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SHIFTING FOR SURVIVAL IN THE SPANISH SOUTHWEST

ALBERT H. SCHROEDER

MUCH HAS BEEN written about the submergence by the Europeans of the American Indian and his culture, indicating that the rate of change varied according to the type, frequency, and density of contacts between the Indians and neighboring white men. Too little reference has been made to those ethnic groups which retained their way of life for several centuries, practically unaffected culturally by nearby European activities and settlements. Some of the best examples of Indian cultural survival and Indian interaction are found in the Southwest. Here, between A.D. 1540 and the 1820's, a number of inter-Indian hostilities and population shifts occurred, many of which ran their full course only indirectly influenced by the presence of the Spaniards. Ecological factors and intertribal enmities played a far greater role in affecting native population shifts than did the presence of, or pressures from, the Spaniards. This paper outlines the history of Indian population shifts in the Southwest during the Spanish period and the factors involved in the tribal moves discussed.

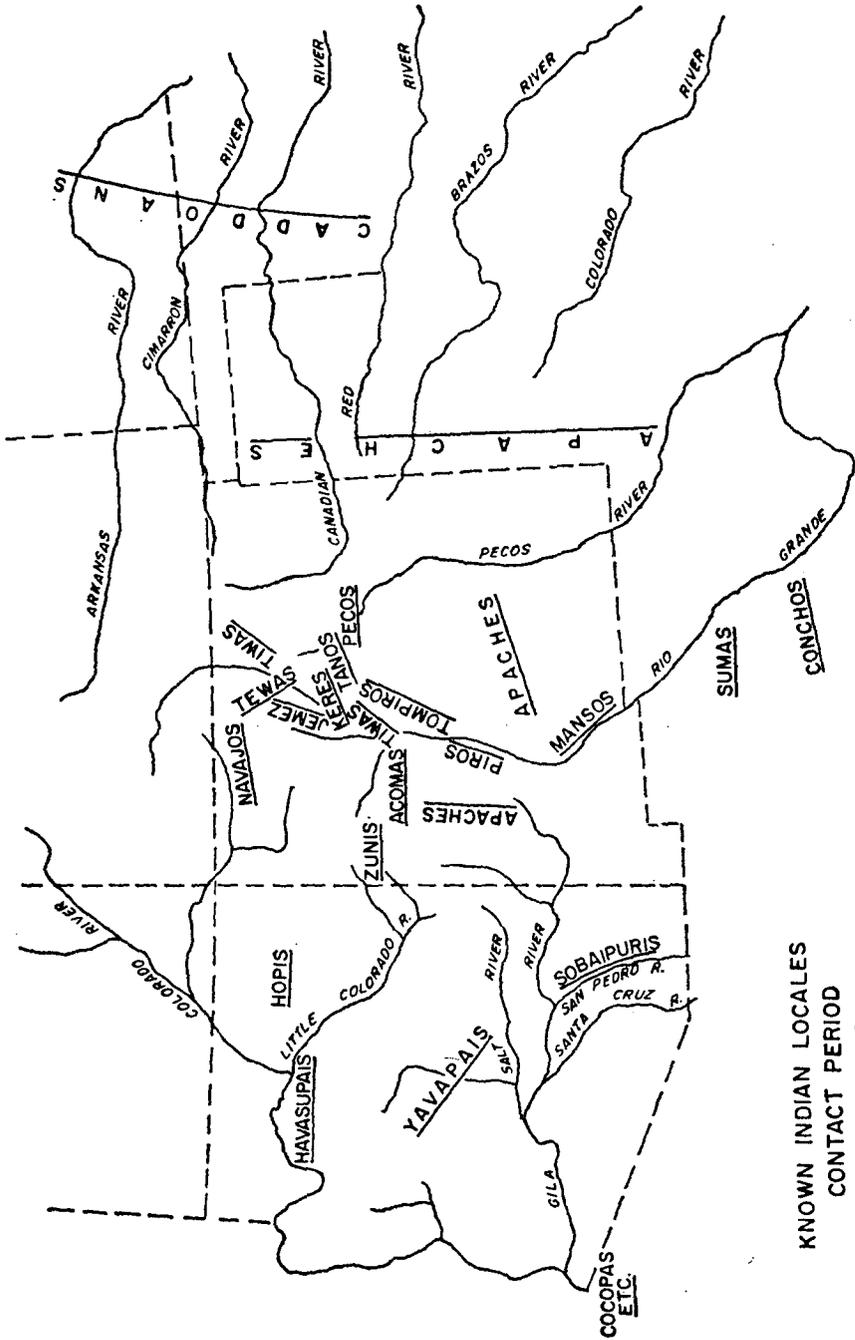
Indians, like most any other people, were prone to accept new ideas or traits that would ease their way of life, providing that these elements did not alter their own pattern of culture. In the Southwest some of the Indians received gifts from the early Spanish explorers, usually trinkets and an occasional metal knife or axe. These items paralleled articles of adornment and stone knives and axes already existing in their own culture. As Spanish settlement advanced into the Southwest, the Indians accepted other material goods on the same basis. Their stone tools, stone arrow-points, pot-

