

## Appendix One

## Facsimile of Tablet to Amír Khán &amp; Research Department Memoranda

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THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE  
DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARIAT

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8 June 2007

Transmitted by email: [buckc@msu.edu](mailto:buckc@msu.edu)

Dr. Christopher Buck

U.S.A.

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

Your email letters of 25 April and 22 May 2007, inquiring about the recipient of a Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, have been received at the Bahá'í World Centre and forwarded to the Research Department for study.

The Research Department confirms that 'Abdu'l-Bahá's original Tablet, part of which was published in *Amr va Khalq*, volume 2 (Hofheim: Bahá'í-Verlag, 1985), pages 45 and 46, was addressed to Amír Khán of Tihrán. A copy of that Tablet was sent to you as an attachment to a memorandum dated 16 May 1996 written by the Research Department at the instruction of the Universal House of Justice. An additional copy of that material is enclosed for your study.

As the name of the recipient of the Tablet is not cited in the above-mentioned memorandum, you may wish to change the wording of the source of your published footnote to read, "An attachment of the Research Department memorandum dated 16 May 1996".

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Department of the Secretariat

Enclosure with attachment

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M E M O R A N D U M

To: The Universal House of Justice  
 Date: 16 May 1996  
 From: Research Department

Tablet of the Holy Mariner;  
**the “Call of God” and Native Messengers**

In his electronic mail messages dated 15 November 1995 and 22 November 1995 to the Universal House of Justice, Mr. Christopher Buck requests certain materials concerning the Tablet of the Holy Mariner and raises questions about an extract from a Tablet revealed by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to which reference is made in memoranda prepared by the Research Department on 25 August 1994, 24 May 1988 and 22 October 1995. We respond as follows.

1. Tablet of the Holy Mariner

As Mr. Buck requested, we attach a photocopy of the original of the section of this Tablet that was revealed in the Persian language together with a short list of references from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, from *God Passes By*, and from letters written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi concerning the Tablet of the Holy Mariner. To date, no English translation of the Persian section of this Tablet is available at the Bahá’í World Centre. However, a brief summary of the contents of this Tablet may be found in Adib Taherzadeh’s *The Revelation of Bahá’u’lláh*, rev. ed. (Oxford: George Ronald, 1988), volume 1, page 243.

2. **Tablet Revealed by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá**, in *Amr va Khalq*, volume 2, pages 45-46

We attach for Mr. Buck a copy of the original of the Tablet revealed by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, part of which is published in *Amr va Khalq*, volume 2, pages 45–46. As noted in our memorandum of 25 August 1994, the beginning and final passages of this Tablet are published in *Amr va Khalq*, volume 3, pages 307–308.

The English translation of the section of the Tablet that appears in volume 2, pages 45-46 is as follows:

In ancient times the people of America were, through their northern regions, close to Asia, that is, separated from Asia by a strait. For this reason, it hath been said that crossing had occurred. There are other signs which indicate communication.

As to places whose people were not informed of the appearance of Prophets, such people are excused. In the Qur'án it hath been revealed: "We will not chastise them if they had not been sent a Messenger."

Undoubtedly in those regions the Call of God must have been raised in ancient times, but it hath been forgotten now.

As Mr. Buck observed, the final paragraph of the Tablet is cited in the Research Department memorandum of 24 May 1988. The first and last paragraphs are quoted in the letter dated 7 July 1988, written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer, which was attached to our memorandum of 22 October 1995, and phrases from the final paragraph are also cited in the October 1995 memorandum.

### 3. The "Call of God" and Native Messengers

Mr. Buck states that he regards the phrase "Call of God", mentioned in the extract above, as a technical term which "is very clearly a reference to the teachings that originate from Manifestations of God". He also indicates that this Tablet appears to provide "a textual basis for establishing in principle but not in name — the existence of Manifestations of God sent to the aboriginals of North America, and possibly, by extension, to other indigenous peoples as well". He, therefore, proposes that

... the Faith officially proclaim that God, in addition to sending the named Manifestations of God that we already have accepted, has sent "Messengers of God to Indigenous Peoples" as a principle grounded in *Amr va Khalq* (vol. 2, pp. 45-46). We should at least be able to assert that there were "Messengers of God to First Nations", as we say in Canada.

Further, Mr. Buck's understanding of the Tablet leads him to question whether the Research Department used excerpts from the Tablet to support two conflicting views. Before considering this question, it is, as Mr. Buck says, important to address the issue of the meaning of the term "Call of God".

#### 3.1 The "Call of God"

The Persian term translated as "Call of God" in the above Tablet is "*nidáy-i-lláhh*". This term appears frequently in the Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá with differing shades of meaning. By way of illustration, we provide the following examples from *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá* (Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1982), each of which contains the expression "*nidáy-i-lláhh*", though the English translations differ:

- Section 15, page 31: "... for this did Bahá'u'lláh raise up the call of the Lord".

- Section 195, pages 234–235: Referring to the influence of opposition to the Faith on its dissemination, 'Abdu'l-Bahá asks: "How else could His summons have been heard in the continents of America and of Africa the dark?"

- Section 219, page 274: "Although ye dwell in western lands, still, praise be to God, ye did hear His call from out the east and, even as Moses, did warm your hands at the fire kindled in the Asian Tree."

- Section 225, page 283: Describing the "Two calls to success and prosperity", 'Abdu'l-Bahá indicates that the second "is the soul-stirring call of God", which, He explains, "is founded upon the instructions and exhortations of the Lord and the admonitions and altruistic emotions belonging to the realm of morality which, like unto a brilliant light, brighten and illumine the lamp of the realities of mankind. Its penetrative power is the Word of God."

From these several examples, it is suggested that while the "Call of God" is clearly "founded" upon the teachings of the Manifestation of God, being in the physical presence of the Manifestation is but one means by which people become informed of "His summons".

### 3.2 Native Messengers

With regard to whether the excerpt from the Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá cited above enunciates a general principle that permits the conclusion that God sent His Messengers to indigenous peoples, specifically to the Americas, we wish to note, that, to date, the Research Department has not been able to locate any authoritative interpretation of the Master's Tablet in the Bahá'í Teachings, nor have we found a text which clearly indicates that Manifestations of God have appeared in the Americas. We offer the following points for consideration:

#### The Tablet

It is not clear from the context of the Tablet that the reference to raising the "Call of God" presupposes the presence of a Manifestation of God in the Americas.

