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Photograph by Ralph Norman

*Paul Radin*

*Paul Radin died on Saturday, February 21, 1959, in New York city. This book, conceived in his lifetime and left exactly as conceived, is now his visible memorial.*



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## NEO-AZTECISM IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY AND THE GENESIS OF MEXICAN NATIONALISM

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ONE OF THE MOST STRIKING consequences of Spanish expansion in the New World was the emergence of societies characterized by racial and cultural heterogeneity. Spanish, Negro, and Indian were thrown together, and out of this mixture grew a new culture which was neither totally European nor predominantly indigenous. This development, of equal interest to the historian and the cultural anthropologist, was slow, painful, and sometimes demoralizing to the groups involved. The ultimate significance of this process has become apparent only in our time with the emergence of a dominant mestizo civilization in much of Hispanic America. This paper seeks to explore some of the attitudes of articulate Creoles toward the Indians. Out of this Indianist preoccupation the first glimmerings emerge of a Mexican national consciousness, based on the racially diverse character of Mexico's culture.

During the three centuries of the colonial period the Creoles (people of European blood born in the Indies) gradually adopted the Aztec world of pre-conquest times as the "classical antiquity" of Mexico. This proposition may sound historically incongruous for several reasons. First, Creoles had no racial affinity with the colonial Indians or their Aztec ancestors. Second, colonial society was rigidly caste-centered, with the Creoles near the top of the pyramid and the Indians forming its base.

The origins of neo-Aztecism in the eighteenth century go back to the sixteenth-century religious chroniclers. The early missionaries were animated by the conviction that the new Indian Church was a return to the spirit of the primitive Apostolic Church of Christ's time. Since the sixteenth-century Indian Church appeared like the primitive Church, the pre-conquest period in America became analogous to the pre-Christian era in Europe, that is, classical antiquity. Juan de Torquemada's *Monarquía indiana* (1615), for example, is saturated with analogies and comparisons, many of them of dubious pertinence, be-

tween the history of the Aztecs and that of the Greeks and the Romans. By these analogies, Torquemada clearly implied that Aztec society was the "classical antiquity" of Mexico.<sup>1</sup>

Torquemada's implication was made more explicit by succeeding Creoles. The notion received a literary expression in Valbuena's epic poem, *Grandeza Mexicana*, a powerful impetus in the erudite studies of Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, and a historical reaffirmation in Mariano Veytia's *Historia antigua de México*. The correlation of Aztec culture with Greek and Roman cultures reached its colonial culmination in the *Historia antigua de México* of Francisco Javier Clavigero.

The deities of the Aztecs were enveloped in an atmosphere suggestive of the gods of the Greeks and the Romans. The Aztec rulers took on the virtues of heroic Roman emperors. Each Aztec sovereign was thought to personify a classical virtue. The Council of the Republic of Tlaxcala became enmeshed with the aura of a Roman senate. In saluting the arrival of the viceroy, the Conde de Paredes, Sigüenza y Góngora urged that representative of the crown to seek inspiration in the classical virtues of the Aztec emperors.<sup>2</sup>

The Creoles' adoption of the Aztec world as their own American classical antiquity sprang from a yearning to secure roots that sank deep into the history of the New World. They felt the need for an American past, one totally disconnected from the Europe they had come from. The Creoles, of course, did have an American past of their own, something which began with Cortés. This tradition, however, was too brief in duration and too European in content to satisfy their need to identify themselves with a historical tradition indigenously American. To fill this same historical vacuum the Creoles warmly espoused the cult of the Virgin of Guadalupe. Their enthusiasm for the cult of Guadalupe was nationalist-inspired. She was an Indian, that is, an American, and not a European Virgin. Hence the Creoles claimed her as their own.<sup>3</sup> It was not fortuitous that Father Hidalgo proclaimed her patroness of the independence movement in 1810, for the brown Madonna was as popular with the Creoles as she was with the Indians.

It would be misleading to assume that the Creoles were adopting an attitude similar to that of the descendants of American immigrants, who claimed as their heritage all that had occurred in English America

since the landing of the Pilgrims. For the American immigrant the English colonial and national past, which antedated his arrival, was a tradition that still continued to mold the cultural environment of the United States. In the eighteenth century the Aztec tradition had no such comparable influence on the colony, for the Spanish Conquest had terminated the cultural creativity of indigenous society. The dominant civilization of the colony, even for the Indians, was Spanish. The post-Conquest world was to the Creoles what the English colonial tradition was to the North American immigrant.

