



Portrait by T. S. Arthur

1765

*Jon<sup>a</sup>. Edwards*

THE DOCTRINE OF THE WILL

*And the nature of the Will*

# OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

## LANGUAGE OF THE MUHHEKANEW INDIANS;

IN WHICH THE

EXTENT OF THAT LANGUAGE IN NORTH AMERICA IS SHOWN; ITS GENIUS  
GRAMMATICALLY TRACED; AND SOME OF ITS PECULIARITIES,  
AND SOME INSTANCES OF ANALOGY BETWEEN THAT  
AND THE HEBREW ARE POINTED OUT.\*

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THAT the following observations may obtain credit, it may be proper to inform the reader, with what advantages they have been made.

When I was but six years of age, my father removed with his family to Stockbridge, which at that time, was inhabited by Indians almost solely; as there were in the town but twelve families of whites or Anglo-Americans, and perhaps one hundred and fifty families of Indians. The Indians being the nearest neighbors, I constantly associated with them; their boys were my daily school-mates and play-fellows. Out of my father's house, I seldom heard any language spoken, beside the Indian. By these means I acquired the knowledge of that language, and a great facility in speaking it. It became more familiar to me than my mother tongue. I knew the names of some things in Indian, which I did not know in English; even all my thoughts ran in Indian; and though the true pronunciation of the language is extremely difficult to all but themselves, they acknowledged, that I had acquired it perfectly; which as they said, never had been acquired before by any Anglo-American. On account of this acquisition, as well as on account of my skill in their language in

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general, I received from them many compliments applauding my superior wisdom. This skill in their language I have in a good measure retained to this day.

After I had drawn up these observations, lest there should be some mistakes in them, I carried them to Stockbridge, and read them to Capt. Yoghum, a principal Indian of the tribe, who is well versed in his own language, and tolerably informed concerning the English; and I availed myself of his remarks and corrections.

From these facts, the reader will form his own opinion of the truth and accuracy of what is now offered him.

When I was in my tenth year, my father sent me among the Six Nations, with a design that I should learn their language, and thus become qualified to be a missionary among them. But on account of the war with France, which then existed, I continued among them but about six months. Therefore the knowledge which I acquired of that language was but imperfect; and at this time I retain so little of it, that I will not hazard any particular critical remarks on it. I may observe however, that though the words of the two languages are totally different, yet their structure is in some respects analogous, particularly in the use of prefixes and suffixes.

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THE language which is now the subject of observation is that of the *Muhhekaneew* or Stockbridge Indians. They, as well as the tribe at New London, are by the Anglo-Americans, called *Mohegans*; which is a corruption of *Muhhekaneew*,\* in the singular, or *Muhhekaneok* in the plural. This language is spoken by all the Indians throughout New England. Every tribe, as that of Stockbridge, that of Farmington, that of New London, etc. has a different dialect; but the language is radically the same. Mr. Elliot's translation of the Bible is in a particular dialect of this language. The dialect followed in these observations, is that of Stockbridge. This language appears to be much more extensive than any other language in North America. The languages of the Delawares in Pennsylvania, of the Penobscots bordering on Nova Scotia, of the Indians of St. Francis in Canada, of the Shawanese on the Ohio, and of the Chippewaus at the westward of lake Huron, are all radically the same with the Mohegan. The same is said concerning the languages of the Ottowaus,

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\* Wherever *w* occurs in an Indian word, it is a mere consonant, as in *work, world, etc.*

Nanticooks, Munsees, Menomonees, Messisaugas, Saukies, Ottawaumies, Killistinoes, Nipegons, Algonkins, Winnebagoes, etc. That the languages of the several tribes in New England, of the Delawares, and of Mr. Elliot's Bible, are radically the same with the Mohegan, I assert from my own knowledge. What I assert concerning the language of the Penobscots, I have from a gentleman in Massachusetts, who has been much conversant among the Indians. That the languages of the Shawanese and Chippewaus is radically the same with the Mohegan, I shall endeavor to show. My authorities for what I say of the languages of the other nations are Capt. Yoghum, before mentioned, and Carver's Travels.

