

THE HAIDA RAVEN:
A ZOOLOGICAL AND SYMBOLIC INTERPRETATION

by
Daphne/von Hopffgarten
MA, University of British Columbia

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Department of Anthropology / Sociology

The University of British Columbia
2075 Wesbrook Place
Vancouver, Canada
V6T 1W5

Date April 21, 1978

ABSTRACT

This study is about the Haida raven. It is both a zoological and symbolic study: of the raven bird (Corvus corax principalis) which is an ubiquitous natural presence throughout the Queen Charlotte Islands, and also of the personified Raven, the trickster transformer character Nañkí'lsLas. Thus, the study looks at the natural attributes of the bird, and the ethnographic literature, with references to the myths, and most specifically, at the material representations' abstractions of the attributes of the raven.

As a result of this correlation, it becomes clear that these different dimensions of expressions of the Raven/raven interrelate in such a way as to support a wider and more comprehensive understanding of this complex figure of the Haida culture.

In conclusion, the raven is discussed as a primary symbolic animal of the Haida culture, who is perhaps, in a metaphorical sense, a reflection of man's conception of his own self in the universe; who is, Raven/raven, the 'one who makes things happen by his word'.

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INTRODUCTION

The Raven is a complex figure of the Northwest coast of North America, particularly of the more northern peoples, the Tlingit, Tsimshian and Haida. The Raven embodies various capacities of culture hero, creator, trickster and transformer.

This is a study of the Raven/raven in the Haida culture; the culture hero Raven, the personified Nañkî'lsLas who brought the Haida world into existence after the great deluge, and the natural bird raven who is an ubiquitous presence in the physical environment of the Haidas on the Queen Charlotte Islands.¹

The majority of studies thus far concerning the Raven deal with his character as portrayed in myth.² This study begins with a new approach, focussing on the 'primary symbolic animal' in a culture as discussed and demonstrated by Willis (1974). This thesis endeavours in part to work within the framework set up by Willis, but with an added dimension which has been significantly lacking in other works - a zoological examination of the particular animal of primary symbolic importance in the culture. The overall problem herein then is to bring together three dimensions of expression of the Haida Raven/raven: 1) as expressed in ethnographic writings, 2) as the natural bird exhibiting specific physical attributes and behavioral displays, and 3) as a symbol represented in design elements and form in Haida material representations.

1. Throughout this study a distinction will be made between the culture hero Raven and the bird raven by designating "R" and "r" respectively, as did J.R. Swanton in his ethnography of the Haida. (1905a)

2. See Chowning (1962), Boas (1898), Evans-Pritchard (1967), Meletinsky (1973), Radin (1956), Stone (1971), and Ricketts (1965).

Chapter I introduces the concept of 'primary symbolic animal' as developed by Willis, and also looks at studies by Lévi-Strauss, Geertz and Gerbrands. Chapter II is a necessary introduction to some acts and actions of the Raven/raven as expressed in the Haida ethnographic literature together with references to the myths. Chapter III is divided into three sections, all of which are focussed on the natural bird raven as portrayed in Haida material representations. Section 1 looks specifically at the physical attributes of the bird as depicted in the material representations, to see if, in fact, the natural and formal elements do correlate, and if so, if they are consistent. Section 2 looks at expressions (primarily in three-dimensional form) of the physical aspects of the raven's behavioral displays in Haida material objects, in relation to four basic 'attitudes' of the bird which are described in conjunction with the renderings. Both Sections 1 and 2 attempt to see more clearly how the natural attributes of the bird have been borrowed and abstracted into formal elements. Section 3 looks specifically at the beak and eye of the raven, as they were seen to be emphasized throughout the previous two sections, and then in relation to the raven's voice. Each aspect is discussed in relation to material representations, and in the light of zoological and ethnographic information. Section 3 goes beyond the direct one-to-one correlations to reveal the symbolic significance of these features of the Raven/raven. Chapter V draws together the disparate aspects of the Haida Raven/raven and thinks from a wider perspective of the Raven/raven as a symbolic animal who 'transforms the meaningless into the meaningful', and ultimately 'says' something to man about man.

CHAPTER I

THE CONCEPT OF THE PRIMARY SYMBOLIC ANIMAL

This chapter introduces some ideas centring around the relationship in a culture between man and other animals 'not man'. More specifically, it touches on some of the cognitive realities of man in relation to the symbolic qualities of that particular animal. A review of some related studies will provide a framework within which to explore and think about this relationship.

Lévi-Strauss wrote in his study on Totemism that

The animal world and that of plant life are not utilized merely because they are there, but because they suggest a mode of thought...The connection between the relation of man to nature...the real link between the two orders is indirect, passing through the mind. (1962:13)

suggesting, therefore, that it was the cognitive relationship that was predominant between man and animals or plants.

Willis' study, Man and Beast, is a detailed focus on the relationship between the 'primary symbolic animal' and man in three African cultures - the Lele, Nuer, and Fipa. He came to ask why it was that

...animals, as opposed, for instance, to inanimate objects of the earth and sky, should be bearers of this supreme symbolic function. Why, as John Berger has noticed, 'Animals supply examples for the mind as well as food for the body. They carry not only loads but principles. (1974:9)

Willis suggested that if the way in which man related to animals could be examined and understood, then that relationship could perhaps be

...used as a key to 'read off' certain otherwise inaccessible information about the way human beings conceived of themselves and the ultimate meaning of their own lives. (Ibid.:7)

His entire study began from this premise that the primary symbolic beast of a culture was an embodiment of the "ultimate value - what

might be called the 'meaning of life'". (Ibid.:8) Thus, he proposed that the culture projected its intrinsic values and 'life meaning' onto an animal which due to some particularly peculiar but appropriate physical or behavioral characteristics was chosen to be the central symbolic figure of the culture.

Considering this aspect of the man-animal relationship, Lévi-Strauss wrote of totemic animals that:

...their perceptible reality permits the embodiment of ideas and relations conceived by speculative thought on the basis of empirical observations. We can understand too that natural species are chosen not because they are "good to eat" but because they are "good to think". (1962:89)

Willis thought that the symbolic animal was reflective of the "human consciousness" of the culture, and that it was perhaps possible to some extent to unfold their processes of "deductive thought" in relation to the animal. (1974:93) Lévi-Strauss restated his thought that 'every relationship postulated between human groups and animal species...is metaphorical ' when he referred to Evans-Pritchard's study of the Nuer in which he suggested that a totemic relationship should be interpreted not only "in the nature of the totem itself but in the association it brings to mind." (in Lévi-Strauss, 1962:81)

To do just that, the "nature of the totem itself" must first in part be understood before the "association it brings to mind" can make a somewhat comprehensively sensible picture. It is therefore necessary to be familiar with the physical and behavioral characteristics of the animal, not as an end in itself but as a necessary part in the more conclusive understanding of the cognitive associations

developed within that culture towards the place of their particularly symbolic animal. Through such a study, of the animal itself, and the animal within the culture, basic notions and perhaps even more subtle associations between the ideas and concepts expressed by the people and the qualities of the animal symbol can emerge. What might at first glance seem to be obscure and distantly related facts could prove upon closer study to be integral to an overall understanding of the man-animal relationship.

There are varying ways and mediums through which a culture expresses its concepts of its collective human self in the universe in relation to the chosen animal symbol: through dance, song, language myth and material objects. Ideally an holistic approach to this type of study could be done; however within the confines of this thesis the point for focus is the Haida conceptions of the Raven within their culture and specifically how they express in material objects the peculiar attributes and behavioral dimensions of the raven bird.

There have been some recent studies which look into this relationship between man and animal, such as Willis' study cited above and that of Geertz (1972) in which he says of the Balinese people in relation to their cocks:

The madness (a landlord said to Geertz "We are all cock crazy") has some less visible dimensions, however, because although it is true that cocks are symbolic expressions or magnifications of the owner's self,...they are also expressions - and rather more immediate ones - of what the Balinese regard as the direct inversion, aesthetically, morally, and metaphysically, of the human status: animality. (1972:6)

Geertz studied in detail the relation between the Balinese men and their cocks, and specifically the expression which he refers to as

an 'art form - for that is what we are dealing with' (Ibid.:23) of the cockfights which take place regularly in the village, saying that

the cockfight renders ordinary, everyday experience comprehensible by presenting it in terms of acts and objects... being reduced (or, if you prefer, raised) to the level of sheer appearances, where their meaning can be more powerfully articulated and more exactly perceived...an image, fiction, a model, a metaphor, the cockfight is a means of expression. (Ibid.)

However, as with Willis' work, Geertz did not study in any detail the particular physical and behavioral attributes characteristic of those particular birds. One needs to know "not only ethnographic data but also data from other sources - zoological, botanical, geographical". (Lévi-Strauss, 1967:64)

One work which did study closely the physical attributes of the symbolic animal in relation to the culture's material depictions of it was Gerbrands.¹ His study was concerned with the Asmat people of Nangai village in New Guinea, who regard themselves as "tree people", having been born, as their creation story tells, from the sego tree as carved by the 'first being'. Thus, the Asmat man = tree: the legs of man are the tree's roots, the body the trunk, the arms the branches, and the skulls are the fruits. The Asmat had been a head-hunting culture until 1956, and the number of heads to a man's name determined his social position within his society.² The black king cockatoo

1. Presented as a lecture at U.B.C. in April, 1975. See also his works: Art as an Element of Culture, 1957; Art in its Context, 1967.

2. Carvers had to have many heads to their name before they were able to carve certain figures (and thus there existed the notion of 'peer' carver, and he might be requested to carve something which was considered to be overly 'loaded' with dangerous symbols for a carver with 'less heads to his name' to 'bring to life').

bird was recognized as an exceedingly important symbolic animal for the Asmat because, when seen in the light of his natural attributes and behaviors, he not only symbolizes but acts out the very essential actions of the Asmat's life: he is associated with head-hunting and brings life from out of the sego tree; almost 'carves' it out with his beak. What Gerbrands demonstrated in his study was that the full dimension of the symbolic quality of the cockatoo could not be cognitively grasped without having a fairly close knowledge of the peculiar behaviors of the bird.³ The Asmat's material depictions of specific features of the bird highlighted and reinforced the cognitive relation between the man and the animal; each object was a material synthesis of the culturally defined reality of the animal's attributes which were thought to embody that reality. They were a material expression of the association through the mind between the Asmat and the bird.

Thus, seen in both the Geertz and Gerbrands' studies, it becomes clear that the symbolic animals of the cultures were an integral element of what Willis called the 'psycho-social reality', the culture's intermeshing of ideas and meanings contingent upon the social and natural order.

As a Pawnee thinker once expressed: "All things must have their place" (Fletcher in Lévi-Strauss, 1962:10). Lévi-Strauss went on to explain that

It could^{even} be said that in being in their place is what makes them sacred for if they were taken out of their place, even in thought, the entire order of the universe would be destroyed. Sacred objects therefore contribute to the maintenance of the order of the universe by occupying the places allocated to them. (Ibid.)

Thus, all beings and things had their place both in the mind and in the physical reality. Willis concluded that in relation to the man-animal cognitive relationship, that the central symbolic animal of a peoples' culture was their ultimate expression of their ideals and "human consciousness" (1974:70), and in answer to his questions asking 'why an animal' and 'why this quality of cognitive relationship' he closed his study with the following explanation:

...as symbols, animals have the convenient faculty of representing both existential and normative aspects of human experience, as well as their interrelation what is beyond society, the ultimate ends of action, and the incorporation of such values in the structure of social perception and relations. At this level of abstraction human diversity and human identity are coterminous. (Ibid.:128)

Such a conclusive unveiling of the interrelationship between man and symbolic animal may be peculiar to the cultures studied above. However, this study intends to bring to sharper focus ideas which are associated specifically with the raven. The following chapter looks at the raven as a primary symbolic animal of the Haida culture, and attempts to draw together some of the 'life values' ("principles") that the Raven/raven as a symbol carries.

3. There are many further facts and obvious attributes of the king cockatoo which make him so powerfully symbolic of the Asmat values. He has, for example, black and red skin around his eyes, and wears white feathers. Simply summarized, the black is associated with night and head-hunting, red with sexuality and therefore many children, and white with ancestral spirits. He embodies symbolic links with all those necessary elements to ensure the continuance of successful life. Thus, he is regarded as the black-skinned eater of fruits (ie: the eater of heads of men, and therefore a successful head-hunter). The male bird encloses the female inside the sago tree when she lays eggs, feeds her throughout this time, and later pecks her free of the enclosure and brings out she and the young from the 'womb' of the tree. Thus, a re-enactment of the primal 'carving' of life from the sago tree trunk.

CHAPTER II

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HAIDA RAVEN

The Haida people (from Xa'ida, "people") live in the territory which "includes the whole group of islands called by Captain Dixon in 1787, the Queen Charlotte Islands, and also the southern portion of the Prince of Wales' group in Alaska" (the Kaigani). (Newcombe, 1907:135) The Haida world was a place wherein two systems were in simultaneous operation, one which controlled the flow of animal souls through society, and the other which controlled the social reciprocity through marriage between the two exogamous moieties and child-bearing. Thus, the Haida universe was a 'closed storage' of souls which could be transformed into one form or the other, both human and animal souls being interchangeable. Every being was recognized as one part of the totality, one necessary entity within their entire cosmic order.

The origin of the Haida people and the ordering of the social and natural world is related in the mythical accounts of Raven's adventures which he began after the flood. Captain Gold, as an old chief (ca. 1887, according to Deans' writing) told the story of the flood to Deans:

Very long ago there were wars of the elements, the Great Chief above joined with the Great Chief below to destroy this part of the world; the former sent forth his warriors thunder and lightning, with torrents of rain. The latter also sent forth his warriors, earthquakes, upheavals and subsidence of the earth, up through whose rents the water rushed from beneath; soon everything was covered by a seething rapidly-rising ocean. (1888:277)

Raven survived this flood that destroyed all the animals and men but spared the supernatural beings. The Raven was not an ordinary

bird; he possessed human attributes as well and could change his black feathers for human garments at will. He stood alone, before the beginning of order and time, when the Haida world was "...a boundless expanse of sea, and in this sea lay a single reef...where all the supernatural beings were heaped together." (Swanton, 1905a:73)

Raven flew about above, unable to find a foothold; and at last, looking at the neighbouring sky, he became fascinated by it. Then he ran his beak into it and climbed up. (Ibid.)

