

The Origin of the Maliseet Family Called Bear

[Source: Chamberlain, Montague. 1880. "Melicite (Malisit') vocabulary," pp. 106–109. MS 13, National Anthropological Archives, Suitland, MD.]

1. Ksihkéhe skinúhsis. Malom=öte wmihqi-ksihkáhan muwínyol naka wnicàns. Pisessultúwok msqikūwámok, elömi-ihit nqocípun.

[A boy became lost. At length his wanderings brought him together with a bear and her cubs. They all went into the den, where he stayed all winter.]

2. Wmawi-ihiniya kakéhsönul pepúkil. Wtolawsiniyal msí kehkikkíkok keqsimínsol puniw, on nípok nömèhs wtolawsiniya.

[They stayed together for many winters. They lived on all kinds of berries in the winter, and in the summer they lived on fish.]

3. Kci-wskinuhsūwìw meskuwùt. Ítom muwìn wkisi-ösánal weckuwihalícil skàt nehpuhukuwōniya.

[He was a young man when he was found. He said that the bear had turned away someone who was coming toward them so that he would not kill them.]

4. Pésqon pépuk eyultíhtit msqikūwámok, kci-muwìn ítok, "Wòt tőkèc weckuwíhat, ntolithàs knatkakùn. Ntoqeci--ehta -ösánan."

[One winter when they were in the den, the old bear said, "This one who is coming now, I think he is coming right toward us. I will try to turn him away."]

5. Ítok, "Katékon nkisi-ösánaw. Knokkahtuhukùn. Kil téhpukt wetawsíyon."

[She said, "I cannot turn him away. He will kill all of us. You alone will survive."]

6. "Kénuk ktíhul, musà=hk nehpaháhkoc núsesq elōmawsíyon. Nehpohòt núsesq, knehpahà=hc kúhkōmoss. Nehpohòt kúhkōmoss, kàt=oc àpc knehpahàw muwìn.

["But I tell you this, never kill a female bear as long as you live. If you kill a female bear, you will be killing your grandmother. If you kill your grandmother, you will never again kill a bear."]

7. "Tőkèc ktíhul, elōmawsíyon, sipkawsíyon, kōtunōlòt muwìn li-nutahàyon spasūwìw, knomihtūwanòl=c wpoktéwal. Tàn piqi-pkotènōmat, nòt kmúhsums; wahkaci-pkotènōmat, nòt kúhkōmoss. Nòt musà=hk nehpaháhkoc.

["I tell you now, as long as you live, if you live a long time, if you hunt a bear when you go out in the morning, you will see their (columns of) smoke. The one from whose chimney thick smoke comes, that is your grandfather; the one from whose chimney hardly any smoke comes,

that is your grandmother. Do not ever kill her.”]

8. Katáma nusésqol wnehpahàwǐyol malom=öte kiskátom. Wnisüwihtícil wtihúkul, “Nkotúpa núsesq. Ktahcüwi-nehpáhtüwin núsesq.”

[He did not kill a female bear until he got married. His wife told him, “I have a craving for female bear. You must kill a female bear for me.”]

9. Malom=öte wtahcüwi-nehpahtüwánol. Nít wecehtakémok, katáma wnehpahàwǐyol muwínǐyol. Nekèt=ölu mèsq, uci=nömhíhal ’qahakönumok, wtolihánol kiyahqìw wnehpáhan.

[Finally he had to kill one for her. From that point on, he did not kill a bear. But before that time, he would see one from his door, go straight to it, and kill it.]

10. Nít wòt wskitáp weci-sissaháhtit muwinewakütökik.

[It is this man from whom the Bear family (those who are related to the bear) are derived.]