The Creole attitude toward the Aztec world also differed from the medieval ideal of the *renovatio imperii romanorum*. In the Middle Ages much of Antique culture had survived both in the Church and in the sphere of higher learning. The Creoles were not seeking any conscious restoration of Aztec cultural ideals similar in scope to the medieval program of the *renovatio*. Instead, they were feeling their way toward self-identity; their aim was to distinguish their culture from European culture. By claiming the Aztec world as their own American heritage they were accomplishing two objectives. First, they were beginning to break some of the ties which bound them to Europe. Second, they were laying the foundation for a rationale justifying their own assumption of political control over the Hispanic-American world. The nationalist and anti-Spanish implications of neo-Aztecism begin to become apparent in the historical investigations of Francisco Javier Clavigero.

Born in the city of Veracruz in 1731 of Spanish parents, Clavigero played a vigorous role in reforming the Jesuit educational curriculum in Mexico after 1750.<sup>4</sup> This movement aimed at replacing much of traditional Scholasticism with the rationalist philosophy of Descartes and Newton. These eclectic Jesuit reformers sought to introduce as much of the new philosophy of science as would not conflict directly with the dogmas of Catholicism.<sup>5</sup> On the ideological plane this movement represents the first stage in the dissolution of the Spanish imperial system, for Scholasticism had powerfully buttressed the hold of the Spanish crown over its overseas dominions.<sup>6</sup> Clavigero's pedagogical labors were cut short in 1767, when at the age of thirty-seven he found himself exiled to Italy, a victim of the Spanish crown's decision to expel the Society of Jesus from the Spanish dominions.

In the Papal States Clavigero spent the rest of his life completing his

*Historia antigua de México*, which was first published in Italian in 1780-81.<sup>7</sup> This work soon acquired a solid reputation for excellence both in Europe and in America. Clavigero's account, in reality, was a revision of Torquemada's earlier text. One basic difference between the two books is the contrast between the methodology of a Baroque scholar and that of a historian of the Enlightenment. Clavigero used his sources more critically. He had scant sympathy for Torquemada's penchant for the mythical and the fabulous. Although Clavigero shared the eighteenth century's scorn for the florid erudition of the Baroque age, he retained and expanded Torquemada's central thesis of the supposed parallel between the histories of the Aztecs and that of the Greeks and the Romans. What Clavigero did was to revise Torquemada, using a more up-to-date method.<sup>8</sup>

The outstanding feature of Clavigero's text is his contribution to the development of neo-Aztecism. He brought out for the first time its anti-Spanish implications, and he related the cult of Aztec antiquity to the social problems of the contemporary Indians.

Clavigero spent the last two decades of his life in an enforced exile in Italy, the victim of what he thought was the arbitrary and unjust act of the Spanish crown in expelling the Jesuit order from the Spanish empire. An articulate Creole and a political exile, he had an understandable grudge against the Spanish metropolis.

His American patriotism was further sharpened by his spirited reaction to the then widely read *Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains* (1768-69) of Cornelius de Pauw. That Dutch-born publicist claimed that all forms of physical and human nature in the New World were degenerate. A general inundation, which allegedly occurred a few centuries before the Conquest, was Pauw's explanation for the degeneracy of American nature. The Indians had such weak memories that they were unable to remember one day what they had done the day before. Their minds were so dull that they were incapable of arranging even the most simple ideas in any kind of orderly sequence. Their emotions were so frigid that they were unable to respond to the stimulus of love. Pauw also accused the Indians of drunkenness, sodomy, ingratitude, and suicide. Refusing to make any distinctions between the various Indian peoples, Pauw argued that the cultures of the Incas and the Aztecs bordered on brute savagery. Did they not lack minted money, iron, large vessels, arches, and an alphabet? The

ease with which a mere handful of Spanish adventurers were able to overthrow these nations was convincing proof to Pauw of their lack of solid cultural progress.<sup>9</sup>

However unscientific, illogical, and ill-documented Pauw's reflections may now appear, he was a publicist of some repute in his own time. Hence Clavigero thought it necessary to add a one-volume appendix to the *Historia*, called the *Disertaciones sobre la tierra, los animales, y los habitantes del reino de México*, in which he set out to refute systematically Pauw's dismal portrait of the Aztecs.

