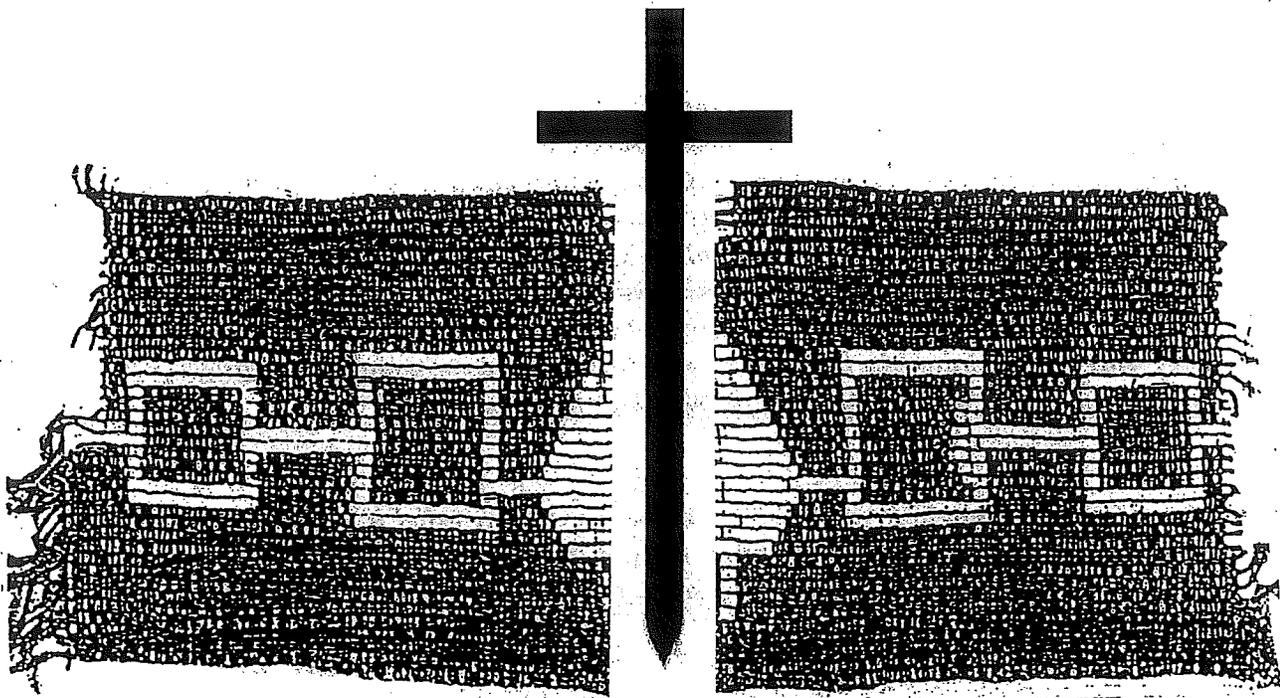


**THE CONFUSION BETWEEN  
THE GREAT LAW  
and  
THE HANDSOME LAKE CODE**

*BY KAHENTINETHA HORN*



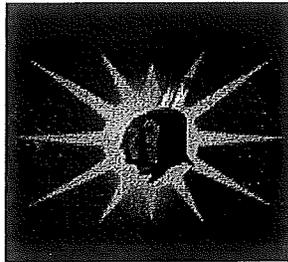
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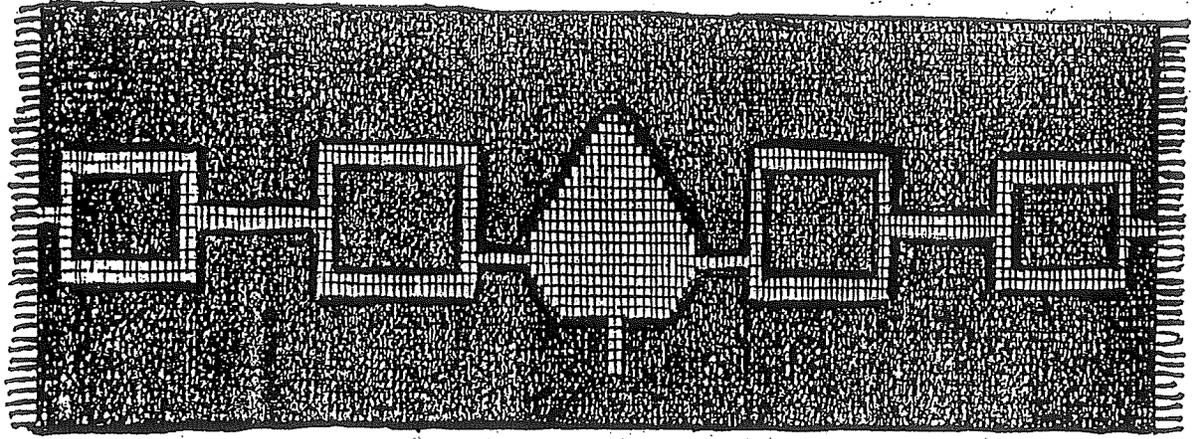
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***"Gees, I always thought I was "traditional" because of my belief in the "Creator"! It looks like I have to question how I relate to the natural world and my responsibilities to it", stated a Kanion'ke:haka youth who is always looking for answers.***

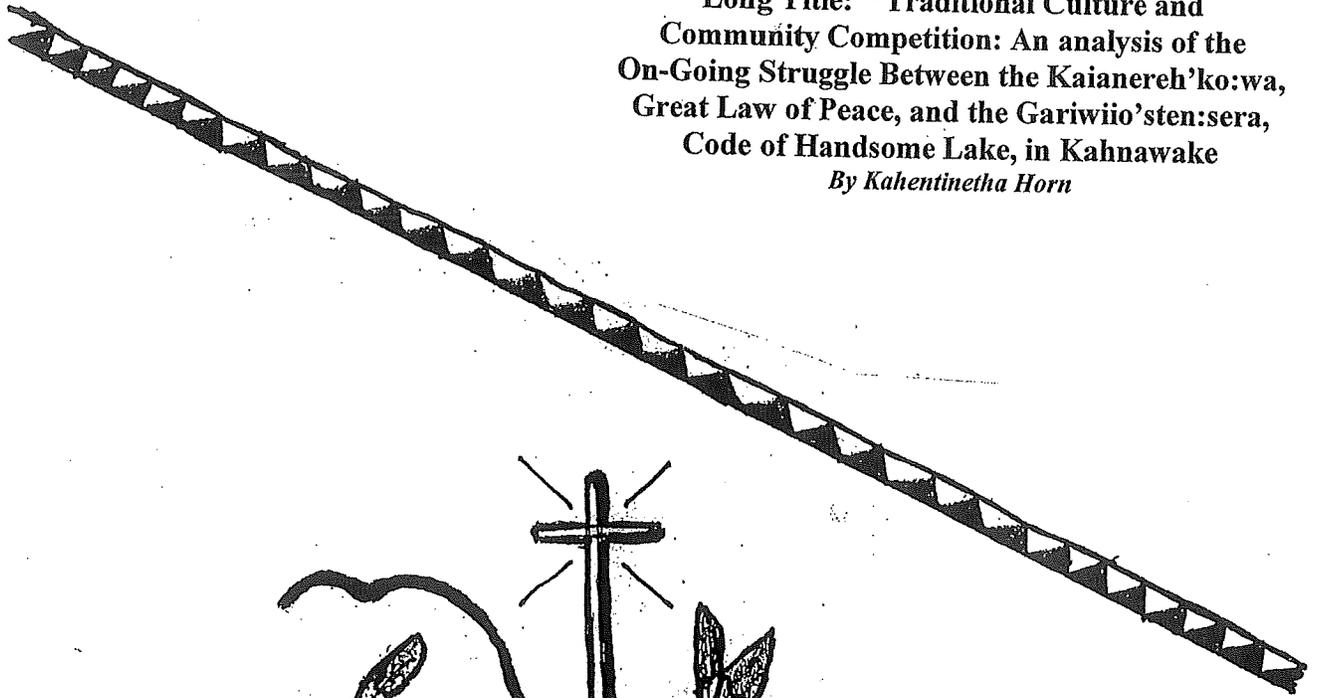
***"What a colonial conspiracy! This is the first time anyone took the Great Law philosophy and compared it with the Christian-based Handsome Lake Code", said a surprised elder of Kahnawake.***

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Long Title: "Traditional Culture and  
Community Competition: An analysis of the  
On-Going Struggle Between the Kaianereh'ko:wa,  
Great Law of Peace, and the Gariwii'o'sten:sera,  
Code of Handsome Lake, in Kahnawake  
*By Kahentinetha Horn*



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### ABSTRACT

A philosophy is the basic underlying principles, conduct, thought and knowledge in how a people relate to the universe. An ideology is based on doctrines, opinions or ways of thinking which set out how a people shall behave, not necessarily based on a knowledge or practical understanding of the nature of the universe. This distinction is demonstrated in the conflict between the Kaianereh'ko:wa/Great Law of Peace and the Gariwio'sten:sera/Handsome Lake Code which, on the surface, are seemingly similar traditional understandings in Mohawk communities.

The Kaianereh'ko:wa is a pre-contact philosophy which formed the basis of Iroquois culture. The opening thanksgiving outlines an interdependent system of relations of all elements of nature which are equal; women have powerful roles in social, political and economic life; and the people form the base of power.

The Handsome Lake Code is a post-contact Christian based ideology which outlines a hierarchical order of the "spirit" forces, offices and elements of nature arranged according to their idea of power. This 'faith' is trying to supplant the Great Law in most Iroquois communities.

This book compares and contrasts the principles of the two. The conflict is between the inner directed people and the accommodationists. The Kaianereh'ko:wa adherents are directed by the inner core of our knowledge system and traditions, and the Handsome Lake followers are directed by outside forces to accept the modes of the newcomer society.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Several people have contributed to my understanding of the controversy between the two main 'traditional' philosophies found on Iroquois territory, the Great Law of Peace/Kaianereh'ko:wa and the Handsome Lake Code/Gariwio'sten:sera. As a youngster it was the late Karonhiaktajeh, an elder who saw afar the struggles that lay ahead for our people. He patiently explained the differences between the Law and the Code. This essay is dedicated to his memory. He died in December 1993, on Kahnawake of Mohawk Territory at the age of 77 after a life of dedication to the rebuilding of the Kanion'ke:haka Mohawk Nation and to continue the work of Dekanawida. He was loved, hated, reviled and respected by his adversaries and adherents. He told me, 'When you go on this long path of knowledge, you will always walk a rocky road of ups, downs, twists and turns. People will dislike you without knowing why. But don't let that stop you from helping our People anyway. The Kaianereh'ko:wa says that you must pursue an issue that is right for the people until you win'. Karonhiaktajeh worked with the author and Kanietahawi on an 8 hour film of the Kaianereh'ko:wa along with a textbook, in Mohawk and English.

As well, many thanks to Kanietahawi, who continues to interpret the subtle concepts; to my readers Aroniakons, Dr. Vic Valentine, Kakwirakeron and Tekarontake; and many others who find themselves entangled in the continuing debate.

The Great law is a philosophy because it is the basic underlying principles, conduct, thought, and knowledge of the Rotino'shonni:onwe in how we relate to the natural world. To the author, the Handsome Lake Code is an ideology because they are doctrines, opinions or ways of thinking which set out how a people shall behave not necessarily based on a knowledge or practical understanding of the nature of the universe. They are based on faith and hope, not facts.

## PREFACE

During the summer of 1996 the writer was confronted with a situation which brought together the very issues of this essay, a conflict created by those who do not realize they are followers of the Gariwio'sten:sera/Handsome Lake Code and who try to bring it into the Longhouse where the Great Law of Peace/Kaienereh'ko:wa prevails. The following letter illustrates the confusion of those Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois who believe that Gariwio'sten:sera is "traditional" rather than a Christian based religion.

"Dear L....:1[1]

*For sometime now we have been hearing about your dreams. You say in your dreams you have been ordered to go around collecting money to promote your ideas. Recently at the Longhouse. We were invited to enjoy a social. We attended.*

*After a few songs, you got up and talked for about an hour about your dreams and visions. One of our elders, who was sitting next to me, said that your actions at a social are not usual.*

*After a few more songs, you got up again and, along with others, sat on benches in the middle of the Long House. The young people got up and went outside. One of your woman supporters brought them back into the Longhouse. Someone stood in front of the door to dissuade them from leaving again. We left early. I was told the rest stayed until 12:30 a.m.*

*Someone later told us what happened. There was emotional outpouring of fear and threats of impending doom. Others were encouraged to talk about their dreams, fears and hard luck. There was talk of the 'Creator and his Son', of angels, of bad parents whose children will drown or be drowned.*

*Normally we thank Creation for all that has been provided. We don't pray, repent, fear devils or angels, have visions, fantasies or dreams or force beliefs on people by scaring them.2[2] We do not allow anyone to try to manipulate and control our will.*

*After the 1990 Mohawk Oka Crisis the government of Canada needed another way to manipulate our culture by promoting healing to pacify us. They knew most of us were not going to church anymore. So they tried to put fear and pacification into us in another way. "Elders" were trained to become the new age missionaries to promote "traditionalism" and "native spirituality".*

*Dramatising supernatural forces and frightening us is not our way. We raise our children to be strong in spirit, to look at reality and demand proof of everything. Even gossip is not condoned because it is second hand. When we*

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1[1] "L..." is a pseudonym

2[2]Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. *Warriors Hand Book*. 1985. 25. "The Handsome Lake Code was added to the Iroquois system in the early 1800's. It consists of dogmas and doctrines such as hell, devils, angels, purgatory, limbo, sins, temporary repentance, etc. which were adopted from Christianity with a bit of Judaism thrown in. The Caughnawaga Mohawks who were reinstated in the Six Nations Confederacy were once Catholics and had lost faith in such unprovable doctrines. When the reinstated Mohawks refused to follow the old dogmas and doctrines they had renounced, it became a matter of dispute and controversy in the Six Nations which was resolved at the Grand Council when it was decided that anyone who did not want to follow the Handsome Lake Code didn't have to".

speaking about something we did not personally see ourselves, we say, "ia-kon", meaning "I did not see it myself but was told" so as to warn others that the story may not be true.

As in the past, today there is continuing conflict between us and the colonial settlers who want our land, resources, possessions and rights. So they use their old strategy of "divide and rule", to confuse and "pacify" us to gain control over us. Colonialism has placed many of us in a powerless state. 3[3] To deal with this, we learn to keep our fear, anger and hostility deep inside ourselves. It is a combination of oppression and the feeling of helplessness against the exploitation that caused many people to run to religion and ritual as a way to cope. It is said that ritual never brings you to reality. Its repetitiousness is meant to keep our minds occupied.

In the colonial churches we are encouraged to talk about how bad our life has been, pray and feel good afterwards for a little while, but our problems are still there. Soon after that we are looking for another meeting.

In the dictionary religion and cult have the same meaning: The worship of the supernatural from which is developed a dogma or code based on unproveable facts (such as dreams and visions). Believing in a supernatural being, an omnipotent deity, or God, is a "high" for the oppressed. It's all supported by the elite.

Religion reinforces the abuse of power. Oppression depresses the natural spirit or the senses. So people turn to religion. It stops many of us from fighting for a better life. It makes us think that exploitation, suffering and hardship are a natural part of life. It's a pacifier. The government knows how to use this strategy to stop a movement that would oppose them.4[4]

Indian Affairs in Ottawa established the "Kumik Lodge" to encourage and train people to be elders. Then they sent them into Indigenous communities to teach healing and pacifism. Religion has always been a weapon in the hands of the ruling class and the government. It makes "sacred" laws and rules to protect themselves. The violence and wars generated by the elite are said to be "the will of God", but it's the poor people who die in the wars.

Religion helps people submit their will to another power. It is the 'opium' of the masses, the painkiller, the drug! As long as the pain continues people will need a painkiller to kill the pain, instead of doing something about it. Oppression is persistent so that we are supposed to always need the religion of the oppressor. Religion is an upside down path created by an upside down world.

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3[3]Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. "People do experience natural phenomena. It's an experience and might happen again. But we should not put interpretations and meaning to them".

4[4]McGill Institute for the Study of Canada. Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. Jan. 31-Feb. 2, 1997. K. Horn. "Do you find that these healing circles are being used to suppress any negative criticisms by Indian people? This is what Christianity was used for, so that Indian people would not, complain about their bad situations and abuse. It is healthy for Indians to speak out about the wrongs and abuses that have been committed against them. Healing and born again meetings stop Indians from doing something about their situations. Rather than making Indian people go into themselves and avoid the reality of their bad life, they should be encouraged to face reality square in the face and to be strong".

*Religions and cults are proclaimed by so-called "prophets". Many seek fame, fortune and power. They sell dreams, visions and promises that cannot be fulfilled. These prophets recruit people who have gone through severe personal troubles. They preach unsound ideology, such as symbolically burning people at the stake for criticising them, calling them "trouble makers" or "witches". A tactic is to use up all the time at a meeting telling stories about their dreams so that no one else can talk except themselves. The critical ones are driven out. Those who don't question remain. A wall of prejudice and intolerance is erected against those who question their value, truth or righteousness. They thrive on pretending to be better than others, on gossip, and dislike of those who won't go along with them.*

*The television evangelists are expert "prophets". Some of them have been caught in perversions such as sex with prostitutes, homosexuality, child abuse and other vices. Their goodness turns out to be a big front.*

*The band and tribal council political structures in our communities today are based on religious colonial hierarchy. A minority votes in representatives to be their voice for two to four years, without being involved in the political process and issues in the community. The politicians like the churches decide what's best for the people.*

*When people take control of their mind, will, economy and politics, they become free of religion and superstition. The better world is the real one. The here and now on this earth! With a strong mind and facing the reality of life, people will not need to believe in dreams and visions or a God that they're afraid of. Instead they will use their minds and at last be free.*

*Nia:wen. Kahentinetha5[5]*

This phantom letter illustrates the conflict created by religions and how they have been used to weaken, confuse and control our people. A non-Christian would find it difficult to fully understand its effect on a person. Elders like Karonhiaktajeh, Kanietahawi and others explained their own relationships with Christianity and the Church and how they had to struggle for their freedom. They described their lifelong battle to get rid of the deeply ingrained psychological conditioning designed to break down their will and freedom of thought. Today we are beginning to see how we were made to live under its shadow without realizing its effect on us. We think we're "traditional" when we are practising Christian-based rituals such as confession while wearing Indian clothes. We also take on the traditions of a variety of other Indigenous nations. For example, the 'pow wow' takes native imagery from its original context, i.e., the Plains Indians, and adopts it. There are many similarities in the nature-based philosophies of all Indigenous peoples on Onowaregeh, which is Turtles Island, and beyond.

It should be noted that after every so-called native "uprising" or conflict there has been some type of religious doctrine brought among the people to

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5[5]Horn, Kahentinetha. Letter to "-". July 7, 1996

institute pacifism. After the War of 1812 it was the Handsome Lake Code. After the American Revolution in 1775-1783 it was the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). Among other native struggles on Turtle Island, the Lakota (Sioux), it was Wovoka and the "Ghost Dance" religion. In 1990 it is the "healing circles".

The author is a Kanion'ke:haka/Mohawk of the Rotino'shonni:onwe/Six Nations Confederacy who grew up on Kahnawake of Mohawk Territory, south of Montreal.<sup>6[6]</sup>

During the first attempt to write this book as an essay in the summer of 1990, several significant events took place: the conflict at Akwesasne, between the 'Pros' and 'Antis'. Both sides called themselves "traditionalists". The "pros" followed the Kaienereh'ko:wa/Great Law, and the "anti's", for the most part, followed the Gariwio'sten:sera/Handsome Lake Code. This conflict resulted in hard positions leading to violence and the death in May 1990 of two Mohawk men, which have not been solved. Akwesasne will not be the subject of this essay but some of the findings are relevant to this community.

Around the same time, in, May 1990, a helicopter was shot down and landed in the middle of Ganienkeh, another Mohawk territory near Plattsburg in upper New York State. This led to a siege of this territory by New York State and federal police forces. Although this territory is also closely allied physically and philosophically with Kahnawake, Ganienkeh will not be discussed in this essay.

Then on July 11, 1990, the Quebec paramilitary forces opened fire on the Mohawk people of Kanehsa'ta:ke/Oka because they were barricading a dirt road leading to an old Indian burial site and ceremonial land known as "The Pines".<sup>7[7]</sup> The nearby non-native municipality wanted to bulldoze this land to extend their golf course and develop homes and condominiums for the Montreal leisure class. To support the people of Kanehsa'ta:ke, the nearby Kahnawake Mohawks blocked the entrances of the Mercier Bridge, cutting off 80,000 commuters from the south shore to the island of Montreal. This eventually led to Canada and Quebec governments dispatching the Quebec Provincial Police, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and 5,000 soldiers of the Canadian army to surround these communities. The crisis lasted 78 days.<sup>8[8]</sup> This historic crisis is not the subject of this book. However, the author's first draft was thrown into the fire at the Treatment Centre in Kanehsa'ta:ke, along with the weapons, just before the Mohawk came out of the compound to be captured by the Canadian Army. All the research had to be reconstructed.

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<sup>6[6]</sup> Kahentinetha Horn's father was a Longhouse chief, and her two grandfathers were also strongly involved in the Longhouse movement, her paternal Grandfather Horn being a War Chief. There are also a long line of medicine people in her family, her Grandmother Horn being a herbalist. Many of the men in her family are part of or support the Warrior Society. She speaks the Mohawk language.

<sup>7[7]</sup> Akwesasne and Confederacy communities westward have long been in turmoil over the philosophical divisions between the Great Law and Handsome Lake Code. In Kanehsatake band councils called themselves "Hereditary Traditional Government".

<sup>8[8]</sup> All factions came together to support the Kanehsatake Mohawks, all longhouses whether Great Law or Handsome Lake, Christian and non-Christian, band council and traditional.

## INTRODUCTION

This essay will demonstrate how the philosophical arguments over the Kaienereh'ko:wa/Great Law and the Gariwio'sten:sera/Handsome Lake Code have confused the Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois people and creates conflict in all Onkwehonweh communities.

To make sense of this deep-rooted conflict in Onkwehonweh country, these two philosophies are examined.<sup>9[9]</sup> To the Rotino'shonni:onwe followers of the Kaienereh'ko:wa, the Gariwio'sten:sera is seen as a deliberate attempt to disregard the ancient world view of the Rotino'shonni:onwe. The followers of the Gariwio'sten:sera believe they are "traditional". Both sides take strong positions. Basic principles, a comparison of the "Law" and the "Code" and where they contradict each other are set out. There is a discussion over the solutions advocated by the Kaianereh'ko:wa of co-existence as a separate nation versus integration and compromise as recommended by the Code.

