45. The Bearing of the Heraldry of the Indians of the North-West Coast of America Upon Their Social Organisation
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colour of hair, skin or eyes (Man, 1908, 27) deserves a wider recognition than it has yet obtained.

During the last few years he had been greatly interested in developing a machine for measuring the speed at which an observer ceased to see flicker in a revolving disc coloured in black-and-white segments, or, in the later and improved form, in a revolving mirror reflecting alternately white and coloured light. The critical speed seemed to show only slight variations for the same observer at different times (if care were taken to keep the illumination constant) but a great variation between different individuals, and Gray concluded from his observations that the critical speed in question was closely related to the mental characters of the observer. He was working on this machine—the "intelligence machine"—up to the time of his death.

Of his other papers during recent years may be mentioned those which he read at British Association meetings on "England before the English" (Man, 1906, 93), "Who Built the British Stone Circles?" (Man, 1908, 96), "An Imperial Bureau of Anthropology" (Man, 1911, 95), and the paper read before the Institute on "The Differences and Affinities of Palaolithic Man and the Anthropoid Apes" (Man, 1911, 74).

Gray was elected in 1909 a Foreign Associate of the Anthropological Society of Paris. He acted as treasurer of the Universal Races Congress, held last year, and at the time of his death was serving as assistant treasurer of the forthcoming Congress of Americanists.

He will be greatly missed not only as the untiring worker for the Institute, as the protagonist for physical anthropology, but also by many of us as one of the best of friends. He was a man whom it always cheered one to see, and to argue with him was a delight, as his simple and upright character left no room for bitterness. The deepest sympathy will be felt by all his friends for the widow and daughter who survive him.

G. Udny Yule.

America, North-West.

The Bearing of the Heraldry of the Indians of the North-West Coast of America upon their Social Organisation. Read at the Meeting of the British Association, September 6th, 1911. By C. M. Barbeau, of the Canadian Geological Survey.

The plastic and pictorial art of the Indians of the north-west coast being well known, it may prove interesting to give an outline of the relations between the social organisation of these aborigines and a characteristic class of carvings and paintings meant to represent mythical animals, human beings, and monsters.

I shall refrain from referring to the facts as actually described by the ethnographers, and shall confine myself to a summary description—first, of a few typical kinds of social groupings to be found among these Indians; second, of the right claimed by these social units to the exclusive use of distinctive crests, emblems, or armorial bearings handed down in a traditional way from generation to generation; third, of the peculiar devices adopted by the privileged owners of these emblems and names connected therewith in order to bring about the normal working of a well-established and consistent system of social organization, based upon the requirements of a semi-nomadic mode of life.

As a preliminary remark, it may be added that though the culture of the north-west coast presents some features to be found in the many ethnic groups of the region, it is by no means uniform. The Tlingit, the Haida and Kaigani, the Tsimshian, the Heiltsuq, and the northern Kwakiutl, on the one hand, may be taken as forming a fairly homogeneous group. On the other hand, the southern Kwakiutl, the
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Nootka, and the coast and interior Salish constitute another group, representing a slightly different cultural type.

I shall call attention almost exclusively to the first of these two groups of people, that is, the one consisting of the Tlingit, the Haida, the Tsimshian, and the northern Kwakiutl, indulging only in a few passing references to the southern group.

A Few Typical Kinds of Social Unit obtaining among the Indians of the Pacific Coast.

The social organisation of the tribes of the Pacific coast may be considered under two different aspects, one of which is that relating to the ethnology of the natives—that is, to the geographical distribution of groups of tribes respectively characterised by different physical types, cultures, and languages.

The other point of view, which I intend to adopt presently, confines itself exclusively to the analysis of the internal structure of their social units or groupings, as based upon a recognised form of kinship or of selection, irrespective of any geographical, linguistic, and ethnic considerations.

The social units of by far the greatest importance among the northern tribes of the coast are characterised by the linear inheritance of their membership, and the ties uniting together the members of a single grouping or unit are, roughly speaking, of the nature of a conventional kinship. The many varieties of these rather numerous kin-groups may be classified according to their antiquity, the extent of their membership, and their influence.

