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# THE ALGONQUIAN AND THE IROQUOIAN OF ONTARIO

## THE BEGINNING

by

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and

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**Stony Lake — Near Peterborough, Ontario**

It is dawn, to a soft sunned Ontario summer. Like dark fingers, the night shadows retreat, tracing ancient symbols carved into coarse crystalline grey rock. Approaching the ancient site, silence and the scent of pine embrace the pilgrim.

The sound of water, moving deep within the rock, soothes the worries of everyday life and invites the pupil to listen, to learn, and to participate in the lessons of the land. The Ojibwa call this place *Kinomagewapkong*, the teaching rocks. It is here, and at similar prehistoric rock sites of knowledge that history is being opened up to us today.

## PREFACE

### HUMAN AND ECOLOGY

Within the province of Ontario are located two different “types” of indigenous peoples; Algonquian and Iroquoian.

The Algic or Algonquian speakers in Ontario include the Algonquin, the Cree, the Nipissing, the Ojibwa, and the Ottawa (and one Potawatomi Reserve). The other group, the Iroquoian speakers, includes the Cayuga, the Huron, the Mohawk, the Neutral, Oneida, Onondaga, Petun, Seneca, Tobacco, and the Tuscarora.

The arrival of the first of the two linguistic groups, the Algic, into the Great Lakes area, began possibly as early as the 13th Millennium B.C.; the Iroquoian speaking peoples not appearing in the area until approximately 10 millennia later. Although their cultures, languages and origins are profoundly different, the cosmology of both of these aboriginal groups include “Beings” of critical importance to their survival; the Thunderers. In a sense, these “Thunderers” are the result of a very complex eco-atmospheric system that, in large part, has given life to that region and provided the laws to guide their different life-ways. Hence, rather than attempt to “fight” or resist the ecosystem (their habitat), it was necessary to adapt; to fit one’s physical and spiritual presence into an accommodation with the system.

*“ . . . Today, when a storm approaches an Indian community and someone places the proper offering on the ground in a respectful way, the storm will separate and go around the village.”*

In the Great Lakes region, tribal “eco-atmospheric” behaviour is necessitated by its wide range of weather conditions and temperature variations. This central northern Canada region is isolated from both Pacific and Atlantic moisture sources by a remarkable series of interrelated topographical factors. The mountain ranges of Western Cordillera, Baffin Island and Labrador serve to channel continental air masses north and south over Canada’s relatively dry interior.

As a result, total precipitation in Northern Ontario is rather small (about 60 cm.), of which most, peaking in July, falls during the summer months of thunderstorms. Snowfall, on the other hand, has its primary peak in November with a secondary one in April, both occurring during periods of shifting frontal zones, changing winds and unsettled conditions. Cool Spring and late Fall temperatures turn the tail ends of these precipitation periods into a large portion of the area's snowfall.

Also, the region experiences pronounced seasonal temperature cycles; minimum daily temperatures range from a monthly means of 29<sup>o</sup>C in January to 11<sup>o</sup>C in July. And, maximum daily temperatures rise from a low of -19<sup>o</sup>C in January to 21<sup>o</sup>C in July. Thus, it was necessary for the region's inhabitants (including human) to develop a flexibility suited to that broad spectrum of change.

Despite the close physical proximity of Ontario's two neighbouring people to one another, we find wide variations in their social and cultural practices, and in their economies. The differences are further heightened by the fact that the Algonquian live directly within the eco-atmospheric system described above, while the Iroquoian's northern boundaries lie along the southern and eastern fringes of the system. Also, both derive from vastly different histories.

## **THE HISTORIES**

The origins of Ontario's Native people and their development and emergence as distinct Iroquoian and Algonquian speaking peoples spans a vast period of time and space approximately, some linguists say upward to 20,000 years. Such sweeping histories have great relevance for today because they include critical information about the environment, about the nature of human development and consciousness and, they call for a new working order between Native and non-Native people. Ancient though these histories are, and remote may be

the records left by the ancients, the evidence and knowledge can be understood. The key is to recuperate information about the migrations that brought both peoples into the area.

## THE ALGONQUIAN AND THE IROQUOIAN OF ONTARIO

Western science tells us that the Human specie of mammal evolved from mouse-sized primate of the Tardier family. Further, archaeologists found skeletal remains of such an animal in Africa which was subsequently dated as having lived 35 million years ago; thus concluding that the origins of the human specie lies somewhere in central Africa.

But then, in January 1991, the Carnegie Museum of Natural History in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania reported that between 1984 and 1987, they unearthed skeletal remains of that same specie of primate. This one, found in the United States (Wyoming), dates back 50 million years. And, as reported in the *British Journal Nature*, “. . . challenges conventional wisdom by suggesting that man may have evolved in North America.” This is consistent with the histories of nearly all the tribes of North and South America.

### THE ORAL TRADITION

Native American histories portray a far more complex picture of the past forty to fifty millennia than most western scholars might possibly imagine.

