

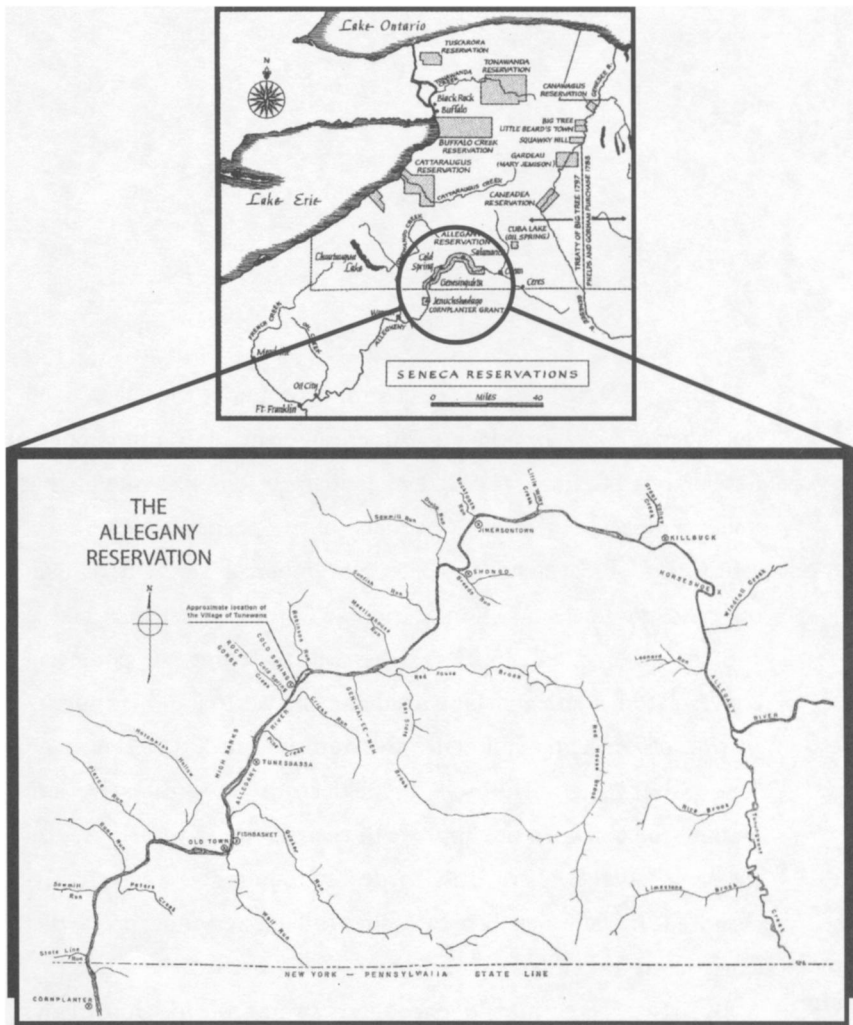
**PRACTICING LOCAL FAITH & LOCAL POLITICS:
SENECAS, PRESBYTERIANISM, AND A
“NEW INDIAN MISSION HISTORY”**

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Asher Bliss, a New England trained minister under the auspices of the benevolent organization, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, traveled in January of 1834 to one of the many villages within the borders of the Seneca New York reservation of Cattaraugus. Since November of 1832, Bliss had operated the Lower Mission Station at Cattaraugus which had a church and a school. In 1834 Bliss was searching for potential converts from a village whose residents had yet to join his church. Instead of a receptive audience the minister encountered a man, “one [who] justifies himself for neglecting the great salvation because the chiefs do not approve of their going to meetings.” In the same village where Bliss made his rounds, he was verbally assaulted by another Seneca: “the Indians do not need the Christian religion. It was white men who crucified the Lord.”¹

By 1834 such hostile encounters were routine for many Senecas and board-certified ministers like Bliss. Christianity’s opponents had had several decades of facing off with Protestant

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Sources: These maps are adapted from Anthony F. C. Wallace, *The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca* (New York: Random House, 1972) Charles E. Congdon, *Allegany Oxbow* (New York, Salamanca: Salamanca Area Museum Association, 1997)

missionaries. First it was with a series of itinerant Presbyterians and evangelicals. But by the 1820s, the United Foreign Mission Society (UFMS) and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) initiated the peak years of nineteenth-century Christian influences on the Seneca Nation.

At the Seneca reservations of Buffalo Creek, Allegany, and Cattaraugus, Presbyterian missions from the 1820s through the 1850s managed to hold firm ground operations. But if Bliss's confrontation with opponents in 1834 provides any indication, Senecas responded to missionaries with individual as well as collective resiliency. Senecas defended, adapted, but also sometimes abandoned, forms of sociopolitical organization and cultural practices that once bound them together as a nation. Moreover, in the initial decade of Presbyterian mission settlement, there was a central role for faith in local politics as the split between the "churched" and "unchurched" formed the principal political divisions. Faith differences, however, declined in political life once schools and churches matured as Seneca civic institutions and translators firmly established a Seneca Presbyterianism. Later, when battles over school placement, land retention, and national leadership raged from the 1830s through the 1850s, Seneca alliances formed between church and non-church members. By the 1840s and 1850s, the local practice of faith was not nearly as divisive an issue as who might govern the nation, and in that battle race and nationality trumped local religion. Though the "white men had crucified the Lord," and Senecas chose or refused to join a biracial Christian family in which the Lord had also supposedly given his life for Indian sins, Senecas eventually put aside differences of religious belief and united together to take some of the same positions in the political realm.

A history of the creation of a Seneca Presbyterianism, Seneca civic institutions, and Christian reservation networks also presents a strong case to argue for a "new Indian mission history" for the early American republic. An evaluation of the scholarship confirms a sophisticated body of work on Indian-missionary encounters in the first half of the nineteenth century has yet to emerge.² As this article shows, historians who might practice such scholarship have to get inside Native American communities. At the local-level, historians will find Native Americans and missionaries who came together in friendship and kinship for Christian worship, natives who discovered new governance in churches and schools, and yet Indians who recognized Christianity and mission institutions as disruptive to community politics and native religious practices. Like Indians who faced missionaries in British, French, or Spanish colonies, many Senecas in western New York rethought

and renegotiated local practices of faith. Such negotiation did not render Senecas vulnerable to white dominance or lead to the loss of Seneca ways of life. Seneca engagement with Presbyterianism, as Bliss's unsuccessful efforts of 1834 demonstrate, was also one of hostile opposition. Shared faith also brought together those who avoided Christianity, Senecas who adhered to the rituals and ceremonies sanctioned by Handsome Lake's *Gaiwi:yo:h* prophecy. With Red Jacket until his death in 1830 as one outspoken advocate, Senecas who remained out of churches tried to beleaguer missions among their communities in the 1820s, while sporadic episodes where Seneca religion served



Sources: Fenton Papers, Series VI, Wampum Transfer to MAI-HF, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, Pa. Chief Jake Thomas holding a replica of the Two Row Wampum at the 1988 repatriation ceremony. I would like to thank Katherine V. Muller for bringing this image to my attention.

as a political weapon appeared in following decades.³ The community-centered approach applied here adds to a field dominated by the study of well-known prophets and “tribal” or “pan-Indian” spiritually-influenced wars to the neglect of how practices of faith and politics merged as well as broke apart among Native American villages, families, and clans.⁴

On the outskirts of what would become the Erie Canal's main artery, Senecas met a series of itinerant Second Great Awakening Protestants. Baptists and Presbyterians as early as 1800 made their way to Buffalo Creek.⁵ But with much disaffection, revivalists faced a harsh opponent in the renowned orator and Wolf-clan affiliated chief, Red Jacket. The chief drew on history, memory, as well as ritual and ceremony to support an isolationist position from Protestant missionaries. Acknowledging the divisive role of

colonial missions, Red Jacket meant to associate Protestant missionaries of the nineteenth century with the dispossession of Native American lands.

With the Baptist minister Elkanah Holmes in 1800 for instance, Red Jacket, as suggested by historian Alyssa Mt. Pleasant, referenced a set of symbolic social relations established in the eighteenth century in the famous wampum belt, the *Guswentá*. It had “acknowledge [d] equality” between whites and the Iroquois. The *Guswentá* reaffirmed notions of “peace and friendship” in a particular way. Euro-Americans would not interfere with the political and ritual life of Senecas. Known in historical documents and Iroquois memory as the “two row wampum,” the *Guswentá* had two rows of purple beads separated by three rows of white beads. The two purple rows brought to Seneca minds images of boats, one representative of the Iroquois the other of Euro-Americans. An Iroquois boat took the form of a canoe and the one attributed to Euro-Americans was a sailboat. Both boats represented peaceable relations between two cultures. Senecas and Anglo-Americans maintained this peace and friendship only by separation, metaphorically represented in the rows of white beads.⁶

With the arrival of revivalist Jacob Cram in 1805, Red Jacket again called for separation from missionaries as reaffirmed in the *Guswentá*. Red Jacket’s council speech set the agenda of unconverted Senecas, who, to have a sense of community with the lands, saw churches as unnecessary. For Red Jacket and others opposed to Protestants, seasonal cycles that produced “skins for clothing” and “corn for bread” from the land was everything Senecas desired. Seneca “forefathers” had provided Red Jacket’s generation with the necessary rituals and ceremonies “to be thankful” for the bounty provided by “the Great Spirit” and to maintain their political unity on the homelands under a “Tree of Peace.” As Red Jacket further explained, there were clear differences between the Great Spirit’s “white and red children.” The chief’s stance toward racial separation had mid-Atlantic roots extending back to the 1750s and 1760s with the Pennsylvania Delaware prophet, Neolin. Both leaders shared similar language as found in Red Jacket’s attack.⁷ If the “Great Spirit” intended Indians to have literacy and an understanding of the world as all laid out in the “good book,” then according to Red Jacket, why had the “Great Spirit” not provided them with the knowledge of the Bible?⁸

Red Jacket’s emphasis on ritual and ceremony also had more recent Seneca roots in Handsome Lake’s *Gawiyoh* prophecy, also known as the “good word.” After a series of visions from 1799 to 1800, Handsome Lake put together a message that sanctioned specific forms of worship to keep Senecas

tied to their lands. The rituals and ceremonials were the Midwinter Ceremony, the Strawberry Festival, and the four sacred rituals—the personal chant, the Great Feather Dance, the Thanksgiving Dance, and the bowl game. A revival council at Tonawanda in 1818 only reinforced Seneca religion's importance. At the council, Kasiadestah, a Seneca spiritual specialist, warned his audience in the tradition of Handsome Lake that if they refused the prophet's prescribed practices, a storm and deluge would disrupt crop production with a tidal wave covering Seneca homes. To Red Jacket and others who refused to convert, ritual and ceremony and the set of social relations represented in the *Guswentá* had to prevail at all costs.⁹ Without ritual and ceremony, without separation, land loss was inevitable.