Having arrived in sky-country, Raven began his travels by crawling into the skin of the chief's daughter's child. The stone woman who never slept saw Raven steal the right eye from every person in the four rows in the town, and in telling the villagers of his tricks that she saw, she began the relating of the whole mythical cycle of Raven's travels which started the origins of the Haida world; "The Raven story relates how matters came into their present condition." (Ibid.:72) As Deans wrote, "Ask any of the old Indians "who made the world and all things therein?" and the answer will be "the raven;" leading one to imagine him (the forefather of all ravens) to have been a personal deity, the creator of the universe and everything therein." (1888:110)

The Haida hero Raven was indeed thought to sometimes be the natural bird raven. This can be seen, for example, in their language. Some words refer specifically to the bird raven, and others distinctly to the hero Raven, or sometimes to both.¹ "Hoya" was translated by Chief Edensaw as "raven". (Swanton, 1905b:195) "Hooyheh" is also a name for Raven. "Xuya" is the Skidegate word for Raven/raven (Levine, written communication, 1977), and

1. Throughout this study a distinction will be made between Raven the mythical hero and raven the natural bird by designating "R" and "r".

"Hoya" was recorded by Newcombe as the "raven". (Notebooks #43,:1)
The personified Raven was called Nañkí'lsLas (He-whose-Voice-is-obeyed), "because whatever he told to happen came to pass". (Swanton, 1905a:27) Before he had "earned" this name, he was called "The-One-who-is-going-to-be-He-whose-Voice-is-obeyed, Nañkí'lsLas-in-Potency." The Masset people said that his original name was "He-who-was-born-from-the-Hip (Qlā'xulAñ'ai'sta nañ L! q). (Ibid.) The people of the Raven clan in Masset called the Raven "grandfather" ² indicating the patriarchal quality of Raven. A Tsimshian name for Raven is Wigit meaning "Large Person" (Halpin, written communication, January 1978).

In the beginning before Raven made things 'happen by his word', he began his adventures by flying to sky-country where he 'caused himself to be born'. "Some say that He-whose-Voice-is-obeyed was a great man" (Swanton 1905a:28) because he 'made things become to be as they are'. Stone wrote of Raven as both a trickster and a transformer who had made order from disorder on the earth after the great flood, saying that Raven was not a "creator" who created the world materially from nothing, but a 'transformer' who changed and ordered the world whose essential elements were in existence, but in chaos. Thus, Raven brought the world to be in an ordered state from its disorder and was thereby considered to be a 'creator' of order, but primarily a 'transformer' of the state of the world as it was.³

At other times, Raven "assumed the skin of a raven when he did

2. The Koryak Raven trickster was called "The Big Grandfather" (Meletinsky, 1973:9).

3. Meletinsky wrote of the differing roles of Raven in the Paleo-Asiatic peoples' myth-cycles: In the Itelman cycle, he was regarded as both creator and culture hero; and in the Koryaks cycle, he was primarily a trickster with shamanistic powers, and called "Creator". In that of the Chukot, he was separate from the shaman, and was similar to the NWC Raven in his creating of elements, matter and animals on earth.

rascally tricks"; Raven was "always playing tricks on people, who often tried, but in vain, to catch him, as he was constantly changing form." (Ibid.) Raven was both a transformer and a trickster, as Radin wrote of the "break between trickster conceived of as a divine being and a buffoon", stating that

Swanton found individuals among the Haida who insisted that the deity Nañkí'lstlas, with whom Raven is identified, put on the skin of a raven when he wanted to act like a buffoon. (1956:146)

Deans stated it somewhat differently in explaining that the bird raven was "the symbolization of the god Ne-kilst-lass, who in all his works of creation and providence assumed the forms and features of a raven." (in "Tales...":24-25) Diverging from the views of other, Ricketts was the one to forward the notion that

...the trickster and culture hero are, from the earliest times, combined in one figure; and therefore, if we wish to understand this character, we should attempt to do so not by splitting him up into logical parts, but by attempting to see what meaning he might have in all his complexity. (1965:330)

Whatever his composite character enveloped, the Haida knew that the Raven was the one who transformed their world from the antediluvian period of indistinction and chaos, the "unbounded" expanse of disorder, into its presently established and 'bounded' structure of natural and social order. Newcombe reported Moses McKay as saying "This (Xaina pole) belongs to Chief Nankilstlas, 'one who makes things happen by his word'." (Notebooks #46, 1903-06)

It was said that after the flood when all the supernatural beings were 'heaped together on a single reef', "on top lay the strongest of

these, and the weaker stretched out in lines from it in all directions."

(Swanton, 1905a:73) Raven originally created the land for them.

When he later 'created' human beings out of a clam shell, the supernatural beings had the influence of power over them; the supernaturals who obtained power amongst themselves, could either possess humans or give them power. When the animals were 'created', there evolved a complex interrelating of all three kinds of beings:

According to the Haida spirit-theory, every animal was, or might be, the embodiment of a being who, at his own pleasure, could appear in the human form...As animals they might be hunted or given as food to man by another animal who was a supernatural being; as supernatural beings themselves, they might entertain men in their towns, intermarry with them, help or harm them... (Swanton, 1905a:16)

In relation to the animal raven, Swanton recorded that

The raven plays a conspicuous part in Haida mythology, yet the people do not appear to have revered it very much. A west coast man said that the people sometimes left food for a raven on the beach, and, when it got near them, told it to give them something. He thought that in old times it was called upon to some extent. A Masset man, however, said that they did not sacrifice to it or prey to it, because it stole too much as it was. (Ibid.:27)

It has become evident throughout this chapter that the Haida did indeed make a cognitive association and distinction between the hero Raven and the natural bird raven. The next chapter looks at some of the natural features and behaviors of the raven bird in his natural state of existence.

CHAPTER III

THE GENERAL CHARACTER AND PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES OF THE RAVEN

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce some of the more obvious behaviors and physical attributes of the raven, for not one anthropological study of the raven or trickster has been encountered which takes into any detailed account this zoological dimension. Without such knowledge, a somewhat comprehensive understanding of the complex raven figure of the Haida culture is not possible.

It is the Northern Raven which inhabits the Queen Charlotte Islands. This particular raven is distinguishable from all other species of the crow family (Corvidae) in that it is a larger bird generally, with a conspicuously larger beak. This raven is a highly intelligent bird with behaviors which are among the most complex of all bird species. His intelligence facilitates a capacity for learning, and thus it is important to recognize that while the fundamental behaviors and attributes of the bird can be described, there is a wide margin of variability and flexibility in the expression of individual ravens' behaviors.

The raven is referred to repeatedly as a conspicuous bird which is big, black, intelligent, and an acrobat of the air with a sonorous voice. He is a year-round inhabitant wherever he lives. Opinions concerning the life-expectancy of the raven are conflicting, however, they are considered to be birds of considerable longevity both in the wild and in captivity (recorded from seventeen to over eighty years of age). There are various reasons which contri-

bute to this indistinction. All ravens when mature are entirely black and therefore not readily distinguishable from one another. They mate for a life-time and in general "the nests are used year after year" (Tyrrell, 1945:5) which indicates that often a pair of ravens will occupy the nest of their parents which will also be the nest for some of their young. Ostensibly these three generations of ravens look 'the same', and thus the notion of time and immortality, and consequent power through this omnipresence, that is so often associated with the raven is understandable in the light of these natural behaviors and attributes.

The raven has been described as "one of the most sagacious birds, crafty, resourceful, adaptable and quick to learn and profit by experience". (Bent, 1945:193) As the Corvus (crow family) is distinct from all other bird species due to its particular development of mental abilities, so too is the raven specifically, above all other members of the Corvus family, outstanding in his intellectual capacity. He has been referred to as "quick-witted" and thus often is able to "profit from opportunities created by man's activities." (Goodwin, 1976:60)

Like humans, the raven is omnivorous. He eats anything dead or alive which he is able to procure, primarily with the practical aid of his beak. He is both a scavenger and a predator, feeding on carrion to a great extent if it is available, and preys either as an individual, a cooperative pair, or an arranged grouping. His techniques employed for securing food are often reflective of intelligently planned strategies. He is clever in recognizing a sick,

injured, or dying animal as a potential food source, even if it is a food for which he would normally not have interest. He is an adamant food cacher, and in contradiction of the generally-held notion that food-caching behavior is directly related to an overabundance of food, the raven usually stores food in association with hunger, often storing food in advance of having a meal for himself. (Gwinner, 1965, cited in Goodwin, 1976:22)

The raven is well noted for his complicated flight patterns which are recognized in many instances as complex aerial acrobatics, particularly accentuated at the time of courtship and mating. Lorenz wrote that ravens "fly for the pleasure of it and playfully enjoy the fullness of their ability." (1952:52) Because of their skill in flying, ravens can afford the risk of play and trickery in the air, almost testing the threshold of control and non-control.

The raven's voice is considered in more detail in Chapter IV Section 3, but should at this point be noted for its complexity in its extraordinary versatility of mimicry and idiosyncratic development. Indeed the raven is a "loquacious" bird with a wide repertoire. (Brown, 1974:11) Both Brown (1974) and Gwinner (1964) said it is due to the behavioral complexity of the raven that an elaborate acoustical capacity is necessary.

Physical Attributes

A basic study of the more obvious components of the raven's physical expression is necessary to develop an understanding of the cross-comparison between the natural physical elements and the formal elements of the material objects.

The raven has four different types of feathers which constitute his total plumage: the lanceolate feathers of the throat and breast, the bristles of the upper and lower mandibles of the beak and on the cheeks, the contour feathers of the body generally, and the flight feathers of the wings and tail. (See Diagram A)

The lanceolate feathers are developed only with mature plumage and are of particular importance in courtship and other self-asserting displays. Lorenz pointed out that these "elongated neck feathers of the raven, shaped like lancets" are iridescent, and when flashed by a pulsating movement of the raven's throat, catch the light and thereby effect a striking stimulus (1952:32). Morphologically, they lie singularly one on top of the other so that even when relaxed they appear somewhat 'ruffled' in comparison to the flat smooth sleek line of the body contour feathers (see Diagram B and C).

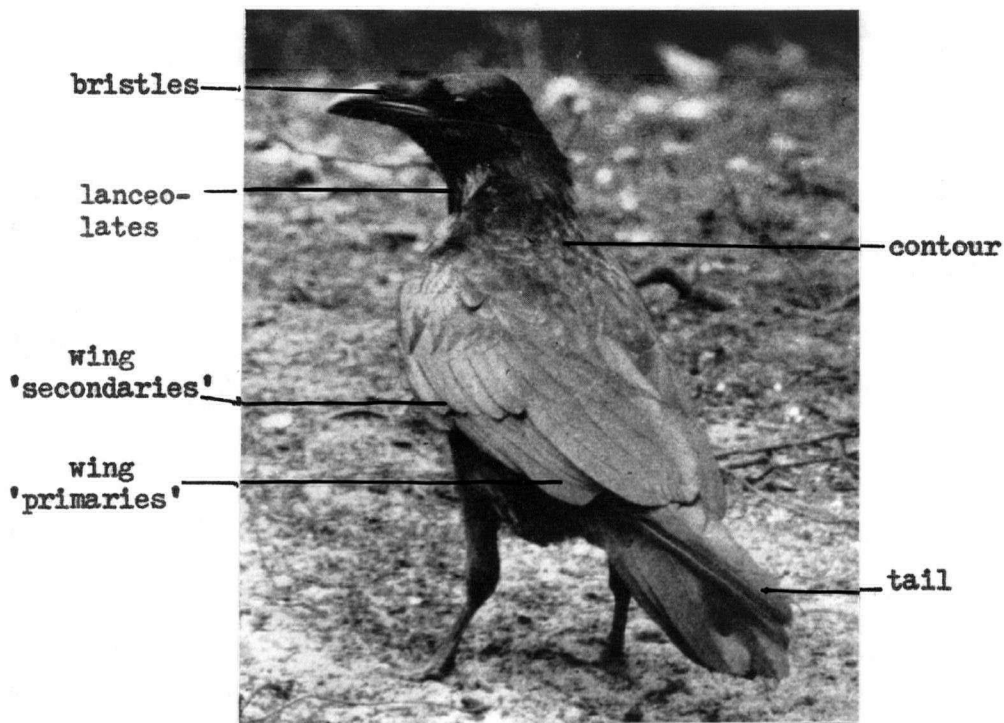


Diagram A

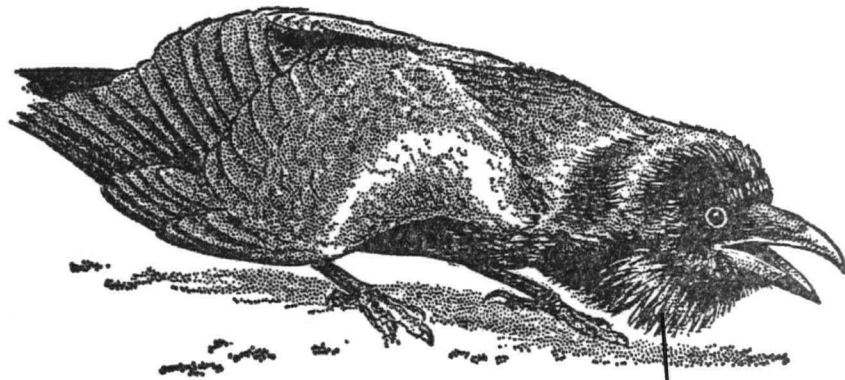


Diagram B

flashing
'lancets'

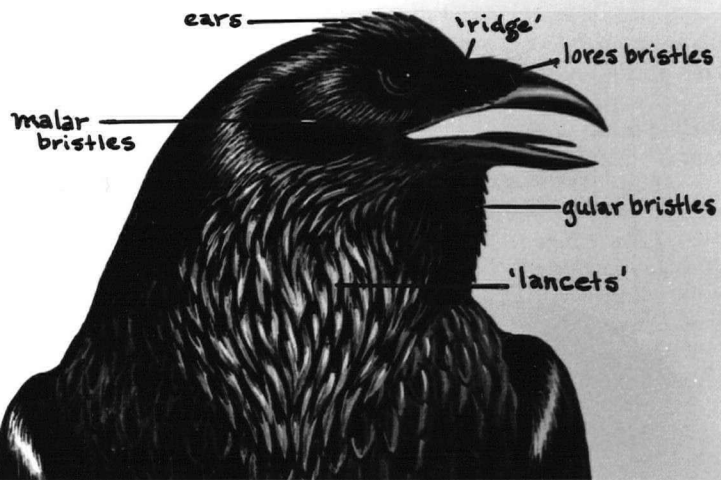


Diagram C

There is a conspicuous growth of bristles found on the upper
mandible of the beak near the head^(lores) which is separated by a 'ridge'
from the head feathers and 'ears' (see Diagram C). Bristles are
thin wirey 'semifeathers' which project outward away from the skin,
and ^{can} be further erected by little skin muscles for instance to form
'ears'. Other bristles are found around the eyes and the side cheek
area (malar), and on the under-beak towards the throat area (gular).

