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## Nancy Parrott Hickerson, *The Jumanos: Hunters and Traders of the South Plains*

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*The Jumanos: Hunters and Traders of the South Plains.* By Nancy Parrott Hickerson. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994. xxviii + 270 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$40.00 cloth, \$17.95 paper.)

In this dense text, anthropologist Nancy Parrott Hickerson takes on the "Jumano problem" (p. xix) and posits a tempting and near-comprehensive solution to a conundrum that resulted from the numerous applications of the term "Jumano" by Spanish explorers and other early Europeans to many American Indians from northern Mexico to Kansas and from east Texas to central Arizona. Many historians long ago reconciled themselves to the weak conclusion that Spaniards had used the word indiscriminately for a wide range of different Indian peoples. This notion, just sufficient enough to stave off serious attempts to identify the Jumanos, never concurred with what was known about colonial Spanish thoroughness and precision, creating a dilemma that has nagged the historical conscience for half a century.

Forewarning the reader that her task must rely upon "a bare skeleton of chronological events, a few recorded cultural details, and a large amount of inference" (p. xiv), Hickerson launches into the first truly comprehensive review of the published historical, archaeological, and anthropological record of the Jumanos. She concludes that they were indeed an identifiable people—a tribe whose center was in the Tompiro Pueblos east of the Manzano Mountains of New Mexico (partially preserved in present-day Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument), and whose trading took them great distances in several directions.

Hickerson's presentation explains a number of anomalies in the historical record, including the long-recognized limited ability of the Tompiros to sustain themselves through agriculture and their unusually rapid decline and disappearance after their encounter with the Spanish. A people who reaped the profit of trade among tribes over a vast area encompassing a great variety of animal, vegetable, and mineral resources could prosper with little agriculture. Such an economy, however, was fragile and vulnerable. Impacted by two cataclysmic forces at once—the hostile intrusion of Apaches from the north and the conquering *entrada* of Spaniards from the south—Jumano society collapsed and disappeared within the brief 130 years between 1540 and 1670. Beyond

the usual attrition from war and pestilence, Hickerson argues that the Jumanos suffered Spanish levies exceeding their ability to pay and, finally, dispersion. Some were relocated by Spaniards to present-day Juarez, Chihuahua, others joined bands of Apache, some may have joined other puebloan groups, and some—based on evidence derived from extinct and unrecorded languages—may have become the Kiowa.

The weakness of this book is one too common among scholars in the United States: it makes no use of archival records that are still in their original Spanish language. Such documents must be available, which would reduce the need to rely upon inference (e.g., that the Pueblo of Abo was partly but perhaps not entirely Jumano). In explaining how Jumano traders could have penetrated the barriers of enemy Plains Apaches to the east and Navajos to the west, the author finds it "reasonable to believe" that Spanish military power supported them. And because one Jumano leader, Juan Sabeata, had a musket in 1684, the author infers that Spain may have armed the Jumanos, contrary to their general Indian policy. Perhaps one person's inference is another's guesswork, but if these and other assertions are correct, the evidence to support them surely awaits a researcher in a Spanish or Mexican archive.

Hickerson unquestionably deserves credit for pulling past research into a single overview. If time and research prove her correct, she will deserve praise for brilliant insight. The Jumanos have been satisfactorily upgraded from an indiscriminate term to a genuine people, but historically much remains to be ascertained.

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