

Introduction to American Indian Area at Rock Ledge Ranch Historic Site

Prepared by Jared W. King, 2001

During the summer of 2000, I worked as both a student attending Colorado College and as a City employee at Rock Ledge Ranch Historic Site to research the history of American Indian heritage in this area and interpret this history to Park visitors. It is my purpose to present the results of my research and experiences in this Resource Manual so that others can utilize this information to further develop the American Indian Interpretive Site at the Ranch. It is not intended to be an "end all" product, but rather a start. My research, observations and insights are presented from the viewpoint of an American Indian student and interpreter.

This was our land. American Indian people have existed in the mountainous regions of Colorado for a long period of time. I have identified the geographic area we presently know as the Pikes Peak region as the *Central Front Range*. Over time, it was (and still is) inhabited by different groups of native people. The precursors to historic groups or tribes were present for thousands of years before present, as evidenced in both the archaeological record and oral history. The historic Nations who once lived and traveled in this area included the Ute, Apache, Kiowa, Comanche, Cheyenne and Arapaho. Other Nations such as the Lakota, Pawnee, Pueblo, Hopi, Navajo, Shoshone and Paiute played a role in the evolving history of this area. The geographic dispersal of these groups is difficult to pinpoint prior to historic contact beginning with the Spanish explorers. It was an ebb and flow between and among people as they migrated to, through, and visited the Central Front Range. Only after contact from written accounts can a more exacting picture of the presence of the Nations be constructed.

Early Spanish occupation in northern New Mexico from 1598 until 1821 changed the daily life of American Indian people. With the introduction of new technologies like horses, guns, and metal, American Indian life-ways were dramatically altered. The social, cultural, political, and economic forces of American Indian people would soon be disrupted by European political and cultural hegemonies. Disease carried by Spanish explorers had a deep and profound impact on the lives of American Indians.

With the arrival of Spanish explorers in northern New Mexico, trade between American Indian people and Spanish settlers increased. Trading centers included places like Santa Fe, Taos, Picuris, and Pecos Pueblos. Early Spanish trade items included metal tools, flour, produce, horses, tobacco, liquor, and glass beads. Trading was a powerful tool that allowed Spanish settlers to closely navigate and to a certain degree control Indian relations. It also allowed American Indian people the access to resources that influenced their lives.

This period of history of the Central Front Range is significant because of these early interactions among these distinct and diverse groups of people. Spanish occupation divided and largely influenced the lives of the people they had contact with. Life would never be the same.

The American Indian Interpretive Area at Rock Ledge Ranch Historic Site in Colorado Springs, Colorado was established to set the record straight regarding the history and culture of the people who occupied the Central Front Range prior to permanent American settlement. This project was started out of a partnership put forth between The Colorado College and the City of Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department by the Native American Student Association (NASA) at The Colorado College on March 29, 1999. Since then, efforts have been made to unveil the history and culture of American Indians through the development and implementation of an American Indian Interpretive Area at Rock Ledge Ranch Historic Site. Out of the project also came the support from Anne Hyde of the History Department at The Colorado College to design a class devoted to the preliminary site/plan proposal in the Fall of 1999. I was also fortunate to have devoted the summer of 2000 doing independent research under the History and Anthropology department at The Colorado College for the American Indian Interpretive Area.

A Brief History of American Indian/Ute Presence in the Central Front Range of Colorado (1775-1835)

By Jared King, 2000

It would be so convenient if the history of American Indian people in the Central Front Range of the Colorado Rockies could be presented in straightforward, linear fashion from the beginning of time to present. That however is not the case. Human presence in this area, extending south to New Mexico and northwest into Utah was a cacophony of people and events. The very use of the words *time* and *line* together is contradictory to the nature and intensity of human activity from 1775-1835. It was more like a spiraling cascade of inter-related events, activities, people and places that comprised this window of time.