Contour feathers are the main feather mass which gives 'shape'
to the body form. They lie flat and are smoothed together, and
also can be erected on various parts of the body to give a 'fluffed'
appearance, which creates the visual effect of an enlarged body or
exaggerated part. In the behavioral displays discussed in Chapter
IV. Section 2, such attributes as fluffed head feathers and 'pants'
are examples of exaggerated contour feather portions.

The wing and tail feathers, aside from being essential for
flight, are also expressive elements in many behavioral displays.
The tail is often spread widely and depressed downwards or lifted
upwards in different attitudes. The wings, comprised of both pri-
mary and secondary flight feathers, are spread outwards away from
the body, lifted or dropped downwards in various attitude displays.
Their basic structure can be seen in Diagram A, and an impression
of their overall shape in flight can be sensed from Diagram D
and E.

The behavioral displays of the raven, which employ these
physical attributes, will be discussed in Chapter IV, Section 2,
in conjunction with the material expressions of them. ¹

1. See APPENDIX A for more detailed information on the bird
raven in various dimensions of his life-cycle and physical nature.



Diagram D



Diagram E

In thinking of the concept of the primary symbolic animal in a culture and the Haidas' ideas about their hero-trickster figure, Raven/raven who is very definitely at times understood to be the natural bird raven, one comes to wonder how these attitudes might be expressed in their material objects. Having seen that the Haida make that clear cognitive distinction and association between the Raven and the raven, it would seem probable that such an association would be conveyed in the various representations of him. The following chapter, in the course of three sections, explores some dimensions of the material representations of the composite raven/Raven character.

CHAPTER IV

THE RAVEN IN HAIDA MATERIAL REPRESENTATIONS

What constitutes the body of this extended chapter is a collection of illustrations and descriptions of the representations of the raven in Haida design elements and form. They are described in relation to the bird's natural physical attributes and behaviors, and augmented by relevant ethnographic data and zoological descriptions. The chapter, overall, attempts to uncover 'if or if not there are regular depictions, in design elements and forms, of the natural attributes of the bird', and if so, 'if particular aspects of the bird are overly emphasized'. The chapter falls into three sections: 1) The general depictions of the raven in formal elements and design are studied in relation to his natural physical attributes, progressing from relatively simple to more complex representations; 2) This section presents several depictions which are suggestive of specific behavioral displays, described together with the representations. These particular material expressions of the raven go beyond those of Section 1 in their primarily three-dimensional representation of the raven's behavioral attitudes, over and above merely his physical parts. 3) This section demonstrates a more in-depth study of the beak, eye and voice of the raven due to their emphasis in the previous two sections. The symbolic dimensions of the raven's voice is studied in relation to the expressive quality of his beak and eye, all of which is supplemented with Haida ethnographic material and zoological studies of the bird.

1: THE PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES OF THE RAVEN
IN HAIDA MATERIAL REPRESENTATIONS

To begin this section which looks at a one-to-one correlation between the physical attributes of the bird and the Haida design elements which depict those features, the following example recorded by Boas is an instructive point of departure. He described the two-dimensional design elements of a housefront painting: (see Figure 1)

...represents the painting from a housefront showing a raven in profile. This painting appears on the right and left of the doorway; the beaks facing the door. (1) is the raised tuft on the head of the raven, (2) feathers, (3) the facial bones, (4) the skin over the beak, (5) is supposed to be a joint in the tongue, (6) the skin over the lower jaw, (7) the supposed joint at the base of the tongue, (8) represents the shoulder joint, (9) feathers, and (10) the long wing feathers. It will be noticed that the inner feathers (9) are rounded, while the wing feather has a sharp point, according to the standard requirements... (11) represents the tail... (1955:241)

Although it is a Kwakiutl design, this is a useful example insofar as it provides a concrete ethnographic example which illustrates the relation between the description of the parts of the bird and the elements of the design. The phrase "according to standard requirements" clearly indicates the knowledge of a system of rules which were to be referred to. Some less obvious aspects of the raven's anatomy and physical features, such as the head tuft, the facial bones, and the round or pointed feathers could only be realized and represented in design upon careful observation and knowledge of the raven.

In thinking of the representation of the physical attributes of the bird raven in the design elements, and at the same time of Boas' reference to "standard requirements", one must necessarily think of the system of formal representation on material objects.



Figure 1.
Demonstrates the relationship between the raven's
natural attributes and the elements of design.

The traditional system of forms and elements in the Haida art was a finite one in which different arrangements of the elements (ovoids, formlines, and U-forms) and forms, in both two- and three-dimensional objects, could be combined so as to be an individual expression which could inspire new ideas, while at the same time remaining consistent with the overall rules of the system. The ostensible simplicity of the highly stylized form of the Haida material representation is deceptive. While each element in design was a distinct entity in itself, it became meaningful when seen in relation to the other elements which when all combined formed the complete representation. Perhaps, for the sake of thought, the English sonnet form of poetry can be referred to. As its structure was rigid and could be regarded as a confinement to poetic expression, so too could the Haida prescribed system of design structure be thought of as confining. However, within each of these structures, there was an expansive range of possible combinations and arrangements of the established elements to create the form.

That there were established rules of design which were to be followed was clearly reflected in the reaction of Charles Edensaw to the design he saw on gambling sticks, recorded by Swanton:

Edensaw was rather inclined to consider the design on the left as intended to represent the raven's wing, because it had no tongue, and because it is not the proper form of head belonging with the foot on the right.
(1905a:152; emphasis mine)

The puzzlement of Edensaw indicated that his understanding of the prescribed combination of elements, in this case the head and the foot (see^{No. 34.} Figure 2), was violated, and he regarded this deviation

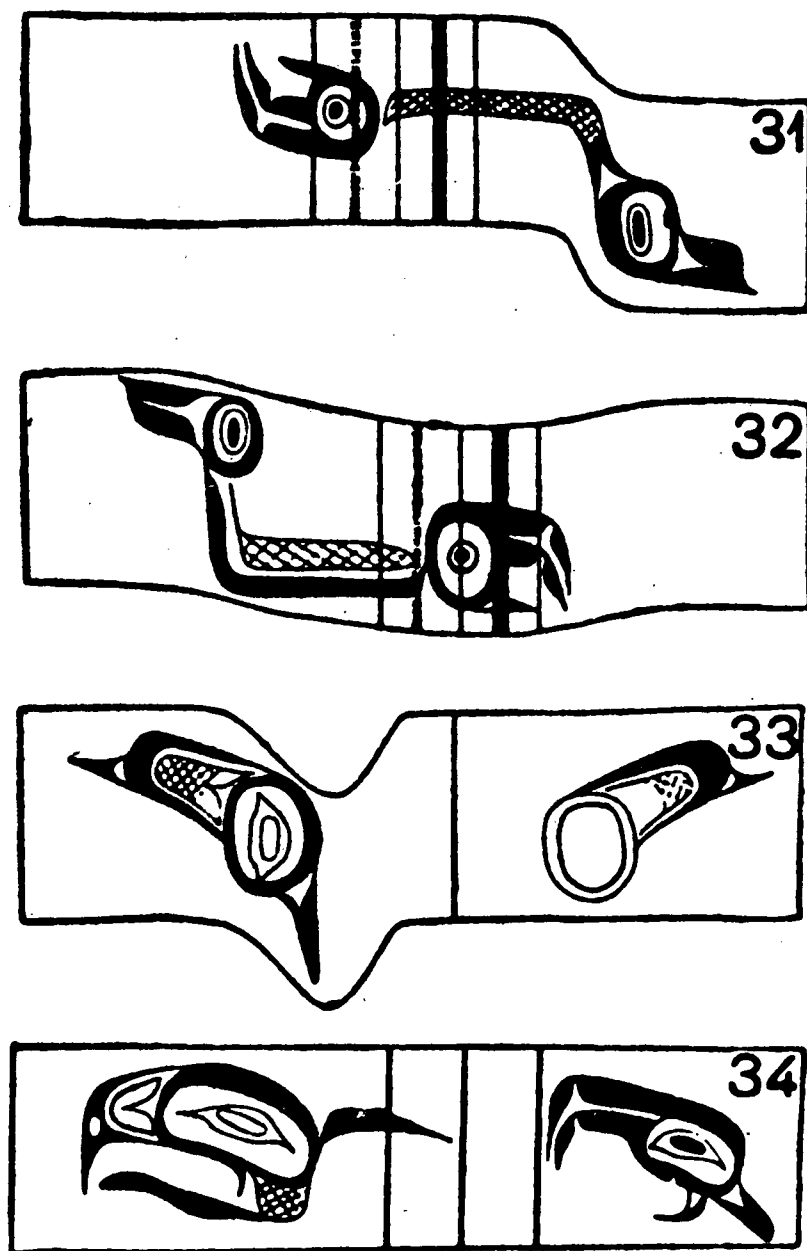


Figure 2.

Demonstrates the established relationship between elements within design:

"The series Nos. 31-34 represents the raven. In No. 31 the wing is shown on the right side, the foot on the left hand side. The same combination, with the foot on the right and the wing on the left is shown in No. 32. The hachure on the leg was said to be characteristic of the raven. In No. 33 we have the wing on the right, and the head on the left." No. 34 was described on the page preceeding this Figure.

(Swanton, 1905a:152)

from the traditional rules unacceptable. Since the established correlation was not evident, he assumed that the form necessarily had to be another form of the raven; thus he found it not understandable that such a conspicuous deviation from the system could be exercised. Thus, it can be learned from this example that specific elements not only in themselves but also in relation to others, constituted the definitive system of design of the Haida style. This system was well understood and practised in such a way so that individual expressions could be immediately recognized as being consistent or inconsistent within the system. In thinking of the execution of the disparate parts of design which eventually combine to form the completed whole, Ospensky's statement concerning art in general is illuminating:

In real art there is nothing accidental. It is mathematics. Everything in it can be calculated, everything can be known beforehand. The artist knows and understands what he wants to convey...(his work) will always, and with mathematical certainty, produce one and the same impression.
(1956:27)

Once one becomes accustomed to looking closely at the following illustrations, all of which, by their individual combinations of design elements and forms, depict various expressions of the Haida Raven/raven, details begin to emerge with an increasingly clarity. Coupled with an awareness of the possible spectrum of variations of depictions, both the differences between the raven objects and yet their underlying similarity become recognizable and thought-provoking.

Figure 3 is a painting on a canoe stern by Charles Edensaw (Barbeau, 1957:170) which was recorded by Swanton as representing the raven (1905a:136). This simplified arrangement of formlines is an appropriate point of departure from the previous examples of Figures 1 and 2, in beginning to look at formal elements chosen to depict the raven. To facilitate the easy locating of the design elements depicting specific physical parts of the bird, each has been lettered in correspondence with its explanation. This painting is of course a 'flat' or two-dimensional design of painted formlines. The rather round primary ovoid which distinguishes the eye area (a) flows forward through a thinner portion (b) to widen again to delineate the beak (c).^{*} The tongue (d), and the joint (e) in the tongue are clearly depicted and reminiscent of the depictions of Figure 1 described by Boas. One formline only indicates the presence of the body (f) which leads into an accentuated wing represented by a large formline ovoid (g) which merges into a large primary "U" form (h) which depicts the secondary wing feathers with their characteristic overlapping texture with two secondary Uforms inside (h), and two elongated U forms (i) both complete with points (j) which are characteristic of the primary flight feathers. The tail is shown to be overly large in relation to the rest of the body, and widely spread. A formline ovoid (k) shows the 'joint' at the base of the tail from which the three rounded tail feathers project, designated by 'soft' (ie: rounded) U forms (l). The claw is also depicted as large and closed; being tucked up underneath the body (m) (which was not a necessary adapta-

*. The formal terminology throughout this study is taken from Holm, Art of the Northwest Coast, 196 .