A most remarkable variety of social units, owing to its all-pervading importance in matters of domestic and political life, may be found only among the northern tribes, that is among the Tlingit, the Haida, the Tsimshian, the Heiltsuq, and the northern Kwakiutl. To this variety of social unit has been applied the name of phratry.

The phratries are rather few in number. The Tlingit people are divided into two main phratries, the more important of which is that of the Raven, while the other is that of the Wolf; another Tlingit phratry of lesser importance and obtaining only among their southern tribes is that of the Eagle.

The Haida have two phratries—the Gyitina and the Koala. The significance of these two terms has not been quite satisfactorily determined so far, although many ethnographers hold that the Gyitina phratry is that of the Eagle, and that the Koala is that of the Raven.

The Tsimshian have four phratries, named after the Raven, the Eagle, the Wolf, and the Bear. The Heiltsuq have three phratries, those of the Raven, of the Eagle, and of the Killer-whale (Delphinus Orca).

These are the main phratries of the north-west coast. It is worth noticing that the Raven phratry, the largest and probably the most ancient, obtains among the Tlingit, the Tsimshian, the Haida, and the Heiltsuq. While being the principal and most powerful phratry among the Tlingit, it is only secondary in importance among the Haida. In the same manner, while the Eagle phratry (Gyitina) is the most important among the Haida, it comes only third among the Tlingit.

Although space forbids any attempt at a thorough description of the nature of the phratries, it may be stated briefly that they are very numerous aggregates of peoples scattered over a wide area, bound together by a tie of semi-artificial kinship, and using in common the same distinctive emblem, crest, or armorial bearings.

The members of the phratries as such are, on the one hand, held responsible in common for the fulfilment of certain obligations towards the members of one or more than one phratry; and, on the other hand, are expected to claim together the fulfilment of analogous duties and obligations on the part of those outstanding
phratries; both parties having previously made an arrangement whereby it was under-
stood that henceforward they should respectively carry out the mutually beneficent
results of their initial compact.

The obligations and correlative advantages following such a mutual under-
standing are quite numerous and complex. The member of a phratry, as such, is
compelled to depend upon the members of another allied phratry in connection with
many important circumstances and transactions, namely:—

(a) Certain transactions of economic concern, as exchanges of movable property,
loans, with interest, gifts, &c., may be entered upon only with the members of the
other opposite phratry;

(b) In many circumstances of great moment in the social life of the natives, such
as birth, initiation, marriage, the erection of a house, and burial, the assistance of the
allied phratry has to be solicited and paid for;

(c) One of the noted consequences of the alliance between two or many phratries
is that one may never marry inside of one’s own phratry; that, in other words, the
phratry is exogamous.

When one of the parties turns out not to fulfil its duties towards another, war
generally follows (that is before the whites interfered); and the members of the same
phratry stand together, either being held responsible in common for a wrong done,
or vindicating the same transgressed right. This solidarity between all the members
of the same phratry, even though they may be living in far distant regions, asserts
itself very markedly, especially in the case of war between two phratries; so much
so that the marital tie itself may temporarily be dissolved, the wife joining the
people of her own phratry with her children, while the husband stands by the people
of his own phratry.

It is all-important for a native to be a member of a phratry, as it is the only
means of sharing in the communal rights, and in the public and domestic life of the
aborigines.

Another variety of kin-group, only next to the phratries in importance, consists
in the subdivision of the phratries into smaller units of the same nature. To the
kin-group of this variety is properly applied the term clan.

The clan, as a subdivision of a phratry, is an aggregate of individuals who,
besides sharing in the communal phratric emblem and rights with the other clans of
the same phratry, claims the exclusive use of a special and distinctive emblem and
rights connected therewith.

The individuals of a clan, while bound to those of the other clans of the same
phratry by ties of special affinity, consider themselves as still more closely associated
together.

The number of clans inside of the Tlingit and Haida phratries ranges from ten to
tyenty or thereabouts. The Ko'a'la phratry of the Haida, for instance, is divided into
about nineteen clans, having as many distinctive crests or emblems. The Gyi'tina
(or Eagle) phratry of the same tribes includes no less than fifteen clans.

