

Toləpa, Kąkw, tta Təmahkwa: Turtle, Porcupine, and Beaver

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Wzôkhilain, Peter Paul. 1830. *Wobanaki kimzowi awighigan* [Abenaki study book], pp. 32–36.
Boston: Crocker and Brewster.

Wzôkhilain'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. 92–97.

1. a. ⟨Wawôdamwinno Tolba illakannitep ni owa- / naskawôn Kôgua ta Tmakwa; nitta wguahômin / sibiwi idak, paakwinôgwziak kiuwô awanigik, / ktilleba paakwinôgwziakw kanwa ôda kowawi- / noloppa;⟩

b. Wawątaməwinno Toləba illakannitəp, ni owanaskawąn Kąkw^wa tta Təmahk^wa. Ni=tta wək^wahąmin. Sibiwi itak, “Paahkwinaḡ^wəsiak kiową awanikik. Kətihləpa ‘paahkwinaḡ^wəsiak,’ kanəwa ąta kəwawinoloppa.”

‘Turtle, a knowledgeable person, had been traveling when he met Porcupine and Beaver. Right away he called out to them. Then he said, “I haven’t seen you folks in a long time. I have told you, ‘I haven’t seen you in a long time,’ but (in fact) I don’t recognize you.”’

2. a. ⟨Niaki achi ôda kowawinolo kôgw idam, / witamawi aguachi wigôdamana awani kia.⟩

b. “Nia=hki ahci kəwawinolo,” Kąkw^w itam. “Wihtamawi ak^wahci wikątamana awani kia.”

“I don’t know you either,” said Porcupine. “Tell me, if you please, just who you are.”

3. a. ⟨Ni / Tolba wdidamen, niaga wigawôjiwi ali hwilgaa / Tolba, ôda ni ôzoka ahowi liwizia, wibiwitta / ni noji liwizin ali nanihlawôba li mamessani / hiwilidép. Niagaki ahowi liwizia ta walôma / liwizia pita kinawtôguat, weskkbi kôdak kiuwô / nahnodwakw ali liwizia Plawinno.⟩

b. Ni Tolôpa wôtitamôn, “Nia=ka wikawaçiwî ali-wihlêkaa Tolôpa, âta ni âsohka ahcêwi-li-wisia. Wipiwi=tta ni noci-li-wisin ali- nanihlawâpa li -mamæssani-wihlitép. Nia=ka=hki acêwi-li-wisia, tta walâma li-wisia pihta kinawtâk^wat wskêpi kâtak kiowâ nahnotêwak^w ali-li-wisia Pêlawinno.

‘Then Turtle said, “I am often called Turtle, but that is not what I should be called. I am only called by that name as a way to mock me by calling me by the name of a common fellow. I should instead be called, and I believe if I am more properly named this way perhaps even all of you will have heard how I am called, Person who Takes his Time.”’

4. a. ⟨Ni adoji / kôgw idak, niagakitta pazgo asma nodanowa ni / wizwôgan, witamawi aguachi kagui ni waji liwiz- / ian.⟩

b. Ni atoci- kâk^w -itak, “Nia=ka=hki=tta pasêko ahsêma nênotamowa ni wisêwâkan. Wihtamawi ak^wahci kak^wi ni waci-li-wisian.”

‘At that point Porcupine said, “I, for one, have not heard that name before. Tell me just why it is you are called that.”’

5. a. ⟨Tôniba nawa Tolba idam, aliga wa ngw- / üt kamigzo nia wadaguôgodama ntôwi pla kagui / pabaki ta sipki mômanni tbidahôdak tôni kadawi / lalokat: tahôlawiba idôziga plamanni, plamanni, / plamanni, --ni waji liwizia Plawinno.⟩

b. “T̄ani=pa=nawa,” Tol̄opa itam, “ali=ka wa n̄ək^wət̄kamik̄əso nia watak^wək̄otama. Nt̄awi-p̄əla kak^wi papaki tta sipki məman̄əni-t̄əpitaḥ̄atak t̄ani katawi-lalohkat: taḥ̄lawi=pa it̄asika “p̄əla man̄əni, p̄əla man̄əni, p̄əla man̄əni,” ni waci-li-wisia P̄əlawinno.

“Well, then,” Turtle said, “it is because of this tribe I am related to. One knows how to think something over first thoroughly and slowly for a long time when he is going to do it: just as they say *hold off, go slow—hold off, go slow—hold off, go slow*, for that reason I came to be called Person who Takes his Time.”

