

# the quest for indian origins in the thought of the jeffersonian era

bernard w. sheehan

i

From the first confrontation between white man and native, the Indian was the subject of avid speculation. As a curiosity scrutinized with amused skepticism; as a representative of the human order in its pristine condition, a moral exemplar for an advanced and decadent world; as a microcosm of the violence and savagery inherent in a flawed human nature—the American aborigine was seldom out of the white man's thinking. Similarly, in his close identity with the New World, the Indian became enmeshed in the eighteenth-century discussion of the relative fecundity of the American continent. But in all the considerations of the native, the question of his origin was pervasive. Whether the object of the inquiry was polemic or scientific, the problem possessed a singular relevance. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries particularly, when Indian-white relations were in a state of constant crisis, the aborigine's ancestry was given close attention by the best minds of the age.

Besides the inherent interest of the subject and the broadly inquisitive character of the Jeffersonian era, the basis for such widespread concern over the Indian's derivation should be seen with reference to the overall defense of the Indian prominent in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century thought. Jefferson and his contemporaries, although they were not without a perception of the deficiencies of aboriginal existence and of the violence associated with the idea of savagery, portrayed the Indian as a creature of admirable capacity and even, considering his level of development, of notable accomplishment. The major theme of Jeffersonian treatment of the native was the expectation of his eventual incorporation within the limits of civilization.

But the elucidation of the Indian's beginnings was also a purely scientific pursuit which drew its significance from the universalizing tendency of Enlightenment thought. Within this body of thinking the unity of mankind was axiomatic. Although there was little chance that the Indian, even if his beginnings remained shrouded in an impenetrable mist,

would be dropped from full-fledged membership in the human family, the tendency in eighteenth-century thought was to place a premium on inclusiveness. So far as mankind was concerned, wrote the doctor and natural philosopher James H. McCulloh as late as 1829, "there can be no reasonable ground to doubt the one origin of the species." At the same time, the traditional Christian doctrine of human unity remained an important element in any consideration of the disparate members of the human family. In his search for the origin of the Indian through an examination of the western earthworks, Caleb Atwater found corroboration for the Mosaic account of the creation. The scriptures, he believed, threw "a strong and steady light on the path of the Antiquarian."<sup>1</sup>

Despite the penchant for the universal in the Jeffersonian period, most writers had at least some sense of history. Jefferson himself was deeply interested in his country's past and easily applied his inquisitive spirit to the question of the Indian's forebears. He carried on, at the same time, an extensive correspondence with other devotees of that peculiarly eighteenth-century branch of learning, natural history, in which the Indian held a prominent place. But whatever the reason—and no aspect of Jeffersonian thought wholly excluded it—the problem of Indian origins long engrossed the scientific attention of the Jeffersonian age.<sup>2</sup>

Jefferson was familiar with the extensive literature dealing with Indian origins.<sup>3</sup> He had most of the important volumes in his library, and his interest in the problem was as deep as any of his contemporaries. But he would not tolerate reckless speculations and contended that whatever conclusion was arrived at must be achieved through the study of Indian languages. And, of course, such a study was to be the opposite of idle theorizing. In a letter to John Adams he had criticized Lafitau, one of the early eighteenth-century Jesuit historians, for his effort to draw an extensive parallel between the American Indians and a number of the ancient civilizations. "He selects . . . all the facts," said Jefferson, "and adopts all the falsehoods which favor this theory, and very gravely retails such absurdities as zeal for a theory could alone swallow." And at a later date, after having summarily disposed of a host of bizarre theories, he wrote Adams that "the question of Indian origin, like many others, pushed to a certain height must receive the same answer, 'Ignoro.'"<sup>4</sup>

Adams thought the whole thing as ridiculous as did Jefferson, and he suggested that he

could make a System too. The seven hundred Thousand Soldiers of Zengis, when the whole, or any part of them went to battle, they sett up a howl, which resembled nothing that human Imagination has conceived, unless it be the Supposition that all the Devils in Hell were let loose at once to set up an infernal Scream, which terrified their Ennemies, and never failed to obtain them Victory. The Indian Yell resembles this: and therefore America was peopled from Asia.<sup>5</sup>

Though his humor was not as neat as it might have been, Adams had not unduly exaggerated the situation.

The most sensible approach, but probably the least popular, was that taken by Peter S. Duponceau, the linguist and president of the American Philosophical Society. He favored scientific investigation for its own sake without the encumbrance of a weighty hypothesis. Referring to Benjamin Smith Barton's book *New Views of the Origins of the Tribes and Nations of America*, he lamented that the author had not kept strictly to his philological task of adding information on American Indian languages to the great work of the German scholar Peter S. Pallas. "Happy would it have been," he wrote, "if he had not suffered his imagination to draw him away from that simple but highly useful design! But he conceived that by comparing the American with the Asiatic languages he could prove the origin of our Indians from the nations which inhabit the opposite coast of Asia; and thus he sacrificed the real advantage of science to the pursuit of a favourite theory." Duponceau's position as editor of David Zeisberger's Delaware grammar, a formidable scholarly achievement, added pertinence to his opinion.<sup>6</sup>

Such disinterested scholarship, however, was not characteristic of the age. The study of the Indian languages was subordinated to the value it might have in elucidating the problem of Indian origins, while the question of origin was forever intermixed with the larger problems of man's place in the universe and the future relation of the Indian to the white man's society.

## ii

Americans in the Jeffersonian era could not but be curious about what appeared to be the remnants of a pre-Indian civilization in the Mississippi Valley. These ancient remains were what was left of the "Mound Builders'" culture. The structures were of various shapes, but the most common form was a large rectangular area walled with earth and pierced by a number of openings. Burial mounds, similar to the one on the Rivanna described by Jefferson in his *Notes on the State of Virginia*, were also a common sight.<sup>7</sup>

The opportunities for imaginative theorizing about these remnants were of course most enticing. Jefferson shared the common interest in them, but once again he regretted the tendency to leap to exaggerated and ill-founded conclusions. While he was in Paris, Charles Thomson had sent him a letter written by John Cleves Symmes who, following the speculations of William Robertson, was convinced that the western earthworks were the ruins of the original home of the Mexicans. The writer contended that this highly cultured people had been forced to migrate by the primitive Indians who currently inhabited the region.<sup>8</sup> Jefferson replied that he wished the people who went to the western country to examine the native antiquities "would make very exact de-

scriptions of what they see of that kind, without forming any theories." He was most adamant that the moment a person adopted a theory he tended to see only those facts which would enhance it. And the problem at that time was, as he saw it, that so few reliable facts had been unearthed. The American Philosophical Society, he thought, should "collect exact descriptions of the several monuments as yet known, and insert them naked in their transactions, and continue their attention to those hereafter to be discovered. Patience and observation may enable us in time to solve the problem. . . ." At a later date, in 1798, the Society appointed a committee which sent out a letter of solicitation for the purpose of gathering information on various facets of Indian life including what were assumed to be ancient fortifications and tumuli. Jefferson, who had been elected president of the Society in 1796, was appointed to the committee whose membership included such diverse types as Caspar Wistar, Charles Willson Peale and James Wilkinson.<sup>9</sup>

The earthworks were believed by most to manifest a high level of cultural attainment and certainly to indicate a people superior in their development to the Indians. Jeremy Belknap stated the position succinctly when he wrote that

the form and materials of these works seem to indicate the existence of a race of men in a stage of improvement superior to those natives of whom we or our fathers have had any knowledge; who had different ideas of convenience and utility; who were more patient of labour, and better acquainted with the art of defence.

