

A los que siguen a la manera de los antepasados

To those who continue in the ways of the ancestors

Por la señal de la santa cruz de nuestros enemigos,
líbranos señor, Dios nuestro.
En el nombre del padre, del hijo, y del espíritu santo. Amen

Reflejemos que significa en nuestra vidas es la tradición de este celebración. La tradición de nuestros antepasados, y la promesa que nos llevemos en nuestros corazones. Que por la intercesión de nuestro Santo Patrón San Lorenzo, somos una comunidad unidos en el amor de nuestro señor Jesucristo. Amen

-Vispera de San Lorenzo

Preface

Virtually every community that performs the Matachines recognizes their version of the dance as the correct manner in which to perform it. Within the larger whole of Matachines, each community has created its own distinct style and Bernalillo is no different. Bernalillo maintains very distinct origin stories, dance attire and structure in order to present a communal view of the proper manner in how this tradition is performed. This “proper manner” in how the Matachines is viewed and performed has served as the vehicle in the preservation of this tradition.

In addition to Bernalillo distinguishing itself from other communities, variances within the community regarding origin, symbolism and meaning of the dance are also present. The intention of this work is two-fold; addressing how Bernalillo presents this tradition to the outside community, and how Bernalillo presents this tradition to itself. By interviewing as many prominent Matachines participants, the story presented in the subsequent pages reflects a communal view of the tradition. This book, in no way, intends to refute family oral traditions regarding history, symbolism, meaning, etc. of Bernalillo residents and Matachines participants. I realize that this may occur, since community members are my biggest critics, however, this study is in response to the lack of research on the Bernalillo Matachines by community members, moreover by Matachines dancers. It is in my hopes that this book is well received by the people of Bernalillo- we can finally say this is *our* story.