tery containers, and other objects were slowly supplemented with or replaced by metal European items of like nature. Glass and metal also became desired materials for adornment and sometimes replaced native stone, bone, and shell ornaments. This process reflects substitution in, not alteration of, a basic culture pattern. The indigenous way of life remained essentially the same without any specific changes in settlement patterns, warfare practices, means of subsistence, or social or ceremonial activities.

BETWEEN 1540 and 1598 six Spanish exploring expeditions visited the Pueblo farmers of the Rio Grande, as well as those of the Zuñi and Hopi villages, the desert irrigation Sobaipuri Pima farmers of southern Arizona, and the Yuman-speaking floodwater farmers of western Arizona. The Spaniards also encountered various nomadic Apache and Yavapai groups, as well as some factions of Plains Indians (figure 1). The exchange of a few gifts, and perhaps a few ideas, marks the extent of cultural contact that took place. So far as is known, the explorers left no equipment, no livestock, and no seeds—only the gifts, and a few zealous missionaries who chose to remain behind and quickly met the fate of martyrdom.

Of the southern Tiwa pueblos in the Bernalillo region (figure 2), Coronado's army in 1541 took over one for a base headquarters and laid siege to two others. The people of nine neighboring Tiwa pueblos left their homes but reoccupied them after Coronado departed for Mexico in 1542.¹ Spanish expeditions of the 1580's reported as many as twelve to fourteen pueblos in this same area. There is no evidence that Coronado permanently displaced these southern Tiwa pueblos.

Though Spanish exploratory contacts were brief, journals of the *entradas* contain considerable information, supported by recent archaeological investigations, showing changes in locales by Pueblo groups. The Pueblo people of the Chama River drainage, for example, whom the Spaniards mentioned but did not contact,² abandoned their homes in the late sixteenth century to join their Tewa-