I have chosen to use the term **Central Front Range** as a "*descripthistorical*" title to define the loose parameters of the geographic vicinity that has come to be known as the *Pikes Peak Region*. I am not comfortable with the use of the term *Pikes Peak Region* to define the range of people indigenous to this area. Zebulon Montgomery Pike was not present here until 1806 and his impact on the area was fleeting in comparison to the long term relationship established by multiple, varied groups of American Indians. In its most basic essence, the geographic reaches of the Central Front Range encompass the landscape in which human eyes can see the mountain the Ute people knew as Sun Mountain. (Subsequent historians have naively named this mountain Pikes Peak.) Ute Bands each had a mountain significant to their world. For the Mouache, Capote, and Tabeguache Bands, Sun Mountain was their mountain, the center of their universe. They climbed this mountain many times before Pike's ill-equipped and ill-fated attempt in 1806. They identified stopping points en-route to the summit for those who sought out the challenge.¹ Dr. Jim Goss and Southern Ute Historian Alden Naranjo have described the Ute attachment to this mountain. Sun Mountain can be viewed from great distances from all directions of the compass. With the introduction of the horse, these boundaries were extended to include areas that were trade centers.

At the heart, or bullseye of our area is a small area at the eastern base of Sun Mountain that is known as Garden of the Gods Park and Rock Ledge Ranch Historic Site. Garden of the Gods is a 1,360 acre City Park in Colorado Springs, Colorado. It is a noticeable landmark of the region now and was even more notable prior to the invasion of the one half million residents who now call it home. It is and was an ecological crossroads of plant and animal life. Exotic flora and fauna converge from the north, south, east, and west to produce an area rich in its extensive variety of useable plants. Its towering red sandstone rock formations produce a mini-climate that makes it cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter. Nearby in a town named Manitou by 19th century settlers are the soda springs that American Indian people revered and visited from afar. At the eastern edge of the Park boundaries is Rock Ledge Ranch Historic Site. Within the Ranch is Camp Creek. Along the west bank of Camp Creek, a little north of the present-day 1860s homestead interpretive area, is the American Indian Interpretive site that we have chosen to tell this story. This land was a traditional camping area for the Ute people, primarily during the winter months. Water from the creek met their needs along with the abundance of plants and animals thriving in the vicinity of the red rocks. The valley's plentiful grass provided grazing for horse herds. Permanent camps were not established in this location, as small groups would move around to different spots to avoid depleting resources in one location. We know, however, that the Ute presence was strong from the archaeological evidence discovered. Colorado City pioneer Irving Howbert recorded first hand accounts of groups of Ute, Cheyenne, and Arapaho frequenting the "Indian Trail" winding through Garden of the Gods and up into Ute Pass. Emily Johnson, in her book on White House Ranch, refers to her husband picking up artifacts and arrowheads in the fields. An archaeological survey of the Park done in 1993 recorded numerous finds ranging from lithic material and Ancestral Puebloan pottery shards, to numerous hearths ranging from 400-3,280 B.P. Oral accounts talk of Ute Mouache Chief, Buckskin Charlie, being born in the Garden of the Gods and of his frequent camping here until the Ute were banished to their reservations in the late 1870s. General William Jackson Palmer himself, refers to the Ute visitors who camped along the creek just south of his Glen Eyrie home. This spot then, is the point from which we will attempt to tell the story of the people who were here for centuries yet unknown.

Once again, it would be convenient if we could precisely identify what groups of people were undeniably here at any given time. That is simply not possible. Historians and scholars in their desire to neatly package history into a bound volume of events attempt to research and describe definitively what once was. This leads to giving names to groups so they are easily identified for reference purposes. As Alden Naranjo points out, the picture was not that simple. "You know, people travel around, other tribes came through this country. It wasn't totally Comanche or Kiowa or Apache or anything like that.... So, American Indians in this part of the country were territorial, but they also shared. They didn't own this piece of ground, they shared it with other people, they shared it with all living things." ²

Groups of individuals and family groups roaming the landscape were only loosely affiliated with each other prior to European contact. There was ebb and flow of affiliation that varied immensely depending on the location, the season, and the needs of each group. Many such groups of Ute people moved about the landscape. Families grew, the groups grew or split or died away. They were Ute because they shared a common language and deep-time history. After contact by the Spaniards, their groups were increasingly consolidated and referenced by geographic location. And of course, Ute were distinguished from Apache, who were distinguished from Comanche and so on. By 1750, groups of Ute people in Colorado were placed or grouped together into six bands: Yampa, Grand, Weeminuche, Tabeguache, Capote and Mouache. The ranges of the Tabeguache, Mouache and Capote intersected at the eastern base of Sun Mountain, an area that includes our present day American Indian Site.