The Master's Tablet appears to be a response to a question about the fate of people who live in "places" which have not been penetrated by the call of the Prophets. If this be so, then 'Abdu'l-Bahá's statement about the raising of the "Call of God" could simply imply that "the people of America" were "informed about the appearance of Prophets" as a result of the contact and "other signs which indicate communication" that occurred "in ancient times"

between the peoples of America and Asia. In this regard, the following extract from a letter dated 25 November 1950, written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer is of interest:

It is possible the Indians of the Americas were influenced in the remote past by Prophets in Asia. But again, as there is nothing in our teachings about it we cannot do more than speculate.

#### Statement in *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, page 289

In one of His talks published in *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is reported to have stated:

The East has ever been the dawning point of the Sun of Reality. All the Prophets of God have appeared there. The religions of God have been promulgated, the teachings of God have been spread and the Law of God founded in the East. The Orient has always been the centre of lights.

The principle enunciated in this statement is confirmed in the published letters of Shoghi Effendi. For example, in his letter addressed to the Asian Intercontinental Teaching Conference in October 1953, the Guardian refers to the “Asiatic continent” as “the cradle of the principal religions of mankind”. And, in his letter entitled “America and the Most Great Peace”, Shoghi Effendi reiterated the principle and actually cites this and other similar passages from *Promulgation* on the same subject.

#### Prophetic Figures

While we are unable to locate a text which clearly indicates that Manifestations of God have appeared in the Americas, the Bahá’í Teachings and the Qur’án recognize the possibility of individuals’ being centres of divine guidance for their own people, without occupying the station of Major Prophethood. In a letter dated 21 December 1986, written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to a National Spiritual Assembly, the House of Justice states:

... there are also other prophetic figures who are under the shadow of the Manifestation, and personages, such as sages, seers, and divine men of learning, who because of their wisdom and guidance, profoundly influence the lives of people in certain parts of the world.

#### 4. Two Conflicting Views?

Mr. Buck refers to Research Department memoranda dated 24 May 1988 and 22 October 1995, which, he believes, use the statement from the

Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá about the “Call of God” to support two opposing points of view. He states that, while, in one memorandum the passage argues the possibility of two Manifestations of God on earth at the same time, in the second, it is used to argue against the possibility of Native Manifestations in the Americas.

In our memorandum of 24 May 1988, the Department was addressing, among other things, the question of whether, in the past, it was possible that two Manifestations of God could have lived at the same time. In commenting on this question, we called attention to the fact that the Bahá’í Teachings contain no exact information about the dates of Dispensations prior to Muhammad, that our Writings and the Qur’án indicate that Manifestations and other prophetic figures have been sent down to mankind from the beginning of time, and that the records concerning many of these personages have been lost. Since we were not able to find any clear guidance in the Bahá’í Teachings concerning the possibility of two Manifestations of God having lived at the same time, our tentative conclusion — that it was not possible to rule out such a possibility — was based on the fact that the Teachings affirm that the traces of many such personages had been lost. The statement from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was cited in this connection, rather than to argue for the presence of Messengers in a particular place, i.e., the Americas. This usage is consistent with our reading, as outlined above, of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s statement as an affirmation of the fact that “In ancient times the people of America” had been “informed of the appearance of Prophets”, but that “it hath been forgotten now”.

With regard to the citation of the Master’s statement about the “Call of God” in our memorandum of 22 October 1995, we wish to note that reference to this passage was included because it is one of a small number of texts and authoritative statements which, when considered in relation to each other, help to provide insight into the question of whether or not Messengers of God have arisen in the western hemisphere. Based on these materials, it is our view that evidence for the advent of Messengers of God in the Americas does not appear to be very strong. However, we have found no text which explicitly rules out the possibility.

