

Through Spanish Eyes: Life at Kuaua Pueblo, 1540 - Primary Source Documents

DOCUMENT A: De Castañeda de Nájera, Pedro. "The Journey of Coronado," 1540

TIGUEX is a province with twelve villages on the banks of a large, swift river; some villages on one side and some on the other. It is a spacious valley two leagues wide, & a very high, rough, snow-covered mountain chain lies east of it. There are seven villages in the ridges at the foot of this -- four on the plain and three situated on the skirts of the mountain.

League: About three miles

DOCUMENT B: De Castañeda de Nájera, Pedro. "The Journey of Coronado," 1540

They are governed by the opinions of the elders. They all work together to build the villages, the women being engaged in making the mixture and the walls, while the men bring the wood and put it in place. They have no lime, but they make a mixture of ashes, coals, and dirt which is almost as good as mortar, for when the house is to have four stories, they do not make the walls more than half a yard thick. They gather a great pile of twigs of thyme and sedge grass and set it afire, and when it is half coals and ashes they throw a quantity of dirt and water on it and mix it all together. They make round balls of this, which they use instead of stones after they are dry, fixing them with the same mixture, which comes to be like a stiff clay.

DOCUMENT C: De Castañeda de Nájera, Pedro. "The Journey of Coronado," 1540

Before they are married, the young men serve the whole village in general, and fetch the wood that is needed for use, putting it in a pile in the courtyard of the villages, from which the women take it to carry to their houses.

The young men live in the estufas, which are in the yards of the village. They are underground, square or round, with pine pillars. Some were seen with twelve pillars and with four in the center as large as two men could stretch around. They usually had three or four pillars. The floor was made of large, smooth stones, like the baths which they have in Europe. They have a hearth made like the binnacle or compass box of a ship, in which they burn a handful of thyme at a time to keep up the heat, and they can stay in there just as in a bath. The top was on a level with the ground. Some that were seen were large enough for a game of ball.

Estufas - Spanish word for stove; referred to kivas, which the Spanish thought were warm places.

DOCUMENT D: De Castañeda de Nájera, Pedro. "The Journey of Coronado," 1540

When any man wishes to marry, it has to be arranged by those who govern. The man has to spin and weave a blanket & place it before the woman, who covers herself with it and becomes his wife.

The houses belong to the women, the estufas to the men. If a man repudiates his woman, he has to go to the estufa. It is forbidden for women to sleep in the estufas, or to enter these for any purpose except to give their husbands or sons something to eat.

Estufas - Spanish word for stove; referred to kivas, which the Spanish thought were warm places.

DOCUMENT E: De Castañeda de Nájera, Pedro. "The Journey of Coronado," 1540

The men spin & weave. The women bring up the children and prepare the food. The country is so fertile that they do not have to break up the ground the year round, but only have to sow the seed, which is presently covered by the fall of snow, and the ears come up under the snow. In one year they gather enough for seven. A very large number of cranes & wild geese and crows & starlings live on what is sown, and for all this, when they come to sow for another year, the fields are covered with corn which they have not been able to finish gathering. There are a great many native fowl in these provinces, .. with great hanging chins.

DOCUMENT F: De Castañeda de Nájera, Pedro. "The Journey of Coronado," 1540

They keep the separate houses where they prepare the food for eating and where they grind the meal, very clean. This is a separate room or closet, where they have a trough with three stones fixed in stiff clay. Three women go in here, each one having a stone, with which one of them breaks the corn, the next grinds it, and the third grinds it again. They take off their shoes, do up their hair, shake their clothes, & cover their heads before they enter the door. A man sits at the door playing on a fife while they grind, moving the stones to the music and singing together. They grind a large quantity at one time, because they make all their bread of meal soaked in warm water, like wafers.