By the 1820s opponents of Christians still attacked missionaries who could make Senecas more vulnerable to territorial dispossession. A chief, Captain Strong, referred to a prevailing fear of “false ministers.” Strong and others were obviously aware of Eleazer Williams, a Mohawk Episcopalian missionary to the Oneidas. According to Strong, “there were false ministers”—“many who could put on a black coat whenever they pleased, and that they were not always to be trusted.”¹⁰ Men like Williams used the Bible to integrate themselves into Iroquois communities. Working in concert with land speculators, “false ministers” turned their backs on Native Americans to take their lands. Williams had brokered friendship with Oneidas but violated the chain of friendship. He had swayed many of the “People of the Standing Stone” to remove to Green Bay in the 1820s. Christianity's opponents in the 1820s characterized all missionaries as “false.” These mission fears abounded regardless of the assurances from the United States Indian agent, Jasper Parrish, that the Federal government protected Seneca lands, and despite the enactment of a preventative measure in New York in 1821 that was supposed to keep whites from settling Indian tracts.¹¹ In 1821, Red Jacket still asked:

What has been the result of those numerous tribes who had received missionaries among them? They are extinct; they are forever gone, so that the name even is no more remembered.¹²

In obvious violation of the New York law and in spite of opponent hostilities, missionaries from both the UFMS and ABCFM established Presbyterian ground operations that set the tone for the next three decades. Thompson S. Harris sponsored by the UFMS replaced Jabez Backus Hyde at Buffalo Creek

on November 2, 1821. At Cattaraugus, William Thayer set up his ABCFM mission school on January 14, 1823.¹³ Both Harris and Thayer established classrooms. Harris encouraged Seneca translators to decipher hymns and other Presbyterian literature into Seneca. With both missionaries establishing the earliest reservation networks connecting funded programs, the divisions between Christians and unchurched Senecas became more clearly pronounced.

A series of “new measure revivals” enabled Harris to convince some Buffalo Creek Senecas to promote his mission.¹⁴ Harris held a variety of prayer sessions, many in the council house or schoolhouse in front of large audiences. Presbyterian ministers traditionally proffered Calvinist theology in meticulously written sermons and felt most comfortable with scriptures read at the front of the church. Such methods had, however, been modified in the wake of the “new measure revivals” established by an agreement between Congregationalists and Presbyterians under the 1801 Plan of Union. “New Measures” were a “less ecstatic” form of religious revivalism than evangelical camp meetings. Harris’s revivals, in this sense, were spiritual environments under strict ministerial control. One can still only imagine how emotions ran high in the meetinghouse when Harris called Senecas forward to “anxious benches” reserved at the front where Indians sought repentance and expressed religious devotion. Though formal in this sense, the Plan of Union admitted terms of flexibility to increase church membership. Ministers granted Indian converts church membership with a “minimal, if any, probationary period,” encouraged Senecas to “publicly pray” for fellow “sinners by name,” and allowed “women to pray in mixed-sexed assemblies.”¹⁵

During Harris’s Buffalo Creek meetings, it was common for Senecas to fuse cultural practices with the teachings of the mission family, a process the mission family seemed willing to accept, on some level. With enthusiastic crowds of Indians exceeding one hundred, prayer sessions aided by translators were characterized by Senecas seeking Christian approval as they faced key turning points in their lives, receiving offerings of gifts from the mission family, or attending because the mission family strategically convened revivals at the same time as ceremonial events. Winter revivals, which occurred at the same time as the Midwinter Ceremony, usually attracted anywhere from 150 to 170 people.¹⁶ With revivals at the same time as Seneca councils and religious rites where he presented gifts that mirrored Iroquois reciprocity, Harris tried to enhance the trust between the mission family and potential converts in a period otherwise marked by intense distrust for men of the cloth.¹⁷

Presbyterians held their greatest sway at Buffalo Creek in the 1820s, where mass spectacles of religious revivals on special occasions suggested support for church activities was increasing. As their minister it was his duty to evaluate potential converts. Even if Harris provided church membership to Senecas after a brief period of evaluation, full devotion of faith was one of body, but more of soul and mind. And only the minister could determine such full submission. Indians might “act” like Christians, but church membership required one’s entire being to enter into a loving partnership with God and Lord Jesus Christ as savior. Full admission to the Presbyterian Church and devotion to its activities, under Harris’s supervision, became demanding for Senecas, both physically and mentally.¹⁸

Senecas who professed commitment found comfort as other kin and village members joined the church either on their own or under the influence of friends and family. Prominent chiefs and their children received Christian names at council house ceremonies.¹⁹ Two brothers, Seneca White and John Seneca, met with Harris on the Sabbath of November 12, 1821, where they renounced their previous attachments to the *Gaiwi:yo:h* prophecy that had required dancing in honor of the “Great Spirit.” Harris then had both kneel “down and [he] commended them to God and the word of his grace which [was] able to save souls.” These two men, affiliated with the Snipe clan, were some of Harris’s earliest converts. Brought into full membership with the church on April, 12, 1823, both men became influential church members. For example, Seneca White eventually served as president of an inter-reservation temperance society and became a Buffalo Creek chief.²⁰

Harris, with a young Indian schoolteacher, James Young, labored to guide church members to incorporate Christian doctrine, images, symbols, as well as follow biblical concepts of time and history. Harris expanded on Hyde’s educational work. He gave Young responsibility for translating several gospels, hymns, as well as the Ten Commandments into a rough written version of the Seneca language. Harris and Young’s *Hymns, in the Seneca Language*, published in 1823, contained many interesting songs that integrated meaningful Christian concepts with Seneca words and phrases. These hymns also contained particulars directed toward an Indian audience not in English-language versions of similar texts. With “culture as an affair of the mind” among the Iroquois, with a “Good mind [as] as a prerequisite to welfare, whether personal or interpersonal,” songs contained numerous references to the work of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit as giving Indian “minds peace,” and bringing “light to their minds.”²¹

With Seneca language texts made available, conversion under Harris was to reorder a Seneca connection with a spirit realm. Within a Seneca religious world, spirit beings moved both horizontally and vertically as men and women accessed power. A gender division was at one time separated by the forest, the domain of men, and the field, the domain of women. As seasons fluctuated males and females discovered spirit forces in the performance of different tasks to benefit friends and family. Once warriors and hunters, Seneca men took both animal and human life; they carried medicine bundles not to antagonize familiar game spirits and to appease an unseen world suffused with the spirits of the dead. Women had raised crops, gathered seeds and berries, and took care of longhouse extended families. In both fields and homes Seneca women thanked and placated the spirits lurking around homes, gardens, menstrual lodges, and amid mounds of corns, beans, and squash.²² Persistent Christian instruction by Young and Harris was to upend what remained of this Seneca cosmic-human relationship. In the nineteenth century, Senecas and spirits still engaged in relations that were at once nurturing, reciprocal, and cyclical. But in the Presbyterian Church, Senecas were to conceive of a spirit realm hierarchically with the Seneca place within the world located somewhere in Biblical history.

Outright adoption of Harris's teachings did not occur; Seneca translators of texts and doctrine made a Seneca Presbyterianism. Hymns were significant texts to translate as Indians also sang during Seneca rituals and ceremonies. As one of Young's hymns entitled "Confessions of Sin" sung by Senecas in the meeting house made clear, "Adam, our father, Was made holy, but he sinned, and we became sinners." God, however, translated into *Nah wen é u*, a derivation of *ne wi yuhs*, meaning "the good things."²³

Under proper ministerial charge, Senecas were part of the chain of being extending back to Adam, although *Nah wen é u*, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit stood at the apex of the Christian hierarchy. However, Senecas interpreted the Christian hierarchy in Seneca terms. Heaven in Seneca hymns was a Christian version of the Sky World, the place in Iroquois cosmology from which Sky woman descended to create Iroquoia on Turtle's back. Heaven, *kęgya' ka*, was a place "in the sky" occupied by angels, *batigya' ke: onq*, "sky dwellers," and saints, *swęgya' ke: onq*, translated as "you sky dwellers."²⁴ Jesus, "because to heaven he has gone" did not join a kingdom, "but [was] to find a house, for his people." Such references were symbolic of how Iroquois identified themselves as a people, the *Haudenosaunee*, translated into the "whole house." This was a reference to clan, kin, friends, and nations metaphorically united as one

Longhouse. As Senecas prayed, these lines probably also brought forth images of the house in Sky World where an Iroquois man and Iroquois woman took up residence on opposing sides of a fireplace.²⁵ The Devil, in contrast, was literally known in Seneca as “the pit dweller.” An underground layer throughout Iroquois cosmology was the domain of malevolent spirits.²⁶ Senecas sang of hell as “a place where the wicked always remain below.” Between these two spirit worlds, Indian men were to act as heads of households and farmers, and women as dependents, with both genders standing as equals in the eyes of the Lord. Senecas were Presbyterian but Seneca.