To illustrate the analogy between the Mohegan, the Shawanee, and the Chippewau languages, I shall exhibit a short list of words of those three languages. For the list of Mohegan words I myself am accountable. That of the Shawanee words was communicated to me by general Parsons, who has had opportunity to make a partial vocabulary of that language. For the words of the Chippewau language I am dependent on Carver's Travels.

<i>English.</i>	<i>Mohegan.</i>	<i>Shawanee.</i>
A Bear	Mquoh	Mauquah
A beaver	Amisque*	Amaquah
Eye	Hkeesque	Skeesacoo
Ear	Towohque	Towacah
Fetch	Pautoh	Peatoloo
My Grandfather	Nemoghomet†	Nemasompethau
My Grandmother	Nohhum	Nocumthau
My Grandchild	Naughees	Noosthethau
He goes	Pumissoo	Pomthalo
A girl	Peesquausoo	Squauthauthau
House	Weekumuhm	Weecuah
He (that man)	Uwoh	Welah
His head	Weensis	{ Weeseh (I imagine mis- spelt, for weenseh.)
His heart	Utoh	Otaheh
Hair	Weghaukun	Welathoh
Her husband	Waughecheh	Wasecheh
His teeth	Wepeeton	Wepeetalee
I thank you	Wneeweh	Neauweh
My uncle	Nsees	Neeseethau
I	Neah	Nelah
Thou	Keah	Kelah

\* *e* final is never sounded in any Indian word, which I write, except monosyllables.

† *gh* in any Indian word has the strong guttural sound, which is given by the Scots to the same letters in the words *tough*, *enough*, etc.

<i>English.</i>	<i>Mohegan.</i>	<i>Shawnee.</i>
We	Neaunuh	Nelauweh
Ye	Keauwuh	Kelauweh
Water	Nbey	Nippee
Elder sister	Nmees	Nemeethau
River	Sepoo	Thepee

The following is a specimen of analogy between the Mohegan and Chippewau languages :

<i>English.</i>	<i>Mohegan.</i>	<i>Chippewau.</i>
A bear	Mquoh	Mackwah
A beaver	Amisque	Amik
To die (I die)	Nip	Nip
Dead (he is dead)	Nboo or nepoo*	Neepoo
Devil	Mtandou, or Mannitot†	Manitou
Dress the kettle (make a fire)	Pootouwah	Poutwah
His eyes	Ukeesquan	Wiskinkhie
Fire	Stauw	Scutta
Give it him	Meenuh	Millaw
A spirit (a spectre)	Mannito	Manitou
How	Tuneh†	Tawnè
House	Weekumuhm	Wigwaum
An impostor (he is an impostor or bad man)	Mtissoo	Mawlawtiasie
Go	Pumisseh	Pimmoussie
Marry	Weeween	Weewin
Good for nought	Mtit	Malatat
River	Sepoo	Sippim
Shoe	Mkissin	Maukissin
The sun	Keesogh	Kissis
Sit down	Mattipeh	Mintipin
Water	Nbey	Nebbi
Where	Tedah	Tah
Winter	Hpoon	Pepoun
Wood	Metooque	Mittic

Almost every man who writes Indian words, spells them in a peculiar manner; and I dare say, if the same person had taken down all the words above, from the mouths of the Indians, he would have spelt them more alike, and the coincidence would have appeared more striking. Most of those who write and

\* The first syllable scarcely sounded.

† The last of these words properly signifies a spectre or anything frightful.

‡ Wherever *u* occurs, it has not the long sound of the English *u* as in *commune*; but the sound of *u* in *uncle*, though much protracted. The other vowels are to be pronounced, as in English.

print Indian words, use the letter *a* where the sound is that of *oh* or *au*. Hence the reader will observe, that in some of the Mohegan words above, *o* or *oh* is used, when *a* or *ah* is used in the correspondent words of the other languages; as *Mquoh*, *Mauquah*. I doubt not the sound of those two syllables is exactly the same, as pronounced by the Indians of the different tribes.

It is not to be supposed, that the like coincidence is extended to all the words of those languages. Very many words are totally different. Still the analogy is such as is sufficient to show, that they are mere dialects of the same original language.