The Kaianereh'ko:wa/Great Law of Peace is the Constitution of the Rotino'shonni:onwe Confederacy, also referred to as the "Old Way" and the "Haudenosaunee". This confederation of five nations, later six, was a powerful force before and during the colonial period of North America.<sup>10[10]</sup> Certain principles of the constitution were adopted as the basis of the Constitution of the United States. <sup>11[11]</sup> The Rotino'shonni:onwe Confederacy still exists today. Most Rotino'shonni:onwe nations are finding their way back to the original Kaianereh'ko:wa philosophy. Some communities follow the Christian-based religion of Handsome Lake known as the 'Gariwio'sten:sera'. These two philosophies are contradictory and so in these cases the Longhouse structure has been modified to accommodate the Gariwio'sten:sera. For example, instead of the Clan Mothers appointing the Chiefs according to the Old Way, in the Gariwio'sten:sera the Chiefs select the Clan Mothers.<sup>12[12]</sup>

Chapter I explains the Kaianereh'ko:wa followed by a discussion. Chapter II gives a background and commentary on the "Gariwio'sten:sera", the Handsome Lake Code. The Summary and Conclusions reflect the information provided. Included are charts of the "Grand Council" seating, Confederacy

9[9] North American Indian Travelling College. *Traditional Teachings*. N.A.I.T.C. 1984. Its version of the Creation Story, Great Law of Peace and the Handsome Lake Code differs from that of Seth Newhouse, some parts being left out and changing the order of the Law and Code.

10[10] The Longhouse people are also referred to the *Haudenosaunee, Rotinonsionni, the Five Nations, League of Five Nations, Six Nations, the Iroquois and the Iroquois Six Nation Confederacy*.

11[11] United States Senate. *To Acknowledge the Contribution of the Iroquois Confederacy of Nations to the Development of the U. S. Constitution and to Reaffirm the Continuing Government-to-Government Relationship Between Indian Tribes and the United States Established in the Constitution*. Select Committee on Indian Affairs. S. One Hundredth Congress. Con. Res. 76. 1987. This gives a negative explanation of the Great Law as having little influence on political and legal affairs.

12[12] Recently a tax dispute in New York State brought the Confederacy women together to assert their power on the Chiefs who were making a deal with the New York State Governor. The Chiefs did everything to stop this meeting from happening, even blocking the buses from getting out of the hotel parking lot in Syracuse to stop them from going to the Onondaga Longhouse.

... before and during the early colonial period of today's Oneregowa... our Haudeosaunee Confederacy principles were adopted as the basis of today's European Constitution of the United States colony.

Structure, followed by a bibliography. Illustrations of the Circle of Chiefs and the Flow of Authority are in the appendices. Articles of the Law are called "Wampums".

The principles and philosophy of the Kaianereh'ko:wa were brought to the Rotino'shonni:onwe by the "peacemaker", Dekanawida. He wanted to make a great peace plan for all Indigenous people and eventually bring all the nations together into a league.<sup>13</sup>[13] He worked alongside Jigosaseh, a woman, who helped develop the male and female balance. They saw the natural world as the model of the Kaianereh'ko:wa. The story goes that Dekanawida went to Kanion'ke:haka territory to ask for help to form the Confederacy. He first went by a waterfall near the source of the Mohawk River and lit a fire. This was the custom when one comes into another's territory to let them know that he wanted to parlay. Then a representative of the community went to the fire. Dekanawida informed him that he had a message of peace. The representative left, went back to his community and returned with a few people. Dekanawida then told them he had a formula to bring peace to the warring nations and that he would need their help. He explained that in order to develop peace, they would need to become righteousness in respecting each other's human rights. Therefore, power in achieving total peace would be attained. Later on Dekanawida was assisted by another individual in interpreting and documenting the work that was being done. This individual was later given the name "Ayonwatha" [he carries the belt] because of his ability to recite the wampums and words of the Kaianereh'ko:wa.

The story of the founding of the Confederacy and the Kaianereh'ko:wa was written down a few times at the turn of the century by various Iroquois scholars. Three important versions are available by Seth Newhouse, an Onondaga, Arthur C. Parker, a Seneca, and John Hewitt, a Tuscarora.

The dissertation of Arthur C. Parker in "The Constitution of the Five Nations", a New York State Museum Bulletin<sup>14</sup>[14] is a most thorough source. He relied on material brought together by Seth Newhouse, of Six Nation in Ontario, which was written in Indian-English and submitted in 1910 to Albert Cusick, a New Yorker, Onondaga-Tuscarora, who had been an informant of Parker.<sup>15</sup>[15] Newhouse wrote the Law down when he was an old man hoping that this might help preserve the traditions of the Confederacy.

In 1924 the Newhouse "Traditional History of the Six Nations Confederacy" was sent to Kahnawake, Akwesasne and Kanasatake for the education of future generations.<sup>16</sup>[16] Although the Canadian and American Governments were pressuring the Mohawk to set aside our Old Ways, this manuscript had a tremendous effect on us. It confirmed the basic goodness of the Kaianereh'ko:wa and made the Mohawk more determined to survive as a culture.

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<sup>13</sup>[13] Willoya, William and Vinson Brown. *Warriors of the Rainbow. Strange and Prophetic Dreams of the Indian People*. Northwestern Printing: 1962. 42-48

<sup>14</sup>[14] Parker, Arthur C. *The Constitution of the Five Nations or the Iroquois Book of the Great Law*. New York: New York State Museum Bulletin No. 184. 1916.

<sup>15</sup>[15] Ibid., Parker. 1916. 12

<sup>16</sup>[16] Blanchard, David. *Seven Generations: A History of the Kenienkehaka*. Kahnawake Survival School. 1980. 399

Kahnawake has been a Kaianereh'ko:wa stronghold.<sup>17[17]</sup> The church continued to persecute the Mohawks to give up their traditional longhouse ways. They would attend church and sit in their clans without the knowledge of the priests. To maintain the Kaianereh'ko:wa structure, after Sunday mass, they would gather in homes and have secret meetings.

The longhouse is the symbolic structure where the Confederation of Iroquois Nations is housed and the constitution is practiced. In Kahnawake, the traditional Mohawk government continues to function. Today there are three longhouses and several other factions in Kahnawake:<sup>18[18]</sup> the 207 Longhouse, the Mayo Longhouse<sup>19[19]</sup> and the Mohawk Trail Longhouse. Today the Mohawk Nation Office deals with issues inside and outside of the Mohawk Nation, arranges for passports for international travel and keeps records of and issues certificates of births, deaths and marriages.

In the Travelling College version which is based mainly on the Handsome Lake Code, Deganawida was born to a virgin. His grandmother tried to get his mother to marry the father to avoid shame and embarrassment. The mother refused and so the grandmother tried to drown the baby, burn him and cut him into pieces. She then had a vision that the Creator had sent the baby and stopped trying to kill it. This story seems inconsistent with the sacredness of life held by the Indigenous people in general. The ducks even parted the waters so Hiawentha could walk across the dry bottom of the lakes.<sup>20[20]</sup>

Words like "lords", "prayers" and "hymns" are English words. The Mohawk language is very specific and descriptive and difficult to translate into English. Most analyses have been written by non-Indigenous people who did not understand or else romanticised the Rotino'shonni:onwe culture, or they were afraid to critically question their informants. The numerous mistakes in translations could have misled the writers. For example, William M. Beauchamp translated Deganawida as "Two water currents flowing together". One Mohawk says it means "Two Rows of Teeth" referring to his supposed speech impediment. It could also mean he spoke another dialect of Iroquois. Kanietahawi asked, "What would two rows of teeth have anything to do with the teaching of the Great Law? He is asking or telling people to renew or mend their ways", which must have been after a great deal of conflict. Beauchamp translated "Atotarho" as "Entangled". J.N.B. Hewitt translated it as "He obstinately refuses to acquiesce". The author translates it as "He hooks and

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<sup>17[17]</sup> Dione, Frances Kanietahawi. Acting Bear Clan Mother. Interviews. May-August 1990. *"The reason why Kahnawake is a Great Law stronghold is because they shook off the Catholic Church and did not want religion anymore. They wanted something tangible and real"*.

<sup>18[18]</sup> Ibid., Dione. *"Some profess to be followers of the Great Law and yet incorporate the practices of the Handsome Lake Code, arguing that they are definitely not Handsome Lake followers. Some are totally against any kind of unexplainable substitution and stick to reality and what they know and see."*

<sup>19[19]</sup> The Mayo long house was created when some members of the 207 Great Law longhouse walked out over a disagreement. One of the chiefs had called in the foreign police to take care of what he saw as a problem with the young people. This was a violation of the Great Law Wampum 58. They walked out and created another group of followers of the Great Law.

<sup>20[20]</sup> North American Indian Travelling College. *Traditional Teachings*. N.A.I.T.C. 1984. 25

brings it in". Hiawentha or Ayonwatha is translated as "He who carries the belt", The author's is "He wakes up the People". Kaianereh'ko:wa means "the great good path" based on natural law. Gaiwii'o'sten:sera means "made up good", meaning it was made up by man. Its origin is "gari'wi:io" referring to "the perfect reality" which is the natural world. The Handsome Lake Code used the word but not the concept.

The term "longhouse" was not used for sometime. Some of the older chiefs said that Handsome Lake, whom they felt was the destroyer of the old knowledge system, had successfully associated his Christian religious teachings with the Longhouse. Newhouse used the term "longhouse" in his earlier manuscripts but later changed it to "confederacy".<sup>21[21]</sup> Today, the Rotino'shonni:onwe use the term "longhouse" but make the distinction that it refers to either the Kaianereh'ko:wa or the Gariwii'o'sten:sera.

Interviews were conducted with five main people in the community of Kahnawake, Karonhiaktajeh, an artist, historian, poet and the Secretary of the Six Nations Confederacy (now deceased),<sup>22[22]</sup> Kanietahawi, formerly an acting Bear Clan Mother, Frank Natawe, a "Faithkeeper" (deceased) and three warriors, Ayonwes from Kahnawake, Kakwirakeron from Akwesasne and Tekarontake formerly from Ganiengeh. The author attended women's meetings at Kahnawake and Kanehsa'ta:ke in so-called Quebec and Akwesasne and Ganiengeh of so-called New York State in 1990. Bruce Elijah, an Oneida, from the territory near London Ontario,<sup>23[23]</sup> was interviewed in the Treatment Centre during the 1990 Mohawk Oka Crisis.

Today on Kahnawake territory there is a small number of Roman Catholic and Protestant and non-traditional people who support the Canadian government colonial band council system. The main polarisation was between the band council system and the Kaianereh'ko:wa/Great Law Longhouse on Route 207. Today the band council has forged ties with the Longhouse. The band council aspires to become the traditional government. The colonial governments know that any agreements made with the band and tribal councils are illegal. Therefore, they need a true sovereign government to legitimize any agreements. The band council supporters voted in a referendum during the 1979 election for their band council to turn their affairs over to the traditional government of their Nation. There is presently no evidence that the band council has moved in this direction.

In spite of this historic adversarial position, the Kaianereh'ko:wa Longhouse and the band council worked together during the 1990 Mohawk Crisis to deal with and negotiate an end to the stand-off between the Mohawk and the

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<sup>21[21]</sup> Parker, Arthur C. *The Constitution of the Five Nation*. New York: New York State Museum Bulletin. No. 184. 1916, 13

<sup>22[22]</sup> Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. *Warriors Handbook and Rebuilding the Iroquois Confederacy*. Kahnawake. 1985. He also left a vast collection of paintings of Iroquois subjects to the Warrior Society.

<sup>23[23]</sup> Elijah, Bruce. Oneida. Interview. Sept. 1990. He could not see the difference between the Kaienerekowa and the Gai'wii'o, saying, "There would be some people some day who would be totally against the Handsome Lake Code. We are in a time when western civilization has to have a person, like Jesus Christ or god.

Canadian army and the Surete du Quebec [Quebec police]. The main issues were sovereignty, reaffirmation of nationhood, land claims and Indigenous authority. The Kahnawake band council recognized that Mohawk 'nationalism' is the domain of the traditional longhouse people. However, when the crisis was over the band council returned to opposing and criticizing the Longhouse. To add to the confusion, the band council began to infer that it was the "traditional" government and was working certain "advisors" from the Longhouses in Kahnawake.

## *CHAPTER I*

### *THE KAIANEREKOWA/GREAT LAW TRADITION*

To understand the principles of the Kaianereh'ko:wa, four aspects must be considered: (1) the structure of the Long House, i.e. the people within our clans and our rights and duties; (2) how an issue is passed from one party to another so there are checks and balances; (3) the basic criteria when deliberating, that of peace, righteousness and power; and (4) the symbols such as the small condolence ceremony when we cleanse our eyes so we may see clearly, our ears so we may listen well and drink clear pure water so we may speak directly and truthfully. In the process the will of each individual is preserved. These are different parts of the Great Law that must all work together so we can function communally in our best interests. Today some groups have formed which use one aspect to the exclusion of the others, such as using only the structure without the philosophy, or using the symbols and turning it into a religion, or using the structure and putting another ideology onto it such as the Gariwio'sten:sera.

The Kaianere'ko:wa followers are mainly those Mohawk who live on the following territories: Kahnawake and Kanehsa'ta:ke (Quebec), Akwesasne (at the intersection of the New York State, Ontario and Quebec borders), Tyendinaga (in Ontario) and Ganiengeh (near Plattsburgh New York).

To acquire peace, Dekanawida did not base his ideas on faith and hope. He described a giant white pine that reached into the sky, symbolizing the sisterhood and brotherhood of all human beings.<sup>24[24]</sup> At its roots were the five nations of the original Rotino'shonni:onwe Confederacy. A structure was designed to make the individual families the centre of power so that no dictator could seize control. The people met to discuss issues and came to an understanding. The governmental structure included the separation of powers of the judicial, executive and legislative branches. The Rotino'shonni:onwe nations were made up of democratic social units to form a democratic and peaceful confederacy of all Indigenous people. After the upheaval of Indigenous culture by the European invasion, the Iroquois and many other Indigenous nations such

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<sup>24[24]</sup> Symbolism has always been important to the Iroquois people. Karonhiaktajeh Louis Hall, knowing this, designed many symbols which are now used by the Iroquois and others throughout the world as a sign of resistance.

as the Aztec, Blackfeet, Sioux and Hopis<sup>25</sup>[25] had the same ideas about the return of Indigenous thought. Dekanawida saw that if war continued, greed and suffering would continue and eventually our extinction would be inevitable. We would distrust each other and the principles of peace of the Confederacy. We would become involved with the 'serpents' (the Europeans) of materialism, who would become so powerful that they would almost destroy the Indigenous people. Dekanawida told our people that when the worse time came, to gather our minds as set out in the Great Law. He, meaning his message, would return as a light coming from the east. After the fight among the serpents, at which time the Indigenous people would remain neutral, we would reassemble and renew our knowledge of the principles of the Kaianereh'ko:wa. Dekanawida said that the fight between the serpents would become so violent that there would be an environmental catastrophe, "the mountains would crack and the rivers would boil and the fish would turn up on their bellies".<sup>26</sup>[26] He also predicted that all the elm trees would die. Once Dekanawida's message returned, the Indigenous people would be greater nations than ever before. The abuse by the Europeans was seen as a time for us to renew our minds and help lead mankind to respect the natural world.

The Rotino'shonni:onwe established separate nations along the Great Lakes, St. Lawrence River and Upper New York State and further south. We, along with the Tuscaroras, Hurons, Eries, Wenros, Cherokee and Minquas, spoke an Iroquoian language. Each nation had national territories and trade relations with our Iroquois and non-Iroquois neighbours. All Iroquoian peoples were organized into clans and shared the same basic structure and ceremonies of thanksgiving to Creation. Particularly, the *ahenton kariwatekwen*, the "words that come before", as provided in Wampum 7, was common to all Indigenous peoples. It indicates that the Kaianereh'ko:wa is an interdependent system of relationships of all elements of nature which are all equal.<sup>27</sup>[27] For many generations there had been blood feuds within and between Iroquois nations, usually over seeking justice over the death of someone of their clan. These blood feuds threatened our systems of law, order and social unity. <sup>28</sup>[28]

The Five Nations Confederacy was at first a confederation of five Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois nations - the Mohawk, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida and Seneca. The Tuscarora, who came north from the Carolinas, joined the Confederacy in 1713, making it the sixth Nation.<sup>29</sup>[29] According to Rotino'shonni'onwe mythology, the law was meant not only for us but for everyone, a United Nations of people who united for peace.

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<sup>25</sup>[25] Willoya, William and Vinson Brown. *Warrior of the Rainbow. Strange and Prophetic Dreams of the Indian Peoples*. Northwestern Pringing. 1962. 1-16

<sup>26</sup>[26] Ibid., Willoya and Brown. 1962. 42-48

<sup>27</sup>[27] Tekarontake. Personal Interview. June-July 1997

<sup>28</sup>[28] Wallace, Anthony F.C. *Death and Rebirth of the Seneca*. Alfred A. Knopf. 1970. 44-48

<sup>29</sup>[29] Jennings, Francis and others. *The History and Culture of Iroquois Diplomacy*. Syracuse University Press. 1985. 7-9

To illustrate how effective the philosophy was, "their weapons of war were buried so as not to fight amongst each other again, vowing to uncover them only for defence against invaders".

The Kaianereh'ko:wa reflected the "blood" ties which strengthened the unity of the five nations. Dekanawida knew that the blood ties were a positive force, which brought together Rotino'shonni:onwe politics, culture and social order. These were the ties the newcomers had to alter in order to possess the land and establish themselves in North America. The colonists have not succeeded.

Rotino'shonni:onwe women are the "progenitors of the soil" (Wampum 44) and hold the land for the future generations. The land cannot be alienated. Thus the Europeans had to displace the Indigenous women so they could manipulate the men in order to take the land and resources. They had no fondness for or understanding of the women's traditional position of power.

The Kaienerekowa has 117 articles called "Kayoni" or Wampums. Each law is associated with a wampum belt or string of wampum beads and is structured as follows:

**Wampums 1 to 16:** The organization of the Confederacy: Dekanawida and the Chiefs plant the tree of peace; Atotarho and the Onondaga Chiefs become the caretakers of the Council Fire; the nations are divided into three parties; Mohawks are appointed as the leaders of the Confederacy; and how issues are passed and how a new law is made.

**Wampums 17 to 27:** The Rights, Duties and Qualifications of Statesmen: The roles of the Clan mothers; how Chiefs are deposed or resign; and the qualifications and roles of Chiefs.

**Wampums 28 to 35:** Condolence of Chiefs: how condolences are conducted; and how titles are passed on.

**Wampum 35:** Pine Tree Chiefs: Temporary chiefs.

**Wampums 36 to 41:** The War Chiefs: their titles, names, functions, installation and duties.<sup>30</sup>[30]

**Wampums 56 to 65:** The Meanings of Symbols such as the wampum strings; the bound five arrows meaning "unity in one body and one mind"; who are traitors and how they are punished; the Confederacy belt, reading the Great Law; rites of installation and burying of the weapons.

**Wampums 79 to 92:** War: the Warrior Society; establishing peace with an outside nation; conducting warfare; relations after war; the Peace Chiefs and related protocol.

**Wampums 93 to 104:** Rights of the People: referendum; Men's Council; Women's Council; all Council Fires; the rights of ordinary Men and Women; and the festivals of thanksgiving.

**Wampums 108 to 117:** Funerals: the rites of passage.

Not every wampum will be discussed, only those that illustrate the basic philosophy and structure of the Great law.<sup>31</sup>[31]

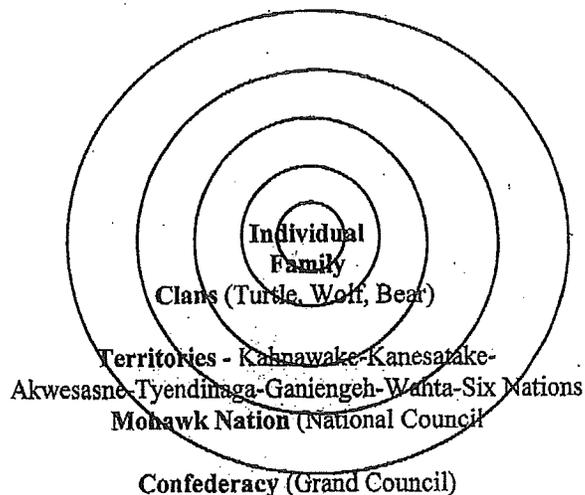
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<sup>30</sup>[30] The War Chief is a person who has to know the individuals that make up his community. He must be patient and explain where the people are going wrong.

**Great White Roots.** Wampum 2 provides the possibility for those other than the Iroquois to trace the roots and take shelter under the tree of peace as long as they obey the laws of the Great Peace and live according to the philosophy of the Rotino'shonni:onwe.

**Confederacy Structure.** Wampums 5 to 11 set out the structure of the Rotino'shonni:onwe Confederacy, the Five Nations Hereditary Council. Rotinonshonn:onwei means "those who make the Longhouse".<sup>32[32]</sup> Each nation keeps control over its own affairs, its dealings with other nations of the Confederacy and with non-member nations that the Grand Council becomes involved with. Within each nation, local settlements and clans are autonomous and independent. Clans and settlements have their own meetings. Nations meet in a national council. All of the nations meet in the Grand Council as the issues warrant.<sup>33[33]</sup> The Rotino'shonni:onwe confederate council consists of 50 civil chiefs referred to as the "Circle of Chiefs"<sup>34[34]</sup>: Onondaga 14, Mohawk 9, Seneca 8, Oneida 9, Cayuga 10, Tuscarora 0.<sup>35[35]</sup>

### **THE ORGANIZATION WITHIN THE CONFEDERACY<sup>36[36]</sup>**



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31[31] Dekanawida. *Gayanerekowa. The Constitution of the Iroquois Confederacy*. Ohontsa Films. 1993. This version is based on the Newhouse document.

32[32] The original dwelling house of the Iroquois.

33[33] Blanchard, David. *Seven Generations: A History of the Kanienkehaka*. Kahnawake Survival School: 1980. 83

34[34] Appendix A. Circle of Chiefs. Haudenosaunee

35[35] North American Indian Traveling College. *Traditional Teachings*. N.A.I.T.C.: 1984. 37  
Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. *Rebuilding the Iroquois Confederacy*. 1985. 14. "Our ancestors should have followed Deganawida's Great Plan to make all American Indian Nations equal in power, voice and authority in the Iroquois Confederacy instead of having an ego indulging elite groups of just Five Nations lord it over other nations. The Iroquois Confederacy had a chance to create a mighty union of Indian nations, in control over all America and the European invaders would not have been able to gain a foothold on Red Man's land."