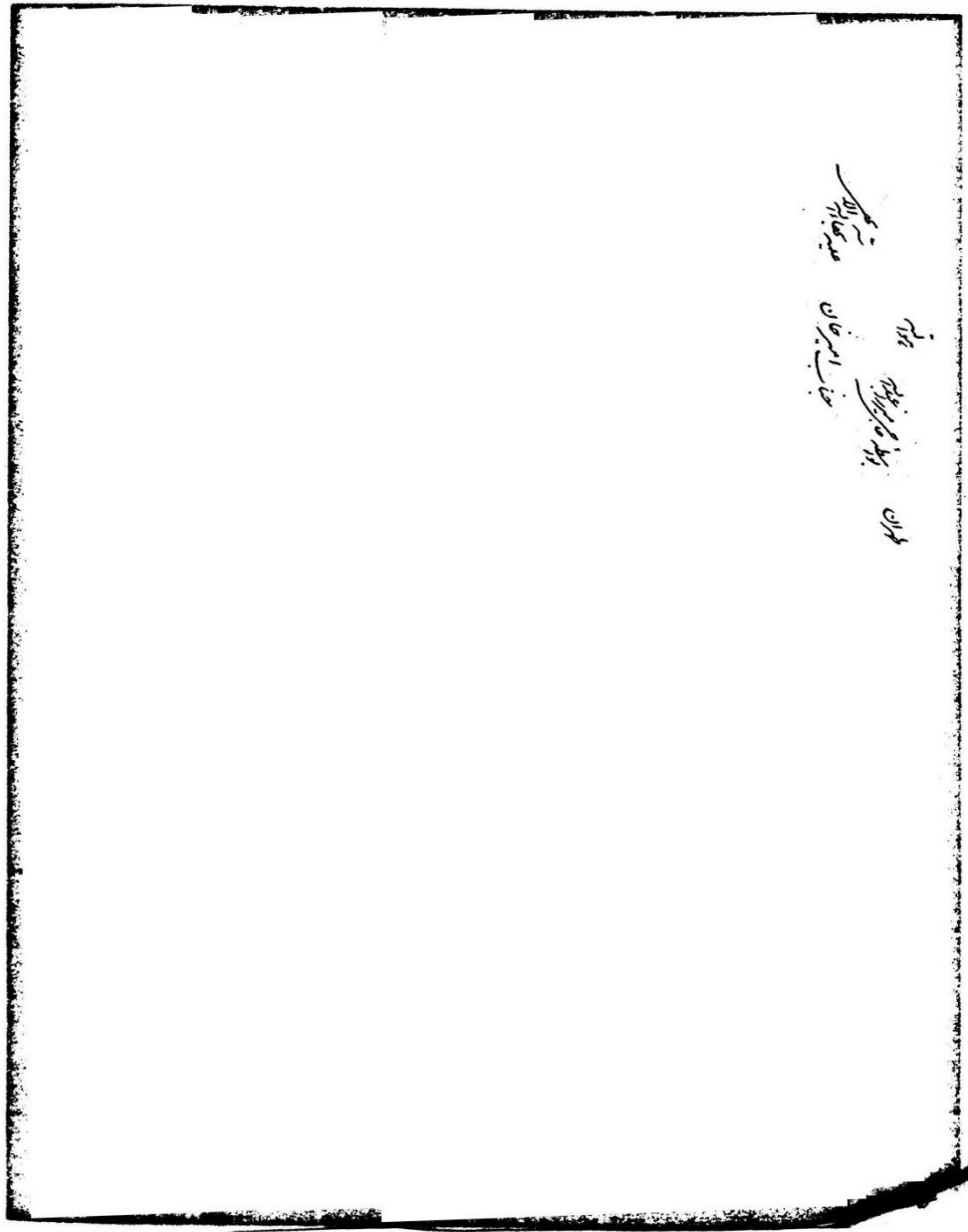


Figure 1:  
Facsimile of Tablet to Amir Khan, courtesy Bahá'í World Centre (digital artifacts removed).

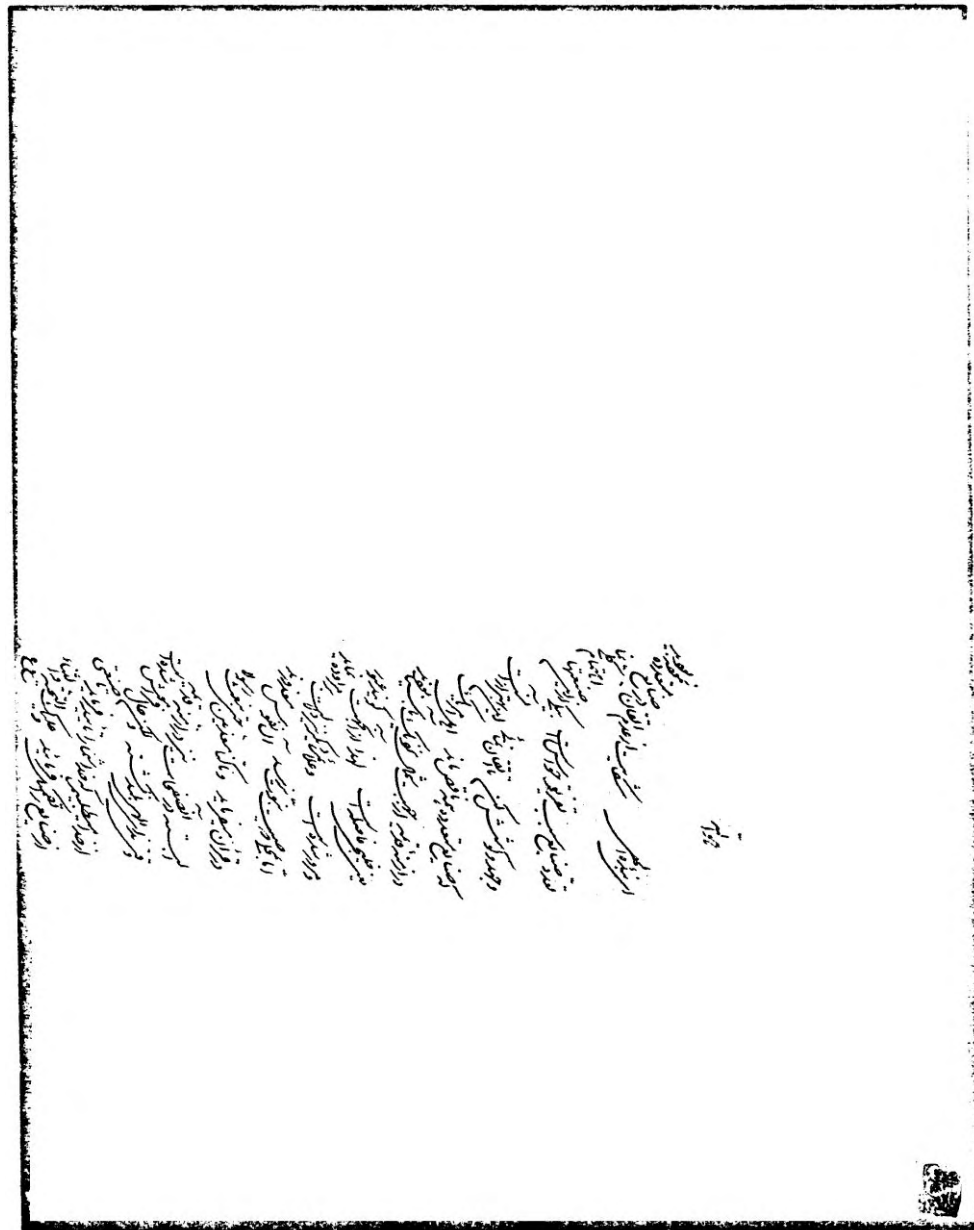


Figure 2: Facsimile of Tablet to Amir Khan, cont.



## M E M O R A N D U M

To: The Universal House of Justice  
 Date: 6 August 2007  
 From: Research Department

## Tablet to Amír Khán and Related Questions

The Research Department received a copy of Mr. Phillip Tussing's email letter dated 25 May 2007 and studied the matters that he has raised in his message. The following is our response to his questions:

1. The text of the Tablet is correct. In response to his request, the facsimile of the original Persian text is attached. The Research Department is not aware of whether a copy of the Tablet also exists in the handwriting of Mírzá 'Alí Akbar Mílání.
2. As indicated in the attached facsimile, the Tablet was revealed in honor of a certain Amír Khán, about whom we have no information. Therefore, we can not verify the biographical information provided by Dr. Iraj Ayman and quoted in Mr. Tussing's email. The Archives Office at the Bahá'í World Centre so far has no evidence regarding the questions that Amír Khán submitted to the Master.
- 3.a. The Research Department is not aware of any other Tablets, textually similar to that of Amír Khán, in which the question of the "Call of God" being raised in North America is discussed.
- b. The terms "Call of God" and "America", of course, appear in a number of Tablets of the Master in various other contexts unrelated to the text of the Tablet to Amír Khán. As Mr. Tussing has indicated in his letter, the term "Call of God" in the Bahá'í texts relates to God's voice and His summons, messages and teachings.
- c. The literal meaning of the Persian term "*farámúsh shudih ast*" is "forgotten", as it appears in the English translation of the Tablet. The Research Department is not in a position to interpret the term beyond its literal meaning.
4. The Master's likening of the indigenous Americans to the pre-Islamic Arabs, which is described in His *Tablets of the Divine Plan*, is not noticed in His other works.