It should be remembered that the size and the importance of all the clans, as
well as of the phratries, are by no means even. This point may be illustrated in the
course of a short analysis of the Gyi'tina phratry of the Haida, in which about
fifteen distinct social groups are to be found. The fifteen social units enjoy in common
the use of the Eagle crest, the Eagle being the emblem of the phratry. Twelve of
these groups use the Beaver as an emblem, nine the Frog, seven the Whale, five the
Raven, three the Humming Bird, three the Cormorant, two the Dog Fish, three the
Monster Wasp, two the Heron, two the Dragon Fly, three Copper, three the Weasel,
one the Blue Hawk. In other words, the phratry is split up into many smaller kin
units of different sizes, called clans. The clans in their turn are subdivided into families,
and the families into house-groups, each one of these separate units claiming crests for their own exclusive use.

The only sources of the right of securing membership in a phratry, a clan, and a family, are birth and linear inheritance, and also occasionally adoption of a non-kinsman into the kin-group as a substitute for a real kinsman.

The right of membership in any of these social units is inherited in the maternal line, which is to say that the children belong to the mother’s phratry, clan, and family. In other words, the children, being considered as mere strangers by their real fathers, may never inherit a phratry, clan, and family designation and rights from them: a natural consequence of which is that early in life the children are sent out to reside and be educated by the maternal uncles, their real fathers attending to the training of their own sister’s children. This form of inheritance obtains almost exclusively among the Haida, the Tlingit, the Tsimshian, and, apparently, the Heiltsuq.

The customs of the Kwakiutl relating to the inheritance of the right of becoming member of a kin-group are much more complex. The matrilinear and patrilinear systems co-exist, but only inasmuch as certain rights are inherited through the mother, while certain others devolve through the father.

The right of using certain crests, moreover, may be secured among the Kwakiutl through the slaying of their legitimate owners in war, or through the lawful murder of one’s own tribesman in a very few special circumstances.

This complex system of inheritance obtaining among the Kwakiutl and a few other southern tribes is found co-existing with a social organisation somewhat different from that of the northern tribes.

The existence of the phratries and clans, however, being dependent upon the law of inheritance through the mother, as soon as the matrilinear system of inheritance is dropped, it is all over with the phratries and the clans. It is worth noting in this connection that the Southern Kwakiutl, the Nootka, and most of the Salish tribes, while resorting to the more complex inheritance of the kin-group designations through the mother or through the father, show at best but faint and sporadic vestiges of a real clan-organisation.

The most conspicuous feature of the social morphology of the Kwakiutl, and also of that of the Nootka and the Coast Salish, consists in the abnormal development of the fraternities, generally termed secret societies by the ethnographers.

The Kwakiutl social morphology is worth a special mention here in this connection. The Kwakiutl proper have two different ways of grouping themselves, one of which prevails during the summer time and the other during the winter ceremonials. In the summer time all the people are arranged into clans, but these groupings are broken up in the winter, when the people arrange themselves quite differently under two large fraternities, the first of which is called Me’emqoat (the Seals), and the second Quequtsa. The Me’emqoat and the Quequtsa fraternities are subdivided into many smaller fraternities, known by various names.

This double social morphology, the one obtaining during the summer and the other during the winter, is characteristic among all the Kwakiutl tribes, and, to a lesser extent, among the Kwakiutl and the Salish tribes. It is also found that the individuals that are grouped together into one single clan during the summer generally turn out to belong to various fraternities during the winter, quite regardless of their clan connection. This is due to the fact that, while among these Indians the child may belong either to the clan of his mother or of his father, his right of admission into a fraternity may not only be inherited from his parents, but is often secured by a payment, or by many other legitimate means.

The numerous fraternities of southern British Columbia are far from being homogeneous in character and purpose. A few are mainly concerned with ritual dances,
dramatic performances, and potlatches: others are societies into which medicine-men initiate their patients with a view to healing their maladies; others seem to be guilds of sorcerers, addicted to the practice of certain arts.

