system of Mexicano political-economic relationships, just as in Arizona. The railroad into Albuquerque was completed in 1880, the same year it arrived in Tucson. The incursion of Anglos resulted in the construction of a new residential complex adjacent to the original Mexicano settlement of the Plaza de Albuquerque. Anglo economic and political incursion into Albuquerque generally had the same effect on the local Hispano elite as it did in Tucson. In Albuquerque, as in Tucson, one of the earliest sociedades mutualistas was initiated by a member of the Hispano elite. In 1896 Jesus Romero started the Sociedad Nuevo Mexicana de Mutua Protección. The exact date of the first Alianza lodge in Albuquerque has not yet been established, although it was in existence by 1913 (Table 1).

Generally, conditions in New Mexico were propitious for the expansion of the Alianza Hispano Americana. The notion of organizing for mutual aid had existed previously among Nuevo Mexicanos. The earlier forms were oriented towards cooperation within a farming economy. Perhaps the nineteenth century form of the sociedad mutualista was accepted by Nuevo Mexicanos accustomed to the older forms because it offered a modern means

of adapting to changing political and economic conditions. Alianza lodges were established in communities where the membership most likely was part of a mobile population working in the mines and on the railroads, and where the local Nuevo Mexicano business and community leadership was attempting to adapt to competition from Anglo economic enterprise.

Initial organizing efforts for enlisting affiliate lodges were thought to have been directed at the elite in different Mexicano communities (Briegel 1974:48). That this organizing approach was used in mining towns has been questioned due to lack of evidence of elites in these communities (Briegel 1974:48), but another source (Arrieta 1987) indicates that Morenci, Metcalf and Clifton, where early Alianza lodges were organized, did have a diversified Mexicano class structure. It can also be hypothetically suggested that the compelling philosophy and organizing efforts of the Alianza may have led to spontaneous organizational expansion to other communities by word-of-mouth through working-class networks.

Structure of the Alianza Hispano Americana

Like other organizations of its kind, the Alianza Hispano Americana was governed by adopted statutes which defined the roles of members and officials, and delineated procedures for the acceptance and dismissal of members, and the conduct of meetings and elections. At the national level, the tone of the general organization was set by the Supreme President and at national conventions. The membership was otherwise united through the

organization's publication Alianza. General business for the membership was conducted from national headquarters, housed in the organization's building, completed on 1916, on Congress Street in downtown Tucson.

The following chart provides the names of all Supreme Presidents of the Alianza Hispano Americana from 1896 until 1965, the dates of their terms in office, and their place of origin. Clearly, control of the organization was principally maintained within the Arizona-New Mexico region if one takes into consideration the origin of each of the Supreme Presidents.

Table 2

Alianza Hispano Americana Supreme Presidents

Name	Term	Place of Origin
Carlos Velasco	1894 - 1896	Tucson, Arizona
Pedro Pellon	1896 - 1897	Tucson, Arizona
Mariano Samaniego	1897	Tucson, Arizona
Samuel Brown	1897 - 1927	Tempe, Arizona
Antonio Sedillo	1927 - 1933	Socorro, New Mexico
Jesus Siqueiros	1933	Nogales, Sonora
Emilio Apodaca	1933 - 1941	Socorro, Texas
Candelario Sedillo	1941 - 1950	Socorro, New Mexico
Gregorio Garcia	1950 - 1951	St.Johns, Arizona
Arturo Fuentes	1951 - 1954	Glendale, Arizona
Ralph Estrada	1954 - 1962	Tempe, Arizona
Carlos McCormick	1962 - 1963	Santa Barbara, Calif.
J.M. Romero	1963 - 1965	Trinidad, Colorado

Of the thirteen supreme presidents, seven were from Arizona, two were residents of Arizona, and two were from New Mexico. The terms of the Arizona supreme presidents amounted to forty-five years, and the terms of two supreme presidents from New Mexico amounted to fifteen years. The terms of two other presidents who made their life and residence in Arizona totalled nine years. Emilio Apodaca made his career in southeastern Arizona and lived there when he became supreme president. Carlos McCormick, originally from California, made his life in Arizona after marrying the daughter of Arizonan and former Supreme President Ralph Estrada. Therefore, the seventy-one (71) year lifespan of the Alianza Hispano Americana was dominated by sixty-nine (69) years of supreme presidents centered in Arizona and New Mexico.

One of the clearest examples of how a change of presidency affected the general tone and action of the Alianza is a comparison of Candelario Sedillo's administration to those that preceded and followed it. Sedillo instituted programs with assimilative tendencies, whereas the philosophy of the Alianza under previous leaders had been one of biculturalism, promoting the Mexican culture within the organization and leaving the teaching of American culture to the larger societal institutions. Another notable example of a Supreme President's actions was the case of Carlos McCormick, whose indictments on charges of embezzling Alianza funds dealt the final death blow to the organization in 1965. These cases will be discussed in more detail in a later section.