On more than one occasion Clavigero exploded in wrath:

... European travellers, historians, naturalists and philosophers have made America into a warehouse for their childish fantasies. In order to make their works more delectable with the fantastic novelties of their alleged observations, they have attributed to all Americans that which they have observed in some or in none. . . . I do not pretend to maintain that the Americans are stronger than the Europeans. They can even be less strong than the Europeans without being positively weak and degenerate. The Swiss are stronger than the Italians; but we do not call them degenerate, nor even less do we blame the Italian climate. . . . If Pauw has seen, as I have, the enormous burdens that the Indians carry on their backs, he would not have had the insolence to hurl in their faces any accusation of physical weakness.<sup>10</sup>

Clavigero was reacting against the blatant Europe-centered attitude of Pauw. Clavigero's theme was that the "empire of reason" was not confined to Europe.<sup>11</sup> Other areas of the world in addition to Europe had made cultural achievements of note. In order to refute Pauw's galaxy of charges he was compelled to compare and to contrast in a systematic fashion the pre-Conquest world of America with other civilizations. What he did was to use a comparative historical method, one first suggested by Montesquieu in *L'esprit des lois*.<sup>12</sup> Several major spokesmen of the Enlightenment, including Leibnitz, Christian von Wolff, Montesquieu, and especially Voltaire, rejected the arrogant cultural parochialism personified by Pauw. Voltaire, for example, stressed the achievements of the Chinese;<sup>13</sup> Clavigero vindicated pre-Conquest America. This Mexican Jesuit participated in the Enlightenment's repudiation of a narrow, Europe-centered attitude toward the non-Western world.

Pauw claimed that the Aztecs had been vastly overrated by the early Spanish chroniclers. The colonial Indians were stupid, indolent,

and alcoholic. How could their ancestors before the Conquest have made any respectable cultural accomplishments? Impossible! insisted Pauw. Clavigero admitted the demoralization of the colonial Indians. His quarrel with Pauw was about its cause. Pauw claimed that the backwardness of the Indians was a congenital condition. Clavigero rejoined that the cause was environmental. He added:

... I solemnly affirm to Pauw and to all Europe that the minds of the Mexican Indians are in no respect [congenitally] inferior to those of the Europeans: that the Indians are capable of learning all the sciences even the most abstract ones. If their upbringing were carefully supervised, if they were educated in schools by competent teachers, and if they were encouraged by rewards, one would see among the Indians philosophers, mathematicians and theologians who would vie with the most famous of Europe. But it is very difficult if not impossible, to make progress in the sciences in the midst of a miserable and servile life full of continual vexations. He who contemplates the present state of Greece could not convince himself that long ago that country produced those great men about whose existence we know, if he were not assured of the fact by the survival of the immortal works the Greeks wrote and by the consent of the ages. But the obstacles that the Greeks must surmount in order to acquire an education are small in comparison to the difficulties that the American Indians have always and still have to overcome.<sup>14</sup>

Today it is almost taken for granted that people are molded in some significant measure by their cultural environment. But in the eighteenth century this contention, which formed a cornerstone for the idea of progress, was a novel and revolutionary proposition. Montesquieu was one of the first to stress the central importance of environment. His conclusion was derived from John Locke's principle that human nature is plastic at birth and that it is molded by its surroundings (its sensory experiences). By demolishing the theory of innate ideas Locke challenged the traditional Christian notion of the innate depravity of man springing from original sin. The humanitarianism of the Enlightenment was built upon the belief that social evil was not the result of God's wrath and curse on mankind, but merely the consequence of conditions susceptible to rational criticism and improvement.<sup>15</sup> This environmentalist doctrine of the Enlightenment was clearly echoed in Clavigero's defense of the Indian.

Clavigero set out to defend the Indians against what he considered were the slanderous attacks of Pauw. He ended by affirming a faith (often voiced in the Enlightenment) in the capacity of any people to

achieve distinction, provided they were given a favorable social milieu in which to develop their abilities. Not only did the environmentalist doctrine provide an answer to Pauw's charge about the congenital inferiority of the Indians, but it also gave Clavigero an opportunity to criticize Spanish colonialism. The analogy Clavigero made between Spanish rule over the Indians and Turkish enslavement of the Greeks was scarcely flattering to the Spanish empire. To suggest that the Greeks under Turkish rule had more opportunities for upward social mobility than did the Indians under Spanish dominion was a pointed charge. The Spanish authorities, who examined and postponed granting Clavigero's request for a Spanish edition, were not slow in catching the powerful anti-Spanish undercurrent of the Indian-Greek analogy.<sup>16</sup> In Clavigero's view the Conquest had imposed chains on the Indians. A vast portion of Spain's rule in America was implicitly condemned, for the colonial administration did not create social conditions which would encourage the Indians to develop their latent talents.<sup>17</sup>

