

## Characteristics of Traditions

1. Every house has to have a history to recount at its yeeks. If it doesn't have one it will borrow or otherwise get one. So don't count too much on their strict historical accuracy.
2. The traditions of the houses that give the most and biggest potlatches will be best remembered. The random traditions of lower class families will tend to be forgotten.

There will be a "drift" toward uniformity of traditions.

People try to identify themselves with high prestige groups (If my myth <sup>can show</sup> shows that I am related to tsibesz, it may do me much good) & To show your right to a crest you are asked to recite your myth. You know your myth best, and you are believed. No traditions can be manipulated to advantage.

## Historical Accuracy of Traditions

In a ranked society with high horizontal mobility, where groups are constantly moving in and out, the traditions will recall <sup>be selective and recording</sup> only some of these changes :-

1. Movements out of the tribe are not well remembered in the tribe

2. Movements in, to low positions, don't make much of a splash. <sup>If they amalgamate with existing groups, they get lost.</sup>

3. Movements in, to high positions, are the stuff family traditions throw on. They are proudly <sup>celebrated</sup> related, in the tribe, from then on. When these groups amalgamate with existing groups, the latter's more dull traditions are apt to be forgotten. More rank, more potlaches, more recounting of traditions. → better remembered tradns. Once established, their newcomers will grow by random accretion. Therefore the traditions of a tribe give a distorted view of their actual history. They tend to give the view that most of the families are from outside, that outsiders always take over. As Barbeau says. sedentary people have no history.

We must avoid wrong conclusions: that most of Inuit population is from outside. (The above could take place without change in population)

Traditions don't give a balanced picture of the comings and goings of people.

## "Counterfeiting" of Traditions

In addition the imperfections in memory of generation after generations <sup>of tellers</sup> would alter the tales.

Locales <sup>motivating characters</sup> would be changed, common motifs would slip in, the plot would come to be developed more and more along the conventional literary lines, names would change.

## "Borrowing" others adax

To be sure there were strict rules against stealing others adax's or claiming to be something you are not (That is why Jewish traditions are as valuable as they are for historical reasons). But there were ways, consciously or unconsciously in which they could change.

Houses amalgamate, and the adax of one side or the other will be forgotten (eg watida'ax, wallaci's explanation)

Unconscious drift, casting them into the regular mold, resulting from oral repetition

Conscious "stretching" of certain elements to justify something or other. Eg temporary elevation of g. t. xata to soko royal position and his dumping.

The traditions provided the justification for royal rank, use of crests, claims of relationships to others, claims over territory (Can give examples of each) These oral accounts took the place of written deeds, bonds etc. This being so, and the Teutonic being ambitious prestige seekers, it would be presuming too much on it as well within the bounds of probability that some conscious counterfeiting of traditions must have taken place at times. We have no actual instances of this, but we know the Teutons were aware of the possibility and had safeguards against it.