

HISTORICAL PART

IMMIGRATION

OF THE ANCIENT POPULATORS OF MEXICO

NO one, up to the present, has drawn aside the veil that conceals the history of the populators of Mexico, previous to the Toltecs. The ruins of ancient edifices of a growing importance, met with from the North to the South, and the distribution of dialects in this part of the American continent, reveal a series of immigrations, that manifest in my opinion both the successive arrivals of certain tribes in search of lands adapted to their purposes, and the places where they definitely fixed their residence, constituting themselves into communities. Neither in America nor in Europe does either history or tradition discover the origin of their first populators. In the New Continent as well as in the old one, the remains of grand monuments are found demolished by the lapse of centuries, which only serve to indicate the perseverance of the ancient and unknown generations. What has been revealed to us by the magnificent ruins of Palenque and Comalcalco in Chiapas and Tabasco — by those of Uxmal and Chichen-Itza in Yucatan and those of Mitla in Oaxaca? Only

the existence of former and occult generations, very superior in civilization to those of which history speaks to us.

Various historians, basing themselves on the interpretation of the monumental hieroglyphics and those of the indigenous papyrus, have attributed the origin of the races that populated the rich regions of Anahuac to seven families that immigrated successively from North America, all speaking one common language, the Nahuatl or Mexican; but history neither reveals the primitive derivation of those races, nor does it open up the mystery of the multiplicity of tongues and their dialects of so diverse a character.

According to the descriptive and comparative tables of Pimentel, none of the 108 languages which he has classified have any analogy to the Asiatic tongues, nor even to Othomi, which from consisting almost entirely in monosyllables and from its construction, was thought to be similar to the Chinese.

Notwithstanding, the identity of the language of the Esquimaux indicates the communication betwixt Asia and America, a circumstance, in my idea, which is demonstrated in the form of our ancient monuments and the art of their constructions. The "tumulos" or sepulchres—according to Sir John Lubbock in his work "Prehistoric man"—are found scattered over all Europe from the Atlantic coasts to the Ural mountains and covering a great part of the immense steppes of Asia from the Russian frontiers to the Pacific and from the plains of Siberia to those of Hindostan. In a similar manner, monuments of a like nature are found disseminated from the banks of the Gila to those of Usumacinta and from the shores of the Atlantic to those of the Pacific, the pyramids on this side, like those on the other, displaying the most admirable development of the same idea.

In my "Essay of comparison between the Egyptian and the Mexican pyramids," I did not call attention solely to the form of the monuments, but more particularly to their specialities and details both interior and exterior, and from their undeniable analogy I deduced the identity of artistic knowledge between one and the other people, but without wishing that from my conclusions the inference should be drawn

of the Egyptian origin of the first populators of Mexico, as some have pretended to attribute to me, from simply reading the title of my work.

If we carefully examine the color of the skin, the configuration of the cranium and the features of the individuals of the Tartar race and the Mexican race, we shall find such a similarity between them that we can scarcely avoid inclining our opinion towards the belief, already somewhat generalized, that the latter descended from some of the former. Perhaps a really physiological study in this respect might throw some light on our hallucination.

I do not pretend to adduce these arguments with the view of convincing those who entertain contrary opinions to mine in regard to the origin of the primitive American races; the object by which I am guided is solely to demonstrate the obscurity of history and the distance that separates us from the manifest triumph of one of many conjectures.

With the view of presenting the greatest amount of data respecting the population of the Republic, and treating of the indigenous race, as unfortunate as it is deserving of an attentive study, it may be deemed proper to refer to some of the ancient historical notions, if only with the object of learning their origin.

The ancient history of Mexico commences with annals of the Toltecs; nevertheless it is believed that the country was inhabited previously by a wild people, amongst whom the "Olmecas" and "Xicalancas" and even the "Othomies" have been cited, as being considered among the very first inhabitants of the Mexican territory.

The hieroglyphical inscriptions found amongst the ruins of the ancient edifices, which are generally characterized by their pyramidal form, have not even revealed the epochs of the construction of these monuments, nor the nations to which they belonged. As the former Mexicans were ignorant of the existence of any tribes previous to that of the Toltecs, the construction of the pyramids of Teotihuacan, Papantla and Cholula was attributed by them to the latter, whilst some historians ascribed them to other nations of greater antiquity. If therefore, history teaches nothing certain in regard

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"ALFONSO H. LEÓN"
APDO. 1625 MONTERREY, MEXICO

to those monuments, as of much less antiquity, how can we avoid being at fault on contemplating the magnificent structures of Mitla, Palenque and Uxmal, which for their style, solidity and decorations excite well merited admiration and profound curiosity?