The history and culture of the many historic people represented in the Central Front Range plays an integral part in the layers of experience and interactions over periods of time. The Apache, Kiowa, Comanche, Ute, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Paiute, Lakota, Hopi, and Shoshone, Spanish, and later Americans interacted in the ever-changing landscape of Colorado's high mountains and plains. The histories of these specific groups are distinct. They are set apart by time and space. Historically, their geographic locations often overlap and intersect. For the purposes of this Resource Manual, I will discuss the history and culture of the Ute people through three different

windows of time. First, beginning with the origins of Ute culture prior to 1598, 1598 to 1800, and from 1800 to 1835.

Origins of Ute Culture

What distinguishes the Ute from the other groups who traveled through Colorado? The Ute say it's the fact that they do not have a migration story. Ute oral tradition maintains that they have always existed in the mountains of Colorado from time immemorial. They are a distinct group of people who covered an inordinate amount of land from all of western Colorado to the pinon covered valleys of northern New Mexico and parts of Utah. There has been a certain amount of scholarship devoted to Ute migration theories. Where did they come from? The answer is still being hotly debated. According to Ute people, they have always been here. Linguistically, Utes are part of the Uto-Aztecan group which identifies Comanche, Shoshone, Hopi, O'odham (Papago and Pima), Yagui, and tribes in Northern Mexico as part of the same language family known as Numic speakers. (Goss 2000:29)

"Numic speakers are in the Great Basin. Except for a small island of Hokam Washo, they are the only peoples in the Great Basin. This is the only positive evidence. There is no other evidence to argue from. The most parsimonious model is that Numic speakers and Washos and their ancestors have been in the Great Basin for the past 10,000 years. We can assume great enough antiquity of man in western North America to contain this. It is quite probable that the Intermontane and Southwest areas have contained ancestral Hokan, Keresan, Penutian, and Aztec-Tanoan speaking communities for the past 10,000 years. Working from the positive evidence, there is no ground for bring any of these groups from the outside; they are there."³

Ute people have interacted for thousands of years with other people who also existed in the area. The flat topped houses in northern New Mexico known as Pueblos provided centers for trade. Utes migrated and traveled around primarily by foot. There were no horses before the Spanish brought them. The Jemez people identified the Utes as *Guaputu* meaning people who live in shelters built of straw or brush.⁴ (Wroth 2200:58) Numic people of the Great Basin commonly used brush shelters. Numic people are the same people identified in the Uto-Aztecan language group. The ecologically diverse

mountains and plains of Colorado would have provided a plethora of resources for Ute people. Multiple groupings or Bands populated the Central Front Range, traveling the landscape by foot.

1598-1800

The arrival of Spanish explorers and settlers would soon change the lives of all American Indians forever. Spanish occupation in the northern province of New Mexico began as early as 1598. Many Spanish expeditions were sent from Mexico in search for rich cities of gold and glory. They failed in their attempts to secure any potential findings of gold in this area but left a legacy that defined the existing social, economical, cultural, and political landscape, which in turn shaped the future of this area.

Early Spanish contact in New Mexico was between the existing Pueblo people and then later Utes, Navajo, Apache, Comanche, and so forth. Spanish explorers became aware of the *Guaputu* as described by the people of Jemez pueblo. Historian Virginia McConnell Simmons is confident in overriding the commonly held date that the acquisition of horses by American Indians was during the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. Spanish and Ute made first contact in 1637 in the San Luis valley where they skirmished. Eighty Ute people along with some Jicarilla Apaches were taken to Santa Fe and forced into Governor Luis de Rosa's textile workshop. Some Utes escaped in 1640 and took their first horses. Life would never be the same.⁵

The introduction of the horse was profound and left a powerful impact on the world of American Indian people. For the Utes, life began to move a little faster. Groups of people began to travel in larger numbers. Hunting buffalo during the fall in the plains of Colorado was much easier. Communications between different Ute bands was more efficient. News could travel faster in local vicinities of Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona. Houses also changed. By 1721 Utes developed the use of hide covered shelters, organized by lodgepole pine poles. This shelter is also known as a tipi. The origin of the work "tipi" comes from the Lakota language meaning "home".⁶

So, other things began to change. Material culture made a dramatic turn. With the arrival of Spanish settlers in places like Santa Fe, Taos, Picuris, and Pecos Pueblo, trading was the engine that powered Spanish-Indian relations. Spanish settlers introduced flour, tobacco, produce, liquor, glass beads, mirrors, metal, guns, trinkets, religion, language, geo-politics, and disease.