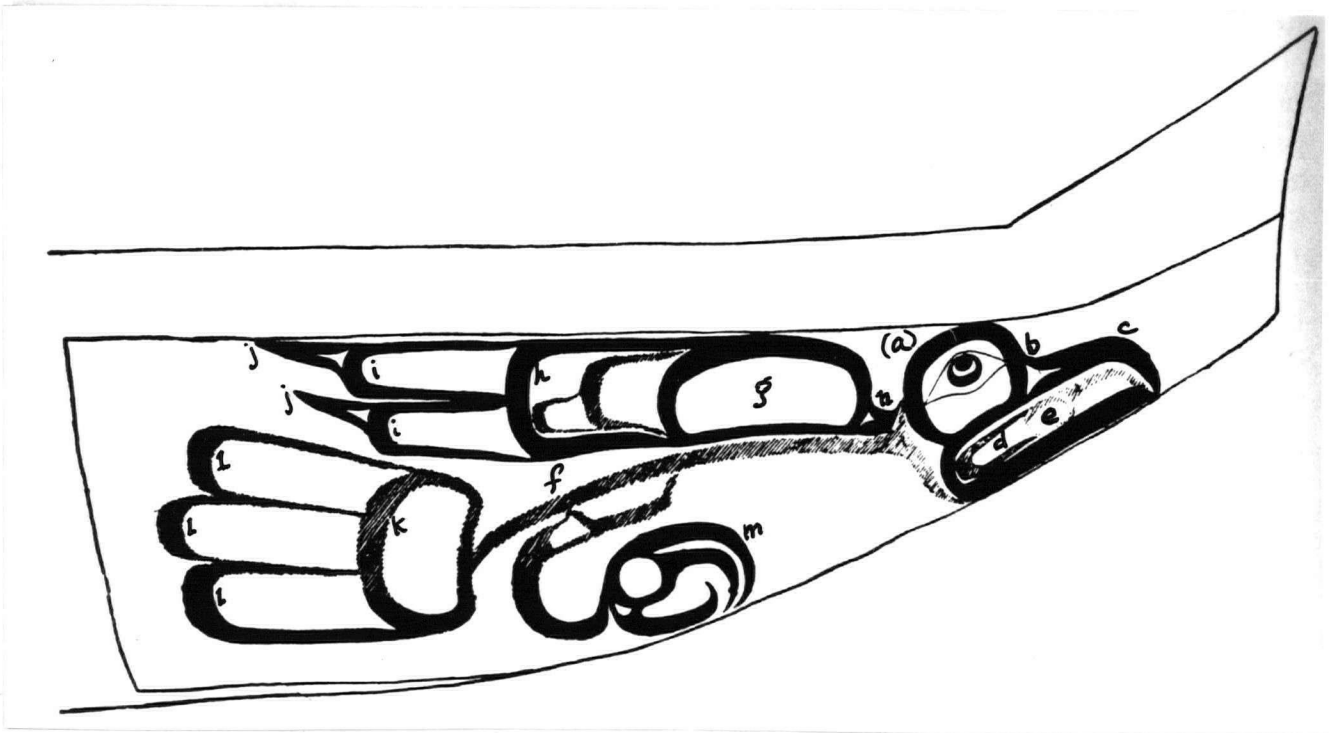


Figure 3.
Raven on a canoe prow, by Charles Edensaw.



Diagram F.
Shows the spread wings and tail,
and the shapes in flight. Note
the pointed tips of the wing
'primaries' and the extended
neck, head and beak.

tion to the available space). The way in which all these elements are combined, with the upward and backward extended wings, the spread tail, and the distinctly forward stretching head and beak emphasized by the design elements depicting the neck (which is not usual as will be seen in further Figures), a strong impression of a flying raven is created (see Diagram F). Perhaps this flying raven painted on the canoe stern could be thought of in association with the desired speed and grace of movement of Haida canoes. For it is true that ravens are exceedingly accomplished and acrobatic 'masters of the air', engaging in tumbling, rolling, flipping upside down, dropping vertically, and spiralling, and yet not losing their control. Certainly in the roughest waters the Haidas would desire such control over the movements of their canoes.

Figure 4 is a tattoo of the raven, again in flat design working strictly with two-dimensional effect. The scope afforded by the two-dimensional depictions is in itself interesting, as elements have to be varied and juxtaposed to give impressions of textures and the illusion of depth and relief.

To appreciate what at first appears to be such simplicity of lines and forms of a tattoo, it is meaningful to realize that tattoos were for the Haida a highly regarded and jealously guarded property of the clans. Swanton recorded the information he learned regarding the historical importance of a particular tattoo:

...a tattooing drawn by Charlie Edensaw for Professor Boas. It belongs to Edensaw's wife, who belonged to the Middle-Town-People (R19). Originally this tattooing belonged to Those-Born-at-Skedans (E3). At one time the Gîti'ns began to use it without authority, and in return Those-Born-at-Skedans (E3) used the raven, which up to that time had belonged to the Gîti'ns. This nearly led to war.

(1905a:142)



Figure 4. Raven "split in two" tattoo.

Figure 4 represents the raven "split in two" (Ibid:142), drawn for Swanton "in crayon by John Cross, a Skidegate man, who formerly did tattooing." (Ibid.:141). This relatively simplified design of the raven depicts his upright ears, over a heavy primary ovoid describing the eye area as separate from the beak. Although the 'ridge' between the beak and the ear is not accentuated, the curve of the primary ovoid obliquely indicates its presence. The beak is open showing a tongue. Simple oval lines depict the shoulder and elbow joints above the wing feathers, of which both the secondary and the primary feathers are shown. The secondaries are depicted by U forms filled with fine cross-hatch which gives the impression again (as did Figure 3 with inside U forms) of the overlapping texture and denser quality of the secondary wing feathers, as compared to that of the primary flight feathers which are long and singular and with the typical pointed extensions. The tail, although not particularly emphasized in any way, is represented again by rounded U elements (with smaller U's inside creating the natural overlapping effect). This difference in the elements used to depict the wing and tail feathers recurs rather consistently, as will be evident in further illustrations of the raven.

The little human inside the raven is curious. Is he a part of the raven, or is the raven part of him...? This design certainly alludes to the trickster-transformer dimension of the Haida Raven/raven, who did, after all, bring the Haida people into existence. Note how the human's legs merge into the point of meeting of the raven's tail and legs (emphasizing 'both in one'); is he perhaps going to be born?

Figure 5, drawn for Boas by Charles Edensaw of Masset in 1897, is a flat design representing the raven on a blanket-border. It has been included here specifically to demonstrate that even in a much more complicated design, arranged to adapt to the prescribed space, it depicts accurately the natural physical attributes of the bird. Swanton described it as

...a curiously distorted representation of the raven.
The beak and foot occupy the middle of the design. To
the left is one wing, to the right the other wing, while
the body is represented by the light design to the
right of the head. (1905a:143)

It is immediately evident that the eye area and beak are emphasized, being not only situated in the centre of the design but also disproportionately large. The fine split U inside the primary U of the beak, each with a nostril in it, gives the impression that the raven is being viewed from the top, and yet the other elements are certainly seen from the side perspective (although when looking directly at the beak it is easy to imagine that the wings are being seen from a front perspective and that they are being held away from the sides of the body).

The natural attributes are certainly depicted: the beak with its characteristically curved tip is opened and shows a tongue, and the eyesocket area is described by a heavy primary formline, and ears rise behind the eye area (with little round elements which hint a pun: are they nostrils, or another face? If one covers the tip of the beak, it can be seen that the ear U is almost exactly the same structurally as is the beak U which is only a little more elongated). The cross-hatch element which dips below the eyesocket



Figure 5.
A complicated arrangement of elements depicting the raven,
on a blanket-border by Charles Edensaw.

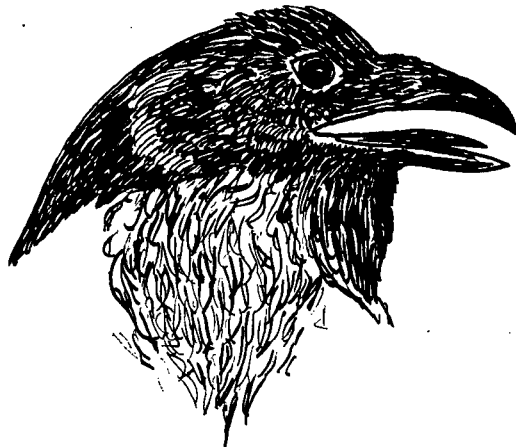


Diagram G.
Notice the bristles around the eyesocket area, parti-
cularly their wirey texture as compared, for example,
with the lanceolate feathers under the neck.

is a careful depiction of the malar bristles, with the texture of the wirey and sparsely-spaced bristles simulated by the cross-hatching (see Diagram G).

While certainly being a more complex design, the arrangement of the elements does not disregard the natural physical attributes of the raven. While the head generally (the beak and eye area particularly), the wings, the tail (turned downwards below the wing tip), and the claw are all somewhat emphasized due to their size and detail, the central body is underplayed. Notice the heavy primary form lines of the former elements and the thin 'light' lines of the body. Certainly it is just those attributes of the raven which are in this blanket design emphasized which are also the most expressive body parts in the behavioral displays (further discussed in Section II).

The following Figures 6 to 10, all hats woven from spruce root, provide a conceptual 'transition' from two-dimensional to three-dimensional fields. They afford a three-dimensional ground on which is painted two-dimensional depictions of the raven. The effect is peculiar to these types of hats due to their conical centre which slopes outward gradually to their edges; their overall impression, then, is one of 'inbetween' truly two- or three-dimensions. All of the hats appear at first glance 'the same' until upon closer study it can be discerned that each is a different yet similar depiction of the raven. The differences are effected purely through individual arrangement and elaboration of certain of the traditional design elements which represent the raven's natural phy-

sical attributes, as did the flat designs of the previous Figures 1 to 5.

Seen together, these hats all show a similarly designed head of the raven, the large heavy primary formline ovoid describing the eye area forming into the thick beak which tapers into a fine point. Effort has been made on the field of these hats to depict the beak curving in a slightly convex forward-downward line towards its tip (particularly noticeable in the 'beak-on' views of Figures 6 and 7). The wide shallow U form between the eyes and the beak depicts the bristles area in every hat, each one with its own particular elaboration: in the case of Figures 6 and 7, this space is filled with another empty shallow U space, Figure 8 shows a thin-line



Figure 6. Spruce root hat: raven.

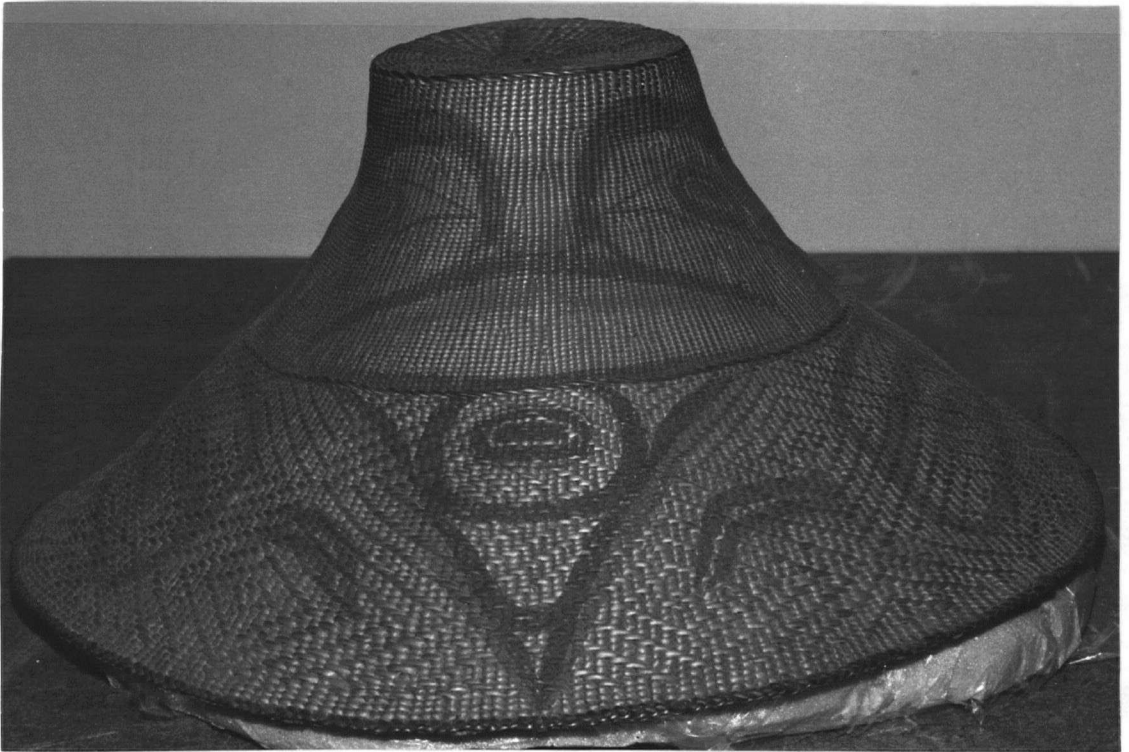


Figure 7, Spruce root hat: raven (front view of Figure 6).



Figure 8. Spruce root hat: raven.

split U element, and Figure 9 shows yet more detail with the horizontal dash lines which suggest the texture of the beak bristles, much in the same way as did the cross-hatch element of Figure 5.

This same hat also depicts the gular bristles and lanceolate feathers under the throat and along the breast, indicated by the hatched lines extending from under the cheek area to the wing. The natural space relation between the beak and the eye (see Diagram H) is accurately expressed in the hats due to their shape and the way in which the eyes have been painted in the space just below the cone, where it begins to flare out into the hat rim. This slope, and the particular place at which the eyes have been painted (somewhat more forward than in a directly opposing position on the sides) represents the forward inward-angling of the eyeball towards the beak. This aspect of the raven's eye positioning and consequent abilities of sight are further discussed in Section III. All the hats depict the eyesockets with firm primary formline ovoids with a non-concentric inside ovoid as the pupil. Figure 9 is again more elaborate in its depiction of the details, seen in the cheek space under the eye where the tertiary space is hatched which suggests again the texture and quality of the malar bristles under the raven's eye. Figures 6, 8 and 9 all show ears, designated by a primary U form, and with a further tertiary split U inside in Figures 8 and 9.