The national conventions of the Alianza Hispano Americana were also key in setting the national trajectory of the organization, where representatives of the hundreds of lodges were present to elect the Supreme officials; discuss major issues of general concern; and make major decisions. The dominance of Arizona in the Alianza is also indicated in the location of Supreme Conventions (See Table 3). We know the location of twenty-three regular and special national conventions. Two conventions were held in the adjoining El Paso-Juarez border cities; two were held in New Mexico; two in Los Angeles, California and one in Trinidad, Colorado. The remaining fifteen (over half) were located in Arizona, eleven of these in Tucson. The last eight conventions were in Tucson which may have reinforced the locus of control there.

Table 3

Alianza Hispano Americana Supreme Conventions

Conventions	Year	Location	President
1st	1897	Tucson,AZ	Mariano Samaniego
2nd-3rd	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
4th	1902	Tucson,AZ	Samuel Brown
5th	1905	Phoenix,AZ	" "
6th	1907	Florence,AZ	" "
7th	1910	El Paso, TX	" "
8th	1913	Nogales, AZ	" "
9th	1915	Albuquerque,NM	" "
10th	1918	Los Angeles,CA	" "
11th	1921	Tucson, AZ	" "
12th	1927	Los Angeles,CA	Antonio Sedillo
13th	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
14th	1933	Nogales, AZ	Jesus Siqueiros
15th	1937	Santa Fe, NM	Emilio Apodaca
16th	1941	Trinidad, CO	Candelario Sedillo
17th	1944	Tucson, AZ	" "
18th	1949	Tucson, AZ	Gregorio Garcia
19th	1950	Tucson, AZ	" "
Special Convention	1950	Tucson, AZ	None
20th	1954	Tucson, AZ	Rafael Estrada
21st	1958	Tucson, AZ	" "
Special Convention	1961	Tucson, AZ	" "
Special Convention	1963	Tucson, AZ	Carlos McCormick

Although any member could attend, direct participation in the Supreme Conventions was restricted to delegates from each of the lodges, with the number of delegates determined by the size of each lodge's membership. Since national conventions could not bring together the entire Alianza membership, the primary vehicle for unifying the entire general membership was the organization's publication, Alianza, which was disseminated to all members. The magazine reported issues being addressed at the national level, highlighted activities of member lodges, and included writings and visual images that emphasized key cultural symbols. The cover page of Alianza in particular often illustrated the symbolic emphases and development of the Alianza.

Functions and Maintenance of the Organization

In addition to the obvious economic functions of direct burial and illness benefits, sociedades mutualistas served a number of other functions. These varied from community to community, falling into the following general categories: religious, educational, legal, political, cultural and social. Variation in lodge activity, functions and emphases, depended on the different social, political and economic situation of individual lodges and on the size of their membership. For example, the situation of a small lodge in an isolated mining camp differed significantly from that of a lodge in an agricultural camp or from a lodge in an urban neighborhood.

Regardless of functions however, the same general guiding

principle was behind all mutualista activities: mutual support and assistance and the promotion of the unity and integrity of the ethnic community through fraternalism. These organizational principles were carried out in the Alianza at both the level of local lodge and at the national organizational level. Although the total range of variation among local lodges is yet to be determined, a preliminary examination of a sampling of the Alianza magazine issues provides a general understanding of organizational functions. Issues which were examined date from World War II to the early 1960s and the review concentrated on lodges in Tucson, Arizona and Albuquerque, New Mexico.

The question is: How did the various functions of the Alianza Hispano Americana promote or insure its maintenance? To address this question, findings on the Alianza are examined here following a framework developmed by Tirado (1970) in a study of Mexican American political organizations. The discussion that follows on the Alianza is organized according to the five characteristics identified by Tirado (1970: 53-78) as common to enduring Mexican American organizations which are:

1) The organization is multifunctional.

2) The organization involves the entire family.

3) The organization deals with single-area issues.

4) The organization has personalistic, consensual leadership and has a decentralized structure.

5) The organization makes effective use of ethnic symbolism.

Multifunctionalism

The Alianza Hispano Americana cleary fulfilled the first of these requirements, since in the tradition of sociedades mutualistas it went beyond the obvious economic benefits to its members by also providing social, educational and political benefits. Examples of social functions include the sponsoring of baseball teams by the central lodge in Tucson (Alianza, June 1945) and lodge 178 of Albuquerque (Arrieta, 1989). Other social functions are discussed in sections that follow on family-oriented activities, dinners for entertaining political notables, and particularly on the effectiveness of the social dance as central to the solidifying of social links among the membership and wider ethnic community and which in fact can be seen as a significant ethnic symbol.