All of this activity makes for a very busy place. For the Utes, it means opportunity to build peaceful trade relations with Spanish settlers. This, of course, secures potential future alliances between Spanish settlers and Ute people. For the most part, Utes and Spanish settlers made certain efforts to establish peaceful relations. Spanish influence on Ute culture was powerful because of all the sophisticated technological advancements they introduced. However some influence was more indirect. The pace of their daily life was altered. Language and custom were affected. Utes were able to retreat back into the mountains of Colorado, easily navigating its mysterious (to the Spaniards) terrain. For the Spanish, it meant geographic ignorance and getting lost. Spanish occupation in Colorado was short-lived idea. They did not see potential use for the land and certainly did not find gold to fill their pockets. San Luis is the most identifiable remnant of their claim to Colorado.

The flip side of that coin is the direct influence the Spanish had on the Pueblo people of New Mexico. This picture is somewhat more straightforward. Pueblo people did not have a choice. The political and cultural hegemonic tools used by the Spanish forced Pueblo people to accept the direct influence. They were in the shallow end of the pool where sharks of Spanish people could easily prey. Utes on the other hand were safe? Not really. They continued to maintain trade relations with Spanish settlements and often camped in Santa Fe, Taos, Picuris, and Pecos Pueblo, but they were never really safe.

A simplistic treatment of history would indicate that all American Indian Nations gathered together as one to ward off the Spanish invasion of their lives. The reality is far more complex. Alliances with the Spaniards and with each other were made and broken.

Alliances shifted, pitching former friends against one another both in support of and in opposition to the Spaniards. The Ute joined forces with the Navajo. The Navajo later became enemies of the Ute. The Ute and Comanche shared a common language and ancestry. Yet, the Ute and Comanche became bitter rivals.

The Utes had the mountains, horses, language, family, and boundless spirit. The picture seemed straightforward for the Utes. By 1775 Ute interactions with Spanish settlers was well established. Their most pressing problem was largely due to the consistent onslaught of Comanche raids. Spanish, Pueblo, Apache, and Ute settlements were unsafe. Many of them fell from the hard blow of the Comanche gun. Their guns divided Nations and further divided American Indian people. This reality was certainly the message for the Utes. Comanche people had acquired guns through French traders in the early 1700s. Spanish traders were careful in not trading guns with American Indians simply because it served as a potential threat for an uprising, one that the Spanish could certainly identify with (1680 Pueblo Revolt). Comanches were also very highly skilled equestrians. They dominated the horse culture as fierce riders. Add guns to the picture and they are a force to be reckoned with by all. In response to Comanche raids, Spanish governor de Anza organized an alliance of over 200 men with the help of Ute guides and warriors in 1779. Their army traveled through the San Luis Valley, across South Park, and around Pikes Peak. They traversed Ute Pass and moved due north onto the plains, where they first surprised the Comanche east of present day Colorado Springs at a location near Jimmy Camp Creek. They then followed the Comanche southeast to today's Greenhorn Pass to fight a fierce battle with Comanche Chief Cuerno Verde who considered himself invincible in warfare. The Spanish were victorious, but only through the assistance of their Ute guides who mysteriously disappeared just prior to the encounter with Cuerno Verde.

This moment of time is important because it illustrates the relationship between Ute people and Spanish settlers. Their relationship evolved through trade and later developed through alliances that worked to maintain the unrest of the plains and vicinity of Ute and Spanish territory. This alliance fostered a partnership with Spanish settlers

who depended highly upon Ute people for trade between them and other more hostile American Indian Nations in the mid 1700s. Abiquiu was a regular trade center in 1776 as was Santa Clara Pueblo in 1791. This period also produced one of the first documented descriptions of Ute people during the Escalante expedition in 1776.

The Escalante expedition was organized in 1776 and journals describe more accurately the Ute people and their boundaries. Escalante writes, "Their habitations are some lodges or little huts of willow."⁷ Escalante was able to see how far the Ute territory reached and gained a new insight on their knowledge of the intricacies of the landscape that would prove invaluable. It was the pivotal drama of Don Juan Bautista de Anza's army led by Ute scouts on a new, unexpected route of attack that changed the balance of power for the powerful Comanche Nation on September 3, 1779.⁸

These examples are particularly significant because they portray the carefully navigated alliances between the Spaniards and other American Indian Nations. Through their cooperative efforts, de Anza's surprise march was successful, leading to the defeat of Comanche Chief Cuerno Verde. De Anza's frontier diplomacy certainly paid off. This frontier diplomacy was the mechanism so highly sought after by Spanish settlements in their desire to claim and retain their northern realm.