36[36] The organization within the Confederacy is not hierarchical. Rather it is a processual and organized under principles of relations of equality.

The Rotino'shonni:onwe Confederacy structure is not hierarchical.<sup>37[37]</sup> It is a series of circles within circles with a process to form relations between each segment of society. They operate on a cyclical basis, just like the natural world. The most important is the unborn individual, surrounded by a circle of the family, then by the circle of the clan, then by the circle of the chiefs, then by the circle of the Kanion'ke:haka/Mohawk National Council and finally by the Confederacy Grand Council. Every individual belongs to a clan, which are organized within each community. Each community is the responsibility of the particular nation and each of these nations is part of the Confederacy.

Sovereignty and self-determination begin with the individual. All people are recognized to be free and equal, from the very youngest to the eldest. It is provided in the Kaianereh'ko:wa that liberty and equality demand great moral fortitude, and it is the nature of freeman to defend freedom.<sup>38[38]</sup>

The Warriors are the "Ratiskenraketeh", the "carriers of the peace". In his medicine pouch he carries tobacco, soil and his umbilical cord. Skenha is a state of complete peace, tranquillity and enlightenment.<sup>39[39]</sup> The people of the Clans select the Chiefs, Clan Mothers and War Chiefs. Based on the people's decision, the clans can depose the Chiefs, who are the spokesmen for the people, not the decision makers. The Warrior Society is actually the power of the people in action.<sup>40[40]</sup> The War Chiefs are not a distinct class and can only give orders on military expeditions. They sit in council meetings and make sure the Kaianereh'ko:wa is followed. The clans can depose the War Chief when necessary and can even call a war party back from the field. It is said when war is declared, it is based on factual evidence with no doubt, allowing the men to wage it with all their might. It is said that all Rotino'shonni:onwe are born warriors and that it is the duty of every person to become a protector of the people and the land.

The 'Rotino'shonni:onwe', the "makers of the longhouse" or confederation, do not rule by force but by the power of the mind. They are powerful because they are able to make complex alliances based on persuasive debates on the reality of the issue which many people shared.<sup>41[41]</sup>

The Five Nations refer to themselves as "Ongwehonweh", which means, in Mohawk, "People forever".<sup>42[42]</sup> It is the basis for universal action. In case of war, "Skanawitith's Law of Peace and War" provides that after a war with a foreign nation, the foreign nation is to be persuaded three times by reason and

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<sup>37[37]</sup> Appendix B. Flow of Authority. Great Law, Non-Great Law. In the Past and Today.

<sup>38[38]</sup> Bagley, Carol L. and Jo Ann Ruckman. *Grand Council Process for Decision-Making People's Rights*. American Indian Culture and Research Journal. Iroquois Contributions to Modern Democracy and Communism. Special Iroquois Issue. Vol. 7, Number 2/1983. 19

<sup>39[39]</sup> Horn, Margaret. *Tatiskenhaketeh: Traditional and Contemporary Role of the Iroquois Warriors*. Ottawa; Carleton University paper. 1990

<sup>40[40]</sup> Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. *Rebuilding the Iroquois Confederacy*. Kahnawake. 1985. 37. "The Indian struggle for survival has many sides. One of the most important is to counteract the psychological warfare inflicted on the Indian people".

<sup>41[41]</sup> Mohawk, John. *Origins of Iroquois Political Thought*. Northeast Indian Quarterly: 1986. 16-20

<sup>42[42]</sup> Maracle, Andrew. Elder. Tyendinaga M.T. Interview. January 1997

urged to join the Great Peace. If this fails, the chief of the offending nation is clubbed to death and warfare continues until won by the Five Nations. If a nation willingly joins, their internal government system may continue so long as it is consistent with the Kaianereh'ko:wa.<sup>43</sup>[43] They have to treat people as equals and with human rights.

In Wampum 6 the Kanion'ke:haka/Mohawk are recognized as the heads and leaders of the Rotino'shonni:onwe Five Nations Confederacy. The Kanion'ke:haka were the first to accept the Kaianereh'ko:wa and helped one of the founders, Dekanawida, to gather the other nations together. It is therefore a violation of the Kaianereh'ko:wa to introduce measures in the Confederate Council if the Kanion'ke:haka have protested against them.\* The decision-making process gave the member nations an actual power of veto which equalized all the nations. This position may make the Kanion'ke:haka feel they have to take on the duty to maintain the Kaianereh'ko:wa and its philosophy and to not make any compromises with the Gariwio'sten:sera. On the other hand, the requirement of complete understanding on all decisions of the Confederacy Council gives all nations a de facto power of veto, and thus does not set the Kanion'ke:haka apart from our brethren. Those Mohawks who refuse to compromise with the Handsome Lake Code find it is contrary to how they see the natural world. <sup>44</sup>[44] We are constant in our adherence to the original constitution.

All members of the Confederacy have a duty to understand and explain the philosophy of peace and power throughout the Six Nations, other Indigenous nations and throughout the world when asked to do so. There are, however, Rotino'shonni:onwe who do not realize this and have embraced the Gariwio'sten:sera/Handsome Lake Code, not realizing that it is not intrinsically "traditional" to Indigenous thinking, that it is colonial.

### **Consensual Decision Making Process**

In Wampums 5 to 11, Dekanawida outlined the decision-making process. The Mohawk Council is divided into three parts with each having 3 chiefs for a total of 9. The 3 parts are: the Bear Clan, the first part and the Fire Keepers; the Turtle Clan, the second part; and the Wolf Clan, the third part.

The Well Keeper announces the subject for discussion and passes the issue over the Council Fire to the Turtle clan and Wolf clan. The Bear clan listens to the discussions of the Turtle clan and Wolf clan. If an error is made or the proceedings are irregular, the Bear clan calls attention to it. When a case is decided by the Turtle clan and Wolf clan, the Bear clan confirms their decision.

If the Turtle clan disagrees with the Wolf clan, then the Bear clan, as the Fire Keeper, asks the two sides to deliberate again and to provide new information. Usually the two sides are now likely to agree. The issue is then passed by the Bear clan.

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<sup>43</sup>[43] Parker, Arthur C. *The Constitution of the Five Nations*. New York. New York State Museum Bulletin. No. 184. 1916. 52-54

<sup>44</sup>[44] Dickson-Gilmore, Jane to Kahn-Tineta Horn. Memorandum. Nov. 1, 1996

Should the Turtle and Wolf clans again disagree on their second deliberation, the Bear clan as Fire keepers then pass a decision they see fit.

Should the Bear clan disagree with the decision of the Wolf and Turtle clans, whose decisions are the same, the Turtle clan must once again deliberate and the Wolf clan must do the same. If their decision is the same as before, the Bear clan has no choice but to sanction their joint decision.<sup>45</sup>[45]

In the decision-making process:

- all opinions have to be considered;
- all must be completely reasonable;
- all should come with an open mind;
- all must fully understand the other's viewpoint;
- each participant cannot repeat a position once it has been fully explained and understood;
- if a person does not agree with the views that have been stated, then they must fully explain their dissenting views;
- no one can impose their will nor make decisions for another;
- all must understand the viewpoint and agree of their own free will. The goal is not total agreement, but total understanding; and
- if there is no agreement, then the consensus is to retain the status quo. If there is understanding by all, then they go ahead with the decision.

Although no one can ensure that all will fully understand the other's viewpoint, one must try to explain as fully as possible and the respondent must try to understand.

The Chiefs and the War Chief who preside over the meeting make sure that the Kaianereh'ko:wa and collective rational thought and behaviour are followed. Persons are asked throughout the process if they fully understand. If not, the process stops until this is done. One cannot be stubborn and refuse to understand as they will be questioned and must follow the criteria of peace, righteousness and power at all times. All human beings are capable of rational thought, which leads to solving even the most difficult problem. The underlying philosophy is that human beings are loving, caring and wish to interact in a positive way. It is known that people cannot think clearly when they are in psychological pain, or have feelings of rage, or lose hope. The consensual decision making process must bring people from despair to hope.<sup>46</sup>[46] Every person has a responsibility to develop their minds. To think is to create a sane world for the present and future generations, a world safe from the emotional, irrational behaviour of people controlled by fear, hatred, greed, jealousy, suspicion and conflict. The main obstacle to our survival is fear.<sup>47</sup>[47] <sup>48</sup>[48]

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<sup>45</sup>[45] Dekanawida. *Gayanerekowa. The Constitution of the Iroquois Confederacy*. Ohontsa Films. 1993. Wampum 5

<sup>46</sup>[46] Mohawk, John. *Origins of Iroquois Political Thought*. Northeast Indian Quarterly. 1988. 16-20

<sup>47</sup>[47] *Ibid.*, Mohawk. 1986

<sup>48</sup>[48] Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. *Rebuilding the Iroquois Confederacy*. 1985. 13. "People in fear are often very vocal and infect others with their fear. (To Hall) People in fear inspire no respect, only pity

**THREE CRITERIA.** The clans consider the pros and cons of the issue. Three criteria must be met:

- (1) "Skennen", which is peace and does it preserve the peace that is already established?
- (2) "Gari'wiiio", which is righteousness meaning is it morally correct; just as the natural world is correct; and
- (3) "Gasatstensera", which is power and does it preserve the integrity of the nation?<sup>49</sup>[49] What does it do for the present and how does it affect the future seven generations from now? The 7 Generations concept means that decisions made today must benefit the people seven generations into the future.

Dekanawida raised the idea of rational thinking to a principle. Every human being has the potential to use their mind to create a better life through peace, power and righteousness.<sup>50</sup>[50]

In entering the consensual decision-making process, whatever ideas are put into the process, the needs and attitudes of each is considered and complements the decision. Also, the individual has a duty to be directly involved, and to bring their ideas into the discussion within their clan. The final decision will be fully satisfactory to some, satisfactory to others and relatively satisfactory to the remainder, and will reflect elements from every group. This is a slow careful process requiring the reaching of a full understanding by each individual and not a decision made by a 'leader'. The person who explains the decision is a spokesperson.

***Iroquois Justice System.*** If the issue concerns a person's behaviour, the accused may defend themselves.<sup>51</sup>[51] Depending on the severity of the infraction, the accused have the right to be heard before the Council fires of the men and the women of their clan, the Chief Statesmen of their nation, as well as the Chief Statesmen of the Confederacy. Basically this is a trial by jury. Decisions have to be justified, rational and follow the process. The defendant's voice is lost only after a final decision.

In Iroquois society those performing the 'court' function are persons who represent the people according to their own selection process. In the Iroquois constitution the people select the Clan Mothers, Chiefs and War Chiefs, who can be recalled by the people at anytime. Adjudication is carried out with the advice, guidance and wisdom of the people as a whole who keep in mind the continuity of the genealogical information, history, traditions and values of the nation. Carrying out responsibilities is a burden, a duty and a privilege. The crucial feature is that the people make the decision. Should a clan feel unable to deal

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*mixed with contempt. They are ripe for extinction for only those who struggle grow strong and achieve survival".*

<sup>49</sup>[49] Fenton, William N. *Symposium on Cherokee and Iroquois Culture. No. 25. Iroquois Culture History. A General Evaluation.* Smithsonian Institution. Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin 180. 262

<sup>50</sup>[50] Mohawk, John. *Origins of Iroquois Political Thought.* Northeast Indian Quarterly: 1986. 16-20

<sup>51</sup>[51] *Ibid.*, Dekanawida. 1993. Wampums 93-98

with an issue, they may pass the issue to other clans to be dealt with.

Depending on the issue, the Six Nations Iroquois Confederacy serves as courts of appeal from individual community issues, as well as courts of first instance in disputes that cannot be resolved at the community level. Great Councils meet where the wisdom of the communities is pooled and applied. The four principles of Indigenous law are:

- first is natural law;
- second is truth as the highest point of being and justice when truth is applied to affairs;
- third is applying respect to all affairs; and
- fourth is liberty based on the first three principles.<sup>52[52]</sup>

**Ohen:ton kariwentehkwen –  
the words that come before all matters**

*Wampum 7* provides that the opening thanksgiving is recited at every gathering of the people. Thanks is given to all that help human life. It does not mean that the people worship these useful gifts, but thank the power that produces them.

The Great Law thanksgiving opening address puts people within an interdependent system of relationships of all elements of nature which are equal. The Handsome Lake Code outlines a hierarchical order of the "spirit" forces as well as a hierarchy of offices in the Long House and a hierarchy of medicines arranged according to power.<sup>53[53]</sup>

An elder <sup>54[54]</sup> provided the following insights into the basis of the Great Law as set out in the *ahenton kariwatekwen*, "the words that come before every matter".

The opening begins by paying respect to the people who still follow the Great Law reminding them of the necessity of good relations between themselves in order to be more productive and happy.

Then respect is extended to the earth, which is our mother, and how female functions parallel the role of the earth. The immunities and medicines they inherit come from living on her. Their mother is one of the family, not more important than any other member of the family. She has a specific role and way of doing things.

The waters are the cousins with whom each person associates everyday and are a necessary part of their lives. From there respect is extended to the contents of the waters, the fish, plant life and other beings. Food and medicines needed to live healthily come from the waters.

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<sup>52[52]</sup> *Onondaga Indian Nation v. The State of New York, et al.* United States District Court. Northern District of New York. May 27, 1997. 10

<sup>53[53]</sup> Shimony, Annemarie. *Conservatism Among Iroquois at the Six Nation Reserve.* Syracuse University. 1994. 290

<sup>54[54]</sup> Tekarontake. Ganiengeh. Personal Interview. June-July 1997

The plant life is referred to as the "sisters", such as corn, beans and squash, strawberries and other foods. They are given the same respect as the mother and cousins. Then respect is given to their brothers and sisters, the animals, insects and birds, who too are beneficial to the people. The people grow up with their relations who constantly help one another, and are all part of the continuation of life.

Then respect is extended to the grandfathers, the four winds and thunderers who too are part of the family. They help to renew elements of nature for the people and continually show their natural and beneficial functions. The grandmother is the moon which has a lot of knowledge. From the moon the people learn the best time to put seeds into the ground, to pick medicines, it controls the cycle of the women and when new phases are coming onto the earth.

The sun is the eldest brother who is the example for the men to follow. The sun gives support to the earth by warming it so things can grow. He helps give support and reinforcement to the people. He beautifies everything that has been put on the earth. The men too protect and support the people, particularly the women. They help raise the children and ensure their well being and continuation of life.

Then respect is given to the distant cousins, the stars. They were used by our ancestors for direction as we traveled. We do not always see them but when we do they are at their brightest. They have a lot of knowledge and strength should we ever need their assistance.

All elements of Creation are an important and necessary part of everything else in the world, not above or beneath anything. Every individual in the family has a different function. In the raising of the names in the long house, every child is a child of the people, who, together must support that child and recognize and develop their natural abilities. Thus the natural world is the family and respect is given to all the relatives equally. There is no hierarchy.

The big one created everything. "Now let us turn our direction to the Gasatstensera kowa sa oiera, the "big natural power" that is great and natural. We shall never know the face of this power, nor the name of this power nor where this power dwells. All we will know is the creation of this power and that it is logical. It is neither male nor female.

Kaianereh'ko:wa comes from the word "kaienere" which means the "great, good path". Roianer, the word for chiefs, means "he has a path". "Iakoianer", the clan mother, means "she has a path". In other words, a natural direction has already been set for everyone to follow which is good and beneficial to all members of society.

There is an eagle that sits at the top of the tree which will scream a warning if we go off that path. The eagle is symbolic for the people. They are told to be watchful as well as emulating their 'great vision' to distinguish the situation at hand from past experiences. They are to look in all directions and with an open mind.

The 50 chiefs are equal in power. None are higher than the other. Some nations have more clans, greater territory and larger populations, but all are

equal. The people are not rulers but have a specific path set for us. Iotianaian, the path they must follow is the great path which is the Kaianereh'ko:wa.

The term "chief" is inaccurate and misleading. The Roianer does not lead the people according to their own will but only according to the Kaianereh'ko:wa.55[55]

The elder notes, "All family members come from the same creation - mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, sisters, brothers, cousins, nephews and nieces. How can there be peace and harmony when one is above the rest?"

The Kaianereh'ko:wa is real democracy based on natural righteousness, which acknowledges all that is real. Gariwio'ston:sera, man-made righteousness, creates devils, angels and unprovable nonsense to scare and control the people. Fear is created to confuse the people. According to the Kaianereh'ko:wa, everything is reality. Kari-wiio (Gari'wiio) means it is real, it is perfect. Gari:wiio has been erroneously used to describe the Handsome Lake Code, which is a Christian based ideology.

The elder said that, "There are some things that are not understood and unexplainable, such as Creation. People have mixed the European-Christian school of thinking with Kaianereh'ko:wa. For the Iroquois confusion is created through unsubstantiated explanations for unexplainable powers. Creation has been made perfectly with all forces and facilities necessary to help the people. Praying to unexplained "spirits" will not resolve their problems. Facing reality will. These fears are exploited to make people dependent rather than independent and self-sufficient. Indigenous people have been convinced that they must live in peace. In nature any creature that succumbs to such exploitation or does not defend itself becomes extinct. The Indigenous people are threatened with extinction if they rely on this principle.

In Wampum 8 Dekanawida warned that each of the chiefs must never seriously disagree among themselves. If they do, it will cause them to disregard each other. Quarrelling with each other could lead to bloodshed. The law stipulates that no 'sharp utensils' will be used in order to avoid the spilling of blood in any way. They would lose their rights and privileges. Then their grandchildren would suffer and be reduced to poverty and disgrace.56[56]

Dekanawida warned that such an eventuality would be hard and their grandchildren would suffer hardship. Should it occur that the heads of the people of the Confederacy shall roll and wander away westward, the other nations will say to them, "You belong to the Confederacy, you were a proud and haughty people once". They will kick the heads (of the Confederacy) with scorn and go on their way. But before they had gone far they would vomit up blood. Meaning that the Confederacy would still have enough power to avenge their traitors.57[57]

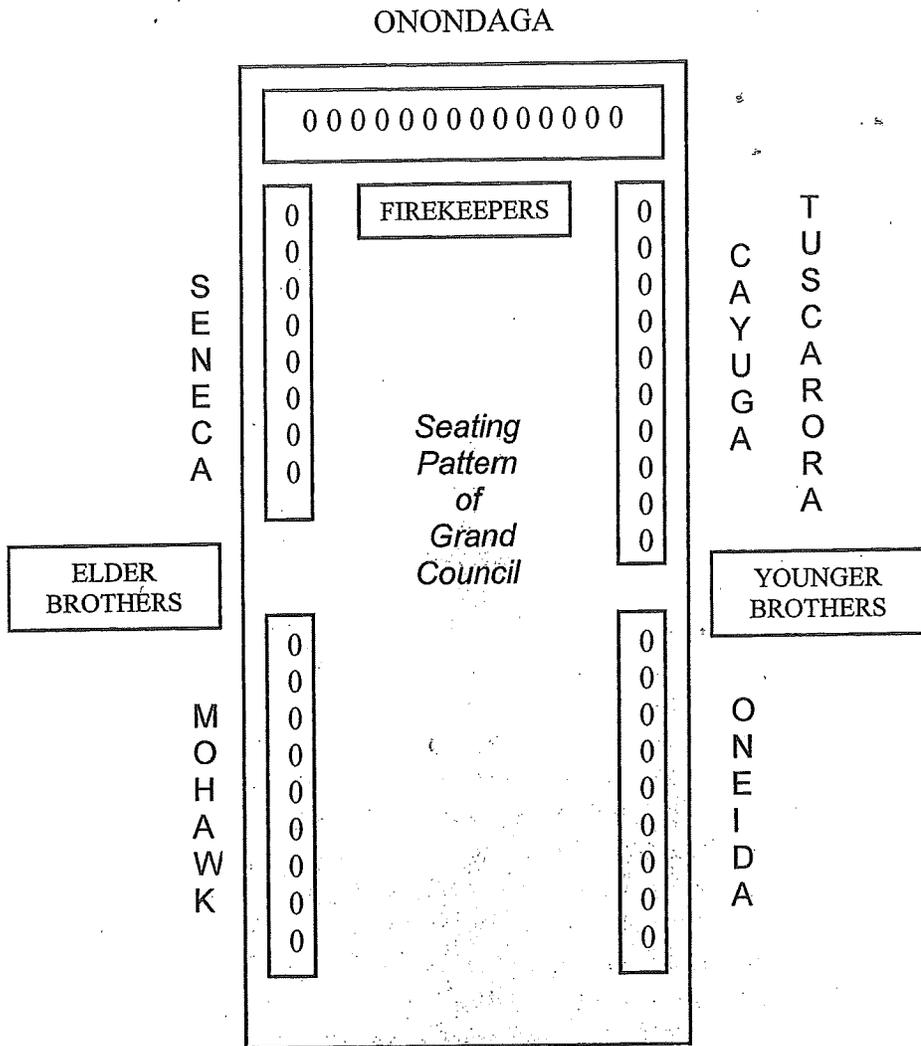
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55[55] Kakwirakeron. Akwesasne Warrior. Personal Interviews, Nov. 1989 -

56[56] Parker, Arthur C. *The Constitution of the Five Nations*. New York. New York State Museum Bulletin. No. 184: 1916, 104

57[57] Ibid., Parker. 1916. 104

Grand Council Decision Making Process58[58]



58[58] North American Indian Travelling College. *Traditional Teachings*. N.A.I.T.C. 1984. 37. Seating Pattern of the Grand Council

Grand Council process is established along the same 3 party system with the Kanion'ke:haka. The Seneca being the First Part; the Cayuga and Oneida being the Second Part; and the Onondaga being the Fire Keepers, the Third Part.<sup>59</sup>[59] The Tuscarora speak through the Cayuga and Oneida.<sup>60</sup>[60]

In Wampums 9 and 10, the Law outlines the Decision Making Process at the Grand Council level and involves 7 separate steps:

1. All decisions start with the Kanion'ke:haka/Mohawk. The Kanion'ke:haka statesmen are divided into three clans who must all consider the measure separately and arrive at a joint decision.
2. When the Kanion'ke:haka have agreed on the outcome of the decision, it goes to the Seneca for consideration in the same manner.
3. When the Seneca have the question and agree with the Kanion'ke:haka, they then give their opinion to the Oneida and Cayuga statesmen for their decision, again arrived at in the same manner.
4. After the Oneida and Cayuga have agreed, they turn their decision back to the Mohawk and the Seneca for their confirmation again.
5. At this time the Kanion'ke:haka and Seneca give the question to the two separate bodies of the Onondaga statesmen for their decision. This step operates like the veto power.
6. When the two bodies agree, then Atotarho gives the decision to Honowirethon to confirm their decision if it is unanimous.
7. Honowirethon then gives the decision of the Onondaga to the Kanion'ke:haka and the Seneca so that the decision may be announced to the Council as the will of the Council and the policy of the League of Five Nations.