I could not throughout, give words of the same signification in the three languages, as the two vocabularies, from which I extracted the Shawanee and Chippewau words, did not contain words of the same signification, excepting in some instances.

The Mohawk, which is the language of the six nations is entirely different from that of the Mohegans. There is no more appearance of a derivation of one of these last mentioned languages from the other, than there is of a derivation of either of them from the English. One obvious diversity, and in which the Mohawk is perhaps different from every other language, is, that it is wholly destitute of labials; whereas the Mohegan abounds with labials. I shall here give the numerals, as far as ten, and the *Pater noster*, in both languages.

<i>Mohegan.</i>	<i>Mohawk.</i>
Ngwittoh	Uskot
Neesoh	Teggeneh
Noghoh	Ohs
Nauwoh	Kialeh
Nanon	Wisk
Ngwittus	Yoiyok
Tupouwus	Chantok
Ghusooh	Sottago
Nauneeweh	Teuhtoh
Mtannit	Wialeh

The *Pater noster* in the Mohegan language, is as follows :

Noghnah, ne spummuek oieon, taugh mauweh wneh wtukoseauk neanne annuwoieon. Taugh ne aunchuwutammun wawehtuseek maweh noh pumme. Ne annoihittech mauweh awauneek noh hkey oiecheek, ne aunchuwutammun, ne aunoihitteet neek spummuk oiecheek. Menanaunuh noonooch wuhkamauk tquogh nuh uhhuyutamauk ngummauweh. Ohquutamouwenanunh auneh mumachoeiaukeh, ne anneh ohquntamouwoieauk numpeh neek mumacheh annehoquaukeek. Cheen hquukquaucheh siukeh annehanaunh. Panneweh htouwenanunh neen maumtchkeh. Keah ngwehcheh kwicuwauweh mauweh noh pum-

meh ; ktanwoi ; estah awaun wtinnoiyuwun ne aunoieyon ; hanweeweh ne ktinnoieen. Amen.

The Pater noster, in the language of the Six Nations, taken from Smith's history of New York, is this :

Soungwauneha caurounkyawga tehseetaroan sauhoneyousta es sawaneyou okettauhsele ehneauwoung na caurosunkyawga nughwon-shauga neatewehnesalauga taugwaunautoronoantoughsick toantangwe-leewhewayoustaung cheneeyeut chaquataulehwewayoustaunna toughsou taugwaussareneh tawautottenaugaloughtoungga nasawne sacheautangwass coantehsalohaunzaickaw esa sawauneyou esa sashoutzta esa soungwasoung cheneneauhaungwa ; auwen.

The reader will observe, that there is not a single labial either in the numerals or Pater noster of this language ; and that when they come to *amen*, from an aversion to shutting the lips, they change the *m* to *w*.

In no part of these languages does there appear to be a greater coincidence, than in this specimen. I have never noticed one word in either of them, which has any analogy to the correspondent word in the other language.

Concerning the Mohegan language, it is observable, that there is no diversity of gender, either in nouns or pronouns. The very same words express *he* and *she*, *him* and *her*. Hence when the Mohegans speak English, they generally in this respect follow strictly their own idiom : A man will say concerning his wife, *he sick, he gone away, etc.*

With regard to *cases*, they have but one variation from the nominative, which is formed by the addition of the syllable *an* as *wnechun*, his child, *wnechunan*. This varied case seems to suit indifferently any case, except the nominative.

The plural is formed by adding a letter or syllable to the singular ; as *nemannawo*, a man, *nemannauk*, men ; *penumpawsoo*, a boy, *penumpawsoouk*, boys.

The Mohegans more carefully distinguish the natural relations of men to each other, than we do, or perhaps any other nation. They have one word to express an elder brother, *netochon* ; another to express a younger brother, *ngheesum*. One to express an elder sister, *nmase* ; another to express a younger sister, *ngheesum*. But the word for younger brother and younger sister is the same,—*Nsase* is my uncle by my mother's side ; *nuchehque* is my uncle by the father's side.