Attachment

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## Appendix Two.

### **Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet to Badí'u'lláh: Parallels to Bahá'í Teachings by Native American Messengers of God**

Donald Francis Addison, Ph.D.

Christopher Buck, Ph.D., J.D.

*Be generous in prosperity, and thankful in adversity. Be worthy of the trust of thy neighbor, and look upon him with a bright and friendly face. Be a treasure to the poor, an admonisher to the rich, an answerer of the cry of the needy, a preserver of the sanctity of thy pledge. Be fair in thy judgment, and guarded in thy speech. Be unjust to no man, and show all meekness to all men. Be as a lamp unto them that walk in darkness, a joy to the sorrowful, a sea for the thirsty, a haven for the distressed, an upholder and defender of the victim of oppression. Let integrity and uprightness distinguish all thine acts. Be a home for the stranger, a balm to the suffering, a tower of strength for the fugitive. Be eyes to the blind, and a guiding light unto the feet of the erring. Be an ornament to the countenance of truth, a crown to the brow of fidelity, a pillar of the temple of righteousness, a breath of life to the body of mankind, an ensign of the hosts of justice, a luminary above the horizon of virtue, a dew to the soil of the human heart, an ark on the ocean of knowledge, a sun in the heaven of bounty, a gem on the diadem of wisdom, a shining light in the firmament of thy generation, a fruit upon the tree of humility. Bahá'u'lláh, Tablet to Badí'u'lláh<sup>134</sup>.*

- *Be generous in prosperity, and*

Then Tekánawíta said, “Who is helping you to guard the field?” Thereupon the man came there, and then Tekánawíta said “Are you the person who guards this field?” and the man answered, saying, “It is I, indeed, I am the person who stands guard at night at the cornfield;” then Tekánawíta said, “How do you do it, customarily?” and the man said, “This, generally, is how: when it just dawns, I am roaming about all over the field; sometimes I find corn cobs lying on the ground and I pick up as many as I can find. *Then I take them back to the chief's house, and that is how we do it throughout the harvest. Actually everything is owned jointly, and when the task is done, the way our chief distributes it is in equal shares for them to receive it, all of the people in the settlement.*” Thereupon Tekánawíta said, “Now I understand what your work is, so this shall be your name, they will address you calling you Kanuhkwe'yotu' [Growing Corn Cobs] *and that is what everyone will live by.* This is

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what your work will be now, the newly arriving Good Message and the Power and the Peace.” — Deganawidah<sup>135</sup>

- *...thankful in adversity.*

Thereupon Tekánawíta stood up, saying, “The Great Power came from the sky, and now it is functioning, the Great Power that we accepted when we reached consensus. So now our house has become complete. Now, therefore, we shall give thanks, that is, *we shall thank the Creator of the earth*, that is, he who planted all kinds of weeds and all varieties of shrubs and all kinds of trees; and springs, flowing water, such as rivers and large bodies of water, such as lakes; and the sun that keeps moving by day, and by night, the moon, and where the sky is, the stars, which no one is able to count; moreover, the way it is on earth in relation to which no one is able to tell the extent to which it is to their benefit, that is the people whom he created and who will continue to live on earth. *This, then, is the reason we thank him, the one with great power, the one who is the Creator, for that which will now move forward, the Good Message and the Power and the Peace, the Great Law.* — Deganawidah<sup>136</sup>

- *Be worthy of the trust of thy neighbor, and*

[Then Tekánawíta stood up in front of the whole group and said:] “Thirdly, this is what ‘Peace’ means: now it will stop, the massacre of humans and the scalping and bloodletting among themselves, specifically, among the people of the various nations. Now as to that, it will end, the human slaughter, because the Great Spirit never planned for humans to hurt one another nor to slaughter one another. So now it will end, the warpath, and everywhere it will become peaceful; *the different nations’ villages are as neighbours and as to the localized families and their children*, what will happen is that they all will be very close relatives; and it will come to pass that they will become just like one family which will encompass every nation and every language. And this: when everyone can travel from village to village, then it will end, the danger and terror, and everything will be peaceful, and they will rejoice by day and by night as the family continues on, there being no end to peace; that is what it means, the Great Law of Peace, and everyone will be united; now I am finished.” — Deganawidah<sup>137</sup>

- *look upon him with a bright and friendly face.*

Thereupon Tekánawíta prevented them, saying, “You will stop it because it is sinful for people to hurt one another; you especially, for

<sup>135</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in Gibson, *Concerning the League*, 193–196.

<sup>136</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in Gibson, *Concerning the League*, 294–296.

<sup>137</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in Gibson, *Concerning the League*, 105–108.

you are all relatives, and so it is necessary for you to be kind to one another, as well as to other people, those you know, and those people you do not know; *and you should respect them equally — all of the people — you should be kind to everyone.*” — Deganawidah<sup>138</sup>

- *Be a treasure to the poor,*

Thereupon Tekánawíta said, “Moreover, I decree that if this is what will happen to the coming generations, *if they are going to be impoverished, our grandchildren*, then these chiefs are to look for there very biggest tree, the large elm, which is tall and has huge branches and roots, all of them extending equally into the depths, and if they find such a large tree with long branches and roots extending equally deep, they will have good luck in generations to come, our grandchildren; in that place they will collect their heads, all of our Nations of our League, all of us will place our heads there, and there we will hide our heads as long as it will last, the earth which is beneath the sun. This is where it will be possible for them to be happy for they will continue to hold on to that which protects the group, that is the Good Message and the Power and the Peace and the Great Law; there the fire will be rekindled, our fire of our League which will keep burning and the smoke will keep rising, piercing the sky where all of us share our beliefs.” — Deganawidah<sup>139</sup>

- *...an admonisher to the rich,*

*The man who is a skillful hunter, and whose wife is alive to her opportunities, makes many feasts*, to which he is careful to invite the older men of his clan, recognizing that they have outlived their period of greatest activity, and now love nothing so well as to eat in good company, and to live over the past. The old men, for their part, do their best to requite his liberality with a little speech, in which they are apt to relate the brave and generous deeds of their host’s ancestors, finally congratulating him upon being a worthy successor of an honorable line. Thus his reputation is won as a hunter and feast-maker, and almost as famous in his way as the great warrior who has a recognized name and standing as a “man of peace.”<sup>140</sup>

- *...an answerer of the cry of the needy,*

Whenever a specially important matter or a great emergency is presented before the Confederate Council and the nature of the matter affects the entire body of the Five Nations, threatening their utter ruin, then the Lords of the Confederacy must submit the matter

<sup>138</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in Gibson, *Concerning the League*, 27–28.

