

CHICHIMECAS OF WAR





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EDITORIAL

This compilation is a study concerning the fiercest and most savage natives of Northern Mesoamerica. The ancient hunter-gatherer nomads, called “Chichimecas,” resisted and defended with great daring their simple ways of life, their beliefs, and their environment,. They decided to kill or die for that which they considered part of themselves, in a war declared against all that was alien to them.

We remember them in this modern epoch not only in order to have a historical reference of their conflict, but also as evidence of how, due to the simple fact of our criticism of technology, sharpening our claws to attack this system and willing to return to our roots, we are reliving this war. Just like our ancestors, we are reviving this internal fire that compels us to defend ourselves and defend all that is Wild.

Many conclusions can be taken from this study. The most important of these is to continue the war against the artificiality of this civilization, a war against the technological system that rejects its values and vices. Above all, it is a war for the extremist defense of wild nature.

Axkan kema tehuatl nehuatl!



Between Chichimecas and Teochichimecas



According to the official history, in 1519, the Spanish arrived in what is now known as “Mexico”. It only took three years for the great Aztec (or Mexica) empire and its emblematic city, Tenochtitlán, to fall under the European yoke. During the consolidation of peoples and cities in Mexica territory, the conquistadors’ influence increasingly extended from the center of the country to Michoacán and Jalisco. The conquistadors were there to stay, and the resistance of the indigenous peoples did not seem to pose much of a problem. This continued to be the case until they arrived at the northern territory of the Chichimecatlalli. The northern regions of Mesoamerica were an unknown and dangerous place, known now as the Great Chichimeca. Here, many groups of nomadic hunter-gatherers from many ethnicities had wandered for hundreds of years. The Aztecs, Otomis, and Tarascos tried at times to conquer these lands, but they were never able to do so. The Aztecs even called the Great Chichimeca, “Teotlalpan tlacochcalco mictlampa,” translated as “the northern land where death hides”. In 1526, Hernán Cortés himself wrote that, “There is a certain people who are called Chichimecas, they are a very barbaric people... I am sending now sixty horsemen and two hundred foot soldiers... to find out the secret of this province and those peoples... and if they refuse to be obedient we will wage war on them and take them as slaves... and thus Your Majesty will be served and the Spanish will benefit from taking the gold from the mines...”

According to the chronicles of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, the Aztec emperor Moctezuma Ilhuicamina, who governed the empire from 1440 to 1469, in a meeting he had with the elders of the city stated: “We must construct our history, because we still pass through the Valley of Mexico like Chichimecas, and this cannot be. Thus, we must erase the past Chichimeca history and construct another: the history of how we are the civilizing people, how we are the builders of the great Tenochtitlán.”

The word “Chichimeca” itself has always been used to refer to the uncivilized savages who had rejected sedentary living and continued to follow the customs of their most primitive ancestors. This was the case even though there were Chichimecas who were completely “sedentary”, among these, the Caxcans, the Pames, the Tecuexes, etc. This type of Chichimeca had embraced sedentary living and agriculture. On the other hand, the Zacatecos, the Huachchiles, and some Guamares were entirely “savage.”

They were expert at the hunt with bow and arrow, they wandered the mountains naked, they painted their bodies, they wore jewelry made from bone and animal teeth, they scarred and tattooed themselves, they had long hair going down their backs, and they were hostile to any intruder or outside threat. Thus, the term “Chichimeca” can fail to be very descriptive. The governor of Texcoco, Netzahualcoyotl, was Chichimeca. Juan Diego, who supposedly saw the Virgin Mary on the hill of Tepeyac, was also Chichimeca. Those who killed friars with bows and arrows and adorned their hair with the scalps of the Spanish during the Mixtón conflict were Chichimecas as well. Thus, I have written this text in order to have a solid and concrete definition of the term, “Chichimeca” and to differentiate between the sedentary Chichimecas and their barbarous counterparts. We will use the term “Teochichimeca” to refer to those Chichimecas who were completely savage in order to not fall into ambiguity when approaching this subject.

The seed of confrontation: The Mixtón War

During the period between 1520 to 1531, various provinces were constructed upon the ruins of Aztec civilization. Two of the most important ones were New Spain and New Galicia. The latter occupied a territory covering the present states of Jalisco, Zacatecas, and Nayarit.

The conquistador Nuño de Guzmán was charged with subjugating the sedentary and nomadic peoples of New Galicia. His governance was characterized by the excessive use of force against the natives, and he meted out deadly punishments to those who refused to be enslaved. During these years, the conquistador worked faithfully for the Crown and the Catholic faith. Even though he was later imprisoned for his brutality against the Indians, the memory of his deeds persisted in the minds of the indigenous peoples up to the day that the rebellion started.

By 1541, the natives had had enough of the mistreatment and decided to defend their way of life, their beliefs, and their ancestral lands. They began to rebel first by not attending Mass. Their discontent deepened when the friars ordered soldiers to bring them to the churches by force. It was at this point that many historically sedentary peoples abandoned the Spanish towns and fled into the hills. They adapted themselves once again to semi-nomadic hunter-gatherer life.

In the mountains they began to encounter other indigenous peoples who had decided the same course of action. Thus, after some gatherings of tribes and their leaders, known as “tlatonis,” the general revolt began. With the cry, “Axcan kema, tehuatl, nehuatl!” (Until your death or mine!), the armed groups of native peoples attacked the Spanish soldiers, burning their monasteries, churches, and small towns. They ambushed and killed friars, Spanish citizens, blacks, women, mulattoes, and the Indians allied to the whites, as well as cattle and horses.

Among the tribes who participated were Coras, Huachichiles, Caxcans, Zacatecos, Guamares, Guainamotas, Tepehuanes, Irritilas, and Huicholes.

After many attacks, the warriors assembled at Mixtón Hill, where they attacked the Spanish cavalry that was sent by the governor of New Galicia, Cristóbal de Oñate. At the same time, missionary friars also climbed the hill to try to achieve peace through their preaching of the Gospel. According to the chronicles, the Franciscan Juan de Calero tried to dialogue with Bible in hand, to which one of the warriors angrily replied, “You will no longer preach to us things concerning heaven or hell, we do not want your doctrine!” After saying this in the native tongue, the warrior killed the friar using arrows and spears.

Fernán Gonzales de Eslava had this description of the barbarians: “In their fury, I found that they have all evils within them, and with their hellish arrows they left not one missionary alive.”

The Europeans launched many attacks against the rebels of Mixtón, all of which failed. The rebels also managed to seize many cities, including the city of Guadalajara itself. Oñate then called upon Captain Diego de Ibarra, who was an expert in military strategy. The captain tried to lay siege to the rebels on multiple occasions without result. His army continued to lose soldiers and cattle to the indigenous bow and arrow, and it was thus demoralized from suffering such heavy losses. The rebels mocked him from the top of the hill after winning each battle.

But the natives also had another thing in store for Ibarra and his men, a blow so strong that it would make the Viceroy of New Spain, Antonio de Mendoza, and the whole Council of the Indies tremble in fear. On April 9th, 1541, knowing full well the natural cycle and tending toward the wild in their favor, the natives took advantage of a solar eclipse to surprise attack the Spanish and slaughter most of them.

This blow was so severe that the Viceroy summoned a known conquistador who had been the former captain of Hernán Cortes, one who had assisted him in defeating the jaguar and eagle warriors who defended Tenochtitlán. The same overconfidence and megalomania would have him fall before the barefeet of the



savages of Mixtón. We speak of course of Pedro de Alvarado.

Alvarado was confident that he could control the situation, and decided to go there directly along with his men and those of Ibarra to the Peñol de Nochistlán, another fortified hill the rebels occupied. Alvarado chose not to wait for reinforcements and was defeated in a bloody battle with the native warriors.



On June 24th, during a great battle in the forests of the Peñol de Nochistlán, the arrows, spears, and rocks would put to flight Alvarado's Spaniards. They were so frightened by the cries and frightening appearance of the savages that they lost control of their footing and tumbled over each other like a human avalanche. Alvarado also was injured, having received various arrow wounds from points specially designed to pierce Spanish armour. His horse also fell on him and fractured many of his ribs. He was left sprawled out and badly wounded.

On July 4th, Alvarado died of the wounds that he received at the battle of Nochistlán, having lost the battle to those he had dismissed as primitives inexperienced in war. At his height, Alvarado could defeat the best warriors of the Aztec military elite, but he could not overcome the wild hunter-gatherers.

This was another bad blow to the whites, who were realizing that their kingdom was in imminent danger. The Viceroy Mendoza was unsettled and extremely concerned with these losses. The rebellion had extended to Michoacán where various Purepechas had taken up arms alongside the (Teo)chichimecas. He commanded more allied indigenous peoples to be summoned to fight their related ethnicities; in this force were many Mexicas, Tlaxcaltecas, Xilotepecas, Huejotzincas and others who were mixed into with the Spanish army in order to exterminate the rebels. The chronicles recount how 50,000 men fiercely attacked the renegades and made them retreat from the cities that they had taken. The savages of Mixtón as well as those at Nochistlán fell to the superior numbers of the Spanish and indigenous allies in 1542.