DOCUMENT G: De Castañeda de Nájera, Pedro. "The Journey of Coronado," 1540

They gather a great quantity of brushwood and dry it to use for cooking all through the year. There are no fruits good to eat in the country, except the pine nuts. .. The men here wear little shirts of tanned deerskin & their long robes over this. In all these provinces, they have earthenware glazed with antimony and jars of extraordinary labor and workmanship, which were worth seeing.

Earthenware- ceramic pottery

Name: _____ Class _____ Date _____

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Identify the author of documents A-G: _____

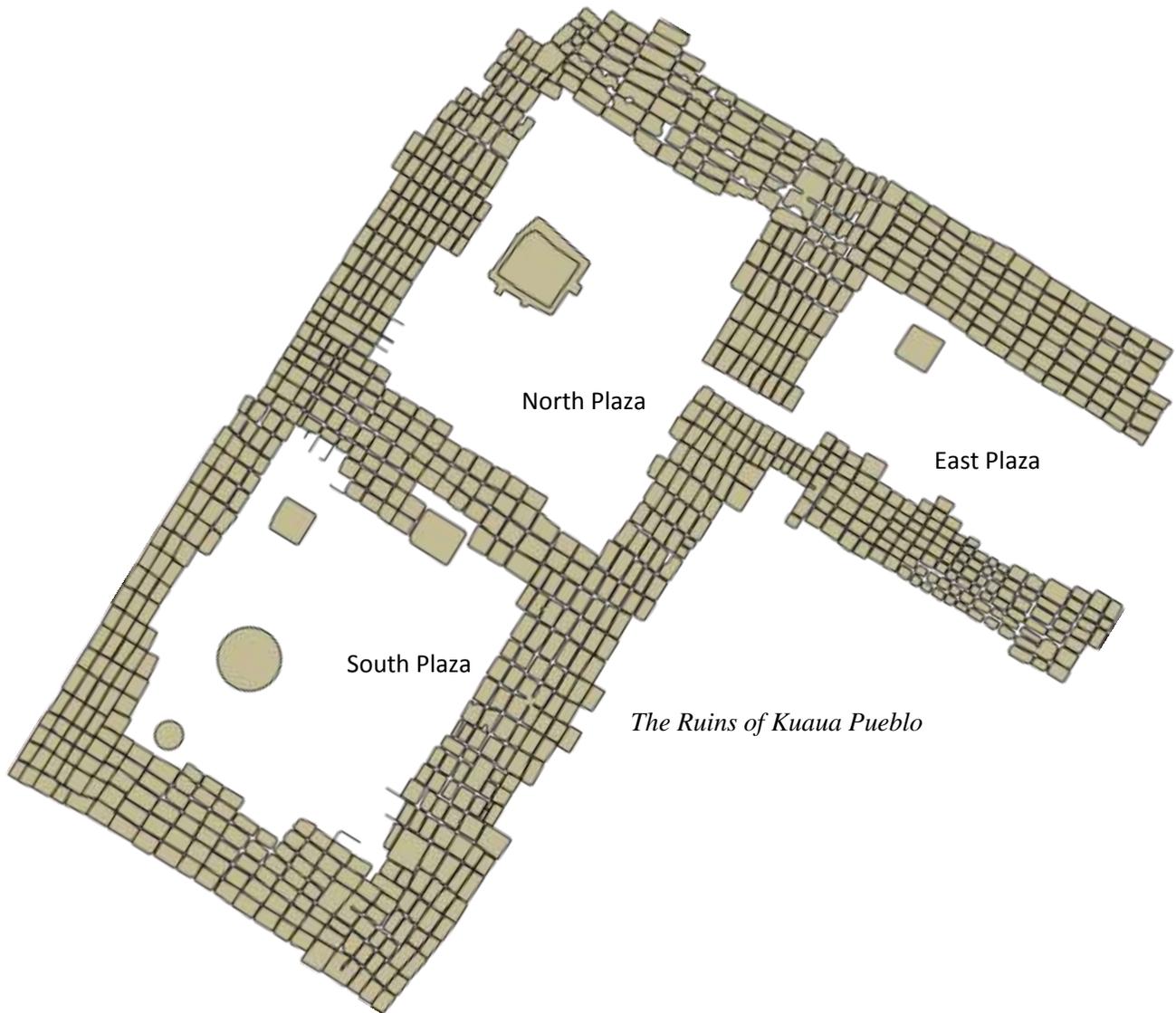
This Spanish author wrote to record what he saw on Coronado's expedition. What was the name and date of his report? _____