<sup>139</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in Gibson, *Concerning the League*, 482–484.

<sup>140</sup> Charles A. Eastman (Ohiyesa), *The Soul of the Indian: An Interpretation* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1980 [1911]), 100–101. Cited as an exemplar of traditional Native American religion, with wisdom handed down from unnamed Native Messengers and sages.

to the decision of their people and the decision of the people shall affect the decision of the Confederate Council. This decision shall be a confirmation of the voice of the people. — Deganawidah<sup>141</sup>

Should a great calamity threaten the generations rising and living of the Five United Nations, then he who is able to climb to the top of the Tree of the Great Long Leaves may do so. When, then, he reaches the top of the tree he shall look about in all directions, and, 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.*” *Then shall the Lords convene in council and discuss the impending evil.* — Deganawidah<sup>142</sup>

- *...a preserver of the sanctity of thy pledge.*

All Lords of the Five Nations Confederacy *must be honest in all things*. They must not idle or gossip, but be men possessing those honorable qualities that make true royaneh. It shall be a serious wrong for anyone to lead a Lord into trivial affairs, for the people must ever hold their Lords high in estimation out of respect to their honorable positions. — Deganawidah<sup>143</sup>

- *Be fair in thy judgment, and*

De-ka-na-wi-da and Hai-yo-hwat-ka’ then added: “In the first place, *the chiefs must be patient, long-suffering, and courageous in the cause of right and equity*. This applies to the chiefs and the war-chiefs who shall fill these offices. All this must be done for the sole object of peace and quietness. We are bound also to carry this Law around and show it to all the nations, and we will name it the Great Law — *the Great Law of Equity*.” — Deganawidah and Hiawatha<sup>144</sup>

- *...guarded in thy speech.*

“*Guard your tongue in youth*,” said the old chief, Wabashaw, “and in age you may mature a thought that will be of service to your people!”<sup>145</sup>

<sup>141</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in Arthur C. Parker, [The Constitution of the Five Nations or the Iroquois Book of the Great Law](#), Article 93.

<sup>142</sup> *ibid*, Article 61.

<sup>143</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in Arthur C. Parker, *The Constitution of the Five Nations or the Iroquois Book of the Great Law*. New York State Museum Bulletin, No. 184 (Albany: NY: April 1, 1916). Reprinted in William N. Fenton, ed., [Parker on the Iroquois, Book III: The Constitution of the Five Nations](#) (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1968), Article 27.

<sup>144</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in J. N. B. Hewitt, “Legend of the Founding of the Iroquois League,” *American Anthropologist* 5.2 (1892): 131–148 [140–141].

<sup>145</sup> Chief Wabashaw, qtd. in Charles A. Eastman (Ohiyesa), *The Soul of the Indian: An Interpretation*, 90. Cited as an exemplar of traditional Native American religion, with wisdom handed down from unnamed Native Messengers and sages.

He believes profoundly in silence — the sign of a perfect equilibrium. Silence is the absolute poise or balance of body, mind, and spirit. ... If you ask him, “What is silence?” he will answer: “It is the Great Mystery!” “The holy silence is His voice!” If you ask: “What are the fruits of silence?” he will say: “They are self-control, true courage or endurance, patience, dignity, and reverence. Silence is the corner-stone of character.”<sup>146</sup>

- *Be unjust to no man, and*

The chiefs of the League of Five Nations shall be mentors of the people for all time. The thickness of their skins shall be seven spans, which is to say that they shall be proof against anger, offensive action and criticism. Their hearts shall be full of peace and good will and *their minds filled with a yearning for the welfare of the people of the League.* — Deganawidah<sup>147</sup>

- *...show all meekness to all men.*

Then Tekánawíta stood up in front of the whole group and said, “You shall listen well, for you wanted to ask questions so as to understand what it means, ‘Good Message’; this is what it means: *people respect each other as though they are one person*; also everybody is related among the various nations, so that now they will stop, the sins and activities of evil people; now everyone will repent, the old people and the young people; *now everyone will respect one another among the nations*; and just this is what will operate again, the good, and that is what the ‘Good Message’ means.” — Deganawidah<sup>148</sup>

The *wakan* woman [White Buffalo Calf Woman] then touched the foot of the pipe to the round stone which lay upon the ground and said: ... “Every dawn as it comes is a holy event, and every day is holy, for the light comes from your Father *Wakan-Tanka*; and also you must always remember that the two-leggeds and *all the other peoples who stand upon this earth are sacred and should be treated as such.*” — White Buffalo Calf Woman<sup>149</sup>

- *Be as a lamp unto them that walk in darkness,*

With endless patience they shall carry out their duty and their firmness shall be tempered with a tenderness for their people. Neither

<sup>146</sup> *ibid.*, 89–90.

<sup>147</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in Arthur C. Parker, *The Constitution of the Five Nations* Article 24. See also Deganawidah, qtd. in Bruce E. Johansen, *Forgotten Founders: Benjamin Franklin, the Iroquois and the Rationale for the American Revolution* (Ipswich, MA: Gambit, 1982), Chapter Two, epigraph. Cf. Gibson, *Concerning the League*, 698.

<sup>148</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in Gibson, *Concerning the League*, 103–104.

