Trickster's Anus Guards the Ducks (§6 of the Trickster Cycle)

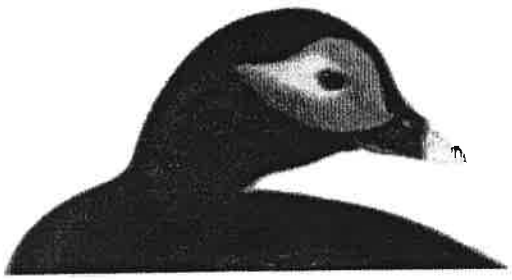
Translation Based on the Interlinear of John Baptiste

Version 1

Hočąk Syllabic Text with an English Interlinear Translation

(104) Away he walked. As he walked along there, unexpectedly, (105) there was a lake and unexpectedly, the lake was full of ducks. He ran back there. Secretly, before they had seen him, a swamp being there, he went there. (106) When he got there, he did a lot of grass cutting. He made a very big pack out of it. And he packed it, and he went there to this lake. He went along the edge of it. The ducks saw him. "*Koté,* Trickster is passing by over there. (107) *Koté,* ask him what he is doing," they said. They hailed him. "What are you carrying?" they asked him. He did not answer. They asked again. (108) When they asked for a fourth time, he stood up. "*Weyi,*" he said. "What are you packing?" they said to him. "What a thing you have asked, my younger brothers. Now my stomach is filled up with songs. I'm packing along some bad songs that my stomach could not contain. (109) I have not sung them in a long time. Therefore, right now I have a great many songs in me. I am packing some. I have not seen any people on my trip. (110) Who will dance for me if I should sing? Therefore, I never did sing for a very long time." And those ducks said, "*Koté,* suppose we ask him to sing? Then we would dance, wouldn't we?" (111) "*Koté,* let it be so. I enjoy dancing very much. I haven't danced in a long time," some of them said. "*Koté,* let's do that," they said. And they said to him, (112) "Trickster, older brother, if you will sing for us, we will dance. We have been desiring to dance. We don't have any of these, the songs," they said, the ducks said to him. (113) "My younger brothers, you have spoken well. It will be so. I will make a dance lodge," he said. And they helped him. They made a long house there. They made a grass lodge. (114) And they made a round drum. Then he told all of them to come in. They all went in.

And when he was ready to sing, he said, "My younger brothers, this is the way to do it. (115) When I sing and have them dance, this dance is always the first that I have had them do. I am going to sing one song. Up to the end of it, not one of you shall ever open his eyes." (116) "*Howo,*" they said. Then he began to sing. He said, "*Ha,* my younger brothers, if any of you should open your eyes, your eyes will turn red," he said. While he himself was sitting, yet he told them to dance. In time, one of them came with its wings flapping. "*Gwo!*" it said. "*Gwo!*" it said, again and again one of them would do the same. (118) In the singing, sometimes it would sound like his mouth tightened up. Sometimes again one would cry out. Then he would tell them to dance harder. Finally, a duck which they used to call by the name *gisge,* (119) one of this kind, he secretly looked at him. He opened his eyes only the least bit. Unexpectedly, he was wrenching their necks, thus he was doing. He could bite them and also twist their necks. (120) Therefore, thus he did. His mouth was nearly closed. He sang and as many as he reached, he killed. And Gįsgeną́ka (Old Squaw Duck) said, "*Hąho,* he is



killing us. (121) Some one of you try to save yourselves." He quickly went out through the smoke hole. There they crowded themselves out of the smoke hole. They also struck Trickster with their wings and they also scratched him. (122) With his eyes shut, when he put forth his hands in their midst in order to grab them, he grabbed one apiece with each hand. These he choked to death and he closed his eyes, whereupon they all suddenly escaped. (123) He had hold of two of them. When he looked at what he had, unexpectedly, he was holding a scabby mouthed duck by each side of its legs. He thought that he had hold of two of them. (124) Then, "*Hąhó*, this is the way that men do, and they will be drinking soup," he said.