6. a. ⟨Pita ko- / litbi witamen K̄ōgw id[a]m, chanawa witamawi t̄ōni / wjidbihla ta awani ni ali mamessanni hwilgowaza; /⟩

b. “Pihta koli-t̄əpi-wihtam̄ən,” K̄ək^w itam, “Ca=nawa wihtamawi t̄ani w̄əci-t̄əpihla=tta awani ni ali-mam̄əssani-wihl̄əkowasa.”

“You explain it very thoroughly and thoughtfully,” Porcupine said. “Now, then, tell me how it came to be that someone named you mockingly like that.”

7. a. ⟨ni Tolba wdidamen, n̄ōwatga waskinnowīōna / nad̄ōgues nnizi n̄ōji namih̄ōpnohop n̄ōkskwak / wawitsakasottijek; ni ōzoka ni māōwi tojiwi kdak / mina wskinnos wdel̄ōbast̄ōnap. Ni ōzoka ali / niuna nad̄ōgues paa[m]i wli kin̄ōgaak ta wdowika- / d̄ōgaak, ni agma ōda k̄ōkkinaw̄ōwen, ni ngaḡō- / wih̄ōnana, ni adoji nia liwihlit tolba, ni nad̄ōgwsa / awasos; kagui ato k̄ōdak u idamoo tolba ala / awasos, ōda nwawtamowen, achi gatta agma / walma wawtak.⟩

b. Ni Tol̄opa w̄ətitam̄ən, “N̄awat=̄əka waskinnowīāna, nataḥ̄^wəss n̄ənisi-n̄əci-namih̄əp̄ənoh̄əp n̄əks^wak wawitsahkahsohticik. Ni ̄əshoka ni māāwi tociwi k̄ətak mina skinnos w̄ət̄əlapast̄ənap. Ni ̄əshoka ali- niona nataḥ̄^wəss -paami-w̄əli-kin̄ākaak tta -w̄ətowihkataḥ̄kaak, ni ak̄əma ̄əta

kąkkinaŵəwən, ni nəkakəwihənanana. Ni atoci- nia -li-wihlit Toləpa, ni natakw^wsa Awahsohs.

Kak^wi=ahto kətak yo itamoo “toləba” ala “awahsohs,” əta nəwawtamowən, ahci=ka=tta akəma waləma wawtak.

‘Then Turtle said, “A long time ago when we were young, my cousin and I went together to see some girls who were sisters. But then at the same time another young man had his eye on one of them. But as my cousin and I were looked upon more favorably and were more highly esteemed, and he was not regarded, we made him angry. It was at that point that he called me Turtle and my cousin Bear. What “turtle” or “bear” may even mean, I do not understand, and indeed he probably didn’t understand it himself.’”

8. a. ⟨Ni əwalami achi nadəgues as- / kamat ni mziwi nanihlawəba alihwlgot, əlawiki / agma achi owizwəgan pita wligen ta kinawtəguat / wiskbi kədak nahnodamakw ali liwizit Wgawin- / no, ta oji liwizin ni ali əda peboniwi pabəmkən- / nikw wibiwi kəgao kwanipok.⟩

b. Ni əwalami ahci natakwəss askamat ni məsiwi nanihlawəpa ali-wihləkot. Əlawiki akəma ahci owisəwəkan pihta wəlikən tta kinawtəkw^wat. Wskəpi kətak nahnotamak^w ali-li-wisit Wəkawinno, tta oci-li-wisin ni ali- əta pəponiwi -papəmkannik^{wk^w}, wipiwi kəkao k^wanihpok.

“So from then on my cousin was also called by that name by all the ordinary people. However, he also has a name that is much better and more accurate. Perhaps in fact you have heard that he is called Person who Sleeps, and the reason he has this name is that he does not travel around in the wintertime, but just goes on sleeping all winter.’”

9. a. ⟨Nia ta nadəgwes / owizwəgan adoji wlitəguak, aguachi mziwi kina- / wi alnəbak, lidbezwinnoak, ta podawazwinnoak / pita owigawananəl; ədahaba awani nodawəwi /

tônwa idak tolba ala awasos, majimiwi wibiwi / nodôzo Plawinno ta Wgawinno. />

b. Nia=tta natakw^wəss owisəwəkan atoci-wəlihtək^wahk ak^wahci məsiwi kkinawi-alənapak, li-təpəsəwinnoak tta potawasəwinnoak, pihta owikawa[k]anał. Aṭah=əpa awani nətawəwi tən=əwa itak Toləpa ala Awahsohs, macimiwi wipiwi notəso Pəlawinno tta Wəkawinno.

