

Sacred Duplicity

America!

The proverbial land flowing with milk and honey

Cookie cutter of Rome's eternal city

God's dwelling place now that the temple has been destroyed

Anointed and Chosen

To wreak havoc upon the earth

You defame the name of God

The way you treat God's people

Stealing some, killing others, marginalizing all

For the sake of your sacred dollar

The annals of history are full

With names and faces who you have crushed to have your own way

Escaping your own hell

You've created it for others

No need for seven years of tribulation

Evil is alive and well right here

You exonerate yourselves with pious language

Hiding behind pretentious platitudes and prayers

As if God would look past your misdeeds of racism and white supremacy if you put his name on it

As if God wouldn't care about the stolen lands and stolen bodies

And hungry bellies

And polluted waters

If you shouted and danced hard enough

Like the prophets of Baal

But God can't hear you over the harrowing screams of black and brown folks

Whose sons and daughters lay dead in the streets

And whose mothers they cannot afford to feed

And whose fathers are dying because they don't have health insurance

And whose family is being deported unless 45 gets his wall

And whose sisters and brothers and play cousins live under the constant threat of death and destruction because their very bodies testify against the misdeeds of a country that claims to love God so much while hating God's people

These poems are excerpted from a collection of poems by Ebony Adedayo entitled

Musings of a Liberated Black Woman, 2017

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And still you have the sheer audacity to get upset when we grow indignant
When football players take a knee
When we march through the streets chanting and screaming
And burn down your cities

You come up out of yourselves when we block freeways
Call us thugs when we shut down malls
Shoot rubber bullets at us when we protest your building projects
Arrest us when we protest their laws

As if we should take the violence
And constant degradation
And just roll over
And let massa hit us once more
As if silence is more godly than resistance
As if complacency will get us closer to freedom than demanding liberation

America, not beautiful
You have always been hell to me
We see through your ruse and find you wanting
We see through the lies and find you deeply scarred

Won't you consider for just a moment
God's imminent judgment
Won't you repent
Put on sackcloth and ashes
Wedge yourself in between the altar
And lament over all that you have done

Won't you turn from your evil ways
And loose the chains of slavery that you have been holding onto so tightly
And make amends with those you have destroyed
And provide food, housing, and water to those you have ripped off

This is what repentance looks like
You see, this is what religion consists of
This is the sacrifice that pleases God
Everything else, well everything else, is nothing more than sacred duplicity

Babel

Babel went up in flames
I cared not that it burned
I watched on in delight as the twin flames of blue and gold consumed everything in their paths

One by one the strongholds fell
one by one, they loosened their grip
over the lives of the people as they disintegrated into ash and dust piling up on the earth reeking not of smoke
but of the death it had harbored within its walls

Babel fell today
that great untouchable city became nothing in a manner of moments
and they asked us if we missed it
and chastised us for dismantling it
as if Babel were our best hope at salvation
oblivious, or perhaps, not even caring that for all of its glitz and glam, it thrived because
our blood gave it life

Today, Babel came tumbling down
and we were the ones who broke down the walls
we were the ones who lit the flame to its sacred places
that tore through the fortified walls with our nails
unbothered by how the flames might have torched us
unconcerned with the blood dripping down our fingers
we were going out free today
by every means necessary

Fourth of July Address at Reidsville, New York

by John Quinney (Mahican, 1854)

From *Great Documents in American Indian History*, Edited by Moquin, Wayne and Charles Van Doren (1973).

It may appear to those whom I have the honor to address a singular taste for me, an Indian, to take an interest in the triumphal days of a people who occupy, by conquest or have usurped, the possessions of my fathers and have laid and carefully preserved a train of terrible miseries to end when my race ceased to exist.

But thanks to the fortunate circumstances of my life I have been taught in the schools and been able to read your histories and accounts of Europeans, yourselves and the Red Man; which instruct me that while your rejoicings today are commemorative of the free birth of this giant nation, they simply convey to my mind the recollection of a transfer of the miserable weakness and dependence, of my race from one great power to another.