KNOWN INDIAN LOCALES
CONTACT PERIOD
1540 - 1598

FIGURE I

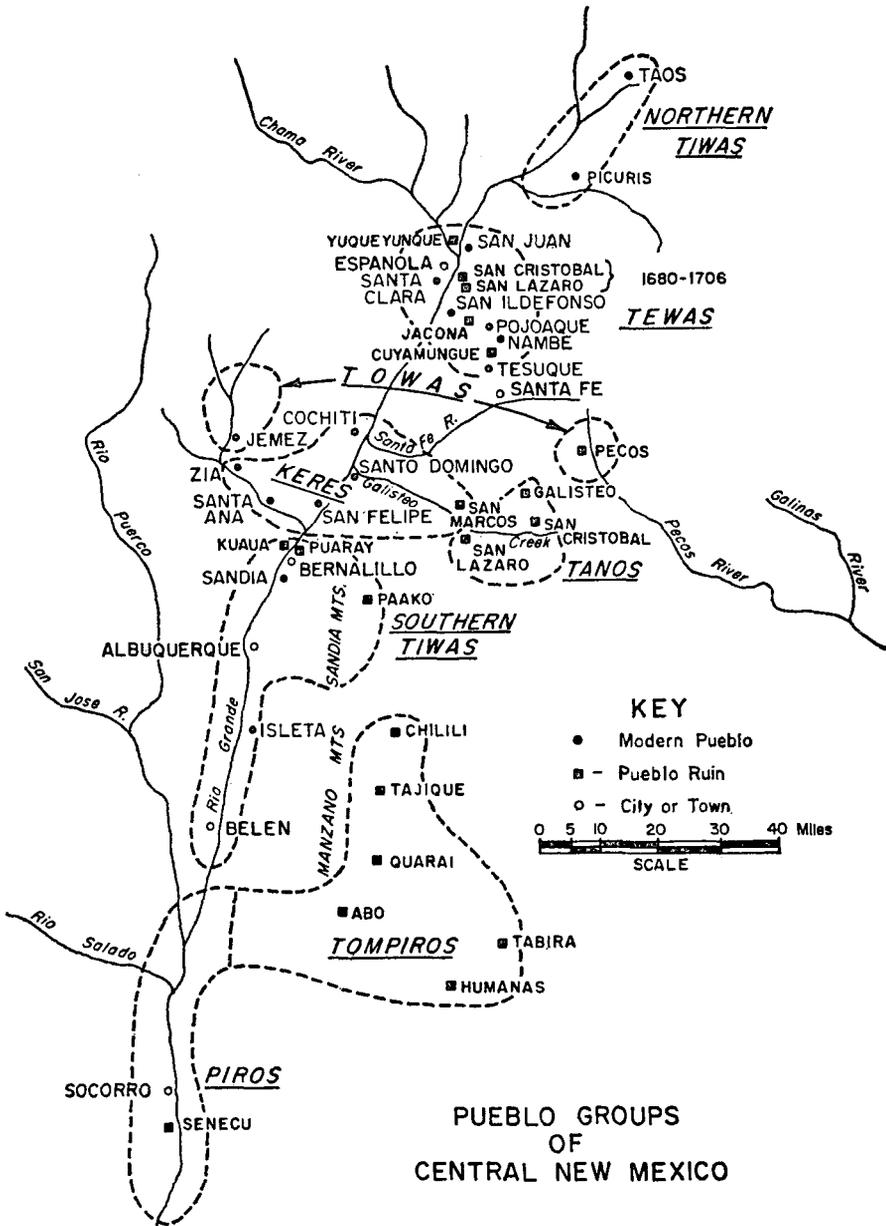


FIGURE 2

speaking linguistic relatives living along the Rio Grande between Española and Santa Fe. Others, along the Rito de los Frijoles within present Bandelier National Monument, moved south to join their Keres-speaking neighbors at Cochiti, and some perhaps east to San Ildefonso. Those of the pueblo of Gipuy, on lower Galisteo Creek, moved west to join their Keres kindred at Santo Domingo. The people of two pueblos on the north end of the Sandia Mountains which were attacked by other Indians and abandoned in 1591, probably took refuge among Tiwa relatives near Bernalillo. Almost a dozen pueblos were permanently abandoned between 1540 and 1598, but not from causes attributable to the Spaniards.³

Known hostilities between Indian groups, as recorded by the Spanish chroniclers of these early expeditions, account for some but not all these abandonments. The Teyas, a Caddoan-speaking farming group on the plains, destroyed pueblos in the Galisteo Basin and attacked Pecos on the eastern Pueblo frontier as early as 1526, but by the time the Spaniards came in 1540, they were friendly with Pecos.⁴ Later, in the 1580's, Apaches on the plains were enemies of the Tanos of Galisteo Basin.⁵ They may also have been responsible for the 1591 attack in the Sandia Mountains mentioned above. In the 1580's Piro-speakers of the Socorro region were at war with southern Tiwas on their northern border, perhaps the warfare referred to by Juan Morlete in his report of 1591,⁶ but no abandonment was recorded along their common border during the late decades of the century. Some friction also existed between the Zuñi and the Hopi pueblos throughout the same period.⁷ All these hostilities, however, were far to the east, south, and west of the northern pueblos abandoned during the 1500's.

It is possible, though doubtful, that the presence of Navajo Indians northwest of the Tewa pueblos in the north might have been a disrupting factor. The first specific documentary reference to "marauding Apaches" is in the vicinity of the Spanish colony near Española, 1606-1607.⁸ We know that during the early 1600's the Picuris, Taos, Pecos, and "Apaches" formed an alliance against the Tewa people because they were harboring the only Spanish

settlement in New Mexico.⁹ Perhaps it was this alliance that moved the Spaniards to abandon their first colony and establish the capital at Santa Fe, some twenty-five miles to the south, in 1610. The alliance against the Tewa people that developed in the early seventeenth century appears to be too late to explain the abandonment of certain Tewa, let alone Keres, pueblos in the late sixteenth century. Moreover, since Picuris, Taos, and Pecos are known to have carried on good trade relations with Apaches in eastern New Mexico,¹⁰ the "Apaches" who joined this alliance are more likely to have been from east of the Rio Grande rather than Navajo-Apaches from west of the continental divide.

The most probable cause for the abandonment of certain northern pueblos appears to have been ecological rather than cultural. The pueblos located on tributaries of the Rio Grande were dependent on dry farming, and the area was struck by a severe drought toward the end of the sixteenth century.¹¹ The Tewas and the Keres were forced to contract their territory, and farmers from the tributary streams abandoned their pueblos and took refuge among their irrigation farmer relatives on the Rio Grande.¹²

During the initial period of Spanish settlement in the Southwest, which began with the colony founded near Española by Don Juan de Oñate in 1598 and ended with the expulsion of the Spaniards during the Pueblo Rebellion of 1680, the Spaniards introduced the Rio Grande Pueblo Indians to wheat growing. Fruit trees provided welcome additions to Pueblo diet. Although the Puebloans had long raised domestic turkeys,¹³ the introduction of pastoral ways was truly new. The Spaniards distributed livestock among some of the pueblos, but they kept the horse herds under guard near their own settlements because the use of horses would increase the mobility and fighting power of the Indians. In spite of this precaution, it was not long before mounted non-Pueblo Indians became a reality, and already existing intertribal hostilities accelerated. The pattern of native warfare now was changing in some ethnic groups.