These are the checks and balances in the Kaianereh'ko:wa.<sup>61</sup>[61]

The Council Fire system is the Confederacy's dispute resolution system.

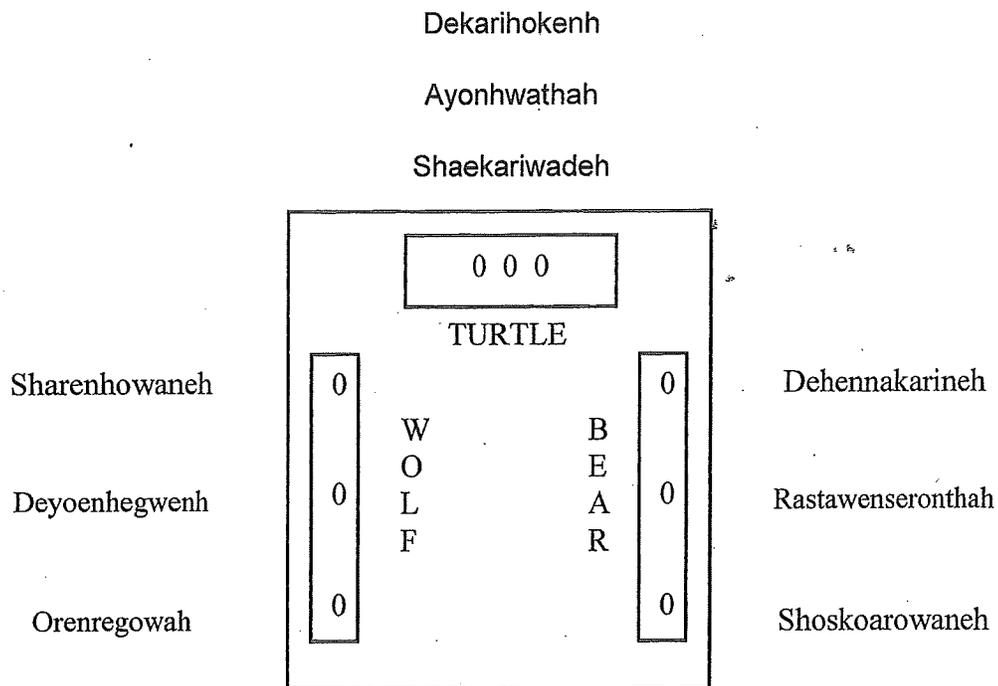
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<sup>59</sup>[59] Dekanawida. Gayanerekowa. *The Constitution of the Iroquois Confederacy*. Ohontsa Films. 1993. Wampums 9-12

<sup>60</sup>[60] *ibid.*, Dekanawida. 1993. 65. "The Founder wanted all Onkwehonwe in the Longhouse. He was able to gather only 5 nations in his time. He left the work of uniting nations to his successors and coming generations. They fell down on the job. Not only did they not get more nations into the Confederacy, but instead devised a protectorate of nations, i.e. an empire of subject nations, which was, not Dekanawida's plan...The protectorate nations were extinct and the Longhouse was reduced and weakened. It enabled the Europeans to take over the continent. A great lesson here not to lord over others but to make them into equals."

<sup>61</sup>[61] Barreiro, Jose. *How a Chief is Raised, Deposed. Sovereignty*. Indian Roots of American Democracy. Special Constitution Bicentennial Edition, 1988. North East Indian Quarterly. 64

**Council of the Mohawks - Wampum 11 62[62]**



*In* selecting a new chief, the Clan Mother, the Men and the Women of the family and clan of the deceased chief must all agree. The name is selected by the people and then submitted to the chiefs. If they confirm the nomination, then the candidate is submitted to the other two Clans. If confirmed he is raised by the condolence ceremony before all of the people.

In Iroquois the chief is the "Roianer" from the word "path", which means one who follows the footprints of the previous Roianer". When he goes off that path he cannot lead the people.

The custom is that no one shall put themselves up as leaders, but that they shall be invited to be leaders. There are, in fact, no leaders as such. They are "spokespersons" or "representatives" who carry the will of the people. They are asked three times to be a representative. The candidate refuses each time, asking if others are more suitable. If none is found, then the candidate is asked a fourth time when he must accept. By this time, he has received the majority backing of the house and confirmed at a people's meeting where he is "stood up" as a representative. After this process, it is difficult to remove a person as a spokesperson or from any position.

***Power of the People.*** Wampum 16 provides one of the most powerful rights that a citizen has in making government policy, particularly when the

leaders do not heed their wishes: "If the conditions ... call for an addition to or change of this law, the case shall be carefully considered and if a new beam seems necessary or beneficial, ... [it] shall be called, "Added to the Rafters". The clans tell the War Chiefs who must tell the Council to heed the will of the People. The Chiefs do not go against the will of the people because of their treason and impeachment powers.<sup>63</sup>[63]

Wampum 25 provides that if a chief of the League should establish any authority other than that of the Kaiahereh'ko:wa, he shall be warned three times and then dismissed by the War Chief on behalf of the people.<sup>64</sup>[64]

Wampum 35 provides for the election of Pine Tree chiefs. Should any men, inside or outside the nation help with special ability or show great interest in the affairs of the Nation, ... the Chiefs may elect him to sit with them. He shall be proclaimed a Pine Tree sprung up for the Nation,<sup>65</sup>[65] but he has no power except as an advisor. Joseph Brant was stood up as a Pine Tree chief to be a translator for the Rotino'shonni:onwe. A Pine Tree chief has only one duty and can only do what they are stood up for. Brant became a Free Mason, which is part of colonial society. He broke the Two Row Wampum agreement and Wampum 58 of the Kaianereh'ko:wa by submitting to the laws of a foreign people. He was deposed by the 50 Confederacy Chiefs in 1805. This was a precedent because a Pine Tree chief traditionally cannot be cut down, only ignored for all time. He signed treaties and agreement as a "chief" when he was a British subject as a colonel in the British army. In 1811 he died alone in his home in St. Catharines Ontario. [footnote Man of Two Worlds].

***War Chief and His Men.*** Wampum 36 provides definite functions for the War Chief<sup>66</sup>[66] and his Men (Warrior Society). The War Chief is the mediator between the people and the chiefs, during times of both war and peace.<sup>67</sup>[67] They are charged with the protection, defence and welfare of the people. These duties may take many forms, such as peacekeeping, teaching, speaking to the people, repossessing lost lands, maintaining human rights, diplomatic relations with other nations, and any other work that promotes the

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<sup>63</sup>[63] Bagley, Carol L. and Jo Ann Ruckman. *Grand Council Process for Decision-Making People's Rights*. American Indian Culture and Research Journal. Iroquois Contributions to Modern Democracy and Communism. Special Iroquois Issue. Vol. 7, Number 2/1983. 64  
<sup>64</sup>[64] North American Indian Travelling College. *Traditional Teachings*. Changed to "No person or foreign nation... shall have any voice except to answer questions.." Louis Hall in *Rebuilding the Iroquois Confederacy* says that "The Handsome Lake Code was established as an authority independent of the jurisdiction of the Great Law". All chiefs who practice this Code of a foreign people are guilty of violating Wampum 25 and can be deposed, as well as alienating themselves from the Iroquois Confederacy and territory.

<sup>65</sup>[65] United States Senate. *To Acknowledge the Contribution of the Iroquois Confederacy of Nations to the Development of the U. S. Constitution and to Reaffirm the Continuing Government-to-Government Relationship Between Indian Tribes and the United States Established in the Constitution*. Select Committee on Indian Affairs. S. One Hundredth Congress. Con. Res.: 77. 1987

<sup>66</sup>[66] *Ahserakowa* is the Mohawk word for Head Warrior or War Chief.

<sup>67</sup>[67] People of the State of New York against Andrew Gibson Jones, et al. State of New York. Town of Onondaga Justice Court. County of Onondaga. July 18, 1997. 22

welfare of the people. If there is no council, or the National Council and Adordaho are not functioning properly, the people then assume the functions of government. The War Chief and his men carry out the wishes of the People's Council.<sup>68</sup>[68]

**Clans.** Wampum 37 provides that the women head the clans, are the sole title holders of the nation's soil, and in them are vested the birthrights. The Europeans, not being members of any of these clans, have no right to own any land in this part of the world. Karonhiaktajeh stated that, "In the true matriarchal society, the women are the Chiefs and fight in the wars. In the Iroquois matrilineal society, the women have political equality plus other rights because they are the source of life and are considered closer to nature than are the men". The line of descent, rights of inheritance and Chieftainships are derived through the female line.

Wampums 42 to 54 provide the structure of the clans, which are political families. The Clan mother is called "Oianer" meaning "she follows the footprints" of the previous Oianer. They carry out the decisions of their Clan, put their Clan on the right course of action and make sure their Clan upholds the Kaianereh'ko:wa. The Clan Mothers possess the Chieftainship title wampum strings. The people can depose her if she does a serious wrong. Through the War Chief, based on the will of the people, she can depose and replace an errant chief. Children automatically belong to their mother's clan.

**Condolence Ceremonies.** Wampums 32 and 54 provide that a condolence ceremony is performed when a chief dies and a new one is installed. The Mohawk, Seneca and Onondaga Chiefs are installed by the Oneida and, Cayuga Chiefs and vice versa. The Chieftainship titles are the names of the original 50 chiefs at the formation of the Confederacy, which must never be buried.

**Line of Descent.** Wampum 44 provides that the line of descent shall follow the female line being the progenitors of the nation and titleholders of the land and soil. The Clans oversee the adoption of strangers, ceremonies, burial places and meetings of the clans. The women are in charge of maintaining the blood lines of the people. This explains why the European colonists had to destroy the women's powers in order to occupy and take political and economic control of North America.

**Land Title Held by Women.** The Kaianereh'ko:wa does not provide for the sale or alienation of land. The territory belongs to the unborn. No living being has the right to sell any part of it, just like no one has a right to sell their

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<sup>68</sup>[68] Onondaga Indian Nation v. State of New York, et al. United States District Court. Northern District of New York. May 27, 1997. 6

mother or any part of her.<sup>69[69]</sup> [A motion in a land claims case by the citizens of the Onondaga Nation <sup>70[70]</sup> was withdrawn because of the nature of how their lands are held.] Both Wampums 44 and 72 provide that the titleholders of the land and soil are the women on behalf of the Rotino'shonni:onwe. The Rotino'shonni:onwe legal opinion is that the Indigenous peoples of Onowaregh - Turtle Island - are the first humans here, and that foreigners have no right to take over the land. The so-called "conquest of America" is simply theft of Indigenous land. Women never relinquished ownership because they have no right to do so. "No treaty between the Onondaga and the newcomers involves the women. Further, it is not proper to pursue constitutional jurisdictional issues in the colonial court. Jurisdiction over the land is still with the Indigenous people and its re-appropriation is the responsibility of all the people. Therefore, all land transactions since contact are fraudulent and illegal."

The Kanion'ke:haka say that when the women of the nation are weak, the nation is weak. The strength of the Kanion'ke:haka is derived from the women, where the male and their children gain their identity, power and relationship with the universe. The women are the connection to the earth and their men depend on this connection to give them the energy and courage to protect their people and their territory.

***Naming Ceremony.*** Wampum 46 provides for the Clan Mothers to bestow the names on the children. In the past we were born and lived in longhouses. A child is born a Kanion'ke:haka, Oneida, etc., but when he or she is ceremoniously named according to the Kaianereh'ko:wa, they become a Rotino'shonni:onwe. They are Kanion'ke:haka by blood and Rotino'shonni:onwe by law. The parents are instructed to teach the native language and to live according to the Kaianereh'ko:wa.

These Clan ties perpetuate the position of the Kanion'ke:haka women within the Confederacy. They take part in the daily lives of their family members. If a mother is having problems with her children, she sends them off to meet with the Clan Mothers. The Clan Mothers would then explain to the children their roles within the Kanion'ke:haka organization and the behaviour expected of them, leaving the final decision up to the individual. This system keeps the group working together as a whole, and removes any disruption that could cause dissension to the Nation.

***Fifty Chiefs Names.*** Wampum 46 provides that the women shall be the holders of the Authorized Names of the 50 Chiefs of the Confederacy for all time to come.

***Deposing Chiefs.*** Wampums 52 and 54 provide that the women select and depose the chiefs. They are also responsible for reciprocal obligations of

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<sup>69[69]</sup> People of the State of New York against Andrew Gibson Jones, et al. State of New York. Town of Onondaga Justice Court. County of Onondaga. July 18, 1997. 11

<sup>70[70]</sup> Onondaga Indian Nation v. State of New York, et al. United States District Court. Northern District of New York. May 20, 1997. 4

help, defence and redress of injuries to outsiders. They maintain strategic marital ties.

**Symbolism.** In Wampums 56 and 65 Dekanawida used symbolism to explain his ideas. He told them to bind their nations together as a bundle of arrows to be left beside the great Tree of Peace and the Confederate Council Fire of Atotarho. This symbolizes all these bundled arrows are stronger than one arrow. He said the Confederacy shall in the future have one body and one head. He warned that if any evil should befall the nations, they should stand or fall united as one person. This is how the Kanion'ke:haka and other Rotini'shonni:onwe nations are today. Although divided on certain issues, we are united in our pursuit of sovereignty and justice.

Dekanawida instructed the Chiefs to cultivate the good feelings of friendship, love and honour amongst each other. He had now fulfilled his duty in assisting them to establish and organize this great Confederacy, which, if carefully guarded, would continue from generation to generation, as long as the sun shines. He instructed that no one else should ever be given his name and then left. This may have been because he was the peacemaker from possibly another Iroquoian nation. He brought the message. His job was done.

**Chief submitting to Foreign Laws.** In Wampum 58, "Anytime a Confederate chief chooses to submit to the law of a foreign people, he is no longer in but out of the Confederacy. ... [They] shall be called "They have alienated themselves". Such persons ... shall forfeit all birthrights and claims on the Five Nations Confederacy and territory. This provision is used as the reason for the majority of Rotino'shonni:onwe not voting in colonial band council, federal or provincial elections. In most Mohawk communities, there are two main systems of authority operating, the traditional Longhouse chiefs and the Indian Act band council set up by the colonial government of Canada, or the federal Indian law tribal council set up by the U.S. Some vote in the band or tribal council elections because they are beneficiaries of jobs, social assistance and other government programs. Less than 10% of the "eligible voters" take part in the Indian Act elections. Even so, the colonial governments transfers all moneys, programs and benefits to their band or tribal council for distribution to the members. Given the lack of jobs, the social, economic and political divisions and the constant campaign to weaken our traditional ties, this system has gained some influence on the territories.

Accepting the band council system and the Handsome Lake Code are considered a violation of Wampum 58 of the Great Law.<sup>71[71]</sup> Karonhiaktajeh

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<sup>71[71]</sup> To the People of the Mohawk Nation. Haudenosaunee. Concerned People of the Mohawk Nation of Akwesasne, Ganiengeh and Kahnawake (by authority of , Wampum 98), Dec. 30, 1987. 'From 1987 the Akwesasne Mohawk chiefs joined in a "Tri-National Council" with the Canadian Band Council and the Tribal trustees of the New York..... following the Canadian Indian Act and the New York State law respectively. This is seen as a ... violation of the Great Law of Peace which provides that no chief can establish any authority independent of the

stated that the charge against these chief is treason and the penalty is death. There are persons who have taken part in the band council system who are considered to have "lost their voice". These persons may remain in the Longhouse by sitting in meetings and listening but no speaking. They may be asked for an opinion or assistance. They are not discarded because the Longhouse way means getting along with each other and bringing people back into the fold. The policy is one of inclusion, not exclusion. These persons then can eventually regain their voice. We attempt to understand, learn and bring harmony to the people.72[72]

In Wampum 59, if a chief does not heed the warnings of the people, then the Council of Women or of the Men have the duty to return him to the right course of action. If he seriously endangers the people, the War Chief drops the black wampum and the men spring to their feet and club the erring chief to death. The right to decide on execution is held by both the General Council of the Men of the Five Nation's and the General Council of the Women of the Five Nations. If the erring chief grabs the black beads before they hit the floor, then he is given a chance to make amends.

***Tree of Great Long Leaves.*** Wampum 60 provides that those who are farseeing have a duty to bring any insights to the people's attention. Should a great calamity threaten the generations rising and living, ... then he who is able to climb to the top of the Tree of the Great Long Leaves may do so. ... should he see that evil things indeed are approaching, then he shall call to the people of the Five United Nations assembled beneath the Tree of the Great Long Leaves and say: "A Calamity threatens your happiness". This is ancient man's way of warning the people to be ever on the alert to danger, to discuss and do something about it.73[73]

***Reciting Great Law.*** Wampum 62 provides for reciting the Kaianereh'ko:wa every five years. Now that it is written down, Dekanawida would probably have recommended that the people read it often. There are Chiefs who don't realize when they are violating the law because they refuse to read it.74[74] Once a year every community would recite the Great Law for its members to hear. Every five years the entire confederacy would gather to have a Great Law recital to eliminate the excuse of being ignorant of the law. "I did not know" is not an acceptable excuse for breaking it.

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*jurisdiction of the Great Law, and which must establish a peaceful society by eliminating the causes of conflict between individuals and between peoples.*

72[72] Karonhiahente. Personal Interview. Kahnawake. June 1997 -

73[73] Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. Kahnawake. Interviews. May-August 1990. *The word "Tioneratasekowe" was mistaken to mean "Tree of the Great Long Leaves" when it actually means a great big tree with leaves that are always fresh, "a-she", an evergreen tree particularly the white pine which grows to 250 feet high when allowed to fully grow, referring to the forest giant of eastern North America".*

74[74] A convenience for some chiefs to profess such ignorance.

**Temporary Adoptions.** Wampum 67 allows temporary adoptions of persons of another Clan or of a foreign Indigenous nation by bestowing "A name hung about the neck".

**Holding Confederacy Land.** Wampums 72 and 73 provide that the Confederacy territory is the soil of the earth from one end of the land to the other, and is the property of the people who inhabit it and none other may hold it.<sup>75[75]</sup> The nations agreed on boundaries for hunting grounds and territories. The Confederacy's role is to protect these boundary lines and any changes have to be made in Grand Council with all nations concurring.

**Blood Claims.** Wampum 76 provides that the rights can only be claimed through family lineage. Otherwise, not knowing all the traditions of the Confederacy, they might go against its Great Peace without realizing it. In the National or Grand Councils, only the Rotianer (Chiefs) have a voice in the Council unless an individual is asked to speak.

**Weapons of War.** Wampum 91 provides for the right of the Warriors to take up the weapons of war to defend their land, people and sovereignty. Every living thing in the natural world possesses the "instinct" to protect themselves, their territory and their own kind, especially their young.<sup>76[76]</sup>

**Peoples' Right to Meet.** Wampum 93 provides for the inherent and constitutional right of the People to assemble anytime and at anyplace within their territory without having to seek permission from any National Council. The Great Law sets the path to follow, no new path can be made and no one may stray from that path: "Whenever [there is] an especially important matter ... the Chiefs of the League must submit the matter to the decision of their people and the decision of the people shall affect the decision of the League Council [which] shall be a confirmation of the voice of the people."<sup>77[77]</sup> When the people hold a General Council, their decisions are as valid as a Grand Council decision provided that it does not violate the Constitution. The Grand Council has to go along with the People's decisions as the Confederacy is the People's government.

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<sup>75[75]</sup> Dekanawida. *Gayanerekowa. The Constitution of the Iroquois Confederacy.* Ohontsa Films. 1993. 61. Creation made Aboriginal People of the one blood and of the same soil. Different languages constitute different nations and different hunting grounds and territories with boundary lines between them were established. Also, no race of people has a "God given" right to invade other races.

<sup>76[76]</sup> People of the State of New York against Andrew Gibson Jones, et al. State of New York. Town of Onondaga Justice Court. County of Onondaga. July 18, 1997. 17

<sup>77[77]</sup> Bagley, Carol L. and Jo Ann Ruckman. *Grand Council Process for Decision-Making People's Rights.* American Indian Culture and Research Journal. Iroquois Contributions to Modern Democracy and Communism. Special Iroquois Issue. Vol. 7, Number 2/1983. 64

***WHAT THE CONSTITUTION REPRESENTS  
IN TERMS OF PHILOSOPHY***

The Constitution gives the Rotini'shonni:onwe a strong identity, a philosophy upon which to base our life, unity with our brethren, and a sense of who we are as a people. This has created a momentum to recover control over our destiny. Today, the constitution provides a platform for negotiating political disputes with Canadian and American colonists as we did in the stand-off in Kaneh'sa:take (Oka) and as we did in the past with the French, English, Dutch and Americans. Also, using the constitution, we are able to deal with disputes within our nation, and make decisions using its basic principles. It outlines everyone's role and purpose in the Confederacy and a philosophy and structure within which to deal with our environment.

Women are an integral part of Kanion'ke:haka survival and are the backbone of Mohawk society. Both men and women have our roles to fulfil in keeping the nation strong. Duties are divided and complementary.

Women, as heads of our families and clans are said to better understand controversies among people. In war, we would not unnecessarily risk the lives of our people over petty squabbles. The Kanion'ke:haka men depend on this feminine wisdom to decide whether going to war would provide the greatest good for the ultimate effort.

The Rotino'shonni:onwe, being a matrilineal society, hand down property through the females. A Mohawk bridegroom is expected to live in his wife's community and in her home, which was a longhouse with the extended family. Marriages are considered seriously. Children are highly regarded. During marriage ceremonies young couples are instructed that "if Creation wants to, they will be sent children". Children are gifts from Creation and are to be treated as such.

The philosophy unites the Rotino'shonni:onwe which is now a force that Canadian and American authorities have come to respect. Challenged for hundreds of years, the Rotino'shonni:onwe have emerged as a cohesive group. We are reaffirming our sovereign nationhood, reclaiming our lands, powers and possessions, and making our presence felt nationally and internationally. Outside threats from the colonial states that are squatting on our land have forced the Rotino'shon:ni to consider our political position. We are falling back on our traditional longhouse philosophy, the treaties, our history and, of course, our constitution, the Kaianereh'ko:wa. Young Kanion'ke:haka people are studying the Kaianhereh'ko:wa and re-learning the Kanion'ke:haka language. No doubt, the tried and true philosophy of the past which has withstood attack and near annihilation provides direction to the young people.