By the turn of the century, commerce dominated the plains with the arrival of footloose American traders and a new group of people. Cheyenne and Arapaho began staking out territory in the central plains and eastern plains of Colorado. Spanish and Comanche animosities continued. Other forces on the plains resulted in the continued displacement of the Comanches. Commerce was a powerful tool that brought American Indian people together for trade. With the arrival of these different groups of people, Spanish and Ute relations were further reinforced. For the purposes of the Utes, commerce with Cheyenne and Arapaho people did not make much sense simply because they were not compatible. Commerce continued to dictate Ute-Spanish alliances into the 1800s.

1800-1835

The time period between 1800 and 1835 became even more frenetic and interactive. The diversity of people represented in this particular area grew increasingly complex. Ute people continued to trade in Abiquiu, Santa Fe, Taos, Picuris, and Pecos in northern New Mexico. Expeditions like Lewis and Clark in 1804, Zebulon Pike in 1806, and the Long expedition in 1820 were well on their way out "west". Zebulon Pike's expedition is germane to this area because of the significant heritage and name he left on the large mountain (Pikes Peak) he failed to climb in the snowy clouded month of November, 1806. His expedition was "rescued" by Spanish militia and taken to Santa Fe where he was arrested and taken to Chihuahua, Mexico.

The permanent removal of Spain in 1821 from the northern province of New Mexico went, for the most part, unnoticed by the Ute People. Spain left a legacy that influenced American Indian culture through language, customs, beliefs, and traditions. Trade relations between the Utes and Mexicans continued as though no dramatic changes occurred. The removal of Spain opened up the first international trade route with the establishment of the Santa Fe Trail. American traders soon arrived in larger numbers, populating the eastern Plains of Colorado and central Plains, outfitting crude trading posts along the Arkansas River.

Most trading posts on the central and eastern plains of Colorado failed. Trade in this area depended primarily upon a very large animal, the buffalo. The buffalo was part of a very isolated trade industry that powered commerce from the plains to the growing metropolitan cities like St. Louis. One trading post that prospered was the Bent's Fort of the Bent and St. Vrain Company from St. Louis. George and William Bent established Bent's Fort in 1832 in present day La Junta, Colorado. With the assistance from the Cheyenne and Arapaho, Bent's Fort would send east over 40,000 buffalo hides in one winter alone. The buffalo extermination was underway. The quest for buffalo led the Cheyenne and Arapaho up into traditional Ute territory in South Park.

Cheyenne and Arapaho relationships with Ute people were acrimonious. Over a several year period the Cheyenne and Arapaho traveled a route beginning in the vicinity of the Great Lakes and moved slowly into the fringes of Ute homeland around the early to mid 1800s. Their arrival coupled with the arrival of American traders in the years between 1820 to 1835 shaped the future of Ute people. There was a blurred sense of direction for a lot of people. Who were these new people? Why were they coming in greater numbers? These questions would be answered in the years to come.

Ute people maintained their homes for a very long period of time in the mountains of Colorado. Their knowledge of this far-reaching landscape is what makes them distinct from other neighboring Nations represented in the Central Front Range. Their language, dress, customs, shelters, and interactions with the world around them keep them safely thriving in their secret pockets of communities. They are not a "Plains" people. They are not a cliff dwelling people. They are mountain people broken up into different bands, profiling the Central Front Range and all of western Colorado. The story of the Utes is unique and until recently, has been untold in their eyes. They were here before. They were here while other Native groups moved through and by their homes. They were here when the strange, powerful apparitions of men on large four legged dogs appeared. The Ute helped them survive and took the things they wanted or needed from the Spaniards. They were here when the Spaniards became Mexicans. They were here when Americans tipped the first dominoes of westward expansion that led to yet more Native people moving into and through their homeland. They were here with the buffalo. They were here after the buffalo. They were here before the railroad. They are still here.

Ute Culture and Timeline Selection for American Indian Area

The area identified as the Central Front Range has been home to many American Indian people throughout time. Based on our research we maintain that this area was shared by many and their stories are very different from each other. The Kiowa, Apache, Comanche, Ute, Cheyenne and Arapaho are among the groups who occupied different

parts of Colorado. Whose story do we interpret? The larger picture illustrates that these diverse groups of people play an integral role in the foundation of interpretation from the American Indian perspective. Therefore interpretation based on Ute occupation in the Central Front Range was selected for the starting point of this project.