Extermination was inevitable, and thus another episode of native resistance against civilization and progress ended. Many of the savage warriors died in the battle because they were not prepared to negotiate their liberty, nor would they accept the mandate of their new rulers. They chose to die rather than accept the customs and beliefs of the foreigners. Those who survived continued the fight, but not with the same effectiveness of the general uprising. The flame of conflict continued to burn, however. The Mixtón War was only the beginning of a larger conflict, the Chichimeca War: the largest and bloodiest native war in North America, one which would last a little more than fifty years.

The Chichimeca War (first part)



Introduction

Even with the end of the Mixtón War in 1542, the attacks of the Teochichimecas against the Spanish did not cease. The war officially ended because Spanish troops had taken the land away from the savage tribes. Hostilities between the two sides in the next stage of the conflict would be a continuation of this war, but with greater force and of longer duration.

The Mixtón War had presented a predicament to the conquistadors and their allies. The warlike tribes of New Galicia had put up a fierce defense against the invaders of their lands and way of life.

*An interesting note is that “Mixtón” means, “ladder of the cats,” making allusion to the characteristic of that hill of being so craggy, steep, and difficult to climb that only mountain lions could make the ascent.

Zacatecas silver

History records that, on December 8th, 1546, an expedition of Spanish horsemen, Franciscan friars, and allied indigenous led by Captain Juan de Tolosa, came upon a secluded and unexplored area in northern New Galicia. In the expedition, the Spanish had contact with some Teochichimeca Zacatecos. The two groups exchanged gifts, and, in return for trinkets, the Zacatecos gave the Spanish silver nuggets, indicating that their land had an abundance of that mineral. Shortly thereafter, the Spanish began to dig mines in that northern area (now named Zacatecas). Economic interests drew ambitious men to the region to start lucrative mining businesses where people literally became wealthy overnight.

Juan de Tolosa, with Governor Cristóbal de Oñate and explorer Diego de Ibarra (both wounded in the Mixtón War), as well as

Leonor Cortez Moctezuma (daughter of Hernán Cortez and the Aztec princess, Isabel Moctezuma) were some of the first to open mines in Zacatecas, making roads into the area and paying for expensive exploratory trips into the Great Chichimeca. The price for invading the lands of the untamed indigenous peoples was high in many senses of the term.

From that point forward, Zacatecas' infrastructure began to develop at a frantic pace. Cristóbal de Oñate soon became the owner of a luxurious house, three mineral grinders, foundries, over one hundred slaves, and a church where they could worship. As the years passed, the enriched foreigners became richer at the cost of the exploitation of the earth, the seizure of land, and continuous land invasion, things that were looked at negatively by the hostile tribes of the north.

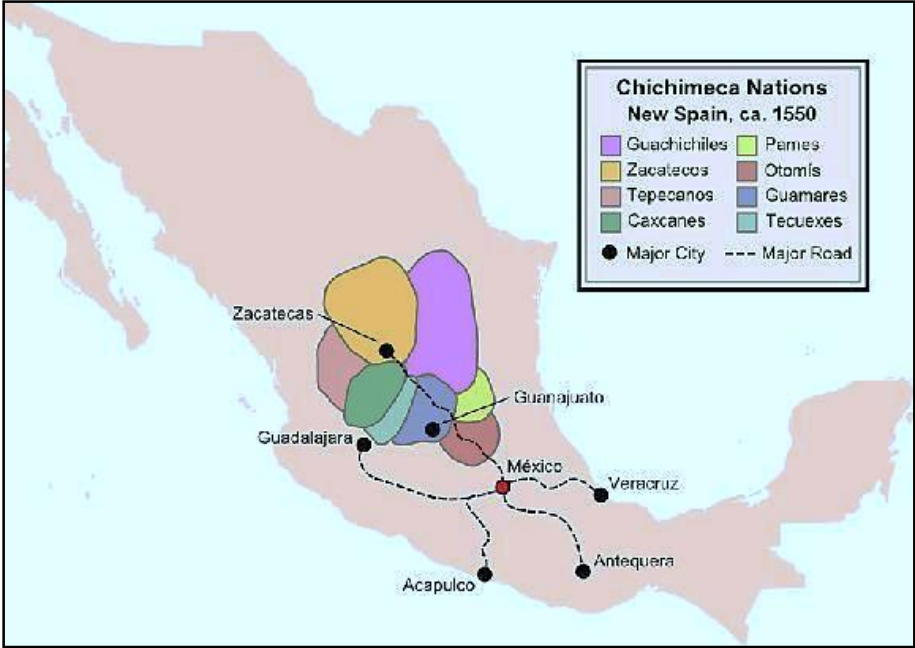
In 1549, once the mining industry had expanded and become more consolidated, news of the riches of Zacatecas reached the ears of the wealthy in New Spain, in the center of the country. Zacatecas then became a meeting place for those who wanted to get rich or take advantage of the situation however they could.

In order to transport the minerals of Zacatecas to various parts of the country, the Mexico-Zacatecas highway was open. This road became the principal route for the silver stolen from the depths of the earth.

The superhighway divided the Great Chichimeca into two, leaving destruction in its wake as well as the sacking of lands and other crimes against some sedentary Chichimeca peoples, such as some Ixtlachichimecas (Guamares or White Chichimecas, named that way not because their skin was lighter than others, but because they lived in a land had much saltpeter in it). They were expelled from their lands to the mountains of Comanja, Guanajuato by orders of the mining companies. A series of events would drive the sedentary people and the nomadic peoples to become hostile and defend themselves against the invaders.



The war begins



The torture and abuse of the Spanish reignited the spark of rebellion among the indigenous peoples. Starting in 1550, a sudden resistance emerged against the mining projects and those who participated in them. The chroniclers indicate this year as the beginning of the Chichimeca War.

One of the first major episodes of this war occurred towards the end of that year. A group of savage Zacatecos killed a considerable number of indigenous Tarascos who were carrying Spanish silver out of Zacatecas. The tribesmen slaughtered all of them and took their goods.

Afterwards, a group of Zacatecos stole the flocks that were the property of Cristóbal de Oñate and Diego de Ibarra. The Zacateco Teochichimecas were nomads who lived from hunting and gathering, although some were sedentary, and were brave warriors who were experts with the bow and arrow. They inhabited the Great Chichimeca in the region that stretches from Zacatecas to Durango. Zacatecos were distinguished by their wearing of a rag made of natural fibers worn wrapped around their forehead while walking around partly naked. When the path was especially harsh, they were known to wear something similar to

leggings made of animal skin that went from their ankles to their knees. The Zacatecos were greatly feared by the sedentary Chichimecas such as the Cazcans, whom they were at war with constantly before and after the wars against the Spanish. In the Mixtón War there was a tactical union between these two bands as well as others, but after the end of hostilities the Cazcans began to side with the Europeans. From that point forward the Cazcans were considered the allies of those who invaded the Great Chichimeca, and the Zacatecos began to attack their towns. For example, some ancient chronicles indicate that some 50 Zacatecos had successfully sacked and destroyed a Cazcan town of 3,000 people, demonstrating by this act their ferocity in the surprise attack.

After this, Huachichil Teochichimeca warriors began a series of attacks against Spanish flocks, killing shepherds and stealing livestock. The cattle and the flocks were constantly attacked by the savages.

The wild Huachichiles were the most primitive among the Chichimecas. They were isolated and warlike hunter-gatherers, also exceptional with the bow and arrow. Their area of wandering went from Coahuila to Guanajuato, and they continuously disputed a region in San Luis Potosí. Huachichiles usually walked about naked, covering themselves in tanned animal hides in the cold. They wore their hair all the way to their waist and painted their head and bodies with a red pigment (from which comes the name, “huachichil”, which in Nahuatl means, “heads painted red.”) They wore ear-expanding jewelry and bone collars, and they weaved the hair of their dead enemies into their own. They also scarred and tattooed their skin, and the Spanish in particular found their appearance to be terrifying. The Huachichil method of attack was highly individualistic. Their surprise ambushes were always accompanied by the frightening sound of drums and horrifying war yells in their primitive language. Some Zacatecos, who were their traditional enemies before the arrival of the Spanish, said that in times of war and want the Huachichiles were known to consume human flesh and drink their mesquite-based drinks out of the hollowed-out human skulls of their defeated enemies. The ancestral knowledge of the desert, a dry and hostile place, made them completely immune to any attacks of the Spaniards. Their number and area of occupation made them even more dangerous. They were masters of war, always insisting on and organizing the other tribes into united efforts to fight against the invaders. These temporary tactical unions have been called by historians “The Chichimeca League”, of which we will speak of further below.

Pedro de Ahumada described them thus:

“The warriors of the north were barbarous men, daring and great thieves.”

“The most warlike Indians that I have seen in these Indies.”

“Untamed people and arrogant, with an audacity which increases by the day.”

“So powerful the Spaniards tremble at their very mention.”