Although not commonly known by western scholars, within all tribes, the transferring of history from one generation to the third, involves a very rigorous process; one in which history is taught by the grandparents to the grandchildren (grandmothers to granddaughters and grandfathers to grandsons — the history of the origins of women and origins of men are not the same) with the generation between listening until the grandparents ahead of them are gone or are not capable of carrying on. Then the formal training of the next generation begins; it is a life-long process rather than simply an avocation or career choice of self-appointed individuals.

The histories of the origins of the various tribes are individualistic; although they may have aspects in common, they do not tell of one common creation. Some point to a specific locale within their present territory and say, “This is the place we came into being.” Others tell of

origins that go so far back into the dim reaches of human history, so far back as to make it difficult in today's terms, to identify the situs of that origin. However, those origins are recorded in, as we shall see, "non-language" forms.

Of-times the oral traditions tell of the origins of a people's migration as having begun at a much greater distance away from present locations that indicated by the boundaries mapped by western science. A common variation of tribal history tells of the arrival of people different from themselves, into their homelands migrating from some unnamed origin. A third scenario is one wherein one people tells of another people within their territory leaving for unnamed destinations. Such is that of the Hopi.

In 1947 Hopi Elder, Thomas Banyacya, was appointed by a Council of Hopi Elders to be Spokesman for the Hopi Nation (Arizona, U.S.A.). One of his first assignments was to contact a people who migrated out of the south-southwest and failed to report back, those people were today's Ontario's Iroquoian people, with whom the Hopi had lost contact thousands of years earlier. Yet, through their annual ritual reading of their petroglyphs, the Hopi remembered who had (migrated away) and who had reported back. Elder Banyacya was spared the trip North when a delegation of Six Nations Chiefs literally appeared at his door, about fifteen thousand years late for the meeting!

The Bering Land Bridge migration theory is extremely problematic, for like the "ice-corridor," it is too narrow.

Even if Native people had run across the Americas, there would not have been sufficient time for them to have populated the continent to the extent estimated by western science (100 million by the year 1492) nor to have diversified into such a vast array of distinct language and cultures that were present to greet the new arrivals from Europe in the 15th and 16th Centuries, A.D.

The last retreat of an ice age; one emptying the Bering Straits of sea water between Siberia and Alaska, occurred only 15,000 years ago (the current estimate is that there have been approximately ten ice ages every one million years, or one, on average, every 100,000 years.). Such vast time periods, as those lapsing between ice ages, are understood widely by tribal peoples; Algonquians refer to the ages as “Fires.” Hopi describe them as “Worlds” and the ProtoIroquoian as “Suns.”

In western terms, a “World” (or “Fire” or “Sun”) is 26,000 years; a period measuring a complete cycle of the *Precession of Equinoxes*. Early Native scientists were so attuned to the natural world that phenomena such as this “wobble” in the Earth’s rotation was perceived and entered into their mathematical calendrical calculations.

Tribal histories almost invariably present accounts of supernatural origins . . . stories which, to the western mind, are without this sense of time. Tribal languages do not discuss history from the perspective of “time” but in terms of “distance,” hence, are timeless stories. The events chronicled in song, chant, and/or story might have taken place in “this world” (26,000 year cycle), or in other worlds which the People described as timeless, pre-time.

### **NON-LANGUAGE MESSAGES**

When the migrating tribes arrived in their new homelands, each group began a curious undertaking, that is the creation of a new form of information — carving and painting of ideographs on rocks. Unlike the phonetic alphabet of Europe, ideographs, these designs are highly developed picture writings that convey “abstractions, subtleties and multiple associations.” The powerful psychographic information encoded on rocks ensured that the message recorded would be recoverable for thousands of years. Moreover, a message, written in ideographic form, is independent of a particular spoken language, i.e., non-Language form. Generations born millennium later, who might not speak the language of their ancestors, could still access the

knowledge — but only if they had matured into and mastered the “good mind” or the authentic Native mind.

### **THE “DARK SUN”**

It is probable that the most recent migrations were responses to their prophecies of the “Dark Sun”; an event that was more than a Spiritual or psychological prediction, it was an actual physical phenomenon recorded in rock records. The year zero, or null-year time, i.e., around the time of the birth of Christ, forward to the end of the first millennium, A.D., marked an epoch of intense solar activity. Enormous solar flares, visible to the naked eye, created great black splotches across the face of the Sun. It was as terrifying an experience then as it would be today; and the impact was profound not only on human beings but on the climate itself, of North America.

### **THE NINE (9) HELLS — 468 YEARS**

Life-ways decisions, based upon thousands of years of keen observations, and a very precise knowledge of complex planetary movements and weather patterns, were implemented with a very high degree of confidence. So high a degree of confidence that when the decision was made to leave home, the people picked up their belongings, left, and set out on journeys exceeding the life-spans of several generations of their people.

An example of this knowledge involves the Aztec people of Mexico (cultural-linguistic relatives of the Iroquois) who view great spans of time (as stated above) as “Suns” which, like the Hopi “World,” equals 26,000 years. Approximately 1,000 years before the time of the birth of Christ, Aztec scientists began to predict a Dark Sun, which would conclude in Nine Hells, a span of 9 Aztec centuries of 52 years each or 468 years. During the period of these Nine Hells, (or negative energy) hardship, suffering and great death were anticipated.