Kanion'ke:haka activism has shown other Indigenous people that it pays to exercise their rights. The mainstream public is seeing a new Indigenous image emerge. Even on the international stage Kanion'ke:haka and other Rotino'shonni:onwe are asserting ourselves, such as at the United Nations where we are eloquently presenting our cases. No doubt the philosophy imbedded in

the ancient Kaianereh'ko:wa constitution is a major factor as to why the Rotino'shonni:onwe still struggle, resist and exist.78[78]

Unity of the Rotino'shonni:onwe nations is based on the philosophy of the Great Law. The more unified the clans and communities of the Kanion'ke:haka Nation become the stronger we become. It is this philosophy that affirms the sovereignty of the Kanion'ke:haka Nation and the Rotino'shonni:onwe Confederacy. The Rotino'shonni:onwe being geographically located in both the colonies of the United States and Canada must constantly exercise diplomatic acuity in dealing with these states on various matters such as land claims, programs and services. It is the Kaienere'ko:wa and the Rotino'shonni:onwe constitution that provides the will and spirit to exercise this identity.

## *CHAPTER II*

### *THE HANDSOME LAKE TRADITION*

*The Handsome Lake Code/Gariwio'stensera* is a Christian, colonial based ideology. Handsome Lake, or "Skaniatario", held one of the fifty Chieftainship titles of the Confederacy. He was born in 1735 in the Seneca village of Conawagas on the Genesee River and died in Onondaga in 1815.

Handsome Lake is buried in a tomb near the Onondaga Council House. After a bout of drinking the white man's "firewater", he went into a coma and had a revelation in which he was visited by "4 beings" who revealed the will of the "Creator". He felt the Old Way was no longer valid. Poverty, defeat in war, loss of land, broken promises and hostility of the newcomers brought despair to the Iroquois. His message was meant to give the people some hope for the future. Henry O'Bail [often spelled O'Beel], his nephew, the son of Handsome Lake's brother, Cornplanter, 79[79] is said to have taken him up in the mountains. He explained the Bible to him and gave him the idea of creating the Gariwio'sten:sera.80[80] O'Bail, along with Joseph Brant, John Deseronto and Aaron Hill are signatories to the fraudulent 'Mohawk Treaty' of 1796.

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78[78] Mohawk Nation News MNN. Oct. 27, 1996. "Indigenous People Global Crisis Stand-off". The Iroquois position: "in Canada Britain passed imperial instruments ' such as the Royal Proclamation of 1763 affirming that the Aboriginal people were the true Indigenous People of North America with our own governments and that treaties have never been repealed. So Indigenous People don't need to go begging to colonial Canada or the United Nations to be given self-government which we have had since time immemorial".

79[79] Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. Kahnawake. Interviews. May-August 1990. "Handsome Lake could neither read nor write, so could not have devised 'Gai'wio' in the bogus treaty with N.Y. State in 1797 only the federal U.S. government has the right to make treaties. Handsome Lake wrote his name with an "X". Individual states do not have the right to make treaties. New York State paid \$100, 000 for the 5 million acre Seneca territory, first making the sorry chiefs drunk. The sale is illegal not because the Seneca were drunk, but because New York State did not have the right to make treaties".

80[80] Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet*. New York. New York State Museum. Bulletin 163. 1912. 11

"Traditional Teachings" by the North American Indian Travelling College of Cornwall Island, 1984, cover the Creation Story, the Great Law of Peace and the Handsome Lake Code. The Creation Story has similarities to the Christian version, such as the male that went across the great salt water to bring them the message, being crucified and returning to Turtle Island, the land of his father, with blood on his face and on his body.

Dekanawida is not mentioned but referred to as the "Peace Maker". Due to influence by the Quaker, the Handsome Lake Code used European symbolism, such as the woman desiring forbidden fruit, the virgin birth of twins, one good and one bad and the bad son ripping off his grandmother's head and throwing it into the sky creating the moon. The "good" brother created the calm and good things of nature while the "bad" brother created the bad things, as though things in nature are good and bad. The disputes ended with the bad brother getting the night time world and the good brother getting the daytime world. The good brother created the yellow, white, black and red people to look after creation. The red man was to be visited by a messenger. Twelve boys were born, one whose father was the Creator, who became their leader. After his crucifixion in Europe he said that they will always have turmoil over religion. The religion of the Onkwehonwe people will always be expressed through our communities.<sup>81</sup>[81] This, of course, is not how it turned out when the Christians tried to change the Kaianereh'ko:wa into a Christian religion. In the Handsome Lake Code and in other Christian based religions there is a power structure of the spirit forces in the opening thanksgiving address where the elements of nature are arranged according to levels of power.<sup>82</sup>[82]

The Gariwio'sten:sera challenged the basic philosophy of the Rotino'sonni:onwe. It created a disoriented Rotino'sonni:onwe personality and a distorted Rotino'sonni:onwe community. To this day Kanion'ke:haka are still trying to deal with these and other incursions which are still disorienting our lives. The present disagreements come from differences in these two competing philosophies. They have affected our behaviour and the structure of our society. The Kanion'ke:haka have re-established our nationhood by returning to our real traditional ways.

Once again it was the work of Arthur C. Parker who wrote "The Code of Handsome Lake, the Seneca Prophet" for the Education Department Bulletin (No. 530. Albany. 1912) that was the most useful document on the Handsome Lake Code.

The Gariwio'sten:sera purports to be the teachings of Handsome Lake, a Seneca, during sixteen years until his death in 1815. It was called the "new religion" of the Six Nations and is the basis of the Longhouse festivals on some of the Rotino'shonni:onwe reservations in New York and Ontario that have

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<sup>81</sup>[81] North American Indian Travelling College. *Traditional Teachings*. N.A.I.T.C. 1984. 3

<sup>82</sup>[82] Shimony, Annemarie. *Conservatism Among Iroquois at the Six Nations Reserve*. Syracuse University Press. 1994. 290

followers, such as Tonawanda, Cattaraugus and Allegany in New York and Grand River and Muncytown in Ontario.<sup>83</sup>[83]

Parker says that Handsome Lake learned his ideas of morality from Henry Obail (Abeal), a Quaker who went to school in Philadelphia. Henry, it is said, took him up to the mountains and explained the Christian bible to him, thus giving him the idea of devising the Gariwio'sten:sera.

According to Parker, preachers reciting the Gariwio'sten:sera drove the people to tears. They would re-pledge their allegiance to Gariwio'sten:sera and stop drinking. The patriotism and religious fervour was similar to a 'revival' meeting. The Code was written down by Presbyterian missionaries, and given to Chief John Jacket of Cattaraugus, who lost it. It was rewritten by Chief Cornplanter in 1903 in Seneca, which was translated by a preacher of the Baptist Church. In 1806, the President of the United States, Thomas Jefferson, in a letter to Six Nations, rejoiced that they had adopted this message. He praised Handsome Lake as his Code was seen as an acceptable way of influencing the Ongwehonwe (Indigenous people of Turtle Island) towards adapting to white society, and accommodating the needs of the settlers who needed their land. The President recognized Handsome Lake as having the "right to teach and prophesy".<sup>84</sup>[84]

Karonhiaktajeh viewed Handsome Lake as building a Christian religion, similar to today's "born again" religion, under the guidance of the Quakers.<sup>85</sup>[85] Handsome Lake felt that the Rotino'shonni:onwe had to adapt to the converging white man's world. Using the Longhouse building as the basis, he set out to change those things that made the Confederacy strong - the clans, the women, the lineage ties, the warriors, the music, songs and dances through which some of the culture is passed. He created heaven and hell which instilled guilt, fear and punishment which did not previously exist for the Rotino'shonni:onwe. He made pride a sin, which is contrary to Rotino'shonni:onwe child rearing which developed pride, strength and a sense of place in the children through the ahenton kariwatekwen, the thanksgiving. He even told them that money was evil so that when the newcomers offered very little for their land, the Indians hesitated to take it.

Dekanawida taught self-reliance and dependence on self, relatives, community, nation and the Confederacy. Handsome Lake taught that Rotino'shonni:onwe must now rely on the outside forces, on fate, on greater acceptance of what surrounds them, to learn to live a life of deprivation and humility, for the rewards in the hereafter and how the "Creator" will punish them in "hell".

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<sup>83</sup>[83] Parker, Arthur C. *The Constitution of the Five Nations*. New York. New York State Museum Bulletin. No. 184. 1916. 5

<sup>84</sup>[84] Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet*. New York. New York State Museum, Bulletin 163. 1912. 10

<sup>85</sup>[85] Fenton, William N. *Symposium on Cherokee and Iroquois Culture*. No. 25. *Iroquois Culture History. A General Evaluation*. Bulletin 180. 164. "In the period 1797 to 1805 there was a mass revival hysteria, in which hostility, loss and guilt are resolved in an orgy of confession, repentance and salvation."

When the Rotino'shonni:onwe argued that poverty should not be part of their religion and social system, Handsome Lake said that the true followers will be poor and suffer much in this world but that their condition in the "new world above the sky" would be better. [The meek shall inherit the earth]. They are, therefore, to esteem poverty, lowly surroundings and sickness as a sure way of getting a rich heavenly reward after death. He pointed to the better material surroundings and wealth of their white brethren as evidence of what the devil has brought them!

Section 78 instructs the Indians to share their bounty - land and environment.

The women were too strong and had innate influence and power. This power had to be broken, hence their position in Rotino'shonni:onwe society was drastically altered by Handsome Lake. The matrilineal society gave way to a patriarchal and patrilineal society. If a woman was disobedient to a man, "she was to be punished by a hot iron and branded".<sup>86</sup>[86]

An affect of this confusion instilled in us through the misinterpretation of the Handsome Lake Code and other Christian religions perpetrated dissension, confusion and division. This weakened our resistance to the newcomers taking control over our lives. That's why the Canadian and U.S. governments are more likely to pump funds into Handsome Lake Longhouses.

Writers such as Fenton said the success of Handsome Lake's teachings did much to guide the Rotino'shonni:onwe into a European economic system. It stressed private property, individualism and materialism, along with a moral code that emphasized sobriety, cleanliness and hard work, the Protestant ethic.<sup>87</sup>[87] Handsome Lake felt that the Rotino'shonni:onwe had to let go of those things that kept us distinct, urging us to conform to the new colonial society. Except for the four main ceremonies, most of the old ceremonies went underground and were practiced in the homes.<sup>88</sup>[88] The main ceremony of the Kaianereh'ko:wa were thanksgiving for what Creation provided. The Gai'wio'sten:sera emphasized praying for salvation. The main difference is that the Kaianereh'ko:wa allows a direct relationship between the individual and Creation. According to the Gai'wio'sten:sera, an individual has to deal with their Creator through another person similar to a priest called a "faithkeeper".

Parker stated that the frauds which the Rotino'shonni:onwe/Six Nations had suffered, the loss of our land and ancient political position of power had reduced us to poverty and disheartened us. The aftermath of warfare, loss of ancestral homes, broken promises and the hostility of the white settlers demoralized the Rotino'shonni:onwe. There is not much energy in a despairing nation who see themselves hopeless and alone, nor could we resist the greedy eyes of those settlers who wanted the few acres we had left.

Parker said that Handsome Lake's message was their own creation around which they could rally and raise their hopes. A few leaders such as Red

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<sup>86</sup>[86] Natawe, Frank. Kahnawake. Interview. July-August 1990

<sup>87</sup>[87] Fenton, William N. *Symposium on Cherokee and Iroquois Culture*. No. 25. *Iroquois Culture History. A General Evaluation*. Bulletin 180. 159

<sup>88</sup>[88] Natawe, Frank. Kahnawake. Interview. July-August 1990

Jacket denounced him as an impostor, which provided Handsome Lake with more reason to attack this leader. He told his followers that the angels had conveniently revealed that Red Jacket was a schemer, a seller of land and an unhappy wretch doomed to carry a wheelbarrow full of soil through eternity as his punishment for his lack of faith. [If they had a television then he would have had his own televangelist program]. This created a prejudice among the Rotino'shonni:onwe lasting to this day. A few others opposed the prophet but this action only created a large faction that supported him.

There are 130 sections of the Gai'wii'o'sten:sera/Handsome Lake Code, known as the Great Message. Comments are made on those that illustrate this comparison and how it contradicts the Kaianereh'ko:wa.

The Code converted many Rotino'shonni:onwe to Christianity. All told, the literal interpretation of the Gaiwii'o'sten:sera contradicts the Kaianereh'ko:wa. Even the name of Dekanawida, the person who brought the Kaianereh'ko:wa to the Rotino'shonni:onwe, cannot be mentioned. He is called the "Peacemaker" by the Gaiwii'o'sten:sera followers. When the calamity comes, they are supposed to call his name and his message will return. How are they going to do this when they are not allowed to say it? His name was to be forgotten.

The Gariwii'o'stensera explains how the white race came to America and why the Gai'wii'o'sten:sera became a necessity. The Bible and Jesus Christ play a prominent role in Handsome Lake's visions, with a reference to a castle of gold, which is probably St. Peters. Handsome Lake wanted to help the Indian adapt to the white man's world and to satisfy his Quaker supporters.89[89]

Handsome Lake often contradicted himself. He said that across the ocean that lies towards the rising sun is another world, a great country and a people whom the Rotino'shonni:onwe had never seen. These people were virtuous, had no unnatural evil habits and were honest. He pointed out five things that men and women enjoy, to take these to the Rotino'shonni:onwe people and make them as white men are. Then they would be rich and powerful and become chiefs of all great preachers.90[90]

In the Parker version, he opened his bundle of five things and found a flask of rum, a pack of playing cards, a handful of coins, a violin and a decayed leg bone. Onega, or Oneganiron, "firewater", was not made for the Indian, so never touch it again, said Handsome Lake. Cards would cause the people to gamble away their wealth and wile away their time. Music and dancing would cause them to dance with their arms around their wives and cause them to tattle and gossip.91[91] The money would make them dishonest and covetous and they would forget their old ways. The decayed leg bone meant that if people did not follow his way there would be a large amount of bones.92[92]

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89[89] Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. Kahnawake. May-August 1 990. "Handsome Lake did not have any visions. He had the D. T.'s (delirium tremens) from a month-long whisky binge and saw snakes. His nephew, Henry, told him not to say he saw snakes but to say he saw angels".

90[90] Parker, Arthur C. The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet. New York. New York State Museum, Bulletin 163. 1912. 17

91[91] Contrarily, Bruce Elijah said that the Indian was to not forget the drum.

92[92] Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet*. New York. New York State Museum, Bulletin 163. 1912. 27

The North American Indian Travelling College version refers to the "Four Major Wrongs" being "oneka" or "mind changer"; "iakotkon" or witchcraft; "love medicine" or using charms to manipulate people; and "iawiratonto" or abortion.<sup>93[93]</sup>

In Handsome Lake's vision, a suitable man, Christopher Columbus, was found in whom to confide. Columbus got some big 'canoes', raised up wings and sailed away for a long time to find a new land. His sailors became impatient and began to think they had been deceived. They were going to behead him, but he heard of the plan and promised that he would discover the new country the next day, which he did. The boats turned back and reported their find to the whole world. After that many other ships came, with many bundles which they distributed to all the men of the great earth island.

The Rotino'shonni:onwe were encouraged to work hard but for someone else. Contradictorily, Handsome Lake encouraged the Rotino'shonni:onwe /Iroquois to not forget their ways and that those who did would be punished.

Handsome Lake may have realized that music was one way the culture was passed down from thousands of years past and was a form of communal social interaction which united the community. "Idle gossip" was the way Indians learned from each other, strengthened our ties and how the clan and kin provided protection. This practice made it difficult for outsiders to have any influence on us. He wanted the men to be dominant and the women subservient to the men, similar to the Quakers. When women were demoted, the men lost their self-esteem and became disillusioned. The men, seeing the women becoming powerless floundered leaving them more open to corruption, exploitation and control by outsiders. As for the rum turning our minds to foolishness, this is true. It became easier to take our land and possessions from us. But this was a common colonial strategy. Although gambling was part of the Old Way, it was not for great stakes. Many of the feasts and festivals incorporated games of chance. The newcomers said the Indigenous people should not covet nor love money, making it easier to offer less for our possessions.

The strict sanctions imposed from the outside threatening dire punishments were new and contrary to the Rotino'shonni:onwe way, that of setting an example and not forcing anyone to follow it. Handsome Lake's visions occurred during the worst phase of the social breakdown of Rotino'shonni:onwe society from which we were recovering.

When the social breakdown had reached its weakest point this new ideology was introduced demanding our subservience.<sup>94[94]</sup> Bruce Elijah said that the Indians had lost our way and at this time the revelation of the prophecies was to reinforce the original instructions.

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<sup>93[93]</sup> This is to illustrate that there are several interpretations of the Gai'wiiio.

<sup>94[94]</sup> Elijah, Bruce. Oneida. Interview. September 1990. He said that the Indian was to not forget the drum.

Witches<sup>95</sup>[95] were seen as "malefic mental suggestion" ... "needle like splinter pointed on either end and having a central eye to which was tied the hair of the witch, a splinter of bone from the fibula of a deer, a worm or some like object." "A witch can work fearlessly and successfully as long as she remains unknown to the victim and under some circumstances even when known". Witchcraft is for the most part auto suggestion, usually by someone emotionally close to the person. It requires that the victim have some real or created guilt which the perpetrator then plays upon through various means.

The European definition of witchcraft is the practice of sorcery with an association with the devil. "Devil" is also a Christian concept. The European concepts of good and evil were introduced through the idea of witchcraft.

Handsome Lake found a way to get rid of his critics by accusing them of being "witches", which was impossible to disprove. Many were punished by merely pointing his finger at them. For example, in Section 95, Handsome Lake in his vision saw a man carrying dirt in a wheelbarrow (selling land). Handsome Lake, who sold the land for very little money, accused Red Jacket of the deed. To this day mention of Red Jacket's name is said with contempt. He had seen the sachem-prophet as an imposter.<sup>96</sup>[96] At the Salem witch trials, hundreds of women were put to death for picking herbal medicine, which they learned from the native women. They were accused of sorcery at the point of a finger.

In section 103 Handsome Lake describes the punishment for those practising witchcraft, who were mostly women or those who do not believe in the Gai'wiiosta. Such women would suffer two deaths. When her body was reduced to dust, the punisher would gather her up again, turn her back into a living body and punish her again until finally he became weary. Then he would blow her ashes to destruction.

Confession<sup>97</sup>[97] was new to Onkwehonwe/Indians. This has always been part of the Christian religion for the priest to find out what is going in the community and advise members on what to do. Handsome Lake banned discussion. They could only receive the Creator's messages through his agents and himself, so anything else they heard had to be disregarded. Instead of being called "priests", they were renamed "faithkeepers".

He created the new role of the faithkeeper which does not exist in the Rotino'shonni:onwe Constitution. The Kaianereh'ko:wa/Great Law provides that every person has a responsibility to live by and protect the Kaianereh'ko:wa. The individual is the centre core with a relationship with all the other relatives. The Kaianereh'ko:wa provides for an open discussion so all members of the community assist in resolving matters.<sup>98</sup>[98]

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<sup>95</sup>[95] Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, the Seneca Prophet*. New York. New York State Museum, Bulletin 163. 1912, Section 2. 28

<sup>96</sup>[96] Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. Kahnawake. Interview. May-August 1 990. "All the chiefs, including Handsome Lake, had a hand in selling Seneca land. All signed with their 'X' mark. Not one of them could read or write."

<sup>97</sup>[97] Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet*. New York. New York State Museum Bulletin. No. 163. 1912. 29

<sup>98</sup>[98] Onondaga Indian Nation v. The State of New York, et al. United States District Court. Northern District of New York. May 27, 1997. 5

Handsome Lake said that it did not matter how much destruction they had wrought as they could repent and the Creator would forgive them. Going to someone else to be forgiven was completely new for the Rotino'shonni:onwe. The Old Way allowed an individual to take full charge of ourselves, forgive ourselves and had only ourselves to answer to. Under the Kaianere'ko:wa a wrong committed was discussed in the Longhouse. The person had to explain everything, including the lessons we and the people learned from these wrongful actions. Lying was distorting reality and totally unacceptable. Then we would express sincere sorrow and the matter would be put aside.

Handsome Lake encouraged women<sup>99[99]</sup> to have children. They had little say in when and how many. The Old Way gave women total rights over ourselves, our bodies, our children and our partners.<sup>100[100]</sup>

Handsome Lake changed the kinship and extended family system to a nuclear family structure, which weakened the family connections. He decreed that the children's lineage descended through the men rather than through the women and her clan.<sup>101[101]</sup> Women were to obey the man. This led to spousal abuse. Those who resisted were branded as witches and either executed or tortured with hot branding irons.

Handsome Lake described heaven and hell as being at the fork of the road where the spirits of the dead were divided. The narrow road led to the pleasant lands of the Creator and the wide and rough road led to the great lodge of the punisher.

In Section 104 he condemns attractive women who have "secret" power over men. These women who did not repent [over being good-looking] were punished. However, there was none for the men who were attracted to them as they were considered to be "victims" of the women.<sup>102[102]</sup>

The extended family was banned. He said that the wife's mother could not interfere in the family even though she was part of the extended family. If there were problems between a man and his wife, she could not go to her mother for aid. If he was an abuser, he could not be reprimanded by the women of the community. Handsome Lake cut off the mother's protective influence which stopped our women from gaining strength from the extended family.

This created some problems. The relationships were reduced to one on one. Previously, men could not mistreat the women because of the women's powerful positions in the community and the closeness of her family to the home situation. If a relationship did not work out, the Old Way allowed the woman to

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<sup>99[99]</sup> Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet*. New York. New York State Museum Bulletin 163. 1912. 30

<sup>100[100]</sup> Ibid., Parker. 1912. 30.

<sup>101[101]</sup> Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. Kahnawake. Interview. May-August 1990. "This is not the first time they destroyed the women. They did it in Europe. Today white society teaches that women are no good, or playthings, the butt of jokes and so on". Kanietahāwi said, "This idea that women are no good came from the other side of the ocean and they did everything to convince the Indians to do the same".

<sup>102[102]</sup> Elijah, Bruce. Oneida. Interview. September 1990. "Women should not be using their strong powers to manipulate men for their own personal advantage". Note: This is a totally newcomer concept which persists in Canada today.

leave a husband and he had no choice but to accept her decision. The Gai'wio'sten:sera did not allow the women to leave but to remain with their husbands no matter how badly abused she was. She was to wait patiently while he mended his ways.

A cheating husband was not to blame.<sup>103</sup>[103] Handsome Lake said that the woman was good in the eyes of her Creator and had a place reserved for her in the heaven-world. If the woman knew that her husband was having an affair in another community, but she remained peaceful and silent, he said that the Creator found her to be right and would have a place in the heaven-world for her. However, the man was on his way to the house of the Wicked One.<sup>104</sup>[104]

The result was that the women were treated disrespectfully because they took on this unusual role of subservience, contrary to their role in the past. According to the Old Way an erring husband would have had the clan after him to mend his ways and would have to right the wrongs during his lifetime. Thus a woman developed her strength and pride amid the security and closeness of her family, and the men respected their women as equals.