The Spaniards of the seventeenth century imposed their civil system and missions on the Pueblo people. This led to consider-

able strife, including friction between Spanish officials of church and state. In many instances appointed Pueblo Indian officials used their authority to screen out or dilute unwanted elements of Spanish culture and to evade undesirable mandates. The church made attempts to suppress Pueblo ceremonies. Civil officials exacted payment of various items as a form of tax. Conversions among inhabitants of the various pueblos drew members away from native ceremonial societies, led to factional splits, and weakened the structure of their complex and closely knit society. By the early 1640's many of the Pueblos were rebelling against impositions which were slowly changing their way of life. Some of the Taos Indians fled east into the plains and remained among Cuartelejo Apaches in the area of present Scott County, Kansas, until they were brought back under Spanish escort in the early 1660's.¹⁴ The practice of returning Indians to their villages became the custom of the Spaniards. The only group who fully accepted missionization during this period was the non-Pueblo Mansos of southern New Mexico, who, in 1659, moved into a mission near El Paso where they eventually lost their identity (figure 3).

While Pueblo Indians in the seventeenth century resisted much of Spanish culture unattractive to them, they were nevertheless strongly influenced. Nomadic groups, on the other hand, continued as in the past to trade at various pueblos, obtaining Spanish goods at times, and even horses. By the early 1640's the governor of New Mexico traded directly with Apaches of the plains, rather than through frontier pueblos, bartering horses and various items in exchange for hides, slaves, and other articles. The Apache masters of the plains were quick to shift from dogs as beasts of burden to horses. In short order this one addition to their culture increased their already mobile way of life, and mounted Plains Apache warriors now held a very definite advantage over their enemies. Apache raids into eastern New Mexico became a major problem in the 1660's. Their depredations, plus the severe droughts of the late 1660's, led to the abandonment of all the Tompiro pueblos east of the Manzano Mountains by the early 1670's.

Apache groups west of the Rio Grande concentrated their at-

tacks on the Zuñi pueblos, which were isolated from the Spaniards, but maintained friendly relations with Acoma. In the 1580's Apache Indians joined Acomas in resistance against the Spaniards.¹⁵ In 1599 Oñate sentenced a number of the old people of Acoma to the care of an Apache group.¹⁶ As late as 1692 an Apache faction was reported in council at Acoma, an alliance the Spaniards were still attempting to break four years later.¹⁷ These or closely related Apaches also developed an alliance with the people of Jemez who, up to the 1620's, were living in the mountains, depopulated by war and famine,¹⁸ possibly the aftereffects of the severe drought of the late 1500's. From 1614 on these allies also plotted against the Spaniards. Some of these Apaches were reported among the Jemez as late as 1694.¹⁹

In the late seventeenth century Apache raids against Piro and Tompiro pueblos, as well as against those of the Zuñis on the west, met with little or no direct Spanish military opposition at these pueblos. Occasional punitive expeditions were sent into Apache country from the Santa Fe region, but few troops could be spared to protect outlying areas. The few thousand settlers of New Mexico lived in the Rio Grande Valley between Socorro and Española, with a heavy concentration in the Santa Fe area. After 1640 all available military forces were needed to cope with a series of uprisings among nearby Tewa and Keres pueblos, and threats of Apache attacks.²⁰

In August 1680, after almost a century of oppression, the Pueblo Indians rose in revolt, forcing the Spaniards to withdraw south to the El Paso region where they remained for twelve years. This uprising marked the beginning of a number of population shifts (figure 4). As the Spaniards withdrew, they were joined by some Isletans and some of the weakened Piro Indians of the Socorro region who already had abandoned one of their pueblos in the 1670's because of Tiwa attacks²¹ or Apache inroads throughout the 1600's.²² Perhaps the droughts of the late 1660's and 1670's had also broken the spirit of those Piro farmers who decided to leave with the Spaniards. In November 1681 Spaniards probing north found that other Piro pueblos had been sacked and aban-

done. The occupants either had followed their relatives to El Paso or had joined other Pueblos farther north or had been taken captive by them.²³