Are these documents primary or secondary sources? Explain your choice. _____

With your group, read the seven documents (Documents A-G) in your folder. Together, discuss the information, and copy important phrases from the text into the columns below. Use quotes from the author's exact words. Then use Document H to add information you did not know!

Economic How they made their living – Food Acquisition & Trade	Political Government	Social / Cultural Structure of Families, Religion, Homes, Music, Art, Clothing

Secondary Source: Document H



Life in Kuaua: The Evergreen Village

Coronado Historic Site  Bernalillo, NM

**NEW + MEXICO
HISTORIC SITES**

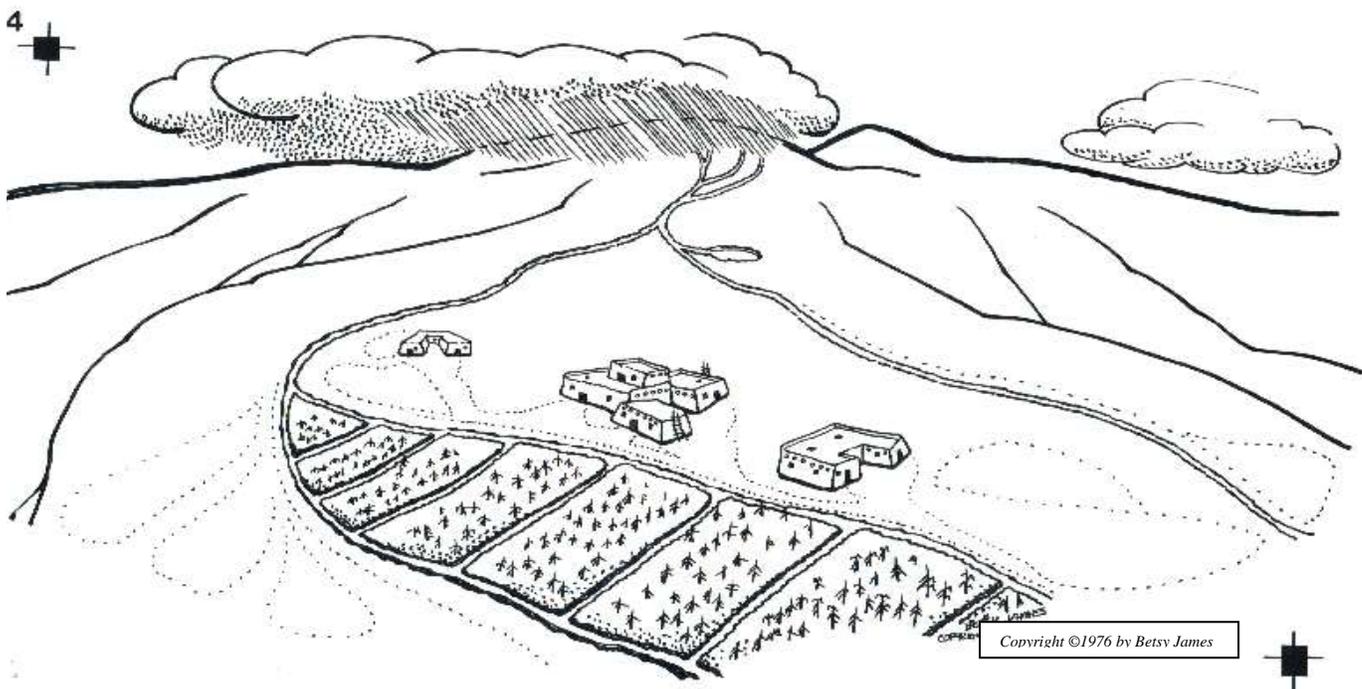
 **CORONADO
HISTORIC SITE**

 **NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF
CULTURAL AFFAIRS**

They moved as one with the Earth and accepted its gifts with gratitude – the gifts of bison, corn, rabbits, mountain sheep, squash, antelope; plants that would nourish, plants that heal, and plants that were magic.

Pueblo Groups of Northern New Mexico