My friends, I am getting old and have witnessed for many years your increase in wealth and power while the steady consuming decline of my tribe admonishes me that their extinction is inevitable. They know it themselves and the reflection teaches them humility and resignation, directing their attention to the existence of those happy hunting grounds which the Great Father has prepared for all his red children.

In this spirit, my friends, as a Muh-he-con-new, and now standing upon the soil which once was and now ought to be the property of this tribe, I have thought for once and certainly the last time I would shake you by the hand and ask you to listen for a little while to what I have to say.

About the year 1645, when King Ben the last of the hereditary chiefs of the Muh-he-con-new nation was in his prime, grand council was convened of the Muh-he-con-new tribe for the purpose of conveying from the old to the young men a knowledge of the past.

Councils for this object especially had been held. Here for the space of two moons, the stores of memory were dispensed; corrections and comparisons made and the results committed to faithful breasts to be transmitted again to succeeding posterity.

Many years after, another and last council of this kind was held; and the traditions reduced to writing, by two of our young men who had been taught to read and write in the school of the Rev. John Sargent of Stockbridge, Mass. They were obtained in some way by a white man for publication, who soon after dying, all trace of them became lost. The traditions of the tribe, however, have mainly been preserved, of which I give you substantially, the following:

A great people from the northwest crossed over the salt water, and after long and weary pilgrimage, planting many colonies on their track, took possession of and built their fires upon the Atlantic coast, extending from the Delaware on the south to the Penobscot on the north. They became in process of time different tribes and interests; all, however, speaking one common dialect.

This great Confederacy, Pequots, Penobscot, and many others (Delawares, Mohegans, Mansas, Narragansetts) held its councilfires once a year to deliberate on the general welfare.

Patriarchal delegates from each tribe attended, assisted by the priests and the wise men, who communicated the will and invoked the blessing of the Great and Good Spirit. The policies and decisions of this council were everywhere respected, and inviolably observed. Thus contentment smiled upon their existence and they were happy.

Their religion communicated by priest and prophet, was simple and true. The manner of worship is imperfectly transmitted; but their reverence for a Great Spirit, the observance of feasts each year, the offering of beasts in thanksgiving and atonement is clearly expressed.

They believed the soul to be immortal—in the existence of a happy land beyond the view, inhabited by those whose lives had been blameless. While for the wicked had been reserved a region of misery covered with thorns and thistles, where comfort and pleasure were unknown. Time was divided into years and seasons; twelve moons for a year, a number of years by so many winters.

The tribe to which your speaker belongs and of which there were many bands, occupied and possessed the country from the seashore at Manhattan to Lake Champlain. Having found the ebb and flow of the tide, they said: "This is Muh-he-con-new," "Like our waters which are never still." From this expression and by this name they were afterwards known, until the removal to Stockbridge in the year 1630.

Housatonic River Indians, Mohegans, Manhattans, were all names of bands in different localities, but bound together as one family by blood and descent.

At a remote period, before the advent of the European their wise men foretold the coming of a strange race from the sunrise, as numerous as the leaves upon the trees, who would eventually crowd them from their fair land possessions. But apprehension was mitigated by the knowledge and belief at that time entertained, that they originally were not there, and after a period of years they would return to the west from which they had come. And they moreover said all Red Men are sprung from a common ancestor, made by the Great Spirit from red clay, who will unite their strength to avert a common calamity. This tradition is confirmed by the common belief, which prevails in our day with all the Indian tribes; for they recognize one another by their color, as brothers and acknowledge one Great Creator.

Two hundred and fifty winters ago, this prophecy was verified and the Muh-he-con-new for the first time beheld the paleface. Their number was small, but their canoes were big.

