

## *Stories of the Cahto Tribe*

### The Coming of the Earth

#### **Professor Goddard's Translation**

*Water came they say. The waters completely joined everywhere. There was no land or mountains or rocks, but only water. Trees and grass were not. There were no fish, or land animals, or birds. Human beings and animals<sup>214</sup> alike had been washed away. The wind did not then blow through the portals of the world, nor was there snow, nor frost, nor rain. It did not thunder nor did it lighten. Since there were no trees to be struck, it did not thunder. There were neither clouds nor fog, nor was there a sun. It was very dark.*

*Then it was that this earth with its great, long horns got up and walked down this way from the north. As it walked along through the deep places the water rose to its shoulders. When it came up into shallower places, it looked up. There is a ridge in the north upon which the waves break. When it came to the middle of the world, in the east under the rising of the sun it looked up again. There where it looked up will be a large land near to the coast. Far away to the south it continued looking up. It walked under the ground.*

*Having come from the north it traveled far south and lay down. Nagaitcho, standing on earth's head, had been carried to the south. Where earth lay down Nagaitcho placed its head as it should be and spread gray clay between its eyes and on each horn. Upon the clay he placed a layer of reeds and then another layer of clay. In this he placed upright blue grass, brush, and trees.*

*"I have finished," he said. "Let there be mountain peaks here on its head. Let the waves of the sea break against them." The mountains became and brush sprang up on them. The small stones he had placed on its head became large. Its head was buried from sight.*

*"I am fixing it," he said. "I will go north. I will fix things along the shore." He started back to the far north. "I will go around it," he said. "Far above I will fix it." He fixed the world above. "I have made it good," he said.*

*When he went back far south he stood stones on end. He made trees and brush spring up. He placed the mountains and caused the ground to stand in front of the ocean.*