<sup>149</sup> White Buffalo Calf Woman, qtd. in Black Elk, *The Sacred Pipe: Black Elk's Account of the Seven Sacred Rites of the Oglala Sioux*. Recorded & edited by Joseph Epes Brown (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989 [1953]), 7

anger nor fury shall find lodgement in their minds and all their words and actions shall be marked by calm deliberation. — Deganawidah<sup>150</sup>

- *...a joy to the sorrowful,*

Thereupon he said, Tekánawíta did, “Moreover, I decree that these the clear minded, shall take care of all of it. When the day comes, when they go to bury him, these, the clear minded ones. I will choose a man to be their speaker. Now this one will direct his words towards the other side of the fire, *towards the bereaved, raising their spirits, the survivors* — the chiefs and also the deaconess of the title name and the whole group — he will raise all of their spirits; and this represents everything he will speak about to strengthen the spirits of the survivors.” — Deganawidah<sup>151</sup>

- *...a sea for the thirsty,*

*Public giving is a part of every important ceremony.* It properly belongs to the celebration of birth, marriage, and death, and is observed whenever it is desired to honor any person or event. Upon such occasions it is common to give away to the point of utter impoverishment. The Indian in his simplicity literally gives away all that he has, to relatives, to guests of another tribe or clan, *but above all to the poor and the aged, from whom he can hope for no return.* Finally, the gift to the “Great Mystery,” the religious offering, may be of little value in itself, but to the giver’s own thought it should carry the meaning and reward of true sacrifice.<sup>152</sup>

Orphans and the aged are invariably cared for, not only by their next of kin, but by the whole clan.<sup>153</sup>

- *...a haven for the distressed,*

Thereupon Tekánawíta said, “In relation to that I have decided to extend a pole from which we will hang a pouch made of [spotted fawn hide]. Thereupon we will drop into it strands, the short strands called *Atu’takshe’*. As to that, it shall be ours jointly. Moreover, if, in some particular place one will come to be a mourner, thereupon it will be the clearminded ones who will take down the pouch. Thereupon a man will bend down near the wall where he will pick it up, the object made of [spotted fawn skin] and, throwing it on his back, take to the road, walk to the place where one is mourning, and at the edge of the ashes he will stop, kneel down [?] and *then he will speak up, this one, using gentle words, for it would not be fitting if he were to use strong language when one is, actually, grieving.*

<sup>150</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in William N. Fenton, ed., *Parker on the Iroquois*, Book III: *The Constitution of the Five Nations* 37.

<sup>151</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in Gibson, *Concerning the League*, 495.

<sup>152</sup> Charles A. Eastman (Ohiyesa), *The Soul of the Indian: An Interpretation*, 102–103

<sup>153</sup> *ibid.*, 101.

Moreover, he will use the thirteen matters for clearing the mind, indeed, the thirteen strands of wampum [the Condolence Wampum]. Moreover, when he completes the rite in which *he will raise the spirits of the mourners again, these, as soon as they recover, will follow again the path of the Great Law.*” — Deganawidah<sup>154</sup>

- ***...an upholder and defender of the victim of oppression.***

Moreover, this also I decree: if the wind blows this way, coming from the east — or possibly coming from the west, or possibly it will come from the south, or possibly it will come from the north — if this wind comes, hitting the growing tree we have planted, and the tree falls over — or hits where we are holding each others arms — nevertheless it ought not break it; and this means that it could come from anywhere, the trouble that causes us to die, or perhaps, attempts to break our power; *even if, say, it happens that way to only one person, we shall stand up as one, protecting ourselves and shielding all of the people, so that they will survive, and the families will continue on.* Moreover, I decree that a single family we shall become, our various nations. — Deganawidah<sup>155</sup>

- ***Let integrity and uprightness distinguish all thine acts.***

Moreover, and most importantly, one is going to assemble in meetings where it will be announced that *all of mankind will repent of their sins, even evil people, and in the future, they will be kind to one another, one and all.* When they are functioning, the Good Message and also the Power and the Peace, moreover, these will be the principal things that everybody will live by; *these will be the great values among the people.* — Deganawidah<sup>156</sup>

- ***Be a home for the stranger,***

Roots have spread out from the Tree of the Great Peace ... and the name of these roots is the Great White Roots of Peace. If any man of any nation outside of the Five Nations shall show a desire to obey the laws of the Great Peace ... they may trace the roots to their source ... and they shall be welcomed to take shelter beneath the Tree of the Long Leaves. — Deganawidah<sup>157</sup>

- ***...a balm to the suffering,***

Thereupon Tekánawíta said, “Moreover I decree that if she is not able to get ready by the third day, she may postpone it to the tenth

<sup>154</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in Gibson, *Concerning the League*, 534–537. Cf. pp. 646–648.

<sup>155</sup> *ibid.*, 307–309.

<sup>156</sup> *ibid.*, 40–41.

<sup>157</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in William N. Fenton, ed., *Parker on the Iroquois*, Book III: *The Constitution of the Five Nations*, 9.



day, which is the time indicated in mourning ordinary persons - when they have someone who dies, and the families (lineages) and clans grieve at their separation by reason of that persons death — so the time has passed, ten days, then she will cook one more meal, and this one is called the Dead Feast.

This is how it is done when an ordinary person has died, and so similarly, when the time has passed, the ten days, then the matron of the title name will prepare a Dead Feast upon the death of a deceased chief, and their at the feast all Three Brothers chiefs (the mourners) will assemble. Thereupon the other side of the fire, the clear minded ones, now they will go to the door of the bereaved, and they will clear the mourners minds, the Three Brothers, Indeed, that is to say, the Mohawk and the Seneca and the Onondaga, and what will get used to accomplish it are thirteen matters, which we shall call *Atu'takshae'*, the thirteen strands of wampum, which will always get used *to raise the mourners' spirits.*" — Deganawidah<sup>158</sup>

- *...a tower of strength for the fugitive.*

Then Deganawidah said, "So then what is the reason that you are stirring about here?" The men replied saying, "***Actually we are fugitives.***" Then Deganawidah asked saying, "What is the reason that you are running away, for surely there is nothing amiss now?"

The men said, "Understand that it so happened that where we lived our village was destroyed. So really we do not know the state of affairs there." Then Deganawidah inquired, "Who are these people who have destroyed your village?" The men answered, "It is indeed that person who continually harms us named *Dehononhsahenhwa?*, "He whose house obstructs the path."

Now then Deganawidah affirmed, "Now as for that, from now on that kind of work shall stop. Indeed understand that such an intention was not in the mind of the Creator of the earth and the skyworld.

