

*Los Quimbayas bajo la dominación española.* By JUAN FRIEDE. Bogotá, 1963. Talleres Gráficos del Banco de la República. Maps. Illustrations. Tables. Pp. 280.

The lightning-like decline of the Indian population of New Spain during the 16th century, so convincingly demonstrated in the numerous works of Woodrow Borah and S. F. Cook, represents but one part of a larger and as yet but dimly perceived new world demographic catastrophe. Juan Friede, the new director of the Archivo Nacional in Bogotá and a life-long student of the Indian struggle for land and livelihood in New Granada during the colonial period, is the author of this pioneering analysis of the fate of the Quimbaya tribe of the eastern flank of the middle Cauca depression, Colombia, a people whose principal claim to a place in history has been the exquisite quality and unrivaled craftsmanship of their worked gold and their clay pottery.

The original homeland of the Quimbaya, the temperate volcanic slopes of the Quindío district of modern Caldas, is today the most productive coffee-growing area in Colombia. Aboriginally it was also densely peopled, with some 80 hereditary caciques, each the lord of his own village. The coffee fincas that cloak its rolling hills today are literally paved with archeological evidence of past human occupancy. When, in 1540, the city of Cartago Viejo was founded by Jorge Robledo at the site of the modern city of Pereira, the entire Quimbaya-speaking population, estimated at 60,000-80,000, was distributed among some 30 encomenderos. The estimated original 15,000 *tributarios* (adult males between 14 and 50) had been reduced to 4,553 in a period of the first 20 years; by 1628 only 69 remained, of whom some were *forasteros*. With the abandonment of Cartago Viejo the Quindío was left an unpeopled wilderness of *cañaverales y rastrojo* for 250 years, until the arrival of the Antioqueño colonists from the north in the last years of the 19th century.

The Quimbaya were agriculturalists, their country containing but little gold. Tribute was paid chiefly in cotton mantas (of superior quality and reputation), chickens, maize, beans, yuca, cotton, cabuya, pottery, salt, and dried river fish. One is puzzled to learn that the cotton was *algodón silvestre* and that the collecting of 'wild cotton' was a general occupation of the Indians. There is little reference to the probable causes of the precipitous population decline suffered by the Quimbaya and Friede gives the impression that social disruption rather than disease must have played the major role. Many of the men were employed in the mines of Anserma, in the wars against the Pijao, and as carriers; for the Quimbaya country lay athwart the main route

between Santa Fe de Bogotá and Quito. Friede finds no documentary evidence of the "peste de 1546" which, according to Cieza de León, devastated the native population, and he suggests that it is a canard.

The early chroniclers give only passing reference to the Quimbaya country and what information they offered seems often to have been second hand and wrong. Friede's work, which should stand as a landmark in Colombian historiography, is based almost exclusively on unpublished materials in the archives of Sevilla, Bogotá, and Popayán. A small part of the documentary material here employed has recently been made available in the 9 volumes of *Documentos inéditos para la historia de Colombia*, edited by Friede and published by the Academia de la Historia, Bogotá (1955-1960). Particularly detailed reconstructions of the life and economy, including Indian-Spaniard relations, have been made from the records of the trials and investigations that followed each of the several Indian uprisings in the area. In the first of these, in 1542, the victims surprisingly included *yanacona* Indians from as far away as Nicaragua and Peru.

The number and extent of the previously unknown or unused reports of *visitadores* and *oidores* which Friede has uncovered pertaining to the 90 year period of Quimbaya history under the Spaniards suggests the enormity of the untapped archival resources awaiting future workers in the economic and demographic history of other parts of the northern Andean lands. Such work would be most effective if tied to archeologic evidence and an intimate familiarity with local geography and ecology.

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*A History of New Mexico, Gáspar Pérez de Villagrà, Alcalá—1610.*

Translated by GILBERTO ESPINOSA. Chicago, 1962. The Rio Grande Press. Illustrations. Notes. Appendixes. Index. Pp. 308.

Gáspar de Villagrà's *Historia de la Nueva Mézico*, originally published in 1610, was first issued in English by the Quivira Society in 1933. Reprinted by the Rio Grande Press in 1962, it is not only the first history of New Mexico but also the earliest of any North American state. This thirty-four canto historical account of the Ácoma uprising and of Juan de Oñate's early conquest, was written as an epic poem patterned after Virgil's *Aeneid* within eleven years of the events' occurrence by a participant and eyewitness, Captain Villagrà. In spite of its historical significance, the *Historia* was overlooked or ignored by historians, and remained unnoticed for over two and one half centuries. Rediscovered in the 1880s by such outstand-