Even still, a Christian family of Indians at Buffalo Creek was small compared to the many non-church members, but both Seneca brethren and sisters found new sources of power and authority in the Presbyterian Church. Their number, reaching only thirty-six, included several members from the Snipe, Turtle, Bear, Swan, Beaver, and Hawk clans.²⁷ Women exerted new influence over unruly husbands by turning to the church in times of need. Harris convened chiefs both young and middle-aged loyal to the church and convinced many of them to abandon their old ways of “putting away their wives” to marry as Christians.²⁸ Chiefs like Seneca White found new roles as deacons and brethren, while women exerted their own influence as sisters within the circle of the Christian family. Male and female church members, according to Harris, “show [ed] a good example” to the many unconverted villagers at Buffalo Creek as they married as male household heads and females in charge of proper behavior in the private realm of the home.²⁹

For Seneca church members patrilineal nuclear households were important to try to establish. And yet, in another instance where cultural boundaries blurred, Handsome Lake’s *Gaiwi:yo:h* also sanctioned such reforms to Seneca social structures. The prophecy had called for men and women to remain together, with men as farmers and Seneca women as household domestics. *Gaiwi:yo:h* also encouraged education among Senecas. In this sense, churches also promoted Senecas reforms to male and female behavior that Senecas would have learned if they followed all of the tenets of *Gaiwi:yo:h* administered by a spiritual specialist. But the number of churched or unchurchd Senecas who abided by the same set of social relations is impossible to determine from the historical evidence. Mission accounts reveal only that between Presbyterian Senecas and the unconverted, divisions were primarily faith based. Furthermore, religion in the 1820s turned political when faith-based alliances sought control over the placement and operation of schools and the right to guard missionary land use.

Clan and family members followed a different path in Christian worship than their unchurched kin and friends. Harris converted, baptized, and buried relatives of Red Jacket. Although Red Jacket “repudiated” his own wife who converted to the faith, she remained steadfast to play a prominent role in the Seneca church.³⁰ Even when unchurched Senecas visited prayer sessions with family members, cynicism toward what they saw and heard was clear. A woman, a devoted follower of Seneca religion, attended church services with her son’s family. What terrified her was “an emblematical cut” that portrayed “the heart of a sinner under the control of the Devil.” She had the image translated to her, with the closest corollary in the Seneca language to a masculine evil-doer being the Iroquois cosmic trickster, *Tawiskaron*. His bad behavior after Iroquoia was created on Turtle’s back helped shape Seneca concepts of wrong versus right.³¹ Once a church member explained the picture in translation, the woman felt she was the person (“sinner”) portrayed in the image, undutiful to her family and unequal to the tasks of a Christian life. She could only beg her kin to pray for her. Relations exposed others to Christian precepts and practices, but many Indians still opted for Seneca forms of worship over Seneca Presbyterianism.³² Local family and clan affiliations were to remain divided on issues of faith, especially as church members forged their first “mission community networks.”³³

With the aid of his church members, Harris established the earliest of such networks.³⁴ Red Jacket and other supporters of Seneca religious practices worked against them. Because of Red Jacket’s rumors, Cattaraugus Senecas had come to believe it was the UFMS spearheading the western expedition under Eleazer Williams “to drive them from their lands.” Red Jacket’s speeches circulating from Buffalo Creek to Cattaraugus associated church power with the invasive and unsettling effects of state power: “all Indians who should embrace the gospel of the white men, should in a short time be compelled to pay taxes [on their lands] and subject themselves to the laws of the land.” Red Jacket’s words had debilitating effects on “the intelligence on a number of persons was to make them desert the cause they had espoused, for pagan superstition.” Unchurched Senecas also had reservation networks to foil missionaries whom they demonized as “false ministers.”³⁵ With support from Presbyterian Senecas at Buffalo Creek, Thayer still managed to set up his Cattaraugus schoolhouse by January 14, 1823. Connections between Christian Senecas from Buffalo Creek and Cattaraugus were keys to maintaining mission programs as much as unchurched Indians formed networks to try to stem the spread of Seneca Presbyterianism.

Friends in faith especially turned toward political alliances on schools and mission land use. Senecas owned reservation lands in common. No group of children was to have special privilege cultivating these lands, especially children under the supervision of missionaries. On this point, both Christian and non-Christian chiefs would agree but for their own reasons. Both sought to safeguard the Buffalo Creek reservation. Christian Senecas wanted to hold the church together and prevent political strife. Because Harris and the mission family had built a large home, fenced in a large plot of land for the use of the school and the children, even Presbyterian Senecas began to question that "if you give white people a footing among you, you will find that they will soon be building a town." Approaching a council with non-church members, these chiefs fully understood "that they [the unchurched] would no doubt take make the mission family's use of the land and encouragement of Christian children to cultivate it" a political issue used "to their own advantage."³⁶ By 1822, the Presbyterian Church at Buffalo Creek, to keep itself intact, yielded on the issue of missionary land use.

Other political issues were formal education and the discipline of children. Under the guidance of the mission family, children were restricted from family visitations as the missionaries exposed them to biblical teachings and offered rudimentary elements of education such as reading, writing, and arithmetic. The mission family did not hesitate to discipline Seneca boys and girls. Disciplining young girls became a particularly thorny issue. On September 24, 1822, "two squaws" came to the schoolhouse and removed all of the girls, declaring they were to abandon learning Christian values for the ritual calendar of the harvest to "assist their parents in the corn." Of course, the women took such action without consulting the mission family.³⁷

The discipline of girls was the center of an ongoing dispute about the limitations of the mission family's power and authority. Churched Senecas looked at the school as a place where children were to become as "well-behaved" as Anglo-American children under the guidance of the mission family. Senecas without church membership, in contrast, wanted the school children only to learn reading, writing, and arithmetic, and the authority of schoolmasters did not extend into discipline. For Senecas not of the church, many of whom still abided by matrilineal rules, discipline was the purview of Seneca mothers, uncles, and grandmothers, not a mission teacher only tied to Senecas by relations of symbolic kinship.

Harris's school fomented divisiveness at Buffalo Creek that also affected the small Christian community at Cattaraugus. Red Jacket began to use the

law from 1821 to try to rid Buffalo Creek of Harris's church and school. Christian Senecas on several reservations petitioned the government of New York requesting the Assembly to overturn the 1821 law prohibiting "ministers of the gospel" from establishing permanent residence on Indian lands. Harris received word by March 2, 1823, that the Assembly rejected the petition. Furthermore, the schoolhouse at Buffalo Creek divided generations on the loyalties Indians owed to the nation rather than the Presbyterian faith. According to Red Jacket, many "young chiefs" had adopted Presbyterianism, abandoned Seneca religion, and avoided separation represented in the *Guswenta*. Presbyterian Senecas apparently did not want to protect reservation sovereignty with their "reception of ministers and teacher of another color and another blood." In other words, Presbyterian Senecas had torn apart local leadership on issues of faith. Such men, according to Red Jacket, had once stood together under a "Tree of Peace." Without separation, churches and their missionaries would ultimately take Seneca lands. Red Jacket, who wanted a school run by a Seneca, presented speeches that persuaded young, Presbyterian chiefs to back off from the schoolhouse issue.³⁸ By February 23, 1824, Red Jacket's powers of persuasion had also reached Buffalo. Harris was to shut down his school under the ordinance of 1821. Seneca not of the church, united in Seneca faith, had won in politics. The school closed its doors in March. Ramifications of this event extended beyond the borders of Buffalo Creek.³⁹ With the suspension of the school, thirty-six Buffalo Creek children went to the mission school under William Thayer's control at Cattaraugus. By the late 1820s Harris's ministerial influence waned, while the duties of Christian instruction went to a pair of ABCFM ministers.⁴⁰

With Asher Wright at Buffalo Creek by November 9, 1831, and Asher Bliss—a man first trained as a Congregationalist at Andover Theological Seminary—at Cattaraugus after November 3, 1832, the job fell on the New England based ABCFM "to greatly elevate the standard of piety in all Seneca churches."⁴¹ Wright's first years at Buffalo Creek demanded all the ministerial powers the man was able to muster. On his first Sabbath he conducted his first marriage between George Turkey and Lydia Moore.⁴² As the "interpreter in their female meetings," Moore had exerted tremendous influence within the church at Buffalo Creek, and her move to Cattaraugus, where George Turkey lived, prompted the sisters of the church "to mourn." January 22, 1832 was a particularly busy one for Wright. He conducted nine other marriages, and baptized twelve children as Christians.⁴³ Administering rites of passage was a way for both Bliss and Wright to maintain a sense of a Christian

family that was not restricted by reservation borders. Out of a total of forty-five baptisms conducted by Wright in the 1830s, seventeen of these were at the reservations of Allegany and Cattaraugus—eleven at the former, and six at the latter. With thirty-five marriages performed by Wright, thirteen were at Allegany, and one at Cattaraugus.⁴⁴ Bliss, in fact, divided his time between Cattaraugus and Allegany. Bliss assumed control of the Cattaraugus Lower Mission Station and oversaw the running of the schoolhouse at a small village.⁴⁵ In February of 1833, he made his first trip to Allegany to hold a revival session. Bliss visited Allegany over the course of the next several years, appointing proper ministers and schoolteachers.⁴⁶ The church at Allegany was officially organized on February 18, 1830, with two deacons, Robert Peirce of the Bear clan and Blue Eyes of the Turtle clan, former supporters of a Quaker school first run at Cold Spring then a smaller village two and half miles north called Tunewana.⁴⁷ The church began with only fifteen members, but by 1833 that number had increased to fifty-four. Bliss had baptized nineteen children since the formation of the church and received twelve members. Bliss was convinced that the so-called “village system” of Allegany, with Indians separated from those who followed missionaries, created the potential to have three or four schools along the river.⁴⁸ In 1833, Bliss began endeavors to set up a school at Old Town located south of Cold Spring, where the Peirce family held a strong presence. By 1834, under the supervision of Bliss, firm mission community networks existed between Cattaraugus and Allegany.⁴⁹

The concept of a Seneca Christian Family continued to keep church members together between reservations to strengthen old and form new associations of kinship and friendship. Deacon Blue Eyes of the Turtle clan who formerly helped run the church at Allegany, moved with his family and friends to Cattaraugus, and entered the Lower Mission Station Church (also known as the Western Mission Station) on January 24, 1837.⁵⁰ Several members of the Lower Mission Station, perhaps disgruntled with Bliss’s leadership and attached to their former residence where Lydia Moore (Turkey) had exerted her influence as sister, searched out old connections of kinship and friendship. They moved back to Buffalo Creek on July 2, 1845, with seven other Senecas who were admitted into Wright’s Buffalo Creek Seneca Church. Their stay was short lived, however.⁵¹ These church members returned to Cattaraugus with Wright once Senecas were forcibly removed from Buffalo, and their traveling partners included many of Wright’s original congregation. Once at Cattaraugus, many of them came together to create the Upper

Mission Church.⁵² Some from Buffalo Creek went elsewhere for Christian instruction; they joined the Western Mission Station. This number included Seneca White of the Snipe clan and his wife, as well as Stephen Silverheels.⁵³ By the late 1840s, there were two Presbyterian churches at Cattaraugus. These were the Lower (western) and Upper mission stations whose members included Cattaraugus, Allegany, and former Buffalo Creek Senecas.