The nineteen Pueblos of northern New Mexico fall into three different language groups these are: Keresan, Tanoan and Zuni. The Tanoan group is further divided into three dialects: Tewa, Tiwa and Towa. There are some subtle differences between the northern Tiwa (Taos and Picuris) and the southern Tiwa (Sandia and Isleta) as well as between the western Keresan (Acoma and Laguna) and eastern Keresan (Cochiti, Zia, Santa Ana, San Felipe and Santo Domingo). Kuaua was a Tiwa-speaking Village; in Tiwa, Kuaua means “Evergreen.”



The Earth was generous. The people made warm blankets from feathers and wove cotton into cloth. The skins of animals became their skins to shield them from the wind and cold. Plants became baskets for gathering, winnowing seeds, and storing grain through the winter.

A Time Capsule of Culture

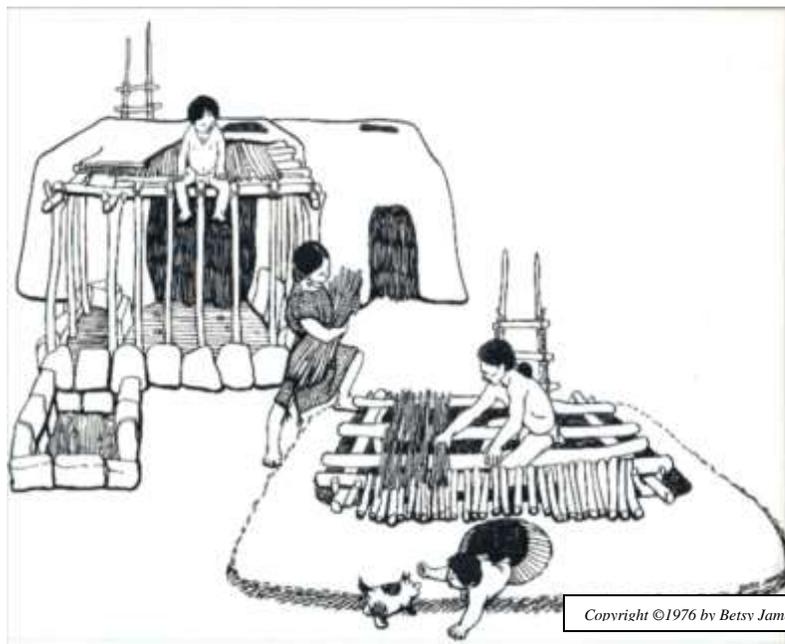
Like silent sentinels that gradually yield to the ever-downward pull of Mother Earth, the earthen remains of Kuaua (a once-thriving Pueblo Indian farming village located on the western bank of the Rio Grande in northern New Mexico), stand to tell their story. Kuaua (pronounced “Kwah-wah” and meaning “evergreen” in the Tiwa language) is part of a bigger picture, an epic drama that spans two millennia. The scene is set in a landscape of desert and mountains stretching from the Four Corners region of the American Southwest southward into Mexico.