Native peoples began to prepare. Representatives from all of Anauak (a pre Columbian name for North America, literally, the land of the wind or eagles) met at Tenochtitlan where they arrived at the following directives designed to protect the knowledge of the Americans:

- 1) The sacred sites of learning including the pyramids, would be closed. This would prevent power and knowledge from falling into the hands of people who were not prepared.
- 2) The people who would be arriving from the East would be greeted in friendship, this would be in the long-term interest of the land and future generations.
- 3) Knowledge would no longer be written or recorded; except through the oral tradition.
- 4) The North American leaders discontinued their meetings in Mexico.
- 5) Only two communications systems were to remain opened — the Native languages and the direct communication with the Great Spirit.

These precautions were not taken only because European people would be arriving but because it was the time of the dark sun — a necessary fluctuation of negative energy which would be balanced in 1987 with the New Sun.

Beginning in 1519, consciousness (represented by the Sun) entered the darkness. The yellow-pelted Jaguar with its black spots symbolizes this epoch and appears everywhere in pottery, rugs and art from this period of Aztec history.

It was at this time when Cuauhtemoc, nephew of Montezuma addressed the assembled Iroquois and Aztec leaders (recorded by a Spanish priest):

#### **Cuauhtemoc's Consignia**

*Our Sun has hidden,  
Our Sun has disappeared from sight.  
And in complete darkness  
It has left us,  
But we know that it will return again.  
That once again it will emerge,  
And will shed its light on us anew.*

*But while it is there in the place of Silence,  
Let us quickly reunite, let us embrace one another.  
And, in the center of our being let us hide  
All that our heart loves  
And which we know to be a great treasure.*

*Let us hide our sacred spaces and grounds  
to the Spiritual Creator,  
Our schools, our Ball Courts,  
Our centres for the youth,  
Our houses for song and play,  
Let our homes seclude us,  
Until emerges our New Sun.*

*Dear fathers and mothers  
Never forget to guide your youth  
And to teach your children while they live.*

*How good She has been,  
Until now, our beloved land Anauak,  
the shelter and protection of our destinies.  
Which our ancestors received  
through their great respect and good behavior  
And which our dear fathers very wisely  
Instilled in our being.*

*Now we will advise our children  
Not to forget to tell their children  
How good She will be,  
How She will rise up and gather strength,  
And how well She will fulfill her great destiny,  
This our beloved Mother Earth Anauak.*

MEXICO-TENOCHTITLAN  
August 12, 1521

## **PROTO ALGONQUINS BEGIN TO ARRIVE**

The Algonquin, whose name means “they are our relatives,” can be traced to an early people — the Proto Algonquins — who moved into and populated much of Eastern Canada shortly after the retreat of the East Glacier around 15,000 years ago. Based on their own history, these are the only North American Indian people to have originated somewhere in the Atlantic, then move westward up the St. Lawrence and into the Great Lakes area.

By 6,000 B.C., the great earth mounds that characterize this early populace were already covering the banks of the waterways of Southern Ontario. Along Lake Erie, the oldest existing mound systems are found clay and artifacts from distant reaches of North America. Other mounds contained burials and some, by their location and design, speak to educational purposes. These recent discoveries, although “new” to the “Scientists,” have long been an integral part of the “story”; part of oral tradition of Algonquian peoples who say the well-developed trade routes and communication systems established this area as a major sphere of intellectual and economic activity. But the movement westward did not stop with the mounds.

Two of the three branches of the Algonquian language group, the Yurok and (now thought to be extinct) Wiyot, continued westward and settled in Northwestern California. The third branch, the Algonquian speakers, remained within the general area of the Great Lakes.

In terms of territorial distribution, it is difficult to pin-point the exact geographic boundaries within which these peoples were distributed but, that distribution appears to have been bounded by natural forces, i.e., eco-atmospheric system. In any case, the linguistic group was numerous and dispersed widely enough by the end of that first millennium to begin developing separate linguistic traditions. But, evidence derived from the oral traditions of the people themselves, and some provided by archaeology, anthropology and from linguists indicates that the territory occupied by this group was quite large.

The territory occupied by this group was quite large, perhaps from Lake Huron to some distance down the St. Lawrence River. In fact, the northeastern (and Eastern/Northern Carolina Atlantic coast) languages (Abenaki, Beotuk and Micmac) were at one extreme end of the resultant dialect chain. Algonquians are also found (west of the Mississippi River) as far south as Kansas and Oklahoma. Curiously, it appears that culturally this group is more closely identified with those of the East and Northeast than with the others.

## **THE MOUND-BUILDERS, ADENA, HOPEWELL AND MISSISSIPPIAN CULTURES**

Oral history says that the Iroquoian people moving northeast encountered the Proto Algonquin and helped to build effigy mounds, including Ohio's serpent mound. Subsequent arrivals from the southwest would create elaborate platform mounds and finally pyramids, as far north as Wisconsin.

Hundreds of these sites literally dot the landscape, beginning at the mouth of the Mississippi River, travelling up the Ohio River and terminating in southern Ontario.