Specific duties relegated to deacons and brethren from particular churches extended outward into a social Christian network. Wright attended an annual convention of Seneca churches assembled on February 13, 1833 at Allegany. Indians gathered with friends in faith from all reservations like the more common associations of presbyteries throughout the United States. A Seneca General Temperance Society celebrated an anniversary under the guidance of its President, Seneca White.⁵⁴ The society arranged to appoint two Indian agents twice a year "to visit every village and neighborhood on all reservations."⁵⁵ A court of appointed Senecas was also deemed appropriate with "the power of granting divorces." According to Presbyterian Senecas, many Indians, either church members or practitioners of the *Gaiwi:yo:b*, still readily switched marriage partners. Meeting twice a year, the court was to handle cases of adultery.⁵⁶ Christian Seneca benevolence, however, was a loyalty not restricted to the Seneca Nation. There was an emergent identity as part of a pan-Indian Christian family. At a convention in 1834 a committee determined to appropriate most of the money collected from prayer sessions to support the "gospel among the Ojibways," an Algonquian group located in the Great Lakes region.⁵⁷ Devoted to the promotion of Presbyterianism, Senecas, moreover, attended the Quarterly Meetings of the Missionaries to the Western New York Indians. On August 15, 1840, Brother Zachariah Jimerson, presented an essay, "In What ways can the educated young men of our Indian churches offer their best support to their people?"⁵⁸ Appointed committees, court officials, and conventions provided a bulwark of civic responsibility and democratic negotiation that joined Seneca Presbyterian friends and family together and linked them symbolically to other Christian Indians throughout the United States.

Both Wright and Bliss by the 1830s also had extensive programs of formal education, and yet translators still regulated over sessions until Wright began his mastery of the Seneca language.⁵⁹ When Presbyterian cultural go-betweens conveyed the Christian message, Wright and Bliss only observed bodily reactions within audiences to somehow gauge Seneca commitment to the faith. The ministers used words and phrases such as "fixed countenances," "breathless silence," "venting their feelings," "flow of tears," "animation,"

“spirit,” “strengthened,” “enlightened,” and “external performances” to describe Seneca reactions to reservation-based revivals.⁶⁰ Wright presented the Board Commissioners with his problem in stark terms: “There is a great defect in the plan of the ministerial labor here that all the preaching is done through an interpreter . . . scarcely an individual can be found who will show his real feelings and let out his whole heart through an interpreter.” Full commitment to the church was also to be one of mind and soul, and yet such things were hard to determine when lost in translation.⁶¹

An inability to speak Seneca made board-certified ministers even more weary of the physicality that, from a mission perspective, seemed to make *Gaiwi:yo:h* an attractive style of worship. Bliss abhorred how Seneca preaching and chanting affected the bodies of Indians not of the church. Bliss, in 1833, could barely watch the Indians “fulfilling the injunction that thy head to do with thy might,” as “every muscle and every nerve was put in requisition and was attended with a very free perspiration.”⁶² In turn, Senecas not of the church mostly avoided ministers in trying to uphold the relations of separation represented in the *Guswenta*. For Christianity’s opponents, permanent membership within ABCFM-run churches seemed like too much of a burden to bear physically and mentally. Senecas who remained unconverted were probably responsible for coining the pejorative phrase, “planks on shoulders,” used to describe Presbyterians. Methodists, in contrast, were known “to be noisy,” and the Baptists, were “those who baptize,” an obvious reference to the immersion of bodies of converts into rivers, ponds, or streams.⁶³ Senecas who still benefited from *Gaiwi:yo:h* perhaps found more similarities in the practices of Methodists and Baptists. Evangelicals emphasized physical actions during prayer sessions, although “planks on shoulders” referred to hardships of sin, and the strict regulations of church discipline encouraged among ABCFM mission stations.

Certain villages remained centers of *Gaiwi:yo:h*. ABCFM missionaries recognized Jack Berry’s town at Buffalo Creek as one such place, while Cold Spring at Allegany maintained the same reputation. And although Wright attempted to bring unconverted spirits and minds in line with his Christian teachings, according to Blacksnake, “our bodies might be present but our spirits are entirely given up to our old religion.”⁶⁴ Blacksnake’s council language made clear enough that conversion to Christianity was an issue that some Senecas steadfastly opposed. For the unbelievers like Blacksnake, devotion to Seneca rites and ceremonials meant spiritual isolation from the Christian flock and physical division as Red Jacket once presented in the metaphor of the *Guswenta* as they kept *Gaiwi:yo:h* in practice at separate villages.

Gaiwi:yo:b and Seneca rituals and ceremonies were all passed down by messengers who followed specific sets of guidelines in language. Recognizing the significance of Handsome Lake's message, Asher Wright published the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John with the subtitle *Ne Gaiwiyo:s duk*. The name contained *Gaiwiyo:s*, a reference to the "good message."⁶⁵ Yet in the Seneca language, authority over sacred knowledge depended on whether it involved Handsome Lake's message which took the form of preaching. Chanting, on the other hand, occurred during the separate Thanksgiving addresses: the *kanq':nyqk*, the "Thanksgiving Speech," used to open each Seneca ceremony; the *konéop*, the "Thanksgiving Dance," or the *kayękqthwę: 2*, "Tobacco Burning." All of these chants occurred at specific moments during the seasonal ritual cycle. Speakers of the prophet's teachings used language expressing that the presenters "were not a direct party to the knowledge" for the original messengers who imparted such knowledge to Handsome Lake were otherworldly beings-the sky spirits. However, Handsome Lake was a person who had once lived, whose visions and creation of the message occurred in a particular time and place. In this sense, "the authority for the Good Message" rested "in a set of partly historical, partly supernatural events known or believed to have occurred." Chanting found in the variety of thanksgiving addresses conversely expressed "knowledge that was remote in every way. The authority for this kind of knowledge [was] distant from everyday experience in every respect."⁶⁶ To bring Senecas into proper contact with an Iroquois world of spirits, Seneca worship, whether in preaching and chanting, depended on the memory, oratory, and performance of the presenter. Several local whites, dutiful to the Baptist or Methodist cause, thus easily convinced an Indian woman that Presbyterian ministers "ha[d] sugar on their mouths" because they failed to back up their talk with the animated gestures, verbal performances, and sense of closeness with the gospels exploited by awakening evangelicals to propel crowds toward a state of spiritual bliss.⁶⁷

Wright and Bliss both attracted more listeners when they spoke extemporaneously as opposed to resorting to "anxious benches" and written sermons. Wright captured the missionary's conundrum perfectly: "there is very little success to be gained if everything is stiff and formal."⁶⁸ On Bliss's first day at the meetinghouse at Cattaraugus, "his sermon was not written," but to Bliss's surprise, the translation caused "the Indians [to] manifest a good deal of attention" on their faces.⁶⁹ Through such extemporaneous performances, ABCFM ministers made Christian teachings more palatable to potential converts.

Trained in ancient languages before attending Andover Theological Seminary, Wright understood that to master the difficult nuances of the Seneca language was the key to ABCFM mission networks. In short, he had to build on his predecessors' work with Seneca Presbyterianism.⁷⁰ Wright soon discovered that true religious persuasion rested in the correlation of Christian teachings with Seneca conceptions of a spirit world. To have the same impact as *Gaiwi:yo:b*, this meant Wright could not exhibit little, or lack of historical specificity when he transmitted his sacred knowledge in the church.

If Wright presented the Holy Trinity with intimacy, they became spirit beings with true life-sustaining powers. Perhaps some of his most creative yet least studied linguistic works were his translations of specific meanings of Christian symbols into Seneca words found in a notebook and in his dictionary. Scribbled in his pages, Wright presented Seneca corollaries for "where is heaven," "in the plain path," "my Lord," and "good food" (a reference to the Lord's Supper). All of these phrases contained *Na'wēnni'yuh* (similar to Harris's *Nah wen é u*), with a derivation of "the good things." According to Wright's dictionary, *Na'wēnni'yuh* also meant "God" in Seneca. In translated texts for religious purposes, *Na'wēnni'yuh* was made to stand out "as an object tangible to the senses." For example, *hayāhdadeh Na'wēnni'yuh*, translated into "God is in existence; or there is a God." With his meditation on, and translation of Biblical teachings, the minister made *Na'wēnni'yuh*, a good and sacred individual who lived in a Seneca human realm. *Na'wēnni'yuh*, the Christian God, as transmitted by Wright, was not one of several distant cosmological figures appreciated by Senecas who listened to the chants of their seasonal calendar.⁷¹

Wright gave his first sermon in Seneca sometime around March of 1835, "and the people sa[id] they understood it perfectly." Several Senecas who approached Wright afterward, supplicated that he "might never preach again through an interpreter." During translated prayer sessions, "the best interpreters among us lose the point of nearly or quite half the sentences when interpreting a discourse off hand." With sacred authority so clearly dependent on skillful presentation of Seneca words and phrases, fine distinctions and mispronunciations had made "a large share of the gospel truth still utterly unintelligible to many if not most of our church members." Because church members at Buffalo Creek were excited in his "Indian preaching," Wright could "scarce[ly] repress the tears in view of their darkness although the gospel had been nominally preached to them for almost twenty years."⁷² Integration

of Christian male figureheads, instruction, and doctrine with a formalized Seneca orthography became Wright's passion. Only then could he more easily sway Indians to the "anxious benches" or seats in the meetinghouse.