Until Clavigero, the neo-Aztecism of the Creoles had little connection with the contemporary Indians. The latter were considered remote and rather brutish descendants of the "classical" Indians of Aztec antiquity. Such was the attitude of Valbuena, Sigüenza y Góngora, and Veytia. But Clavigero realized that the Creoles could not merely adopt the Aztec world as the classical antiquity of America and continue to ignore the social conditions of the descendants of the Aztecs. In Clavigero's view the Indians belonged to the Mexican nation as much as the Creoles did, and the latter's responsibility to improve the condition of the former could not be evaded. Placitudinous though this realization may sound today, it was then a novel thought for a spokesman of the Creoles, who as a class were notoriously unmindful of the plight of the Indians.

Not only did Clavigero condemn the colonial administration of the Indians, but also he attacked the race-caste system of the colony:

There is no doubt that the policy of the Spaniards would have been much wiser, if, instead of importing women from Europe and slaves from Africa, they had married the Indians so that the result of this fusion would have been a single and integrated nation. If the character of this work would permit, I could very easily demonstrate the incalculable advantages to the kingdom of Mexico and to the whole Spanish monarchy that would have resulted from this racial amalgamation, and I could indicate the grave ills that have been caused by its non-existence.<sup>18</sup>

Given his preoccupation to unite the Creoles and the Indians into one cultural community, Clavigero wistfully regretted that the ties between the Creoles and the Indians were psychological, geographical, and historical rather than biological. Envisaging Mexico as a nation of mestizos, Clavigero was a prophet who has found his vindication in the mestizo Mexico of the twentieth century.

It would be misleading to overemphasize the anti-Spanish innuendos of the *Historia antigua de México* without taking note of the fact that Clavigero on several occasions defended Spain's conduct in the New World. Clavigero sharply criticized contemporary European historians such as the vitriolically anti-Spanish *abbé* Raynal and the more objective William Robertson for exaggerating and in several cases inventing atrocities attributed to the Spaniards during the Conquest.<sup>19</sup> Cortés emerges as an inspired and resourceful leader—not, however, without a few blemishes of character.<sup>20</sup> In Books VIII-X Clavigero radically revised his "chains" metaphor. The oppressive servitude imposed on the Indians by the Conquest was a just punishment decreed by Providence to chastise the ancient peoples of America for the sins of their paganism. On this somber note Clavigero concluded his book.<sup>21</sup>

The ambivalence in Clavigero's attitude resulted from a conflict of loyalties. He felt himself both a Spaniard and a Mexican. As a Spaniard and as a priest he became the defender of the Conquest. As a Creole and as a Mexican patriot he was somewhat critical about several phases of Spanish activity in the New World. This conflict was resolved a generation later when several advocates of independence outwardly repudiated their Spanish inheritance. Clavigero died in 1787, two years before the outbreak of the French Revolution, which would begin a chain of events leading to the dissolution of the Spanish colonial empire.

Two leading publicists for Mexican independence—Servando Teresa de Mier and Carlos María de Bustamante—gathered up the threads of colonial Indianism and fashioned out of them a rationale for Mexican separation from Spain. They made explicit what had been largely implicit in the thought of Clavigero. Mier and Bustamante formulated the thesis that the justice of independence lay in the injustice of the Conquest. Their argument was that the Spaniards in 1519-21 had deprived the Mexican nation of 1810, which they identified with the

pre-Conquest Aztecs, of her liberty by means of brute force and deception and that Spain had held the Mexican nation in an oppressive subjugation for three hundred years. Bustamante interpreted the War of Independence as a revenge for the alleged atrocities committed during the Conquest against the Mexican nation.<sup>22</sup> The fathers of Mexican independence were intoxicated with North American, British, and French constitutional theories which seemed a panacea leading toward political stability and economic prosperity. They proposed to repudiate their Spanish colonial heritage. In its place they proclaimed Aztec antiquity as the true origin of the nation which they intended to govern by the maxims of Anglo-Saxon and French constitutional theory.