Although much is unknown about these ancient efforts, today's archaeologists refer to the ancient mounds as spheres of interaction. At these sites fancy symbolic goods were produced and exotic trade items and other highly prized materials came from great distances and were exchanged. These newcomers and their great earthworks also brought new ideas and technology which triggered a profound shift away from hunting and gathering towards an economy of horticulture.

As this way of life grew larger, more stable communities developed with increasingly substantial housing. A golden age of social and community development was at hand when suddenly the development stopped. Early historians speculated some type of cultural decline that the mound builders culture fell apart and that people reverted to simpler ways of life, but contemporary scholars contend that the new way of life had simply diffused among the population thereby rendering the mound complex obsolete.

Aztec, Iroquoian history states that this phenomena represented the scattering of the knowledge to the four directions — the ultimate sacrifice of a people determined to survive the coming age of darkness.

## **PROTO IROQUOIS**

The Proto Iroquoian people linguistic relatives of Mexico's Aztec, like the Proto Algonquin, also migrated into Southern Ontario. But, unlike the Algonquin, they originated in the Southern or Southwestern part of North America.

This move North occurred over a period of time exceeding, perhaps 15,000 years during this period, the tundra of Southern Ontario was changing and evolving into the mixed woodlands — we associate with the area today. The warming of the climate meant that agriculture, never before possible, could now eventuate in the North. Responding to this new change in the environment, the Iroquois moved, not so much for new opportunity, but out of the perceived need to maintain balance. The move up the Mississippi was hazardous and demanding. The people were moving across a land that not only they had never seen before, but had not even known of its existence. In order to travel safely and with confidence, these early people created maps of many types and practiced the indigenous science and art of wayfinding.

Through wayfinding, the Native traveller relied on all senses and drew upon years of rigorous study and practice in order to successfully negotiate vast distances of land and water, knowledge of the stars and their movements, ability to read weather patterns and mastery of oral traditions which contained survival information was necessary. Because the knowledge was so complex, numeric devices including notched and painted sticks, wampum and woven belts were created to aide the memory of ancient travellers. Many of these artifacts exist and are used today.

## **THE CONTEMPORARY ALGONQUIN ARRIVE IN ONTARIO**

About 7,000 years ago, the ancestor's of today's Algonquin speaking people began to arrive in southeastern Ontario, Beuton tells us that “the people were so many and so powerful

that if one was to climb the highest mountain and look in all directions, they would not be able to see the end of the nation.”

Clans and bands were widely distributed and highly specialized. There were: berry pickers, wood carvers, fisherman, canoe makers and stone carvers, others called Gi-ti-gay-wi-nini-wug, keepers of the creators garden, raised and gathered food. Trade and communication, as in Proto-Algonquin days, was active and highly developed. The early Algonquian used the waterways to travel by canoe, and dog sheds and teams to travel in winter. According to oral history, life was good for the people — the clan system and government were strong; there were plenty of food from the land and sea. The groups grew and diversified.

Historically, there was a continuous shifting of kin-related groups of Algonquian-speaking peoples who resided along the north shore of Lake Huron and Superior, from Georgian Bay to the edge of the prairies. The high mobility inherent in the migratory and relocation patterns of these peoples resulted in small scattered sites concentrated in areas of great faunal variety and density. Areas such as edge zones and small discrete natural communities of the northern forest. Generally, these settlements consisted of relatively small habitation sites and associated hunting camps. The movements tended to be restricted by eastern arctic weather systems to the north, and those of the “mild Pacific” to the south and by their neighbours to the east and west. In short, they moved in a relatively homogenous environment and seasonally coalesced around locales dictated by Spiritual guides.

The tribal cultures encountered by the early European arrivals had existed for a considerable period of time. It seems to have been a modified continuance of a somewhat more complex Algonquian culture, which developed south of the Great Lakes, and was in place before the Iroquoian migration into that Eastern region (nearly caused total isolation of the eastern Algonquian from their western kindred).

Before the projection of this Iroquoian wedge into the regions bordering the Lakes Erie and Ontario, and the St. Lawrence River, the eastern outpost of the outer fringe of this group of people whose more “complex” culture we have already mentioned, and whose derive shaped burial mound building activities centred in Ohio, entered and occupied a large portion of New England. There seems to be little doubt that they belonged to the great lakes Algonquian.

### **OTTAWA (Outaouakamigouk)**

#### Territory

The Ottawa tend to be concentrated primarily on Manitoulin Island; chiefly in coastal and riverine regions of Michigan's Lower Peninsula and adjacent parts of Ontario, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin (arrived later in Kansas and Oklahoma).

It is sometimes difficult to separate Ottawa territory from that of their linguistically close related neighbours. Seventeenth Century sources apply the term Ottawa not only to a local group otherwise known as Sable but also to both the total totemic or local groups that together formed the tribes (Kiskakon, Sinage, Sable, Nassauakueton and, later, others) and to all other “Upper Algonquians,” including possibly the Ouacheskesouek.