Moreover, it is also my aim to put a stop to the killing of one another — that too should cease.<sup>159</sup>

Moreover, I am putting down inside of the area you are surrounding the arrow-bundle which signifies a single mind; *for this bundle, made of five arrows, is impossible to break*, and it is impossible to bend it; but if someone were to pull out one arrow, it will weaken its power, and if someone should pull out two arrows, thereupon it will

<sup>158</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in Gibson, *Concerning the League*, 501–504.

<sup>159</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in William Nelson Fenton, *The Great Law and the Longhouse: A Political History of the Iroquois Confederacy*, 87.

become bent, and if sometimes only two arrows remain, thereupon it is no longer strong and it has no power. Thereupon it will get broken, and it will come to pass that just about anyone will be able to bend it back and forth; but if all the arrows separate, now as to that, it will be easy for someone to break it, and so it is with your power: it should not get broken, nor should it get bent. This therefore, is what I decree: we shall have only one body, and only one head, and only one life. — Deganawidah<sup>160</sup>

- *Be eyes to the blind, and*

Moreover, at present it [*the Great Law*] *is young as the day is when the sun is rising and lights up the earth*; just as it causes warmth all over the earth for all the people, we will help the people of every nation. And just as all of the many things grow on earth and sustain the people, *the newly arriving Great Law will come to shed light on the minds of the people*, the elders and the younger people, everybody, even the children, and this is what you will work at: everyone shall become related to one another, so that it will become a single family consisting of every tribe; and they will be kind to one another, all of the people, and this is what will unite them: the Good Message, and the Power, and the Peace. — Deganawidah<sup>161</sup>

- *...a guiding light unto the feet of the erring.*

It shall be the duty of all of the Five Nations Confederate Lords, from time to time as occasion demands, *to act as mentors and spiritual guides of their people and remind them of their Creator's will and words*. They shall say:

“Hearken, that peace may continue unto future days! “Always listen to the words of the Great Creator, for he has spoken. “United people, let not evil find lodging in your minds. “For the Great Creator has spoken and the cause of Peace shall not become old. “The cause of peace shall not die if you remember the Great Creator.”

Every Confederate Lord shall speak words such as these to promote peace. — Deganawidah<sup>162</sup>

- *Be an ornament to the countenance of truth,*

Then the Spirit-woman pointed to the other scout, who trembled before her, and she said, “Go, tell your People what you have seen here. Tell them to build an altar of sage and cherry branches, and also

<sup>160</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in Gibson, *Concerning the League*, 305–307.

<sup>161</sup> *ibid.*, 127–129.

<sup>162</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in Arthur C. Parker, *The Constitution of the Five Nations or the Iroquois Book of the Great Law*, Article 26.

to put up a great tipi, and I will come tomorrow from where the sun sets. Tell them I have a great gift to give them, a gift kept in this sacred Bundle.’ And she told him, ‘Tell them just what I have said. Don’t make more than what it is and don’t make less than what it is!’ — White Buffalo Calf Woman<sup>163</sup>

- **...a crown to the brow of fidelity,**

Thereupon Tekánawíta said, “Stand-up,” and the man stood up in front of the chiefs. Thereupon Tekánawíta said, “Now the task is done, and *it is you who are the first one they have crowned with antlers*. Moreover your title shall be Thatotaho’, which is what they will call you, the people living on earth. *Moreover, this is what will protect them, all of the people of future generations, your grandchildren*. Moreover, now it will function, that which we will call the Great Law. So this is what we will begin to do in relation to you who are chiefs: from now on we shall have as symbols of our status, antlers for us to wear.” — Deganawidah<sup>164</sup>

- **...a pillar of the temple of righteousness,**

Righteousness means justice practised between men and between nations; it means also a desire to see justice prevail. — Deganawidah<sup>165</sup>

- **...a breath of life to the body of mankind,**

Now in turn, the other, my third saying, “now it is arriving, the Peace”, this means that everyone will become related, men and also women, and also the young people and the children, and when all are relatives, every nation, there will be peace as they roam about by day and also by night. Now, also, it will become possible for them to assemble in meetings. Then there will be truthfulness, and they will uphold hope and charity, so that it is peace that will unite all the people, indeed, *it will be as though they have but one mind, and they are a single person with only one body and one head and one life, which means that there will be unity*. — Deganawidah<sup>166</sup>

- **...an ensign of the hosts of justice,**

<sup>163</sup> As recounted by Arvol Looking Horse (the 19th Generation Keeper of the Sacred White Buffalo Calf Pipe), *The Native Voice* (Rapid City, S.D.) 5.13 (Oct 1–Oct 15, 2006): p. D1. “She [White Buffalo Calf Woman] told the remaining scout to go back, tell what he had seen, but not to make more of what it is or make less of what it is. These words are also a teaching of staying with truth.” Chief Arvol Looking Horse, “Response to Eagle Hunter,” *Lakota Journal*, 2004, June 18–25, A5.

<sup>164</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in Gibson, *Concerning the League*, 238–239.

<sup>165</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in Paul A.W. Wallace, *White Roots of Peace*, 39–40 See Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal*, Vol. 1, Part 1, Section 4, Sub-section 2, “*Iroquoians and the Iroquois*,” pp. 14 and 58, n. 26.

<sup>166</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in Gibson, *Concerning the League*, 38–40.

Power means authority, the authority of law and custom, backed by such force as is necessary to make justice prevail; it means also religion, *for justice enforced is the will of the Holder of the Heavens and has his sanction.* — Deganawidah<sup>167</sup>

- ***...a luminary above the horizon of virtue,***

A broad dark belt of wampum of thirty-eight rows, having a white heart in the center, on either side of which are two white squares all connected with the heart by white rows of beads shall be the emblem of the unity of the Five Nations. [Ed. note: This is the Hiawatha Belt, now in the Congressional Library.] The first of the squares on the left represents the Mohawk nation and its territory; the second square on the left and the one near the heart, represents the Oneida nation and its territory; the white heart in the middle represents the Onondaga nation and its territory, and it also means that the heart of the Five Nations is single in its loyalty to the Great Peace, that the Great Peace is lodged in the heart (meaning the Onondaga Lords), and that the Council Fire is to burn there for the Five Nations, and further, it means that the authority is given to advance the cause of peace whereby hostile nations out of the Confederacy shall cease warfare; the white square to the right of the heart represents the Cayuga nation and its territory and the fourth and last white square represents the Seneca nation and its territory. *White shall here symbolize that no evil or jealous thoughts shall creep into the minds of the Lords while in Council under the Great Peace. White, the emblem of peace, love, charity and equity surrounds and guards the Five Nations.* — Deganawidah<sup>168</sup>