During the absence of the Spaniards between 1680 and 1692, a number of pueblos moved to new sites. The Tanos of Galisteo Basin, the first group to arrive in Santa Fe and take part in the rebellion, remained in Santa Fe and in the area immediately to the north.²⁴ The Jemez left their homes, into which the Spaniards had gathered them in the early 1620's, and built new pueblos in the mountains to the north where the Spaniards had first found them in 1614, and were to find them again in 1692, still allied with Apaches.²⁵ The Keres speakers of San Marcos joined relatives on the Rio Grande who also took refuge in the mountains or on mesas, probably for defense against the enemy Tano and Tewa or from Apache raids coming in from the south.²⁶ During this period, five Zuñi pueblos were merged into one under pressure of continuing Apache attacks from the southeast. These enemies had already caused the abandonment of one Zuñi pueblo in the 1670's.²⁷ The Hopis, plagued by Ute attacks, moved their pueblos to the mesa tops, with the exception of Oraibi which already had been similarly situated. Perhaps it was at this time that they also abandoned their farmlands in Canyon de Chelly.²⁸ The Utes also were hostile toward the northern Tiwa, Tewa, and the Jemez pueblos. The pueblo changes in locale, almost entirely measures of defense, can be related to pre-rebellion hostilities between tribes.

Interpueblo friction also was rife. Though Isleta did not move, leaders of the rebellion came from the north in 1680 or 1681 and burned the church and all objects within it in their attempt to stamp out everything Spanish.²⁹ This may explain the willingness of some Isletans to go to El Paso with the Spaniards who entered Pueblo country in 1681. Almost all Rio Grande pueblos were forced to take a stand on interpueblo strife. As a result, Pecos, Taos, Jemez, and the Keres were allied for a time against the Tanos, Tewas, and Picuris. Apaches west of the Rio Grande were allied with the Jemez, and those to the east with Pecos or with Picuris and their allies.³⁰

The shift of pueblos to defensive positions between 1680 and 1692 has been thought by some to have been due to fear of reprisal by the Spaniards if they returned. The evidence cited, however, indicates that old enmities as well as new ones flared high during the absence of the Spaniards and required immediate action to handle hostilities close at hand. Though the Spaniards, far off at El Paso del Norte, had sent punitive expeditions into Pueblo country in 1681 and 1687, on their re-entry in 1692 and 1693 they found several pueblos ready to do battle, while others sought refuge elsewhere before the Spaniards approached their pueblos.³¹ There is no documented case or any evidence of a pueblo changing its locale during the rebellion or at any other time because of a fear of Spaniards.

The Pueblo Rebellion also marks changes in and expansion of Apache raiding patterns. After the abandonment of the Tompiro pueblos in the early 1670's, the Apaches of southeastern New Mexico were able to extend their raids northwest against the southern Tiwas, Keres, and Tanos during the revolt period.³² This seems to have been the reason not only for the abandonment of Tompiro pueblos east of the Manzano Mountains, but also of the few surviving Tiwa pueblos in the foothills of the Sandias; as well as of the Keres pueblo of San Marcos, and for the failure of the Tanos to reoccupy their Galisteo Basin homes after the Spaniards left in 1680 (figures 4 and 5). Northern Gila Apaches to the west of the Rio Grande continued to hammer the Zuñi pueblos, while the Apaches of southern New Mexico ranged south of the present international border in the early 1680's. In 1684 the latter formed an alliance with the Sumas, Janos, and Jocomes of western Chihuahua and eastern Sonora.³³

During the 1690's a vanguard of southern Gila Apaches, in company with Janos and Jocomes of northern Mexico and southeastern Arizona, began attacking Opata Indians in Sonora, Sobai-puri Indians along the upper San Pedro River of present southeastern Arizona, and mission rancherías which were expanding north at this time. By the opening of the eighteenth century these Apaches began to use the Chiricahua Mountain area as a home

base, absorbing or displacing the local Jocomes in the process.³⁴ Even the more northern Gila Apaches opened up new routes to the south, via San Francisco River, to raid into northern Sobai-puri country.³⁵ By 1762 the Sobaipuris, no longer able to stem Apache onslaughts from the north, abandoned their fertile valley and joined their Piman-speaking relatives near and to the west of present Tucson,³⁶ where Spanish missions had begun the process of breaking down the culture of the Papagos.³⁷