#### Environment

The physical environment of the Ottawa was mostly wooded except for small prairies in southwestern Michigan; hardwoods predominating in the south, while in the north mixed conifers and hardwoods. Fish, fowl and mammals, especially beaver, were present in great variety while the temperate, humid climate with annual growing seasons of up to 180 days easily permitted the cultivation of corn and other crops.

## **NIPISSING**

An Algonquian-speaking people whose homeland was the Lake Nipissing region of Ontario. The language of this group is clearly related to that of the Algonquin, Ottawa and Ojibwa dialects.

The precise limits of Nipissing territory are not known; they seem to have been neighbours with the Temiskaming and Temagami on the north; the Ottawa, Bonnechere, and Kipawa Algonquian tribes to the east; Huron to the south; and, the Amikwa and Achiligouan Ojibwa to the west.

Their territory all lay within the glaciated "Canada Shield," within the mixed coniferous-deciduous forests of the Great Lakes — St. Lawrence River region, and at or near the northern limit of maize cultivation. As with the territory of the Ottawa, there was an abundance of fish, waterfowl and mammals.

Unlike the other Algonquian-speaking peoples who spent time cultivating the land, the Nipissing were primarily hunter-gathers (fishers) who moved according to their Spiritual guides instructions.

## **ALGONKIN AND CREE**

Along the Ottawa river and adjoining the Montagnais in the east were the Algonkin proper who gave their name to the entire group of people. By now, the culture of the Proto Algonquin shaped by its "old copper," technology and its focus on mound building had with changing climate, become wild rice country. The region, filled with countless lakes and marshes of menominee or wild rice held skies filled with waterfall. The region teemed with people.

To the North, the cultural and linguistic relatives, the Cree had moved into the spruce for country that ran all the way to the Hudson. Centering largely upon hunting, trapping and gathering, small family units of Cree distributed themselves across vast areas of boreal forest.

The board pattern of dispersal was critical for it provided sufficient area for triplanes; permitted generations of a single family to live in one area over hundreds of years. The stability of Cree society promoted knowledge of medicinal plants, and animal behavior which cannot be matched even by science today.

The stability of Cree society and the demands of the northern climate produced deep knowledge of medicinal plants, northern meteorology and animal behavior. What Cree people learned of boreal ecology is so profound that the slightest change in environment can be detected even today.

Such breadth and accuracy was developed and maintained through a vigorous spirituality which created in it's disciples, the ability to receive lucid dreams; the ability to wayfind — to project one's consciousness in order to see what can't be seen while simultaneously remaining alert to ordinary reality — qualities essential for mapping and hunting in vast spaces. Jung describes this as accessing the collective unconsciousness. In any event, the Cree so valued this ability that it became institutionalized through shaking tent ceremonials. Through such processes individuals received knowledge, often in the form of animal images, that empowered or healed people and allowed them to live in balance with the land.

### **OJIBWA — The Final Arrivals and Message**

Ojibwa (Last syllable pronounced "way," refers to the peculiar puckered seam of their moccasins; Europeans garbled it into Chippewa and stuck to it so persistently that many Ojibwa today call themselves Chippewas) made up one of the largest nations north of Mexico.

The Ohio Valley, the centre of the Hopewell Mound Builders some centuries earlier, had become very sparsely populated due to the diffusion and absorption of knowledge created through these centers. The Miami Confederacy of Indiana and environs (one of their villages was called chicago, meaning "Skunk Place") and the somewhat more populous Illinois Confederacy

to their west were growing in number (These people were the of the Algonquian language group, while the Erie to their east, below Lake Erie, were Iroquoian speakers).

The history of the Ojibwa, handed down to us by elders tell us that seven major prophets came to the Anishiabe in prehistory. They came in the time when people were living full peaceful lives on the eastern seaboard. The prophets gave the people seven predictions, each prediction was called a Fire which refers to a particular time and space. These seven Fires instructed the Ojibwa to:

- leave the seaside and migrate west following the sacred megis shell, to a place in the west where food grows on the water.
- Organized and live the teachings of the spiritual Midewiwin Lodge.
- Prepare to receive the coming light skinned race which could come carrying either good technology and ideas or warring the face of death. The face of death would be known when rivers run with poison and fish become unfit to eat.
- The fourth Fire warned of a great struggle that would grip the lives of Native people if Ojibwa reached out for a false promise of great joy and salvation.
- The fifth Fire predicted that Native children would be taken away and that elders would close their reason for living. "The cup of life will almost be spilt. The cup of life with almost become the cup of grief." (Beuton).
- In the sixth Fire visionaries came among the people and the Ojibwa joined the Aztec and Iroquois in hiding the sacred scrolls. Like cantemocs message, it is said that "the teachings of the elders were hidden out of sight but not out of memory. It was said that when the time came that Indian people could practice their religion without fear that a little boy would dream where the ironwood log full of sacred bundles and scrolls was buried. He would lead his people to this place."

- The seventh Fire says that Native people will reawaken and retrace their steps to find out what was lost. The light skinned race will be offered a choice between two roads. If they choose the right road then:

*“the seventh Fire will light the Eighth and Final Fire, and eternal Fire of peace, love, brotherhood and sisterhood.”*

If they make the wrong choice, the destruction will come back to them and cause suffering and death to all the earth's people.