The author of the first treatises on the Chichimecas, Fray Guillermo de Santa María, described them thus:

“They are all extremely cruel, which is the greatest sign of their brutality. To the people they seize, whether they be man or woman, first they give a ‘crown’, scalping them and leaving the skin uncovered, as in the crown of a friar. I saw a Spanish man without his scalp, still alive, and also a woman of Copoz, who lived many days without hers. They also take out their tendons and use these to tie their arrowheads to the shafts. They also take out the shinbone from the legs and also from the arms, while the person is still alive, and sometimes even the ribs, as well as a hundred other cruelties, until the soul is separated from the body of the wretch.”

In July 1551, the Huachichiles ferociously attacked a caravan that was the property of Cristóbal de Oñate. In this attack, the driver, a Portuguese, as well as two blacks and five allied indigenous people were killed, and all of the goods were stolen. In September, the red warriors killed a merchant and forty Tamemes (couriers) who took the merchandise to Zacatecas. This act was brought to the attention of the Spanish authorities, who expressed urgency against the new savage threat.

The Guamar Chichimecas (not all of these were nomads, some had become sedentary and practiced agriculture) inhabited the region of the mountains of Querétaro to Guanajuato, and part of Aguascalientes and Jalisco. They also began a violent rebellion against the conquistadors. The Spanish settlements were targets of the warriors, since they were very close to Guamar territory. In 1551, the savages ferociously attacked the property of Diego de Ibarra, killing two colonists and stealing the cattle.

The small town of San Miguel was the site of a Franciscan mission, a hospital, a school, and the houses of many peaceful Chichimecas. It was also leveled by the Guamares, killing at least fifteen people in the process.

Afterwards, the Guamar Chichimeca warriors led by Carangano and Copuz the Elder burned buildings and killed all the inhabitants of a Spanish ranch.

The Guamares were brave, warlike, and considered traitors by the Spanish, since some supposedly peaceful Guamares gave



information to their savage and nomadic confreres concerning the activities of the Spanish settlements where they lived. This made them all the more vulnerable to tribal attacks.

The Guamares were considered to be a type of Chichimeca who had a more advanced cultural development than the Huachichiles and the Zacatecos, since some practiced agriculture and had temples.

The Guamares maintained their skill with bow and arrow, but were also good with clubs and in hand-to-hand combat. They could go long periods without food or water. These warriors were adapted to the harsh environment, and their nocturnal attacks were a particular problem for the Spanish. The Guamares became more of a threat when they began to ride stolen horses into battle and started wielding the sword.

In 1563, the Guamar Rebellion was one of the most violent episodes of the Chichimeca War, though we will speak of this further below.

In the meantime, the old enemy of the Spanish began to recruit more indigenous people. His men had killed over 120 Spaniards and allies in only a matter of months in that bloody war. We speak of course of the active participant in the Mixtón War, one of the leaders of the Cazcan Chichimecas, Francisco Tenamaztle. Tenamaztle was still free and on the loose in the southwestern part of the Great Chichimeca. The Spanish authorities knew that the savage leader, who had once been at the head of a force that almost took the city of Guadalajara, was still leading his warriors in battle. Killing him had become one of the priorities of the conquistadors.

By that point many of the Cazcans had been domesticated by the Spaniards – in fact, they were among the peoples who helped the Spanish in their campaign against the northern nomads. This was one of the reasons that the Cazcans would become a target of the Zacateco Teochichimecas, as mentioned above.

The Cazcans were sedentary and seminomadic. They were decimated by the colonizers during the Mixtón War, due in part to the preaching of the Spanish friars who pacified them. The most fierce among them were killed or enslaved. Another way in which they broke the Cazcans was exploiting the fact that they were agricultural. The Spanish destroyed their crops, forcing them to surrender and settle among the peaceful Indians. These peaceful Indians served as a buffer in the Great Chichimeca that could also help securing the safety of the roads to the Zacatecas mines.

The organization of the Teochichimecas was not complex. In this war, the bands were led by the most experienced warrior in the group in a campaign of guerilla warfare. This tactic was both effective and devastating at the organizational level, and the Spanish simply could not counter the mobility of the insurgent factions. The great Aztec Empire had fallen to the Europeans in only three years. The elite armies of the eagle and jaguar knights that defended the Great Tenochtitlan had been exterminated. No one at that point thought that it would take the new conquistadors significantly more effort and about fifty years to get rid of the naked primitive barbarians who wandered Chichimecatlalli.

Ancestral beliefs

In the area of religious beliefs, the Teochichimecas (Zacatecos and Huchichiles) were animists who believed that all things in nature had a spirit. A change in the environment as well as illnesses were caused by the shaman of another tribe who wielded those spirits for nefarious ends. All Chichimeca tribes had a shaman who was responsible for curing illnesses by means of plants and the invoking of spirits. After a shaman cured some ailment, it was recommended that the encampments be surrounded with thorns and prickly brush, so that the barrier could protect against harmful spirits.

Another typical ritual was at the birth of a first-born son – the members of the tribe would cut the skin off of the father until the baby was covered in it.

The Teochichimecas did not have altars, nor complex deities, nor established ritual centers. Because of their nomadic nature, they only referred to the sun, moon, and stars as spiritual entities.

Before the start of a war or tribal conflict, the tribe came together at night and danced around a great bonfire. Songs and yelps accompanied the banging of the bow, arrow, and drums that were used to make music. They painted their bodies with red pigment and charcoal, and drew animals such as snakes, coyotes, toads, and bears on their chest and back as protection. During this ritual, they drank alcohol made from cactus fruit or aloe vera, and they consumed peyote; they used these substances as a means to obtain spiritual contact with nature and to achieve greater sensibility in the field of battle.



The Huachichiles believed that if they ate certain animals or people, they could obtain the qualities of the consumed. Even though

this was a common practice among them, for the Europeans and certain indigenous peoples who had converted to Christianity, this was seen as a work of the “devil”.

The Teochichimecas defended their beliefs against those who wanted to destroy them. The elders and shamans were those who did the most to incite these efforts, and they organized large meetings even with other tribes to organize resistance against the foreigner and the invader. As in the Mixtón War, the friars feared an evil spirit who they called “Tlatol”, which was merely a translation of the Spanish of the word,

“Huehuetlatolli”, a Nahuatl word (which the

peaceful Indians spoke and which was understood by the language of the Teochichimecas) meaning, “the word of the elders”. The Tlatol was thus considered as a spirit of evil that the pagan cults invoked, something totally opposed to the Catholic religion.

In many places in the Great Chichimeca, resistance against the Spanish was seen as a sort of Holy War, where tribes defended to the death their beliefs and way of life. So extreme was their defense that many friars and indigenous converts to Christianity were cruelly killed by the northern hunters. They very much deserved this, however, as terrorist violence was the only response possible to the years of slavery, destruction, and humiliation that our ancestors went through.

Ancestral foods

A large part of the Great Chichimeca is encompassed by expansive and inhospitable deserts. The conquistadors who were accustomed to plentiful food sources in the city thought that food was scarce in the Great Chichimeca, but the Chichimecas were able to find multiple food sources.

The northern nomads depended on gathering done by women and children. They collected roots, tubers, pods, cactuses, seeds, etc. The men were in charge of the hunt, and their game included snakes, toads, rabbits, worms, birds, fish, larvae, hares, deer, rats, etc.

The cactus and mesquite were important sources of food for the indigenous people in the Great Chichimeca. Both the cactus and its fruit were consumed. They also ate the leaves, flowers, and heart of the biznaga (another type of desert cactus). Mesquite pods were collected and ground in large mortars to create a type of flour which could last months and even up to a year without spoiling. Mesquite was also the base of an alcoholic drink.

They also ate honey, and, when water was scarce, they drank the juice of the aloe vera plant. When the hunters came back to the camp with their prey, the meat was shared among all, and the person who had hunted and killed the animal could keep the hide. This description applies only to the wild Chichimecas. The more sedentary tribes depended almost totally on their crops.

The war intensifies

At the end of 1550, Luis de Velazco succeeded Antonio de Mendoza as governor of Mexico. This viceroy put more pressure on the army during the Chichimeca War. Even though he was cruel, he was also capable of partially quelling the conflict with ruses and key decisions. The new governor of Mexico called upon those indigenous people who had previously been warriors (Tlaxcaltecs, Aztecs, Otomies, Cazcans, and the rest) to fight against the Teochichimecas. This was a definitive move that stopped the war for a time, although many of those allied indigenous people would pay the ultimate price of their lives for their support of the Spanish invaders.

Viceroy Velasco would authorize Francisco de Ibarra to undertake a new expedition into the Great Chichimeca in order to expand the kingdom and pacify the warlike indigenous people there. One of the strategies employed by Ibarra was to found small Spanish towns of armed colonists. Each town would serve as a military base that could resist the attacks of the Teochichimecas. These bases would also serve to defend the silver routes and larger towns. Thus, Ibarra held the attackers at bay for some years, until a further change of strategy was needed.