Together with his translators he published texts that gave even more coherence to Seneca Presbyterianism. "In Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah," "Be thou still my strength and shield" translated into Seneca as "only you set my mind at peace." "Let the fiery, cloudy pillar lead me all my journey through" referred instead to a natural phenomenon associated with rain. Intimacy between a Seneca human realm and spirits from nature produced balance: "The rainbow (*oħ ha' ot* in Wright's orthography) will carry me always where my path leads."⁷³ Senecas sang about how they were "invited to Christ" "lost their former possessions (probably a reference to Seneca culture change)" and how they had to "cast away the devil in order to have the Seneca Nation honored." Senecas in church also sang in honor of *Swēn ni'yuh*, which in Wright's notebook translated into "O God" or "Thou God."⁷⁴ Wright became somewhat of an arbiter over Christian sacred knowledge, and yet several hymns produced by his Seneca helpers spoke directly to a Seneca audience.

Christian figureheads and Wright were all clearly male. Even the phrase "that which enlightens" contained a reference to father-*nih*. Yet Wright's translators phrased appropriate actions, behaviors, and beliefs associated with church sessions within the confines of the feminine gender of the Seneca language (oftentimes represented in *Yé, ye, ya, or yā* .). As Wright noted, "the Feminine is the ruling gender in Seneca, as the Masculine is in English."⁷⁵ For example, "prayer, petition, or supplication" translated into *á dā na yā nídak shāh*, while "it will suffer pain, torture, or hardship," meant *ǎ gǎ o ya gǎh* in Seneca. The reference to the crucifixion, "he was hung up," bore the feminine in translation, *chi á yah thaah*.⁷⁶ With feminine power reflected in the words and phrases used in churches, the minister's attempts to alter a Seneca convert social order from female dominate to masculine dominate remained incomplete.⁷⁷ On multiple fronts, Wright's translators bolstered a distinct brand of Seneca Presbyterianism.

The missions of Wright and Bliss had influence outside the sacred into the secular world of daily affairs. In the 1830s and 1840s mission stations became full-fledged Seneca civic institutions. Churches had more consistent involvement in the secular world of family, clan, and village matters of governance. As civic and spiritual bodies churches had tremendous potential to transform Seneca power relations in the avowed commitment of churches to

spiritual equality among all believers, men and women, white and Indian, all had to meet specific standards of Christian comportment in private and public.⁷⁸ In this sense, biracial churches seemed welcoming to Senecas. Churches were also threatening bodies. In the reservation council house, chiefs and elders-clan-appointed men-were usually selected to embody and exercise both spiritual and political power and authority in the rituals and ceremonies associated with council protocol. In churches, it seemed to the opponents, all Senecas found both politics and faith accessible as part of racially-mixed Christian family.⁷⁹

Cases of church discipline presented to the brethren and sisters of the Lower Mission Station at Cattaraugus mostly involved Seneca men in the decade from 1834 to 1844. Seeking manly independence as farmers and heads of households like fellow white brethren of the church, Seneca men faced suspension and excommunication for private and public actions outside the realm of appropriate Christian conduct.⁸⁰ Wrong behavior included intemperance, adultery, “backsliding” (returning to Seneca religion), and lack of paternal authority over children and wives. Seneca masculinity within the church also demanded subordination to “Christ’s body in this place.” Habitual violation of covenant obligations in and outside of church walls resulted in suspension and even excommunication. By May 21, 1841, three relatives, George, James, and John Turkey, were suspended for drinking, not caring for their families, and violating their “covenant” with the church and God. Parallels to such cases were to be found in the Seneca church at Buffalo Creek. Nearly half of all excommunications and suspensions during roughly the same period of time were of Seneca men.⁸¹ When Presbyterian Seneca men were unable to strike the proper balance of subordination to Christ and the church body with independence and authority as household heads, they stood before other church members for censure.⁸²

Women also faced the same rules of church discipline as Presbyterian men. On May 9, 1838, Mrs. John White confessed to the church her “long time neglect of the ordinances of the gospel,” having returned to Seneca ritual and ceremony and avoiding church services. On the same day that George, James, and John Turkey faced suspension, Martha Silverheels came before the church for accusations of committing adultery. The church decided to excommunicate her on such grounds. With equality before the eyes of the Lord when it came to acting, thinking, and believing as a Christian, there were no gender-based inequalities when disciplining members of the church. At Buffalo Creek, women were also expected to meet the same standards.⁸³

Disputes involving kin and community brought before the church were mostly from Seneca women. A concept the Christian family shared in common with *Gaiwi:yo:h* was that the household was to be the domain of women. When Bliss visited among Senecas not of the church at Cattaraugus, he was approached by an old lady who apparently followed *Gaiwi:yo:h* but spoke about how “she [had] once died,” but “was told she could not go to Heaven because there [were] children lying in her way and she must come back and take them.”⁸⁴ Even if the household was to remain a force in the Seneca female world—among women both church and unchurch—women exacerbated longstanding tensions with Seneca men and other members of Seneca society with church discipline.

Presbyterian women exerted new power and authority as sisters, although they oftentimes still took affairs to the council house where clan decision making meted out community justice. Mrs. Crow, on January 9, 1841, brought certain issues related to “her grandmother, parents, and brother” before the church. Fearful of what the decisions of the church might bring, and unwilling to foment tensions outside the church, Mrs. Crow chose to send “all their business to the opinions of the chiefs to be settled.” Nonetheless, women used the church to hold husbands, brothers, and sons to the standards of respectable manliness, as the accusations of adultery and drunkenness in the Lower Mission Station record books attest. Church men resented church discipline because it was such a useful weapon of female power and authority. At the same time, however, some Seneca women like Mary Crow in the 1830s and 1840s remained aware that the church had not fully replaced the council house. They often yielded to chiefly power to resolve personal matters.⁸⁵

Positions within the church hierarchy were more available to men as deacons and as appointees to committees. Most of the men who were deacons were also, at some point or another, chiefs in the council house. Such men included Oliver Silverheels, Blue Eyes, John White, and Jacob Jameson. Deacons, working in concert with brothers in good standing, created committees whose efforts centered on settling church governance. They visited Seneca men and women in their homes when they failed to show up for church services for periods of time, reported acts of intemperance and misconduct, and served as judges in cases of discipline, suspension, and excommunication. Committees of men made such decisions through a process of democratic decision-making; no one male voice within the church ranked above others on matters of church business.⁸⁶ The church, although a house

of worship, also worked as a civic institution through which committee members supervised the public and private actions of fellow members.

Seneca men deliberated issues of reservation politics during prayer meetings as outspoken advocates for local sociopolitical alliances, although Bliss could not stress enough that political issues should not be considered in church. Politics was the domain of brethren, and on such matters Seneca sisters are quiet in the church records. With the Ogden Land Company pressing Senecas to sell their reservations by the 1830s, issues of land retention weighed heavily on the minds of church brethren. The church took up the issue of allowing Deacon Blue Eyes to remain in the church in spite of his political leanings (he was pro-emigration to western lands). At the time Bliss insisted that men keep the church free of politics, as men "are not to be censured for honest political opinions, but for wrong measures." Although Blue Eyes found much opposition from his fellow brethren, under Bliss's influence the church voted six to three to "give him the privilege" of "gospel ordinances." On the role of politics in the church the minister and his flock would never agree. Bliss could never grasp how politics and its attendant social relations could possibly trump a relationship with the divine.⁸⁷

Shared faith was less binding than it had been in the 1820s in schoolhouse politics. Discord over William Thayer's school ripped apart both the church and community of Cattaraugus. Since December 24, 1825, the school was located at the "Indian village" among non-church members where Indians did not board but traveled to the classroom, and the American Board only provided a teacher and the necessary items for education. By December 11, 1827, a new school opened, a boarding school; it was this school that caused the discord. Many of the church members supported Thayer's attempts to keep the boarding school open under his control, although a new church member, Isreal Jimerson, opposed the plan.

By December of 1830, local political alliances between church and non-church members developed over the schoolhouse. Even without confirmation from the American Board, Deacon Johnson and "his party" from within the church decided to start school. Rebuffed by Jimerson and his party, who had "assembled took possession of the schoolhouse and boarding house brought a few children and supplied them with provisions" and employed a non-church member to teach. By 1831, both sides agreed to hold a council with chiefs from the other reservations. In a stunning move, Cattaraugus chiefs, both church and non-church members, fired off a letter from the council house to the Board. The letter made clear that both Jimerson and Strong kept close ties of kinship and

friendship outside of the church, and it was these connections behind the opposition to the school. Senecas not of the church were opposed to Thayer's involvement in land transactions on the reservation; Thayer had purchased forty acres for a farm. Peace and unity seemed out of reach even the next year, after Deacon Johnson claimed on January 11, 1832, "that some who had been unfriendly to [Thayer] would not unite with [the church] in promoting the interest of the school." By the 1830 and 1840s, shared faith was no longer enough in the realm of Seneca politics. In issues of land and the maintenance of schools, Senecas could cast aside faith differences for local political coalitions.⁸⁸

As the center of Presbyterian worship after 1845, Cattaraugus churches were also pulled into the fray over the national government revolution where Senecas, again, formed non-faith based alliances. Mission community networks, which in earlier decades were at once divisive and unifying, became more divisive. This was particularly the case after Buffalo Creek church members moved to Cattaraugus and joined in politics. Seneca churches were functioning as *de facto* council houses. After the constitution and elected officials had replaced chiefs at Cattaraugus and Allegany in the fall of 1848, Bliss lamented that "the unsettled state of political affairs" made Seneca conversions nearly impossible. Asher Wright, who had labored so hard to establish the Upper Mission Station, could only draw a similar conclusion about Presbyterian's declension.