After the return of the Spaniards to New Mexico in 1692, Indian alignments shifted one way or another according to events. Some of the Navajos allied themselves with the pueblos of San Ildefonso and Cochiti.³⁸ The localized Pueblo rebellion of 1696 was ineffective and led to moves which can be related directly to dissatisfaction with the Spaniards. The Tewa pueblos of Jacoma and Cuyamungue were abandoned for all time.³⁹ Some dissatisfied southern Tiwa Indians, as well as Tanos from San Cristóbal and San Lázaro pueblos on the Santa Cruz near Española, took refuge among the Hopis.⁴⁰ Some of the Picuris went out among the Cuartelejo Apaches on the plains.⁴¹ A group of Keres speakers also formed a new pueblo at Laguna in 1698 or 1699. In 1700-1701, the Hopis even sacked one of their own pueblos, Awatovi, for allowing Spanish friars to enter.⁴² The period from 1680 to 1700 was one of considerable stress among the Pueblo people at a time when they were making a major attempt to retain their way of life.

Several of these Pueblo shifts were not permanent. The Picuris on the plains requested aid and were escorted back to their pueblo in 1706.⁴³ Most of the refugees from Rio Grande pueblos, when offered the choice, elected to leave the Hopi villages in the 1740's and settled at Sandia and other pueblos.⁴⁴ Only the Tano group who had settled in 1696 at Los Tanos, or Hano, decided to remain among the Hopis. Their descendants are still there, still Tewa-speaking, today.⁴⁵ Though the flight of some of the Pueblos in 1696-1698 was caused by the Spaniards, most of the groups returned to their original locales.

A new element—the coming of Comanches and their Ute

allies into northern New Mexico in the opening years of the eighteenth century—set up a chain reaction that was to affect population shifts for many years. In 1706 Penxaye Apaches north of Raton Pass were involved in their last desperate fight against Comanches. Jicarillas, badly mauled by Comanche attacks, planned to move to Navajo country west of the Rio Grande, only to be talked out of it by the Spaniards. Soon more Apaches, fleeing south from north of Raton Pass, joined the Jicarillas. By 1719 Cuartelejo Apaches, pressed by Plains tribes armed with guns obtained from the French, fled west to the Jicarillas.⁴⁶ Comanches, moving south into eastern New Mexico and northern Texas, forced Lipan Apaches on the upper Canadian River south into central Texas and continued to harass the Jicarillas and their allies, who fell back into the Sangre de Cristo Mountains between Taos and Pecos in the late 1720's.⁴⁷

While Comanches were causing a rearrangement of tribal territories east of the Rio Grande in 1715, Southern Utes began a long war against Navajos, then living just west of the continental divide, and gradually forced them to the south and west. By the 1750's the last of these Navajos abandoned their homeland. Following this victory, the Southern Utes broke their alliance with Comanches and aligned themselves with the Jicarilla Apaches.⁴⁸ This association assured Jicarilla survival in and to the east of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. From their newly gained territory on the plains, Comanches began to raid into New Mexico from the east. The surviving Tano pueblo of Galisteo, resettled under Spanish direction in 1706 with Tano refugees from pueblos north of Santa Fe, managed to survive Comanche depredations into the Galisteo Basin until 1793, when it was abandoned. These Tanos joined the people of Santo Domingo pueblo.⁴⁹ Farther south, Comanche raids into the country of Mescalero Apaches cut them off from their buffalo-hunting grounds east of the Pecos River.⁵⁰ Repeated attacks upon the pueblo of Pecos on the eastern frontier plus the ravages of epidemics so reduced the population that in 1838 a handful of survivors walked out of the pueblo to join their linguistic relatives at Jemez.⁵¹

Comanche-Ute hostilities continued to the end of the eighteenth century and beyond. During the first half of the nineteenth century, Southern Utes hunting on the plains not only clashed with their former allies but also with Kiowa, Shawnee, Arapahoe, and Cheyenne Indians who frequented the upper Arkansas River, one of the regions through which these Utes passed on their way to hunt on the plains. The other major Southern Ute access to the plains was through Jicarilla country. This led to considerable trouble along the western end of the Santa Fe Trail in the 1820's and later.⁵²

Indian population shifts in New Mexico during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were paralleled by similar movements far to the west in Arizona, where Spanish activity was confined mostly to the area south of the Gila River. Halchidhoma Indians, pressed by Mohaves and Yumas living above and below them on the banks of the lower Colorado River, abandoned their homes and fled south in the 1820's, eventually joining Pimas on the Gila River. Maricopa Indians on the Gila near Gila Bend and Yavapais of central Arizona, separated by a strip of no-man's-land which had been developed over centuries of conflict, continued their hostilities; but the Maricopas, also a target of Yuma attacks from the west, finally moved east and took refuge among Pimas by the 1840's.⁵³ As in New Mexico, native groups in Arizona battled among themselves, with even less or no communication or contact with the Spaniards.