In 1551, the Chichimeca chief Tenamaztle was persuaded by a ruse of the Bishop of Guadalajara, Pedro Gómez Maraver, to put down his arms and cease hostilities. Tenamaztle was one of the few who had resisted after the end of the Mixtón War up to that year (1542-1551). This Chichimeca tlatoani (leader) had kept up his attacks on the Spaniards as well as his robberies of their merchandise and cattle. In 1552, Tenamaztle was caught and imprisoned. He was then taken before the Council of the Indies in Spain to be tried. How the story unfolded is widely unknown, including the ultimate fate of the warrior. What is certain is that the old tactic used by the bishop worked so that Tenamaztle was finally captured, and the Spanish thought the war would then cease definitively. That was not the case.

Already in 1552, the Chichimeca warriors had studied the terrain and received important information from allies in the towns, which they used to attack them ferociously. In 1553, in the province of Jilotepec, the Chichimecas had killed more than 300 peaceful indigenous inhabitants of Spanish towns. In that year, they also killed 65 indigenous people and burned the church of the



little town of Jalpa, causing great devastation in the land. In 1554, the Chichimeca chief Maxorro had coordinated other Chichimeca groups to carry out more destructive and devastating attacks. “Majurro” was his real Chichimeca name, but he was called “Maxorro” or “Mascorro” by the Spanish. It is said that when Maxorro wounded someone in battle, he ripped out their heart and lifted it still beating to the sky a sign of victory. Maxorro and his men inflicted a severe defeat on the Spanish at the Paso de Ojuelos near Torro Hill. Six carriages under armed escort were attacked by the Chichimecas, and the warriors carried off 30 thousand pesos worth of cloth, silver, and other valuable objects. This was only a small demonstration by the wild savages of their strategic abilities during ambush. This type of action was a frequent occurrence during the war.

An accurate description of the Chichimeca warriors was written by Phillip Wayne Powell in his book, *The Chichimeca War (1550-1600)*:

“The Chichimeca warrior in 16th century Mexico was a formidable fighter, and was among those who most stubbornly resisted the Spanish invasion of the American continent. His way of life, the vast and untamed topography of his land, and his primitive political development made him more difficult to conquer than the sedentary and urban peoples like the Spanish or the Nahuas. By nature, he wandered constantly; he was not accustomed to work, but had a ferocious practice of the art of war and the hunt. They often feared the Spanish horsemen, but they always challenged them. They despised and terrorized their indigenous neighbors who had adopted sedentary lifestyles and Christianity. In summary, many of his cultural characteristics made him a bad candidate for incorporation into the sedentary system. His way of life, combined with certain psychological characteristics, guaranteed his resistance to all forms of subjugation.

Inherent to his nomadic state, other factors contributed to the warlike feats of the Chichimecas. Their encampments and their rancherías were difficult to access. Often, they were hidden in caves, canyons, and valleys protected by the mountains, forests, or craggy landscapes. Once these were located, the Spanish could destroy the rancherías and capture some women and children, but often the warriors escaped to establish another base. Their habit of eating foods native to the Great Chichimeca allowed them better mobility than the sedentary peoples, who needed to be near their cattle, crops, and imported supplies. The nomad could cut off the invader’s supplies and slaughter his cattle, thus paralyzing the economic and military vitality of sedentary society. The reverse was often not the case. The nomad was an expert in utilizing the refuges and the wealth that the landscape offered. The Chichimeca was thus often an invisible and therefore terrifying enemy. The type of war that the Chichimecas undertook against the sedentary invaders not only involved surprising and threatening the Spanish in their northern advance. The Spanish as well as the Tarascos, Aztecs, Tlaxcaltecas, and Otomies all learned to fear and respect the Chichimeca as a formidable warrior.”

The Chichimeca war cry led many other tribes from other parts of the country to start assaulting roads, destroying towns, and demoralizing the Spanish army. For this reason it is estimated that from the discovery of Zacatecas until 1561, more than 200 Spaniards and 2,000 indigenous allies were killed by the hands of hostile natives on the roads of Zacatecas, Guadalajara, México, and Michoacán

Security measures were undertaken to protect caravans of merchandise that were going to and from Zacatecas. For example, reinforced carriages were constructed out of thick wood with holes that could be used as gun ports in the event of a raid. By such measures, the avaricious invaders could protect their merchandise and the silver extracted from the mines. The caravans were also accompanied by heavily armed soldiers, and the entrances of mines were protected by heavily armed miners. However, not even these security measures could stop the Chichimeca warriors who constructed thicker and stronger arrows, as well as bows powerful enough to penetrate the armored carriages. Even the Spanish soldiers who wore heavy armor consisting of suede capes, chainmail armor, and a doublet were not totally protected. Vargas, in his “Description of Querétaro,” described the following: “Ordinarily the men of this land should travel armed with two coats of mail, or one good one and another one of strong leather, with the horses well protected [with leather]. And even with this there is no certain protection against the arrows that they fire at us.”

While the attacks of the Chichimecas continued, the order of the Viceroy Velasco concerning the founding of defensive towns continued to be implemented. In 1555, the town of San Miguel was founded, which was strategically positioned on the Zacatecas Highway close to the Great Tunal of the Huachichiles. This tribe saw themselves invaded by armed colonists, and they retreated from their native territories to organize further attacks.

Malpaís

After many Spanish defeats at the hands of Maxorro and his men, the Chichimeca leader was finally defeated and imprisoned by Nicolás de San Luis Montañez who was named captain of the province of the Chichimecas in 1557. This territory consisted of fortified towns such as San Miguel, San Felipe, Sichú, San Luis, Rio Verde, and San Francisco. The Viceroy Velasco would order the attack on the savages with the aim of making them withdraw from New Galicia. After the successive founding of these towns, the Chichimeca warriors began a fierce campaign against civilization and the invasion of the Great Chichimeca. In 1561, the great confederation of native warriors made felt their vengeance against the Spaniards and their allies.

The Zacatecos and the Huachichiles torched various Spanish ranches. They killed the owners and their slaves and scalped them. They destroyed crops, pillaged all of the goods, killed the cattle, and intercepted the carriages going toward the ranches, taking all of their merchandise. The warriors killed shepherds and merchants. There was also a mine seizure on the part of the Huachichiles. The indigenous workers fled, and the besieged mines ceased operation. The economy of the region was thus paralyzed. Mining operations in Zacatecas were nearly stopped due to lack of provisions and the Teochichimeca threat.

The place where the general Chichimeca uprising was believed to be consolidated was called Malpaís, a volcanic landscape east of

New Vizcaya (Durango). This land was inaccessible to Spanish horsemen, and had an abundance of tunas, yucas, and rabbits. 800 warriors led by 13 leaders were assembled in that place, where they planned their attacks and ambushes. From there, messengers were sent to other tribes, calling on them to take up arms. This is how the Tepehuanes came to join the Zacatecos, Huachichiles, and some Cazcans in the rebellion. After this addition, Malpaís had around 1500 warriors from different clans ready to fight in what would come to be known as the Chichimeca League.

Apart from the attacks on the ranches, mines, and roads, the nomadic warriors organized an assault on the town of San Martín with the aim of making it the first of many targets in their attempt to wipe the nearby Spanish towns and camps off of the map of the Great Chichimeca.

Thus, the Teochichimecas fell upon the town of San Martín in a surprise attack, first attacking during the patronal feast of the church, where the whole town was assembled and there was no means of escape. They also snuck into town and stole all of the horses of the whites; thus the colonists could only pursue the attackers on foot. The Chichimecas were able to rob many horses and arms from the Spanish, resulting in a major victory among many for the indigenous warriors.

Afterwards the royally-appointed Captain Ahumada decided to enter Malpaís in mid-1561 with only five soldiers and an interpreter, with the purpose of entering into negotiations with the inhabitants of the place. The captain asked the combatants to lay down their weapons in exchange for a pardon for past attacks and crimes. The indigenous people agreed to various peace treaties; but knowing that the Spanish could not be trusted and knew their location, they made an important decision.

Ahumada, after the final peace negotiation, decided to prepare to attack the Chichimeca rebels, thinking that they would betray him at the first opportunity. The captain stationed twelve horsemen and 80 foot soldiers at the base of Malpaís to capture any savage trying to flee. Ahumada would then enter the volcanic terrain with his principal infantry to try to drive them out. When he made his entry and arrived where the “peace negotiations” had taken place, he was surprised to find it empty save for a few warriors who refused to abandon Malpaís. These were subsequently killed by the invaders. The Spanish then burned the huts in the encampment and went in pursuit of the rebels who had fled to the Valley of Guadiana and Amantequex.

In Guadiana, a fierce battle took place that ended in the death and capture of 200 savage warriors. The prisoners had their thumbs cut off to hinder their use of the bow and arrow, especially the Huachichiles, as this was their deadly weapon of choice. Seeing the devastating defeat that the Spanish inflicted on the indigenous warriors, the Tepehuanes signed a peace treaty with the whites, who took advantage of the situation to gather information concerning the hiding places of the Teochichimecas.

It was in this manner that Captain Ahumada pursued the native rebels from Avino, Peñol Blanco, and Mezquital, who had fled 24 leagues from Malpaís.