Jonathan Heart elaborated the argument by contending that the ancient American population "must have been under the subordination of law, a strict and well-governed police, or they could not have been kept together in such numerous bodies, and made to contribute to the carrying on of such stupendous works." The remains yielded evidence, wrote Gilbert Imlay, "of a people far more advanced in civilization than any which have yet been discovered in this part of the continent." Similarly, De Witt Clinton thought enough had been written "to demonstrate the existence of a vast population, settled in towns, defended by forts, cultivating agriculture, and more advanced in civilization than the nations which have inhabited the same countries since the European discovery." One on-the-spot observer, Moses Fiske, writing from Tennessee, noted traces of pottery of various sizes and shapes some of which, found near the licks, indicated the use of salt. Also numerous stone utensils of some refinement—axes, spikes, mortars, pounders, plates—pointed toward a society of a relatively high level of proficiency. The highest ground was taken by Atwater. He placed the builders of the works at a median level, between the primitive Indian and the advanced European. The ancestors of the Indians, he maintained, had lived by hunting while those of the "Mound Builders" were shepherds and farmers. Through an examination of the

various remains, he concluded that at the time they were built the country was heavily populated, that the people who erected them had the use of iron, and possibly steel, gold, silver and copper, and knew the art of brick making.<sup>10</sup>

Jefferson, however, was skeptical about the supposed level of culture manifested in the western ruins. The president of Yale, Ezra Stiles, had written to him in 1786 and enclosed a letter from Samuel Holden Parsons on the earth formations. The writer, a Connecticut politician and speculator in western lands, had examined a number of them and had drawn a sketch of one at the mouth of the Muskingum which he included in his letter. He thought that the presence of pottery and bricks in the earthworks, together with the great height of the mounds, was ample evidence that the builders possessed a knowledge of the arts superior to that of the Indians. The size of the trees which he found growing out of the works, and the Indians' ignorance concerning their purpose, led him to believe that they had been abandoned long before the coming of the Europeans and also to doubt any connection between the natives who then roamed the western country and the ancient culture. Stiles seemed to agree with Parsons. Probably, he wrote, there had been "European or Asiatic Inhabitants there in ancient ages. . . ." He noted also that John Smith had claimed to have met Indians in Virginia "who descended from those who read in a book."<sup>11</sup>

But Jefferson thought the whole thesis rather flimsy. He could agree that these ancient people had been able to dig entrenchments and pile earth in mounds, but the making of brick was another thing. Had General Parsons actually seen the brick as part of the old fortifications? After all, the European had inhabited the region east of the Alleghenies for some time now, and as yet no indication had come to light that the native population ever possessed the use of iron. And certainly those on the eastern side of the mountains were at least as advanced culturally as those on the west. It was unlikely, thought Jefferson, that the art of making brick preceded the ability to use iron, since it presumed a greater degree of industry than was usually possessed by men in the hunter state.<sup>12</sup>

Jefferson had much to back his contention. There was, for instance, the obviously low technological level of Indian civilization, which had not improved since the white man's arrival. If one presupposed that those who had built the earthworks in the Mississippi Valley were of a relatively high degree of culture, then it was necessary to assume that either the Indians had no connection with the "Mound Builders" or that the native civilization had suffered a very serious decline. Either of the propositions offered a tenable explanation. The current aboriginal inhabitants might well have destroyed the superior civilization, as barbarians had done repeatedly in the past; but then one was left with the impossible task of explaining the origins of the earlier people. The notion of cultural decline was given serious consideration and never totally discarded. Al-

though Jefferson's explanation, that those responsible for the works were at a rudimentary stage of development and probably related to the Indians, accounted for the verifiable facts, it remained a minority position.<sup>13</sup>

Benjamin Smith Barton, the botanist and professor of medicine, was the most articulate spokesman for the idea of the native's cultural decline. He thought the traditions of the Indians themselves indicated that war and disease had constantly plagued them and eventually split them into numerous antagonistic tribes. Even during the period of European contact, the decline had continued. He viewed the Indians of his own time as much less polished than their ancestors of 200 years before. And since it was evident to any observer that the Indians were then passing into "a melancholy decay," he believed they had been in continuous decline from even before the European arrival. There were numerous remnants of a higher civilization. The native mythology, for example, seemed to be of Asiatic origin. There were fragments of astronomy practiced among them reminiscent of that science as found in Mexico. Also the pervading sense of reverence and courtesy characteristic of the behavior of the northern Indians seemed to connect them with the refinements of the Aztec empire. The structure of the Indian languages, in Barton's view, revealed that they had once been of a superior quality, while the small number of basic language groups argued for a previous degree of unity.<sup>14</sup>

Hugh Williamson, the historian of North Carolina, also posited the idea of a decline among the Indians from some previous condition of cultural eminence, though the main force of his argument was directed not toward Indian origins but the Buffon-Raynal theory of American deficiency. He thought the western earthworks made it evident that the original North American settlers were "artists and husbandmen" who, for some time after their arrival, cultivated the arts in their new settlements. They found, however, that there was not sufficient tillable soil in the area they had chosen, and, as a consequence, were forced to send out small colonies to live by hunting. This step, according to Williamson, constituted an irreversible move into savagery. From that day the progress of the American Indian had been a gradual descent from his relatively high position of the past.<sup>15</sup>

For similar reasons the notion of Indian decline was also upheld by Benjamin Rush. For him the earthworks were the cultural remains of the ancestors of the Indians who had "become savages in consequence of their having lost the use of letters or written characters and the knowledge and habits of religion . . . without both of which nations seldom or perhaps never become civilized or preserve their civilization." He added, in a most curious, though not uncommon, rejection of God's abundance, that "the extent of our country, and the facility of subsistence by fishing and hunting and the spontaneous fruits of the earth, would naturally accelerate the progress of the descendants of the first settlers of our country to the savage state."<sup>16</sup>