Politics divided church and clan members against each other. The former Buffalo Creek Snipe-clan chiefs Seneca White and Isreal Jimerson joined forces with Nathaniel Thayer Strong. All three men broke with the Western Mission Station on the issue of the new government. White, Jimerson, and Strong tried to have both Wright and Bliss removed from Cattaraugus. They attacked the men as missionaries who meddled too much in Seneca issues of land and governance. On the other hand, Henry Twoguns, who was also a former Buffalo Creek Snipe-clan chief, remonstrated against Seneca White's aggressive tactics. Apparently, White tried to gather members for a separate anti-missionary congregation. According to Twoguns, politics "should be kept out of the church." The churches under the charge of Bliss and Wright started to diminish in numbers. As church and non-church members united together in the cause of politics, Asher Wright could only write that "the disposition of too many of even our leading members of the church [is] to sacrifice everything to zeal of party." By contrast, the church at Allegany, a congregation with less former chiefs and young men from Buffalo Creek, weathered the late 1840s with a church intact (Table 1). In response to the

TABLE 1. Shift in the Balance of Power: Total Number of Chiefs at Cattaraugus Compared to Allegany and Buffalo Creek, 1845:

Reservation	Total
Cattaraugus	38
Allegany	21 19 + (2) Former Cattaraugus
Buffalo Creek	19

Sources: To understand the shift in the balance of power to Cattaraugus, I eliminated women from my counts and focused on men labeled in various counts (but not the population census) as chiefs and warriors. While the Cattaraugus census had 189 heads of households with some of them as women, my database only included 136 men. The number for Seneca chiefs at Cattaraugus could be even more because the following pro-emigrationists do not show up on the schedule: N.T. Strong, Blue Eyes, and Big Deer. The following account is compared to Buffalo Creek's 92 heads of households, and Allegany's 153. See Population Census of Indian Reservations, A1832, 1845, New York State Library, Albany, New York. I cross-referenced the Cattaraugus lists with all names from the censuses taken for Buffalo Creek and Allegany, the population schedules and tables of chiefs and warriors in *The Case of the Seneca Indians in the State of New York: Illustrated by Facts* (Philadelphia: Merrihew and Thompson Printers, 1840), 228.141-56, from 1838, Asher Wright's partial population of Buffalo Creek in his Notebooks [1840] D.2., 3282, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, PA., and lists of heads of households and signatures on petitions found in Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs: New York Agency, 1848-1851, Collection 234, Reel 587, originals in the National Archives, Washington, D.C. Such cross-referencing enabled me to determine men who originally lived at Buffalo Creek or Allegany around 1838 but who moved to Cattaraugus by 1845. Any men who did not show up on population lists and petitions of any the other two reservations, or who were not chiefs of all three reservations, I determined they were men of Cattaraugus.

Cattaraugus problem, both Bliss and Wright created the United Mission Church of Cattaraugus in July of 1851. Consolidation of church power during the government debates revealed how kinship and friendship on issues of land, nationalism, and racial sovereignty, had taken importance over the practice of faith.⁸⁹ The days of Red Jacket's generation, where faith once served as a political division between Senecas, had given way to local alliances between people who did not share faith but who took the same political positions on national concerns.

Such a dramatic transition in Seneca life would remain imperceptible without a "new Indian mission history" that demands scholars to look at the local level and find out where Native American faith and politics diverged and converged. Also left unnoticed would be another side to what Joel Martin has described as a "cultural underground, a hidden set of beliefs and practices that

reinforced their identity as Indians and strengthened their will to survive and resist.” In creating their own Presbyterianism, building old and new social networks in mission civic institutions, and joining a pan-Indian community of Christians, Presbyterian Senecas had their own “cultural underground.” It was Christian on the outside, Seneca at its core, while local and multiregional in its defense of Native American rights. Moreover, the places and situations were two “cultural undergrounds” intersected and deviated—Seneca Presbyterianism and *Gaiwi:yo:h*—are also made explicit with a local-level approach to understanding the missionaries’ impact. A “new Indian mission history” for the period of the early American republic has much to offer. And as scholars produce more studies as the one presented here, more Indian religious and political undergrounds will be unearthed. Such works will add a new layer of complexity to a field long occupied with the study of famous prophets as well as the militancy some of their spiritual teachings helped inspire.⁹⁰

NOTES

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1. Asher Bliss Diary, 1832–1837, Bliss Family Papers, Box 2, Volume II, New York State Library (NYSL), Albany, New York.
2. Recent works that have dispelled the notion that conversion to Christianity, or involvement with missionaries, entailed cultural loss are mostly concerned with Indians in the colonial period. David J. Silverman, “Indians, Missionaries, and Religious Translation: Creating Wampanoag Christianity in Seventeenth-Century Martha’s Vineyard,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd Ser., 52 (April 2005), 141–174; Jane T. Merritt, *At the Crossroads: Indians and Empires on a Mid-Atlantic Frontier, 1700–1763* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), chaps 2–3. This project is especially indebted to Merritt’s phrase “mission community networks” as I use it frequently as a metaphor for inter-reservation connections between Christian Senecas. Kenneth M. Morrison, *The Solidarity of Kin: Ethnohistory, Religious Studies, and the Algonkian-French Religious Encounter* (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 2002); Daniel K. Richter, “Iroquois versus Iroquois: Jesuit Missions and Christianity in Village Politics, 1642–1686,” *Ethnohistory* 32 (January 1985),

- 1–16. Scholars of colonial Latin America, especially those interested in Nahua texts produced in Mesoamerica, have yielded sophisticated works focused on Indian Christianity. See Louise M. Burkhart, *The Slippery Earth: Nahua-Christian Model Dialogue in Sixteenth-Century Mexico* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989); Matthew Restall, "A History of the New Philology and the New Philology in History," *Latin American Historical Review* 38, (January 2003), 113–34; on leadership in California Spanish-run missions see Steven W. Hackel, "The Staff of Leadership: Indian Authority in the Missions of Alta California," *WMQ* 3rd Ser., 54 (April 1997), 347–376. There has been considerable work among historians who practice a "new mission history" for parts of colonial Latin America. See James Schofield Saeger, *Chaco Mission Frontier: The Guaycuruan Experience, 1700–1800* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2000); Susan M. Deeds, *Defiance & Deference in Mexico's Colonial North: Indians Under Spanish Rule in Nueva Vizcaya* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003); *The New Latin American Mission History*, Erick Langer and Robert H. Jackson eds., (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995). Few exemplary works exist for the early American republic; see William G. McLoughlin, *Cherokees & Missionaries, 1789–1839* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984) and Clara Sue Kidwell, *Choctaws and Missionaries in Mississippi, 1818–1918* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997). For a study that explores the cross-gendered currents that characterized religious revivalism in portions of the early American republic frontier south, see Nathaniel J. Sheidley, "Unruly Men: Indians, Settlers, and the Ethos of Frontier Patriarchy in the Upper Tennessee Watershed, 1763–1815" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1999), part 3.
3. A study of Oneidas which uncovers the syncretism involved as these people engaged with Christianity to rightly suggest against "Christian" versus "Pagan" divisions is Karim Tiro's "The People of the Standing Stone: The Oneida from Revolution to Removal" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1999), 98–147. Recent works that still perpetuate the "progressive" and "traditional" or "Christian" and "pagan" dichotomies but have made their own substantial contributions to Iroquois studies include Laurence Hauptman, *Conspiracy of Interests: Iroquois Dispossession and the Rise of New York State* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1999) and Christopher Densmore, *Red Jacket: Iroquois Diplomat and Orator* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1999).
 4. Gregory Evans Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for Unity, 1740–1815* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), Joel Martin, *Sacred Revolt: The Muskogees' Struggle for a New World* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991).
 5. Elkanah Holmes, "Letters of Rev. Elkanah Holmes from Fort Niagara in 1800," in *Narratives of Early Mission Work On the Niagara and Buffalo Creek*, in *Buffalo Historical Society Publications (BHSP)* ed. Frank H. Severance Vol. 6 (1903), 194–195; for Lemuel Covell's trip to Buffalo Creek see Lemuel Covell, "Visit of Rev. Lemuel Covell to Western New York and Canada," *BHSP* Vol. 6 (1903), 213; on John Alexander see Red Jacket to Reverend John Alexander, 1811, Appendix D, in Densmore, *Red Jacket*, 141–142.
 6. I am here indebted to Alyssa Mt. Pleasant's interpretation of the "two row wampum," Red Jacket, and Holmes, that appears in "A Footing Among Them: Haudenosaunee Perspectives on the Intersection of Land Cessions, Government Relations, and Christianity," chapter four of her dissertation "After the Whirlwind: Maintaining Haudenosaunee Space at Buffalo Creek, 1780–1825" (Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 2006); Letters of Rev. Elkanah Holmes from Fort Niagara in 1800," in *BHSP* 6, vol. 6 (1903), 194–195.

7. Mt. Pleasant, "A Footing Among Them"; Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance*, 33–35. For further information on the *Guswentá*, consult the works of Kathryn V. Muller: "The Evolution and Renewal of the Two Row Wampum," presented at the Conference on Iroquois Research. Rensselaerville, New York, October 2004, and "The Haudenosaunee Kaswentha Ethic: From the Great Peace to Early European Contact," Conference on Iroquois Research, October 2005. Papers in my possession, and cited here with permission of the author.
8. On Cram's encounter with Red Jacket see Christopher Densmore, *Red Jacket*, "Red Jacket's Reply to Reverend Cram, 1805," Appendix C, 138.
9. For the best discussion of the teachings of Handsome Lake see Anthony F.C. Wallace, *The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca* (New York: Vintage Press, 1969), 239–337; Arthur C. Parker, *The Code of Handsome Lake*. Bulletin 163. (Albany: New York State Museum, 1913); on the Tonawanda council see Timothy Alden to Rev. Abiel Holmes, 28 August 1818, in Box 1, folder 5, MSS 48, Society for the Propagation of Gospel, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts.
10. "Journals of Reverend Thompson S. Harris: His Missionary Labors Among the Senecas at Buffalo Creek and Cattaraugus Reservations, 1821–1828," *BHSP* Vol. 6 (1903), 293. I compared the published version with the manuscript journals. The published version is accurate in its content. The originals are housed at the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society (BECHS), Buffalo, New York. I cite the published version for sake of convenience for the reader.
11. On Jasper Parrish's assurances see "Journal of Reverend Thompson S. Harris," 289. This was even after the New York Legislature had passed an "Act Respecting Intrusion on Indian Lands." For the act see *Revised Statutes of the State of New York*, Vol. III., 1829, quoted in Densmore, *Red Jacket*, 93.
12. "Journals of Reverend Thompson S. Harris," 289.
13. William Thayer to Lewis Cass, "School Report" September 1832, in American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions Papers (ABCFM), 18.6.3, v.1, 154–158, Reel 788, Houghton Library.
14. Thayer to Cass "School Report," 283–284.
15. On new measures see James D. Bratt's "Religious Anti-Revivalism in Antebellum America," *Journal of the Early Republic* 24 (Spring 2004), quotations from 70.
16. For numbers see "Journals of Reverend Thompson S. Harris," 293, 327.
17. "Journals of Reverend Thompson S. Harris," 362.
18. "Journals of Reverend Thompson S. Harris," 347, 298–299.
19. "Journals of Reverend Thompson S. Harris," 295–296; Harris wanted to give the chiefs Christian names rather unfamiliar Seneca names to make them better known to both the mission family and the UFMS. See "Journal of Reverend Thompson S. Harris," 349. Harris baptized the children of church members on four separate occasions: April 20, 1823; May 1, 1825; April 19, 1827; and in June of 1827. See Asher Wright, Register of Seneca Missions, Vault Folio, E.99.S3 W7, 1822–1874, Presbyterian Historical Society (PBHS), Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
20. On these significant conversions see, "Journals of Reverend Thompson S. Harris," 286–287.
21. Quotations on "culture" see William N. Fenton, *The Great Law and the Longhouse: A Political History of the Iroquois Confederacy* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), 50; T. S. Harris and J. Young, *O EN AD O GE TEEH SOAH NA NA Nonnadowah'gau Neuenoob'dea Hymns, in the Seneca Language*, (David M. Day, 1823), 13.

