

Hocak Ecology  
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1 Egi Wamaniga egi wahanakšana.  
This is Wamani speaking.

2 Egi cowexji, egi hunikarakit'e kshanahawina.  
I'm going to talk to you for a short while.

3 Egi, jagu hihe kshanahare hazohixji najnakixgujanaga.  
What I'm going to say, listen to it carefully.

4 Egi pi wageguni hirarawegi,  
If you think what I'm saying is good,

5 te, koresgexjishge ho'uwizaxji ho'eizha wagekseneahena.  
for once I'm going to say something that makes sense.

6 Egu nisge hiyaicgakje yare wahanakšana.  
That way I'm going to try to say that.

7 Esge, hagoreizha, wagegi Waxopinixetera jagu hajajawinegu egu  
hanacinaborehina.  
Once, the Great Spirit above created all the things we see with his hands.

8 Egi wagegi egi maxhi wagegi  
And above, above the clouds (?)

9 Egi keracorasge warajiren.  
They talked about the blue sky.

10 Maxiskara, hahewira, hawira žige wiragusgerasge warajiren.  
They talked about the white clouds, the moon, the sun and also the stars.

11 Egi janaga egi wanigra wagegi unekšenegi  
And all the birds above

12 Že egi waxopinina, egi wāgregi jagu,  
And the spirits above

13 hirukaṇa wagihigi, hābirukaṇaxete, wigairen. [hāp used to mean life]  
were given powers, Great Keepers of the Light-and-Life, they were called.

14 Hesge waguṣaṇa.  
He created them that way

15 Egi žige, egi maṇagre, žige, egi ṇaborehi giži  
He created this Earth

16 Egi jagu žige hajajaṇi (hajawi?) giži  
and whatever we see

17 ṇaṇašge, xawina, gu jagura haṇac  
the trees, the grass, or everything else

18 Egi maṇhagregi wanoicge hujobemanišge airen.  
On the Earth animals four leggeds, they call them.

19 Žige wakiri xunuxji \_\_\_\_\_ egi maṇkuḥa

Also the small insects down beneath the earth. And the animals under the water, all this, this creation, the good spirits--as they call them--created this Earth, the Heavens. The Caretakers of the Water, as I was saying, the Caretakers of the Light and Life, they all have jobs to do. The sun comes out every day. When it finishes its job, the stars appear. They all have their own work to do. And what about ourselves...we also handle ourselves in a certain way. We have a mind to think with, also a heart. That's why they say that we have to be careful. This body of ours, we need to take care of it, we can't harm our bodies. We need to be careful. We shouldn't abuse our bodies. We shouldn't use alcohol, all this time we shouldn't have been doing this, but we do do it. We're harming our bodies. Alcohol brings a lot of bad things with it.

Nowdays, people are using another kind of medicine, too. Not a good one, a bad one. When it gets into your system, it's very bad for you.

And as for our hearts, we have to also be very careful, that's what they told us. We have to be concerned for one another. We should think about our other relatives--our Grandfathers, Grandmothers, Fathers, Mothers, our children, Uncles, Aunts, and our Clans. Some of us are "shirttail relatives," but we're all related in some way. Our Kinship system shows us how we have to respect one another. That's why we call one another by the terms we use, that's why those words were put here for us to use.

Let's put aside what I've said so far, and now we'll put our thoughts on the Creator. The Earth, we see it is our Grandmother. That's what we, the Hocak, say. Everything is based on that. Our Earth is like our Hocak women, they say we must not abuse our women. It's the same with our Grandmother, Earth, the same things apply. Our women bear our children, nurture them into adulthood, take care of our homes; they have a lot of hard work to do. It's the same with this Earth, we have to respect her the same way.

Whatever we can see on her surface, the Creator gave a name to it--the trees, everything, is alive, that's what the Hocaks say. Someday, they all have to die, whatever they are.