The respectable degree of civilization which the Europeans had found in Mexico was certainly a possible link in explaining the existence of a pre-Indian culture of high quality. Barton was willing to give credence to the suggestion that the tumuli and earthworks were of Mexican construction. (He maintained also that the Danes were the ancestors of the Mexicans!) Albert Gallatin and Samuel L. Mitchill also speculated about a link between Mexico and the Mississippi Valley. But as Jefferson had said, in commenting on William Robertson's similar contention, the evidence in its favor was indeed feeble.<sup>17</sup>

Any treatment of the ancient remains that associated them in some way with the Indian could not but add weight to the widely held conviction of human homogeneity. Admittedly, the theory that the works were constructed by a people of superior attainment came close to severing all connection with the native people. The concept of decline, on the other hand, though articulated by only a few observers, provided a convenient explanation of the low level of aboriginal accomplishment and the reputed evidences of high civilization which littered the continent, while also retaining a place for the Indian. Jefferson's doubt concerning the existence of a past civilization of impressive stature obviated the need for any such effort on the native's behalf. But for the most part, opinion in the Jeffersonian period lacked the subtlety necessary for unraveling the varied possibilities concerning the relation between the ancient remnants and Indian origins. Somehow it was enough that even the most tenuous association of the aborigines with another people, who may or may not have been their ancestors, should have clarified the native's position in the world.

### iii

The most dependable tool available to the Jeffersonian investigator of native origins was the study of Indian languages. None had a higher confidence in the value of comparative linguistics than Benjamin Smith Barton. In his view the "pure certainty of science," even without the Old Testament, would have established the origins of man in Asia through the study of comparative linguistics. He quoted the French historian Charlevoix to the effect that similarities in customs and traditions between one people and another were not sufficiently reliable to determine relationships. "New Events, and a new Arrangement of Things give Rise to new Traditions, which efface the former, and are themselves effaced in their Turn. After one or two Centuries have passed, there no longer remain any Marks capable of leading us to find the Traces of the first Traditions." But such was not the case with language. Through all the vicissitudes of time, the core of the language remained stable and offered the scholar the key to past history.<sup>18</sup>

Jefferson was also confident in the utility of language for the determination of relationships between nations. But he was careful to note

that although the investigation of similarities of language might furnish information concerning the fact of a relation between two groups of people, it did not solve the problem of language transmission—one would have to look elsewhere to determine the parent stock.<sup>19</sup> One of Jefferson's dearest projects, to which he devoted years of application and care, was the compilation of a comparative Indian language list. There could be few more telling proofs of his conviction that language constituted an instrument of the utmost importance in discerning the origins of the American natives. Of course his interest encompassed purposes broadly philological, but in the more immediate context he seldom failed to relate his word collecting to the origin of the Indian.<sup>20</sup>

Over the years Jefferson's avid vocabulary hunting gave him a list of approximately 250 words in as many as 50 Indian languages. He had arranged these in such a way as to allow him to compare the various Indian words for one particular object with each other and to illustrate the wide diversity in the Indian tongues. Further, he had juxtaposed to the Indian words a selection of European equivalents with the purpose of marking off the possible relations among them. He had thought to use his own work as a complement to the extensive comparative vocabulary which had been compiled under the patronage of Catherine the Great by Peter S. Pallas.

From the beginning an air of misfortune hung over Jefferson's language study. As early as 1786 he had written to Benjamin Hawkins from Paris that he feared the loss of his work, while to the same correspondent in 1800, he wrote that the danger of risking the collection any longer had determined him to put it into print. Yet in 1806 it was not yet published, and he was writing that he expected it would not be for "a year or two more. . . ." Before his precious work reached the public, however, time ran out. In 1809, Jefferson described how an "irreparable misfortune" had deprived him of thirty years' labor. The tale was certainly a sad one. His intention had been to publish his work before retiring from the presidency, but he had received from Meriwether Lewis a large selection of western Indian words gathered on the famous expedition, and he had not had the time to collate them into his own lists. The task was put off until his return to Monticello. Along with a number of other bulky packages, all of Jefferson's Indian language material was put into a trunk to be sent around by water from Washington. While it was being brought up the James, a thief broke open the trunk and in his disappointment at the seemingly worthless contents emptied the papers into the river. A few tattered and mud-stained remnants floated ashore but most of the material was lost forever. Jefferson later sent what could be salvaged to the American Philosophical Society at Philadelphia where, even in their mutilated condition, they testify to the quality of his assiduous labor. Though there was a period when he thought that he might make another effort at



building an Indian vocabulary, he was convinced that age and time were against his completing it.<sup>21</sup>

From his long study of the Indian languages, Jefferson had drawn one major conclusion and a corollary: that the most salient characteristic of the Indian tongues was their radical diversity and that from this it was reasonable to infer that the Indians had lived on the American continent for a period sufficiently long for them to be the parent stock of Asia. Speaking from memory of his own word lists in 1816, he wrote that he was

certain more than half of them differed as radically, each from every other, as the Greek, the Latin, and Icelandic. And even of those which seemed to be derived from the same radix, the departure was such that the tribes speaking them could not probably understand one another. Single words, or two or three together, might be understood, but not a whole sentence of any extent or construction.

And, as he made clear, the differences were by no means superficial but went to the very root of the languages.<sup>22</sup>

If, according to Jefferson in his *Notes*, one arranged the Indian languages

under the radical ones to which they may be palpably traced, and doing the same by those of the red men of Asia, there will be found probably twenty in America for one in Asia, of those radical languages, so called because, if they were ever the same, they have lost all resemblance to one another. A separation into dialects may be the work of a few ages only, but for two dialects to recede from one another till they have lost all vestiges of their common origin, must require an immense course of time; perhaps not less than many people give to the age of the earth. A greater number of these radical changes of language having taken place among the red men of America, proves them of greater antiquity than those of Asia.<sup>23</sup>

Evidently, however, Jefferson was not at all certain that Asia was populated from America. In a note he later appended to his own copy of the Stockdale edition of the *Notes* of 1787, he offered an alternative solution to the problem. It had to be confessed, he wrote, it was not easy to believe that the period of Indian residence on the American continent was long enough to account for the great diversity of their languages. Perhaps, he suggested, he might be permitted a further conjecture. Americans have found in dealing with the Indians that they are most reluctant to use a language other than their own, even when they have full knowledge of the other tongue. And since we know also that their domestic feuds are frequent, would it not be fair to assume that a tribal faction alienated from the original body would refuse to employ a language still in use among those with whom it had quarreled. The tendency would be for the dissident element to form its own language. They needed but few words,

and it would take little effort to invent the requisite number. The principle of diversity was upheld, but the argument was tenuous indeed.<sup>24</sup>