- ***...a dew to the soil of the human heart,***

Thereupon Tekánawíta said, “Now, moreover, I decree that you chiefs of the Five Nations, that is to say, the Mohawk and the Oneida and the Cayuga and the Seneca and the Onondaga, who have the Good Message and the Power and the Peace and the Great Law, this is what I decree: do not ever disagree, thus there shall always be unanimity! It will be like a single person; you will have one body, and one head, and one heart, which means that as it became one family, when unified, creating relatedness and kindness, *each person will now be kind to one and all.* Moreover, we have completed all matters that follow in the family through generations, and these shall last as long as the earth exists, and as long as they are going to grow, the grasses and also the various weeds, as long as the shrubs keep growing wild, the various shrubs, and as long as they [keep growing wild], the trees, all kinds of trees; *and as long as springs emerge the*

<sup>167</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in Paul A.W. Wallace, *White Roots of Peace*, 39–40.

<sup>168</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in Arthur C. Parker, *The Constitution of the Five Nations or the Iroquois Book of the Great Law*, Article 60.

*water of rivers will keep flowing, also the large rivers and the various lakes; and as long as the sun keeps rising and setting and the moon keeps up its phases, and in the sky the stars do the same, and the wind is stirring on the land, and the heavenly bodies continue to provide light by day and by night; thus, it shall last, the task we are completing, the Great Law, and these two will cooperate, the earthly land and the other one, the heavenly land.” — Deganawidah<sup>169</sup>*

- ***...an ark on the ocean of knowledge,***

Nineteen generations ago the beautiful spirit we now refer to as Ptesan win-yan (White Buffalo Calf Woman) brought the Sacred C’anupa to our People. She taught the People the Seven Sacred Rites and how to walk on Mother Earth in a sacred manner. She said, “Only the good shall see the Pipe ... the bad shall not see it or touch it.” — White Buffalo Calf Woman<sup>170</sup>

- ***...a sun in the heaven of bounty,***

Thereupon Tekánawíta said, “It will turn out well for us to do this: we will say, ‘We promise to have only one dish among us; in it will be beaver tail and no knife will be there.’ Thereupon the chiefs confirmed that so it should happen.” Thereupon Tekánawíta said, “Now we have completed the matter; *we will have one dish, which means that we will have equal shares of the game roaming about in the hunting grounds and fields, and everything will become peaceful among all of the people;* and there will be no knife near our dish, which means that if a knife were there, someone might presently get cut, causing bloodshed, and this is troublesome, should it happen thus, and for this reason there should be no knife near our dish.” — Deganawidah<sup>171</sup>

- ***...a gem on the diadem of wisdom,***

She warned, “You must have a good heart and a good mind to go to the ceremonies. Honor the Sacred Places, the Sacred Ceremonies and the Sacred Sites. Each Sacred Site is an altar to the Great Spirit. Gather there often and pray the prayers and sing the songs I have taught you. *In time you will understand the meaning of the Seven Sacred Rites* that come with this sacred Bundle.” — White Buffalo Calf Woman<sup>172</sup>

- ***a shining light in the firmament of thy generation,***

<sup>169</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in Gibson, *Concerning the League*, 474–478.

<sup>170</sup> As recounted by Arvol Lookinghorse. *The Native Voice* (Rapid City, S.D.) 5.13 (Oct 1–Oct 15, 2006): p. D1 (2 pp.).

<sup>171</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in Gibson, *Concerning the League*, 458–460.

<sup>172</sup> As recounted by Arvol Lookinghorse. *The Native Voice* p. D1

Moreover, *at present it is young as the day is when the sun is rising and lights up the earth*; just as it causes warmth all over the earth for all the people, we will help the people of every nation. And just as all of the many things grow on earth and sustain the people, *the newly arriving Great Law will come to shed light on the minds of the people*, the elders and the younger people everybody, even the children, and this is what you will work at: everyone shall become related to one another, so that it is what will unite them: the Good Message, and the Power, and the Peace. — Deganawidah<sup>173</sup>

- *...a fruit upon the tree of humility.*

She [White Buffalo Calf Woman] said, “When you put the C’anupa s bowl and stem together, you connect the world above and the world below. The only time the C’anupa is put together is when you are in prayer. *And when you pray with the C’anupa, humble yourself.* Present your prayers to all four Sacred Directions, and then pray to the Great Spirit above and Mother Earth below. Sing your songs and pray for life, peace, harmony and happiness.” — White Buffalo Calf Woman<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> Deganawidah, qtd. in Gibson, *Concerning the League*, 127–129.

<sup>174</sup> As recounted by Arvol Lookinghorse. *The Native Voice* p. D1.

Appendix Three  
Letter from Dr. David S. Ruhe on Native Messengers of God / Deganawidah

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14 July [2001]

Dear Christopher —

It was a happy thing to find that you are now at Michigan State — a university affiliation which I've been too busy to develop as an alumnus — and have lost classmate contact — thus being an active Bahai and physician!

The ms<sup>175</sup> is coming by separate posting.

If you can bring off the “category” idea at the least, and Deganawida as indigenous Prophet at the most[,] it will be a great coup and a great service. A Bahai Indian woman, with tearful eyes, said that the Bahais gave her no respect as an Indian — a sorry thing.

Your mission = to bring respect for spirituality of the original Americans and perhaps much more — pride in Founders of their spiritual systems.

Nuff said, and thanks for chance to see your thorough scholarship once again —

Warm greetings to Nazy [Nahzy] from —

Dave & Meg Ruhe

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<sup>175</sup> Manuscript, i.e. Dr. Ruhe's critical comments on “Native Messengers of God in Canada?: A Test Case for Bahá'í Universalism” prior to its abridgement and republication as: Christopher Buck, “Bahá'í Universalism and Native Prophets.” *Reason & Revelation: New Directions in Bahá'í Thought*. Edited by Seena Fazel and John Danesh. Los Angeles: Kalimát Press, 2002. Pp. 172–201.