Inclusion of the Entire Family

The organizing principle of Morality included strong support for the integrity of the family and is expressed in the organization's ritual as follows: [members should] "maintain inviolate the sanctity of our co-members homes, considering their honor and that of their families, as sacred and worthy of respect as our own" (translated from Serrano 1929:33). Alianza activities, particularly at the lodge level, certainly seemed to encourage participation of the entire family. The place of the family, was defined along conservative lines based on middle-class values of either the American or Mexican cultures. An image

of the "Alianza Family" is depicted on the cover of the July 1949 issue of Alianza as the ideal American household. The cover shows parents and two children (daughter and son) sitting in the living room reading Alianza magazine. This cover reflects the middle class American ideal of the family, rather than middle class Mexican culture which probably valued a larger family size and/or the extended family over the nuclear family.

Sociedades mutualistas often were basically adult male organizations, and an extension of membership or participation to adult women and young adults can be interpreted as supporting the notion of "whole family involvement" in the organization. The Alianza defined roles of members other than adult men in terms of both Mexican and American middle-class cultural values in different ways and at different time periods. In the early days, presumably in keeping with the movement in the United States for women's suffrage, in 1913 women were accorded full membership rights in the Alianza (Serrano 1929:87). Women were to "enjoy all the privileges enjoyed by men" (translated from Serrano 1929:87). However, in comparison to the strong opposition of AngloAmerican males around the same time to inclusion of women in their fraternal organizations (CITATION), the Alianza mens' early support for admitting women as equal members stands in strong contrast and suggests a cultural difference. However, by the 1940s and into the 1960s women had not figured significantly in the official business of the Alianza. They participated principally through ladies' auxiliaries in fund-raising and

charitable activities, a development possibly in keeping with the form that AngloAmerican women's participation in fraternal organizations had taken.

During the 1940s-60s period, participation of young people was also through separate, affiliated clubs, particularly with the central lodge in Tucson, Arizona. Youngsters ranging from ages 12 to 15 could join the Club Juvenil, organized in 1954 to combat juvenile delinquency. A Departamento Juvenil was started in 1924 for youngsters ranging from ages 2 to 16, allowing for lodges, benefits, rituals and activities paralleling the adult lodges (Serrano 1929:352-355). However, no further information is available on the "Legiones Juveniles" after 1931, when the membership had risen to 1500. (Briegel 1974:88)

Young women had separate organizational activities through Alianza affiliates such as the Club Orquidea, organized in 1954 as lodge 110; Club Mavis, organized in 1949 as lodge 126; Club Azalea; Club Cienna, lodge 38; and Club Santa Cecilia. All of these were depicted in the magazine as social clubs which organized dances. Otherwise, the clubs helped the Alianza in charitable and fund raising activities (Officer 1964:248), thus paralleling the older women's activities. The most notable presence of young women was in competitions for reina (queen) of the Alianza, of Alianza dance events, or of various Alianza lodges, a role more in keeping with Mexican customs.

Young men were more directly involved in the political activities of the older Alianza men. For example, a group of

young men belonging to the Alianza affiliate, Club Monte Carlo, organized in 1954, are pictured at the Tucson airport receiving Congressman Joe Montoya of New Mexico in the name of the Alianza (Alianza, February 1960).

Single Issue Approach

With reference to the third factor cited by Tirado, the Alianza Hispano Americana did tend to be issue-oriented rather than developing a long-term structure and process of collective action. The question of whether the Alianza was a vehicle for collective action has been previously raised. The Alianza has been credited with fomenting the 1903 strike in the copper mines of the Morenci-Clifton area (Hernandez 1985: 13, 38-42), although the evidence to support this contention is not substantial. The involvement of the Alianza in direct support of labor organizing has been questioned elsewhere (Sheridan 1986:112-113) and in fact, at the 1918 national convention, where the question was raised by the lodges from the mining camps of Metcalf and Morenci, Arizona, the Alianza disavowed any role in intervention in labor disputes (Briegel 1974: 10).

The Alianza's actions, although based on the concept of equality and civil rights for Mexican Americans, was taken on a case-by-case basis, thus combining the elements identified by Tirado as "personalistic" and "single area issues." At the turn of the century, the founders of the Alianza were acutely concerned about discrimination against Mexicans, but were

primarily concerned with consolidating political influence by controlling the ethnic vote in the tradition of the patrón or "political boss" system.

Direct Alianza involvement in civil rights often concerned individual cases involving Mexican Americans.[3] More concerted efforts at fighting discrimination against Mexican Americans were begun in 1950 and carried through with the creation of a Civil Rights Department in 1954. Alianza lawyers began to take on cases concerning segregation of public facilities, criminal justice, and citizenship and immigration (Briegel 1974:168).

Leadership and Structure

The history of how the Alianza was started by a group of friends and business associates, led by Carlos Velasco; and the ensuing role of the Supreme President demonstrates the personalistic nature of Alianza leadership. The capacity of a single leader to inspire solidarity among the membership and mobilize the organization in the direction of the greater good was no doubt a positive factor in the maintenance and growth of the Alianza until 1939.