It is evident that the designs of each of the hats accentuates the head of the raven, and especially the beak and eye. The wings and tail are also emphasized, through their size and definition by heavy primary formlines. In each hat the tail is depicted as



Figure 9. Spruce root hat: raven.



Diagram H. Note spacial relation between the eye and beak.

structurally the same, however the wings are not, which seems to be interrelated to the presence and position of the claws. Figures 8 and 9 do not depict claws, and have the wings forward-pointing, toward the beak from the shoulder joint which is typically depicted by bold primary ovoids with an 'eye' inside; from this shoulder joint extends a primary U form indicating the primary wing feathers with pointed tips. The overall structure is the same, but each hat's arrangement of elements is individual. For example the primary U of Figure 9 tapers through a thin curving of the ovoid formline which narrows the width of the U in relation to the ovoid which is true to the natural structure of the bird's wing. The split within the primary U form of Figure 8 simulates accurately the natural side-by-side arrangement of the secondary wing feathers.

Figures 6, 7, and 10 do depict claws, although in a different arrangement in relation to the wing. The claws of Figures 6 and 7 are alongside the beak and the latter are painted at the back between the wing and the tail, in the more natural position, which left the wings pointing 'beakward' instead of backwards towards the tail.

The tails of all the hats are designed in a similar way, with the same overall structure, being three primary U forms with soft rounded corners. The tail joint ovoids, with eyes inside, make a conceivable pun, as being perhaps both face and tail - the negative circle inbetween the eye ovoids suggesting the point of the beak, (notice the primary ovoids in the middle of the raven's beak at the front of the hat). The tail eyes, being non-concentric within the

primary tail ovoid, further adds to the ambiguity of the double face (ie: which way are the eyes looking?).

Interestingly, the body of the raven is underplayed as it was in Figure 3, being indicated merely by a line joining the wing and head with the tail. Figures 8 and 9 show somewhat more detail than the other hats which in effect depict more the shape and texture of the feathers under the raven's body, (the split U and hatched split U). When looking at this fine-line depiction of the underfeathers, one notices the definite attention given to the wings - the heavy primary formlines and ovoids.

These hat examples are a fine example of how consistent the depictions of the raven are within a medium and type of object. Within this structural similarity, there is also a consistency in depicting the more outstanding physical attributes of the raven, even though each one was seen to be distinctly individual upon closer study of the elements and their interrelationship. Certainly in each case the head of the raven, and most particularly the beak and the eyes, was emphasized above and beyond even the clearly demonstrated wings and tail. Again a hint of the trickster capacity of the raven was revealed in the punned face-tail design, again shown in all of the hats, and not just one or two.

Another dimension of the expression these hats give of the raven is due to their distinctive shape, which plays with the meeting of two and three dimensions. The way the eyes are painted at the point of the hat at which the cone begins to flare outwards into the rim, and the position at which the wings are located, adds to the illusion

of three-dimensionality.

Finally, it is important to recognize that hats are worn on top of the head, and that the 'cone' of the hat then sits on the middle of the head, in a position, then, between the wearer and the sky.



Figure 10. Spruce root hat: raven.

To appreciate the structural concept of these hats, it is relevant to realize that it was in sky-country where the Raven was born, and it was therefore possible for Raven to bring humans into existence. In thinking of the cone structure of these hats, it is important to know that one of the fundamental conceptions of the Haida

worldview is that of the world axis, the cosmic pole, which extended from the breast of Sacred-One-standing-and-moving up to the sky from which the "string of shining heaven" runs down to the earth and causes natural events of the natural elements to take place (Swanton, 1905a:13). Also, in the Land of Souls, to where the deceased journey, there was "a pole sloping upward from the ground" (Ibid.:39) which could be thought of in structural and symbolic association with the 'world axis'. Parallel to the cosmic pole is the pole in the middle of the houses which was regarded as the symbolic centre of the world. Thus, it was like the cosmic axis which ran through the three cosmological levels - heaven, earth, and the underworld. The house was therefore the microcosm of the cosmic macrocosm, and the centre was the place where powerful images and ritual activities occurred.¹

The head of the hat wearer can be thought of as the centre of the world ontop of which the cone of the hat (the pole) extends to the sky. This conceptual parallel, and its symbolic connotations, could be in some other work elaborated upon. Think for example of the entrance of the Haida houses through a hole in the housefrontal pole which was the "symbolization of the female generative organ. Everytime a person came out of or in to the house he was reminded of his advent into the world.". (Deans, 1899:23) In relation to the structural parallel of hat=house, the entrance, then, would be from the outside through the raven's beak to the inside.

1. See Joan M. Vastokas, Architecture of the Northwest Coast Indians of America, 1966, for a detailed study of that symbolism.

Indeed, it was the Raven who brought life to the Haidas.

Perhaps it is in this connection that the 'star' design on top of the hats, reaching skyward, is significant. It is the basic Haida notion of the intercosmic pole which opens a larger dimension of symbolic significance in looking at and thinking of these raven hats.²

The structure of Figures 11 and 12 demonstrates a shift of form from hats to helmets (Helmets are studied in Section 2, pp. 55 to 88). This hat is different from the spruce root hats in that it is wood and has some relief carving on it, for example the eyesocket ovoid, which in effect pronounces the eyeball ovoid which is defined by a relief eyelid line. This hat works more toward three-dimensionality than did the previous hats of Figures 6 to 10.

The bristle and nostril forms and lower mandibles of the beak are included with a row of 'teeth' (shallow U lines) to emphasize the depth of the beak and mandibles. It is the eyes and beak which are considerably more elaborated upon in this depiction of the raven. The relief of the eyesocket in effect pronounces the eyes, which again, as in the previous hats, angle inward towards the beak as the eyes of the bird naturally do. Aside from the head, the painting on this hat is highly abstracted, for example, the two large feathers of U forms overlapping the shoulders which are disproportionately long if they are meant to depict tail feathers, and yet they do show

2. Related to the notion of the intercosmic pole notion, perhaps, is the idea that on the shaman's mountain, where they go after death, "the most powerful (were at) the top, and the lesser proportionately further down" (Swanton, 1905a:37). Also, the high chief's potlatch hats with many rings (reaching skyward) symbolized wealth and power.

characteristic natural elements. The detailed painting of the primary wing feathers depict clearly the various components of a feather: the quill, the two vanes and the many interlocking 'barbs' and the shallow carving accentuates the secondary wing feathers at the point of joining and overlapping the primaries.

In the light of the abstraction of design on this hat, it is significant to realize the detail of the attributes of the head of the bird, and the emphasis through its three-dimensional quality and the careful depiction of the eye and beak.



Figure 11.
Raven with salmon.

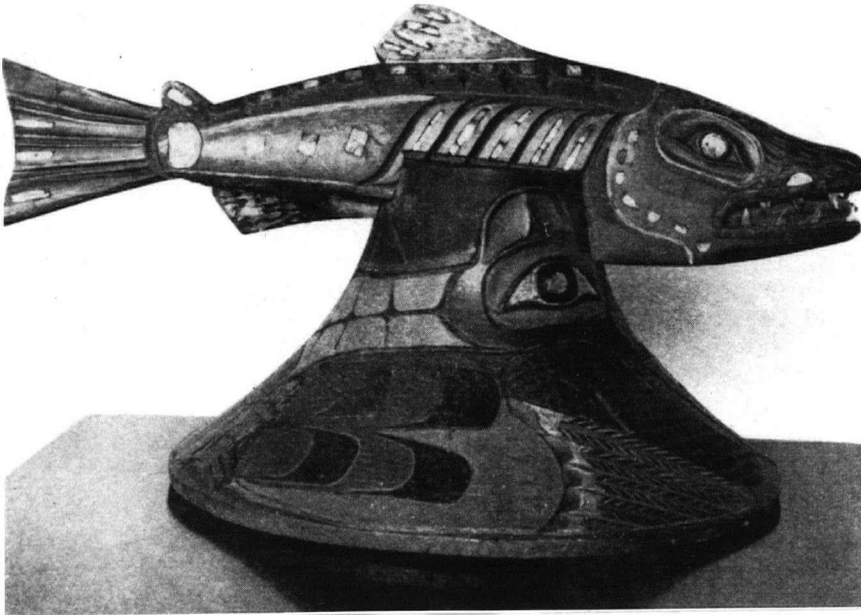


Figure 12.
Raven with salmon (side view of Figure 11).

Figure 13 depicts the raven in a horizontal position, with a heavy opened beak, detailed with the depiction of nostrils and bristles. The eyesocket ovoid is quite concaved, the resulting relief pronouncing the eyeball itself, with the socket more deeply carved at the front, stressing again the inward angling of the eye towards the beak. The 'bowl' form gives a new dimension to the physical attributes of the raven, so that as in this example, the top-side perspective of the wing elements are shown (characteristically with U's, split U's, and ovoids). Although the attributes of the raven are somewhat abstracted, they remain nevertheless defined and consistent with the natural attributes of the bird, while adapting to the prescribed space of the bowl. The ovoids and U's in shallow relief, along the back rim and the sides of the bowl depict the secondary and primary wing feathers, and also the tail. The U forms of the tail are further accentuated by the three-dimensional carv-

ing of the U 'notches' at the end of the tail. This bowl emphasises again the relative importance of the raven's head, the eye and beak specifically, through the detail and sculptured three-dimensional quality.

The little human being on the back of the raven's head highlights again the relationship between the raven and man. It seems significant that they meet at the back (top) of their heads.



Figure 13.
Raven bowl (grease dish).

From the shape of a bowl such as that of Figure 13, it is not a long cognitive leap to the form of the raven rattle, Figure 14. There are some differences, for example the rattle shows the raven's head stretched outward-forward away from the body with a neck ex-

tension, whereas the bowl had no neck element whatsoever, but the head was held closely to the body. The rattle too shows an open beak with nostrils, and a brow pronounced by the deeply carved ovoid of the eyesocket which accentuates the eyeball which angles in toward the beak, as did those of Figures 13, and 6 to 12. Above the brow the ears are erected on which rests the human's head. The wings are carried somewhat outward and to the back, and the tail feathers (behind the tail-bird's face) are detailed with U forms depicting the feathering.

It is obvious that at some level there is a complicated symbolism in the raven rattles³ and yet that complexity does not necessitate an abandoning of the depictions of the natural physical attributes of the raven; certainly all features and the general body shape of this rattle are based on the raven bird's natural appearance (see diagram I). The impression of flying is effected primarily through the forward-stretching head and neck, and the position at which the wings are held (see Figure 3 (repeat) and Diagram J for visual comparisons of the shape and expression of the raven's physical nature when flying). Considering that the raven rattle is used in very specific ritual occasions, and that the raven bird is well recognized for his peculiar flying abilities (enabling him to fly up into the sky beyond what the human eye can see), the cognitive association between the act of a chief shaking a raven rattle and the natural flight of the bird raven, effecting some symbolic

3. For a detailed account of the raven rattle, see Jennifer C. Gould, The Iconography of the Northwest Coast Raven Rattle, 1973.



Figure 14.
Raven rattle.



Diagram I.
Raven's body shape.

Diagram J.
Raven in flight.

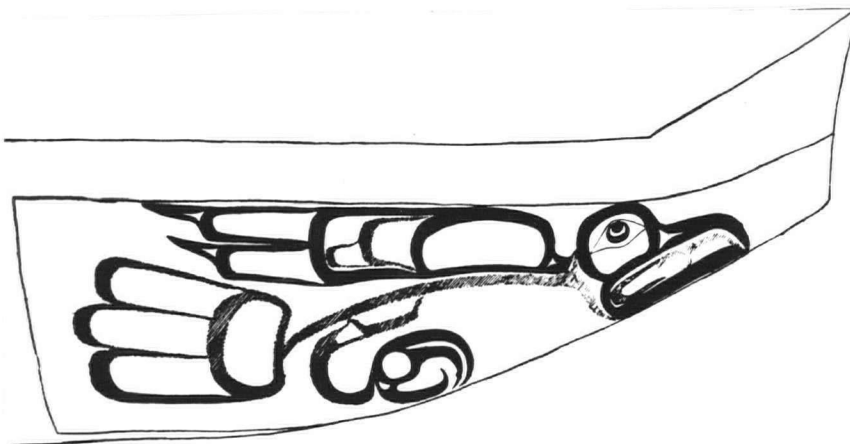


Figure 3 (repeat).
Raven in flight,
on canoe stern.

contact with the supernatural powers above, contributes to a further understanding of the symbolic value of both the physical presence of the raven and his intercosmic quality in the Haida culture.

Having looked at the forms and elements of some objects and designs of the raven there was an interrelationship seen between the natural physical parts of the bird and the material elements of the objects. Although the types of objects were different (tattoos, hats, bowls and rattles), and the mediums various (crayon, woven root and wood), there was a consistency between the elements of the objects and in the relationship between these design elements and particular physical attributes of the raven. A correlation between the two elements, the natural and the contrived, was evident.

This regularity of the correlation supports in itself two assumptions. Firstly, that there are consistent elements in the material expressions which correlate to observed phenomena of the bird's physical appearance. This was demonstrated initially by the design on the housefront, recorded and described by Boas (Figure 1). The subsequent illustrations of the raven demonstrated regular depictions of, for example, the raven's beak, or his angled eye, or his spread wings with both primary and secondary flight feathers distinguished. These physical attributes of each object are listed in Graph 2, in Section 2, p.80.

