

A Vision Quest Experience of a History of Knowledge

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T*ansi, tawaw // Hello, and welcome; there is room, come in.* I've said my salutations and used words in Nēhiyawewin // language of peoples from Nēhiyaw descent. I lay on tarp-covered moss inside a tent, observing constellations with only gravity between us. It is relieving during Sākipakāwipīsim // Leaf-Budding full moon on May 29th, 2018. The second night of a four-day Vision Quest, where the heat has dissipated, and my mind has ascended to connect stars like dots on paper. This moment is a fragment of memory-recollection, constantly on my mind. Manito Api // Bannock Point is a sacred site where ceremony takes place. The Indigenous practice of fasting dates back over millennia, and the remaining infrastructure of Manito Api is approximately 1,600 years in age. Manito Api is a site of Anishinaabe // Ojibwe traditional territory.

Through traditional knowledge passed down generation to generation, the objective research and Ceremonial Protocols of our ancestors gave us the power to survive a genocide

Kānata has been, and still is, home to over 700 defined, distinct, and diverse Nations who speak over 60 languages. Derived from Kānata // a settlement, Indigenous languages influence what is now known as Canada. We, Indigenous peoples, connect with the spirit of all things Land and Skies. We observe there is no pause or static period in the continuum of tradition and evolution amongst the First Nations, Inuit, and Metis Nations. Our languages have fluid states that transcend the honesty of human perspectives. Language is a pillar in any culture, which is why colonial media perpetuates reality based not in truth, but in honesty.

Honesty is a form of subjectivity, where our human bodies elicit a response. Honesty, to simply explain, is human emotion. Most effective of these emotions are paranoia, rage, selfishness, and identity. The epitome of these humanistic emotions would be Capitalism. Non-Indigenous peoples hoarding millions or billions of dollars in profits while less than 200 km away, Indigenous peoples starve from lack of food/water resources. This is applicable across the planet. In Canada 150 First Nation reserves have poisoned water and boil advisories due to non-Indigenous corpora-

tions extracting natural resources next door. Honesty is observed as genocide, where a truth is hidden by the monuments to our sins.

The Truth? Some feel it is boring, factual, and objective, never elevating the heart rate or giving people a rush of epinephrine. Truth is a language spoken by the Moon and Sun. From observing honesty through a microscope, one must then observe truth through a telescope. Animikii // Thunderbird, spiritual beings of water in Anishinaabe legend, is not considerate of human honesty. Truth is no matter how deeply you believe bacteria cannot kill you, they still do. Leaving only scientific findings and proven Protocol, truth is “the bigger picture” to all living beings and their complex relations.

With bloodlines that run deeper than any oil well, Indigenous Peoples feel and sense the spirit of the living on Kānata. Through traditional knowledge passed down generation to generation, the objective research and Ceremonial Protocols of our ancestors

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While 127 million Indigenous peoples occupied Turtle Island in the 1400s, we now have 70 million. This population decline of 57 million Indigenous peoples across Turtle Island // North America is due to genocide. Statistics Canada published a population of 1,673,780 Indigenous peoples for fiscal year 2016, which is approximately the same as 600 years ago. We, Indigenous peoples, are recovering from extensive genocide with the first rise in our population in a long period. We have much farther to go.

Centuries of Indigenous-led fur trades with non-Indigenous people founded the economy of today's society. High and unrelenting demand for Indigenous knowledge transference and sacred traditions led to cultural changes within Indigenous nations. From the 1400s to late 1800s, peoples of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous descent, now referred to as Metis, began to emerge. Indigenous and Metis Nations across Canada faced criminal apprehension of their land and material properties by the Hudson's Bay Company, and eventually the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Often through swindling, in the form of Scrips, the Hudson's Bay Company sold the stolen land to the Government of Canada.