Interpreting Ute history and culture in the Central Front Range is a large window to fill. Where do we begin? Time line selection is important because it will portray a window of time based on various interactions among all people represented in this area. The year 1775 was selected as the starting point of time line identification. Spanish occupation in northern New Mexico started as early as 1598 and ended in 1821. 1775 is important because it depicts a period in time when interactions between the Pueblo, Navajo, Apache, Comanche, Spanish, and Utes heightened. This period also illustrates how the complexities of these Nations evolved with the arrival of Spanish settlements in northern New Mexico.

At what date do we stop? The ending time selection for interpretation is 1835. It's important also to identify where American presence begins to enter the big picture. There is so much happening, making this a very busy place. Early footloose American expeditions make their way "west" in efforts to map out the unknown territory beyond the eastern colonies. These expeditions begin as early as 1804 with Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, Zebulon Montgomery Pike in 1805-1806, and the Long Expedition in 1820. Spanish occupation in northern New Mexico slowly declines between the turn of the 18th century and 1821. Meanwhile, Comanche people were displaced from the eastern plains of Colorado to the territory in Oklahoma by 1800. Cheyenne and Arapaho people begin to migrate down from the upper Missouri and make the eastern parts of Colorado and the central plains their new homeland. Ute People continue to maintain the mountain regions of Colorado and tensions grow between them and the Cheyenne and Arapaho. With the fall of Spain to the Republic of Mexico in 1821 international trade opens with the Santa Fe Trail. The plains and eastern parts of Colorado begin to see about a dozen crude outfitted trading posts. The Bent & St. Vrain Company from St.

Louis send out George and William Bent to the eastern part of Colorado. They establish Bent's Fort in present day in La Junta in 1832.

The window of time from 1775 to 1835 is historically significant because of the changing interactions among Native people, Spanish settlers, and American traders. The social, political, cultural, and economic forces shape the changing milieu and future of its people. It is also important to stress that our depiction of this time period (1775 to 1835) is limited somewhat by the availability of resources that allow us to accurately portray American Indian material culture. To gain the clearest view possible we go beyond the limited historic documentation of this period and include other sources like the oral stories and traditions of American Indian people.

Incidents of Travel

In this section it is my intention to further reinforce the selection of this period as a good "window" into the interpretation of American Indian life in this area because: 1) Contact existed with Europeans - French, Spanish, and English. 2) Intrusive occupation of lands in this area had not yet occurred through occupation of Native lands. 3) The introduction of the horse had a profound impact, permanently changing American Indian people's lives. Travel distances expanded exponentially. 4) Trade introduced new travel incentives beyond those of subsistence and survival. For example, metal goods provided ready made vessels for holding water and for cooking, instead of pottery, gourds, pitch baskets etc. 5) This period provides insight into the so-called "golden age" of American Indian life. 6) Available written records and documentation etc. provide for easier verification of location of American Indian groups. 7) There is potential for collaboration with American Indian oral accounts. 8) It was a dynamic – lively - active period for Native populations. 9) It provides a window of opportunity to re-visit the coexistence of people and how they affected each other within their common cultural properties. 10) Further review of this time period substantiates that this is a valid block of time that has

revealed valuable insights on the social, cultural, economic, and political milieu of this far-reaching landscape.

References from this period are heavily dependent on accounts afforded by Spanish exploration and colonization. Spanish culture was the single most important catalyst for irreversible change. De Anza was a maker of war and a person of peace. The interface among the melange of people is significant because it illustrates the changing social relations based on unpredictable alliances and animosities among American Indian groups. In 1779 Spanish governor Juan Bautista de Anza traveled north to Colorado's San Luis Valley. He traveled north across South Park to Ute Pass and onto the lateral edge of Pikes Peak attacking Comanche Chief Cuerno Verde (junior).⁹ It is a watershed moment because two hundred Utes and Apaches assisted Juan Bautista de Anza and his enormous army in carefully orchestrating a successful ambush of the powerful Comanche.¹⁰ This event responded to the continual presence of hostile Comanches who pillaged Spanish and Pueblo settlements. The Spanish relied on Ute knowledge to navigate the exact location of Cuerno Verde (junior). Other examples of interface among American Indian people involve Utes and Navajos fighting in the 1770s. Later as "conflict simmered down both tribes combined to fight the Hopis. In 1776, Utes were openly at war with the Hopis."¹¹ Ute and Spanish alliances provided impetus for greater economic and social relations. De Anza wanted to end decades of acrimonious and destructive collision between Spanish and Comanches and between the Utes and the Comanches.¹² Did the Spanish always trust the Utes? Did the Utes trust the Spanish? Just *whom* did one trust?