The Toltecs, if we are to judge by the statement of Ixtlilxochitl, were informed as to the creation of the world, the deluge, the building of the tower of Babel and the confusion of tongues. They held as a fact that the world had been destroyed three times and regenerated on an equal number of occasions, denominating each destruction as an "age" or darkening of the sun; the first catastrophe happening with the deluge, which they called "sol" or epoch of the waters—the second was by a hurricane, which they called "sol" or epoch of the wind, and the third by an earthquake to which they gave the name of "sol" or epoch of the earth, and lastly awaited the complete destruction of the world by fire.

On the Toltecs being expelled from their country, *Huehuetlapaltan*, a place situated, according to Humboldt, towards the North West Coast of America, near 42° of Latitude North, they commenced their peregrination towards the South, in the year 596 of the vulgar era, led by their chiefs, and stationing themselves at various places and founding towns and cities, but without meeting for some time with an appropriate spot for their purposes. After more than a century of wandering, they arrived at Tollancinco, where they remained for 20 years, and founded the city of Tollan, which was the metropolis of their nation.

According to some writers, Tula, under the name of *Manhe-mi* already existed, and owes its rebuilding and its new name to the Toltecs, and the same occurred with the pyramids of Teotihuacan, which site was chosen by them for their religious ceremonies. The annals of this nation, then preponderating by its institutions and civilization, show that the place of their departure was at the city of *Tlachicatzincan* in the Huetlapallan country and that they effected their immigration, sailing by the Gulf of California and the coasts of Jalisco, until they reached Tochtepec on the borders of the Pacific.

According to the notices of Ixtlilxochitl, on the Toltecs founding their monarchy, there already existed in the regions of Panuco and Huexotla, a savage tribe of the "Chichimecas," to whose chief they addressed themselves, soliciting a prince of that race to be elected as their king; a flattering proposal by which the Toltecs hoped to secure themselves against the ferocious instincts of that barbarous people.

The same *Ixtlilxochitl* in another part of his history relates that the first king was chosen from among the Toltecs, and this is the most probable. The catalogue of the Toltec kings began with *Chalchihuetlanetzin* ("precious stone") in the year 667 of the vulgar era, and it was then that the law of succession commenced to rule designating the period of 52 years for each reign, the same law providing that if the monarch should die before the expiration of that term, a Republican government should be adopted for the time wanting, on the conclusion of which the legitimate successor should take charge of the destinies of the country.

It is a remarkable fact that all the Toltec monarchs completed the time fixed by law, with the exception of *Mitl*, whose reign was prolonged for another seven years, in virtue of the meritorious conduct and good qualities that adorned him.

On the death of the first king at nearly completing the fifty-two years, he was buried with all his insignias, the highest honors being paid to him.

In 719, *Ixtliquechahuac* or *Ixacateclatl*, as the legitimate successor, came to the throne. During his reign he continued the aggrandizement of the nation and was succeeded by prince *Huetzin*. In 1771, a little before the death of *Ixtliquechahuac*, the astrologist *Huetmatzin* in his latter days collected in a large volume which was called the *Teoamoxtli* or divine book, all the rites, sacrifices and ceremonies of the Toltec people, the laws, maxims and sentences, the catalogue of kings and potentates and the astrological, artistic and scientific rules; in one word, all the prosperous and adverse events, forming in this way the history of this great people, whose ruin he also predicted.

At the death of *Huetzing* (823) his son *Totepeuh* inheri-

ted the throne, his reign being remarkable for the peace and tranquillity enjoyed by the nation. Huetzin was succeeded by prince Necaxoh (875) and the latter by his son Mitl, the wisest of the Toltec kings, during whose dynasty the monarchy reached its greatest eminence. Enlightened and prudent, he dictated memorable laws and extended his authority to a very great distance; many villages, towns and cities were founded in his time, among which Teotihuacan (the place of adoration) which already existed, excelled the most, and being as it was the grand sanctuary of the Toltecs, it surpassed Tula in the grandeur of its temples, monuments and power. Teotihuacan was not only renowned for its edifices and extent, but also for its lofty pyramids, of which the largest was dedicated to the Sun and the smallest to the Moon, and perhaps the innumerable "tlateles" to the stars, if we consider the emblematic character of the people we refer to. These monuments, as I have already mentioned in another article, were in my opinion mausoleums and altars.

To counterpoise the supremacy that Teotihuacan had acquired over the capital, Mitl raised the magnificent temple of "la Rana" goddess of the waters, enriching its interior with ornaments of gold and precious jewels, and with the image of the goddess, made from an emerald. In Tolloacan palaces were erected whose prepared stone represented, by means of hieroglyphics, the most remarkable events in the Toltec history. Palaces of an analogous style were built in Cuanahuac and other places, to which his dominion extended.