“My cousin’s name (and mine) sound so nice that in fact all of the respectable people, the officials and the council members, very much like to use them. No one will be heard to say Turtle or Bear; Person who Takes his Time or Person who Sleeps is always the only thing heard.”

10. a. <Kamôji nwahwdaldamen ali nônsojihadôzik / nwizwôganennawal, ta nmamhôlhidahôdamen ka- / gui ato waji nanihlawôba ngemi nosokamawômük / kagui li mólhihwilkada; nagôdak nahihlawi kôgw, / ali ni li hwilgoak, nitta mziwi awani, kinôguida / kôguak wligihidida waji agma nalawi manessani- / moat.>

b. Kaməci nəwahwətəlatəmən ali-nənsocihatatəsik nəwisəwəkanənnawal, tta nmamhəłhitahətamən kak^wi=ahto waci- nanihlawəpa -nəkəmi-nohsohkamawəmək kak^wi li-məłhi-wihlkata. Na kətak na[n]ihlawi kək^w, ali- ni li-wihləkoak^[w], ni=tta məsiwi awani kinək^wita kək^wak wəlikihətita waci- akəma nalawi -manəssaniməat.

“I am very sorry that our names have been spoiled, and I find it very strange how something can so easily follow an ordinary person that was created as a nickname. Even the simple porcupine, as you folks are called, everyone mocks everywhere, although porcupines are at least good-natured.”

11. a. ⟨Ni adoji kôgw klozit, ni wdihlôn tolba, / kahala! Nia dakibgua nitkamôgan ni alihogwaza! / ôdahaba ndidamo ôda palalokawi na tônia ni ali- / hogwan, kanwa ôda ni kdachwi wji majlohôwen / mziwi kôguak; ta ôdahaba kolôma kizi idamo kia / kbaami wlôbai ôdaki kôgw.⟩

b. Ni atoci- Kâk^w kâlosit, ni wõtihlân Tolôba, “Kahala! Nia=ta=hki=pâk^wa nitkamâkan ni alihok^wasa! Âtah=âpa nâtitamo âta palalohkawi na tãni ni alihok^wan, kanâwa âta ni kâtahcâwi-wâci-macilohâwân mâsiwi kâk^wak, tta âtah=âpa kolâma. Kâkisi-itamo kia kâpaami-wêlapai âtahki kâk^w?”

““And at that point Porcupine spoke up, and he said to Turtle, “Sure! In fact, it must be my people who have done that to you! I would not say that they have not been at fault when they have treated you that way, but you must not call all porcupines bad names because of it, for you would not be in the right. Can you say that you are better looking than a porcupine?””

12. a. ⟨Kaguiba waji ôda / kizi idamowa? tolba idam, -- adoji chibaginôgwzit / kôgw, wgôwima paki chignazi kôwizak, sibiwi / wissi piasowit.⟩

b. “Kak^{wi}=pa waci- âta -kisi-itamowa?” Tolôpa itam. “Atoci-cipakinâk^wâsit kâk^w. Wêkâwima pahki cikânasi-kâwisak, sipiwi wissi-piahsowit.”

““Why would I not be able to say that?” Turtle said. “The porcupine is really ugly. He has little hawthorn spikes all over him, plus he is covered with hair.””

13. a. ⟨Kahala! kia ali pabasigiau ni / waji laldaman kbaami wlôbai? achki ato kdelal- / dam kolôbai; kettep paki skogôdep, ni sibiwi / ktapskokwa chibagadagnanôguat paki maskka- /

adagen. Koliba wibiwi majimiwi tali kôtton / ktapskokwa kmiknakok, wzômi pôbaami chibagi- / nôguat;}

b. “Kalala! Kia ali-papahsikia[n] ni waci-lalêtaman kêpaami-wêlapai? Acki=ahto kêtêlalêtam kolapai! Kêtêp pahki skokêtêp, ni sipiwi kêtapskohk^wa cipakatakênanak^wat pahki maskaatakên. Koli=pa wipiwi macimiwi -tali-kâtton kêtapskhk^wa kêmihkênahkok, wêsami pàpaami cipakinak^wat.”