Then he made fire, and he made himself sharp pointed sticks. And some he roasted in that manner. (125) And some he covered over with ashes. "And I shall be very anxious waiting for them. As it is, I shall sleep. When they are cooked thoroughly, I shall awaken," he said. (126) "My younger brother, you keep watch, I am going to sleep," he said. "If you should notice anything, drive them off," he said. He was talking to his anus. Then he lay with his anus towards the fire and he slept.

(127) As the little foxes came along, they scented something. "*Hąho*, there must be something here," they said. They turned their noses to the wind and as they were coming along, unexpectedly, a fire was smoking there. (128) When they had looked, there were pointed sharp sticks all around the fire. They came with stealth

and when they had looked, (129) unexpectedly, there was someone sleeping. "*Koté*, this is Trickster. He is sleeping. Let's eat. Be very careful, you might wake him. We will eat," they said. (130) And then they came there. Unexpectedly, he quickly expelled gas. *Po*, he made it say. "*Koté*, he must be awake," they said, and then they ran back. "*Koté*, I think they are asleep," they said. (131) "*Koté*, it must be a bluff. He is always doing something," they said. Thus they were saying, and again they came towards him there. It did it again. He expelled gas. Again they ran back. (132) Thus they did three times. They came there again for the fourth time. Once again he expelled gas. Just the same, they did not run away. Still harder and stronger he expelled gas. (133) Just the same, they did not run away. He did this again the third time. *Po! Po! Po!* he made it say. It was very loud, but they did not run away. It did it again for the fourth time. (134) *Po! Po! Po! Po!* he made it say. Four times thus, but they began to eat the roastings one apiece. Now this, Trickster's anus, did thus — *Po!* — continuously. (135) It was very loud. Finally, they ate up all the roastings. They came again to the roastings under the ashes. And thus it was making, *Po!*, but they ate a great deal. Again they ate it all up.(136) Then they did it. They nicely replaced what he had cooked under the ashes only. Then they quit the place.

Then he awoke.(137) "*Hohó*, about now what I cooked must be cooked to a crisp," he said. As he felt around there, he got hold of a foot. When he pulled it out, he came away with only the foot. (138) "*Hohó*, thus the cooking usually is when they are thoroughly cooked," he said. He felt around again for another one. Again when he took hold of one and when he pulled it out, (139) it was only a foot that he came away with. Again he said, "*Hohó*, what I've cooked must be well done. I told my younger brother to watch the roast. Some good cook he is," he said. (140) He kept going on and on. When he sat up, unexpectedly, the roasts on sticks were gone. "*Hohó*, those covetous friends must have done me wrong," he said. (141) And when he had poked around the fire, unexpectedly, the fire was only full of bones. "*Hohó*," he said, (142) "surely these covetous homely things have disappointed me; but also, you homely thing, what have you done? I told you to watch. You shall know about this (punishment). (143) You have not done right. I shall burn your mouth.

Consequently, you won't be doing anything with your mouth," he said. He took up a brand and burned the mouth. He burned himself in the anus. (144) Then repentantly, *"Tuwį! tuwį! hagagasgeižą,* I have made myself smart so. For this I am called *wakjąka.* The others have talked me into it. (145) It's just as though I had done something," he said. There Trickster had burned his anus. He put burning firewood to it.

Then he went somewhere there. (146) As he was going along there, unexpectedly, something went by. He trailed him. As he was going along, to his surprise, there he found a piece of fat. (147) "*Hohó,* someone has gone by here packing something. He must be packing something he had killed," he said. As he said this, he picked up that piece of fat and ate it. It was very delicious. (148) "*Hohó,* this fat is such a delicious thing," he said. Again as he was going along, he again found another piece. Again he ate it. "*Hohó,* these fat things are such a delicious thing," he said. (149) As he was going along, unexpectedly, it was he whom he had discovered. He was finding the fat parts of his own guts. The anus and the fat part of his guts had fallen out of him. Because he had burned it, the burning had contracted it. (150) "*Hohó,*" he said. "Very truly have they spoken when they have called me *wakjąka.* The others, by such talking, have turned me into such." And he fixed it. A large part of the skin was lost. (151) Therefore, he had fixed it, but the skin pulled together in wrinkles. So he made it in ridges. So they are. The anuses of people are made in ridges they have said.[1]