It is evident that, in the case of all such fraternities, the bond uniting together their members must be relatively loose and artificial.

Now that an outline of the various kinds of social units has been traced, we may proceed to a short explanation of their heraldry, that is, of the specific crests, emblems, or armorial bearings and masks, to the exclusive use of which they claim a well-established right.

All the social units above described, namely, the phratries, the clans, the families, and the fraternities, consider themselves as closely related to certain mythical animals and monsters, after which they are named.

The nature of this relation between a group of men and a species of animal—a monster or an object—although of momentous importance on account of its great influence over the social psychology of these Indians, and of the close attention paid to it by many leading anthropologists, cannot satisfactorily be discussed here, owing to lack of space.

It may be pointed out, however, that the connection between a social unit and a species of animal resembles that relation between a noble lineage and a domain which, after the medieval European notions, was considered as essential. In Western Europe no noble could be found without an untransferable domain after which he was named. This connection between a lineage, endowed with armorial bearings, and the land was partly of economic import, as the lord had a privilege over the pastoral and agricultural resources of his land.

The north-west coast Indian, who is endowed with the privilege of using a crest is considered as closely related to the object represented by his crest.

The main difference between these two systems is that while, in the former, the lineage is attached to the land, the mode of life being of an agricultural type; in the latter, it is connected mostly with animals, as the north-west coast Indians are semi-nomadic hunters, engaged in fishing during the summer and hunting during the winter. Taking it for granted that a close relation exists, in the mind of the natives, between the animal or the object represented by the crest and the people using this as their distinctive badge, we may proceed briefly to examine the nature of the crest and its use.

The crest of the north-west coast Indians is a plastic and pictorial representation of the animal or object after which they are named, and through which they are connected together by ties of special affinity.

Among the northern tribes the best-known crests are those of the phratries and of the largest clans.

As all the families of standing, that belong to the same phratry and are disseminated over a vast territory, make use of the same phratric crest, it is self-evident that such a crest must be well known to all, and often met. This is also true, but to a lesser extent, of the clan and family crests. As a matter of fact, the explorer of the north-west coast soon becomes familiar with the Raven, the Wolf, the Eagle, the Bear, the Killer-whale, the Thunder-bird, and other social groups and crests.

The use of a crest is manifold. The noblest and wealthiest families in a phratry or in a clan make a most frequent use of it, alike in the form of masks, sculptures, high or low relief carvings, tattooing, and decorative paintings. A chief himself, in some cases, wears on his head, or over his face, the mask representing his phratric, clan, or family crest. This is done mostly in the course of ceremonies intended to represent, ritually or theatrically, the myth explaining the adventures of a remote
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ancestor who was the first to use it. In some other cases an expert is hired to wear the mask in the stead of its real owner. These masks are considered as sacred possessions, and may never be worn or shown outside of the ritualistic performances. In old days an intruder would have encountered a speedy death for having violated this taboo.

The heraldic emblems of the phratry, clan, or family are often painted on the houses and objects of their owners. For instance, the posts erected in front of the houses, the uprights and the walls of the houses, the chests and boxes, the coffins, the many objects used in the course of ceremonial rituals, are carved and painted with the distinctive heraldic bearings of their owner. The Haida and the Tsimshian, more especially, paint and tattoo them on their bodies.

One is not far from the truth in saying that almost all the plastic and pictorial art of the Tlingit, the Haida, and Tsimshian is utilitarian, in the sense that it is intended to refer to the heraldry of the people. Any other purpose or result is only secondary.

It is also to be remembered that, as they are illustrative of a myth and of social group affinities, these representations of animals or of objects must be conventional and stylised, and that very rigid rules crush down the originality of the individual artists.

Nobody outside of the kin is allowed to use its armorial bearings. This rule is universal and without exception among the northern tribes. In old days war was waged against anyone who had appropriated to himself such sacred possessions.

The crests generally held in the highest esteem are the most ancient. It is, nevertheless, deemed necessary that their credit should be maintained at the cost of feasts given by their owners to the people of the other phratries or clans, who are thus assembled and rewarded for proclaiming the munificence of their hosts.