The savages proved to be far from docile prisoners. The chronicles tell of how fewer than 100 warriors were imprisoned in the Presidio of Peñol Blanco, but they were still able to tear off their chains, destroy the presidio, and attack the Spanish guards with only rocks. They ended up capturing a dozen soldiers and kept them prisoners while resisting the reinforcements that had come to pacify them. It should be emphasized that this resistance occurred in adverse circumstances, as they were unarmed, equipped only with strategy, ferocity, and whatever they had on hand; yet they were still able to put up a fight from midnight until dawn. Since they were greatly outnumbered, they ended up surrendering to the forces that had come from the encampment of Cristóbal de Argüello. Nevertheless, they gave a clear example of the fierce nature of the ancient inhabitants of that land.

In October of that year, Captain Pedro de Ahumada along with his army returned to Zacatecas in search of the Huachichiles responsible for the death of Fray Juan de Tapia. He attacked the encampment of these warriors and killed more than one hundred of them. During the general Inquisition-style interrogation, one of the warriors revealed information concerning the continuation of the Chichimeca League, which alerted Ahumada and his men.

In the place known as El Tunal (in Huachichil territory), around 1500 Chichimeca warriors had gathered as they had in Malpaís in order to plan out their attacks. Through Spanish intervention, it seems that the League was not able to fully assemble, though Ahumada left Zacatecas believing he had dispersed the Chichimeca warriors. He later learned that the information that his prisoners had given him had another purpose, namely, so that those remaining warriors could follow and study the movements of the whites from the hills above. The second attempt to consolidate the Chichimeca League was fomenting in the shadows under warlike audacity.



The Chichimeca War (second part and conclusion)



The Guamares Rebellion

The Guamar Chichimecas, or “Ixtlachichimecas” (“White Chichimecas”, who we have addressed in a previous issue) began a series of violent conflicts that peaked between the years 1563 to 1568. The continuous sieges by the Spanish armies and the constant betrayals of the natives in the zone known as Penchichitane (or Chichimequillas) are what led to the uprising. It should be pointed out that the two ethnic groups, the Xiconagues and the Cuxtaques, (seminomadic hunter-gatherers) formed part of the Chichimeca ethnicity. Oddly enough, it should be noted that former entered into contact with the Spanish in 1531, and the then leader named Xiconaque (from thence his name) warned them:

“Don’t come forward since you may perish, since beyond the Tzacatecas, who are of our kin, is a traitorous people, named Guachichila.”

The Guamares were the savage enemies of the Guachichiles, but they had to unite with them anyways against the invaders time and again. Thus we see the complicity of many diverse primitive peoples against the then common enemy. Getting back to the main theme, the indigenous Guamares of what is now Guanajuato (although incursions also extend into what is now Jalisco and Queretaro) focused their attacks on settlements and small towns strategically placed by the Spanish Crown to guard its interests in the territory. Their territories invaded, large groups of Ixtlachichimecas leveled the settlement of Penjamo, killing the pacified Indians, the colonists, and the Spanish soldiers.

Not long afterwards, the Chichimecas on the warpath directed themselves to the town of Comanja, and slaughtered all of the inhabitants, leaving only two survivors according to the chroniclers of the time. After these two severe blows to the Spanish Empire, authorities concluded that this type of Chichimeca could not be pacified.

Every time the Spanish thought they had vanquished them on the field of battle, they revolted in another region and they annihilated everything they could find that represented a threat to their way of life. Thus, the Crown entrusted the pacification of the aboriginal peoples mainly by religion to Alonso de Zurita, as well as granting land concessions in more strategic areas to Spanish families living in forts. Thus, the citizenry would assist in the labor of pacification without entering directly into war. It was in that way that many White Chichimecas were attracted to a repugnant religion’s promise of eternal life and the forgiveness of sins that was imposed on them by the colonizers. All the same, evangelization seems to have captured the imagination of many natives who came down from the mountains to hear the friars preach. While many of the natives accepted the new beliefs, others were more astute. They feigned acceptance of the worship, prayers, and teachings of the Westerners merely in order to familiarize themselves with the enemy. It was in this manner that the Guamares gained the confidence of certain Spaniards, who taught them how to ride horses, as well as use the sword and arquebus (a primitive type of firearm). The Spanish thus thought they could use the Guamares like they used the Mexicas and Tlaxcaltecas to combat the Huachichiles and the Zacatecos, the only two groups they mistakenly thought were still in hostilities with them. This strategy backfired when the soldiers encountered certain Guamares face to face in battle. They wielded ancient weapons such as the bow, arrow, and club, but more surprisingly they also had swords, arquebuses stolen from the towns, and they rode horses painted with the symbols of war. Making great tumult and letting forth ferocious yells, they mixed new and old methods of warfare with great physical agility, homefield advantage, and the ability to subsist on little food and water. This made the Guamares one of the greatest threats to the

Spanish peace.

Thus the roads were closed, interrupting the traffic in silver between Zacatecas and New Spain. The mountains of Guanajuato were no longer secure. The towns were abandoned for fear of new massacres by the tribal warriors. Others were reduced to ash. Production in the great majority of mines was in danger of coming to a halt. It was literally “Teotlalpan Tlacoachcalco Mitclampa” (the land of misery and death). The Spanish wanted to reconstruct the town of Comanja, but this was practically wiped off the map by a massive attack by the Guamares in 1568.

Ceding territory

The only option left to the Europeans was to negotiate with the belligerent Indians. A contingent of friars backed by dozens of Spanish soldiers and hundreds of indigenous allies met with the leaders of the Guamar rebellion on many occasions. These efforts were generously funded by the Spanish Crown. They offered the chiefs land and gifts, and guaranteed that they would not sell them or their women and children into slavery. They also assured them that the various atrocities and damage to property that they committed during war would be forgiven. It was in this way that many rebel leaders preferred to accept the conditions of the invaders and stopped the attacks. While the Ixtlachichimecas ceded territory, the borderlands became more and more militarized. The friars came in peace to visit Chichimeca settlements, convincing the natives by peaceful means to view Biblical precepts in a more positive light. Still the attacks did not cease. In 1570, the year in which they began widespread construction of prison camps for the Chichimecas who would not be pacified, various Teochichimecas staged multiple attacks on the fort of Tazazalca, Michoacan, leaving many soldiers dead. A rebellion carried out by the White Chichimecas as well was suppressed that year, as many of the leaders were “pardoned” by the Spanish Crown upon accepting terms of surrender. There were many others, however, who were not permitted the option of negotiations, since they had been fingered out by the recently converted. The mostly Guachile Chichimeca leaders who continued the hostilities were:

-Bartolomillo, who was cornered and captured by Francisco de Sande, Borderland Administrator of the Viceregal Government. It is said that Bartolomillo had replaced Xale, the fierce leader of Tunal Grande, Zacatecas, after his death. (This place was discussed in a previous issue.)

-Anton Rayado, who succeeded Bartolomillo after he was hanged. They say he was called “Anton Rayado [Anton the Marked translator”s note] due to the tattoos and scars on his body. They came to say that nature itself had marked him with rays as a sign of leadership of the Guachiles in their war to the death against the invader.

-Martinillo, the greatest and most destructive leader of the Guachiles who inflicted the most casualties on the Spaniards than any other group. He was based in Bocas de Maticoya, San Luis Potosi. Other Guachil leaders were: Acuaname, Juan Tensso y Vaquero, Machicab, Nacolaname, Moqiomahal, Guazcualo, Gualiname, etc. To continue its expensive campaign to the tune of many pesos of gold, the authorities of the Viceroyalty decided to raise taxes and impose wine production upon the pacified towns, thus brutalizing the Indians and keeping them from taking up arms again against the Spanish Crown. Another law was passed regulating the sale of beef, requiring licenses for slaughter and sale of the meat, which was intended to keep the Teochichimecas from stealing cattle. If the owners of these cattle guarded them better and none were missing, they would receive an additional reward.

Thus they cajoled cattle ranchers to guard their cattle better, preventing the savages from stealing them and eating their meat and using their hides, tendons, and the rest of the animal.

Nefarious alliances

After this partial ceasefire, Teochichimeca forces were spent while trying to expel the invaders of their ancestral lands, and those who before had carried out attacks, ambushes, and massacres against the Spanish settlers turned against their old allies. They guided the whites to various hideouts and through territory of the stillinsurgent tribes. This is how more than 80 Chichimeca war leaders were killed or captured in 1574. Juan Bautista Orozco was in charge of this military pacification, but his fame for pacifying the insurgents would not have been possible without the turncoat natives. These latter peoples greatly impeded the war efforts of the warriors of the North. This alliance, along with other factors of pacification (militarization of the border, the founding of fortified towns, the building of forts, etc.) led to the decrease of resistance to the white man in these territories. Nomadic tribes had already been partially absorbed by the advance of the Aztecs, the Tarascos, the Tlaxcaltecas, the Otomies, the Cazcanes, etc. who fought for the Spanish army. They dealt a severe blow to the Chichimeca warriors who continued to wage war. It was thus that the Guachichiles, the Zacatecos, the Guamares, and other ethnic groups disappeared little by little and the threat that they posed was no longer so apparent.