Thus, over a span of almost three hundred years, Indian territories and pueblos in the Southwest shifted, contracted, or expanded—often radically. Events after the arrival of the first Spaniards indicate that most of these changes resulted from hostilities (many probably originating in prehistoric times) between Indian groups rather than from Spanish intrusion. One might well wonder how many population shifts of this nature occurred in prehistoric times. In the case of the historic period nomadic Indians of New Mexico, Spanish interference in intertribal warfare was

sporadic. The warring tribes' almost constant preoccupation with intertribal friction undoubtedly reduced contacts with and influence of Spanish culture. Spanish-appointed Pueblo officials, really buffers between Spanish officialdom and Pueblo caciques and other leaders, probably played a large part in minimizing any change. In addition, the complex intertwining of Pueblo ceremonial societies and kinship groups provided a society stronger than that of the frontier Spaniards in which friction between church and state probably created a greater split than any conflict within any pueblo during the Spanish period.

These hostilities appear to have played a major role in limiting the amount of cultural exchange among the groups involved, up to the mid-nineteenth century. Spanish alliances with one-time enemies, such as Jicarillas, Utes, Navajos, and Comanches, intended to protect Spanish settlements menaced at the time they were made, seem to have had little effect on the culture of these Indians. Although Spanish punitive expeditions, undertaken with Indian allies, were sometimes victorious, they gained little more than a brief respite from aggression. Lack of central authority among the occasionally vanquished nomadic groups made it impossible to impose terms on all people of any one group, with the result that normal culture exchange had a minimum time in which to operate. It was not until the 1870's when the United States introduced the reservation system that Indian population shifts in the Southwest were brought to a halt. And this in turn, because of territorial and associated cultural restrictions, quickly broke down what remained of the indigenous cultures of most of the groups involved.