Jefferson's tentative position as to the priority of America over Asia did not pass without criticism. Joseph Doddridge thought it "A gigantic conclusion! A conclusion which an accurate knowledge of one hundred of the languages of America and Asia, would scarcely have warranted. . . ." Though he wished to concede Jefferson his due as a philosopher, he thought that in this case his zeal for the honor of the aborigine had led him astray. A more draconian critique was offered by Clement C. Moore. He accused Jefferson of rejecting the story of Eden in the Old Testament. The Bible, said Moore, proved that mankind had its origin in Asia. Jefferson had cast doubt on this truth through his speculations on native language diversity in America, and, furthermore, had implied that the world was not as old as the Bible said it was.<sup>25</sup>

According to Roy Harvey Pearce, Jefferson's view on diversity was a minority one. As the study of philology advanced, it became more and more evident that the Indian languages were basically interrelated. Barton was probably the most reputable advocate of this position. While admitting there had been a great disparity in Indian languages, certainly since the coming of the European, he readily set this down to differences in dialect which did not reach the core of the language. He criticized Jefferson for reasoning from the great diversity of Indian languages to the conclusion that America was probably the source of Asian population. Except over the question of the nature of the admitted diversity, however, there was no cause for argument between the two. Jefferson assumed a connection between the languages of Asia and America—that at the source there had been language unity—but his important point was the deep-seated diversity found in the native languages as they were then spoken. For Jefferson the problem of whether the differences in the languages were fundamental or merely superficial was of significance because it bore upon the question of how much time had elapsed between the original unity and the dispersion evident in his own time. Had he conceded to Barton that the distinctions in American aboriginal languages were not at the root but at some less basic level of dialect, the time lapse would have been shortened but the relation of Asia and the priority of America would not have been affected. Barton seemed to think that Jefferson's insistence on diversity meant that the same condition existed in the beginning, when this of course was not so.<sup>26</sup>

iv

The mystery of Indian origins invited all manner of outlandish explanations. Thus, just as more than one generation of New Englanders had puzzled over the ancient inscriptions found on the Dighton Rock at Taunton, Massachusetts, attributing them at one time or another to Siberian Tartars, Canaanites, Phoenicians and their Carthaginian relatives,

followers of a mythic prince of Atlantis, Egyptians, Hebrews, and a group of Tyrian sailors during the reign of King Solomon, opinion in the Jeffersonian era was frequently transported into similarly misty realms. But such esoteric speculations might easily be condoned if they served to locate the American Indian, with reasonable assurance, in the natural order of things.<sup>27</sup>

In the eighteenth century the generally accepted theory of the origin of the Indians was that they had come to the American continent probably from Asia. The most prominent rival to this contention was that the Indians had in some way descended from the lost tribes of Israel. The Hebrew theory did not necessarily contradict the Asian solution, since the missing Jews might well have marched east across the wilds of Asia before reaching the virgin territory of the American continent. But the two possibilities were usually considered mutually exclusive. The theoretical advantages of coupling the Indians with the Jews were obvious. Since the European man had his spiritual origin in Israel, it would certainly improve the anomalistic situation of the Indian to find his historical beginnings there. It is interesting that much of the effort to associate the Jews and the Indians occurred after 1815, which, according to Pearce, grew out of the realization of Protestant America that its plans to proselytize the Indians had failed. In the face of this rejection by the aborigine, the white man might console himself with the thought that it had always been necessary for God to be patient with his recalcitrant Israelites.<sup>28</sup>

The originator of the Hebrew theory is reputed to have been Amerigo Vespucci. In the seventeenth century Thomas Thorowgood, quoting Roger Williams for support, was the foremost advocate of a Hebrew origin for the Indian. In 1708 John Oldmixon noted that a similar opinion was entertained by William Penn. But in the eighteenth century the champion of the theory deserving the most serious consideration was the Indian trader James Adair. In his monumental *History of the American Indians*, in 1775, he employed every available tool, together with an unembarrassed prolixity, to prove that the Indians were indeed the long lost descendants of the wandering Jews. The list of similarities between the Indians and the Hebrews was interminable. Both people divided themselves into tribes, were monotheistic in religion, theocratic in their form of government, and looked with respect upon the prophets and priests who guarded their religious shrines. Moreover, Adair thought that the languages spoken by the American natives were similar to the ancient Hebrew in construction and vocabulary. Besides these major items, there was an endless collection of other Indian and Jewish customs which added weight to the argument in favor of their past connection.<sup>29</sup>

In 1816 Elias Boudinot, who had a long-standing philanthropic interest in the Indian, published his last volume, *A Star in the West*, in which he adduced once again all the available evidence to prove the Hebrew ancestry of the Indians. He ran through the usual categories: lan-

guage, traditions received by the Indians from the Jews, customs then practiced by the Indians, religious opinions and ceremonies, all of which, he thought, pointed to a cultural tie between the two people. Though he was not willing to say "past all doubt" that the Indians had descended from the Jews, he thought the evidence could hardly have been more conclusive.<sup>30</sup>

Of the older authorities who had dealt with the problem of Indian origins, Grotius, Acosta and Charlevoix had rejected the notion of descent from the Jews. In the later period some, such as Hugh Jones and Joseph Doddridge, though doubtful about a Hebrew connection, were willing to give it some credence. For others, such as Jonathan Heart, the idea was anathema. Arguments based on a purported similarity of culture, he thought, failed to note that the children of Israel were themselves at a very simple level of civilization. If there was any similarity between their customs and those of the Indians, it was the result of their both being at the same stage of development rather than any ancestral relation. James H. McCulloh, completely out of patience with the far-fetched quality of the evidence, dismissed the Hebrew theory as a "ridiculous conceit."<sup>31</sup>

Somewhat less persistent than the imputed Jewish origin, but a bit more romantic, was the attempt to link the Indians with the Greeks through a lost Alexandrine fleet of the fourth century B.C. One traveler saw proof in the hieroglyphic symbols found in a cave on the Ohio River. Others found it in the noble native visage and in the Indians' universally applauded eloquence. As durable as the Hebrew theory, though never explored with as much resplendent erudition, was the effort to associate the Indians with a group of lost Welshmen who followed Madoc across the ocean in the twelfth century. The story of blond, light-skinned, Welsh-speaking natives cropped up repeatedly well into the nineteenth century and was more than once given an affectionate nod by men of respectable opinion.<sup>32</sup>