Even then, the problems that they caused did not end there. As Powell indicates in his book, *The Chichimeca War*:

“The Tarascos were a natural recourse for auxiliary troops and interpreters in the northern war; they had been in conflict with the northern nomads for many years before the arrival of the Spanish. But some of the Tascos, isolated cases, then seemed to abandon sedentary life to unite with the hostile Chichimecas, causing some difficulties to the Spanish.”

The punishment from Nature: The cocoliztli

In 1576, the indigenous allies were gaining ground in the Gran Chichimeca, winning sympathy from the Western invaders. In this year, however, an epidemic would decimate their numbers in particular. Few Spaniards and African slaves were afflicted with this new bout of unknown plague. It should be pointed out, however, that this plague first struck the newly formed Mexican people in

1545, two years after the official end of the Mixton War. Thus, as if Nature itself cast a curse upon them, the “coconoztli” (the Nahuatl word for illness) sapped the health of the allied group in particular. The symptoms of the coconoztli were high fever, a black tongue, nasal hemorrhaging, intense thirst, yellow eyes and skin, convulsions, delirium, greenish urine, among others. Contracting this disease meant certain death. Neither the Spanish doctors nor the Mexica after contracting the disease could cure it. Because of this, the number of people in the fields, the mines, the shops, the military and the towns themselves was reduced drastically. This brought an end to the offensive against the still hostile Chichimecas, who exploited the opportunity to continue their vengeful efforts. One notable example of the losses that afflicted the auxiliary indigenous troops was that, from the one thousand Cazcan warriors who were quartered in the town of Tequaltiche in Jalisco, only two hundred survived. It should be pointed out again that the nation of Cazcanes-Chichimecas were the first northern nomads and seminomads to join the Spaniards and agreed to help them in their fight against hostile Chichimeca warriors. This plague would last over a year, afflicting those who had turned their back on their way of life dependent on Nature, leaving to come into the fold of the new civilization: the winner and expansionist that had declared a war of extermination against the natives.

The heightening of hostilities of 1580-1585

During this time, the attacks of the Teochichimecas increased exponentially. This caused an increase in the number of forts, the militarization of the border by captains who frequently provoked the insurgent natives, and the more frequent use of force to pacify warring tribes. Aside from being highly skilled in their traditional weapons and the ancient manner of warfare, the Chichimecas by this point also knew how to utilize modern weaponry that they had stolen in battles with the Spanish army. This included being able to fight on horseback. With this augmented means of war, they decided to fight fiercely for their traditional way of life and to seek revenge for their brothers who had fallen previously in battle. The Guachiles along with the Zacatecos were the most hostile towards the Spanish. Both convinced a great number of Pame-Chichimecas to unite with them against the foreign enemy and their native allies in defense of their hunter-gatherer way of life. Thus, the small groups of warriors attacked mines and halted production; they ferociously closed off roads and ambushed shipments of silver, fine linen, and foodstuffs destined for Mexico.

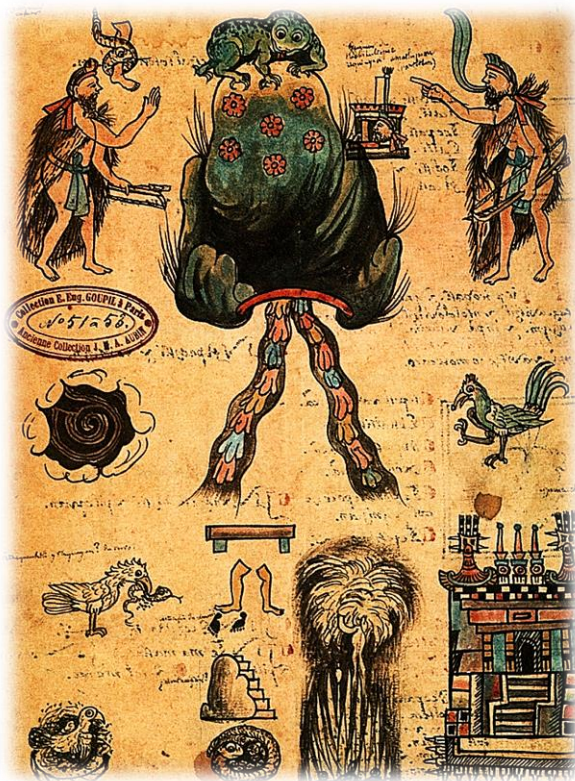
It was in this way that the famous mine of Chalchihuites in Zacatecas was abandoned, as well as towns such as Queretaro and San Juan del Rio. The road to Zacatecas that went to the northern mines was also left unused. A letter to the then Viceroy Manrique de Zuniga stated the following concerning these years:

“The Chichimeca attacks are intensifying, now they are descending from the mountains in great numbers and their attacks have reached twenty leagues from Mexico City. Their victories are leading many Indians, as well as mestizos and mulattos, to join them. A total war against the Chichimecas has thus been deemed necessary. They have begun killing Spaniards, burning churches and sacking the towns. Up until now they have destroyed twenty- two estates in the San Juan Valley.”

In the middle of 1585, a group of rebel Pame Chichimecas fiercely attacked the town of Zimapan, Hidalgo, killing Spanish as well as pacified Indian allies. This situation forced the Viceroy to spearhead efforts to repel the attacks. Zuniga would adopt new methods to obtain peace in a conflict that by then had lasted 35 years. He implemented the following policies: -Penalties for those who would enslave the Chichimecas. Having studied the course of the conflict, the Viceroy noted that the warriors were enraged when they learned that prisoners of war were enslaved to work in the mines, which caused them to attack mining operations. -The freeing of prisoners that were deemed innocent of any crime.

The Chichimeca leaders and warriors who were still deemed a threat were also freed but only in towns where they could be Christianized. -The abandoning of a system of fortified bases and instead negotiating with the rebels and buying peace with clothes and foodstuffs. -The dismissing of soldiers who had created unnecessary frictions with the Teochichimecas on the borderlands. -The establishment of towns closer to the sites of previous conflicts, where attacks were carried out more frequently. Instead of filling these towns with soldiers, houses of religious orders were erected and “civilized” Indians came to live there as well. Both groups would encourage the Chichimecas to abandon the armed struggle and demonstrate the benefits of civilized life. - Taking charge of the shipments of royal silver on the Zacatecas road and making sure they were escorted by armed guards to prevent ambushes from the Guachichiles and the Zacatecos.

In 1586, after implementing a new strategy to safeguard the silver coming from Zacatecas, the Viceroy was proud to report two victories over the native highway robbers. In one he told of how a great number of Teochichimecas tried to ambush a shipment of silver on the road from Mexico to Zacatecas. They were detected by the armed guards who engaged them in battle, and because of



the new viceregal policy the guards were able to prevent the robbery, and even killed thirteen warriors in the process. In spite of this, the robbers were able to kill the chief of the guards and carried off one of the women. The Spanish soldiers then engaged in a rescue mission to find the woman, and were able to recover her.

Viceroy Manrique proudly proclaimed the news, and remained optimistic in spite of the fact that the measures to protect the Zacatecas road would not prevent the remaining belligerent Chichimecas from regrouping. Thus, days after this defeat, the nomad warriors ambushed a group of Spaniards heading toward the San Martin mines in Zacatecas, killing two and injuring others. Hours afterward, a Franciscan friar was killed trying to assist the wounded in this ferocious attack. The end of the conflict Nevertheless, the Viceroy's efforts yielded results in pacifying the groups that were still hostile to the European settlers. Many warring Chichimecas had laid aside their arms and accepted the overtures of the Spanish friars and cooperative Indians to make peace. Thus we can indicate here the Guachil Chichimeca leaders who made peace treaties and accepted the "kind" treatment of the invaders (especially of Gabriel Ortiz Fuenmayor), namely Juan Vaquero, Gualiname, Nacolaname, Juan Tenso, and Acuaname. The rest of the Guachil or Zapateco leaders who didn't accept the terms of surrender were either killed or they fled north toward the lands of the Tepehuans, the Raramuri, or the Apaches. In spite of the treaties, the conflict continued at a lower intensity in the subsequent years. For example, in 1588, a large group of resisting Chichimecas was stalking and attacking the Spaniards in Yuririapundaro (Purepecha for "blood lake") in Guanajuato.

The attackers pretended to convert to Catholicism only to seek the first opportunity to flee into the mountains from which they came. At the same time of this rebellion, another broke out in San Andres, Jalisco in 1591. Here, various "pacified" natives rose up in armed rebellion. Fray Francisco Santos feared the natives and took refuge in the convent of Colotlan. The Spanish soldiers finally came and the friar indicated to them the place in the hills where the rebels were hiding. The Spanish surrounded the outnumbered rebels, who surrendered after calling upon the friar and promising to redouble their efforts at conversion.

After nearly forty years of war, the Europeans finally figured out how to engage the hostile northern savages. Many Chichimecas surrendered and ceased fighting once they saw that they would not be abused and would even be awarded with land, livestock, and work.