By 2,000 years ago people were living in the vicinity of Kuaua, hunting game and gathering wild plants for food, medicine, clothing, and shelter. By A.D. 600, members of the Ancestral Puebloan (formerly known as “Anasazi”) culture had constructed pithouses (semi-subterranean earthen dwellings) several hundred yards from where you stand today. Drought-driven immigrants from settlements to the west and to the north, such as Mesa Verde in southwestern Colorado, joined groups living along the Rio Grande during the 13th and 14th centuries.

Our understanding of Kuaua has come about through historical records, beginning with 16th-century Spanish journals written by members of the 1540-42 Coronado expedition; archaeological investigations that took place from the late 19th century to the close of the 20th century; and oral traditions of contemporary Pueblo Indians whose ancestors handed down stories to them.

Subsistence

Generations of Kuauans began building their multi-storied village of adobe (sun-dried mud and sand aggregate mixture) in the early 1300s. By the 1500s; 1,200 ground floor rooms connected together to form the foundation of a pueblo (the Spanish word for “town”. Spanish explorers referred to people who lived in villages as “Pueblo” Indians). Survival depended on an abundance of natural resources and the coordinated efforts of all members of the pueblo. Wild animals, including foxes, coyotes, prairie dogs, wild turkeys, migratory fowl, and pronghorn



antelope, flourished on the plains, deer, elk, bears, mountain lions, and bighorn sheep roamed the Sandia and Jémez Mountains. Adults and Children joined in communal hunts for cottontails and jackrabbits. Animals provided food, clothing, blankets, and ceremonial objects.

Fathers and uncles taught boys how to hunt, trap, and make tools. Pueblo women and girls gathered wild plants for food and medicine, hauled water, prepared meals, and probably tended to the domestic turkeys that were kept in pens on the plazas. The Rio Grande provided life-essential water for drinking, cooking, bathing, farming, and fishing. Catfish, chub, and buffalo fish swam there. Corn, beans, squash, and cotton were planted, weeded, harvested, and dried for preservation. Whether Kuauan farmers ditch-irrigated their fields with water from the river, (as did other Rio Grande pueblos), has not been determined.

They molded the Earth into their homes and the bowls that held their food. These shapes and forms, like all things, had meaning.