The esteem granted to a crest seems also to be proportionate to the number and wealth of the people who own it, which implies that general recognition and respect may be won for a crest only in the course of a long historical evolution. New crests, however, may originate in feasts (called potlatches) and be appropriated by a group of people. Such crests must not refer to animals or objects already represented in the crests of other people, and they are generally held in but little consideration.

The crests of the fraternities of Southern British Columbia are somewhat different in character from those of the phratries, clans, and families. As they generally reveal themselves under the form of masks and ornamental paraphernalia, to be used only in the course of the fraternity gatherings and ceremonials, they are tabooed and kept in strict secrecy apart from these occasions.

I regret that, since the description of the social units and their armorial bearings has disposed of most of my space, I shall not be able here to deal satisfactorily with some of the peculiar devices adopted by the owners of crests in order to secure the maintenance of their own privileges.

The phratries, the clans, and the families should not be considered as amorphous aggregates of individuals. On the contrary, they are highly differentiated.

A phratry consists of a certain number of clans of different social standing, a few of which are considered of high standing, while some others are awarded a lower rank. In the same manner a clan is subdivided into families, only a few of which are considered as noble. A family itself is arranged in a similar hierarchy, a few of the house-groups of the family being those of the chiefs and dignitaries.

As a rule the largest and wealthiest social units are likely to be the most ancient. The rank and the dignity of these groups, however, are not exclusively dependent upon these considerations, and are hence subject to certain fluctuations.

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The consideration and esteem of the public may be won by a large and wealthy body of kinsmen, who can afford repeatedly to give feasts to numerous guests, both from inside and outside of the kin. The guests, as they are assembled to witness the munificence and power of display of their hosts, are expected to return the compliment in the same proportion at some later time.

The keen desire to improve the rank and standing of one's own social grouping is the main feature of the festivals and potlatches of the natives along the Pacific coast. An intense rivalry between corresponding classes follows, a result of which is that those families most skilful in the pursuit of wealth and in the exhibition of lavish liberality are likely to ascend more rapidly than others in the scale of social eminence.

While striving for advancement, these families have developed quite remarkable means of acquiring wealth and of making skilful displays of ability, in the course of theatrical performances and dances, intended publicly to proclaim their own powers and glory.

Their power of gathering wealth depends largely upon the co-operation of certain privileged folk, who monopolise the hunt of certain animals for their own benefit, while the liberty of the lower classes, in this respect, is restricted by rigid and traditional taboos, the importance of which is enhanced by superstitious fears, skilfully maintained by the privileged classes.

The privileges of the noble classes, in the phratries, clans, and families, are handed down from one generation to another along the above-described lines of matrilineal or patrilineal inheritance. A consequence of this is that the younger people, called to take up this patrimony of their elders, are submitted to a long and arduous training, in the course of which they become accomplished in many utilitarian arts and practices. During many successive initiations their elders teach them the secret arts and devices by means of which their prestige over the outsiders and the lower classes will be maintained.

I may conveniently end my remarks on the North-west Coast Indians by mentioning a few of the devices through which the chiefs, for their own advantage, inculcate in their subordinates weird beliefs and superstitious fears.

In a winter feast and ceremonial numerous guests, both from inside and outside of the family, are gathered in the ceremonial house of the chief of a group of people. The guests are entertained and fed for days and weeks with as lavish munificence as can be afforded. Most of the time during such a feast is taken up by dances, songs, and dramatic performances attesting the glory of the ancestors of the host. Theatrical performances, with elaborate features, are often introduced. Some of these theatricals are meant to show in a vivid manner how the ancestor secured his crest, and the powers connected therewith, from a mythical being.

During other ceremonials a chief's sons are initiated. Monsters, that is the chief and his assistants ceremonially dressed and masked with the evident purpose of imitating the mythical being represented by his crest, appear before the people, are supposed to kill the novices, and bring them away into the woods. The novices are kept in strict seclusion for many days while the secrets of their elders are revealed to them. When, later, they reappear before the public they are said to have learned wonderful secrets and to have acquired magical powers. They are, thereafter, considered as enjoying a higher standing.