But all other opinions paled before the general consensus that the Indian in some way had crossed to the American continent from Asia. The Spaniard Acosta had early toyed with the practical problem of how the migration had been made. He found it impossible to believe that the natives had reached their destination by sea. They possessed nothing like the requisite navigational equipment, nor had the ancients from whom they were reported to be descended. A ship might perhaps have been blown off course and reached the New World by accident, but how would this account for the presence of animals in America. Some useful and desirable animals might have been brought, but certainly no other kind. The solution to the riddle, it seemed to Acosta, was that the New World had been populated by a passage of land between the two continents.<sup>33</sup>

Jefferson, however, summed up the opinion of the late eighteenth century that a voyage by sea to America had always been a possibility, even with the inferior navigational facilities of early times. From the east the

transit from Norway by way of Iceland, Greeland and Labrador was thought to be fairly easy. It was widely accepted that the Eskimo had used this route from northern Europe. And on the other side of the world, the recent voyages of Captain Cook had indicated that if America and Asia were not joined in the northwest, then they were certainly very close to being so.<sup>34</sup>

A wide miscellany of information was used by the Jeffersonian generation to support the assumption that the American Indian had originated in Asia. There was, for example, the tradition almost universal among the Indians that they had at one time come from the west. It would be easy now to doubt the validity of this Indian memory and to speculate that it arose for reasons other than the facts it was supposed to record, but to the eighteenth-century observer, it added substantial weight to the belief in an Asian origin. Among both Indians and whites, there were those who doubted the proposition. The Mandan tradition, as an instance, told of how the forefathers of the tribe had come to their country through a hole in the earth, and there was some talk among the Shawnee that they had lived in Cuba until expelled by the Spaniards. But generally the Indians thought that they had come from the direction of the setting sun, as, in fact, they had.<sup>35</sup>

Bits of corroborative evidence were gleaned from the tales of travelers, sometimes at second hand or more, to associate the Indians with Asia. Josiah Meigs, for example, quoting Ezra Stiles, related to Samuel L. Mitchill a story concerning the artist John Smibert. When the latter arrived in America with Bishop Berkeley, it was reported, he thought a group of Narragansett Indians in Newport looked just like the Tartars he had been employed to paint at the court of the Grand Duke of Tuscany. Bearing on the same subject, Jefferson learned from the traveler John Ledyard in 1787, then in Siberia, that the appearance and circumstances of the inhabitants of northern Asia convinced him that the American Indians and the Tartars were the same people. Ezra Stiles, after viewing some Russian figures on the population of the Siberian Tartars, and then much later listening to the account of Captain Peter Pond of Melford who had traversed the Indian lands beyond the Great Lakes, could not help but think that the sparse distribution of people found in both places was substantial evidence of a connection.<sup>36</sup>

The clinching arguments for the Asian origin of the Indians were really no more critical in the Jeffersonian period than the rumors and stray tales. Imlay offered a convenient summation of the most commonly heard evidence. Native America, he began, had always been more heavily populated on the side towards Asia. The character of the Indians was similar to that of the Tartars; neither applied themselves to art. The color of both people was much alike. Differences could be set down to the effects of climate and "those mixtures with which the Americans rub themselves." The wild beasts in the northern continent could not have

been transported by sea and could only have come from Asia. And finally, the bison of America and the buffalo of Scythia were of the same species. He might have added the supposed kinship in language, besides the bewildering welter of customs which one observer after another saw paralleled in Asia and America. But the conviction, valid as it may have been, had little of a solid, empirical character behind it.<sup>37</sup>

## V

The intense interest in the origin of primitive people, which engrossed eighteenth-century intellectual circles, was a significant spur to the developing science of philology. Though the didactic purpose of demonstrating this or that theory concerning the early history of the Indians was never forgotten, the work of Barton, Jefferson, Duponceau and Gallatin was ample evidence that the concern for the nature of language had roots deeper than the theoretical fantasies that hovered about it. And it is fair to say that the later sciences of anthropology and ethnology, which were to take up with serious intent the story of the prehistoric Indian, had of necessity to build upon the stock of information accumulated mainly in the Jeffersonian period. Perhaps it was as much a task to sift the information for verifiable nuggets, as it might have been to start anew in a virgin field, but of course in intellectual pursuits one never really begins anew.<sup>38</sup>

There is much to be said, moreover, for the plain good sense of the Jeffersonian age. An impressive number of those who examined the question of Indian origins refused to be beguiled by the enticements of exotic theories. For the most part, even those observers who were attracted to one or another of the more extravagant explanations, were simply employing some ancient elements in the deposit of civilized knowledge to solve a very difficult problem. If the American aborigine was a descendant of those lost Hebrews or Welshmen, or had in his manners traces of a connection with classic civilization, long unresolved questions in the Western mind would be answered. And even Jefferson and those devotees of the scientific approach who favored an Asian origin for the Indian were not without a sense that they were operating within the limits of a long accepted body of knowledge. Yet the plain fact was that the evidence, though sparse, pointed in the direction of Asia; sensible men could not but acquiesce.

In both the scope of its investigation and the consensus arrived at, therefore, the Jeffersonian generation had reason to be happy with its achievement. The desire for a closed universal order so prevalent in the eighteenth century was met by the delineation of the Indian's place among the world's creatures while the practical need to arrange the native's relation to the white man's society could find ample justification in the quest for aboriginal origins. Finally, the Indian's credentials as a worthy recipient of the benefits of civilization were enhanced by the search for his derivation and the location of his origin in Asia, the cradle of humanity.