22. On how eastern woodland men and women accessed sacred powers see Dowd's *A Spirited Resistance*, especially chapter one on sacred power; Joel Martin, *Native American Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 39–66.
23. *Hymns, in the Seneca Language*, 13; on meanings of good see Asher Wright, *A Spelling Book in the Seneca Language: With English Definitions* (Buffalo Creek Reservation: Mission Press, 1842), 81.
24. "Appendix: A Short Glossary of Christian Vocabulary," in Thomas McElwain, "'The Rainbow Will Carry Me': The Language of Seneca Iroquois Christianity as Reflected in Hymns," in *Religion in Native North America*, ed. Christopher Vecsey (Moscow: University of Idaho Press, 1990), 102. McElwain utilizes Wallace L. Chafe's more current Seneca orthography and thus I have not changed the words to conform to nineteenth century translations. See Wallace L. Chafe, *Handbook of the Seneca Language*, New York State Museum Bulletin Number 338 (Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1963).
25. This hymnal was entitled "Christ the Savior," in *Hymns, in the Seneca Language*, 2–5; for the cosmological parallels see J.N.B. Hewitt, "Iroquois Cosmology," pt 2. *Bureau of American Ethnology*, Annual Report, 1925–1926 (Washington, D.C., 1928), 567–568; William N. Fenton, "This Island, the World on the Turtle's Back," *Journal of American Folklore* 1962 (75): 283–300.
26. On Seneca translation of the "Christian term" for the devil see Chafe, *Handbook of the Seneca Language*, 58. As Fenton notes for the Iroquois, "monsters get relegated to the mountains or put underground," in *The Great Law and the Longhouse*, 46.
27. "Journals of Reverend Thompson S. Harris," 379; Asher Wright, Register of Seneca Missions; clan membership from Asher Wright Notebooks [1840] D.2., 3282, American Philosophical Society (APS), Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
28. "Journals of Reverend Thompson S. Harris," 379; Asher Wright, Register of Seneca Missions; clan membership from Asher Wright, Notebooks, 3282.
29. On the female and her husband see "Journals of Reverend Thompson S. Harris," 327–328; on the council see "Journals of Reverend Thompson S. Harris," 328. Twogun men were from one of these two clans. See Asher Wright, Notebooks, 3282.
30. For the reference to deathbed conversion of Red Jacket's son, John Jacket, see "Journals of Reverend Thompson S. Harris," 324–326. John Jacket most likely married into the Turtle clan. For the burial of Red Jacket's child, William Jacket see 305; reference to Red Jacket's estranged wife and her role in the church see 369. For clan affiliations see Asher Wright, Notebooks, 3282.
31. The myth of the origins of Iroquoia and the Twins is in J.N.B. Hewitt's "Iroquois Cosmology," pt 2. *Bureau of American Ethnology*, Annual Report, 1925–1926 (Washington, D.C., 1928), 567–568 and Fenton, "This Island, the World on the Turtle's Back," 283–300.
32. "Journals of Reverend Thompson S. Harris," 368.
33. "Journals of Reverend Thompson S. Harris," 368; Merritt, *At the Crossroads*, chapters 2–3.
34. "Journals of Reverend Thompson S. Harris," 283, 287.
35. This entire council is discussed in "Journals of Reverend Thompson S. Harris," 302–304.
36. "Journals of Reverend Thompson S. Harris," 307.
37. "Journals of Reverend Thompson S. Harris," 319.
38. On Harris's reception of the news see "Journals of Reverend Thompson S. Harris," 331–332; for Seneca White's public presentation see 336–337; on parents and students refusing long stays see

336; for Red Jacket's speech and quotations see 344–345. Again, Red Jacket does not refer directly to the “Tree of Peace.” However, inferring from his language about the council fire and peace and harmony, one can conclude he is referencing this Iroquois metaphor for peaceable relations among kin, community, and nation. To maintain their own self-determination, Red Jacket proposed hiring one of the young Buffalo Creek Senecas trained abroad to teach the school: “We need them [missionaries] not. Let them go about their business.” The teacher, Jesse Jameson, was perhaps married to a woman of the Wolf clan. If this was in fact the case, the placement of a young man with close ties to Red Jacket's kin and friends only enhanced the chief's power and authority over the school to make a self-sufficient Seneca institution and not one under the control of missionaries.

39. “Journals of Reverend Thompson S. Harris,” 348–349; Densmore, *Red Jacket*, 94–95.
40. Thayer to Cass, “School Report.”
41. Asher Wright to David Green, April 8, 1833, Unit 6, Reel 788, 18.6.3., New York Indians, ABCFM.
42. Asher Wright, Register of Seneca Missions, PBHS.
43. Asher Wright to David Green, 22 November 1831, Unit 6, Reel 788, 18.6.3., 68–74, ABCFM; for figures on Wright's early marriages and baptisms see Asher Wright, Register of Seneca Missions.
44. Asher Wright, Register of Seneca Missions, PBHS; Vital Record from Cattaraugus Reservation, Bliss Family Papers, Box 3, Volume V, NYSL. Most of the baptisms performed by Bliss in the 1830s were at Allegany, twelve out of eighteen Indians recorded in his diary christened at this particular reservation.
45. “Report Respecting Cattaraugus,” to the Secretaries of the ABCFM, 1 August 1833, Unit 6, Reel 788, 18.6.3., 68–74, ABCFM.
46. “Report Respecting Allegany,” To the Secretaries of the ABCFM, 1 August 1833, Unit 6, Reel 788, 18.6.3., 68–74, ABCFM; Asher Bliss to David Green, 29 October 1833, Unit 6, Reel 788, 18.6.3., 68–74, ABCFM.
47. For the divisive role of the Quaker school under the charge of Joseph Elkinton see Mark A. Nicholas “A Little School: A Reservation Divided” in “The Rise of a Seneca New Order, 1790–1855.” Ph.D. dissertation-in-progress, Lehigh University, chapter 3.
48. “Report Respecting Allegany,” ABCFM; on Allegany clan affiliation see Wallace's *The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca*, 330.
49. Asher Bliss to David Green, 29 October 1833, Unit 6, Reel 788, 18.6.3., 68–74, New York Indians, Vol. 1, ABCFM; Asher Bliss to David Green, 23 November 1833, Unit 6, Reel 788, 18.6.3., 68–74; Asher Bliss to David Green, 18 March 1834, Unit 6, Reel 788, 18.6.3., 68–74.
50. Records of the Lower Mission Church on the Cattaraugus Reservation, 1834–1847, Box II, Folder 7, Series III: Missions and Schools, 1822–1955, BECHS.
51. Asher Wright, Register of Seneca Missions, PBHS.
52. Records of the Upper Mission Church, Cattaraugus Reservation, Box II, Folder 2, Series III: Missions and Schools, 1822–1955, BECHS.
53. Record Book of the Cattaraugus Mission Church, Western Mission Station, 1847–1860, Indian Collection, Series II, Missions and Schools 1822–1955, Folder 9, BECHS, Buffalo, New York. For clan membership see Asher Wright, Notebooks, 3282, APS.
54. Asher Wright to David Green, April 8, 1833, Unit 6, Reel 788, 18.6.3., New York Indians, ABCFM.

55. Ibid.
56. Records of the Lower Mission Church on the Cattaraugus Reservation, 1834–1847, Box II, Folder 7, Series III: Missions and Schools, 1822–1955, BECHS. Mrs. Peirce successfully obtained a divorce against her husband and all the property they once owned in common. Both parties in the trial “procured the assistance of their best speakers as counsel.” Quotations from Asher Wright to David Green, April 8, 1833, Unit 6, Reel 788, 18.6.3., New York Indians, ABCFM.
57. Asher Bliss to David Green, 18 march 1834, Reel 788, 18.6.3., 75–81, New York Indians, ABCFM; on discussions of schools see the first convention Asher Wright to David Green, April 8, 1833, Unit 6, Reel 788, 18.6.3., New York Indians ABCFM; schools for unchurched Senecas were brought up again in Asher Wright to David Green, 25 February 1835, Unit 6, Reel 788, 18.6.3., 55–61, New York Indians, ABCFM.
58. Records of the Quarterly Meetings of the Missionaries to the Western New York Indians, Box II, Folder 8, Series III: Missions and Schools, 1822–1955, BECHS.
59. Thayer to Cass, “School Report.”
60. For these phrases see Thompson S. Harris to David Greene, 20 November 1832, Unit 6, Reel 788, 18.6.3., ABCFM. Other words and phrases are scattered throughout Bliss’s entries as are the various locations where Bliss would hold his meetings in Asher Bliss Diary 1832–1837, Bliss Family Papers, Box II, Volume II, NYSL.
61. Asher Bliss to David Green, 29 October 1833, Unit 6, Reel 788, 18.6.3., 68–74, New York Indians, ABCFM.
62. For the “pagan” practices see entry dated 7 February 1833, Asher Bliss Diary 1832–1837, Bliss Family Papers, Box II, Volume II, NYSL.
63. Mss 68, Series V-B, Box CA-UN, “Seneca Loan Words,” in C.F. Voegelin Papers, APS.
64. On Jack Berry’s Town see Asher Wright to David Green, 4 March 1834, Unit 6, Reel 788, 18.6.3., 68–74, New York Indians, ABCFM; on Blacksnake’s remarks see Asher Wright to David Green, 6 May 1838, ABCFM. By August of 1834, Wright was confident that “a teacher will be needed in the principal pagan village commonly called Jack Berry town during the coming winter.” See Asher Wright to David Green, 29 August 1834, ABCFM.
65. Asher Wright, *Ne Gaiwiyos duk: Seneca Gospels* (New York: American Bible Society, 1878).
66. Wallace Chafe, “Seneca Speaking Styles and the Location of Authority,” in *Responsibility and Evidence in Oral Discourse*. Studies in the Social and Cultural Foundation of Language, No. 15. eds. Jane H. Hill and Judith T. Irvine (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1993), quotations from 72 and 87.
67. For the Seneca woman reference to “sugar on the mouths” see entry dated 22 May 1834, Asher Bliss Diary 1832–1837, Bliss Family Papers, Box II, Volume II, NYSL.
68. Asher Bliss to David Green, 29 October 1833, Unit 6, Reel 788, 18.6.3., 68–74, New York Indians, ABCFM.
69. On his first sermon see entry dated 3 November 1832 Asher Bliss Diary 1832–1837, Bliss Family Papers, Box II, Volume II, NYSL; and on Brother Wright’s Sabbath day talk see entry dated 11 November 1832.
70. Brief descriptions of Asher Wright’s career as a Seneca linguist include, William N. Fenton, “Toward The Gradual Civilization of the Indian Natives: The Missionary and Linguistic Work of Asher Wright (1803–1875) Among the Senecas of Western New York,” *American Philosophical Society Proceedings*

