

The Tlingit, Haida, Tsimshian, and Hëiltsuq have animal totems. The first of these have two phratries, the raven and wolf among the Tlingit, raven (Q'oa'la) and eagle (G-it'na') among the Haida. The Tsimshian have four totems—raven (Qanha'da), eagle (Laxskiyek), wolf (Laxk-ebō'), and bear (G'ispawaduwe'da); the Hëiltsuq three—raven (Qō'ix-tēnōx), eagle (Wi'k'oaqx-tēnōx), and killer whale (Ha'lx'-aix-tēnōx); the Xa-isla' six—beaver, eagle, wolf, salmon, raven, killer whale. Animal totems in the proper sense of this term are confined to these five groups or tribes. They are not found among the Kwakiutl, although they belong to the same linguistic stock to which the Xa-isla and Hëiltsuq belong. The clans of the northern tribes bear the names of their respective totems and are exogamous.

It must be clearly understood, however, that the natives do not consider themselves descendants of the totem. All my endeavors to obtain information regarding the supposed origin of the relation between man and animal have invariably led to the telling of a myth, in which it is stated how a certain ancestor of the clan in question obtained his totem. The character of these legends is uniform among all the peoples of this region; even farther south, among the Kwakiutl and the northern tribes of the Coast Salish, who have no animal totem in the restricted sense of this term. The ideas of the Kwakiutl regarding these matters will be described fully later on. As these legends reveal the fundamental views the natives hold in regard to their totem, I shall give abstracts of a few of them.

The following is a legend of the Tsimshian:

*The Bear Clan.*—An Indian went mountain-goat hunting. When he had reached a remote mountain range, he met a black bear, who took him to his home, taught him how to catch salmon, and how to build canoes. For two years the man stayed with the bear; then he returned to his own village. The people were afraid of him, because he looked just like a bear. One man, however, caught him and took him home. He could not speak and could not eat anything but raw food. Then they rubbed him with magic herbs, and gradually he was retransformed into the shape of a man. After this, whenever he was in want, he called his friend the bear, who came to assist him. In winter when the rivers were frozen, he alone was able to catch salmon. He built a house and painted the bear on the house front. His sister made a dancing blanket, the design of which represented a bear. Therefore the descendants of his sisters use the bear for their crest.

It is evident that legends of this character correspond almost exactly to the tales of the acquisition of manitows among the Eastern Indians, and they are evidence that the totem of this group of tribes is, in the main, the hereditary manitow of a family. This analogy becomes still clearer when we consider that each man among these tribes acquires a guardian spirit, but that he can acquire only such as belong to his clan. Thus, a person may have the general crest of his clan and, besides, use as his personal crest such guardian spirits as he has acquired. This accounts partly for the great multiplicity of combinations of crests which we observe on the carvings of these people.