Secondly, as it was reflected in Edensaw's comments concerning the design elements on the gambling sticks, Figure 2, there exists

an interrelationship between the forms and elements which constitute the complete material expression of the raven. Recall, for example, the repeated ovoid joints and Uform feathers of the wings of the raven, not only within one type of depiction (ie: hats) but also among the different types and mediums of depictions. The ovoids and U feathers of the wing in Figure 9 is not so very different structurally from that of the raven in the blanket border (Figure 5) or the flying canoe-raven, Figure 3. And yet at the same time, within this overall structural similarity, there was a wide range of possible variation of depiction, so that while remaining 'true' to both the natural attributes of the bird and the system of design rules, a design could also effect an individual expression of the raven.

The spruce root hats clearly illustrated that there were between them subtle variations of design even though they appeared to be so similar. However, their overall structure and basic relationship between the painted elements remained constant.

Thus, this Section 1 has begun to formulate answers to questions posed at the beginning of Chapter IV. Indeed the elements of the material depictions of the raven and the natural physical attributes of the raven do in fact correlate. It was also seen that increasing complexity of design did not necessitate an abandonment of certain attributes, but did obscure them by the high degree of abstraction (for example the wings of Figure 13). However, the head, beak and eye were in all examples clearly depicted and detailed. (See Graph 2, p.80.)

In having looked at these foregoing examples of the raven in

Haida material objects and found a correlation with his natural attributes, a following question consequently arises: 'do material depictions of the raven also indicate his behavioral expressions and displays in which these particular physical attributes are employed?'. Section two endeavours to outline and answer this question by describing firstly the raven's basic and recurring displays of behavioral 'attitudes' and listing the physical components of each, and then looking at the features and design elements of various objects thought to be expression of each one of these displays.

2: BEHAVIOR DISPLAYS OF THE RAVEN
IN HAIDA MATERIAL REPRESENTATIONS

In order to better understand the behavioral displays which employ the physical attributes studied in Section 1, it is necessary to look at the interrelating aspects of the display: the vocal expression, the physical attributes, and the behavioral 'attitude'. Brown's study, Aspects of the Vocal Behavior of the Raven (Corvus corax) in Interior Alaska (1974) provided detailed information for further insights into this interrelationship, including both vocal and physical explanations and diagrams of twenty-one recorded displays. He stated that:

Central to an understanding of any animal species is a sound knowledge of the communicatory signals of the species ...The final set of information is that which bears the most fruit in terms of understanding the social behavior of the animal; information on the behavioral context and significance of specific signals. (1974:9-10)

Brown stressed that the vocal component was in its effect only one element of the signal, and that the physical and behavioral components were integral to any comprehensive understanding of the complete signal. He referred to Gwinner's work (1964) concerning the variations of the raven's displays "particularly in connection with behavior in which individual relationships were predominant. This variability may take on the form of variances in frequency, amplitude, or orientation of the display or individuals may alter whole chains of displays by simplification to basic elements or elaboration into more complex forms." (in Brown, 1974:129) According to Gwinner, this flexibility of display and voice "allows the birds to communicate more subtle details of social information to

a partner or well-known member of the group." (Ibid.) The outstanding example of this flexibility is realized in the vocal signals.

Brown organized his results into two sections of Monosyllabic Calls of which there were twenty-two, Disyllabic Calls describing ten such, and Multisyllabic Calls describing two. Non-vocal sounds of beak-snapping and flight were also incorporated. For the interests of this study, the observed attributes and behaviors have been listed under four general categories, each one of which represents a basic 'attitude' of the raven: A) imposing display, B) demonstrative-aggressive display, C) defensive-threat display, and D)submissive display. In order to facilitate a correlation of these 'attitudes' of the raven with the elements of form and design in the Haida material depictions of the raven, it was necessary to reduce the details of Brown's work into these manageable categories. A listing of the characteristic components of each are included in each attitude's description together with the attributes depicted in the material objects thought to express that particular display.^{3b} Finally, after having looked at these objects, the attributes they depict are plotted on Graph 2 (p.80) to clarify repetitions, consistencies or differences of the various material expressions to be correlated with the characteristic attributes of the listed physical displays of each of the four attitudes plotted on Graph 1 (p.79).

What follows is a synopsis of the particular attributes of each of the four attitudes of the raven, together with objects depicting the respective attitudes, and a listing of each one's prominent

^{3b}. See Appendix B for the complete listings of display attributes.

attributes. The repetition and therefore emphasis of specific physical components and signals within each category, plus differences and similarities found between the categories, will delineate the peculiarities of each.

Imposing Display:

This is a self-assertive expression displayed between either a male and female, or between rivals of the same sex. The feathers around the eyes (malar bristles) are erected into ears (see Diagram K) with the surrounding head feathers not stiffly erected, and the throat lanceolates and breast feathers fluffed out. Goodwin mentioned a "copious flow of saliva" (1976:143) in this display which necessarily caused the raven to swallow frequently, and in effect to "pulse" his throat lanceolates which activated this iridescent 'mane' to attract other ravens. His pants were flared and the wings lifted slightly away from the body at the shoulder joints. With this physical appearance, the raven strutted stiffly about in an upright posture. An example of this attitude and posture is that associated with the Koww call (see Diagram L) which often followed preening or billing⁴ and led into courtship feeding. The Koww behavior functioned as a pair-eliciting or pair-bonding activity while at the same time reinforcing social distance toward rival males. This display parallels much of the behavior described in Lorenz's 'bowing ceremony' with the Chrrua call (see Diagram L).

4. Both 'billing' and 'preening' are a sharing of contact which is reflective of a mutually agreed upon affection. Each one expresses a submission by one partner, having abolished all fear, anger or defenses, allopreening is the careful lifting and stroking of individual feathers to clean them and check for parasites. Billing is a gentle rubbing or nipping contact between the two birds' beaks.

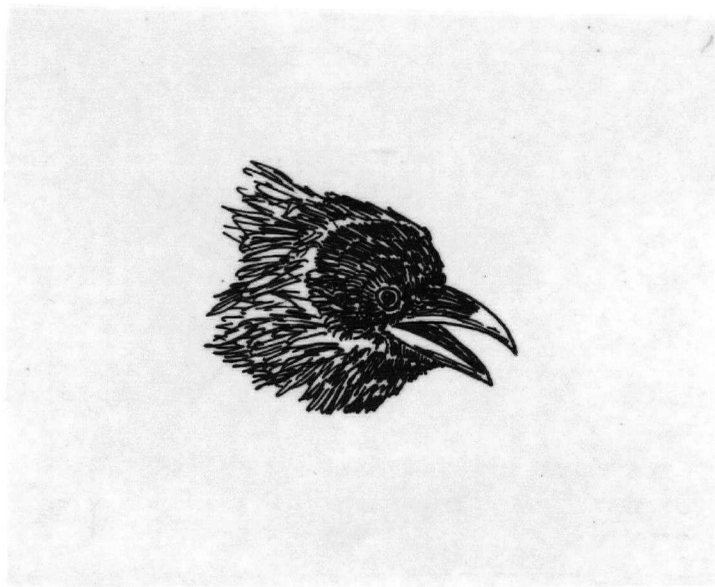


Diagram K.
Showing erected malar bristles: 'ears',
compare with the ears in Diagram O.

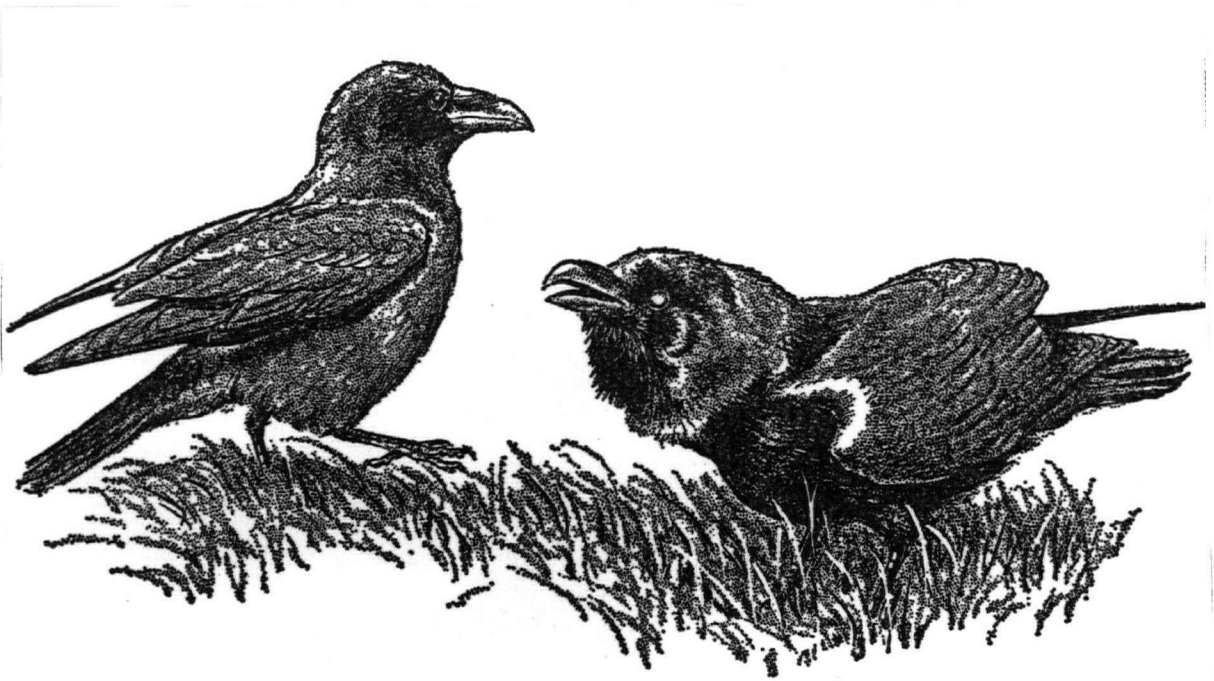


Diagram L.
Bowling ceremony with Chrrua call (Lorenz, 1972:32).
Male (right) lifts his ruffled head, holds wings out and
back, and flashes nictitating membrane over his eyes.

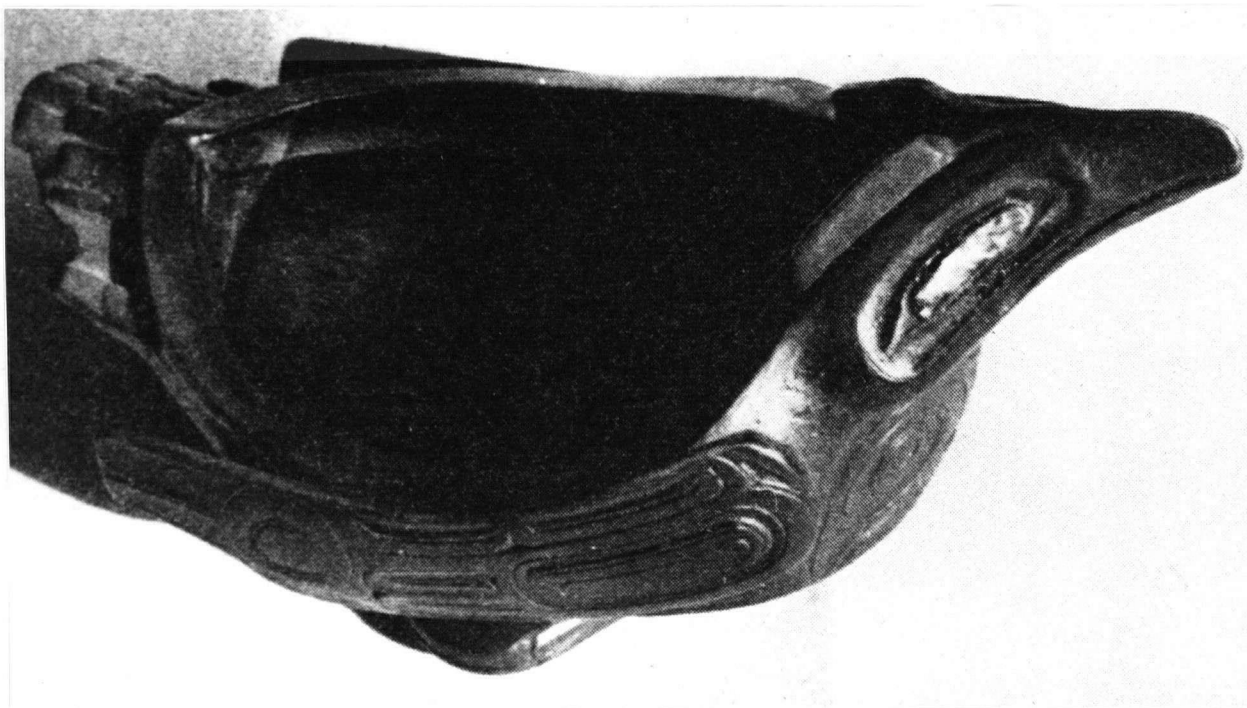


Figure 15. Raven bowl. Compare with Diagram L.

In looking at the imposing bowing ceremony of the male raven, with his erected ears, nictitating membrane, partially held out wings, and upward-turned head and beak, it is thought-provoking to study Figure 15, a raven bowl. The raven's head and beak are directed distinctly upward and forward, with the beak closed, and accentuated ears developed over and above the head form. Notice that the long eye ovoid is inlaid with abalone shell which catches the light, and certainly within the Haida culture signifies wealth. It is significant, no doubt, that it is the eye, and not the ear, or shoulder, that was emphasized by the colour and light quality effected by the abalone. The wings are held at some distance away from the sides of the body from the elbow joint (which can be discerned by the smaller less elaborate ovoid than that of the main shoulder joint). The primary feathers are accentuated by two long empty U forms, and the tail is spread rather widely and lifted upwards above the horizon.

Having some knowledge of the physical components which constitute imposing displays, one must necessarily relate the attributes depicted in Figure 15 with those discussed in relation to imposing attitudes. See, for example, A1 and A2 on Graph 1 (p.79), and compare those attributes with those of Figure 15. The upward-turned beak, the partially spread tail and laterally outward-held wings, together with the flashing of the nictitating membrane are peculiar to both the natural and material expressions.