Unfortunately, some notable cases exemplify the destabilizing effects of a single, strong leader on the organization as a whole. For example, with the election of Candelario Sedillo in 1941, "the Alianza began to operate new programs based on the idea of assimilation" (Briegel 1974:153). When Sedillo was declared the winner of the 1948 election, the

results were hotly contested by his opponent, Gregorio Garcia. A costly, drawn-out legal battle ensued which resulted in the declaration of Garcia as the Supreme President. By then the process had tarnished the Alianza's image and depleted its finances.

From the tone of the Alianza issues of that period, one gets the impression that a basic point of contention between the Candelaria and the Garcia camps was assimilation versus cultural maintenance. Sedillo's action of introducing English into the Alianza for the first time in the July 1942 issue was challenged by Garcia; and when Garcia took office in 1950 the publication returned to Spanish only.

A more complex situation characterized the administrations of two of the last three supreme presidents, Ralph Estrada (1954-1962) and his son-in-law, Carlos McCormick (1962-1963). They increasingly involved themselves as individuals in new activities outside the usual realm of the organization, and, by association, the Alianza also became involved.

In addition to political liaisons made during the "Anti-Discrimination Campaign" of the 1950s, the Alianza continued to have increasing contact with local, state and national political figures. The organization may also have been a vehicle for promoting a number of political careers. For example, Raúl Castro, who in 1974 became the first Mexican American governor of Arizona, was featured prominently in the magazine during the 1950s as an active participant in Alianza activities. In 1956,

six campaign advertisements appeared in the July issue of the Alianza. Of the candidates promoted in these advertisements, four were members of the Alianza, including one Mexican American and three Anglos. Bob Perez was running for State Legislature, Stewart Udall for Congress, Harry Ackerman for State Senate, Cecil Cavender for Pima County Sheriff, and Arthur La Prade for Chief Justice of the state Supreme Court.

The personal political contacts made between Arizona and New Mexico under the rubric of the Alianza are evidenced in receptions given by the central lodge in the mid-1950s in Tucson for senators Dennis Chavez and Joseph Montoya of New Mexico. In New Mexico this was done by Alianza lodge 178 of Albuquerque, which gave a special dinner for Chavez in 1952. During the mid-1950s the lodge had New Mexico Governor Thomas Mayberry crown its Alianza queen. By 1960, Supreme President Carlos McCormick was involved in the national "Viva Kennedy" campaign for John F. Kennedy, and is pictured in the Alianza magazine receiving the presidential candidate at the Tucson airport.

The field of activities was expanded to the national political arena at a time when the Alianza was experiencing difficulties in finances and new membership recruitment, no doubt requiring concentration on internal, rather than external affairs. The Alianza went into the last stage of its decline under the administrations of these two men, with the final blow being the indictment of McCormick in 1965 on fifteen counts of grand theft related to embezzlement of Alianza funds (Briegel

1974:207). Jesus M. Romero, a previous supporter of Garcia, was in office at this point trying to keep the organization together, but the problems could not be overcome.

The structure of the Alianza Hispano Americana was obviously not decentralized, but rather had a strong presidency centered on one individual. The locus of control was maintained in the central offices in Tucson, where all of the conventions were held from 1944 to 1963. It is difficult to envision how an organization of the magnitude of the Alianza, with a hierarchical official structure could proceed in a consensual manner, although consensual decision-making may have occurred within the Supreme Council or at the local level. If there was any degree of consensual process, it probably occurred in the early days, when the principle of mutualismo flourished among Mexicanos. The events preceding the organization's demise in 1965 indicate that power had become concentrated in select individuals.

Ethnic Symbolism

The Alianza made ample use of ethnic symbols in its magazine's visual imagery and in the types of activities it promoted. Mexican cultural symbols were commonly used, although Spanish symbols and Southwest regional influence were sometimes evident. The cover of the November 1942 issue employed symbols from all of these sources. Mexican national symbols included the fiestas patrias (Mexican national holidays); Miguel Hidalgo, "the Father of Mexico" and hero of the fight for Mexican independence;

the national folk costumes of the charro and China Poblana; the Mexican flag; and the national colors of green, white and red. Spanish images used included the conquistador, caballero [horseman], torero [bullfighter], and Spanish woman's costume--a long, ruffled dress, a hair comb and mantilla [lace veil].