The position of children was elevated above that of their mother.<sup>105</sup>[105] If the child was unruly and without ambition, the mother was blamed and sometimes punished. In the past the whole community was responsible for rearing the children of the community. They were gifts to the people from Creation. During the breakdown of Rotino'shonni:onwe society the families disintegrated. The Gai'wio'sten:sera wanted to take control of child rearing which would make it easier to indoctrinate them with the Code. To do this authority had to be taken from the mother, the family and the community.<sup>106</sup>[106]

Fatherhood conformed to Christian principles.<sup>107</sup>[107] The Old Way celebrated the birth of a child which was happily taken into the clan and family as a gift from Creation. The Gai'wio'sten:sera made it a sin to have a child born out of 'wedlock', meaning not sanctioned by Christian ceremony or by the Gai'wio'sten:sera.<sup>108</sup>[108]

The elderly were re-positioned in Rotino'shonni:onwe society. Handsome Lake demanded respect for them.<sup>109</sup>[109] Under the Old Way older people were part of a large extended family, living in the same house and revered in the clan for their experience, wisdom and responsibility. When the social changes weakened the clan's responsibility for the older people, the older people were not taken care of nor revered. Therefore, the Gai'wio'sten:sera was revised to take care of this situation, particularly since Handsome Lake himself was an elderly ill person.

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<sup>103</sup>[103] Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet*. New York. New York State Museum, Bulletin 163. 1912. 33

<sup>104</sup>[104] *Ibid.*, Parker. 1912. 33

<sup>105</sup>[105] *Ibid.*, Parker. 1912. Sections 15, 34

<sup>106</sup>[106] *Ibid.*, Parker. 1912. 34

<sup>107</sup>[107] *Ibid.*, Parker. 1912. Sections 18, 35

<sup>108</sup>[108] Longhouse marriage ceremonies are still not recognized by outside jurisdictions.

<sup>109</sup>[109] Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet*. New York. New York State Museum, Bulletin 163. 1912. Section 19

Handsome Lake did not emphasize clan ties as a way of creating harmony. He used fear and punishment in the white man's hell if we strayed from the Gai'wio'sten:sera. The Old Way emphasized that one was born good, with a will to decide how to direct one's own life. This meant that we were responsible for our own actions and behaviour, and to put ourself, our family, our clan and our nation's interests as a basis for our actions. The Gai'wio'sten:sera emphasized following the Code as a means to find one's way and protect oneself.

Threats and fear of the European's hell was the way to keep us on the right road, the road made by the Creator for the Rotino'shonni:onwe. All those who refused to believe in Gai'wio'sten:sera would suffer hardships. When the earth was about to end the chiefs and head-men would disagree. Handsome Lake felt whatever method that was used was justified.

He persuaded some Rotino'shonni:onwe that those who were "true" and "faithful" would go to sleep and, even though they were healthy, the Creator would take their lives. Apparently because Handsome Lake himself did not die in this manner, some of his half believing followers repudiated his teachings.

There were threats of famine and plague to punish non-believers. He predicted that there will be a time when all the earth would not provide food, that a great plague would kill many people and no one would know its cause; that a woman would be seen performing her witch spells in the daylight (such as combing her hair, dancing and singing); and that there would be further punishment for non-believers in Gai'wio'sten:sera. These teachings had the effect of limiting freedom of thinking and creating intolerance for those who thought differently. The Kaienereh'ko:wa taught tolerance of other people's ways and thinking because it was not right to impose one's will on another.

Sharing became conditional. The Gai'wio'sten:sera specified sharing with those who were also productive and with others in exceptional circumstances. The Old Way provided that sharing was part of the culture, a principle that sustained the entire community. The fruits of the earth were to be shared by all.

A new category called "orphans" was created,<sup>110</sup>[110] to help the "unfortunate girl" who had neither parents nor settled home, to repair her clothing and assist her in cleansing herself and combing her hair. According to the Old Way, this girl belonged to a clan with equal rights and privileges with all other members of the clan. In other words, there were no orphans among the Rotino'shonni:onwe. Gai'wio'sten:sera set up a class system.

Boasting was condemned.<sup>111</sup>[111] This was never a problem until the non-Indians influenced the Rotino'shonni:onwe and tried to raise one above another, which apparently lead to boasting. Humility was an attribute he promoted.<sup>112</sup>[112] Pride became a sin.<sup>113</sup>[113] The Rotino'shonni:onwe, who

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<sup>110</sup>[110] Ibid., Parker. 191 2. Sections 22, 36

<sup>111</sup>[111] Ibid., Parker. 1912. 38

<sup>112</sup>[112] In Kaienerekowa deliberations, the term "we" rather than "I" is used to emphasize equality.

<sup>113</sup>[113] Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet* New York. New York State Museum, Bulletin 163. 1912. Section 25

had much to be proud of, were to be ashamed so as to subject our will to the Gai'wio'sten:sera.114[114] Handsome Lake encouraged the Rotino'shonni:onwe to work on a "tract of cultivated ground and harvest food for his family". This had the effect of limiting the Indigenous land base at a time when white settlement was encroaching on Indigenous territory.

Small single-family houses became preferred over the traditional longhouses which housed the extended family. This change was essential to developing the nuclear family consisting of the mother, father and children and adaptation to the new world surrounding the Rotino'shonni:onwe. Grandparents were not to be in the same house, which was a break with the tradition of the kinship and clan ties through which the culture was passed down from one generation to the next. In essence, it is more difficult to control a whole community, but it is possible by breaking the larger units down into smaller units.115[115] Divide and conquer.

Domestic animals replaced the traditional hunting and fishing life of the Rotino'shonni:onwe over vast areas of land. Handsome Lake wanted to restrict the use of land to smaller parcels.

Using the English language was preferred over native languages. He wanted the Rotino'shonni:onwe to study and learn English so that we may learn to understand the white man's ways. This also made it easier for missionaries to come into the Rotino'shonni communities and set up schools to teach basic educational skills. Rotino'shonni:onwe languages have been almost lost in most of our communities, except for some of the Kanion'ke:haka communities where the language is still spoken.

The relation to the environment was altered.116[116] Handsome Lake told the Seneca that they must not practice their rituals or dances honouring those totem animals from whom they desired favour or power. This was wrong because they did not know what injury it might work upon other people. He felt it was necessary to lessen the strong alliance that existed between the Rotino'shonni:onwe and environment perhaps because he realized that great changes were taking place to which we had to adapt. This included hunting animals for food. He told the Seneca to have a final ceremony so that they would no longer have this relationship with the animals and so that they would adapt to the white man's encroachment and subjection of the environment.117[117]

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114[114] Mohawk Nation News Service. Editorial. *The Nature of Spirituality*. Dec. 20, 1994  
"Spirituality is the will to live free. When the Aboriginal spirit is oppressed and the will is bent under another's will, then control over our lives is lost. The Aboriginal spirit is the most natural spirit because it comes from natural righteousness, as determined by the Kaienerekowa. This is opposite to the man-made righteousness which is meant to control the will of the person. It is control of the many by the few."

115[115] Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. Kahnawake. Interviews. May-August 1 990. "In 1779 Sullivan reported that the Seneca had thousands of acres under cultivation, corn, potatoes, etc. to feed a large Seneca population. A Longhouse required 4 fires to keep 200 people warm. Family unit houses needed 50 fires to keep 200 people warm. Not having saws or axes to cut that much wood one could see why a Longhouse is more practical".

116[116] Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet*. New York. New York State Museum, Bulletin 163. 1912. Section 29

117[117] Ibid., Parker. 1912. 40

118[118] Those belonging to totem animal societies would have to throw tobacco and disband. In the Old Way most of the ceremonies and rituals that the Rotino'shonni:onwe practiced were for giving thanks to the power that created everything that sustains the Onkwehonne (the Original People Forever). These new ceremonies took away any supports we had which enhanced our identity, which was associated with the ceremonies of thanksgiving for the fruits, vegetation, animals and all the other gifts of creation. To achieve the European's desire for the land and control over the environment Indigenous peoples' strong ties had to be gradually lessened, otherwise there would have been too much opposition from us.

He warned that at some future day the wild animals would become extinct.119[119] When that day comes the people would raise cattle and swine for feast at the thanksgiving. It appears that the newcomers saw the eventual destruction of the animals and therefore were preparing the Indigenous people to accept this state of affairs as a reality.120[120]

Gai'wio'sten;sera banned traditional clothes.121[121] Handsome Lake told us it was good enough if we washed our faces and combed our hair. Wearing traditional clothes tended to remind us of our old ways.

Karonhiaktajeh said that in 1964 he and two other Mohawk followers of the Kaianereh'ko:wa/Great Law, Frank Natawe and Eddie Delaronde, attended a Gai'wio'sten:sera convention which was held in Kahnawake. First, he said, they *"could not make heads nor tails of what was being talked about. They seemed to be spouting poetry, and not one of the Indians was wearing traditional clothes. They all had suits on in the Longhouse, except for Abe Hill from Oswego (Six Nations in Ontario) who was 85 years old, who had on Indian pants and a jacket, which is directly contrary to what they teach. When they went to Deseronto (near Belleville, Ontario) for another meeting, Hill came down from Oswego again, dressed in his Indian clothes. He recommended at that time that the Handsome Lake Code be set aside"*.

Section 38 describes the "underworld". Handsome Lake said that if all the world would repent the earth would become new again. Because of sin the under-world was crumbling with decay. His phrase, "the world is full of sin" referred to the coming of the end of the world, where the few who would be saved and live forever were those who acknowledged the Christian 'Armageddon'. The Old Way had no under-world concept, but rather that the world was good. Handsome Lake taught that the world would end in the year 2100, far enough away for anyone to question him about it.

"Sin" and the "soul" being repented are Christian concepts. The Old Way teaches that the Indigenous must attain harmony of body, mind and spirit in this life, the only life there is until Mother Earth takes us back. Dekanawida said people were born with goodness and wisdom which was to be used to do good. Bruce Eijah said that each person had a will to use these gifts.

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118[118] Ibid., Parker, 1912. 40

119[119] Ibid., Parker, 1912. Sections 34, 42

120[120] Ibid., Parker, 1912. 42

121[121] Ibid., Parker, 1912. 41

Heaven and Hell were new ideas that came after his visions. The heaven he described was called the New World because it had not been previously known. The generations before had not gone there, not knowing the will of the Creator as revealed by Handsome Lake. For those who adhere to the Old Way, these places still do not exist. Bruce Eijah says that these places exist for the white man. Handsome Lake said that their forefathers were not aware of these lands of the Creator nor the "house of the tormentor, Gnos'ge". Their forefathers had done the will of the Creator and others had not. They had done both good and bad and none was either good or bad. They were therefore in a place separate and unknown to them, he thought, enjoying themselves!

The hellfire is similar to the one described in the Christian Bible. When the end came the earth would be destroyed by fire and no one would escape as all the earth would be enveloped in flames and all those who refused to believe in Gai'wii'o'sten:sera would be burned. Would they ignite because they don't believe?

Satan<sup>122</sup>[122] is described as having horns shooting out from his forehead, with a cloven foot and a tail. The prophet evidently borrowed his devil from European sources.

Only the poor and meek who had been humble and virtuous could travel skyward. It was better to be poor on earth and rich in the sky-world than to be rich on earth and without a heaven afterward. The meek would inherit the earth and be rewarded in the afterlife.

Handsome Lake banned arguing and complaining<sup>123</sup>[123] at a time when they had many things to complain about, which would be normal and healthy under the dire circumstances then.

The "Milky Way" heaven is where all the souls are destined. The stars were the footprints of the dead.<sup>124</sup>[124] "Suddenly as they looked, a road slowly descended from the south sky and came to where they were standing. Now, thereon he saw the four tracks of the human race going in one direction. The footprints were all of different sizes from small to great. Now moreover a more brilliant light than the light of earth appeared."<sup>125</sup>[125] Looking upward would keep us from seeing our terrible situation of the time and assist us in making it to the other world. However, if we had gluffed ourselves with the things of the earth we would not be able to walk upon the heaven road.

The people of the earth were encouraged to submit our will or mind to others. We were divided into three groups, the first group being those who have not repented; the second was inclined half way; and the third were those who have repented. They, he said, were protected by the true belief in Gai'wii'o'sten:sera.

Those with the evil spirit were to be locked up forever in a house. Eternal confinement within a house was considered a horrible fate by the freedom-loving and roaming Rotino'shonni:onwe.

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<sup>122</sup>[122] Ibid., Parker. 1912. Section 101

<sup>123</sup>[123] Ibid., Parker. 1912. Section 106

<sup>124</sup>[124] Ibid., Parker. 1912. Section 83

<sup>125</sup>[125] Ibid., Parker. 1912. Section 85

The Old Way found a good and not so good spirit in each person, which we controlled. We can let whichever we decide determine our behaviour.

Handsome Lake also gave wampum for sinning. "I will give a string of wampum, ot'go'a", which he said means "magic" but really means "rotten", to the chiefs for a proof of my repentance, for though I have been thinking, yet I cannot discover that I am two-minded".

It was difficult for the Rotino'shonni:onwe to accept such beliefs, which contradicted our understanding of life based on facing reality and dealing with it. So it helps to nullify much of our previous philosophy, either willingly or with some help, by submitting ourselves to various threats, sanctions and symbolic reminders such as the sinning wampum.

Regarding dancing, Handsome Lake later found that it was not wrong to continue some of the ceremonial dances that he once forbade.<sup>126[126]</sup> Many people were becoming ill because they were not observing the traditional ceremonial dances upon which we had always relied for comfort and strength.<sup>127[127]</sup> Bruce Eijah said that only four of the main thanksgiving ceremonies were to be practiced in the Longhouse and the others had to be practiced in the homes.

Handsome Lake banned singing by explaining that if we sang three times, the third time we would step into the other world, and that this would be the earnest wish of all who had heard our singing.<sup>128[128]</sup> In another section he banned music, dancing and singing because the fiddle and fiddle dances were evil and produced as much wickedness as drunkenness.<sup>129[129]</sup> On the other hand, Bruce Eijah said Handsome Lake wanted the Indigenous people to continue to use the drum as it was handed down to us by our ancestors.

Handsome Lake told our people there would be two divisions of mind among the chiefs, head-men and the people, and that nevermore would Rotino'shonni:onwe be united. He was referring to the division of minds between the Old Way and the Christian influenced Gai'wio'sten:sera.<sup>130[130]</sup> He realized he was creating a division among the people which exists to this day.<sup>131[131]</sup>

As for the human soul, the following ideas were held by Handsome Lake:

- \* Every soul has a path to its destiny after death.
- \* Every soul retains its personal identity whatever form it may inhabit.
- \* The soul differs from life.
- \* When life leaves the body the soul generally does, though not always immediately but many linger for ten days.

Handsome Lake deemed that the soul may pass from a living body and enter any object or go to any place to acquire wisdom. Upon its return the message is revealed in a dream or vision. Not attending to them could lead to sicknesses. Should a person refuse to heed these warning visions the soul is

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<sup>126[126]</sup> Ibid., Parker. 1912. 50

<sup>127[127]</sup> Ibid., Parker. 1912. 50

<sup>128[128]</sup> Ibid., Parker. 1912. Section 79

<sup>129[129]</sup> Ibid., Parker. 1912. Section 108

<sup>130[130]</sup> Ibid., Parker. 1912. Section 63, 54

<sup>131[131]</sup> Ibid., Parker. 1912. 54

liable to desert him, leaving the person simply a creature without power to resist or understand the influence of the various spirits of good or bad. Dreams, as a psychological outlet for inner fears, feelings and perceptions, had to be symbolically lived out upon awakening. Dreams were taken seriously, and Handsome Lake used this method to spread his ideas by telling his people that the Gai'wii'o'sten:sera had been revealed to him through a vision. Today, the Mohawk term for doctor is atetsents "interpreter of dreams", which was the original medicine man.

The restrictions on gambling were intended to move the Rotino'shonni:onwe toward a clean pure way of life. The Quakers wanted this as a way of adapting us to the white man's world and as the basis upon which the United States was founded.<sup>132</sup>[132] The Rotino'shonni:onwe had to accept this even though gambling was part of many of the ceremonies of the Old Way. This had the effect of not allowing us to take chances of any kind, which we felt was a natural course of life. It was thus easier to make us follow the Code. If not, the punishment was red hot iron cards.

Jesus Christ is part of Gai'wii'o'sten:sera. When he mentions 'Joi'ise', who is Jesus Christ, he states that in his vision he saw Jesus Christ who was on the earth "across the great waters who was slain by his own people". Jesus Christ came to North America and showed us his palms, which were scarred, as were his feet and his breast which were torn by iron nails.<sup>133</sup>[133]

Handsome Lake warned the Rotino'shonni:onwe that we became lost when we followed the ways of the white man. All the changes he was suggesting appear to be contradictory but appealed to those Rotino'shon:ni who were suspicious of the white man.

Regarding the Warriors, the weapons of war were to be buried and they were not to engage in warfare. In other words, Gai'wii'o'sten:sera followers were pacifists who were not to retaliate if attacked, similar to the Quakers. This is contrary to the Kaianereh'ko:wa/Great Law whereby warriors represented the fighting spirit of the people who had many duties to protect the people and our possessions.

### WHAT THE HANDSOME LAKE CODE REPRESENTS IN TERMS OF IDEOLOGY

**H**andsome Lake's teachings are greatly influenced by white Christian teachings of the Quakers, using Indigenous symbolism to make these acceptable to the Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois. He saw George Washington, the first President of the United States,<sup>134</sup>[134] as the only white man so near the new world of the Creator.<sup>135</sup>[135] He said that there was once a time when the

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<sup>132</sup>[132] Ibid., Parker. 1912. Section 109

<sup>133</sup>[133] Ibid., Parker. 1912. Section 94

<sup>134</sup>[134] The Iroquois call the President "*Ranatakariias*", which means "He eats up the town".

<sup>135</sup>[135] Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet*. New York. New York State Museum, Bulletin 163. 1912. Section 92

Thirteen Fires of the colonies of the United States and the King were in trouble. The Thirteen Fires were victorious and this man won the victory from the King. The King apparently acknowledged that he had been overpowered, so he released everything that was in his control, even those Rotino'shonni:onwe who were his helpers. George Washington gave Handsome Lake responsibility over what shall be done with the Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois, that he would let them go back to their homeland for they were an Independent people. This was the doing of the Great Creator. So the U.S. President delegated authority over the Rotino'shonni:onwe to Handsome Lake, the forerunner of the tribal and band council systems.

Not mentioned is that when Handsome Lake was having visions while suffering from health problems as a result of excessive alcohol abuse. Cornplanter urged Handsome Lake to accept the invitation of his friends and relatives to go to Onondaga because of the problems he was having with his own people. He died there August 10, 1815.

Handsome Lake had influence because he was a life chief of the Confederacy. His clan, relatives and other family members supported and defended him, his reputation, his intentions and the honour of the family.

Why did the Iroquois listen to Handsome Lake?

Kanietahawi said, *"It was because the Indians thought all people were good like them and did not believe there were bad people. Also, in the Old Way, each person has a right to talk and everyone has to listen without interfering until the person is finished. Once the Iroquois listened, then the newcomers were domineering and talkative so they thought they could do anything they wanted to the Indians"*.

Was there a conspiracy to destroy the Rotino'shonni:onwe traditional way, the  
Kaiaenereh'ko:wa?

Both Kanietahawi and Karonhiaktajeh thought there was a conspiracy.

Karonhiaktajeh said, *"There is a difference between knowing what you're doing and just believing in something and then following it. In general, ordinary newcomers may not have been clever enough to form this conspiracy, but their leaders could. There are influential people who can break a people down by liquor, wars, sicknesses and then by hypnotizing the people into doing what is not real. You can question the words of a great speaker but you have to know the facts yourself in order to save yourself from this great speaker. He may even fool himself by believing in something but not knowing it was the wrong thing"*.

Kanietahawi added, *"The big words they use are not understood by many Indians. But in the Indian language we understand everything and the Indian cannot lie as easily, although with practice he can learn. With Handsome Lake an Indian can lie because this religion is based on unrealities and faith. In the Old Way you have to tell the truth even if it goes against you"*. 136[136]

Karonhiaktajeh explained, *"Rhetoric is learned in college where people learn to talk and to get influential. Most people are influenced by clever talk"*. To

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136[136] Eijjah, Bruce. Oneida. Interview. September 1 990. *"The white man took Handsome Lake's visions and Teachings and used it to their own advantage"*.

him the Handsome Lake Code does not allow the people to think but to listen and accept on faith. If they are asked about the Handsome Lake history and its Christian basis, they avoid discussing it.

Sarah Montour, of Kahnawake, who has her own Handsome Lake Longhouse with a few followers, says that chiefs can only be condoled in the Longhouse if they follow Kaianereh'ko:wa and Handsome Lake at the same time.

When asked how this was possible when such things as clans were wiped out by Handsome Lake, she was unable to explain. She criticized the books that have been written by the white people about the Rotino'shonni:onwe, referring to the writing of Seth Newhouse.

Kahnietahawi explained that in Kahnawake and Akwesasne the Handsome Lake people work closely with the Indian band and tribal councils. The Five Nations Constitution forbids such a relationship because Handsome Lake is meant to cancel out the Kaianere'ko:wa.

In the band council election in July 1990 in Kahnawake, all candidates were required to prove all their Mohawk ancestry for five generations back and an ability to speak some Mohawk. This is influenced by the Longhouse.

On the other hand, Karonhiaktajeh said that in the Kahnawake Longhouse there seems to be a lot of Handsome Lake influence and we are having difficulty getting rid of it. "We're always trying to stop them from putting a steeple on our longhouse", he said. This transition back to the Kaianereh'ko:wa requires overcoming a barrier or crutch that has been set up through conditioning. Many are afraid to let go and take on full responsibility for themselves and their actions.

The Kaianereh'ko:wa as told by Dekanawida is not a religion but a philosophy with the goal of establishing the peace and power of the Five Confederate Nations and our friends and allies. In "Rebuilding the Iroquois Confederacy" Karionhiaktajeh warned that by following the code of conduct that ignored the need to resist the take-over of the land and society by the colonists, the Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois nations could become extinct. At that time he urged the Rotino'shonni:onwe to take steps to reclaim any land taken from us. Many of our communities are doing just that. His strategies called for the rejection of the peace oriented teachings of the Chiefs of the "Grand Council of the Six Nations of the Iroquois". He called them traitors because they had accepted a code of acquiescence that represented Christian, not Indigenous, ways. Karonhiaktajeh said that Gai'wiiosten:sera was a "con job" to make the Rotino'shonni:onwe peaceful and that Handsome Lake was a Quaker collaborator with the newcomer governments. The Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois being warriors; their manhood had to be taken away and their weapons had to be buried in order to subdue them so they could not defend themselves or put up any resistance. Then our possessions could be taken from us.