The Toltecs excelled in arts and sciences, and were so skilful therein, that many interpret the word toltec by artist, although the probability is that it means a native of Tollan. They worked both in gold and silver, making very curious articles from these metals; they carved the hardest rocks and polished precious stones. They also excelled in the sciences as proved by their astronomical labors, which gave them for result the exact computation of time, which was qualified by the distinguished astronomer Laplace, as original. They divided the year into eighteen periods of twenty days adding other complementary five days called (nememteni) or useless, this completing the solar year of 365 days; but as this exceed-

ed the period of 365 days, by a little less than six hours, they formed an age of 52 years which they called *Huilimolpia*, bundle or link of years, and the age or century (*Huehuetilixtli*) of 104 years, adding thereto 25 days, hence resulting a difference of only one day in each 538 years.

Agriculture was prosperous, the Toltecs dedicating themselves principally to the cultivation of maize, chile, beans and other products, as well as to cotton which gave them good returns. The women spun and wove domestics, plain, twilled and quilted, and with colored patterns and figures.

The Toltecs were very intelligent in architecture and constructed their buildings with cut stones, packed at times one above another and at others set in mortar; they perpetuated their annals by means of hieroglyphic characters, and finally in their laws, their habits and customs, they exhibited an advanced state of civilization.

In their religious ceremonies, they excluded human sacrifices, with the exception of those they performed in honor of *Tlalotl*, the God of waters, whom they worshipped on the summit of one of the highest mountains of the Sierra Nevada, to the East of Texcoco; and that made to *Tonacatecuhitli*; offering up to the first six maidens, and to the second a criminal who was broken to pieces by the projecting points of revolving stones.

The laws prohibited polygamy and decreed that the monarchs could not contract a second marriage; and courage was as much admired in the men as modesty in the women.

A community which, like that of the Toltecs, based their stability on the observance of the law, as shown by their customs and the legitimate succession of their kings, could not be otherwise than prosperous and powerful.

Wisdom and prudence guided Mitl during his reign, and as an acknowledgement of such commendable qualities, the law was broken for the first time, and he continued on the throne to the day of his death, which happened 7 years after the expiration of the 52 years, and for the same merits, the widow queen Huihtlaltzin continued in power (year 986) with the acquiescence of her son Tecpancalzin.

On the death of queen Huihtlaltzin, four years afterwards,

(year 990) her son, the prince, held the reins of government, assisted by the nobility, but during his sway, the decline of the monarchy had its beginning.

A noble Toltec, called Papantzin, had discovered the method of extracting the juice from the "maguey" (agave Americano), and anxious to make his sovereign a present of that liquor, he with this purpose, made his daughter accompany him,—a noble maiden as lovely as her name, as she was called "the flower" (Xochitl). The lady presents herself and offers the beverage to the king, which pleased the sovereign exceedingly, not so much for the present as for the beautiful personage that brought it. He immediately conceived a violent passion for her and preoccupied himself solely in the contemplation of a plan to obtain the sinister ends, he desired. He took leave of the father and the daughter, but requesting them to repeat their favor, and intimating that on again doing so, it should be by the captivating Xochitl alone. She returned once more to the royal palace, but never to go back to her home. Seduced by the praises and offers of the monarch, she was prevailed upon to accede to his importunities and resign herself to live in the place of recreation, assigned to her by the king, who to screen his proceedings sent to say to Papantzin that wishing to unite his daughter to a king, one of his vassals, he had placed her under the care of a matron to give her a proper education. Some time passed over, when either from suspicion or from a desire to see his daughter, Papantzin resolved to seek her place of abode. After many enquiries and some bribery, he attained his object, and was introduced to some gardens where the lady was just at that moment, with an infant in her arms. Not approving of the disloyalty of his king, he addressed his daughter in these words: "*Has the king by chance, placed you here to play with children?*" Ashamed and tremulous, she confessed her weakness, and the noble Papantzin decided immediately on presenting himself to the king, demanding satisfaction for this affront. The following day, on Tecpancaltzin's listening to the complaint of the old man, he consoled him by promising that he would not take a wife to himself, and that the son of Xochitl (who had received the name of Meconetzin or son of

the "maguey") should inherit him. On the expiration of the term of the fifty two years of his reign, Tecpancaltzin fulfilled his promise, by having his natural son Meconetzin sworn in as king, who took the name of Topiltzin, and became the apple of discord in the Toltec kingdom.

The reign of this prince was made remarkable by the excellence of his government in the earlier years, by his dissipation and dissolute life in those following and by the energetic and appropriate measures he dictated ultimately, with the view of redeeming his faults. His disorderly conduct contaminated all classes of society and libertinage was such, that the priests in spite of their vows of chastity, lived publicly with some of the principal women: vice and the greatest scandal reigned every where, a state of disorder which was rapidly precipitating the nation towards an abyss, in the same degree that industry, labor and respect for the law, had previously flourished in all their splendor.