As mentioned earlier, activities from lodge to lodge differed as did the emphases on different aspects of ethnic identity. For example, the fiestas patrias were often sponsored by Arizona Alianza lodges, probably as the result of continual contact with Mexico and incorporation of new arrivals into the established ethnic communities. In New Mexico, where Mexicanos have been known to have a stronger identification with Spanish culture than with that of Mexico, we see an emphasis on Spanish symbolism. For example, lodge 37 of Albuquerque, with a membership of native Nuevo Mexicanos, held an annual event called Baile en España [Dance in Spain] in commemoration of the entry of Coronado into the Southwest (Alianza, December 1945). On the other hand, lodge 178 of Albuquerque, whose leadership and membership consisted principally of recent Mexican immigrants and their children, emphasized Mexican national symbolism and celebrations.

The most elaborate cultural activities in both Arizona and New Mexico were the Alianza dances and balls, particularly in the 1940s and 1950s in Tucson and Albuquerque. These dances exemplify not only an emphasis on a symbolically strong activity, but also encouraged a wide-based participation of persons of

different ages and of non-members.

In Tucson, dances were held in the Alianza's downtown Club La Selva. In Albuquerque, Lodge 37's dances took place in the downtown Hilton (Alianza, December 1943) or at the University of New Mexico's Carlisle Gym (Alianza, June 1945). According to Francisco Trevino, the last president of Albuquerque lodge 178, the lodge held large theme balls called: "El Baile de las Gardenias," "El Baile de Blanco y Negro," and "El Baile de Los Cascarones" (Arrieta 1989.) These balls involved a coronation ceremony of the selected queen of the festivities, who, along with her attendants, led a formal procession to initiate the dance. Many of the dance events were attended by a large representation of the Mexican American community including non-members of the Alianza. In both Tucson and Albuquerque, one of the first and most notable memories of both members and non-members interviewed were the dances held by the Alianza. In fact, some persons knew of the Alianza only through this activity and were not aware of any of its other functions.

This facet of the Alianza might seem peripheral or trifling in an examination of its functions in the Mexican American community. However, the social dance is a central feature of Mexicano culture and society. Three major kinds of dance events include balls such as those held by the Alianza balls, wedding dances and quinceaneras (debutante balls) all of which are key community events that serve to initiate and reinforce social relationships. These events served to enhance community

collectivity in a multifaceted manner, not the least of which is encouraging courtship and marriage under the auspices of the extended family and other respected community elders. Persons of both sexes, ranging from late childhood to late adulthood are brought together in a socially appropriate context. These persons might not otherwise meet considering jointly the age-segregation of American society and the stronger gender segregation of Mexican American society. Furthermore, the Alianza social dance was another way in which the participation of the entire family in the organization was assured.

Language is significant not only as an indicator of the assimilative process among the Mexican American population, but also as a cultural symbol for that population. A diachronic examination of the Alianza gives us a sense of the changes in the proportionate use of Spanish and English through time. The issues dating from the late nineteenth century until June 1942 are completely in Spanish. In the July 1942 issue the Supreme President states:

> In our last issue we stated that the Alianza magazine would gradually begin to print articles in English as well as in Spanish at the request of many of our members. In this article will appear the first words of English in thirty-five years of publication. For this moment we have chosen some of the most significant words in the English language. The Preamble of the Constitution of the United States.

The November 1942 cover of the magazine for the first time presented the title in both Spanish and English, that is, Alianza/Alliance. Of all covers of the Alianza magazine, this is the one which displays the whole gamut of ethnic images depicting

the Spanish colonization, mixed Spanish-Indian heritage, the "new" Mexican culture, and life in the region of the U.S. Southwest. Drawn by Juan Menchaca of Denver, Colorado, it includes an Indian (Navaho), a Spanish conquistador, a Mexican charro, a Pueblo Indian house, a Spanish mission, a saguaro cactus, cattle, horses and sheep, and the three ships initiating the Spanish conquest. The accompanying explanation of the cover in the text of the magazine is as follows:

> Nos hemos hecho bi-linguales para el beneficio de un gran numero de nuestros lectores. Sin embargo, nuestra posición, en la cuestión bi-lingual es clara. Para ser feliz una persona que reside en el Surponiente de los Estados Unidos, debe leer, escribir y entender ambos idiomas, el español y el inglés. Esto es aplicable lo mismo a las personas de habla inglesa y a aquellas de habla española.
>
> We have become bilingual for the benefit of a great number of our readers. However, our position regarding the issue of bilingualism is clear. In order to be happy a person residing in the southwestern United States should read, write and understand both languages, Spanish and English. This applies equally to both English speakers and Spanish speakers.
> (Author's translation)

In 1950, when the new Supreme President, Gregorio Garcia came into office, the magazine began to publish only in Spanish again and continued to do so until at least April, 1954. The cover title was bilingual until 1951, when it also went back to the original title--Alianza. In 1955, the contents were once again in both Spanish and English and continued in this format until at least the early 1960s.