The Mohegans have no adjectives in all their language ; unless we reckon numerals and such words as *all*, *many*, etc. adjectives. Of adjectives which express the qualities of substances, I do not

find that they have any. They express those qualities by verbs neuter; as *wmissoo*, he is beautiful; *mtissoo*, he is homely; *pehtuhquissoo*, he is tall; *neconmoo*, he is malicious, etc. Thus in Latin many qualities are expressed by verbs neuter, as *valeo*, *caleo*, *frigeo*, etc. Although it may at first, seem not only singular, and curious, but impossible, that a language should exist without adjectives; yet it is an indubitable fact. Nor do they seem to suffer any inconvenience by it. They as readily express any quality by a neuter verb, as we do by an adjective.

If it should be inquired, how it appears that the words above mentioned are not adjectives; I answer it appears, as they have all the same variations and declensions of other verbs. *To walk* will be acknowledged to be a verb. This verb is declined thus: *npumseh*, I walk; *kpumseh*, thou walkest; *pumissoo*, he walketh; *npumsehnuh*, we walk; *kpumsehmuh*, ye walk; *pumissook*, they walk. In the same manner are the words in question declined; *npehtuhquisseh*, I am tall; *kpehtuhquisseh*, thou art tall; *pehtuhquissoo*, he is tall; *npehtuhquissehnuh*, we are tall; *kpehtuhquissehmuh*, ye are tall; *pehtuhquissook*, they are tall.

Though the Mohegans have no proper adjectives, they have participles to all their verbs; as *pehtuhquisset*, the man who is tall; *paumseet*, the man who walks; *waunseet*, the man who is beautiful; *oieet*, the man who lives or dwells in a place; *oioeteet*, the man who fights. So in the plural, *pehtuhquissecheek*, the tall men; *paumsecheek*, they who walk, etc.

It is observable of the participles of this language, that they are declined through the persons and numbers, in the same manner as verbs; thus, *paumse-uh*, I walking; *paumse-an*, thou walking; *paumseet*, he walking; *paumseauk*, we walking; *paumseauque*, ye walking; *paumsecheek*, they walking.

They have no relative corresponding to our *who* or *which*. Instead of *the man who walks*, they say, the walking man, or the walker.

As they have no adjectives, of course they have no comparison of adjectives; yet they are put to no difficulty to express the comparative excellence or baseness of any two things. With a neuter verb expressive of the quality, they use an adverb to point out the degree; as *annuweeweh wmissoo*, he is more beautiful; *kahnuh wmissoo*, he is very beautiful. *Nemannauwoo*, he is a man; *annuweeweh nemannauwoo*, he is a man of superior excellence or courage; *kahnuh nemannauwoo*, he is a man of extraordinary excellence or courage.

Beside the pronouns common in other languages, they express



the pronouns both substantive and adjective, by *affixes*, or by letters or syllables added at the beginnings, or ends, or both, of their nouns. In this particular the structure of the language coincides with that of the Hebrew, in an instance in which the Hebrew differs from all the languages of Europe, ancient or modern. However, the use of the affixed pronouns in the Mohegan language, is not perfectly similar to the use of them in the Hebrew. As in the Hebrew they are joined to the ends of words only, but in the Mohegan, they are sometimes joined to the ends, sometimes to the beginnings, and sometimes to both. Thus, *tmohecan* is a hatchet or axe; *ndumhecan* is my hatchet; *ktumhecan*, thy hatchet; *utumhecan*, his hatchet; *ndumhecannauh*, our hatchet; *ktumhecannoowuh*, your hatchet; *utumhecannoowuh*, their hatchet. It is observable, that the pronouns for the singular number are prefixed, and for the plural, the prefixed pronouns for the singular being retained, there are others added as suffixes.

It is further to be observed, that by the increase of the word the vowels are changed and transposed; as *tmohecan*, *ndumhecan*; the *o* is changed into *u* and transposed, in a manner analogous to what is often done in the Hebrew. The *t* is changed into *d* *euphoniae gratia*.

