

LUQ'U SUK DENA'INA EGH

1Dena'ina hnaga ch'k'echigi yaghali q'udi, Dena'ina hnaga beġ qunuhdetulniġ.

2Hk'uch' k'usht'a qikahdiġdeġ ninenqgheġ'unch'. Ts'eġq'i k'it'ana ghelna duyeq ina it ts'idnes niġdghechet yaghali it.

3Dena'ina lu k'huqidudli niġk'uch'. Deyninqidgheġtey.

4Ch'aduch' q'anqghenish ch'u titenh niya qeġchix niġghuhdudnih; niġquldih yadi htuldih. Luq'u ghel'eh qayeh niġteh q'anqudiġ ch'u suk gheli hsukt'a niġ'eġ nuhqulnish.

5Yadi nudnelyahi quduyi niġ'eġ nuhqulnish, ch'u yadi nudnelyahi hdeġqet.

6Suk hsukt'a qaduqeydghenishi ch'aduch' qeych' quldir ghelna laq'a qeydghetdeġ qyeghuduġt'ani.

7Deshishch'idnulk'edi niġtu qghech'ex, ch'u niġq'ech' k'qidudni ch'u chik'enaq k'u niġhquldih.

8Ghel'eh qayeh k'usht'a ht'uynihdiġt'al.

ABOUT THE OLD DENA'INA LIFE

1Now that the Dena'ina language is written well, the Dena'ina language will be preserved.

2No one has persuaded them away from their own laws. As one people, with the various chiefs, they agreed on what was best.

3The Dena'ina, they say, were competent in many things. They were strong-minded.

4They advised one another how to travel in boats and make caches on overland trails; they taught one another whatever they needed to learn. They visited among all the different villages, and told one another ancient stories.

5They told one another what plants are medicine, and what plants they ate.

6What they learned from the old stories that they heard, they passed on to others for them to make use of it.

7They lived for durable breath,¹ and they trusted one another, and taught one another how to cure sickness.

8They did not depend on other villages.

1. Peter Kalifornsky sometimes explains this sentence as "They lived for their health."

DENA'INA HUGH QEGHDUTNUHCH'

¹Tahdna'ina zah tughetunesht Dena'ina luq'a uhu qul'ihch'. K'etnuh nututetset ndahduh q'enudasden tanatl'ini qelchix. Yadi chik'a dendałnezi entudla ch'u q'eylu ił ch'u qunqelashi ił qyagh tsak'eghduyesh. Ch'u tubugh hch'en tan'i bik'elehi qelchix. Ch'u kiyi' usdethdi tach'nił'i ił tak'qel'uh. Yik'u qunqelashi hagi ił.

²Ch'u ts'iluq'a ch'u chiluq'a yet htl'agh'itqun k'eldina ndahduh nik'eleh yeh niqenish. Yet kiq'u tuleha uhu qel'ih ghu qeghentulten qech'. Yethdi qbeduyeq'a ghun ndahqugh nik'hdalkit yeghudentetish ndahqugh ninutułnah baba ghen nkets' nada'uhqugh nlaq'a hdałt'ay ts'ił jan nghutulkedi dach' nenqghelu.

³Qunqelashi nan ch'u ełnen yitut' nnazk'et' ch'u ki tahbił qbegh qigheste. Tahdna tughaznik htl'agh hdi tahbił qizdlan. Yet k'u dik'qelasht beghuhdghet'ayi qyetsiteh ch'anuk'nal'ishi tahbił qeshqa ghun luq'u Dena'ina laq'a yeghełdeł. Yethdi qughesht'a luq'a nihdulkit.

⁴Qunqelashi quggił ghu hegh dentelnish dgghu elggezi egh naltl'inh t'qyel'ish ch'u luq'a ghen qeyenuduh geyegh dnełdeł ch'u qeyel k'telchesh. K'usht'a bech'ahyeghdnelnik'. Lggezi ghen, q'u beyitih.

HOW THE DENA'INA SUPPORTED THEMSELVES

1Before the Russians came, the Dena'ina fished. Where the current in the river made eddies at low tide, they made fish weirs. They made it with different kinds of wood—driftwood and willow—and laced it with spruce roots. On the beach side they made a trap for the fish to swim into. Lastly, they fished with dipnets they made also out of spruce roots.

2During the spring and summer fish runs, they used to move to wherever the fish were running. There again, they fished for the spawning salmon until it froze up. Then their chief would estimate how long the food supply they had put up would last. It was the rule that one day's allowance of food was a piece of dry fish as big as from the meaty part of your palm at the base of your thumb to the tip of your middle finger.

3They got the spruce roots from where they grow in a network between the moss cover and the ground; they didn't have manufactured nets then. After the Russians came, there were manufactured nets. Then, at the cannery, the boss gave all the people old used nets with the webbing taken off. Then they put up fish well.

4They also used to make a snare out of line made of spruce root with a slip-knot noose tied with grass to a forked stick; they looped that over the fish and strangled them. They didn't slip out. The forked stick held them.

Dena'ina Hugh Qeghdutnuhch'

sYethdi ndahduh heyteh hdelts'ih yethdi nihdelggesh heyi niitu. Ch'u lhk'unch' t'qel'ih—k'qelqit ch'u sukdu nuhqelnish. Ts'ix ghen lu, ts'il ninqetdel ch'u "Ndahdna q'u nach'adalnen?" qetnih. "Ts'ilt'an benu'u k'elggyen sht'a nach'adalnen," nuhqelnish lu.

How the Dena'ina Supported Themselves

5Then, wherever they stayed, they settled in for winter. And they celebrated—they ate and told stories. They used to say, “The mosquitoes got together and said, ‘How many of us did we lose? We only lost the ones whose eyes were white.’”

QEZDAGHNEN HDULTS'IHTS'

¹Qezdaghnen hdults'ih hdghu qunshi ch'u qutsagheti eła ch'u luq'u tlegh qyeghuh. Yethdi, qiz'in uhu htenish. Qiz'in ghen, qyelish ch'u qunshi bis yi qyelish ch'u tlegh qeyetułt'et heyi niłtu. Beduki dghe'uyi qeyeduch'ik'eghdelqet qun ebayi n'at dnuqeyelih. Yadi ch'ułchi qeynizen, qiz'in betuqilyuyi qyelish.

²Yeh ghu dnigi qigheste. Kahtnuh q'anqghenish ch'u dnigi chiqel'ish ch'u yi ghen k'u qyeghnałggish ch'u nunqeydel'ish. Heyi niłtu. Yethdi k'qezdelghash aq'ah ghu qunshach' kiq'u htenish. Yik'u esdlach ha ch'u betlegha atunqeyghelik ch'u niqeyghelik, heyi niłtu.

HOW THEY LIVED AT KUSTATAN

1When they stayed at Kustatan, they made oil from beluga, seal, and other things. Then they went after clams. They cooked the clams. Then they put them in a beluga stomach and poured in oil to preserve it for winter. When they opened it up, they washed the clams in hot water. They cooked clam soup whenever they wanted to make it.

2There were no moose over there. They would go by boat to Kenai and kill moose. They dried that too, and they brought it back over. It was for winter. And then, in the places where they put up fish, they would go after ground squirrels. That, too, they cooked, and they put it away, packed in oil, for winter.