

Alənapak tta Toləpa: The Men and the Turtle

Source: Wzôkhillain, Peter Paul. 1830. *Wobanaki kimzowi awighigan* [Abenaki study book], p. 36. Boston: Crocker and Brewster.

Wzôkhillain's text is given in below in (a); the retranscription and translation in (b) have been prepared by Philip LeSourd, partly on the basis of notes by Gordon Day in his MS collection of Abenaki texts (Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull, PQ, pp. 98–99). These should be regarded as tentative.

1. a. <Pazgueda kini alnôbak pamkannihdit, ni wna- / mihônô kahgini tolba walmikessik pamibizagak, / ni wdidamennô, tônia katoba wa kdelihônana waji / kizi nhlôakw?>

b. Pasək^wəta kini-alənapak pamkannihətīt, ni wənamihəŋə kahkini toləpa aləmihkəssik pamipisakak. Ni wətitaməŋə, “Təŋi=ka=ahto=pa wa kətəlīhəŋana waci-kisi-nhləak^w?”

‘One time several Native men were traveling along, and they saw a really big turtle plodding off into the brush. And they said, “So what can we do to it in order to kill it?”’

2. a. <ni pazgo wdidamen, tmiguataho- / dahga,>

b. Ni pasəko wətitamən, “Təmīk^wahtahətah=əka.”

‘Then one of them said, “Let’s cut its head off!”’

3. a. <nitta tolba wdidamen, ôdahaba niāihobo- / wen.>

b. Ni=tta toləpa wətitamən, “Aṭah=əpa ni aihop=əwən!”

‘At that the turtle said, “That in particular would not do it!”’

4. a. <Niga seguesktahôda,>
 b. “Ni=ka sək^wəsktahəta!”
 ““Then let’s chop him into pieces!””
5. a. <ôdahaba niahobewen, />
 b. “Aṭah=əpa ni aihop=əwən!”
 ““That in particular would not do it!””
6. a. <ala matkazazôda,>
 b. Ala matkasasəta!
 ““Or let’s burn him up!””
7. a. <ôdahaba niahobowen,>
 b. “Aṭah=əpa ni aihop=əwən!”
 ““That in particular would not do it!””
8. a. <ala so- / glozida illôwzitep,>
 b. “Ala sokəlosita illəwəsitəp.”
 ““Or let’s cook him while he lives!””
9. a. <ôdahaba niahobowen.>
 b. “Aṭah=əpa ni aihop=əwən!”
 ““That in particular would not do it!””
10. a. <Niga / sôgawiga kamguakada sibok,>
 b. Ni=ka səkawi=ka kamək^wahkata sipok!
 ““Well, then, so let’s throw him into the river!””

11. a. <ah! niaihip, niai- / hip, niaihip, -->

b. “Ah! Ni aihəp! Ni aihəp! Ni aihəp!”

“‘Ah! That will do it! That will do it! That will do it!’”

12. a. <aguachi kelighama adoji sigôdak / kamguakôlôn, almiki nodasano -- ni almakan ne- / bik -- taketta paki sen adoji ngemi kdahlôt -->

b. Akwahci kəlikhama atoci-sikətak kamək^wahkəlan. Aləmihki-notahsano. Ni aləmahkan nəpik—tahki=ttə pahki ssən nəkəmi kətahlət.

‘He really hung on, very unwilling to be thrown into the water. Gradually he grew weaker. Then he was thrown into the water—and just like a stone he sank right down.’

13. a. <no- / nōgaiwi ni mamiliwi oji sôk^wk^wawin sibewi idak, / awani banawa wjahaki iairobot.>

b. Nəŋəkaiwi ni mamiliwi oci-sək^wk^wawin. Sipiwi itak, “Awani=pa=nawa wəciaahki iaihop=ətta.”

‘Very soon, way out there offshore, he emerged again. After a moment he said, “Who, then, would not continue to live in the country he is from?”’

[Day notes that Ambroise Obomsawin reported (and sang) the following song that Turtle sang after his escape, July 11, 1964 at Odanak, PQ.]

14. a <Ndaaba ggizi baskejəbalôwi doleba wzômiba

Would not you could drown him not turtle because-would

ni gizi ntôwagwizo ndaki gia.>

that one can (could) swim well than you.

b. ʔah=əpa kəkisi-paskəcəpaləwi toləpa wəsəmi=pa ni kisi-ntəwak^{wi}iso ʔahki kia.

‘You could not drown a turtle because he can swim better than the way you could.’