From the mixture of sedentary natives, nomadic savages, and the invading Europeans would arise the newly formed Mexican people. In 1595, the Chichimeca settlement of San Luis was chosen by the Spanish to be the home of multiple ethnic groups who would facilitate the pacification and Christianization of the savages of that region. The friars, followed by blacks, the Mexicas, the Otomies, the Tarascos, and the Tlaxcaltecas, came to reside there. In particular, the Chichimecas of that town and the Otomies had been in conflict previously, but their cohabitation led to the town being known as "San Luis de la Paz", located in present day Guanajuato. Today it is the place of residence of the last Chichimecas in the Mission of the Chichimecas zone.

Some former Indian warriors frequently assisted the friars in locating the most stubborn hold outs so that they could come and see how civilized life was and be convinced to stay in the towns. In exchange, they were given food and clothing. This offer was almost always accepted by the intransigent warriors. In spite of this, it must be pointed out that a certain regression was occurring in some groups of exnomads. According to some chroniclers of the time, the Tlaxcaltecas with their increasing population took the most fertile lands, leaving the worst lands to the recently civilized and converted exnomads. Frustrated, the former savages renounced Catholic doctrine and returned to their old ways of life, departing towards unknown lands to the north.

The war ends (officially)

By 1600 the Chichimeca War was officially over, the attacks having been reduced to isolated incidents. There were however other notable uprisings in this period, two of which are worthy of mention here: the revolt of the Tepehuanes from 1616 to 1618; and the attacks of the Guachiles in Rio Verde, San Luis Potosi from 1628 to 1629. Overall, however, the leaders of these revolts were either bought off or executed. The friars propagated new beliefs to help the whites subjugate their fiercest enemy. Those who did not go along with it, those who shouted the frightening cry of "Axcan Kema Tehuatl, Nehuatl! (Until your death or mine!)", those who preferred to die rather than renounce their ancient way of life and belief, were summarily killed. These are the lessons that history leaves us concerning the resistance to the death that took place in this region against the foreign ideas that sought to replace



the ways of our ancestors. We must again take up these important lessons as we wage just war against the same perennial enemy. We speak of course of the alien, the harmful and the foreign that we, the inheritors of that warlike blood, call “civilized devastation,” “invasive technology,” and “human progress.” We continue to be on the side of wild nature. We continue to venerate the sun, the moon, the wind, the rivers, the coyote, and the deer. We continue to renounce Christianity with our pagan rituals in the dense woods. We continue to be the caretakers of the bonfires. We continue to dance around the flames. Even though we are civilized, we continue to have the instinct to attack.

Authors of the work,

“Ancient Wars against Civilization and Progress”

-“Kill or Die” Faction

-“Stalking Mountain Lion” Faction

-“Thunder of Mixton” Faction

Revised by

-“Council of the Uehuetlatolli”

Faction -“Uaxixil Spirit” Faction

The work, “Ancient Wars against Civilization and Progress” consisted of the following articles:

-El Chilcuague, los Chichimecas y el Cinvestav (Regresión n°1)

-Entre chichimecas y teochichimecas (Regresión n°2)

-La semilla de la confrontación: La Guerra del Mixtón (Regresión n°2)

-Lecciones dejadas por los Antiguos: La batalla del “Pequeño Gran Cuerno” (Regresión n°3)

-La Guerra Chichimeca. Primera parte (Regresión n°3)

-La Guerra Chichimeca. Segunda parte y conclusión (Regresión n°4)

-Algo para la revista Ritual (Regresión n°4)

**Bibliography available in Regresión No.4 in Spanish.*



ANNEX

On Ritual Magazine



In June 2015 issue no. 0 of Ritual Magazine was published. The magazine addresses political topics, and analyzes and critiques various cultural, socioeconomic, and philosophical themes from an academic perspective.

Annex

This issue contains an essay entitled, “Toward Savagery: Recent Developments in Ecoextremist Thought in Mexico”, a Spanish translation of which is available at academia.edu. This interesting essay analyzes and describes the ideological inclinations of the various factions of Reaccion Salvaje, as well as its ideological development based on a rejection of some of Kaczynski’s ideas as described in “Industrial society and its future” in 1995. The essay also analyzes the unique adherence in ecoextremism to the idea of taking up the mantle of huntergatherer nomadic warriors who waged war against invading Europeans and sedentary Indians in the sixteenth century, adapting this past ethos to the current invasion of technology and human progress into our lives.

The article was signed by Abe Cabrera, and though we enthusiastically recommend it, we would like to note the following points.

Regarding the last section of the essay, Conclusion

While Powell’s book on the Chichimeca War describes in detail the end of the armed conflict against the Europeans and their Indian allies, it would also be appropriate to get to know what the members of the last Chichimeca settlement actually think about the end of that war.

San Luiz de la Paz in the state of Guanajuato is the last registered Chichimeca settlement, specifically in the Chichimeca Missionary Zone. Here can be found the last Chichimeca descendants, the ChichimecaJocanes, who preserved from generation to generation the memory of the conflict that threatened the Viceroyalty during those years. A member of RS was able to engage in conversations with some of the people of this town. We will keep these sources anonymous so as not to have them associated with our ecoextremist group. Those involved in these conversations confirm the fierceness of the Chichimeca-Guachiles and proudly emphasize their warlike past. They mentioned that, with the defeat of the last hunter-gatherer nomadic savage tribes, the surviving Chichimeca bands decided to concede and show the Spanish that they now followed the foreign religion; that they adhered to the new commandments and would adapt themselves to sedentary life. They only did this in order to preserve their language, their traditions, and beliefs. The elders as well as the shamans (madai coho), who came down from the mountains after many years of war with peaceful intentions, nevertheless decided to live

apart so that their stories and customs would not be erased from memory. Thus they would be preserved as a legacy for coming generations. In this manner, the Chichimecas pretended to dance before the Virgin Mary, but they were really holding their celebrations in the context of their pagan traditions and were venerating their pre-Conquest deities. They pretended to attend Masses in the churches and listen to the priests, but they were just taking advantage of being able to assemble together and feast, as they did at the mitote of old. They pretended to offer incense to Catholic saints, but their adoration wasn't for them, but for the sun, the coyote, the moon, the deer, etc. They continue to incense the bodies of the dead with various resins as they did in pagan rites. They continue to dress in the skins of various animals to venerate them. This was looked upon by the Catholic Church as being worthy of condemnation in the past, but the Chichimecas continued to perform these rites as part of religious events in towns that had supposedly already converted to the Christian god. To summarize, the apparent surrender of the surviving Chichimecas was really a ploy to continue their resistance against their conquerors, with insincere conversion being an important weapon for them.

This is how this particular ethnic group has survived to this day, and it is evident that the majority of the unbroken Guachichiles and Zacatecos decided to die before surrendering and preferred to avenge their fallen brothers. How come there are no contemporary anthropological references to these two groups in particular, noted for their savagery and bravery in battle?

Nomadic huntergatherers tend to leave few archaeological traces of their societies save for hunting implements, weapons, simple clothing, jewelry, primitive altars, cave paintings and other crafts. However, the artifacts that the most savage Chichimeca tribes left are few and far between even by these standards. If it weren't for foreign chroniclers, the codices of aligned indigenous tribes, contemporary native stories, and their wellknown violent resistance recorded in early colonial history, they wouldn't be known at all. It should be pointed out that the group we know as Chichimecas were actually constituted by various ethnic subgroups, some nomadic, some seminomadic, some more sedentary. It is an error (which the article in question has fallen deeply into) to generalize and say that the Chichimecas as a whole surrendered. It is known that some preferred to die before surrendering and others preferred to adapt underhandedly in order to continue with their traditions. Obviously our position as an ecoextremist group is not one under which we can compromise; we won't negotiate with the enemy, and we have stated this from the beginning. Our principles are squarely on the side of those who died defending wild nature and who resisted the new Western order without relenting.

That's why RS claims Bartolomillo, Xale, Anton Rayado, and Martinillo, the Guachichile chiefs who waged total war and inflicted harsh blows on the invading army. They preferred the gallows before negotiating with the white man. We claim for our own the minority that brought the conflict to the silver roads, the exploitative mines, the towns, the forts, the churches: those places where harmful unnaturalness hid.

b) Continuing with the conclusion

Cabrera wrote:

"Indeed, one cannot project an anticivilization discourse on them, because they would not know what this means."

He's very much correct here. RS does not want to impose on these savage Chichimeca groups an anticivilization discourse. Rather, it's the other way around: we find the savage warriors of the Gran Chichimeca appealing because we want to find in them a unique discourse that stands against civilization and human progress. By this we don't mean that the Chichimecas in particular declared war on civilization explicitly. Their history is worth keeping in mind so that we realize that we have warrior blood running through our veins and as their heirs it's our turn to continue the war against the artificial, against that which is destroying us, and against that which is stripping us of all human qualities to make us hypercivilized automatons. We fully realize that we are civilized human beings. We have found ourselves within this system and we use the means that it provides us to express a tendency opposed to it, with all of its contradictions, knowing full well that we have long been contaminated by civilization. But even as the domesticated animals that we are, we still remember our instincts. We have lived more time as a species in caves than in cities. We are not totally alienated, which is why we attack.