In the select and exclusive circles of your rich men of the present day I should encounter the gaze of curiosity, but not such as overwhelmed the senses of the Aborigines, my ancestors. Our visitors were white and must be sick. They asked for rest and kindness; we gave them both. They were strangers, and we took them in; naked and we clothed them.

The first impression of astonishment and pity was succeeded by awe and admiration of superior intelligence and address.

A passion for information and improvement possessed the Indians. A residence was given—territory offered—and covenants of friendship exchanged.

Your written accounts of events at this period are familiar to you, my friends. Your children read them every day in their school books; but they do not read—no mind at this time can conceive, and no pen record, the terrible story of recompense for kindness, which for two hundred years has been paid the simple, guileless Muh-he-con-new.

I have seen much myself—I have been connected with more—and I tell you I know all. The tradition of the wise men is figuratively true that our home at last will be found in the west; for another tradition informs us that far beyond the setting sun, upon the smiling happy lands, we shall be gathered with our fathers, and be at rest.

Promises and professions were freely given and ruthlessly and intentionally broken. To kindle your fires was sought as a privilege; and yet at that moment you were transmitting to your kings intelligence of our possessions, "by right of discovery," and demanding assistance to assert your hold.

Where are the 25,000 in number, and the 4,000 warriors, who constituted the power and population of the great Muh-he-con-new nation in 1604?

They have been victims to vice and disease, which the white men imported. Smallpox, measles and firewater have done the work of annihilation. Divisions and feuds were insidiously promoted between the several bands. They were induced to thin each others ranks without just cause; and subsequently were defeated and disorganized in detail.

It is curious, the history of my tribe, in its decline, in the last two centuries and a half. Nothing that deserved the name of purchase was made. From various causes, they were induced to abandon their territory at intervals and retire farther inland. Deeds were given indifferently to the government by individuals, for which little or no compensation was paid.

The Indians were informed, in many instances, that they were selling one piece of land when they were conveying another and much larger limits. Should a particular band, for purposes of hunting or fishing, for a time leave its usual place of residence, the land was said to be abandoned, and the Indian claim extinguished. To legalize and confirm titles thus acquired, laws and edicts were subsequently passed, and these laws were said then to be, and are now called, justice.

Oh, what mockery to confound justice with law! Will you look steadily at the intrigues, bargains, corruptions and log rollings of your present legislatures, and see any trace of justice? And by what test shall be tried the acts of the colonial courts and councils?

Let it not surprise you, my friends, when I say that the spot upon which I stand has never been rightly purchased or obtained. And by justice, human and Divine, is the property of the remnant of the great people from whom I am descended. They left it in the tortures of starvation and to improve their miserable existence; but a cession was never made, and their title was never extinguished.

The Indian is said to be the ward of the white man, and the negro his slave. Has it ever occurred to you, my friend, that while the negro is increasing and increased by every appliance, the Indian is left to rot and die before the inhumanities of this model republic?

You have your tears and groans and mobs and riots for the individuals of the former, while your indifference of purpose and vacillation of policy is hurrying to extinction whole communities of the latter.

What are the treaties of the general government? How often and when has its plighted faith been kept? Indian occupation is forever next year, or one removal follows another, or by the next commissioner, more wise than his predecessor, repurchased, and thus your sympathies and justice are evinced in speedily fulfilling the terrible destinies of our race.

My friends, your Holy Book, the Bible, teaches us that individual offenses are punished in an existence—when time shall be no more—and the annals of the earth are equally instructive that national wrongs are avenged, and national crimes atoned for in this world to which alone the conformation of existence adapts them. These events are above our comprehension, and for a wise purpose; for myself and for my tribe i ask for justice—I believe it will sooner or later occur, and may the Great Spirit enable me to die in hope

주여 (주여)

O Lord *Juyeo*

주여 (주여)

O Lord *Juyeo*

주여 (주여)

O Lord *Juyeo*

주여 (주여 X4)

