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**Nez Perce Country.** By Alvin M. Josephy Jr. with introduction by Jeremy FiveCrows. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2007. 178 pages. \$14.95 paper.

*Nez Perce Country* is a small but excellent introduction to the history of the Nez Perce or Nimiipuu tribe. The combined bands that lived in the Columbia plateau area west of the Bitterroot Mountains never numbered more than a few thousand souls and came close to extinction in the early twentieth century, when there were less than fifteen hundred persons. Their story is the usual one for American tribes, especially in the West. New diseases, such as the measles, swept the interior Northwest tribes in the 1780s, likely introduced by coastal traders. Then the army explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark entered the tribal heartland, the first recorded white men to do so. It is arguable that these interlopers would not have been successful in reaching the Pacific coast without Nimiipuu help because tribesmen personally guided them for more than six hundred miles and often provided food for the expedition. The impact of the American–Nez Perce experience was soon felt through the new goods and ideas brought into tribal culture.

At first the impact was felt through fur trappers and traders from Canada and the United States who were hot on the heels of Lewis and Clark in Nez Perce country. Protestant missionaries and then the Catholics, who established missions and won converts, soon followed them. But perhaps the biggest impact on tribal life came from the discovery of gold in 1860 and the subsequent rush onto Nez Perce land. The gold rush through ancient tribal haunts made the Nez Perce a minority within their own homeland. The miners and their cohorts were the first to introduce alcohol to the people and make it available on a year-round basis, and the subsequent disease of alcoholism brought both health problems and social upheaval.

In the meantime the Nez Perce formed an agreement with the United States in 1855, called the Stevens Treaty after one of its negotiators, Isaac I. Stevens, governor of Washington Territory. This first treaty guaranteed a 13.5 million acre homeland; however, following the gold rush, overwhelming white greed led to the demand for a new agreement. During negotiations in 1863, a majority of the chiefs who signed the 1855 treaty walked out. Only about a half dozen chiefs who had signed the earlier agreement remained to sign the 1863 treaty, which reduced the homeland by 90 percent. Finally, war erupted when General O. O. Howard attempted to force Indian removal from property outside the 1863 reservation. In earlier Northwest Indian wars, the Nez Percés, following their original agreements with Lewis and Clark and subsequent alliances with American trappers, fought on the side of the United States. The War of 1877 was between the Nez Percés and the United States, a war described by Chief Joseph as between the deer and the grizzly.

The War of 1877 devastated a free people and their way of life. Some survivors escaped to Sitting Bull's people in Canada; the others were placed in exile near the Fort Leavenworth military prison, then at several locations in what was known as Indian Territory, later Oklahoma. In Indian Territory, which the people called "the Hot Place," more Nez Perce died than during the war.

Alvin M. Josephy Jr., a Marine Corps correspondent in the Pacific during World War II, knew combat firsthand. His summary descriptions of events leading up to the Nez Perce War of 1877, as well as those of the war, remain one of the best ever written. *Nez Perce Country* covers much more than that. Josephy does equally well on coverage of what most authors ignore, the postwar period and the twentieth century.

After World War II, on assignment for *Time* magazine in Lewiston, Idaho, Josephy first met members of the Nez Perce tribe and became interested in their story. His interest and friendship resulted in his *Nez Perce Indians and the Opening of the Northwest* (1965), a scholarly rendition of both the pre-War of 1877 period and a detailed accounting of that tragic war. The publication of his comprehensive history coincided with the creation of the Nez Perce National Historical Park by Congress that same year, an event in which Josephy played a small but significant hand. Although many authors wrote of the War of 1877 both before and after Josephy's 1965 publication, he was the one who wrote best about the Nez Perces within the total context of American history. When the National Park Service decided they needed a handbook, they turned to Josephy. The first *Nez Perce Country* was published in 1983, and the main text of that book has been morphed into this edition of *Nez Perce Country*.