It is interesting to note that the origin of all the crests representing animals or objects is explained nearly in the same way all along the coast. It generally consists in relating that the ancestor met a mythical being, or monster, by whom he was given magical secrets, powers, and sacred objects, which thereafter remained in his own or in his successor's possession.
I may cite here two typical instances of theatrical displays connected with myths and initiations.

A. P. Niblack relates (Report of the National Museum of U.S., 1888, p. 377, and plate lxxxiii) that Shake, a Tlingit chief of Fort Wrangell, Alaska, traced his descent from the Bear, and used the Bear as a crest. Niblack, having witnessed the dramatic performances intended to represent this myth of descent, describes it in the following terms: “The figure of the Bear (plate lxxxiii) is a manikin of a grizzly (bear) with “a man inside it. The skin was obtained up the Stikine River . . . and has “been an inheritance in Shake’s family for several generations. The eyes, lips, ear “lining, and paws are of copper, and the jaws are capable of being worked. A “certain screen in one corner being dropped, the singing of a chorus suddenly ceased, “and the principal man, dressed as shown, with bâton in his hand, narrated in a set “speech the story of how an ancestor of Shake rescued the bear from drowning in “the great floods of years ago, and how ever since there had been an alliance “between Shake’s descendants and the bear. This narration, lasting some ten “minutes, was interrupted by frequent nods of approval by the bear when appealed “to, and by the murmurs and applause of the audience.” Niblack adds: “In these “various representations all sorts of tricks are practised to impose on the credulous, “and to lend solemnity and reality to the narration of the totemic legends.”

Another remarkable instance has been recorded by J. R. Swanton (Jesup North Pacific Expedition, Vol. V, p. 160). It relates the story of a Black Whale which was made of wood by two Haida carpenters of Queen Charlotte Islands. When completed the wooden whale was taken to the sea.

I will now quote fragments taken out of Swanton’s text: “It was a big thing,” “Then the ten novices entered it.” “Animal skins were put around the outside.” “It jumped about very well.” As they were very much pleased with it “they made “it go back towards the town.” A man was put on its back. “When the whale “came out blowing the man sat on top.” “Then all the town people came out and “looked at it. They thought it was a supernatural being. They exclaimed that it “was the Sea Whale” (that is the whale that belongs to the Ocean People). Unfortunately it was wrecked and the novices were drowned. C. M. BARBEAU.

Africa: Congo. Maes.

**Xylophone des Bakuba.** Par Dr. J. Maes.

Dans le courant de l’année 1910 M. Gustin, mort récemment à Pania-Mutombo, reçu d’Ilonga Kitenge, chef des Bakuba établis, au nord-ouest de Lusambo, une série d’objets ethnographiques dont il fit don au Musée de Congo Belge, Tervueren.

Parmi les pièces les plus intéressantes de cette belle collection nous remarquons spécialement un xylophone. Nom indigène madimba. (R.G. No. 4728. R. II. D. a No. 10.)

Celui-ci se compose d’une forte tige de rotang, longue de 1’60 m. et recourbée en forme de demi rectangle aux coins arrondis. Deux sections d’un gros pétiole d’une feuille de bambou, sont fixées transversalement au moyen d’une lanière de rotang sur les branches latérales de la tige de rotang. Deux lattes en bois rougeâtre genre takuba, placées perpendiculairement au dessus des pétioles, sont reliées aux branches de la tige de rotang à l’aide d’un lacs en lanières de rotang. Deux longues baguettes d’un bois rouge-brun, placées à 17 cm. l’une de l’autre et courant parallèlement aux deux sections du pétiole, de l’une extrémité du xylophone à l’autre, sont fixées de part et d’autre dans ce lacs. La surface supérieure des pétioles est recouverte sur toute la longueur d’un bourrelet isolateur formé d’une tresse de fibres de bananier tordue, prise dans une gaine de peau d’antilope. Treize baguettes, longues de 40 à 45 cm., placées de 12 à 12 cm., s’engagent entre la surface supérieure du pétiole et