

Document title: YB-2741A=6
Manuscript title: <ka o ma ni na ka| ka ka nwi ka de wa ni me ko be mi ne ka ko ta|> (“Well now, this next (story) is about one who was chased by a grizzly bear”)
Manuscript date: 1911-1938
Manuscript location: National Anthropological Archives, Truman Michelson ms. #2741A.6
Written by: Young Bear
Written for: Truman Michelson
Transcribed by: Lucy Thomason
Edited by: Lucy Thomason
Translated by: Lucy Thomason
Help with translation provided to Ives Goddard by: Adeline Wanatee (1994)

Abbreviations: YB = Young Bear. LT = Lucy Thomason.

The original manuscript of this text is in the Smithsonian Institution’s National Anthropological Archives. It consists of 2 pages of Meskwaki syllabary (“papepipi”). It was written by Young Bear sometime between the years of 1910 and 1938. There is no contemporary translation.

As of late 2011, the time of this writing, the Smithsonian Institution’s National Anthropological Archives is housed in Suitland, Maryland, a suburb of Washington, D.C. Consult the website <http://www.nmnh.si.edu/naa/> for information about how to arrange a visit to the National Anthropological Archives.

There are phonemically eight vowels in Meskwaki: i, i·, e, e·, a, a·, o, o·.

There are phonemically eleven consonants in Meskwaki: p, t, č, k, s, š, h, m, n, w, y.

There are phonemically 29 consonant clusters in Meskwaki: hp, ht, hč, hk, šk, hm, hn, hw, hy, pw, tw, kw, sw, šw, mw, nw, py, ty, čy, ky, šy, my, ny, hpw, htw, hkw, škw, hpy, hky.

Meskwaki papepipi is adapted to be wonderfully easy to write. It is much harder to read. Papepipi omits vowel length, the consonant “h”, and nearly all punctuation. This means that spoken Meskwaki has eight distinct vowels, but papepipi writes only four vowels; spoken Meskwaki has eleven distinct consonants, but papepipi writes only ten consonants; spoken Meskwaki has 29 distinct consonant clusters, but papepipi writes only 16 consonant clusters. As a result, there is a great deal of educated guesswork involved in transcribing papepipi into fully phonemicized words, phrases, and sentences. The edited and translated text of “One who was chased by a grizzly bear” should be taken provisionally and read critically: there may be mistakes or infelicities in YB’s original papepipi, in LT’s reading of the papepipi, in LT’s choices regarding phonemicization, word breaks, and sentence breaks, and in LT’s choices regarding Meskwaki-to-English translation. Translation in particular is at the best of times an imperfect art, and in interpreting Meskwaki stories into English there is a constant struggle between the wish to give a painfully literal translation of each word and the wish to try to translate the (imagined) intended poetic and rhetorical effect of the Meskwaki language on Meskwaki ears into a similar poetic and rhetorical effect of English on English ears.

The Meskwaki of YB’s manuscript is now archaic, which makes it even more challenging to read than modern papepipi.

Some notes about fundamental features of the Meskwaki language which translate poorly into English: Meskwaki, like other members of the Algonquian language family, has animate versus inanimate gender where English has masculine versus feminine versus inanimate gender. Meskwaki distinguishes between a “proximate” (nearest/most interesting/most important/most sympathetic) third person and various “obviative” (more peripheral/less interesting/less important/less sympathetic) third persons. In Meskwaki it is obligatory to indicate the source of one’s information (direct evidence? indirect evidence? supposition? common knowledge? hearsay?) whereas in English this is optional. Complex, multi-faceted, multipartite verb stems predominate in Meskwaki to an extent

In the following text, the numbers in the left margin reflect the manuscript pages. Capital letters followed by a parenthesis mark the lines proposed by LT. A space between Meskwaki words reflects a word divider in the manuscript. Underscore () marks a word boundary where there was no word divider in the manuscript. Pipe (|) marks a place where the end of a word is not marked by a word divider in the manuscript but does coincide with the edge of the page in the manuscript. Double pipe (||) marks the end of a page. Plain hyphen (-) marks a preverb boundary marked by a word divider in the manuscript. Underscored hyphen () marks a preverb boundary not marked by a word divider in the manuscript. Square brackets ([]) enclose comments on the text and translation, including indications of where YB's manuscript differs from LT's redaction.