To this commencement of the inevitable decay of the people, other calamities followed as a just punishment of their crimes: at times the heavens sent down heavy rains that inundated the lands and destroyed the crops, and at others they were deprived of water, so that a frightful drought joined to the burning rays of the sun ruined the harvests and even the grain that had been stored in the granaries.

To crown their misfortunes, the lords of Xalisco, of the same race, alleging rights to the throne of Toltan and believing the law to have been violated by the exaltation of Topiltzin, invaded the possessions of this monarch's dominion with a large army. Neither the friendly expressions of the noble ambassadors sent to meet them by the king, nor the rich presents which, in his name, they offered them, sufficed to make the invaders desist from their intention, but on the contrary they continued their march until they penetrated the precincts of Tollan.

The persuasive conduct observed by Topiltzin, towards the monarchs of Xalisco, with the view of inducing them to abandon their undertaking, was fruitless, nothing more being procured from their tyrannical pretensions than a truce of ten years, which was conceded in order that preparations might

be made for defense. This concession is not to be wondered at from a race that esteemed bravery and loyalty in all their worth. This compact gave as a first result the immediate withdrawal of the invading forces.

On the conclusion of the time stipulated, which was not misspent by the illustrious Topiltzin, he prepared for war, and posted his troops advantageously and selected the plains of Tultitlan as his headquarters. The enemy's hosts had scarcely borne in sight, when the advanced guard of the Toltec army rushed to attack them. The first battle was commenced, giving rise to a series of sanguinary struggles that lasted three years, the Toltecs, in the midst of all, sometimes conquerors and sometimes vanquished, displaying unheard of traits of bravery. The first division of the army having been completely routed, Topiltzin advanced with the aged Tecpancaltzin, at the head of their forces, the lovely Xochitl leading the ladies, who like a body of amazons, were also prepared for the combat. One and the other of the disputants rush to the struggle with the greatest bravery and courage; the presence of their sovereigns animates and inspires the warriors who with their unerring arrows spread death and desolation on all sides, and even the ladies themselves and the women of the soldiers, imitating the example of queen Xochitl, penetrate into the midst of the heat of the battle, and fight hand to hand with the enemy's men. The battle lasts for three consecutive days and nights without suspension of hostilities, but not without the enemy's receiving fresh reinforcements, while the Toltecs were not aided by any new warriors. The forces of the latter becoming exhausted by so desperate a struggle, the enemy's superiority rose in proportion, and they gradually gained ground. At last, the victory was decided in favor of those of Xalisco, and the Toltec army having dispersed, took refuge in the mountains and lakes, only a small body of the army remaining which commenced its retreat, led by its two kings and queen Xochitl. This gallant army, closely persecuted and always resisting, reached Xaltocan; from thence passed to Teotihuacan, and afterwards proceeded towards the mountains of the South by Totolapan. The king Tecpancaltzin and queen Xochitl, with some of

their vassals, were overtaken before arriving at Tultecaxochitlaltam, which I suppose was at the hills of Tlalmanalco, and had to struggle man to man, the king perishing at the hands of his enemies, without his great age serving him as a protection, and the queen, without any respect being paid to her bravery, her sex or her beauty. This was the tragical end of a heroine worthy of being celebrated in poetry. Topiltzin took refuge in a cave at Xico, from whence he escaped after the retreat of his enemies, marching to Tlalpalan, which as I believe, was the kingdom of Aculhuacan, where he decreed certain laws which were confirmed by Netzahualcoyotl, and lived much esteemed until the day of his death.

The rest of the Toltecs were disseminated over different parts; some of them left for the coasts of the Southern Ocean and Cuauhtemalan, and others went to Tehuantepec, Coatzacoalco, Campeachy and Xacolotlan.

It was in this way that the monarchy now disappeared, which had left such fair pages in history; pages which I have compiled from Don Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl.

More than an age (of 52 years) after the destruction of the Toltecs, the numerous and ferocious tribe of "Chichimecas" arrived in the valley of Mexico, who, guided by their king Xolotl had emigrated from their country, Amaquemecan, a place situated in the Northern regions of Anahuac. Huasteca, Coahuaticamac and Tepenence bore traces of their transit, as also other points known by the name of Nopohualco or Contadero (counting-place) and these were the places where they rested some days to pass review. The king Xolotl, with the view of ascertaining the number of his people, at a given spot, ordered the number of stones to be counted, of which one had been thrown down by each individual. During their peregrination, they found the cities and towns, such as Tula and Teotihuacan, which had formerly been prosperous and flourishing, now sad, deserted and in ruins, and on their arrival at the Valley of Mexico, the Toltecs were disseminated over places afar off, such as Tehuantepec, Quauhtemalan, Teocotlan, Coatzacoalco and Tiauheohuac, and reconcentrated in a larger number in Quauhtitenco, Chapoltepec, Totoltepec, Tlazalan, Cholollan, Tepexomaco and very particular in