The notion that the justice of independence lay in the injustice of the Conquest did not exist merely in the writings of Mier and Bustamante. This idea was a part of the climate of opinion of that era. Morelos's inaugural address to the Congress of Chilpancingo, delivered on November 6, 1813, was saturated with neo-Aztecism.<sup>23</sup> Morelos's conception of Mexican independence as the restoration and continuation of the Aztec empire can not be dismissed as an esoteric bit of romantic sentimentality. Of mestizo and mulatto background himself, he candidly recognized the new nation's responsibility to the Indians. His constructive program was stillborn as the result of his defeat by a coalition of Spanish royalists, clericals, and Creoles—the latter being afraid that Morelos's promised social revolution would jeopardize their privileged position.

These same forces which destroyed Morelos engineered the bloodless coup d'état of 1821 carrying into effect Mexico's separation from Spain. The plan of Iguala envisaged a monarchy headed by a Bourbon prince. Such a program seemed to run contrary to the spirit of neo-Aztecism. Yet its current was running so swiftly that this same ideology, which influenced Morelos, also permeated the declaration of independence issued by the governmental junta in 1821: "Mexico at long last ends the three centuries of oppression under which she has lived, and is restored to all the rights that the author of nature conceded her."<sup>24</sup>

The fact that neo-Aztecism was discarded by the Creole oligarchy, who directed the affairs of independent Mexico in the nineteenth century, is no valid reason for minimizing the influence of this point of view. This pattern of ideas played a significant role in preparing the Creoles for independence, it provided a neat although historically

dubious rationale for independence, and it foreshadowed a mature Mexican national consciousness based upon a recognition of the racially heterogeneous character of Mexican society. In terms of a program for sustained political action, the Indianist preoccupation of the generation of 1810 proved abortive. The Revolution of 1910, however, was to translate the stillborn aspiration of 1810 into a social reality.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> See my *Millennial Kingdom of the Franciscans in the New World: A Study of the Writings of Gerónimo de Mendietta 1525-1604* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Publications in History, No. LII, 1956), pp. 42-55, 110-11.

<sup>2</sup> Ramón Iglesia, "La mexicanidad de don Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora," in *El hombre Colón y otros ensayos* (Mexico City, 1944), p. 133.

<sup>3</sup> Francisco de la Maza, *El Guadalupeñismo mexicano* (Vol. XVII of *México y lo mexicano*, ed. by Leopoldo Zea, Mexico City, 1953).

<sup>4</sup> The most useful primary source for the biography of Clavigero is Juan Luís Manero, S.J., *De vitis aliquot mexicanorum altiorumque qui sive virtute, sive literis Mexici imprimis floruerant* . . . (Bologna, 1791-1792). The most comprehensive secondary source is Sara E. Lake and A. A. Gray's Introduction to *The History of [Lower] California of Francisco Javier Clavigero* (Palo Alto, 1937).

<sup>5</sup> Bernabé Navarro, *La introducción de la filosofía moderna en México* (Mexico City, 1948).

<sup>6</sup> Leopoldo Zea, "The Arcana of Spanish-American Culture," in *Interrelations of Culture* (Paris, UNESCO, 1955), pp. 284 ff.

<sup>7</sup> The first seven Spanish editions of the *Historia antigua de México* from 1826 to 1917 were based on Spanish translations of the Italian edition, *Storia antica del Messico* (4 vols., Cesena, 1780-1781). The original manuscript in Spanish, which Clavigero translated into Italian, was believed to have been lost until Mariano Cuevas found it in Mexico City. I have used Cuevas's text, *Historia antigua de México* (4 vols., Mexico City, 1945). Charles Cullen translated the Italian version into English and published it in London in 1787. It was reprinted in London in 1807, in Richmond, Virginia in 1806, and in Philadelphia in 1817. A German edition translated from the English version was published in Leipzig in 1790.

<sup>8</sup> Julio Le Riverend Brusone remarked on Clavigero's critical attitude toward Torquemada. "We are never so conscious of the limitations of a work when we owe to it a large part of our knowledge on the subject." Julio Le Riverend Brusone, *La Historia antigua de México del Padre Francisco Javier Clavigero, in Estudios de historiografía de la Nueva España*, ed. by Ramón Iglesia (Mexico City, 1945), p. 307.