A raven's imposing display could progress into an act of mutual affection as expressed in courtship feeding, allopreening, or billing, or it could develop into a demonstrative-aggressive display if, for example, the male became angry at the female to whom he was directing his display.

If there developed a progression towards courtship between two birds (although their sexual identity could at this point still be ambiguous⁵), the display would intensify and the male would fluff out all his head feathers, and erect his throat lancets to their fullest extent. He would move from his upright assertive posture to a horizontal leaning forward and out towards his female partner. This would develop into an exaggerated 'bowing' movement as the male stands upright inbetween calls and bends down horizontally as he issued the calls. The subsequent "retching movements during which he utters "KRO" or "KRUA" or some personal equivalent" (Goodwin, 1976:143), is what Lorenz described as the choking ceremony in which the male raven emitted a Chrujuju call, while bobbing his head and pulsating his lanceolates in excitement (see Diagram M), and A6 on Graph 1, which is expressive of the Kwoo imposing display. Wings held out and upwards laterally, and the forward-outward stretched head with a calling beak are expressive of that display. Figure 16, upon close looking, is certainly also expressive of this display attitude. This object shows a very naturalistic position of the

5. Lorenz wrote in his article "Pair-Formation in Ravens" that ravens are sexually dimorphous, in other words they have the physical capacity to enact either a male or female role in courtship and other displays. He used specifically courtship behaviors to illustrate his point.

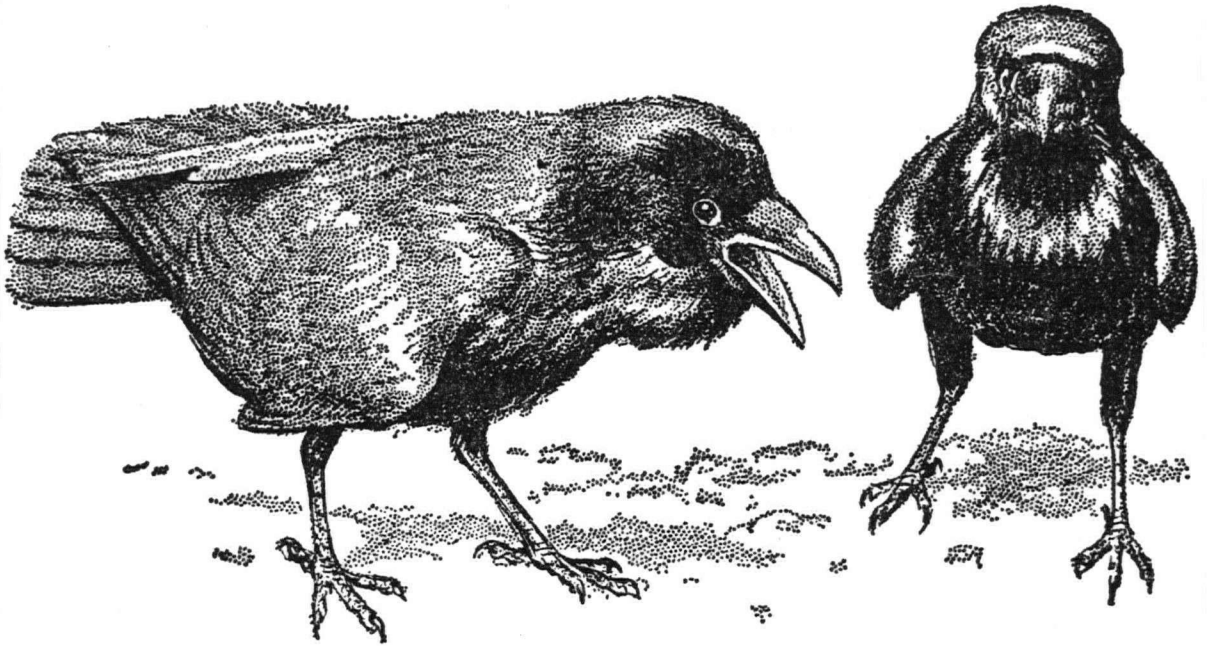


Diagram M.
Male raven showing 'choking ceremony' imposing display.
Wings are stretched laterally outward towards a spread
tail, and the head and neck are stretched forward with
the beak calling. As in Diagram K the ears are pronounced.

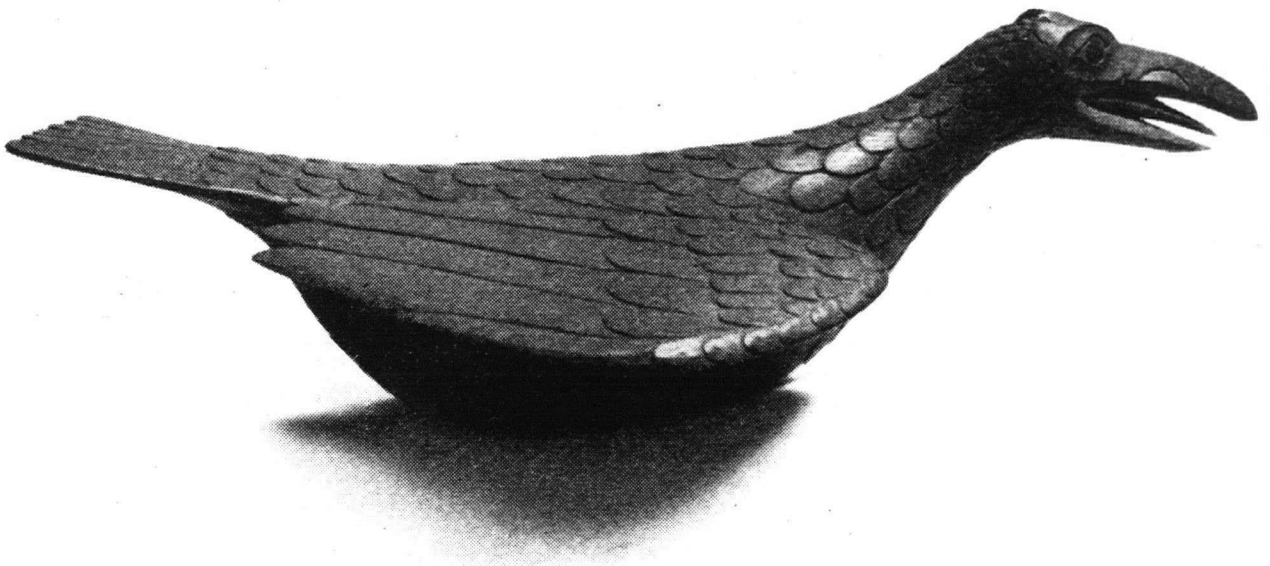


Figure 16. Raven 'calling'.

raven in a horizontal and perhaps somewhat crouching position, with an opened calling beak (indicated also by the tense tongue) and partially erect ears. The wings are spread and carried laterally outward, away from the body and back from the shoulder joint, and the tail too is spread and carried somewhat upwards, almost above the horizontal line. It is evident from Graph 1 (p.79) and the information about the imposing display of the raven, that one of the most indicative physical gestures of this display is the horizontal position with a forward stretched head and beak, which is not, as will be seen, employed in any non-demonstrative display (for example, the defensive or submissive behaviors). Compare the head, neck and beak positions of Figures 16 and 15. They are distinctly different, yet could conceivably have been made to be the same; they are as different as are the positions of Diagrams M and L, both of which illustrate a differing expression of the imposing display. The spread wings of Figure 16 also reinforce the impression of the imposing attitude, as they are comparable to those of Diagram M (of the male raven, left) and also to the information recorded in Graph 1, based upon the observations by Brown. Wings held outward in this manner were never expressive of a defensive display, and the forward 'demonstrative' beak would not be displayed in a submissive pose, but would be held sideways or with a withdrawn neck and minimal (if any) ears. The detailed shallow relief depictions of the feathering is consistent with their natural formations, with the smaller tighter feathers densely overlapping around the throat and neck, graduating into the larger and wider feathers over the body. The

secondary and primary wing feathers after the shorter shoulder-joint feathering are all clearly depicted as are the typically long singular feathers of the tail. Thus, it can be said of the raven of Figure 16 that it is depicted with careful detail of not only the feathering, but also is expressive of an overall alive 'mood' (anything but a static pose) with the specific physical attributes depicted which are reflective of the imposing behaviors of the bird.

Diagram N shows the male raven displaying his "choking " movements, with a forward-outward stretched head and neck, lancets, and a partially opened beak. The flashing nictitating membrane indicates the tension and climatic moment of the display. His wings are stretched laterally somewhat downward and are carried slightly out from the sides, reaching back to his depressed tail. He exhibits head feathers fluffed as well as his erected ears, as was illustrated in Diagram K.

Figure 17 is a wooden helmut to be worn on the head which seems to depict the raven in an imposing display comparable to that of the display expressed in Diagram N, (refer to A4 and A5 on Graph 1, p.79). This raven helmut depicts a very forward-outward stretched neck and head, emphasized by the form of the neck, being extended by a concave line under the throat which merges into the large and partly opened beak. The beak and eye are certainly emphasized, both being proportionately large in relation to the rest of the body, and depicted in clear detail. This particular eye has been accentuated (in a different style, yet comparable to that of Figure 15) with an

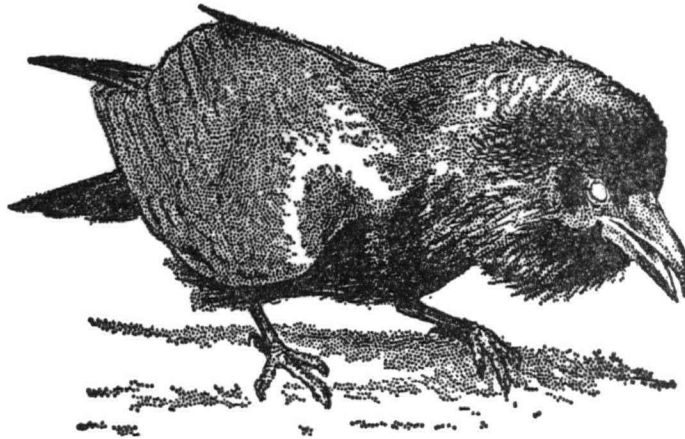


Diagram N.
A raven showing "choking movements": flashing
lancet feathers, spread wings, and a flashing
nictitating membrane.

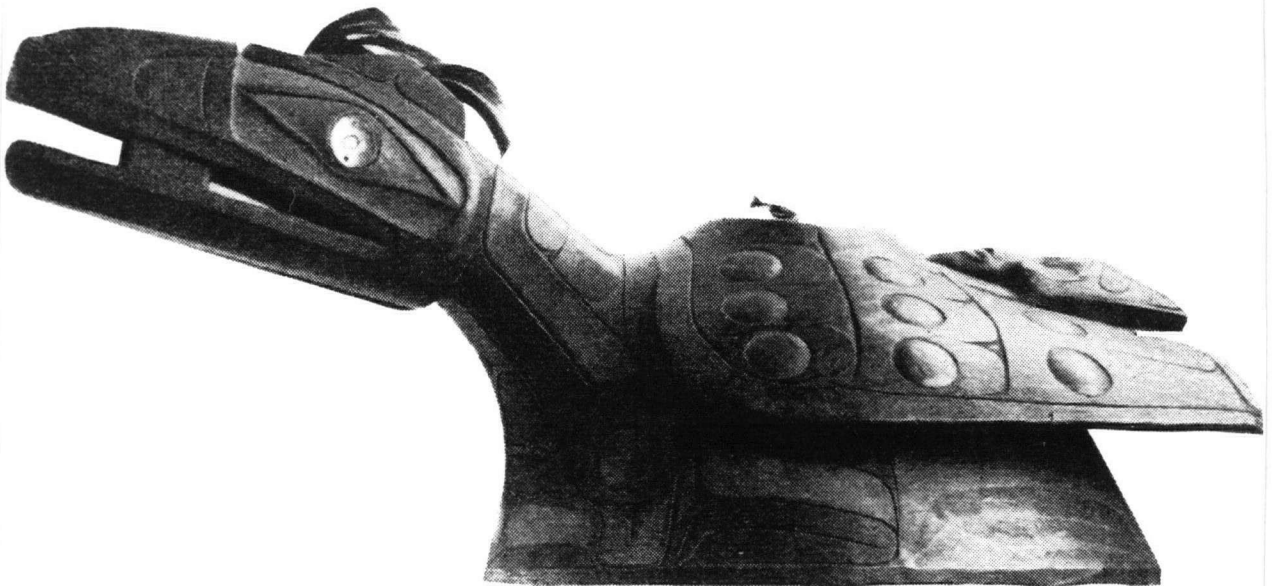


Figure 17.
Raven helmet.

abalone inlay in the form of a circle, as distinct from the recurring ovoid shape which is so characteristic of the eye seen thus far in this study. Again the nictitating membrane which is flashed in this expressed imposing display behavior comes to mind when looking at this raven helmet. The abalone 'lightness' is as eye-catching as is the sudden 'whiteness' of a raven's eye with a flashing nictitating membrane, against his entirely black presence. Two ears are depicted on this helmet as well as extra 'tufts' of head feathers, as is the case in the display of Diagram N. The wings too are held outward away from the sides and somewhat lowered, and the tail is raised horizontally. It seems that not only generally, but specifically in reference to several typically 'imposing' physical attributes of the raven, the two above illustrations are strikingly similar, in view of the fact that there is a vast range of possibilities for depicting the raven in material objects and thus the resulting style and forms are expressive of some forethought, presumably, as to why and how the raven was so depicted.