Based on the prophecy of the Fires, the Ojibwa moved up the St. Lawrence and took up residence in the areas that Europeans found them in. As they arrived the knowledge of the Fires and other essential information was encoded in petroglyphs.

By the time the Europeans arrived, all of Ontario's Native people had undergone profound changes in anticipation of the Dark Sun. Villages had become stockaded; Indian versus Indian wars erupted; and, in the final moments the Ojibwa forged the three Fires confederacies of Algonquin Nations which would unite and strengthen people for the difficult times ahead.

#### Contemporary Iroquois

*“. . . our beginnings were toward the setting Sun, where the grass grew tall, where the buffalo lived.”*

Around the time of Clvasts birth, the Iroquois headed up the Ohio River towards the Great Lakes. The halcyon days of social political, cultural and spiritual evolution through wayfinding and monumental architecture was over. The Dark Sun neared and Native societies grew restive.

As the final southwestern people arrived, one band of Iroquois crossed the Great Lakes and settled on Georgia Bay. They are known as the Thastchetchi; the Huron. South of them settled the Tionontati, the Tobacco people.

A third band of the Hotinonsooni settle along the shores of Lake Erie; they are the Gaguagaono — Erie people. Still another band, the Hatiwaterunh — the Neutral people — settled

along the Niagara River. To the southeast of this group settled the Wenrohronon (Wenroe) band while, along the Susquehanna River is found the Kanastoge people. To the west of them, a seventh band, along the Upper Ohio, the Honiasontkeronon (Black Minqua) built their towns.

The Nottoway and Meherrin people migrated up the Kanawha River. And, far to the south, across the Appalachian Mountains migrated the Oyatageronon, the Cherokee people.

The main band continued down the St. Lawrence River. There they met the Adirondack people; a people different from themselves. These people were physically smaller than the Hotinonsonni, but there were more of them. They were hunters, while the Iroquois were more or less farmers. The Hotinonsonni noticed that when these people cooked their foods, they flavoured them with different kinds of bark. So, the Hotinonsonni called these people "Adirondacks" or porcupines, meaning literally, the Eaters of Bark.

The Iroquois did not get along well with the Adirondacks; and oral history records many battles with the "Bark Eaters." In time they were defeated by the Adirondacks and forced to pay tribute. After many years of planning and with secretly-stored provisions, one dark night they left their village and silently paddled their canoes up the St. Lawrence River.

They looked back and saw specks on the waters. These distant specks were the canoe of the Bark Eaters. The Hotinonsonni knew that the Adirondacks, not being burdened with women and children would catch them before they could land. The Adirondacks overtook the Iroquois near the mouth of the Oswego River. A great battle took place.

For a time it looked as if the Iroquois would be wiped out. The Thunder People heard their cry of distress and sent a great storm. In the confusion, the rough waters and high winds, many of the Adirondack canoes overturned. Those who survived, turned and headed for home.

War in the European definition was virtually unknown on the North and South American continents. Raids that are today referred to as "wars" usually involved only a fraction of the

available fighting men and those only for a very brief period. Utterly defeated nations were assimilated rather than annihilated. Nevertheless, after the Iroquois were established in the Finger Lakes region of New York and southern Ontario, they began to stockade and fortify their villages as did the Algonquin.

The life lived by these woodland people in their stockaded towns had sudden storms of terror and violence but was not one of constant strife.

### The Iroquois Evolve and Diversify

Following the fight near the mouth of the Oswego River, the Hotinonsonni landed and built their village prospered and, soon their population reached a point where it was necessary for the people to begin moving to other village sites.

So from their adopted homeland along the Oswego River, they trailed to the south, the east, and to the west. The Flint People or, to others, the Mohawk settled along the Mohawk River.

The People of the Standing Stone, or Oneida, built their villages along Lake Oneida while, those called the People of the Hills, or Onondagas, settled along Onondaga Creek. To the west, the Great Pipe People, or Cayuga, erected their towns along the shores of Lake Cayuga.

The Seneca, People of the Great Mountain, settled along Canadaigua Lake. Another band, the Akotaskarore, or Tuscaroras, travelled far to the south.

Now, they, the one band of Hotinonsonni, like a nuclear family, had become six separate bodies. To the east was the Hudson River running eastward into the Atlantic Ocean. To the west stretched the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River. North was the Adirondack Mountain region and south were the Finger Lakes.

## HURON

Collectively, the Huron called themselves OUENDAT . . . their confederacy consisted of five tribes; the Attignawantan, the Attigeenongnahac, the Arendaronon, Tahontaenrat, and the Ataronchronon.

Generally, the southern frontier of the Huron territory, defined in today's terms followed the regional strongholds and principal villages; Ossossane (La Conception), Scanonaenrate (Saint Michael), Teanaustaye (St. Joseph II), and Contarea (St. Jean Baptiste).