1

A) kaho',_mani=na·hka| ka·ka·nwikaše·wani=meko_pe·minehka·kota.| [written as title]
A) Well now, this next (story) is about one who was chased by a grizzly bear.

B) e·h=takwa·kiniki,
B) It was fall,

C) e·h=ši·ša·či| maškote·ki.
C) and (a man) was hunting in the prairie.

D) ta·twa·hkiwani e·h=ki·wi_tāši·hkaki.
D) He was going from place to place investigating the ravines.

E) e·h=mamakwahkiwe·hiniki e·h=ki·_tāši·ši·ša·či.
E) And he was going around hunting in the larger hills.

F) meše='nah=kapo·twe e·h=ka·škehtawa·či kwa·koho·taminičini,
F) At some point or other he heard some (creature) roaring,

G) e·h=pesetawa·či.|
G) and he listened to it.

H) kaši', ka·ka·nwikaše·wani=či·h e·h=kwa·koho·mekoči.| [ka·ka·nwi: <.kakani>]
H) Why, it was a grizzly bear roaring at him!

I) e·h=pemipenoči,
I) He took off at a run,

J) si·po·ki ota·hkwe e·h=tāši_kehčipenoči. [tāši: the <ta>, if that's what it is, is written in a confused
jumble]
J) running toward the river.

K) kwi·yena=meko| pe·hki a·nemihekoči,|
K) Exactly when (the grizzly bear) was really pressing him hard,

L) e·h=pakama·ška·či si·po·ki.
L) he arrived in a rush at the river.

- M) (e·h=kepateniki='yo=ke·h.)
 M) (Now, (the river) was frozen over.)
- N) pe·kama·ška·či, [pe·kama·ška·či: <.pekameškači.>]
 N) When he arrived in a rush,
- O) e·h=pemil-a·šowehkwamye·pahoči. [a·šowehkwamye·paho: <|ašowekwemyepao>]
 O) he ran on across the ice.
- P) e·h=makaka·maki·niki, e·h=šašo·škwehkwamye·ya·niki.|| [šašo·škwehkwamye·ya: <šašo|škwekwemyeya>]
 P) It was a wide river, and the ice was slippery.

- 2 A) pe·kama·ška·niči,
 A) When (the grizzly bear) arrived in a rush,
- B) e·h=pemil-paka·sa·niči,
 B) he charged out onto the ice,
- C) e·h=šašo·škwišiniči.
 C) and slid around.
- D) e·h=pa·wi-kaški|-pemoše·niči, e·h=šašo·škwišiniči.
 D) He wasn't able to walk, because he was sliding around.
- E) ke·keya·h=meko| še·ški e·h=wa·pawa·pama·či.
 E) Eventually (the man) was just watching him.
- F) e·h=pa·wi=-meko ke·ko·hi=-'ši-kaškihoniči.
 F) (The grizzly bear) wasn't able to do anything at all.
- G) aya·pami e·h=na·sehkawa·či e·h=apihapiniči mehkwami·ki.
 G) (The man) went back to where it was sprawling on the ice.
- H) pe·hki=meko e·h=wi·ke·čika·pa·či,
 H) He really took up his stance carefully
- I) e·h=pemwa·či,
 I) and shot at it,
- J) e·h=pakisenawa·či,
 J) shooting it down,
- K) e·h=a·htawa·nawa·či.
 K) making it fall over backwards with a shot.
- L) e·h=we·pi-kekye·čikaše·šwa·či.
 L) And he began to cut off its claws.
- M) ki·ši-kečikečikaše·šwa·či,
 M) After cutting off its claws,
- N) e·h=penoči.
 N) he went home.

O) i·ni| nekoti_e·šawiči ne·sa·ta.

O) That is what one person did who killed (a grizzly bear).

P) wi·h=nesekoči_e·h=išite·he·niči,

P) It thought it was going to kill him,

Q) e·h=nesa·či.||

Q) but he killed it.