The Institute of Early American History and Culture

## footnotes

1. William Stanton, *The Leopard's Spots: Scientific Attitudes toward Race in America, 1815-59* (Chicago, 1960) emphasizes the Jeffersonian commitment to human homogeneity, environmentalism and progress. See Chapter I and page 33. For the contention that opinion in the Jeffersonian era favored the incorporation of the Indians, see: Francis Paul Prucha, *American Indian Policy in the Formative Years: The Indian Trade and Intercourse Acts, 1790-1834* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962), 224-25; see Alden T. Vaughan, *New England Frontier: Puritans and Indians, 1620-1675* (Boston, 1965), viii, 19, for a similar position among the New England Puritans; Robert F. Berkhofer, *Salvation and the Savage: An Analysis of Protestant Missions and American Indian Response, 1787-1862* (Lexington, Ky., 1965), 7-8, 105-106. Jefferson wrote of the Indians to the agent Benjamin Hawkins, February 18, 1803: "In truth, the ultimate point of rest and happiness for them is to let our settlements and theirs meet and blend together, to intermix, and become one people. Incorporating themselves with us as citizens of the United States. . . ." *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson* (Memorial Edition), Andrew A. Lipscomb and Albert Ellery Bergh, eds. (Washington, 1903-1904), X, 363. A contrary opinion is offered in Roy Harvey Pearce, *The Savages of America: A Study of the Indian and the Idea of Civilization* (rev. ed., Baltimore, 1965), ix, 3-4, 41-42, and "The Metaphysics of Indian-Hating," *Ethnohistory*, 4 (Winter, 1957), 31. J. H. McCulloh, *Researches, Philosophical and Antiquarian, concerning the Aboriginal History of America* (Baltimore, 1829), 418; Caleb Atwater, *Description of the Antiquities Discovered in the State of Ohio and Other Western States . . .* (n.p., 1820), 205-206.

2. For the tendency to universalize ideas in the Enlightenment and in Jefferson: Walter L. Dorn, "The Heavenly City and Historical Writing on the Enlightenment," in *Carl Becker's Heavenly City Revisited*, Raymond O. Rockwood, ed. (Ithaca, 1958), 65; Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Lost World of Thomas Jefferson* (Boston, 1960), 53; for the place of history in eighteenth-century thought, see Alfred Cobban, *In Search of Humanity: The Role of the Enlightenment in Modern History* (New York, 1960), 105, 107; Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation. The Rise of Modern Paganism* (New York, 1966), 32.

3. For a resume of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature concerning the origin of the Indian, see: Lee Eldridge Huddleston, *Origins of the American Indians: European Concepts, 1492-1729* (Austin, 1967); Don Cameron Allen, *The Legend of Noah: Renaissance Rationalism in Art, Science, and Letters* (Urbana, 1949), 120-30. John H. Powell, *On the Origin of the American Indians* (Philadelphia, 1946); Marc Maurice Wasserman, "The American Indian as Seen by the Seventeenth Century Chroniclers" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1954), Ch. XVI.

4. Jefferson to Adams, June 11, 1812 and May 27, 1813, *The Adams-Jefferson Letters . . .*, Lester J. Cappon, ed. (Chapel Hill, 1959), II, 305-307, 323-24.

5. Adams to Jefferson, June 28, 1812, Cappon, ed., II, 312; Noah Webster, *The American Museum*, VIII (July, 1790), 11-12, offered a typical speculation on Indian origin: "What will the public say of the following opinions, that the Southern Indians, in Mexico and Peru, are descended from the Carthaginians or other Mediterranean nations, who found their way to the continent at a very early period, and spread themselves over North as well as South America—that these nations had become more civilized than the present northern Indians, tho' not acquainted with the use of iron—that at a late period of time, perhaps four or five centuries ago, the Siberian Tartars found their way to the North West parts of this country, and pushed their settlements till they met the southern and more ancient settlers—that, accustomed to the colder climate and more active and hardy life, they were the Goths and Vandals of North America, and drove the more ancient settlers from their territory—that in the contest between these different tribes or races of men, were constituted the numerous fortifications discovered on the Ohio, the northern lomes, and in all parts of the western territory. What facts may be found to support this idea, must be left to further investigation."

6. Peter S. Duponceau, "Preface" to David Zeisberger, "A Grammar of the Language of the Lenni Lenape or Delaware Indians," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, new ser., III (1830), 66.

7. William Peden, ed. (Chapel Hill, 1955), 97-100; Thomas Ashe, *Travels in America . . .* (London, 1809), 131-38, describes in detail his careful opening of a number of mounds on the Muskingum; pp. 175-76, he condemns the "profane and violating hands" which had destroyed what he believed were "mummies" in a cave near Lexington, Kentucky. The earthworks in their various manifestations are now attributed to the Hopewell culture (ca. A.D. 900-1300) and its various connections: Paul S. Martin, George I. Quimby and Donald Collier, *Indians before Columbus: Twenty Thousand Years of North American History Revealed by Archeology* (Chicago, 1947), 267-68. George Hyde, *Indians of the Woodlands: From Prehistoric Times to 1725* (Norman, 1962), 33-34, contends that the enclosed areas were neither fortifications nor villages, as had been claimed, but ceremonial enclaves; for a similar opinion in the Jeffersonian period, see *The Western Review*, I (September, 1819), 96-100.

8. Charles Thomson to Jefferson, April 28, 1787, *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, Julian P. Boyd, ed. (Princeton, 1950-), XI, 323-24; John Cleves Symmes to Charles Thomson, February 4, 1787, *Collections of the New-York Historical Society*, 11 (1878), 233-39.

9. Jefferson to Charles Thomson, September 20, 1787, Boyd, XII, 159; "Circular Letter," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, IV (1799), xxxvii-xxxix.

10. Jeremy Belknap, *A Discourse, Intended to Commemorate the Discovery of America by Christopher Columbus* . . . (Boston, 1792), 45; "A Letter from Major Jonathan Heart to Benjamin Smith Barton . . .," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, III (1793), 217-18; Gilbert Imlay, *A Topographical Description of the Western Territory of North America* . . . (3rd ed., London, 1797), 21, and ed. note, 597; De Witt Clinton, *A Memoir of the Antiquities of the Western Parts of the State of New-York* (Albany, 1818), 16; Moses Fiske, "Conjectures respecting the Ancient Inhabitants of North America," *American Antiquarian Society, Archaeologia Americana* (Transactions and Collections), I (1820), 300-307; Atwater, 120, conceded, however, that the builders of the works had no glass and that their pottery was unglazed and of poor quality. For a selection of other spokesmen favorable to the position see: *Lawson's History of North Carolina*, Frances Latham Harriss, ed. (Richmond, 1952), 179-80; "A Letter on the Supposed Fortifications of the Western Country, from Bishop Madison of Virginia to Dr. Barton," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, VI (1809), 132-42; Ashe, 184-85; 188; "On the Population of Tumuli of the Aborigines of North America. In a Letter from H. H. Brackenridge, Esq. to Thomas Jefferson," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, new ser., I (1818), 151-55; "Reflections on the Institutions of the Cherokee Nation . . .," *Analectic Magazine*, XII (July, 1818), 37-38.

11. Samuel Holden Parsons to Ezra Stiles, April 27, 1786; Ezra Stiles to Jefferson, May 8, 1786, Boyd, IX, 476, 478.

12. Jefferson to Ezra Stiles, September 1, 1786, Boyd, X, 316; Ashe, 32-33, was particularly critical of Jefferson's position concerning the natives' ancestors. He admonished him to visit the western remains and diligently search among them before passing judgment on the cultural credentials of their builders.