Karonhiaktajeh designed the Warrior "Unity" flag and helped the men go to the Council of Chiefs to reinstate the Warrior Society. He wrote newsletters for years, which he personally mailed throughout North America because he felt the need to present the story of Dekanawida and counter the mainstream promotion of Handsome Lake.

Today many of chiefs of the Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois nations follow the Handsome Lake Code. Karonhiaktajeh maintained these chiefs "have to be deposed". But they can be reinstated by making a pledge to respect the Kaienerekowa, the constitution of the Confederacy. Execution of traitors is part of the Kaianereh'ko:wa/Great Law, but, "I don't know of any cases where this has happened". In recent times Karonhiaktajeh's ideas are said to have strongly influenced the warriors at Kahnawake and other Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois communities in Canada and the United States.<sup>137</sup>[137]

Instilling fear as a way to control people is one of the prime strategies of the newcomers. Before people can be made fearful, their self-respect, judgement, identity, self-worth and anything they respect as part of their basic philosophy, such as the roles of the parents, their political order and faith in their economy must be eroded. Once apprehension has set in, it is easier to damage their will and free spirit. After the spirit is damaged, replacing it with fear is the next step. When the people of the Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois Confederacy were damaged internally, the Handsome Lake Code was brought in as a substitute to control us. Its repercussions were felt by all Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois up until several generations ago.<sup>138</sup>[138] Today the Kanion'ke:haka/Mohawk of Kahnawake have one to two generations of followers who are familiar with the teachings of the Longhouse, and the Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois Confederacy, which does not allow development of needless fear in the people. They no longer tolerate tactics of intimidation, degradation and threats.

On the other hand, the Handsome Lake Code controls the people. The Iroquois became fearful of punishment, intimidation, discrimination, not measuring up to others and deprivation. Handsome Lake recognized that poor people had less power therefore sought to keep the Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois Confederacy a poor one.

The Iroquois Confederacy recognized that courage was an element that was passed on from the mother to her offspring and likewise from the woman to the men in her family. Instilling courage in her people was her duty which kept the nation strong. With reducing her role within the Iroquois Confederacy the Handsome Lake instigators clearly took control of the Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois and our communities and land over a span of a few generations.

Today we see a resurgence among the Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois to return to the philosophy of the Kaienerekowa. If these people can indeed lose all elements of fear as a people, then scare tactics and strategies of intimidation can no longer work. It will therefore be necessary for all governing bodies in dealing with the Rotino'shon:ni/Iroquois people to use reason.

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<sup>137</sup>[137] "Writer's Work Thought to be Influence on Warriors", Gazette, July 23, 1990.

<sup>138</sup>[138] Hall. Louis Karonhiaktajeh. Kahnawake. Interviews. May-August 1990. He left the Catholic Church in the 1950's after the Kahnawake waterfront was expropriated. The Long House came out into the open in the 1960's when a group of young people started to openly challenge the Band Council.

In drawing up the Code the Quakers may have thought they were helping the Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois by 'dissolving' our culture and traditional practices. To some extent the Quakers were successful with some. They also were able to get the Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois to part with large land tracts. The Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois, however, have a resilient spirit. We managed to survive, although with less land under our use.

The events surrounding the 1990 Mohawk crises at Kaneh'sa:take territory represents the response to the frustration imposed upon the Kanion'ke:haka/Mohawk people. Where some adhere to the teachings of the Old Ways, there are others who lack the guidance to recapture this knowledge. As well, there is opposition to learning the Old Ways perpetuated by the vociferous followers of the Handsome Lake Code.

### **Destroying the Role of the Women**

*T*he Handsome Lake Code destroying the traditional role of the women was one of the most effective strategies used to upset Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois society. Contrary to Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois tradition, women were made to "obey their men". This change uprooted the females' role as the foundation of Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois society from whom the nation derived its strength.

The early Europeans felt uneasy in dealing with women, particularly in relation to land holdings. Women in Europe had always been subservient to men. They saw the female power bonds as a major obstacle. They set out to destroy the matrilineal system and to set in place a land holding regime which conformed to the European world view.

Although Kanion'ke:haka/Mohawk women did not negotiate for our nation, we had great influence over their outcome. The Europeans broke the women's power through such religions as the Handsome Lake Code and legislation such as the Indian Act 139[139] and federal Indian law which socially and legally placed Indian women in a subservient position to our men. Thus for a time Europeans managed to reduce the importance of the women in Kanion'ke:haka/Mohawk society and unseated the major underpinnings of our sovereignty.

Why did Kanion'ke:haka/Mohawk power break down? Our men were weakened by the social and political breakdown, alcoholism, wars, poor physical and mental health, religious teachings of pacifism, movement restrictions, theft of lands and economic rights. When the newcomers realized that Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois chiefs acted upon the recommendations of women, they made concerted efforts to break up these power bonds. Thus the weakened community power base took its toll on all the people.

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139[139] Indian Act, RCS 1970, c. 1-6

## ANALYSIS

The major difference between the Kaianereh'ko:wa/Great Law and Handsome Lake Code/Gariwio'sten:sera is the opening thanksgiving address which sets the relationship between the environment and the mind to deal with all issues. The Kaianereh'ko:wa opening thanksgiving refers to all elements of nature as a family, equal and dependant on one another. The Handsome Lake Code opening is hierarchical reflecting the European worldview of dominance over nature and subservience to God.

According to Kanietahawi, 'Gai'wio'sten:sera" means "man-made, a doctrine made good", a doctrine made by man, for people to follow, or things that were made good even though they might not have been good or seen as being good. On the other hand, she said the Kaienereh'ko:wa is natural which is not man-made but made by nature. Kakwirakeron stated, "*We devised a law and a way of life that was natural and addressed the true nature of human beings*".<sup>140[140]</sup> By nature Kanietahawi means that "people live together to form a pattern of relationships in which no one is higher than another. Everyone takes responsibility for each other regardless of their capabilities and they do not make judgements on other people as being better or worse. This group does not control nature but tries to live within the ecology as equals without exploiting it."

The Christian and Indian Act traditions are an integral part of the colonial strategy to undermine the Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois which are briefly referred to in this analysis. The conflict between the Indian Act, the Gaiwio'stensera/Handsome Lake Code and the Kaienereh'ko:wa/Dekanawida tradition is happening now. For example, Chief George Martin of Kaneh'sa:take went to the white authorities to report his own brothers and sisters for manning the blockages in their territory in the 1990 Mohawk Crisis. This indicates great confusion. This illustrates the competition for legitimacy between the real traditional belief system of the Kaienereh'ko:wa, the Gai'wio'sten:sera/Handsome Lake tradition and the Indian Act system. When the police raided Akwesasne in 1890 to institute the Indian Act system, the traditional forces were made invalid. At that time it was the Handsome Lake based tradition, not the Kaianereh'ko:wa/Great Law. For the federal government the only legitimate system is the Crown who sent in the police to enforce their will on the Kanion'ke:haka/Mohawk. One man was fatally shot and seven others served many years in jail for resisting. At that time it did not matter whether the dissidents were followers of Dekanawida or Handsome Lake, both were treated the same way.<sup>141[141]</sup>

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<sup>140[140]</sup> People of the State of New York against Andrew Gibson Jones, et al. State of New York. Town of Onondaga Justice Court. County of Onondaga. July 18, 1997. 32

<sup>141[141]</sup> Confederated Native Court, 1997. 37. "*Thus in 1867 began the federal legislation aiding and abetting the illegal provincial land legislation that the federal government in 1875 had acknowledged itself constitutionally bound to disallow. The United States began applying the Major Crimes Act, and Canada the Criminal Code, against Indians in the yet unpurchased Indian territories. To further this process of elevating federal policy over natural law, international law and constitutional law, the federal governments of both Th. United States and Canada eventually began reorganizing, recognizing, funding and promoting native governments that would compete with and supplant the natives' traditional governments*". 38. "*The government of Canada not only*

*The On-Going Struggle Between the Great Law and the Handsome Lake code*

For this analysis, the two basic traditional understandings are seen as competing for legitimacy to represent the traditional view on these Kanion'ke:haka/Mohawk territories.

For the followers of Dekanawida, primary legitimacy is from within one's self through the culture and traditions. Dekanawida projected into the future a system of logic, reason and values. With Handsome Lake legitimacy comes from outsiders, and take on values introduced by a European Christian system, that of the Quakers.

Dekanawida followers are inner directed people who are being directed by the inner core of their knowledge system and traditions. Handsome Lake followers are other directed people who are driven by the mode imposed by outsiders, so that they are directed by others, trying to accept the modes of the other society. They are trying to find their way in this new relationship so, in the meantime, they will live a good clean life and make it with the white people who have occupied our land. It is an accommodation strategy where they give up the traditional values in order to accommodate this new fact.

On the other hand, the inner directed say, "We were never conquered, never gave up our identity and will fight to preserve our traditional cultural values which we think are just as meaningful, if not more, than the foreign ones. We don't apologise to anyone. We have the strength, a view and meaning to our lives we need to continue our lives. We will not tolerate any incursion into this".

As well-meaning as Handsome Lake was to stop the degradation that was occurring, it was a false consciousness, false in that while he believed he was doing the right thing and that it would save the Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois, he was operating on wrong assumptions about our future being made by outsiders.<sup>142</sup>[142] Real consciousness was the Dekanawida tradition because it was based on our culture and the way we relate to the world. Handsome Lake tried to replace this with a compromise using the Quaker approach. The band council chiefs developed another kind of consciousness which the traditionalist say is also false. It is a compromise because its legitimacy comes from outside, the Canadian and U.S. colonial governments. In terms of dominant values, bringing in outside policing, inviting the outsiders in, they are willing to integrate their tradition with that of the Handsome Lake Code. They may really believe what they are doing is right. The difference between a lie and false consciousness is that they really believe in what they are doing but what they believe in is false, and they are not aware of its falsehoods. They are conscious of their history and need to survive as a people, but their consciousness is of a history which is not their own and a mode of survival which they do not control.

Kanietahawi takes a practical approach, "They took away our former economy and put us on small pieces of land. They are handling us 'our' money,

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*moved to outlaw the natives' traditional governments by fostering competing native governments with more controlled powers, but it employed the new native governments in the harassment of the old native governments. It made continuing in the old ways a crime, and it made the raising of the law precluding this a crime. In this way the criminal law few became a criminal weapon. The same process, with different labels and sequences... "*

<sup>142</sup>[142] When the author was attending the mission school in Kahnawake, she was taught that the Indians were a vanishing race.

that is the only way we can live today. We have very little, almost nothing! We are not doing anything wrong. The Handsome Lake followers don't think there is anything wrong in believing in the same God as the white man and forgetting about our own ways. We don't believe in a God, but in a 'Creation' that we're a part of".143[143]

Handsome Lake is false because he made an error in his interpretation of beliefs of which, admittedly, there are many interpretations. Handsome Lake brought in the Gaiwio'sten:sera for what he thought was a genuine reason. He is following a false doctrine which he thought was the solution, but, in fact, was the destruction of the \*Iroquois and our values. Among other concepts, it denied the fundamental principles of equality of women. They genuinely believe in this false doctrine. The people who resisted Handsome Lake were people who had the intuition and feeling to resist. Handsome Lake attempted to help people who were undergoing a destructive psychological experience but it went against the Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois as a distinct people. In effect, he said, "You must compromise, give up many of your beliefs, customs, values and way of life" in order to accommodate this new reality. Some refused to do this because we felt that our reality was just as valid as the one that was oppressing us and we refused to give it up. Today it is an assertion of a way of life that emerged on Turtle Island before the European invasion, against a compromised solution which tries to erode the former traditions in order to take over the Longhouse. It is the two sides manoeuvring both paradigms. Should we accommodate and move on? The Handsome Lake Code was a revitalization movement which told people that, "If you believe and pray to the hereafter, you will be saved". After wars and disintegration of the people the Code served to revive for a time the Indigenous spirit and the idea that the newcomer's way was to be accommodated by the Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois. Kanietahawi said, "Handsome Lake is a rule. But right and wrong are in your head. You don't need a rule to tell you something is right or wrong." She strongly resists going to the 'other side' and surrendering her true free way.

How could the Kaianereh'ko:wa/Great Law survive when we had a well-meaning insidious imposition by one of our own, Handsome Lake? Handsome Lake tradition appeals to the decent things in the Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois and what we think is a way to not be absorbed into the larger society. Handsome Lake's way was to submit to the Code and to resist education in order to stay out of the way of the colonists. The Kaianereh'ko:wa/Great Law Way was to be free in body, mind and energy of all unwanted impositions and to make up our own mind based on all the facts. Deep down the Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois could not give up our identity. Although some appreciated the cleanup values of Handsome Lake, we saw it as a religion and also as not pushing the main message of the Kaianereh'ko:wa/Great Law which is that our society has a political and social structure, with social values and philosophy which have to survive without compromise.

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143[143] Dione, Frances Kanietahawi. Acting Bear Clan Mother. Kahnawake. Interview. May-August 1990

Said Marina Delaronde, "They like Handsome Lake because they are told what to do. They only want to have festivals, eating, dancing and singing. That's because people are getting lazy. They don't want to be responsible for their political and social duties, which are part of the Great Law! They don't want to think, but to be told what to do."<sup>144</sup> There are also individuals who distort both the Kaienereh'ko:wa and Gai'wii'o'sten:sera because they do not understand the basic concepts of both. They use the structure of the Kaienereh'ko:wa and put the Gai'wii'o'sten:sera religion on top of it. Or they take the symbols such as the festivals, dances and songs and create a religion out of it. They also take the criteria of peace and harmony and turn it into a movement for "pacifism". All four aspects of the Kaienereh'ko:wa, the process and principles, the structure, the criteria and the symbols, have to work together in order to achieve the true democracy and human fulfillment envisioned by Dekanawida.

These two traditions remain locked in conflict and complicate the issues. It is traditionalists versus accommodationists - Handsome Lake people, who will compromise in order to survive, and Kaienereh'ko:wa people, who won't compromise the Kaienereh'ko:wa/Great Law. Others who cannot join either group reinforce and further complicate the issue among the Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois. They seem to be waiting to see which side wins.

The problem with Handsome Lake was that he was dealing with the symptom of the problem and not the cause. This false consciousness was rejected by those of the Dekanawida tradition, who saw the problem, which was the invasion and destruction of the Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois people by a foreign power. The basic difficulty lies with trying to bridge the gap. The Dekanawida group said you cannot bridge this terrible invasion of Rotino'shonni:onwe/Iroquois life and culture. The uncompromising position resulted in diametrically opposed strategies, such as the Warriors fighting until they win and the Handsome Lake compromise approach of withdrawal and pacifism.

These are the competing paradigms or ideologies, one of which is leading to integration and the other to coexistence as a separate nation. The Dekanawida tradition wishes to exist as a separate nation while the other says, "We have to have some kind of compromise relationship". It is a struggle between integration, or how can we cooperate with the invaders and survive, versus a coexistence model which says, "There is no way we can cooperate. We are a distinct nation with our own law, government, people and land. We have to be recognized for that."

#### FOOTNOTES

1[1] "L..." is a pseudonym

1[2] Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. *Warriors Hand Book*. 1985. 25. "The Handsome Lake Code was added to the Iroquois system in the early 1800's. It consists of dogmas and doctrines such as hell, devils, angels, purgatory, limbo, sins, temporary repentance, etc. which were adopted from Christianity with a bit of Judaism thrown in. The Caughnawaga Mohawks who were reinstated

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144[144] Delaronde, Marina. Bear Clan Mother. Kahnawake. Interviews. October 1995

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*in the Six Nations Confederacy were once Catholics and had lost faith in such unprovable doctrines. When the reinstated Mohawks refused to follow the old dogmas and doctrines they had renounced, it became a matter of dispute and controversy in the Six Nations which was resolved at the Grand Council when it was decided that anyone who did not want to follow the Handsome Lake Code didn't have to".*

1[3]Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. "People do experience natural phenomena. It's an experience and might happen again. But we should not put interpretations and meaning to them".

1[4]McGill Institute for the Study of Canada. *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*. Jan. 31-Feb. 2, 1997. K. Horn. "Do you find that these healing circles are being used to suppress any negative criticisms by Indian people? This is what Christianity was used for, so that Indian people would not, complain about their bad situations and abuse. It is healthy for Indians to speak out about the wrongs and abuses that have been committed against them. Healing and born again meetings stop Indians from doing something about their situations. Rather than making Indian people go into themselves and avoid the reality of their bad life, they should be encouraged to face reality square in the face and to be strong".

1[5]Horn, Kahn-Tineta. Letter to L. July 7, 1996

1[6] Kahentinetha Horn's father was a Longhouse chief, and her two grandfathers were also strongly involved in the Longhouse movement, her paternal Grandfather Horn being a War Chief. There are also a long line of medicine people in her family, her Grandmother Horn being a herbalist. Many of the men in her family are part of or support the Warrior Society. She speaks the Mohawk language.

1[7] This community had long been in turmoil over the philosophical divisions between the Great Law and Handsome Lake as well as government band councils calling themselves "Hereditary Traditional Government". The long history of conflict here will not be the subject of this essay.

1[8] All factions came together to support the Kanesatake Mohawks, all longhouses whether Great Law or Handsome Lake, Christian and non-Christian, band council and traditional.

1[9] North American Indian Travelling College. *Traditional Teachings*. N.A.I.T.C. 1984. Its version of the Creation Story, Great Law of Peace and the Handsome Lake Code differs from that of Seth Newhouse, some parts being left out and changing the order of the Law and Code.

1[10] The Longhouse people are also referred to the *Haudenosaunee, Rotinonsianni, the Five Nations, League of Five Nations, Six Nations, the Iroquois and the Iroquois Six Nation Confederacy*.

1[11] United States Senate. *To Acknowledge the Contribution of the Iroquois Confederacy of Nations to the Development of the U. S. Constitution and to Reaffirm the Continuing Government-to-Government Relationship Between Indian Tribes and the United States Established in the Constitution*. Select Committee on Indian Affairs. S. One Hundredth Congress. Con. Res. 76. 1987

1[12] Recently a tax dispute in New York State brought the Confederacy women together to assert their power on the Chiefs who were making a deal with the New York State Governor. The Chiefs did everything to stop this meeting from happening, even blocking the buses from getting out of the hotel parking lot in Syracuse to stop them from going to the Onondaga Longhouse.

1[13] Willoya, William and Vinson Brown. *Warriors of the Rainbow. Strange and Prophetic Dreams of the Indian People*. Northwestern Printing: 1962. 42-48

1[14] Parker. Arthur C. *The Constitution of the Five Nations or the Iroquois Book of the Great Law*. New York: New York State Museum Bulletin No. 184. 1916.

1[15] Ibid., Parker. 1916. 12

1[16] Blanchard, David. *Seven Generations: A History of the Kenienkehaka*. Kahnawake Survival School. 1980. 399

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- 1[17] Dione, Frances Kanietahawi. Acting Bear Clan Mother. Interviews. May-August 1990. "The reason why Kahnawake is a Great Law stronghold is because they shook off the Catholic Church and did not want religion anymore. They wanted something tangible and real".
- 1[18] Ibid., Dione. "Some profess to be followers of the Great Law and yet incorporate the practices of the Handsome Lake Code, arguing that they are definitely not Handsome Lake followers. Some are totally against any kind of unexplainable substitution and stick to reality and what they know and see."
- 1[19] The Mayo long house was created when some members of the 207 Great Law longhouse walked out over a disagreement. One of the chiefs had called in the foreign police to take care of what he saw as a problem with the young people. This was a violation of the Great Law Wampum 58. They walked out and created another group of followers of the Great Law.
- 1[20] North American Indian Travelling College. *Traditional Teachings*. N.A.I.T.C. 1984. 25
- 1[21] Parker, Arthur C. *The Constitution of the Five Nation*. New York. New York State Museum Bulletin. No. 184. 1916, 13
- 1[22] Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. *Warriors Handbook and Rebuilding the Iroquois Confederacy*. Kahnawake. 1985. He also left a vast collection of paintings of Iroquois subjects to the Warrior Society.
- 1[23] Elijah, Bruce. Oneida. Interview. Sept. 1990. He could not see the difference between the Kaienerekowa and the Gai'wiio, saying, "There would be some people some day who would be totally against the Handsome Lake Code. We are in a time when western civilization has to have a person, like Jesus Christ or god.
- 1[24] Symbolism has always been important to the Iroquois people. Karonhiaktajeh Louis Hall, knowing this, designed many symbols which are now used by the Iroquois and others throughout the world as a sign of resistance.
- 1[25] Willoya, William and Vinson Brown. *Warrior of the Rainbow. Strange and Prophetic Dreams of the Indian Peoples*. Northwestern Pringing. 1962. 1-16
- 1[26] Ibid., Willoya and Brown. 1962. 42-48
- 1[27] Tekarontake. Personal Interview. June-July 1997
- 1[28] Wallace, Anthony F.C. *Death and Rebirth of the Seneca*. Alfred A. Knopf. 1970. 44-48
- 1[29] Jennings, Francis and others. *The History and Culture of Iroquois Diplomacy*. Syracuse University Press. 1985. 7-9
- 1[30] The War Chief is a person who has to know the individuals that make up his community. He must be patient and explain where the people are going wrong.
- 1[31] Dekanawida. *Gayanerekowa. The Constitution of the Iroquois Confederacy*. Ohontsa Films. 1993. This version is based on the Newhouse document.
- 1[32] The original dwelling house of the Iroquois.
- 1[33] Blanchard, David. *Seven Generations: A History of the Kanienkehaka*. Kahnawake Survival School: 1980. 83
- 1[34] Appendix A. Circle of Chiefs. Haudenosaunee
- 1[1] North American Indian Traveling College. *Traditional Teachings*. N.A.I.T.C.: 1984. 37
- Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. *Rebuilding the Iroquois Confederacy*. 1985. 14. "Our ancestors should have followed Deganawida's Great Plan to make all American Indian Nations equal in power, voice and authority in the Iroquois Confederacy instead of having an ego indulging elite groups of just Five Nations lord it over other nations. The Iroquois Confederacy had a chance to create a mighty union of Indian nations, in control over all America and the European invaders would not have been able to gain a foothold on Red Man's land."
- 1[35] The organization within the Confederacy is not hierarchical. Rather it is a processual and organized under principles of relations of equality.
- 1[36] Appendix B. Flow of Authority. Great Law, Non-Great Law. In the Past and Today.