Legislative recognition over Manito api // Manitoba by this colonial state was a trojan horse. The efforts to recognize Manitoba as a province were led by the honourable politician Louis Riel. Upon learning Indigenous peoples were utilizing language and white privilege in asserting legislative recognition, the colonial state executed Louis Riel and introduced the numbered Treaty Acts in his absence. In knowing Indigenous Nations could not utilize the English language like Louis Riel and other Metis Nations, the colonial state legislated numbered Treaty Acts to perpetuate their ongoing genocide. Riel symbolizes a last resort of one kind, as Traditions, and a new hope of another, as Evolutions.

The colonial state disregards the numbered Treaty Acts, instead legislating the Indian Act. Through the Indian Act of 1876, people were given social authority and jurisdiction to continue in the abduction and murders Indigenous peoples. This federal law gives jurisdiction to the provincial governments of Canada to control Indigenous peoples through institutional oppression. Instead of murdering like the previous four hundred years, in 1876 they began to obfuscate genocide through 139 Indian Residential Schools

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and 29 Segregated Indian Hospitals, through imprisonment and foster care, and through court systems that acquit murderers like Gerald Stanley, Raymond Cormier, and Peter Khill.

These institutions were given legislative powers from the Colonial state to abduct Indigenous peoples and forcefully colonize their minds. Each Indigenous child was subsidized at \$0.35 cents a day, paid by the colonial state, \$0.15 cents extra granted to Indian Residential Schools housing children with Tuberculosis. When they became ill and/or injured from mental, sexual, spiritual, and/or physical abuse, Indigenous peoples were then sent to the Segregated Indian Hospitals. All 29 of these federal institutions performed medical, surgical, experimental, and unethical practices on Indigenous peoples.

Where 150,000,000 Indigenous Peoples once facilitated a wealth of knowledge and wisdom transference, we now have 570,000,000 (non-Indigenous) Peoples facilitating fascist ideologies and capitalist governments.

Almost as if intentional, media outlets constantly run narratives through different perspectives, by different companies (owned by the same corporations). Media went from revering scientific truth to upholding honesty in the form of reality. No matter how truthful the facts, dishonesty will always bear more influence over an audience. People are more attracted to honesty disguised as reality over the truth. Honesty is a form of subjectivity,

where our human emotions elicit a response of a certain type. Truth leaves only scientific findings and proven protocols to be digested, an audience may sigh "Never enough".

We have, in the College of Nursing, a population of 7% Indigenous Peoples. When addressing these concerns to my fellow representatives, they were unintentionally stereotypical of Indigenous students (our GPAs are too low, we don't apply, we lack qualities of strong students, etc.). These stigmatizations of us echo on, so easily absorbed by those with the best intentions, and are endlessly repeated. I attended the Manitoba Undergraduate Healthcare Symposium where Dr. Barry Lavallee spoke of Indigenous Health and wellbeing. We had a student derogatorily demean the research of our health and wellbeing. We experienced continuous taunting throughout, this non-Indigenous student felt so propelled to assert his version of Indigenous health and wellbeing. Anything to suppress and invalidate the knowledge transference of Indigenous research. Our own student body does this, even in the presence of those who directly contributed to or are related in the research performed.

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There are still those within Canadian society who cannot (or will not) see the facts as presented. It is time we shave the blind wool that misleads our societies. It is time rather than blind ourselves to scientific realities, we deafen ourselves to those speaking scientific fallacies and falsehoods. It is the right and responsibility of Indigenous Nations to ensure the knowledge transference of our Sacred Traditions and Traditional Knowledges. No form of colonial media, organization, or state shall interfere with this process. If they try to do so again, they will discover future generations will never allow it. They will find architects of tomorrow's labyrinths are catching up to them. They will find we do not become weaker from starvation of education, food/water sources, shelter, employment, community relations, and pursuit of Life's Purpose. We become stronger warriors. A warrior is not one of anger and malice, they are one of awareness and acceptance.

I speak from experience when I claim we do not become weaker from starvation, through education, food/water sources, shelter, employment, community relations, and pursuit of Life's Purpose. As I lie under the stars, night three of no food or water, I realize how little we need in this life beyond the connection with other human beings. Like gravity, material greed restrains our human experiences as spiritual beings.