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Ceremony

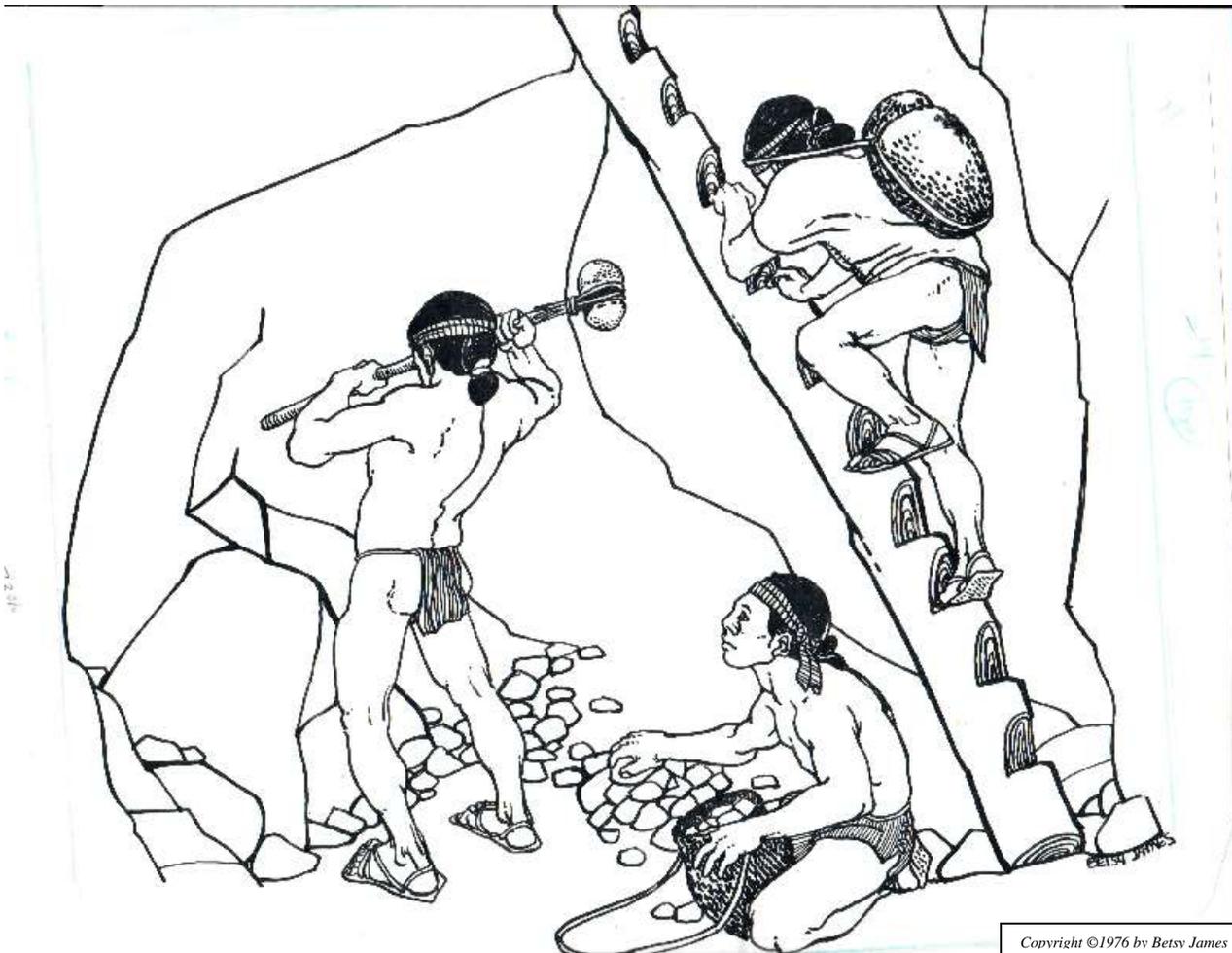
Sustaining Kuaua depended upon the villager's success in pleasing their spiritual benefactors. Katsina dancers, representing spirit messengers and supernatural beings, performed ritual ceremonies in a regular, seasonal sequence, thereby ensuring sufficient rain, successful hunting, and fertility of crops.

Sacred and social activities took place in kivas (underground rooms that symbolized the people's place of origin in the underworld). Kivas rituals were central to ceremonies and communal processional dances in the plazas.

The Home

Since a typical room was quite small, measuring an average 10 by 12 feet, it would have contained few objects in it. Sleeping areas might have had covers made of animal skins, such as bison hides with hair still attached, as well as blankets woven of rabbit fur, turkey feathers, or cotton. Ventilator shafts, openings in the wall, allowed for circulation of fresh air from the outside as well as for airflow between rooms.

The walls of Kuaua were originally constructed of coursed adobe instead of adobe bricks. A layer of mud was applied, allowed to dry, another layer applied, and so forth, until the desired wall height was reached.



Trade

Kuaua was one of about a dozen Tiwa-speaking villages within the province of Tiguex (pronounced “Tee-wesh”), a 30-mile-long corridor flanking the Rio Grande. Long before contact with the first Spanish explorers, Kuaua held a strategic position at the crossroads of two major pre-European trade routes. Access to natural resources, proximity to and social ties with other pueblos, and location in a river valley bordered by mountains placed Kuaua in an enviable zone for commerce. Trade routes brought seashells from the Pacific coast and Gulf of California, macaw feathers from Mexico, and pottery from Hopi. Trails extending as far east as Kansas and Oklahoma on the Great Plains funneled freshwater shells, flint, and bison products through Pecos Pueblo. Pueblos along the Rio Grande, using lead mined in the Cerrillos Hills to make glazes for pottery, traded vessels with each other, as well as with distant partners.