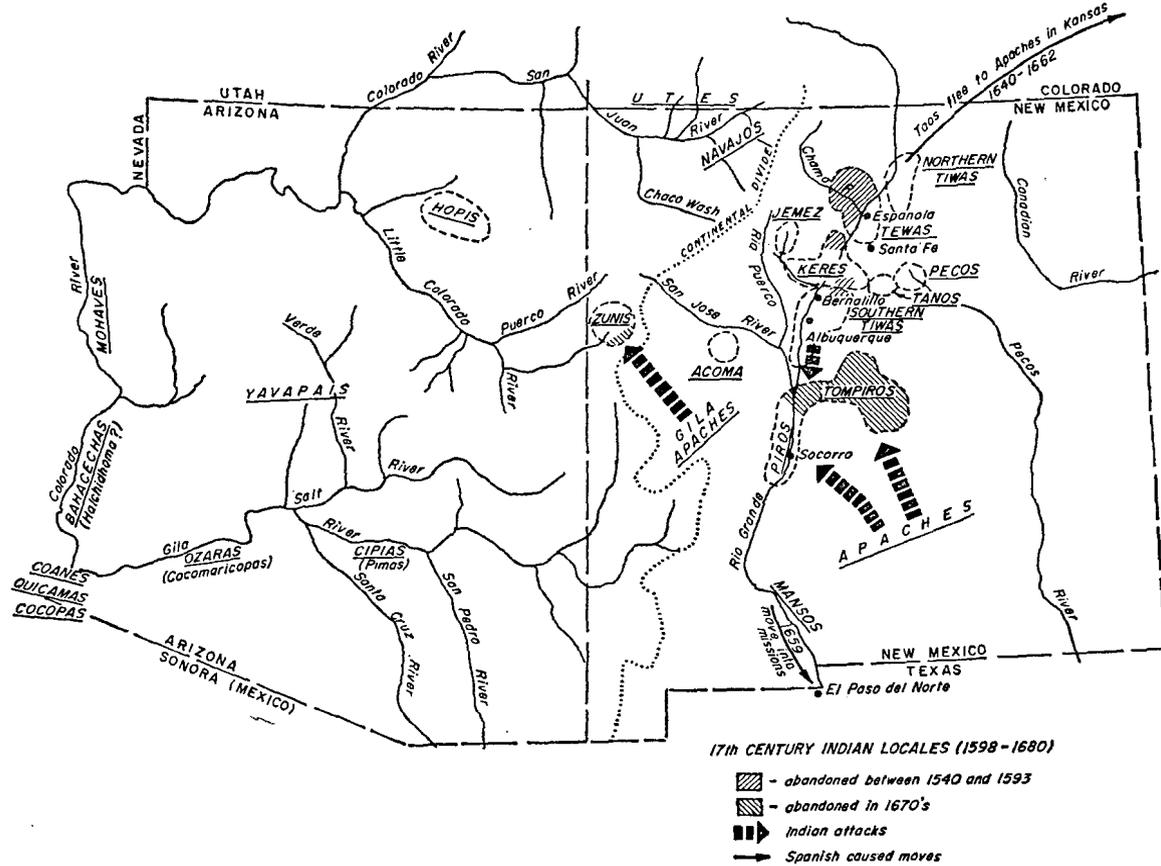
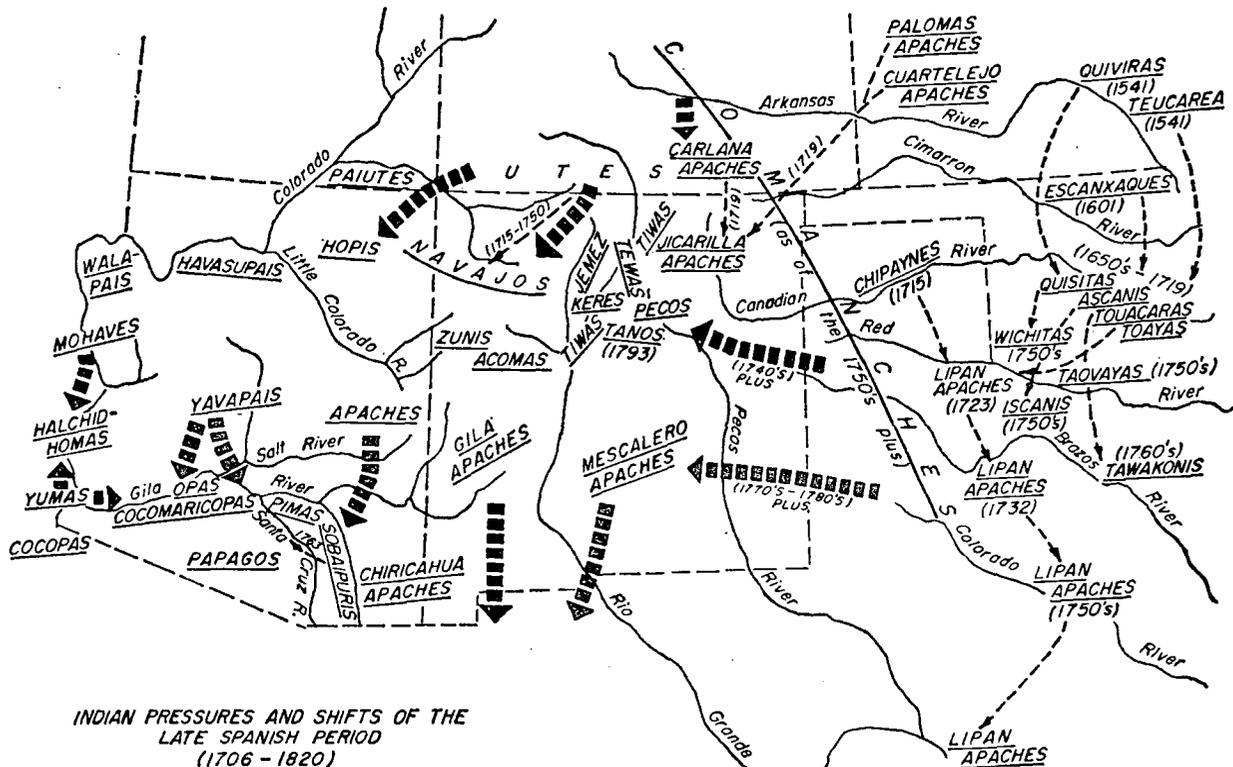


FIGURE 3



INDIAN PRESSURES AND SHIFTS OF THE
LATE SPANISH PERIOD
(1706 - 1820)

AISO SHOWING THE LIPAN APACHE FLIGHT
SOUTH IN ADVANCE OF THE COMANCHES
IN THE 1700'S AND THE GENERAL SOUTHERN
SHIFTS OF CADDOAN GROUPS ON THE PLAINS
FROM 1541 to 1750's

- > Indian change of locale
- ▬▬▬> major Indian attacks

FIGURE 5

NOTES

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11. Harold C. Fritts, "Tree-ring Evidence for Climatic Changes in Western North America," *Monthly Weather Review*, vol. 93 (1965), fig. 3 (A.D. 1556 to 1590).
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13. Hammond and Rey, *Gallegos*, pp. 24, 26, 36; Schroeder and Matson, pp. 115, 147.
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15. Hammond and Rey, *Espejo*, pp. 111-12.
16. Hammond and Rey, *Oñate*, p. 478.

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