““Indeed! Are you so half-witted that you think you are better looking? In fact you probably think you are good looking! Your head is just like a snake’s head, and furthermore your neck has hideous skin like a toad’s skin. You will do well just to keep it hidden all the time in your shell, because it is so exceedingly ugly.”

14. a. <koli wawaldamen kôdak ali alnôbak / chibaginawôhdit skoga, ta tôni alnôbak majina- / mohdit chowi kahala majinôguat, wzômi mziwi / kagui agmôwô wbaami ntônammennô wji ali paa- / maltohdit wawôdamwogan ôdaki kiuna awaaswi- / akw.>

b. Koli-wawalêtamên kâtak ali- alênâpak -cipakinawâhêtit skoka, tta tani alênâpak macinamohêtit ccowi- kahala -macinak^wat, wêsami mésiwi kak^wi akêmâwâ wêpaami- ntâ[wê]namênâ wêci ali-paamaltohêtit wawâtamêwâkan âtahki kiona awaassêwiak^w.

““You well know how even Indians find snakes hideous, and how what Indians find ugly must truly be ugly, since they are more discerning in all things because they have more intelligence than we who are animals.”

15. a. ⟨Ni nawa kia toôô wji sôkwkwawiana, / ôda khaga namitôzinnokwkwa, ôdahaba awani / laldamwi Plawinno ato ni wutep sôkhamik, wibi- / wi laldam kaginhôndowi skog na sôkwkwasik, -- /⟩

b. “Ni=nawa kia tãma wæci sãk^{wj}k^wawiana, ąta khaka namihtãsinnok^{wk}^{wa}, ątah=əpa awani lalətamowi Pəlawinno=ahto ni wətəp sãkhamik, wipiwi lalətam kakinhanətowi-skog na sãkwkwasik.”

““And then if you are coming out from some place, but your body has not yet been seen, no one will think, perhaps that is the head of Person who Takes his Time that is appearing, they will just think, that is some powerful spirit snake emerging.””

16. a. ⟨tabat, tabat, Tmakwa idam, piziwiwi kdalohôwa- / diba, mawia sôgnawi namihodiagua ta kowawal- / damnô aliba ôda kiznemmowakw tônia waligik / talohôwadiagua wibiwijji kpeskwhlanmeba majigek. /⟩

b. “Tapat! Tabat!” Təmahk^{wa} itam. “Pisəwiwi kətalohawatipa. Mawia sãkənawi namihotiak^{wa}, tta kəwawalətaməna ali=pa ąta -kisənəmwak^w tãni walikək talohawatiak^{wa}. Wipiwi=ci kəpəsk^whlanəməpa macikək.

““Enough! Enough!” Beaver said. “You are arguing uselessly. It is better if you take a look at each other, and you will realize that you will not be able to accomplish anything good if you argue. You will just ignite what is bad.””

17. a. ⟨Talohôwadin taketta wli pizwat, ta ôdahaba / awani oji mskawidahômgueziwen, minaguiba sa- / kozida attasi adalohômkat; ta awani minaguiba / agma wligida, ôdahaba ni oji

wlôma nalawi ma- / messanimôwen awanihi tîni alinôgwzilit ; ôda / wzômi agma awani
wdelitowen tîni aligit,)

b. “Talohawatîni=ətahki=tta wəli-pisəwat, tta ətah=əpa awani oci-mskawitahəmək^wəsiwən,
minak^wipa sahkosita ahtahsi-atalohəmkat; tta awani minak^wipa akəma wəlikita, ətah=əpa ni oci-
wələma nalawi -maməssaniməwən awanihi tənî alinək^wəsit, ətə=wəsəmi akəma awani
wətəlihtowən tənî alikit.”

“Indeed to argue is quite worthless, and no one will be esteemed more highly, even
though he is victorious every time he argues; and even though one may be handsome, he should
not for that reason mock anyone anywhere for the way he looks, because he is not the one who
made him look the way he does.”

18. a. (tîni / nawatta awani oli ketmôginôgwzet, li wlaldach, / akwi achi eskawômôch awanihi,
ala awani wligi- / da akwi ni wji kneskelohôch widôwzomôji.)

b. Tənî=nawa=tta awani wəli-kətəmăkinăkwəsit, li-wələlətac ahk^wi- ahci -əskawəwəç
awanihi; ala awani wəlikita, ahk^wi- ni wəci -kənəskəlohəç witəwəsomăci.

“So, then, if someone is pitiful-looking, let him be willing not in fact to envy anyone; or
if someone is good-looking, let him not for that reason speak against his neighbor.”