The emphasis on binationalism and biculturalism is seen in the deliberate juxtaposition of Mexican national symbols with the

national symbolism of the United States. A large part of the Alianza's actions during World War II, was geared to the "war effort." The Alianza made certain that such activities bore the stamp of its cultural identity. For example, one effort was entitled Alianza Por La Victoria, and at one of its national fund-raising events, some of the members dressed in Mexican national costumes and "The World's Largest Tamale" was cooked (Alianza, January 1944). During this period, biculturalism was most obviously promoted on the covers of January issues featuring two New Year's babies, one dressed in an Uncle Sam costume, the other in a charro costume. However, like the increased emphasis on English over Spanish, the trend in cultural symbolism became increasingly Anglo assimilative, as exemplified on the cover of the November 1955 Alianza issue which featured a Pilgrim couple.

The Alianza's purpose in general was to unify Mexican Americans and promote their socioeconomic advancement within American society. The organization unified the membership with a common ethnic symbolism. However, in the later period members became increasingly exposed to American cultural symbolism not only in the larger society, but also in Alianza publications and activities. This weakening of cultural cohesion may have contributed to an undermining of membership interest and participation in assuring accountability from the leadership, and in maintaining the organization.

Analysis and Conclusions

The analysis which follows is based on Morris' (1984) findings on the African American civil rights movement and a related discussion and application of classic collective behavior theory, resource mobilization theory, Weber's charismatic movement theory, and a new model of interpretation he calls the indigenous approach. Based on Morris' (1984:275) discussion of classic collective behavior theory, the emergence of the Alianza is explained only insofar as the theory posits that " collective behavior occurs during periods of rapid social change or crisis," including industrialization. Under such conditions, "collective behavior is that activity in which people engage when attempting to repair and reconstitute a ruptured social structure" (1984:275).

The Alianza certainly emerged during a period of rapid social change with the railroad's entry into Tucson in the 1880s bringing incipient industrialization, increased numbers of AngloAmericans, the consequent political and economic diplacement of the Mexicano ruling class. The Alianza is then initiated by members of this class who realized the racial/ethnic factor that had been introduced into class dynamics. It was this consciousness in addition to a call for cultural solidarity that constituted the basis for early recruitment of the majority of the Alianza's membership.

Classic collective behavior theory however, completely fails to account for the rational basis of the Alianza's formation. A

second central premise of most collective behavior theories assumes a break from "preexisting social structures" which requires that collective behavior be "spontaneous, unorganized, nonrational and emotional" (Morris 1984:276).

Much of what Morris concludes about the non-conformity of classic collective behavior theory to the African American civil rights movement is also applicable to the Alianza Hispano Americana. His analysis of the former shows that organizing and planning was central; that it spread through "sophisticated, preexisting formal and informal communication networks"; that although emotionalism may have been present, it was not a defining characteristic; and that rationality was the basis for making acceptable rather than optimum choices (Morris 1984:277). More significantly, the Alianza was not merely an emotional reaction to rapid economic change or to industrialization as a "neutral" phenomenon (Blumer 1990:53-83), but was also a political strategy used in a struggle with a culturally different and strongly racialized society.

The explanatory gaps in classic collective behavior theory are more ably covered by resource mobilization theory when dealing with both the African American civil rights movement and the Alianza Hispano Americana. Central to this theory is "the ability of groups to organize, mobilize, an manage valuable resources", and also recognizes the importance of the "climate of the larger political environment" to facilitate or inhibit the development of collective action (Morris 1984:279). Significant

resources are defined as "formal and informal organizations, leaders, money, people and communication networks"(Morris 1984:279). Also, collective action "from this view is rational and grows out of preexisting social structures and political processes" (Morris 1984:280). The manner in which these explanations hold true for the Alianza are contained in the discussion that follows on the indigenous approach to interpreting collective action.

With regard to the Alianza, I agree with Morris' assessment of the aspects of resource mobilization theory which fail to account for significant elements of the African American civil rights movement. First, great weight is given to the notion that dominated groups are "unable to organize and sustain movements unless they receive assistance from outside elites" (Morris 1984:280). The Alianza infact was initially subsidized by resources of elites within the dominated group not outside the group. Secondly, cultural factors which were central to both the civil rights movement and the Alianza are considered as residual by resource mobilization theory.

Weber's theory of movements as initiated by a charismatic leader whose effectiveness lies in an extraordinary personality and who is able to convince followers to identify with him as a possessor of supernatural or superhuman qualities, like the classic theory is strongly based on a notion of irrationality.

In interpreting the civil rights movement using the indigenous approach, Morris suggests that charisma "facilitates

the mobilizing and organizing process of the dominated group (1984:285); and that it does not alone account for movement development. For the Alianza, indications are that a strong leader was based mainly in the character of the office of Supreme President and his ability to operate within that office, rather than through charisma.

Central to the indigenous approach as described by Morris is a concern with movements by dominated groups (1984:282). This approach maintains that "the emergence of a sustained movement within a particular community depends on whether that community has the following: 1) basic resources, 2) social activists, 3) strong ties of social activists with indigenous mass-based institutions, and 4) tactics and strategies to effectively employ against a system of domination (Morris 1984:282).