13. Hyde, 32, says that in fact the "Mound Builders" were "in their everyday life barbarous. . . ." A writer in *The North American Review*, VI (1817-1818), 137, maintained "that these masses of the earth were formed by a *savage people*. Yet doubtless possessing a greater degree of civilization than the present race of Indians." For agreement with Jefferson on this issue, see: Joseph de Acosta, *The Natural and Moral History of the Indies*, Clements R. Markham, ed. (London, 1880), I, 69-70; William Robertson, *The History of America* (10th ed., London, 1803), II, 32; Samuel Williams, *The Natural and Civil History of Vermont* (Walpole, N.H., 1794), 200-201; Jonathan Carver, *Three Years Travels through the Interior Parts of North America* . . . (Philadelphia, 1796), 36-37; Thaddeus Mason Harris, *The Journal of a Tour into the Territory Northwest of the Alleghany Mountains* . . . (Boston, 1805), 153; Ashe, 34, in a different mood, had doubts about the level of the "Mound Builders'" culture.

14. Benjamin Smith Barton, "Observations and Conjectures concerning Articles Which Were Taken Out of an Ancient Tumulus . . .," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, IV (1799), 188-97.

15. Hugh Williamson, *Observations on the Climate in Different Parts of America* . . . (New York, 1811), 115-16.

16. Benjamin Rush to David Hosack, September 25, 1812, *Letters of Benjamin Rush*, L. H. Butterfield, ed. (Princeton, 1951), II, 1163. Duponceau, 85-86, rejected the notion that the intricate structure of the native languages was evidence for the existence on the American continent of an ancient civilization of high quality. In his opinion the natural logic given to man by God was sufficient for all people to formulate adequate languages.

17. Barton, 186n; Albert Gallatin, "A Synopsis of the Indian Tribes within the United States East of the Rocky Mountains, and in the British and Russian Possessions in North America," *American Antiquarian Society, Archaeologia Americana* (Transactions and Collections), 2 (1836), 147-48; Samuel L. Mitchell, "The Original Inhabitants of America Consisted of the Same Races with the Maylays of Australasia, and the Tartars of the North," *American Antiquarian Society, Archaeologia Americana* (Transactions and Collections), I (1820), 324-25; Atwater, 244-51; Harris, 162-67; Jefferson to Charles Thomson, September 20, 1787, Boyd, XII, 159.

18. Barton, "Hints on the Etymology of Certain English Words . . .," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, VI (1809), 155, "Preliminary Discourse" in *New Views of the Origin of the Tribes and Nations of America* (Philadelphia, 1797), viii-ix. It should be noted that some critics had doubts about the usefulness of language study in the determination of origins; see, "Heads of that Part of the Introductory Discourse Delivered November 7, 1816, by Dr. [Samuel L.] Mitchell . . ." *American Antiquarian Society, Archaeologia Americana* (Transactions and Collections), I (1820), 340; McCulloh, 38-39.

19. Jefferson to Benjamin Hawkins, August 4, 1787, Boyd, XI, 683; to John Sibley, May 27, 1805, to J. S. Vater, May 11, 1811, *Writings* (Memorial Edition), XI, 79-81, XIII, 60-61. Barton, "Preliminary Discourse," lxxxviii, made the same point.

20. Jefferson to James Madison, January 12, 1789, to William Dunbar, January 12, 1801, to Peter Wilson, January 20, 1816, *Writings* (Memorial Edition), VII, 267, X, 192-93, XIV, 402.



Adrienne Koch, *The Philosophy of Thomas Jefferson* (Gloucester, Mass., 1957), 108-109; Pearce, *The Savages of America* . . . , 80.

21. Jefferson to Benjamin Hawkins, August 13, 1786, Boyd, X, 240; to Benjamin Hawkins, March 14, 1800, to Levett Harris, April 18, 1806, to Benjamin Smith Barton, September 21, 1809, to Peter S. Duponceau, November 7, 1817, *Writings* (Memorial Edition), X, 161, XI, 102-103, XII, 312-13, XV, 153.

22. Jefferson to Peter Wilson, January 20, 1816, *Writings* (Memorial Edition), XIV, 402.

23. *Notes*, 102; Jefferson to Ezra Stiles, September 1, 1786, to Charles Thomson, September 20, 1787, Boyd, X, 316, XII, 159.

24. *Notes*, 282, ed. note; Jefferson's addition has been inserted after p. 162 in the rebound volume that was his copy of the Stockdale edition: Alderman Library, University of Virginia. Jefferson was not alone in contending for the great diversity of Indian languages: Wasserman, 107-108; Lawson, 26, 239; John Oldmixon, *The British Empire in America* . . . (London, 1708), I, 99-101; "David Zeisberger's History of the Northern American Indians," Archer B. Hulbert and William N. Schwarz, *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Publications*, XIX (1910), 141; Heart, 220; Williams, 198-201.

25. Joseph Doddridge, *Notes on the Settlement and Indian Wars, of the Western Parts of Virginia & Pennsylvania* . . . (Wellsburgh, Va., 1824), 46-47; Clement C. Moore, *Observations upon Certain Passages in Mr. Jefferson's Notes on Virginia, Which Appear to Have a Tendency to Subvert Religion and Establish a False Philosophy* (New York, 1804), 15-19.

26. Pearce, *The Savages of America* . . . , 80, n.8, cites William Dunbar, "On the Language of Signs among Certain North American Indians," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, VI (1809), 1-8, as evidence that opinion in the late eighteenth century had turned in favor of language unity among the Indians. But Dunbar, in fact, said just the opposite. He contended that the use of common signs could be found among the American Indians and also in Asia, "although their respective oral tongues are frequently unknown to each other. . . ." Barton, "Observations and Conjectures concerning Articles Which Were Taken Out of an Ancient Tumulus . . . ," 192n, 194, "Preliminary Discourse," lvi-lviii, lxxii, lxxix. Also Gallatin, 142-44; Duponceau to John Heckewelder, August 30, 1816, "A Correspondence . . . respecting the Languages of the American Indians," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, new ser., I (1819), 430-31; *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, 1804-1806*, Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed. (New York, 1804-1806), I, 132.