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- 1[37] Bagley, Carol L. and Jo Ann Ruckman. *Grand Council Process for Decision-Making People's Rights*. American Indian Culture and Research Journal. Iroquois Contributions to Modern Democracy and Communism. Special Iroquois Issue. Vol. 7, Number 2/1983. 19
- 1[38] Horn, Margaret. *"Tatiskenhaketeh: Traditional and Contemporary Role of the Iroquois Warriors"*. Ottawa; Carleton University paper. 1990
- 1[39] Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. *Rebuilding the Iroquois Confederacy*. Kahnawake. 1985. 37. *"The Indian struggle for survival has many sides. One of the most important is to counteract the psychological warfare inflicted on the Indian people"*.
- 1[40] Mohawk, John. *Origins of Iroquois Political Thought*. Northeast Indian Quarterly: 1986. 16-20
- 1[41] Maracle, Andrew. Elder. Tyendinaga M.T. Interview. January 1997
- 1[42] Parker, Arthur C. *The Constitution of the Five Nations*. New York. New York State Museum Bulletin. No. 184. 1916. 52-54
- 1[43] Dickson-Gilmore, Jane to Kahn-Tineta Horn. Memorandum. Nov. 1, 1996
- 1[44] Dekanawida. *Gayanerekowa. The Constitution of the Iroquois Confederacy*. Ohontsa Films. 1993. Wampum 5
- 1[45] Mohawk, John. *Origins of Iroquois Political Thought*. Northeast Indian Quarterly. 1988. 16-20
- 1[46] Ibid., Mohawk. 1986
- 1[47] Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. *Rebuilding the Iroquois Confederacy*. 1985. 13. *"People in fear are often very vocal and infect others with their fear. (To Hall) People in fear inspire no respect, only pity mixed with contempt. They are ripe for extinction for only those who struggle grow strong and achieve survival"*.
- 1[48] Fenton, William N. *Symposium on Cherokee and Iroquois Culture. No. 25. Iroquois Culture History. A General Evaluation*. Smithsonian Institution. Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin 180. 262
- 1[49] Mohawk, John. *Origins of Iroquois Political Thought*. Northeast Indian Quarterly: 1986. 16-20
- 1[50] Ibid., Dekanawida. 1993. Wampums 93-98
- 1[51] Onondaga Indian Nation v. The State of New York, et al. United States District Court. Northern District of New York. May 27, 1997. 10
- 1[52] Shimony, Annemarie. *Conservatism Among Iroquois at the Six Nation Reserve*. Syracuse University. 1994. 290
- 1[53] Tekarontake. Ganiengeh. Personal Interview. June-July 1997
- 1[54] Kakwirakeron. Akwesasne Warrior. Personal Interviews, Nov. 1989 -
- 1[55] Parker, Arthur C. *The Constitution of the Five Nations*. New York. New York State Museum Bulletin. No. 184: 1916, 104
- 1[56] Ibid., Parker. 1916. 104
- 1[57] North American Indian Travelling College. *Traditional Teachings*. N.A.I.T.C. 1984. 37. Seating Pattern of the Grand Council
- 1[58] Dekanawida. *Gayanerekowa. The Constitution of the Iroquois Confederacy*. Ohontsa Films. 1993. Wampums 9-12
- 1[59] Ibid., Dekanawida. 1993. 65. *"The Founder wanted all Onkwehonwe in the Longhouse. He was able to gather only 5 nations in his time. He left the work of uniting nations to his successors and coming generations. They fell down on the job. Not only did they not get more nations into the Confederacy, but instead devised a protectorate of nations, i.e. an empire of subject nations, which was, not Dekanawida's plan...The protectorate nations were extinct and the Longhouse was reduced and weakened. It enabled the Europeans to take over the continent. A great lesson here not to lord over others but to make them into equals."*
- 1[60] Barreiro, Jose. *How a Chief is Raised, Deposed. Sovereignty*. Indian Roots of American Democracy. Special Constitution Bicentennial Edition, 1988. North East Indian Quarterly. 64

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- 1[61] North American Indian Travelling College. *Traditional Teachings*. 1984. 34
- 1[62] Bagley, Carol L. and Jo Ann Ruckman. *Grand Council Process for Decision-Making People's Rights*. American Indian Culture and Research Journal. Iroquois Contributions to Modern Democracy and Communism. Special Iroquois Issue. Vol. 7, Number 2/1983. 64
- 1[62] North American Indian Travelling College. *Traditional Teachings*. Changed to "No person or foreign nation... shall have any voice except to answer questions.." Louis Hall in *Rebuilding the Iroquois Confederacy* says that "The Handsome Lake Code was established as an authority independent of the jurisdiction of the Great Law". All chiefs who practice this Code of a foreign people are guilty of violating Wampum 25 and can be deposed, as well as alienating themselves from the Iroquois Confederacy and territory.
- 1[63] United States Senate. *To Acknowledge the Contribution of the Iroquois Confederacy of Nations to the Development of the U. S. Constitution and to Reaffirm the Continuing Government-to-Government Relationship Between Indian Tribes and the United States Established in the Constitution*. Select Committee on Indian Affairs. S. One Hundredth Congress. Con. Res.: 77. 1987
- 1[64] *Ahserakowa* is the Mohawk word for Head Warrior or War Chief.
- 1[65] People of the State of New York against Andrew Gibson Jones, et al. State of New York. Town of Onondaga Justice Court. County of Onondaga. July 18, 1997. 22
- 1[66] Onondaga Indian Nation v. State of New York, et al. United States District Court. Northern District of New York. May 27, 1997. 6
- 1[67] People of the State of New York against Andrew Gibson Jones, et al. State of New York. Town of Onondaga Justice Court. County of Onondaga. July 18, 1997. 11
- 1[68] Onondaga Indian Nation v. State of New York, et al. United States District Court. Northern District of New York. May 20, 1997. 4
- 1[69] To the People of the Mohawk Nation. Haudenosaunee. Concerned People of the Mohawk Nation of Akwesasne, Ganiengh and Kahnawake (by authority of ; Wampum 98), Dec. 30, 1987. *'From 1987 the Akwesasne Mohawk chiefs joined in a "Tri-National Council" with the Canadian Band Council and the Tribal trustees of the New York..... following the Canadian Indian Act and the New York State few respectively. This is seen as a ... violation of the Great Law of Peace which provides that no chief can establish any authority independent of the jurisdiction of the Great Law, and which must establish a peaceful society by eliminating the causes of conflict between individuals and between peoples.*
- 1[70] Karonhiahente. Personal Interview. Kahnawake. June 1997 -
- 1[71] Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. Kahnawake. Interviews. May-August 1990. *The word "Tioneratasekowe" was mistaken to mean "Tree of the Great Long Leaves" when it actually means a great big tree with leaves that are always fresh, "a-she", an evergreen tree particularly the white pine which grows to 250 feet high when allowed to fully grow, referring to the forest giant of eastern North America".*
- 1[72] A convenience for some chiefs to profess such ignorance.
- 1[73] Dekanawida. *Gayanerekowa. The Constitution of the Iroquois Confederacy*. Ohontsa Films. 1993. 61. Creation made Aboriginal People of the one blood and of the same soil. Different languages constitute different nations and different hunting grounds and territories with boundary lines between them were established. Also, no race of people has a "God given" right to invade other races.
- 1[74] People of the State of New York against Andrew Gibson Jones, et al. State of New York. Town of Onondaga Justice Court. County of Onondaga. July 18, 1997. 17
- 1[75] Bagley, Carol L. and Jo Ann Ruckman. *Grand Council Process for Decision-Making People's Rights*. American Indian Culture and Research Journal. Iroquois Contributions to Modern Democracy and Communism. Special Iroquois Issue. Vol. 7, Number 2/1983. 64
- 1[76] Mohawk Nation News MNN. Oct. 27, 1996. *"Indigenous People Global Crisis Stand-off". The Iroquois position: "in Canada Britain passed imperial instruments ' such as the Royal*

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*Proclamation of 1763 affirming that the Aboriginal people were the true Indigenous People of North America with our own governments and that treaties have never been repealed. So Indigenous People don't need to go begging to colonial Canada or the United Nations to be given self-government which we have had since time immemorial".*

1[77] Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. Kahnawake. Interviews. May-August 1990. "*Handsome Lake could neither read nor write, so could not have devised 'Gai'wiio' in the bogus treaty with N.Y. State in 1797 only the federal U.S. government has the right to make treaties. Handsome Lake wrote his name with an 'X'. Individual states do not have the right to make treaties. New York State paid \$100, 000 for the 5 million acre Seneca territory, first making the sorry chiefs drunk. The sale is illegal not because the Seneca were drunk, but because New York State did not have the right to make treaties".*

1[78] Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet*. New York. New York State Museum. Bulletin 163. 1912. 11

1[79] North American Indian Travelling College. *Traditional Teachings*. N.A.I.T.C. 1984. 3

1[80] Shimony, Annemarie. *Conservatism Among Iroquois at the Six Nations Reserve*. Syracuse University Press. 1994. 290

1[81] Parker, Arthur C. *The Constitution of the Five Nations*. New York. New York State Museum Bulletin. No. 184. 1916. 5

1[82] Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet*. New York. New York State Museum, Bulletin 163. 1912. 10

1[83] Fenton, William N. *Symposium on Cherokee and Iroquois Culture*. No. 25. *Iroquois Culture History.. A General Evaluation*. Bulletin 180. 164. "*In the period 1797 to 1805 there was a mass revival hysteria, in which hostility, loss and guilt are resolved in an orgy of confession, repentance and salvation.*"

1[84] Natawe, Frank. Kahnawake. Interview. July-August 1990

1[85] Fenton, William N. *Symposium on Cherokee and Iroquois Culture*. No. 25. *Iroquois Culture History.. A General Evaluation*. Bulletin 180. 159

1[86] Natawe, Frank. Kahnawake. Interview. July-August 1990

1[87] Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. Kahnawake. May-August 1990. "*Handsome Lake did not have any visions. He had the D. T.'s (delirium tremens) from a month-long whisky binge and saw snakes. His nephew, Henry, told him not to say he saw snakes but to say he saw angels".*

1[88] Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet*. New York. New York State Museum, Bulletin 163. 1912. 17

1[89] Contrarily, Bruce Elijah said that the Indian was to not forget the drum.

1[90] Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet*. New York. New York State Museum, Bulletin 163. 1912. 27

1[91] This is to illustrate that there are several interpretations of the Gai'wiio.

1[92] Elijah, Bruce. Oneida. Interview. September 1990. He said that the Indian was to not forget the drum.

1[93] Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, the Seneca Prophet*. New York. New York state Museum, Bulletin 163. 1912, Section 2. 28

1[94] Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. Kahnawake. Interview. May-August 1990. "*All the chiefs, including Handsome Lake, had a hand in selling Seneca land. All signed with their 'X' mark. Not one of them could read or write.*"

1[95] Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet*. New York. New York State Museum Bulletin. No. 163. 1912. 29

1[96] Onondaga Indian Nation v. The State of New York, et al. United States District Court. Northern District of New York. May 27, 1997. 5

1[97] Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet*. New York. New York State Museum Bulletin 163. 1912. 30

1[98] Ibid., Parker. 1912. 30

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- 1[99] Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. Kahnawake. Interview. May-August 1990. *"This is not the first time they destroyed the women. They did it in Europe. Today white society teaches that women are no good, or playthings, the butt of jokes and so on". Kanietahawi said, "This idea that women are no good came from the other side of the ocean and they did everything to convince the Indians to do the same"*.
- 1[100] Elijah, Bruce. Oneida. Interview. September 1990. *"Women should not be using their strong powers to manipulate men for their own personal advantage"*. Note: This is a totally newcomer concept which persists in Canada today.
- 1[101] Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet*. New York. New York State Museum, Bulletin 163. 1912. 33
- 1[102] Ibid., Parker. 1912. 33
- 1[103] Ibid., Parker. 1912. Sections 15, 34
- 1[104] Ibid., Parker. 1912. 34
- 1[105] Ibid., Parker. 1912. Sections 18, 35
- 1[106] Longhouse marriage ceremonies are still not recognized by outside jurisdictions.
- 1[107] Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet*. New York. New York State Museum, Bulletin 163. 1912. Section 19
- 1[108] Ibid., Parker. 1912. Sections 22, 36
- 1[109] Ibid., Parker. 1912. 38
- 1[110] In Kaienerekowa deliberations, the term "we" rather than "I" is used to emphasize equality.
- 1[111] Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet* New York. New York State Museum, Bulletin 163. 1912. Section 25
- 1[112] Mohawk Nation News Service. Editorial. *The Nature of Spirituality*. Dec. 20, 1994 *"Spirituality is the will to live free. When the Aboriginal spirit is oppressed and the will is bent under another's will, then control over our lives is lost. The Aboriginal spirit is the most natural spirit because it comes from natural righteousness, as determined by the Kaienerekowa. This is opposite to the man-made righteousness which is meant to control the will of the person. It is control of the many by the few."*
- 1[113] Hall, Louis Karonhiaktajeh. Kahnawake. Interviews.. May-August 1990. *"In 1779 Sullivan reported that the Seneca had thousands of acres under cultivation, corn, potatoes, etc. to feed a large Seneca population. A Longhouse required 4 fires to keep 200 people warm. Family unit houses needed 50 fires to keep 200 people warm. Not having saws or axes to cut that much wood one could see why a Longhouse is more practical"*.
- 1[114] Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet*. New York. New York State Museum, Bulletin 163. 1912. Section 29
- 1[115] Ibid., Parker. 1912. 40
- 1[116] Ibid., Parker. 1912. 40
- 1[117] Ibid., Parker, 1912. Sections 34, 42
- 1[118] Ibid., Parker, 1912. 42
- 1[119] Ibid., Parker. 1912. 41
- 1[120] Ibid., Parker. 1912. Section 101
- 1[121] Ibid., Parker. 1912. Section 106
- 1[122] Ibid., Parker. 1912. Section 83
- 1[123] Ibid., Parker. 1912. Section 85
- 1[124] Ibid., Parker. 1912. 50
- 1[125] Ibid., Parker. 1912. 50
- 1[126] Ibid., Parker. 1912. Section 79
- 1[127] Ibid., Parker. 1912. Section 108
- 1[128] Ibid., Parker. 1912. Section 63, 54

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- 1[129] Ibid., Parker. 1912. 54
- 1[130] Ibid., Parker. 1912. Section 109
- 1[131] Ibid., Parker. 1912. Section 94
- 1[132] The Iroquois call the President "*Ranatakariias*", which means "He eats up the town".
- 1[133] Parker, Arthur C. *The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet*. New York. New York State Museum, Bulletin 163. 1912. Section 92
- 1[134] Eijjah, Bruce. Oneida. Interview. September 1 990. "*The white man took Handsome Lake's visions and Teachings and used it to their own advantage*".
- 1[135] "Writer's Work Thought to be Influence on Warriors", Gazette, July 23, 1990.
- 1[136] Hall. Louis Karonhiaktajeh. Kahnawake. Interviews. May-August 1 990. He left the Catholic Church in the 1950's after the Kahnawake waterfront was expropriated. The Long House came out into the open in the 1960's when a group of young people started to openly challenge the Band Council.
- 1[137] Indian Act, RCS 1970, c. 1-6
- 1[138] People of the State of New York against Andrew Gibson Jones, et al. State of New York. Town of Onondaga Justice Court. County of Onondaga. July 18, 1997. 32
- 1[139] Confederated Native Court. 1997. 37. "*Thus in 1867 began the federal legislation aiding and abetting the illegal provincial land legislation that the federal government in 1875 had acknowledged itself constitutionally bound to disallow. The United States began applying the Major Crimes Act, and Canada the Criminal Code, against Indians in the yet unpurchased Indian territories. To further this process of elevating federal policy over natural law, international law and constitutional law, the federal governments of both Th. United States and Canada eventually began reorganizing, recognizing, funding and promoting native governments that would compete with and supplant the natives' traditional governments*". 38. "*The government of Canada not only moved to outlaw the natives' traditional governments by fostering competing native governments with more controlled powers, but it employed the new native governments in the harassment of the old native governments. It made continuing in the old ways a crime, and it made the raising of the law precluding this a crime. In this way the criminal law few became a criminal weapon. The same process, with different labels and sequences...*"
- 1[140] When the author was attending the mission school in Kahnawake, she was taught that the Indians were a vanishing race.
- 1[141] Dione, Frances Kanietahawi. Acting Bear Clan Mother. Kahnawake. Interview. May-August 1990

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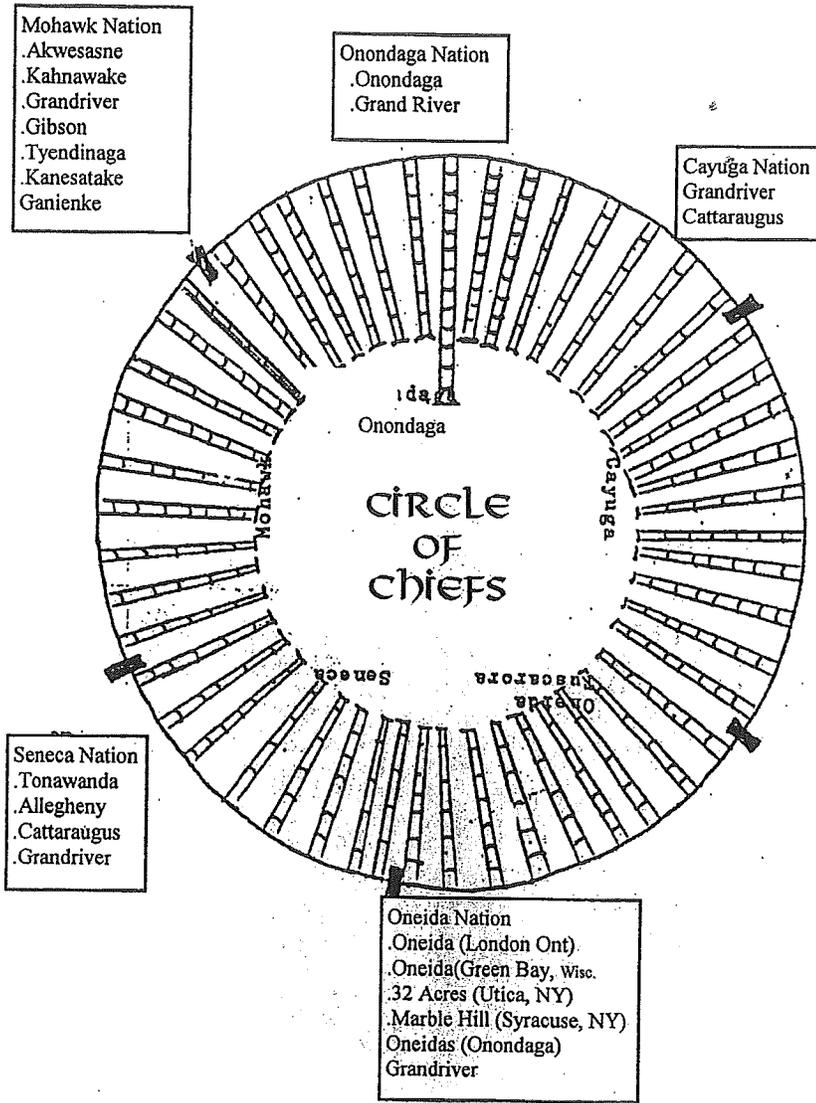
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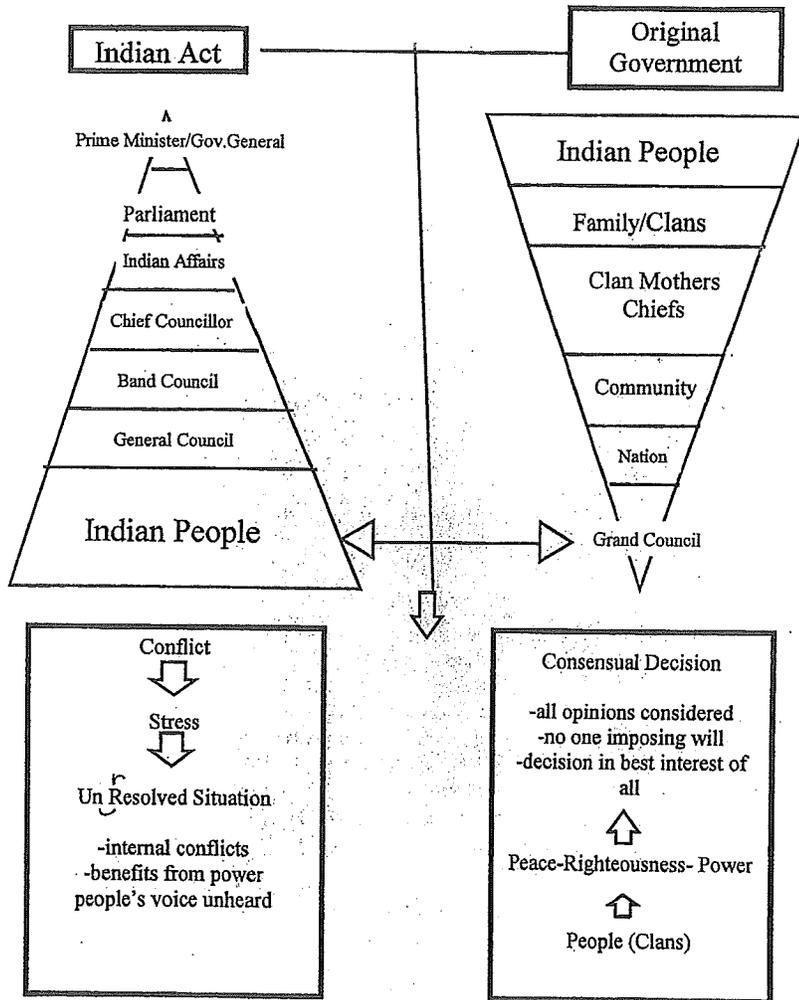
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APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B

*Flow of Authority  
In the Past & Today*



MNN Mohawk Nation News  
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As my Totah always said, "Always ask the question 'Why'? of everything. Then ask, 'Can you prove it?'"

*"The Great Law imposes no terrible religious dogmas and doctrines such as hell, devils, purgatory, and multitudes of mostly illogical sins. There is nothing in the Great Law about temporary repentance to make hypocrites out of people. To show appreciation and thanks for the bounties of nature, the people perform various ... dances which are more fun than fruitful. The purpose of dancing is to show happiness for the favors of nature. Judging by the beaming faces, the system works". Karonhiaktajeh. Warrior's Hand Book.*

*"It is the duty of all Iroquois who are faithful to the Great Law to straighten out the followers of the Handsome Lake Code". Karonhiaktajeh. Rebuilding the Iroquois Confederacy.*