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May 1997

Review of *The Jumanos: Hunters and Traders of the South Plains* by Nancy Parrott Hickerson

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Kawashima, Yasuhide, "Review of *The Jumanos: Hunters and Traders of the South Plains* by Nancy Parrott Hickerson" (1997). *Great Plains Research: A Journal of Natural and Social Sciences*. 315.
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The Jumanos: Hunters and Traders of the South Plains. Nancy Parrott Hickerson. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994. xxviii+270 pp. Notes, maps, illustrations, bibliography, and index. \$40.00 cloth (ISBN 0-292-73083-7).

In the Atlantic region in the seventeenth century, there were several Indian groups, including the Massawomeck, that made a brief appearance in the contemporary documentary records but completely disappeared from the scene thereafter. The Jumanos were a Southwest tribe that faced the same fate. The mysteries surrounding the Jumanos have attracted the attention of such scholars as Adolph Bandelier, Frederick H. Hodge, Herbert Bolton, Carl Sauer, France V. Scholes, and J. Charles Kelley, but by the 1940s the consensus view was established that Jumanos, as used in the Spanish colonial documents, was a general term and did not refer to any specific ethnic group or tribe.

Hickerson's *The Jumanos*, which is based upon a thorough and systematic analysis of the Spanish colonial records, challenges this interpretation by presenting a coherent picture of the Jumanos as a distinct people. The author maintains that the Jumanos were part of the Tanoan-speaking group that covered a vast area extending east of the Rio Grande into the Southern Plains, and south of New Mexico as far as La Junte de los Rios.

The book for the most part reads like a chronological account of the Jumanos until the end of the seventeenth century, when they disappeared from Spanish records. It covers their first encounter with the Spanish explorers, 1535-1610, their dealings with the Spanish Franciscans in New Mexico, which stretched to El Paso and northern Chihuahua, 1610-1685, and their decline and fall in the Southern Plains, 1685-1700.

Yet Hickerson has written more than a mere general survey; she makes several significant assertions. The Jumanos, who were never numerous but

were given a remarkable degree of respect and diplomatic attention by the Spanish government in New Mexico, had two distinct designations: in the broader sense, they were Tanoan-speaking Indians in the Southern Plains; in the narrower sense, they were simply traders. Though occupying a wide area encompassing at least 500,000 square miles, the Jumanos never settled any part of that land permanently and exclusively. Since they occupied such a wide range, adjusting themselves to the natural environment's local features, some dwelled in substantial masonry houses while others lived in skin tents; some were farmers, others hunters; some were pedestrian nomads, others men on horseback; and some were the Pueblo Jumanos, others the Plains Jumanos, who specialized in hunting and trading.

At the end of the seventeenth century, the Apache invasion of that portion of the Southern Plains where the Jumanos then lived almost exclusively as traders not only ended the Jumanos' existence as an independent tribe but, more importantly, marked a major transition in economic and political alignments. The Apaches were never able to serve the same linking function in a larger sphere of operations as did the Jumanos. Therefore, when the Jumano trade died, the Southern Plains became a marginal zone, peripheral to the Pueblos, to northern Mexico, and to the Caddoan tribes on the east.

Hickerson provides a rich history of the Jumanos and their relations with other native people and with the Spaniards and the French. But the story is somewhat diluted by the more-than-necessary detailed chronicles of Spanish explorers, such as Cabeza de Vaca, Francisco Vazquez de Coronado, Castano de Sosa, and Juan de Onate. The last chapter, which traces the Jumanos' ancestors to the second millennium B.C.E., would have been more useful placed at the start. Some readers may find Hickerson's use of several terms questionable. Words such as *genocide* to describe the detribalized Indians of Texas and *diaspora* to refer to the virtual disappearance of the Jumanos as a tribe seem extreme.

All told, however, *The Jumanos* is an important study, the first full-scale ethnohistory of the Jumanos, and will revive scholarly interests stagnant for the past fifty years. Above all, it will stimulate further anthropological and archaeological research that may give a fuller picture of the Jumanos, especially after they disappeared as a distinct tribe. **Yasuhide Kawashima**, *Department of History, University of Texas at El Paso*.