A considerable part of the appellatives are never used without a pronoun affixed. The Mohegans can say, my father, *nogh*, thy father, *kogh*, etc. but they cannot say absolutely *father*. There is no such word in all their language. If you were to say *ogh*, which the word would be, if stripped of all affixes, you would make a Mohegan both stare and smile. The same observation is applicable to *mother*, *brother*, *sister*, *son*, *head*, *hand*, *foot*, etc. in short to those things in general which necessarily in their natural state belong to some person. A hatchet is sometimes found without an owner, and therefore they sometimes have occasion to speak of it absolutely, or without referring it to an owner. But as a *head*, *hand*, etc. naturally belong to some person, and they have no occasion to speak of them without referring to the person to whom they belong; so they have no words to express them absolutely. This I presume is a peculiarity in which this language differs from all languages, which have ever yet come to the knowledge of the learned world.

The pronouns are in like manner prefixed and suffixed to verbs. The Mohegans never use a verb in the infinitive mood, or without a nominative or agent; and never use a verb transitive without expressing, both the agent and the object, correspondent to the nominative and accusative cases in Latin. Thus

they can neither say, *to love*, nor *I love, thou givest*, etc. But they can say, *I love thee, thou givest him*, etc. viz. *Nduhwhunuw*, I love him or her; *nduhwhuntamin*, I love it; *ktuhwhunin*, I love thee; *ktuhwhunookmuh*, I love you, (in the plural) *nduhwhununk*, I love them. This, I think, is another peculiarity of this language.

Another peculiarity is, that the nominative and accusative pronouns prefixed and suffixed, are always used, even though other nominatives and accusatives be expressed. Thus they cannot say, *John loves Peter*; they always say, *John he loves him Peter*; *John uduhwhunuw Peteran*. Hence when the Indians begin to talk English, they universally express themselves according to this idiom.

It is further observable, that the pronoun in the accusative case is sometimes in the same instance expressed by both a prefix and a suffix; as *ktuhwhunin*, I love thee. The *k* prefixed and the syllable *in* suffixed, both unite to express, and are both necessary to express the accusative case *thee*.

They have no verb substantive in all the language. Therefore they cannot say, *he is a man, he is a coward*, etc. They express the same by one word, which is a verb neuter, viz. *nemannauwoo*, he is a man. *Nemannauw* is the noun substantive, *man*; that turned into a verb neuter of the third person singular, becomes *nemannauwoo*, as in Latin it is said, *græcor, græcatur*, etc. Thus they turn any substantive whatever into a verb neuter; as *kmattonnissautauh*, you are a coward, from *matansautee*, a coward; *kpeesquausooeh*, you are a girl, from *peesquausoo*, a girl.\*

Hence also we see the *reason*, why they have no verb substantive. As they have no adjectives, and as they turn their substantives into verbs on any occasion; they have no use for the substantive or auxiliary verb.

The third person singular seems to be the radix, or most simple form of the several persons of their verbs in the indicative mood; but the second person singular of the imperative, seems to be the most simple of any of the forms of their verbs; as *meetsch*, eat thou; *meetsoo*, he eateth; *nmeetsch*, I eat; *kmeetsch*, thou eatest, etc.

They have a past and future tense to their verbs; but often, if not generally, they use the form of the present tense, to express

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\* The circumstance that they have no verb substantive, accounts for their not using that verb, when they speak English. They say, *I man, I sick*, etc.

both past and future event. As *wnukuwooh ndiotuwoohpoh*, yesterday I fought; or *wnukuwooh ndiotuwooh*, yesterday I fight; *ndiotuwooch wupkoh*, I shall fight to-morrow, or *wupkauch ndiotuwooh*, to-morrow I fight. In this last case the variation of *wupkoh* to *wupkauch* denotes the future tense; and this variation is in the word *to-morrow*, not in the verb *fight*.

They have very few prepositions, and those are rarely used, but in composition. *Anneh* is to, *ocheh* is from. But to, from, etc. are almost always expressed by an alteration of the verb. Thus, *ndoghpeh* is I ride, and *Wnoghquetookoke* is Stockbridge. But if I would say in Indian *I ride to Stockbridge*, I must say, not *anneh Wnoghquetookoke ndoghpeh*, but *Wnoghquetookoke ndinnetoghpeh*. If I would say, *I ride from Stockbridge*, it must be, not *ocheh Wnoghquetookoke ndoghpeh*; but *Wnoghquetookoke nochetoghpeh*. Thus *ndinnoghoh* is, I walk to a place; *notoghoh*, I walk from a place; *ndinnehnuh*, I run to a place; *nochehnuh*, I run from a place. And any verb may be compounded, with the prepositions, *anneh* and *ocheh*, to and from.