In the initial stages of the Alianza, experienced leaders certainly took on social activist roles mobilizing social resources, money, labor, and communication networks. Most significantly, the Mexicano leadership mobilized sociedades mutualistas in Arizona, the Mexicano "indigenous mass-based institutions" with which they had previously established contacts. The use of sociedades mutualistas and their organizational form and principles is the best example of the redirection and transformation of indigenous resources, particularly as mass-based organizations which were "accustomed to accomplishing goals in an organized manner" (Morris 1984:283).

In terms of indigenous communication networks, much of the

conceptualization of the Alianza was put forth to the community in the Spanish language newspaper El Fronterizo published by Carlos Velasco, the first Alianza president. Later, other existing Spanish language newspapers throughout the Southwest became the major form of disseminating Alianza news and meeting announcements.

Of most relevance in examining the Alianza through Morris' discussion of tactics and strategies were the following factors: a collective definition of common ends; the development of a local movement center to broaden and sustain the movement; and a non-bureaucratic formal organization. The Alianza's principles of "Proteccion, Moralidad e Instruccion" [Protection, Morality, and Education] came out of middle class Mexican cultural and societal values and as such, having a collective source of definition are "common ends". A "local movement center" was developed through the transformation of the Alianza from a mutual aid society to a the central lodge or Organizadora of a national fraternal insurance society and through the subsequent completion of an Alianza building in 1917 in Tucson to house various centralized organizational activities and national conventions.

In applying the indigenous approach, the greatest difference that emerges between the Alianza and the African American civil rights movement is that the former had a very bureaucratic formal organization. This difference may be attributable to the fact that a major strategy of the latter was the use of mass protest

to challenge the existing power structure, while the Alianza sought to carve a niche for Mexicanos within the existing power structure.

Also in notable contrast to the civil rights movement, during the early life of the Alianza there was strong identification with Mexican culture and identity and with Mexico itself in the form of Mexican Alianza lodges. This linkage suggests a diminished concern with the United States system as the sole social and structural support of Mexicanos in this country, an attitude which is not uncommonly reflected in historical accounts and analyses of the time period between the United States takeover of the northern Mexican territory in 1848 and the 1940s.

A widely accepted explanation for the emergence of voluntary organizations has been that the socially disintegrating factors accompanying urbanization and immigration to urban centers are an impetus for their development. Sociedades mutualistas in the Southwest would therefore be regarded as classic immigrant organizations, and in many instances this was true. However, in Arizona and New Mexico, the organizers of the Alianza Hispano Americana and other sociedades mutualistas were not immigrants, and the contexts in which they were organized were not urban. In the Southwest the factors in the historical context that encouraged the development of these organizations were the broader, sweeping effects of industrialization and rapid social change brought by a large incursion of Anglo Americans.

There are few sociedades mutualistas left from the hundreds

that probably existed at the turn of the century, with at least one sociedad in every small southwestern community with a significant Mexicano population. Although a thorough study and analysis of the factors contributing to their demise has not yet been done, it is safe to assume that competition from life insurance companies was one of them. Therefore, the fact that the Alianza Hispano Americana not only had a protracted existence, but also expanded its scope of activities and achieved a visible public presence suggests an avenue of investigation that can increase our understanding of the role of ethnic organizations.

At the time the Alianza began, the railroad had brought new power brokers with national and international bases of political and economic support into Arizona and New Mexico. The major employers now came from a different culture and spoke a language different than the bulk of the laborers they controlled. Mexicanos were subjected to unequal treatment by dominant Anglo society on the basis of their culture, language and physical characteristics. Discriminatory economic and political practices were felt by Mexicanos of different social classes in different ways. For the Mexicano/Hispano elite, the Anglo political, economic and social domination eroded their position vis-à-vis the larger Mexicano working class. Mexicano laborers, on the other hand, were subjected to unfair hiring and employment practices.

The functions that sociedades mutualistas served for the

middle class and working class may therefore have also differed, particularly in the political and economic spheres. One of the main questions in analyzing the impact of the Alianza on the Mexican American ethnic group is the manner and extent to which it facilitated collective action. This brief examination of the main Alianza lodges in Arizona and New Mexico suggests that one of the organization's functions was to form political alliances within its own structure among middle-class community leaders. In the earlier periods, organizational process and activities may have simultaneously facilitated a more collective process of its lodges and general membership. In the later years, at least in the major centers of Tucson and Albuquerque, garnering political influence with local and state political ethnic and non-ethnic leaders may have taken up more resources than the Alianza could afford at a time when concentration on internal affairs was critical.