Expeditions are like serious field trips for serious findings. The Escalante and Dominguez's ambitious expedition to connect a route from New Mexico's missions to aspiring missions in California were short-lived. They never reached California due to complications which included the desertion of a guide and harsh weather conditions. But they found an impressive array of Utes, or "Yutas" as the Spanish often called them, from southwestern Colorado to the northeastern and southwestern parts of Utah as well as northeastern Arizona and westward to Santa Fe. This ambitious undertaking is

significant because it provided first hand observations of Utes whom the expedition encountered.¹³

The period between 1775 and 1835 pre-dates any permanent English settlement in the locality of Utah, New Mexico, and Colorado. The presence of footloose American frontiersmen begins with expeditions set by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark from 1804-06, Thomas Freeman and Peter Custis led a group in 1806 up the Red River, and Zebulon Pike in 1806 to find the headwaters of the Arkansas and the Red Rivers. In response to these expeditions sponsored by the American government, Spain set out their own expeditions in efforts to intercept the Americans.¹⁴ Other Americans who made it to Santa Fe from St. Louis included Robert McNight, James Baird, and Samuel Chambers. They were arrested, their trade items confiscated, and taken to Chihuahua.¹⁵ Also during the "tumultuous decade of the 1810s, Spain's American colonies began to slip away." Spain faced impossible odds as things began to slip away. Meanwhile the Cheyenne and Arapaho are now occupying the eastern plains of Colorado.¹⁶

The Cheyenne and Arapaho pressed down from the Missouri and displaced the Comanche and Kiowas to south of the Arkansas River. Cheyenne and Arapaho appeared in the rich game mountain valleys to the north and often made several trips into Ute country. The meeting between Ute and the nineteenth century Plains people was relatively late. The social, economic, cultural, and political distrust between Utes and Plains people provided opportunities to be involved in isolated trade centers such as Santa Fe and later in 1832 Bent's Fort on the eastern plains of Colorado. The relations between Spanish colonists and the neighboring American Indian Nations provoked dramatic changes which persisted for over two centuries.

There is a myriad of subject matter to continue to incorporate in our interpretation of American Indian heritage. I will work to build on them.

WORKS CITED

- Carson, Phil. Across the Northern Frontier: Spanish Explorations in Colorado. Johnson Books. Boulder, Colorado. 1998.
- Goss, James A. Traditional Cosmology, Ecology and Language of the Ute Indians in Ute Indian Arts and Culture. Wroth, William, ed. 2000.
- Goss, James A. Ute Myth as a Cultural Charter. University of Oregon. 1977.
- Limerick, Patricia N. Something in the Soil: Legacies and Reckonings in the New West. W.W. Norton & Company. 2000.
- Naranjo, Alden B. Proceedings from the Garden of the Gods American Indian Workshop. Colorado Springs, Colorado. October, 1994.
- Wroth, William, ed. Ute Indian Arts and Culture: From Prehistory to the New Millennium. Taylor Museum of the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center. Colorado Springs, Colorado. 2000.
- Simmons, Virginia M. Ute Indians of Utah, Colorado, and New Mexico. University Press of Colorado. Boulder, Colorado. 2000.
- Weber, David J. Spanish Frontier in North America. Yale University Press. New Haven, Connecticut. 1992.

ENDNOTES

(Draft)

¹ Naranjo, 1994.

² Naranjo, 1994:26.

³ Goss, 1977:60.

⁴ Wroth, 200:58.

⁵ Simmons, 2000:29.

⁶ Wroth, pg ?

⁷ Carson, 1976:165.

⁸ Carson, 1998:139-148.

⁹ Carson, 208.

¹⁰ Carson, 142.

¹¹ Simmons, 36.

¹² Limerick, 115.

¹³ Simmons, 37.

¹⁴ Weber, 294.

¹⁵ Carson, 177.

¹⁶ Simmons, 45.