To the northeast, vast swamps stretched along the contact line separating the rock-knob area of the Canada Shield from the arable uplands of the Huron territory. The southwest was sharply defined by the tangled cedar and alder swamps of the Nottawasaga lowlands. Only along the southeastern frontier between Orr Lake and Lake Couchiching were the swamps more discontinuous. The Huron homeland was in fact an upland area of arable soils surrounded by water and swamp.

The climate in pre-contact times (say 16th century) seems to have been similar to today's 20th century climate. Winters were a bit longer, long enough to hinder tobacco growing but not corn; a growing season of approximately 140 days. Huron corn matured in 90 to 120 days.

Although the extent of the forest cover has changed greatly, the dominant species are the same; maple, beech, and bass wood. White pine, hemlock and elm are also common, particularly in the moister soils. And, there is no doubt that cedar and alder swaps were at one time extensive, as was the abundance of surface water.

### Social Organization

Descent and inheritance was matrilineal. Children did not succeed to their father's property, but to that of the mother's brother.

They were monogamous and formed nuclear families . . . the matrilineal extended family was the fundamental social and economic unit. The Huron society was divided into clan units; Turtle, Wolf, Bear, Beaver, Hawk, Porcupine and Snake.

To the Huron, there was no concept of animate-inanimate; everything had a soul or Spirit. The more powerful of these spirits, those that exerted control over the daily affairs of humans, were called "OKI." The most powerful "Oki" was the sky because it controlled the seasons, the winds, and all natural phenomenon. The Sky "Oki" was invoked at special occasions such as the conclusion of a treaty, the healing of the sick, or the giving of a promise. Feasts were given in its honour, and tobacco was offered as a sacrifice.

Since animals also had spirits, the people were careful not to offend them. Animal and fish bones were not burned nor were they fed to the dogs. Fish nets were never left in the presence of the dead and, to ensure a good fish catch the nets were married at the beginning of the fishing season to two virgins. While fishing, prayers, were offered to the fish and tobacco offered as a sacrifice to the Spirit of the waters.

Some of the more important Spirits could appear in human or semi-human form. ONDOUTACHIAE, part human and part turkey cock, was the Spirit of Thunder, Lightning, and Rain. After the Sky, the two most important Spirits were ATAENSIC, a woman identified with the Moon, and her grandson IOUSKEHA, who was identified with the Sun. IOUSKEHA made the lakes and rivers, freed all the animals from a great cave, made the corn grow, provided good weather, and passed on the secret of fire-making to humans. All living things were in its care; ATAENSIC had fallen from the Sky to become the Mother of humankind.

It was ATAENSIC who made people die, was in charge of their souls, and continuously tried to undo the good works of IOUSKEHA. Both Spirits lived very much like humans but could rejuvenated themselves once they got old.

### **KHIONONTATERONON (Petun)**

The Petun was located about 26 miles southwest of the western boundaries of Huron territory. The occupied portion of the Petun territory lay below the Niagara Escarpment and generally above the major recessional shoreline of Glace Lake Algonquian in what are now Nottawasaga and Collingwood townships, Ontario.

#### Culture

Unless it be the degree of specialization in growing and trading tobacco, the Petun did not appear to have possessed a single trait not shared completely or in some degree with the Huron. The same can be said of all of the Iroquoian speakers and, the same homogeneity is found in the Algonquian cultures.

#### Economy

While a barter economy existed between Huron and non-Huron, there is no evidence of any kind of barter system among the Huron themselves. In fact, there is no evidence that goods and services were redistributed within the Huron society through commercial transactions or any kind of marketing system. Within the kin sphere, goods and services were simply shared. Beyond that system, goods diffused through ceremonial exchanges (“give-away”), such as name-giving ceremonies, burial ceremonies, and through gift-giving such as marriages.

Everyone within the kin sphere was related; traced back to common ancestors. And, when gifts were given, the value of the gift was dependent upon the view of the worth or “standing of the donee by the donor.” Hence, in this system, one’s reputation, in a society wherein secrets were few, determined the stature of an individual, family, or clan and, accordingly, provided the motivation to be a person of stature.

Hoarding of goods and stinginess met with strong village disapproval and could lead to unpleasant accusations and to banishment, while liberality was highly valued and received strong social approval.

### Burial

Some, notably the Huron, north and east of Lake Ontario, practiced elaborated mass burial ceremonies when the collected bones of the deaths of 10 or 12 years were formally interred together with mountains of rich funeral gifts; from furs to beautifully worked tools and arms.

### **OTHER**

The southern ball game, with racquets was played — La Crosse. An east coast innovation was introduced in the centuries following the decline of the Hopewell world, was in widespread use; sea shells (actually the hinges of the shells) strung on strings or beaded into belts, used to record history, and exchanged between nations at diplomatic councils as solemn promises of earnest intent; WAMPOMPEAG, in the Algonquian language — Wampum to the English.

The final policy meeting of North American leaders, in Mexico city, triggered profound changes in Ontario Native life. Five Iroquoian nations inhabiting all of central New York, from the Genesee River to Lake Champlain, organized themselves into a Confederacy. They were, from west to east, the Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, and the Mohawk; the League of the Iroquois.