<sup>9</sup> Cornelius de Pauw, *Recherches philosophiques sur les américains ou mémoires intéressants pour servir à l'histoire de l'espèce humaine* (3 vols., Berlin, 1770). I, 4, 35, 113; II, 60-72, 74, 83-117, 153-56, 159, 163, 203. Pauw's thesis about the degeneracy of both physical and human nature in America was a popularization and an extension of Buffon's hypothesis that nature in the New

World was "green" and underdeveloped. Count George de Buffon (1707-88) was the leading zoologist of the Enlightenment.

<sup>10</sup> Clavigero, *Historia antigua de México*, IV, 232-33, 235, 237.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 196.

<sup>12</sup> Although Clavigero found in Montesquieu much illustrative data which he often cited (*Historia antigua de México*, IV, 136, 277, 279, 321, 340, 341, 343, 345, 348), his use of Montesquieu's comparative historical method was more significant.

<sup>13</sup> Pauw's anti-Chinese prejudice aroused the ire of Voltaire. See Antonello Gerbi, *Viejas polémicas sobre el nuevo mundo* (Lima, 1946), p. 91. In this book and in his more recent *La disputa del nuevo mundo: estudio de una polémica, 1750-1900* (Milan and Naples, 1955) there are illuminating discussions about the intellectual polemics concerning the physical and human nature of the New World in which Buffon, Pauw (to a lesser degree), and Hegel figured prominently.

<sup>14</sup> Clavigero, *Historia antigua de México*, IV, 259; see also I, 165-72.

<sup>15</sup> Carl Becker, *The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth-Century Philosophers* (New Haven, 1932), pp. 64-65.

<sup>16</sup> For official and academic reaction in Spain to Clavigero's book see Lillian Estelle Fisher, *The Background of the Revolution for Mexican Independence* (Boston, 1934), p. 306. The Spanish authorities would not license the publication of a Spanish edition, for they took strong objection to the Greek-Indian analogy. The first Spanish edition was published in London in 1826 by a Spanish liberal émigré, Joaquín de Mora.

<sup>17</sup> Clavigero, *Historia antigua de México*, I, 167; IV, 266.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 225-26.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 14-15, 88, 161.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 12, 40, 49, 154.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 313-14.

<sup>22</sup> José Servando Teresa de Mier Nortega y Guerra, *Historia de la revolución de la Nueva España* (2 vols., Mexico City, 1920; 1st ed., London, 1813) II, 276-78; Carlos María de Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana* (3 vols., Mexico City, 1843), I, 41-42. For a stimulating analysis of neo-Aztecism during the independence period see Edmundo O'Gorman, Prologue to his *Antología de Servando Teresa de Mier* (Mexico City, 1945), pp. xxxv ff. Bustamante's neo-Aztecism was more exaggerated and militant than Mier's.

<sup>23</sup> For the text of Morelos's address see Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana*, II, 391.

<sup>24</sup> Lucas Alamán, *Historia de México* (5 vols., Mexico City, 1883), V, 287.

## THE COLUMBIA INDIAN CONFEDERACY

A LEAGUE OF CENTRAL PLATEAU TRIBES

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THIS PAPER is concerned with a remarkable confederation of Indian tribes which came into being in the Plateau of northwestern America in pre-white times and which persisted until the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Secondly it is concerned with the greatest recent leader of this confederacy, a man known to the whites as Chief Moses. This man was a leader second to none among the many great chiefs of late times in northwestern Indian history. He is less well-known than Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce tribe, but the parts he played in both purely native affairs and in relationships with the whites were equally dramatic and more significant. Joseph was chief of but one sub-tribe of the Nez Perce, whereas Moses was executive and spokesman for the four tribes of the Columbia Confederacy.

The existence of the Columbia Confederacy became known to me in the course of early field researches with the constituent tribes: the Columbia, Wenatchee, Entiat, and Chelan. But it remained for ethnological research which I have conducted in recent years to provide the provocative leads which sent me back to the field for specific study of the confederacy so that the picture might be presented with reasonable fullness and detail.

The member tribes were all Salish speaking and occupied a contiguous block of territory on both sides of the Columbia River in what is now central Washington. Culturally they were close—especially the Wenatchee, Entiat, and Chelan. The Columbia tribe diverged somewhat in having a stronger tribal organization, more tendency to warring activities, and more frequent and prolonged ventures into the Great Plains for buffalo hunting.

It is not surprising that the significance of the Columbia Confederacy and the role of Chief Moses remained undiscovered for so long a time. The tribes involved occupied an area which was the last in the Northwest to feel the impact of white settlement. It was not until the 1890s that any