Mexican Americans, like other national ethnic groups, encountered certain options in terms of adapting to mainstream American society and culture. Some alternatives assumed relenting to dominant society pressures towards assimilation. A variety of other alternatives were based on the premise of biculturalism. That is, keeping a separate cultural identity while at the same time being contributing members of American society. Assimilative or bicultural adaptations could be carried out individually or collectively, through a number of routes and mechanisms. The Alianza Hispano Americana, like sociedades

mutualistas, served as a vehicle for Mexican American adaption to American society, by facilitating both assimilation and cultural maintenance and allowing for the development of a bicultural society and identity as Mexican Americans.

The Alianza Hispano Americana developed from a group-based mechanism for maintenance of "true" Mexicano cultural values and traditions to a vehicle for promoting assimilation to mainstream American society and culture. That is, in the early years, emphasis was placed on key Mexican cultural events and such symbolic elements as discursos [Mexican style discourses] which elaborated and interpreted traditional values and customs. The organization continued to focus on key Mexican cultural events and symbols even as it moved into a bicultural mode by gradually adding Anglo American symbolism, events and activities until, towards the end, the trend became assimilative. During the assimilative period a nominal ethnic identity was promoted through "folk" cultural elements in a stereotypical manner similar to that employed by members of the dominant culture.

Tirado's conclusions about the viability of Mexican American organizations do not completely apply to the Alianza, an organization which had a primarily economic function and which was not avowedly "political." The Alianza was multifunctional, included members of the entire family to a certain extent, and was single-issue oriented. More significantly, however, it was not decentralized and the leadership, although personalistic, was not consensual. The structure was centralized and hierarchical

and did not allow for wide participation and input from the general membership. In contradistinction to the proposals by Morris for the civil rights movement, the focus of the Alianza remained on issues and not on the promotion of collective action.

Because the most common direct participation of the general membership was in dues payment and policy collection, good accounting procedures would seem to have insured membership stability by assuring financial viability. The other most relevant factors would be those that encouraged members to maintain their membership and promoted new membership enrollment.

It is suggested here that "effective use of ethnic symbolism" (Tirado 1970:77) or "cultural factors" (Morris 1984:280) were largely reponsible for the cohesion and continuity of the Alianza Hispano Americana. This element was contained in the original formulation of the organization's guiding principles and in the very name signifying "alliance of those of Hispanic descent in the United States." The members felt included in something that linked them together through common cultural identity, regardless of the degree of direct participation in organizational decisions and actions. Some principal avenues of symbolic ethnic expressions were in language, particularly in the organization's publication, and through key social events.

The Alianza Hispano Americana displayed all the characteristics of persistent Mexican American organizations, with two exceptions. The Alianza did not clearly operate on the basis of consensus, and it did not have a decentralized

structure. Factors which were present in the Alianza, but did not seem particularly strong or did not clearly contribute to organizational viability were: inclusion of the entire family and the single issue approach. The inclusion of the entire family, with the exception of young children, occurred mainly at the social dances and in this sense combined with ethnic symbolism to create group solidarity. Single-issue orientation seems to have been strongest during the period when the Alianza was in decline, and therefore was either not a strong maintenance factor or was overshadowed by other considerations. The use of ethnic symbolism to unify the membership appears to have been used more effectively in the earlier period than in the later period. The strongest aspects of the Alianza were its multifunctional nature and strong personalistic leadership.

Perhaps the Alianza's viability could have been continued beyond 1965 had wider based decision-making been promoted rather than ever-increasing centralization, and had cultural maintenance continued as a guiding philosophy. These preliminary assessments indicate that a clearer determination of how the Alianza developed, persisted, and ended require, among other things, a separate financial and economic assessment, and an in-depth analysis contextualized according to relevant historical and political events.

End Notes

1. The term Mexicano is used here to encompass the ethnic terminology of Hispano, Mexican, Chicano, and Mexican American.

2. In New Mexico, the concept of organization based on mutual aid, preceded the Alianza Hispano Americana in three forms: acequia organizations, the Penitente religious brotherhood, and the classic nineteenth-century sociedad mutualista. Both the acequia and Penitente organizational forms predated the sociedad mutualista. In New Mexico, acequia organizations date to the earliest Spanish settlement in the sixteenth century, and the presence of Penitentes has been variously been traced to the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries. Whereas the essential function of the sociedad mutualista was to provide burial and illness benefits only to active members, the other two types of organizations extended mutual assistance of all kinds to the community in general. Acequia organizations managed water and irrigation systems for the whole community, and the Penitentes, although restricted in membership, promoted mutual aid among all community members. Both types of organizations were most active in northern New Mexico, and may account for the relatively few Alianza Hispano Americana lodges in that region.

3. For example, in 1921 the Alianza, along with other Mexicano organizations, advocated for Aurelio Pompa, accused of killing an Anglo. They asked the governor of California to commute his death sentence (Briegel 1974 :169), an intervention that did not meet with success (Acuña 1988:174).

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