The distinguishing feature of RS in this conversation is that we say that there is no better tomorrow. There is no changing this world into a more just one. That can never exist within the bounds of the technological system that has encompassed the entire planet. All that we can expect is a decadent tomorrow, gray and turbulent. All that exists is the now, the present. That's why we are not betting on the "revolution" so hoped for in leftist circles. Even if that seems exaggerated, that's just how it is. Resistance against the technological system must be extremist in the here and now, not waiting for any changes in objective conditions. It should have no "long term goals". It should be carried out right now by individuals who take on the role of warriors under their own direction, accepting their own inconsistencies and contradictions. It should be suicidal. We don't aim to overthrow the system. We don't want followers. What we want is individualist war waged by various factions against the system that domesticates and subjugates us.

Our cry to Wild Nature will always be the same until our own violent extermination:

"And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come... and the time when thou shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth."
(Revelation 11:18)

Lessons for Ancient: Little Big Horne Battle



The Battle of Little Big Horn was one of the most distressing events for the United States Army during the so-called Indian Wars. In the battle, the Native Americans—led by, among others, the [Lakota] Sioux chief Tašúke Witkó or Crazy Horse; the spiritual leader of the Lakota, Sitting Bull; and Chief Two Moons of the Cheyennes—achieved a crushing defeat of the white invaders. What follows is a short account of one of many histories of fighting to the death against civilization and progress, one of many that contains important lessons for us today.

The Little Big Horn is the name of a river in the territories of the state of Montana in the United States. White colonists had mostly occupied the neighboring area, the Black Hills, since the finding of mines replete with gold. In the year 1976, the government of the United States tried to buy the lands for mineral exploitation.

This upset many natives who still lived in the area. The government's control spread throughout these territories, giving only two options to the ancestral owners of the land: either they could sell their land and be assigned to a reservation, or they would be violating the law. Many chose the latter option, and it was in this manner that the resistance was catalyzed.

The government gave the natives a date by which time they were to leave their ancestral territories. Before the issued date came to pass, in disobedience of the government mandate, military units began to forcefully evict various native villages. The people of Two Moons and Crazy Horse were attacked and had to abandon their positions. It was then that they turned to Sitting Bull, whom they henceforth considered their spiritual leader and who then held the most influence of the whole native community.

Sitting Bull called for unity with other clans to defend themselves against the European menace. Thus, at the command of the new head of the tribe, they celebrated a type of gathering with fifteen thousand natives attending, according to contemporary accounts. It is said that upon seeing so many people united, Sitting Bull prayed to Wakan Tanka (who was, according to the Sioux's worldview, the Great Spirit) that the hunting be good for his people and that the men be strong and indomitable. So that this would happen, Sitting Bull did the Dance of the Sun, in which he danced for two days and two nights without food or water, praying and watching the movements of the sun. At the end of the dance, the spiritual leader had a revelation. He saw a large quantity of white soldiers and natives fall from the sky; according to him, the fallen soldiers were offerings for Wakan Tanka and the native warriors should murder them and not take their weapons, hair, or any of their belongings. If they went against this rule, he said, it would go badly for the natives.

With glowing spirits, the tribal chiefs like Crazy Horse got together their men and left in search of the offering for Wakan Tanka and simultaneously to defend their lands from which they would never leave without a fight. On the 16th of June, a small party of native guards spied a column of thirteen hundred white men and allied Indians between the mountains close to their camp in the area by Rosebud Creek. The leader of these men was General George Crook.

The defense had begun, and the men armed themselves for war. If the invaders got any closer there was the possibility that there would be casualties of women and children in combat.

At dawn of the following day, Chief Crazy Horse unexpectedly ambushed the enemy. The white troops were dispersed by means of a rapidly executed war tactic, and the horde of savages divided into small groups in order to hunt down those who had become easy targets while separated from their columns. After repelling the invasion, the nomads camped on the shores of the Little Big Horn.

On the 25th of June in the same year, the Lieutenant General George Armstrong Custer (who was a hero of the Civil War, the youngest general in the country's army, and the darling of the press, who dubbed him "The Boy General") divided his column of six hundred soldiers into three groups to try to ambush the warriors who had so demoralized General Crook and his men a few days before.

One of the three groups fired directly at the tipis at the front of the camp—in response, the warriors shouted "Hoka Hey," which in Lakota means, "Today is a good day to die," and attacked with their bows and arrows, hatchets, and shotguns. As they killed many of the soldiers by the river, the survivors were forced to flee.

The second group, commanded by Custer, decided to attack from the other flank of the nomadic camp. The spiritual leader Sitting Bull watched over the women and children while the strategies of the savages made the soldiers fall into chaos, defenseless from the mad flight of their horses that were frightened by the natives. In a matter of minutes, the enemies were besieged and reduced. From atop the high hills, Crazy Horse's men screamed words of war. The terrorized Americans killed their remaining horses to

use them as shields. The battle was fierce and chaotic. According to the chronicles, one could see the warriors killing the soldiers in hand-to-hand combat or from horseback with hatchets and arrows fired from point blank range in a scene full of screams, howls, the smell of gunpowder, and the blasts of guns. At the end of the battle, the great

General Custer lay dead with shots to his head and chest, and his men were decimated. The native savages took the soldier's clothing, scalps, and castrated them as well as taking their belongings, all of which went against what the spiritual leader, Sitting Bull, had told them. Disobeying this vision would later be seen by the natives as the beginning of the end, since with this battle they won the enmity of a large sector of the American society and would be massacred and hunted like animals by the American military.

The third and final group of invaders had gathered with the few survivors of the first group. They called for help, and more soldiers arrived. Crazy Horse could not afford to lose more of his men and so ordered that the camp be packed up so that they could leave victorious. The final great strategy used by the old warriors was to divide the group up into many small groups so as to avoid focalizing forces. Many small groups were more difficult to engage than one large one. It was with this in mind that the natives dispersed in all directions.

There are various lessons that can be learned from this fight against civilization.

First: Strategy is very important when it comes to winning a fight or battle. In our case, the individualist war against the technological system should be approached with tactics and intelligence.

We know very well that saying this does not pretend to take into account winning completely against the system, but rather to deal blows to the mega-machine to the best of our abilities. These actions become individualist victories, and escaping unscathed or undetected should be the goal during terrorist as well as sabotage attacks.

Second: Examining the fight described above, we see the old ones united behind one objective: defending their way of life in nature. Their fierceness played a very important role—though during the battle there were individuals wounded and even killed, the focal point remained the fight against civilization and progress, a fight to the death. Our fight should also be fierce and overwhelming, that is to say, extremist. Those who were not capable of taking a hard stance were not part of this war. Those who are ready to kill and die defending their natural humanity that has yet to be robotized, and their savage nature that remains indomitable, should take this into account. Crazy Horse was assassinated one year later when he led the savage nomads against the US Army. He died under a hail of bullets from Indians allied with the enemy. His body was full of holes from the lead of civilization, but his proud example as a warrior was left like a living legend for the later generations who, like him, defend themselves and resist the advance of that which is alien to their nature.

Third: Falling upon the enemy when they least expect it is another lesson from this episode. To be effective and carry out an attack unscathed, it is not practical to attack when the authorities might be aware of the danger. For example, every 8th of August, the Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education sends out an alert recalling that in 2011 the eco-extremist group Individuals Tending Towards the Wild sent a package bomb that injured two technologists. On this day especially, were there to be any attempt against the same academic institution, it would be a danger to those carrying it out, and the act would be more likely to fail, given that they employ additional but discreet police around this time. Although I would personally like to see another attack at the same institution on the same day that would mock all of this additional security, I realize that that is not pertinent.

Fourth: Some foolish individuals who are familiar with our stances have asked in the past: “Are you going to fight the system using its own weapons?”

The natives that we cite above went into war with everything that they had on hand: bows and arrows, hatchets and clubs, horses and rifles. These weapons were useful when they fell upon the whites and their indigenous allies. What would have happened if these natives had rejected the weapons of the white people and clung instead to their old implements for hunting and fighting? Maybe they wouldn't have been victorious at Little Big Horn, among other battles.

The casualties on the side of the army were much higher than those of the natives, and one of the factors that contributed to this was that the warriors used repeating firearms (that is to say, they could fire numerous times in a row without having to reload) that they had previously stolen from the enemy. The Americans and their allies only had single-shot rifles (which could only fire one round before having to be reloaded). The invaders' time-consuming weaponry meant that the natives could fire while they rode their horses directly at the soldiers, cornering them while they tried to reload their weapons.

Thus in the response to the question of means, we say that we cannot limit ourselves to the old weaponry just because we criticize the technological system. We should use the weapons of the system against itself. Just as the Native American participants did not hesitate to use those repeating firearms, we are not going to hesitate to use any modern weapon that might cause the enemy casualties.

With this we conclude the text. Everyone can draw their own conclusions.



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