27. Edmund B. Delabarre, "Early Interest in Dighton Rock," *The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, Transactions*, XVIII (1915-1916), 291; Brooke Hindle, *The Pursuit of Science in Revolutionary America, 1735-1789* (Chapel Hill, 1956), 323-24. For evidence that bizarre speculations concerning Indian origins may be found in the post-Enlightenment age, see: Robert Wauchope, *Lost Tribes & Sunken Continents: Myth and Method in the Study of American Indians* (Chicago, 1962); Harold Sterling Gladwin, *Men Out of Asia* (New York, 1947); Kenneth Macgowan and Joseph A. Hester, Jr., *Early Man in the New World* (rev., Anchor ed., New York, 1962), 248-59.

28. Powell, 8-9; Pearce, *The Savages of America* . . . , 61-62.

29. Robert F. Spencer, Jesse D. Jennings, et al., *The Native Americans: Pre-history and Ethnology of the North American Indians* (New York, 1965), 14; Allen, 126; Wasserman, 464-68; Oldmixon, I, 164; James Adair, *The History of the American Indians* (London, 1775), 15-194, *passim*.

30. Elias Boudinot, *A Star in the West* (Trenton, 1816), 88, 281; George Adams Boyd, *Elias Boudinot: Patriot and Statesman, 1740-1821* (Princeton, 1952), 254-55. The pervasive, uncritical character of the Hebrew theory is illustrated by: "John Heckewelder to Peter S. Du Ponceau, Bethlehem 12th Aug 1818," Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin, ed., *Ethnohistory*, VI (Winter, 1959), 72-73: "What regards *Origin* of the Indians, I chose from the beginning to be silent. True, we all believe (& Pyrlaeus did believe the same) that the Indians were the Offspring of the 10 Tribes whom the King of Assyria led away Captive—&c—but this is only an *Opinion* of ours—No one of us will undertake to prove the fact, & opinion without facts—without reasons for so believing, are worth nothing—"

31. Hugo Grotius, *On the Origin of the Native Races of America* . . . , Edmund Goldsmid, ed. (Edinburgh, 1884), 14-17; Acosta, I, 64-69; Francois Xavier de Charlevoix, *Journal of a Voyage to North America*, Louise Phelps Kellogg, ed. (Chicago, 1923), II, 139; Hugh Jones, *The Present State of Virginia* . . . , Richard L. Morton, ed. (Chapel Hill, 1956), 50; Doddridge, 53-54; Heart, 221; McCulloh, 89, 99, 102-103; Thomas S. Woodward, *Reminiscences* . . . (Tuscaloosa, Ala., 1939), 11-12, 33-34.

32. Ashe, 231-37; Josiah Priest, *American Antiquities and Discoveries in the West* . . . (2nd ed., Albany, 1833), 44-47; Antonello Gerbi, *La disputa de nuevo mundo: historia de una polemica, 1750-1900* (Mexico, 1960), 239n. David Williams, "John Evans' Strange Journey," *The American Historical Review*, LIV (January and April, 1949), 277-95, 508-29; Aubrey Diller, "James Mackay's Journey in Nebraska in 1796," *Nebraska History*, XXXVI (January, 1955), 123-28; Heart, 222; Jedidah Morse, *A Report to the Secretary of War of the United States, on Indian Affairs* . . . (New Haven, 1822), 31; "On the Existence of a Welsh Colony in America," *Analectic Magazine*, II (November, 1813), 410-13; "The Nicholas Biddle Notes" in *Letters of the*

*Lewis and Clark Expedition, with Related Documents, 1783-1854*, Donald Jackson, ed. (Urbana, 1962), 515-16; John Filson, *The Discovery, Settlement and Present State of Kentucke . . .* (Wilmington, 1784), 95-97; Charles William Janson, *The Stranger in America . . .* (London, 1807), 271-77.

33. Acosta, I, 45-66, 63-64.

34. *Notes*, 100-101; Morse, *The American Universal Geography* (Boston, 1796), I, 84, agrees with Clavigero and Buffon that at one time Asia and the northwestern part of America were connected as also were South America and Africa; John Ledyard, *A Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage . . .* (Hartford, 1783), 88, 175; McCulloh, 428. Macgowan and Hester, 17-20.

35. For a selection of opinion favoring the Indian tradition see: Robert Rogers, *A Concise Account of North America* (London, 1765), 252-53; Adair, 194; William Bartram, *Travels through North and South Carolina, Georgia, East and West Florida, the Cherokee Country, the Extensive Territories of the Muscogulges . . . , and the Country of the Chactaws* (London, 1792), 365-66; Barton, "Preliminary Discourse," xci-xcii; Robertson, II, 46-47; John Heckewelder, "An Account of the History, Manners, and Customs, of the Indian Natives Who Once Inhabited Pennsylvania and the Neighboring States," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, new ser., I (1819), 29. Among those who doubted the validity of the tradition, the most important were "David Zeisberger's History . . ." 31, 132 and Clinton, 3-4. For the Mandan story see Gallatin, 125; and for the Shawnee see Randolph C. Downes, *Council Fires on the Upper Ohio: A Narrative of Indian Affairs in the Upper Ohio Valley until 1795* (Pittsburgh, 1940), 9.

36. Delabarre, 274-75; John Ledyard to Jefferson, July 29, 1787, Boyd, XI, 638; *John Ledyard's Journey through Russia and Siberia, 1787-1788 . . .*, Stephen D. Watrous, ed. (Madison, 1966), 164, 165, 175, 177, 195, 198, 226-27; *The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles . . .*, Franklin Bowditch Dexter, ed. (New York, 1901), I, 356, III, 386.

37. The arguments in the late eighteenth century for the Asian origin of the Indian were not unlike those offered by Edward Brerewood, *Enquiries Touching the Diversity of Languages, and Religions, through the Chief Parts of the World* (London, 1614); Allen, 122-23; Powell, 20. For a survey of the common opinion see: Imlay, 2-3; Samuel L. Mitchill, "The Original Inhabitants of America Shown to Be of the Same Family and Lineage with Those of Asia," *American Antiquarian Society, Archaeologia Americana* (Transactions and Collections), I (1820), 326-28; Mark Catesby, *The Natural History of Carolina, Florida, and the Bahama Islands . . .* (London, 1771), vii; *Notes*, 101; Filson, 92-93; Samuel Stanhope Smith, *An Essay on the Causes of the Variety of Complexion and Figure in the Human Species . . .* (Philadelphia, 1787), 67; Williams, 188-93; Carver, 133-34; Barton, *New Views . . .*, 8-81; Morse, *The History of America* (3rd ed., Philadelphia, 1789), 110-11; Robertson, II, 35-45; Dunbar, 1-3; Williamson, 3, 95, 104; Gallatin, 142.

38. Clark Wissler, "The American Indian and the American Philosophical Society," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 86 (September, 1942), 189-204.