- 100: 6 (1956), 567–581; Thomas Abler, “Protestant Missionaries and Native Culture: Parallel Careers of Asher Wright and Silas T. Rand,” *American Indian Quarterly* (Winter 1992), 25–37.
71. For the Notebook and the translations and variations on the word “God” see Asher Wright, Notebook (183?), Seneca Indian Collection, Series II, Linguistic Material, 3487, APS, Philadelphia PA; for references to making God a tangible person see Wright’s nineteenth-century *A Spelling Book in the Seneca Language*, 96. Here, I am approaching Wright’s linguistic work with some necessary skepticism rather than praising him as the first Seneca linguist. The ability to create texts, and especially an orthography and dictionary of a language for a once illiterate society, as well as pay translators for the help, gave Wright tremendous powers. Such knowledge, without a doubt, enhanced his sacred authority, where Wright constructed specific interpretations of Christian teachings in the Seneca language to benefit the needs of his mission devoted to conversion. For recent interpretations of such issues of literacy and power see Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977*, Colin Gordon ed. (New York, Pantheon Books, 1981); *Literacy and Literacies: Texts, Power, and Identity*, eds. James Collins and Richard K. Blot (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), and Claudio Saunt, *A New Order of Things: Property, Power, and the Transformation of the Creek Indians, 1733–1816* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 186–204.
 72. Asher Wright to David Green, 20 March 1835, Unit 6, Reel 788, 18.6.3., 55–61, New York Indians, ABCFM.
 73. *GAĀ NAĤ SHQH*, *Seneca Hymns* (New York: American Tract Society, 1834), 21, 95. Wright employed some of the same translators who had worked on earlier hymns under Thompson S. Harris. See Debra Kathryn Green, “The Hymnody of the Seneca Native Americans of Western New York,” (Ph.D. diss., University of Cincinnati, 1993), 55. On the translation of rainbow see Chafe, *Handbook of the Seneca Language*, 43. For an interpretation of these hymns see McElwain, “‘The Rainbow Will Carry Me’,” 91.
 74. *GAĀ NAĤ SHQH NEH DEQ WĀĀH ŠĀO NYQH GWAĤ NA’ WĒNNI ‘YUH’*: *Hymns in the Seneca Dialect* (Buffalo Creek: Seneca Mission Press, 1843), 258–263, 261, 258; Asher Wright, Notebook (183?), Seneca Indian Collection, Series II, Linguistic Material, 3487, APS.
 75. For Wright’s assessment of gender rules see his *Spelling Book in the Seneca Language*, 81.
 76. Asher Wright, Notebook (183?), Seneca Indian Collection, Series II, Linguistic Material, 3487, APS, Philadelphia PA; for *nih* as a reference to father see *A Spelling Book in the Seneca Language*, 14; for the feminine gender as powerful in the Seneca language see 81. For quotation on “that which enlightens” also the word “civilization” see 68; rest are in 29, 31, 36.
 77. On the Christian hierarchy and its patriarchal dimensions see the work of Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).
 78. There were several white members of the Lower and Western Mission Stations. See Records of the Lower Mission Church on the Cattaraugus Reservation, 1834–1847, Box II, Folder 7, Series III: Missions and Schools, 1822–1955, BECHS, and Records of the Upper Mission Church, Cattaraugus Reservation, Box II, Folder 2, Series III: Missions and Schools, 1822–1955, BECHS. Many of these white people were members of the mission family, whites squatting on or renting reservation lands, or working in local mill and farm towns.
 79. For Bliss’s description of the church as “Christ’s body in this place” see entry dated to 15 October 1837, Records of the Lower Mission Church on the Cattaraugus Reservation, 1834–1847, Box II, Folder 7,

- Series III: Missions and Schools, 1822–1955, BECHS; white members are also listed as Bliss's converts see Lower Mission Church on the Cattaraugus Reservation, 1834–1847, Box II, Folder 7, Series III: Missions and Schools, 1822–1955, BECHS and Record Book of the Cattaraugus Mission Church, Western Mission Station, 1847–1860, Indian Collection, Series II, Missions and Schools 1822–1955, Folder 9, BECHS. Whites were either part of the mission family, farmers who rented lands on shares, or Anglo-Americans on the outskirts of the reservation who sought faith. Stephanie McCurry, *Yeoman Households, Gender Relations, & the Political Culture of the Antebellum South Carolina Low Country* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), chapters 4 and 5.
80. An improvement list dated to December 29, 1843, taken by the preemption holders, the Ogden Land Company, is revealing about land use practices among Senecas by the 1840s. The list included each man, listed as head of household and all of the following: "acres"; "quality" (on a spectrum between one and three, one being the best quality); "value of these lands"; "number of houses"; "value of these houses"; "number of barns"; "value of these barns"; "value of orchards"; and "value of wells." All Seneca men listed as heads of households—this number including church members—on some level farmed their lands and owned some property. See "Cattaraugus and Allegany Improvements, 29 December 1843, Indian Collection, Government Records, Box One, Folder 7, BECHS.
 81. Asher Wright, Register of Seneca Missions, PBHS.
 82. The quotations and entries as dated are all contained within the Records of the Lower Mission Church on the Cattaraugus Reservation, 1834–1847, Box II, Folder 7, Series III: Missions and Schools, 1822–1955, BECHS.
 83. Records of the Lower Mission Church on the Cattaraugus Reservation, 1834–1847, Box II, Folder 7, Series III: Missions and Schools, 1822–1955, BECHS; Asher Wright, Register of Seneca Missions, PBHS.
 84. Entry dated to 14 January 1833, Asher Bliss Diary 1832–1837, Bliss Family Papers, Box II, Volume II, NYSL.
 85. The quotations and entries as dated to women are all contained within the Records of the Lower Mission Church on the Cattaraugus Reservation, 1834–1847, Box II, Folder 7, Series III: Missions and Schools, 1822–1955, BECHS.
 86. For entries on committees see the following: dated to 13 September 1835; 9 May 1838; 18 May 1838; 9 January 1841; all in Records of the Lower Mission Church on the Cattaraugus Reservation, 1834–1847, Box II, Folder 7, Series III: Missions and Schools, 1822–1955, BECHS.
 87. See entries dated 15 October 1837, and entry dated 2 March 1839 in Records of the Lower Mission Church on the Cattaraugus Reservation, 1834–1847, Box II, Folder 7, Series III: Missions and Schools, 1822–1955, BECHS.
 88. Thayer to Cass, "School Report"; on Jimerson's church membership see Records of the Lower Mission Church on the Cattaraugus Reservation, 1834–1847, Box II, Folder 7, Series III: Missions and Schools, 1822–1955, BECHS; quotations and history of the school come from the following series of letters: Mr. Thayer to Mr. Jeremiah Evarts, 25 September 1830; Mr. Thayer to Jeremiah Evarts, 3 December 1830; "Cattaraugus Chiefs to ABCFM," 20 January 1831 in Reel 788, 18.6.3., 140–143, New York Indians, ABCFM; William Thayer to David Green, 3 February 1831; "Cattaraugus Chiefs

- to ABCFM," 11 January 1832; William Thayer to David Green, 11 January 1832 in Reel 788, 18.6.3., 149–153, ABCFM.
89. This paragraph and quotations come from the following: Asher Bliss to S.B. Treat, July 13 1848, ABCFM, 18.6.3, Reel 789, Asher Wright to S.B. Treat, July 25 1849, 18.6.3, Reel 789; ABCFM, Bliss's Journal of Visits, Conversations, and Argumentations with the Indians of Cattaraugus, 8 March 1848 to April 17 1854, Box 3, Volume VI, Bliss Family Papers, New York State Library, Albany, New York; Records of the Lower Mission Station on the Cattaraugus Reservation, 1834–1847, Series III, Missions and Schools 1822–1955, Box II, Folder 9, Indian Collection, BECHS; at the Western Mission Station, Seneca White, Nathaniel Strong, and Israel Jimerson, all were accused of "leading a faction of covenant breakers." See Record Book of the Cattaraugus Mission Church, Western Station, 1847–1860, Series II, Folder 9, Indian Collection, BECHS; for the discussion of the formation of the United Mission Church see, entries dated to 1850, Records of the Upper Mission Church, Cattaraugus Reservation, Box II, Folder 2, Indian Collection, BECHS.
 90. Joel W. Martin, "Cultural Contact and Crises in the Early American Republic: Native American Religious Renewal, Resistance, and Accommodation," in *Native Americans in the Early American Republic*, eds. Fredrick Hoxie, Ronald Hoffman, and Peter J. Albert (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1999), 226.