

Cherokee Vision of Elohi. Ed. Howard Meredith and Virginia Milam Sobral. Noksi Press, Oklahoma City, pp. 33-34, which is one Cherokee of the settlement and defense by the Cherokee of their lands. Permission by Noksi Press granted. For this and further titles, see: <http://ahalenia.com/noksi/>

[Origin and Settlement]

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[Coming of the White Beings and Broken Unity of the Cherokee]

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[Origin and Settlement]

When we lived beyond the great waters there were twelve clans belonging to the Cherokee tribe. ... back in the old country in which we lived[,] the country was subject to great floods. So in the course of time we held a council and decided to build a store reaching to heaven. The Cherokees said that when the ouse was built and the floods came the tribe would just leave the earth and go to heaven. ...we commenced to build the great structure and when it was towering into one of the highest heavens[,] the great powers destroyed the apex, cutting it down to about half of its height. But as the tribe was fully determined to build to heaven for safety[,] they were not discouraged but commenced to repair the damage done by the gods. Finally, they completed the lofty structure and considered themselves safe from the floods. ...after it was completed[,] the gods destroyed the high part again... . Then the tribe held another council and concluded to move out of the floody [sic] country and hunt one more dry and suitable to their liking. So[,] they journeyed for many days and years and finally came to a country that had a good climate and [was] suitable for raising corn and other plenty upon which the tribe subsisted. Other red tribes or clans to the Cherokee tribe began to come also from the old country. The emigration continued for many years, never knowing that they crossed the great waters. In the course of time, the old pathway which had been traveled by the clans was cut by the submergence of a portion of the land into the deep sea. This path can be traced to this day by the broken boulders. This was no surprise to the clans as they were used to the workings of the floods.

Long years after they had settled in their new homes in the new country[,] they began to hunt for the clans of the Cherokee tribe; ...after a fruitless search for the others finally gave it up an established a new system of seven sacred clans to the tribe. From that day to this[,] they have been searching for the five lost clans of the Cherokee.

After this, the Cherokee settled down and organized a government and a religious system of worship. This worship consisted principally of certain rites which were intended to teach the more intelligent the true nature of the heavenly bodies or powers and the laws by which they govern themselves and their younger brethren, the lower planets and their children, the sons of men.

After this was done and the tribe began to prosper in a more favorable climate and a richer soil where an abundance of corn was raised and game was plentiful, a new difficulty stared them in the face. A strange race of men crossed the great waters and landed warriors who began to attack the Cherokee tribe... [Ed. note: this race is not the "white beings" upon which are centered the passage, below. Rather this marks one of three invasions by other races into the Cherokee territory that the *Elohi* describes. In this

case the wise men, religious practice, and war preparation are all in accord so that a united Cherokee tribe fends off the invasion; see below.]

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[Coming of the White Beings and Broken Unity of the Cherokee]

After this living for ages in peace and prosperity[,] the Cherokee tribe increased greatly in population. They built the *cahtiyis* throughout the seven clanned nation[,] organized on the broad principle of universal brotherhood, which included the whole earth except the five lost clans.

Then it happened, while the Cherokee tribe thus lived in their new country, that strange white canoes appeared on the broad expanse of great waters. The clans gathered on the shore in wonder and astonishment at the arrival in their waters of these strange vessels. These white canoes hovered in sight for several for several days as though not confident that they would be received with welcome by the tribe. The clans[,] thinking they were beings from heaven[,] began to beckon to them to come to the shore. The clans also prepared corn in which was cooked sweet nuts, venison, and other prepared food to be presented to these white beings in their canoes. White being an emblem of purity with the Cherokees, they looked upon these white beings as a pure race from the upper world. The white beings of the white canoes were soon convinced that no harm was to be expected and they landed. The strangers were received with welcome by the tribe and food was brought in and given them.

Tobacco which had been purified and called the *cola* of peace was also brought, together with pipes, and the strangers were asked to smoke with the clans. Then the white strangers which were supposed to be visitors from heaven and who were supposed to be such on account of their white skins, as the idea and emblem of white was purity and spirituality among the Cherokees, ... were taken to be such, asked that they be allowed a small piece of ground upon which to camp, cook and sleep; it was charitably granted. These strangers were entertained by the Cherokee clans very charitably and food and other articles of comfort freely given to them. Then these strangers made known their desire and willingness to remain with the native Cherokee clans[,] if they were allowed to purchase a small piece of ground upon which to camp and sleep. They made known to the tribe that they only needed a small piece of land about the size of a bull hide. This modes request was freely granted to the strangers and sold to them for a trifling consideration. The supposed heavenly strangers then cut one of the ox hides which they brought with them inot a small string which they stretched around a square enclosing several hundred square yards. This they claimed to be in accordance with the purchase agreement to which the tribe finally agreed, saying at the same time that they had been deceived. Other purchases of land were made for which a consideration was

always given by the white heavenly strangers, after the cession of which the tribe always acknowledged that they had been deceived. Then the tribe finally came to the conclusion that this white stranger was from the opposite pole of the heavens and put on his white skin for purposes of deceiving. Then the Cherokee tribe began to destroy the white invader as in the case of the dark invader they saved some to report what great warriors the Cherokee were. But the white invader began to use firearms against them and the Cherokee tribe was driven back farther and farther.

[Ed. note:] The story continues as a response to the white beings, but focuses on the relation between the wise men's (*oocatene*) oral traditions versus the "writing of a strange teaching" by "the race of deceit and cunning," the resumption and neglect of religious practices by the Cherokee at the site of the "sacred round or half-sphere temple," and the unification of the seven known plus five lost clans as one tribe. It concludes that upon "reuni[fication] into twelve clans, into one people again, [the Cherokee] will become a great nation known as the *Eshelokee* of the half-sphere temple of light."