How do these two editions compare? First, it must be pointed out that *Nez Perce Indians and the Opening of the Northwest* was a monumental 702 pages in length. Further, the text, although breaking much new historical ground, did receive anthropological criticism for ignoring many cultural traditions and warping, in the anthropological view, some aspects of the Nez Perce story. Therefore, to Josephy's everlasting credit, while distilling the tribal story into a much shorter overall version from *Nez Perce Indians and the Opening of the Northwest*, he added and blended into the story much material from the anthropologists and ethnographers, such as Deward Walker Jr. and tribal ethnographer Allen Slickpoo Sr.

In addition, the 1983 *Nez Perce Country* included a host of beautiful color plates of landscapes and artifacts, which greatly enhanced Josephy's text. The many sites from the interior Northwest that make up the unique Nez Perce National Historical Park also received focused attention. The new *Nez Perce Country* does not have these color plates or the site-specific descriptions. Josephy, in his 1983 *Nez Perce Country*, did an excellent job of approximating the sounds of Nez Perce words by using the English alphabet. The Nez Perce language involves many sounds that cannot be duplicated in the English alphabet; thus the system has built-in inherent limitations. The new *Nez Perce Country* has corrected all of these spellings, utilizing Haruo Aoki's *Nez Perce Dictionary*, which came out in 1993. The new *Nez Perce Country* has been well indexed, unlike the original, and this is a welcome improvement.

One last change was made in the Bison edition that also makes an improvement, and that is an introduction by Jeremy FiveCrows. Young FiveCrows is an enrolled member of the Nez Perce tribe and was raised on the Idaho reservation as a hunter and a fisherman. In his five-page introduction "I Am of This Land" he describes the bonds that he and many other modern Nez Perces have for their homeland. For example, he recognizes "the toil, sacrifices, and

work of our forefathers and mothers” (xiii). He also informs us of the current work Nez Perce people do for the perpetuation of the salmon, steelhead, eels, and sturgeon, and of the tribe’s partnership with the Fish and Wildlife Service’s successful reestablishment of the wolf. FiveCrows offers several descriptions of Nez Perce efforts to maintain connections to the land and old-time culture through familiarity with the horse, especially the Appaloosa breed. While emphasizing connections to the land and water, FiveCrows also relates the many educational advances Nez Perces are experiencing, which he hopes will enhance the tribal connections.

All in all, *Nez Perce Country* is a well-researched and well-written book. The new version’s text, with the exception of the Nez Perce orthography, is identical to Josephy’s original, which was a distillation and in many ways is an improvement over his own *Nez Perce Indians and the Opening of the Northwest*. The orthography is great, and there is an index (which includes a nice “introduction” by Jeremy FiveCrows). The books are about the same size, but the National Park version is out of print and the Bison edition is well priced. Josephy was and remains a giant and a legend in all Indian country, but he will never be larger than in the homes of the Nez Perce. If authoritative summary information is something you want or need, there is no competition for Josephy’s text.

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Author

**Pagans in the Promised Land: Decoding the Doctrine of Christian Discovery.**  
By Steven T. Newcomb. Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 2008. 186 pages.  
\$19.95 paper.

The doctrine of discovery is the international legal principle that Europeans used to claim the lands of Indigenous peoples and nations and to assert sovereign, commercial, and diplomatic rights over Indian nations. The doctrine has been a part of Euro-American law in North America from the beginning of Spanish, French, and English exploration and settlement. Not surprisingly, the English colonies, the American states, and the United States adopted this legal tenet as the guiding principle for their interactions with Native nations. The US Supreme Court expressly accepted discovery in 1823 in *Johnson v. M’Intosh*. As you might imagine, this case and the topic of discovery have been written about and analyzed extensively.

In this interesting new book, Steven Newcomb takes a fresh look at the doctrine through the eyes and methods of cognitive theory and metaphor in which he focuses on the use of Christianity in the Euro-American application of the doctrine against American Indians. Newcomb emphasizes that he does not attack Christianity as a religion, but that he focuses on the actions of Christendom in dominating Native, non-Christian peoples.

Newcomb uses analytical tools that are new to me: cognitive theory and metaphor. After explaining these techniques and going through their