O Lord *Juyeo* X4

미시시피 강가에서

By the Mississippi River *Juycyo*

서울을 생각해

I remembered Seoul *Juycyo*

눈물을 흘렸네

And wept *Juycyo*

눈물을 흘렸네

I wept *Juycyo* X4

반만년 우리를

Though we go back 5000 yrs *Juyeo*

야만족이라 하고

You called us barbaric *Juyeo*

스스로 부끄러

And we internalized it *Juyeo*

양것을 찾았네

And sought after the Western things

Juyeo X4

양것을 배우니

We learned the Western ways *Juyeo*

그네들의 싸움을

Including their ideological battles *Juyeo*

그대로 받아

And we internalized it *Juyeo*

형제와 자매가 서로 총을 겨누

네그려

And killed our brothers and sisters *Juyeo*

X4

주여 (주여)

O Lord *Juyeo*

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주여 (주여)

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주여 (주여 X4)

O Lord *Juyeo* X4

형제와 자매를

Sisters and brothers *Juyeo*

갈라놔놓고

You divided *Juyeo*

갈라진 형제를

And now you called our separated
brother *Juyeo*

악의 축이라 부르네

The axis of evil *Juyeo X4*

우리는 언제나

When will we ever *Juyeo*

하나가 될까

ever be one with our brethren *Juyeo*

우리는 언제나

When will we ever *Juyeo*

자유케 될까

truly be free *Juyeo X4*

주여 (주여)

O Lord *Juyeo*

주여 (주여)

O Lord *Juyeo*

주여 (주여)

O Lord *Juyeo*

주여 (주여 X4)

O Lord *Juyeo* X4

머나먼 이곳에

We came from far away *Juyeo*

이민을 왔네

To make our home here *Juyeo*

못하는 영어에

But because of our English *Juyeo*

애 취급을 하네

You treat us like children *Juyeo X4*

우리네 남성네

You treat our men *Juye*

남자 취급 안하고

Not male enough *Juye*

우리네 여편네

You fetishize our women *Juye*

순종적이라 하네

calling them 'submissive' *Juye X4*

우리네 자식들

Our children *Juyeo*

이 땅에서 낳아

They were born here *Juyeo*

이 땅에서 컸어

They were raised here *Juyeo*

근데 지네 나라로 가라네

But you tell them to 'go back to your
country' *Juyeo X4*

주여 (주여)

O Lord *Juyeo*

주여 (주여)

O Lord *Juyeo*

주여 (주여)

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주여 (주여 X4)

O Lord *Juyeo* X4

낯선 땅 미국땅

This strange land *Juycio*

내 고향이 되고

Became my hometown *Juycio*

내 고향 가서는

And at my hometown *Juycio*

이방인이 되네

I became a stranger *Juycio X4*

그리운 고국땅

My dear motherland *Juycyo*

소식을 듣네

I've heard of the Candlelight Revolution

Juycyo

촛불혁명 하면 뭐하나

But what use is it? *Juycyo*

미국 손아귀 밑에 있으니 다 소용 없더

라

Since we're under Imperial US rule

Juycyo X4

주여 (주여)

O Lord *Juyeo*

주여 (주여)

O Lord *Juyeo*

주여 (주여)

O Lord *Juyeo*

주여 (주여 X4)

O Lord *Juyeo* X4

우리네 조선사람

You called us Koreans *Juye*

못나다 했겠다

You called us weak *Juye*

그래, 우리 못났다

Yes, indeed we are weak *Juye*

못난게 자랑스럽다

We boast in that weakness *Juye X4*

잘나지 않아도

You don't have to be great *Juyeo*

잘날 수 있다네

to be great *Juyeo*

제국이 되느니

Rather than following imperial ways

Juyeo

못나게 죽겠네

We'd rather die weak *Juyeo X4*

주여 (주여)

O Lord *Juyeo*

주여 (주여)

O Lord *Juyeo*

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