It has been said, that savages have no parts of speech beside the substantive and the verb. This is not true concerning the Mohegans, nor concerning any other tribe of Indians, of whose language I have any knowledge. The Mohegans have all the eight parts of speech, to be found in other languages, though prepositions are so rarely used, except in composition, that I once determined that part of speech to be wanting. It has been said also, that savages never abstract, and have no abstract terms, which with regard to the Mohegans is another mistake. They have *uhwundowukon*, love; *sekeenundowukon*, hatred; *nscowukon*, malice; *peyuktommauwukon*, religion, etc. I doubt not but that there is in this language the full proportion of abstract, to concrete terms, which is commonly to be found in other languages.

Besides what has been observed concerning prefixes and suffixes, there is a remarkable analogy, between some words in the Mohegan language, and the correspondent words in the Hebrew. —In Mohegan *Neah* is I; the Hebrew of which is *Ani*. *Keek* is thou or thee; the Hebrews use *ka* the suffix. *Uwooh* is this man, or this thing; very analogous to the Hebrew *hu* or *hua*, ipse. *Neaunuh* is we; in the Hebrew *nachnu* and *anachnu*.

In Hebrew *ni* is the suffix for *me*; or the first person. In the Mohegan *n* or *ne* is prefixed to denote the first person. As *nmeetseh* or *nemeetseh*, I eat. In Hebrew *k* or *ka* is the suffix

for the second person, and is indifferently either a pronoun substantive or adjective. *K* or *ka* has the same use in the Mohegan language; as *kmeetseh* or *kameetseh*, thou eatest; *knisk*, thy hand. In Hebrew the *vau*, the letter *u* and *hu* are the suffixes for he or him. In Mohegan the same is expressed by *u* or *uw*, and by *oo*; as *nduhwhunuw*, I love him, *pumissoo*, he walketh. The suffix to express *our* or *us* in Hebrew is *nu*, in Mohegan the suffix of the same signification is *nuh*; as *noghnuh*, our father; *nmeetsehnuh*, we eat, etc.

How far the use of prefixes and suffixes, together with these instances of analogy, and perhaps other instances, which may be traced out by those who have more leisure, go towards proving, that the North American Indians are of Hebrew, or at least Asiatic extraction, is submitted to the judgment of the learned. The facts are demonstrable; concerning the proper inferences every one will judge for himself. In the modern Armenian language, the pronouns are affixed.\* How far affixes are in use among the other modern Asiatics, I have not had opportunity to obtain information. It is to be desired, that those who are informed, would communicate to the public what information they may possess, relating to this matter. Perhaps by such communication, and by a comparison of the languages of the North American Indians with the languages of Asia, it may appear, not only from what quarter of the world, but from what particular nations, these Indians are derived.

It is to be wished, that every one who makes a vocabulary of any Indian language, would be careful to notice the prefixes and suffixes, and to distinguish accordingly. One man may ask an Indian, what he calls *hand* in his language, holding out his own hand to him. The Indian will naturally answer *knisk*, i. e. *thy* hand. Another man will ask the same question, pointing to the Indian's hand. In this case, he will as naturally answer *nnisk*, *my* hand. Another may ask the same question, pointing to the hand of a third person. In this case, the answer will naturally be *unisk*, *his* hand. This would make a very considerable diversity in the corresponding words of different vocabularies; when if due attention were rendered to the personal prefixes and suffixes, the words would be the very same, or much more similar.

The like attention to the modes and personal affixes of the verb is necessary. If you ask an Indian how he expresses, in his language, to *go* or *walk*, and to illustrate your meaning, point to a person who is walking; he will tell you *pumissoo*, he walks.

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\* Vide Schroederi thesaurum Linguae Armenicae.

If, to make him understand, you walk yourself, his answer will be *tpumseh*, thou walkest. If you illustrate your meaning by pointing to the walk of the Indian, the answer will be *npumseh*, I walk. If he take you to mean *go* or *walk*, in the imperative mood, he will answer *pumissch*, walk thou.