

(full
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Myth of g.usdzadzemti (lightning robe) crest of
h.e.l, gisp, gitxata.

Joshua Tsebass to Bynon 1916

Before the name h.e.l came to this house, the head chief tsibese, along with ni.su't went to Ktsim'ala.g.an to hunt for beaver and other animals. They stayed at the mouth of the river while their servants went up the river to set the traps. The two chiefs entered their house and went to sleep. Before long they were awakened by a noise like thunder. Looking out, they saw a huge bird-like being splashing about in the water. The flapping of its wings caused a noise like thunder, and when it opened its beak it emitted ~~a~~ flashes of lightning. On each of its wings were human beings with bright faces and flashing eyes. When it reached the shore, the chiefs saw that its feet were like those of a grizzly bear. It returned to the water and amidst thunder and lightning, sank below the surface.

The chiefs called their slaves and returned to laxk'le'n (gitxata), where they prepared to display this new crest. tsibese sent for ni.s/ag.anos, chief of the git'le'n ("who was the most celebrated carver of wood and did all the work for other tribes, for which he was highly paid"), and had him make a carving of wood to represent this huge bird. When everything was ready he sent word to the gitg.a'at' people inviting them to the feast, and showed the carving and told the myth, announcing

dam gap gutx | ye dzepkem gusdzadzemti
will surely ^{from one} to another pass crest robe lightning

'a nawe|ps tsibese "The crest of the lightning robe
in the house tsibese

(generation)
will pass from one, to another in the house of
tsibese; ~~meaning the~~ gifts were then distributed
and the crest now belonged to tsibese.

Bynon asked if there was a difference between
this and the crest of the same name in the
house of 'nagap't, ganha'do. The informant
said ~~there was very little~~ ^{the only} difference in the
crest carving itself was that nagap't's would
have bird's claws rather than grizzly bear feet,
and the myth is different in that the two
were seen in different localities.

Gitxata account of 'ayaigansk. pearl bow
scalp headdress

Myth of Crest negam sagz'li (scalp headdress with fin)
of house of 'ayaigansk, g.anha'dz, gitxa'ta.
Amos Collier to Beynon, 1916.

Abstract

'ayaigansk was a powerful and feared chief, and he lived ^{on a small island} near gitxa'ta in a large house with doors at both ends called la.g.a.x'emdza.x (at each end entering). Whenever guests came to his house he would murder them, after seating them on a special board and fooling them with humorous remarks. Two brave Tsimshian men decided to deceive him. They came to his village fully prepared for his tricks, with greased bodies to prevent being seized and clubs ready in their hands. 'ayaigansk tried to outwit them but did not succeed, and finally gave them furs, food, and new canoes to replace the ones he had destroyed.

'ayaigansk was angry at having been outwitted, and decided to take revenge on the Tsimshian. He made a bow inlaid with abalone shell (be'hem ha'kw tek) and took it to g.adu, the gitxax'tet village at Metlakatla. He showed the people his bow and they all wanted it, but he would not part with it. They decided to kill him and take it. He said to his host wish'ot: "I will give it to you but I want to use it first".

He went into the hills and hung the bow on a tree. When someone saw it and tried to take it, he killed him and took his scalp. From the scalps he made a headdress and put a fin on it.

He went to ha'ima's, the gitsi's chief, gave him the bow in exchange for a canoe, and returned to gitxa'ta where he ~~then~~ gave a feast and showed his new crest headdress.

V ayagansk

(g. anha'do)

Amos Colleson and Andrew Jackson

(1) $nax\ n\ \gamma\ m\ gaye't$: supernatural bullhead ; on poles and robes, and house paintings. (Exclusive)

(2) $t\ i\ b\ \bar{n}$: sea lion on pole, garment used in war (called $t\ i\ tk\ \bar{a}m\ t\ i\ b\ \bar{n}$ "whole robe, sea lion")

(3) $g. a\ n\ o\ \epsilon$: frog house painting, sitting position, one on each side of entrance

[Myth] Vol IV p 18-19 (4) $x\ s\ s\ i\ m\ masin$: copper canoe ^{masinom xss} exclusive to this house, from a $nax\ n\ \gamma$

(5) $b\ \epsilon\ l\ h\ a\ i\ m\ h\ a\ k\ w\ t\ 'e\ k$ "abalone shell bow" "like an ordinary bow and was made of mother of pearl"

[Myth] Vol IV p 20-23 (6) $n\ e\ \gamma\ \bar{a}\ m\ sag\ i\ l\ i$: headdress of scalps with fin. This _{fin} _{scalps} ayagansk made from scalps himself and was exclusive.

(7) $t\ i\ t\ \bar{a}\ m\ m\ \bar{a}\ k\ s\ i\ t\ k$: a hat of weasel used as war headdress, conquered from some Isimshian but lost again in war.

House $l\ a\ y\ a\ x\ l\ \epsilon\ m\ d\ z\ a\ x$ at each end entering