As I said, we have to take care of ourselves, and our bodies, too, we have to learn how. And our kin, we have to have concern for them. And we have to have concern for our Grandmother--by this they mean the Earth.

We already knew this, we had these ways of respecting each other and our Earth--what happened? The Longknives, they told us, would be here. Often we heard the story that the Žawanu told about this. The Žawanu were people who had special powers as a result of fasting; they knew what was going to happen before it happened. And so there are many stories that we all knew and know about things that were and are going to happen. They said that someday, a white man with a hairy face was going to be thrust upon us; the White Skin would come at us, and he would rule us. And then they even said that this Earth would be bad. That's the way it is now. The water is not good for drinking; they predicted this, too. And it has come true. This white man, he poured all these inappropriate things in the water. How are we going to drink that? Now, they're even selling water. We could taste all the contamination in the water, so they have to make fresh water to sell.

And this Earth, it doesn't matter to them how much pollution they make doing it, they just take all the metal they can find. In the process they pour all these inappropriate things into the ground. That's another reason why the water would not be good someday, they said.

They said that someday we wouldn't be able to see the heavens above--now we've arrived at that point. Big factory owners, they put those huge chimneys there with the smoke blowing away. We can't see a thing above, because of this, there are so many of them doing this that we can't see the heaven--that's what they meant.

They said that the people responsible for this pollution would then force us to do something about it [like force us to recycle.] Now this is happening.

The Hocak language is almost lost; they told us this would happen. We're there now. That's the way we are. They said the Wąkšik way of life would disappear, and now it's happening. That's what I mean, that's what I am talking about.

And now I'm going to plead with you about something. The houses that Wąkšiks live in have junk all over the place. A lot of these things we'll never

use again, but we just let them pile up. I do it myself. The house I live in has things I'll never use again, but I just let them gather. There's junk cars people have that will never run again. I have some that won't run, either, but I hang onto them as if they were sacred. In my house live a lot of people. There are lots of paper garbage scattered around. When a person goes into a Hocak area, there are beer cans and wastepaper strewn and scattered from one end to the other. That's what I'm talking about.

Nowdays I like to ride around in a car. When I want to chew gum, I take off that wrapper and throw it out the window. If I'm going to have a beer, when I drink it up I open the window and throw those cans out--they land on the ground with a thud, sounds like a turtle hitting the ground. When I buy a bottle of something--not like you all who buy real cheap wine, I don't do that, I buy the best firewater in town, that's all I drink. When you guys take even a tiny sip of that stuff you drink, just a few sips and you're staggering around all over, going around with wet pants. I'm talking about the good firewater--when I drink it up, I throw that bottle outside--CRASH!--it shatters all over the place.

When you see an Indian car coming, those tires are as thin as--what do the Warejns say--as thin as a frog's skin, they're saying those tires are not real thick. If they run over something, that tire just blows out. All these things are happening, in our Hocak areas.

So now, imagine how it would be with those houses we live in, if we started cleaning them up, that's why I'm saying this. Clean them up, inside and out.

In the beginning, the Hocak people used to keep themselves real clean, used to sweep those houses clean, that's the way they were. But now we don't care anymore how the houses are. We should fix our ouses up, and clean them up. Let those old junk cars go! It's gonna hurt, but it's gotta be done. It'll be okay. The ones with the rats living in them can go, too. And we can pick up all the paper garbage littered around in the yard. Those of us in Indian neighborhoods, we can get together and pick up all that litter. And from this day forward, let's not throw things outside anymore. Nowdays there are lots of receptacles, dumpsters here and there. We can put those things in there, papers and all.

Nowdays, people don't even cook anymore. They hurry into town and get hamburgers and french fries--they call it fast food. And the wrappers from all of

this, that is what we litter with. We should put them in paper bags, go to the dumpster, and throw them in. That's what I'm trying to say.

Our Grandmother, we are supposed to respect her, this Earth--how are we going to do it? We throw everything on the ground--the white man, we got that from him. We no longer respect anything, we no longer have respect for our own selves.