North of the Five Nations were the Huron, a populous confederacy made up of five aristocratic tribes, richest in tradition and ceremony of all of the Iroquoian, and a number of dependent groups; one an Algonquian community.

To the west of the Five Nations was the Iroquoian State that become known as the Tobacco Nation and the Iroquoian confederacy that came to be known as Neutrals.

Southwest of the Five Nations were the Erie, also known in their Iroquoian language as the “Cat Nation,” from the full meaning of their name, “People of the Panther.” South of the Five Nations, in central Pennsylvania and adjacent regions were the Susquehanna, also known as the Connestoga or Kanastoge.

The League of Iroquois was organized by Huron statesman Daganawida and assisted by a Mohawk named Hiawatha, put an end to the conflicts between the Five Nations and established a universal peace based upon harmony, justice and a government of law; The Great Law of Peace.

The Confederacy, still active today (the oldest living democracy), is composed of a Grand Council of 50, made up of the Head Councillors of each of the Five Nations. The “Sachems” were selected from specific families by the Clan Grandmothers, and were appointed for life — although the Clan Matriarch of his clan could have a Sachem deposed if he turned out to be a bad choice (not taken lightly).

A second level of Sachems, known as “solitary pine trees,” to which anyone could aspire by merit rather than by birth. These Pine Tree Chiefs had the right to speak in Council and made up a House of Representatives, so to speak, as against the Senate of hereditary chiefs.

The League, or the Great Peace, has these many centuries kept the peace among its members. Its great Council held each summer at the principle Onondaga town provides an impressive show, instilling a feeling of unity, as it continues year after year, generation after generation, century after century. The joy and strength of friendship was established, the deep conviction that “. . . come what may . . .” one’s nation does not stand alone; that all the way from the Seneca to the Mohawk, the west wind streams over a forest of family.

To enhance the feeling of family, the political structure of the Confederacy paralleled the Longhouse. The Mohawk became the eastern door, the Seneca the west. The Onondaga who

most resisted Confederacy were granted the central fire. Moreover, the methods and means of building a Longhouse mirror, the way Iroquoian sentences and thoughts, are constructed. Thus, politics, architecture and language were synchronized and created a powerful psychological construct that would serve to protect and maintain the people through the forthcoming holocaust of invasion by Europe.

### **KINOMAGEWAPKONG — What do the Rocks Teach us Today?**

The tribal “chronicles” of Peterborough and all of the Americas are important not only to the people for whom they were recorded but also for the rest of humanity. The reading of petroglyphs corroborated in oral histories permit the participants, a hundred generations later, to “experience” the events of ancestors. They also provide us with a picture of what the original ecology of our planet was like, at least during the last few hundred centuries. Also, they may also serve as sources for important environmental and species survival purposes.

The rocks in the Americas are beginning to reveal new information. Elders have begun to notice and are travelling across the continent to interpret these messages. Western scientists have also become interested.

Barry Fell was one of the first western scientists to state that the North American rocks contain a record of Celt, Basque, Libyan and even Egyptian visits and colonies dating back 2,500 years. Fell’s interpretation of history provides an image of peaceful, productive relationships between Native peoples and Europeans which was sustained over a long period of time. Needless to say, mainstream historians were skeptical and continued to hold to the linear impoverished Bering Strait’s theory.

From a Native viewpoint, Fell’s work is important because it begins to bridge the chasm that has existed in the knowledge systems and relationships of Native and non-Native Canadian. Fortunately, there is a growing interest on the part of established scientists such as Mavor and

Dix from Harvard to build on the foundations revealed by Fell. This is crucial because Native knowledge systems hold a key to long-term environmental and species survival. Cross-cultural scientific communication and collaboration is essential if our children and their children are to continue.

The future calls upon the people of Ontario to address and find creative solutions to major human and ecological issues such as further development of hydroelectric power and proposed clear cuts. Left unattended, these contentious and vital decisions which are dividing Native and non-Native people out of the hands of science and concerned citizens and into the hands of politicians and vested interests. Unfortunately these groups rely on approaches which evolved out of the epoch of the Dark Sun and produce Burtuo conflict and confusion.

The other avenue is a wholistic approach, articulated in quantum physics and carried in the wisdom of informed Native Elders. One immediate way, to comprehend this life sustaining approach and to access vital information on a timely basis, is to visit the ancient universities like the rocks at Peterborough. As we study and begin to make sense of the messages left for us, there we also discover the deep meaning and the great potential of the western person in Native North America. It is the dawning of the New Sun — let us begin.

TRADITIONAL ADVISORS

Xilonem Gavcia, Aztec Elder  
Mazatl Galindo, Aztec  
Mary Jones, Choctaw Elder  
Thomas Banyacca, Hopi Elder  
Jake Thomas, Six Nations Chief

FIELD WORK SITES

Teotihuacan, Mexico  
Giza, Egypt  
Poverty Point Mounds, Louisiana  
Big Horn Medicine Wheel, Sheridan, Wyoming  
Aztalan Mounds, Greenfield, Wisconsin

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(Part of Ojibwa; Saugeen Ojibway word for Month of the River.)

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