Concluding from the natural behaviors of the raven in imposing displays as described and the resulting listings and graphed attributes, the most frequently recurring attributes of this attitude were: ears (observed by Brown in 7 out of 9 displays), lancet feathers (9/9), wings outward to some extent (9/9), the head and beak forward (invariably so, in calling, although not always recorded), and the flashing nictitating membrane (7/9). It has been seen in the material object (Figures 15 to 17) that these same features, except the throat lancets have been depicted, expressing the imposing

attitude, and those physical attributes that typify it.

Demonstrative-Aggressive Display:

As it was mentioned, the imposing display can develop into a demonstrative-aggressive display, which is often motivated by anger. Lorenz described one aggressive display in which his raven flattened his contour and head feathers, and erected his ears to the maximum height and fullness. Lorenz said that this display is "equivalent to a declaration of war;" (1952:29) (see Diagram O) and the raven then proceeded to stride in an upright stance which could at any moment break into a 'seizing' of his opponenet in which case they would fight claw to claw and peck at each other's beaks. Another instance of anger was expressed with a sleek body of the male with only very prominent ears. He adopted this display after the female he was courting persisted in avoiding his advances; his mood changed into one of fury at which time he promptly developed the accentuated ears.

Figure 18, a tattoo, has been recorded by Swanton as

... curious representation of the Tca'maos, or snag, which was made by John Wi'ha for professor Boas. The monster is here represented as having a raven body with a dorsal fin, a killer-whale's body being at the same time attached to the raven's head.¹ (6)

The raven in this tattoo, albeit without wings, is depicted in an upright position with the exaggerated ears and extra head feather tufts which are suggestive of a demonstrative-aggressive display.

6. "1. In December 1903, when on a visit to Alaska, I inquired of Henry Moody in regard to this tattooing, and received the reply that the shamans identified Raven with Tca'maos in some way, stating that when the Tca'maos spoke through them, it was the same as though Raven were speaking through them." (Swanton, 1905a:142)



Diagram 0. Male raven in demonstrative-aggressive pose.



Figure 18. Raven in Tca'maos tattoo, by John Wi'ha.

The tattoo depicts rather carefully the natural physical features of the raven, the beak with its 'joint at the base of the tongue' (as described by Boas for Figure 1), an indication of the bristles and nostrils on the beak (U form and split-U), the pronounced U formline ears with U form head feathers with points, and the characteristically 'soft' U elements for the tail feathers. The attitude of this raven, although not overly clear, is certainly one of one of dominance, or, conversely, certainly not one of defense or meek submission.

Other expressions of demonstrative-aggressive displays employ 'fluffed' characteristics such as head feathers, lancets, etc. (see Graph 1, p. 79, all of which are more exaggerated than when they are displayed in an imposing attitude. So for many of these attributes indicative of an attitude, it is a matter of degree which distinguishes the 'fluffed' demonstrative-aggressive display which has often developed from an imposing display. This is relevant to this type of demonstrative-aggressive display as distinct from the 'feathers flattened' with only ears expression recorded by Lorenz (Diagram O). Diagram P shows two demonstrative-aggressive displays by male ravens, which are characterized by being more upright than horizontal, exhibiting head feathers as well as ears, and with the wings held slightly (tensely) out from the sides and downwards, and the tail spread. Figure 19 is another tattoo, which in two-dimensional form depicts some of these physical attributes expressive of a demonstrative-aggressive display. It was collected by J.G. Swan in May 1874 in Port Townsend to where the Haidas canoed

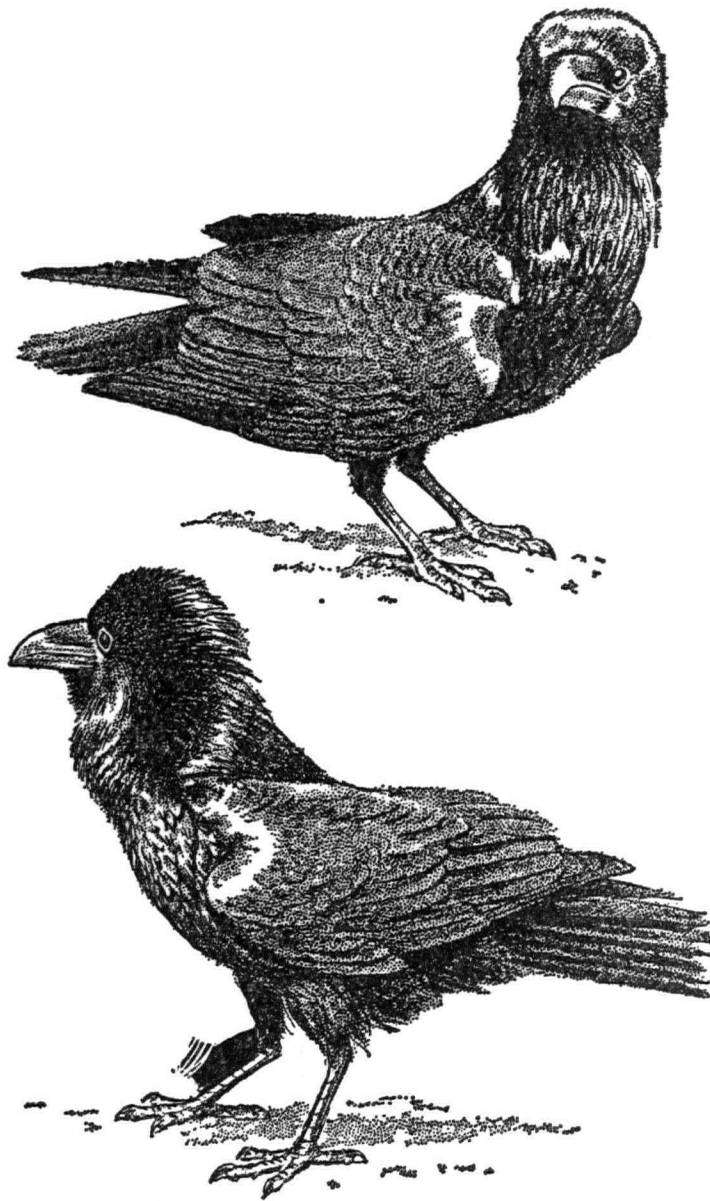


Diagram P.
Two demonstrative-aggressive displays
by male ravens, showing fluffed feathers
with ears in difference to the sleek
feathered appearance of the raven in
Diagram O.

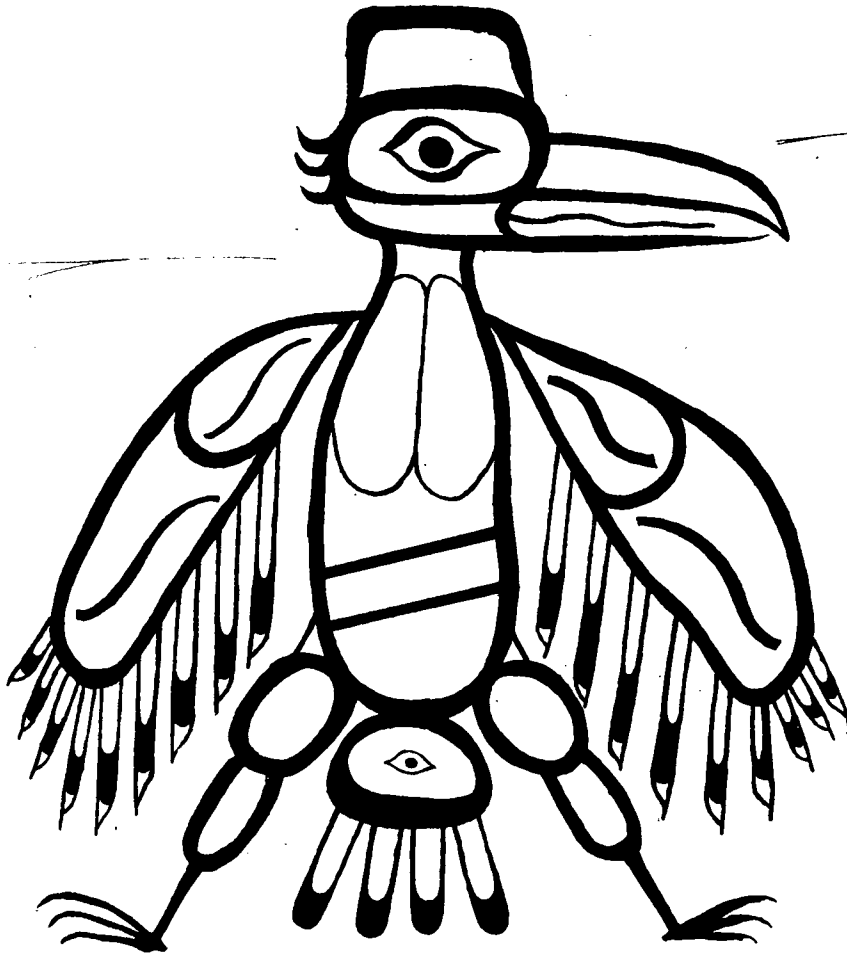


Figure 19.
Raven tattoo.

for trade. Swan wrote in this account an observation of the Haida: "however rude or grotesque his drawings may be...he is always true to nature." (1874:4) Similar elements are emphasized in this tattoo as were in that of Figure 4 (p.33), but drawn in heavier somewhat more flowing form lines: the ear, the eye, beak and nostril, all being well defined. However, this raven has highly accentuated ear projections, with an extra 'tuft' of head feathers which suggests head feathers over and above his ears. His tongue is certainly not a static one, but shows a vibration movement of the raven in calling (as distinct from the motionless straight tongues of Figures 4 and 18).

The extra head feathers and the calling tongue, coupled with the spread wings and tail feathers (the wings held outwards and somewhat downwards as in Diagram P), and particularly the upright stance, all suggest an activity and demonstration of an attitude other than a defensive or submissive one, and most probably indicative of a demonstrating behavior.

In the helmet of Figure 20, the raven sits on top of a sculpin in a position which indicates a demonstrative attitude. His forward-downward stretched head and neck with erected ears and partially opened beak (see Graph 1, p. 79) signal some type of demonstrative behavior. Unfortunately this Figure lacks clarity, and due to its perspective some of the details cannot be discerned. It can be seen, however, that the wings are held out from the sides to some degree, and the tail is spread to some extent and lowered somewhat below the horizontal level. Once again, in looking at this object.

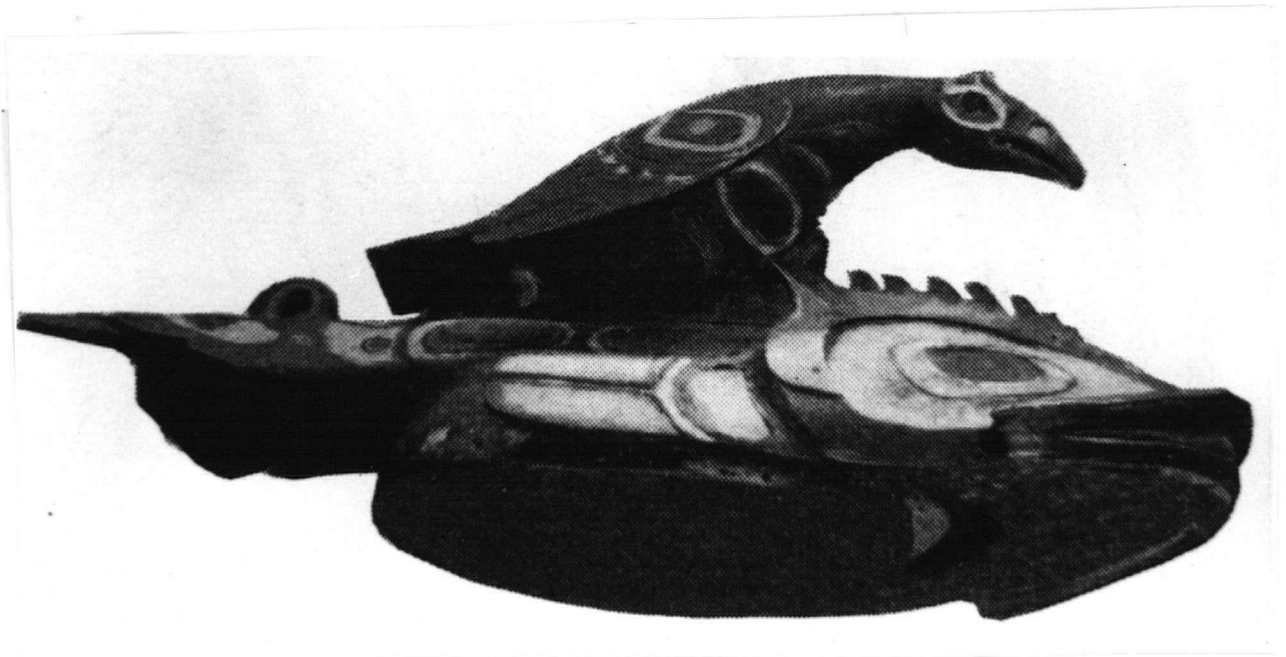


Figure 20.
Raven sitting on the sculpin.

it is important to realize the 'open' possibilities as to how the raven could have been represented, and thus this position particularly with the conspicuously stretched neck length and head forward and slightly downward-outward should be considered as significant to this particular attitude. Such a head-neck positioning is indicative of an aggressive or demonstrative attitude (see B2 and B3 on Graph 1, p.79). Alternatively, the raven's neck and head could have been depicted as pulled back towards the body (which would have in fact been easier, not more difficult, to effect), or turned upwards (indicative of a submissive position). Thus, these variances which might at first seem trivial or insignificant, do suggest fundamental differences between the varying moods and displays of the raven.

In review of the natural and depicted information of the raven's demonstrative-aggressive displays, then, the following attributes have been found to recur in both: firstly in the anger aggression - upright stance, flattened feathers except for exaggerated ears, and in the demonstrative attitude - upright or horizontal posture, (2:2/4) fluffed head feathers and ears (3/4), wings out and up (2/4), and head and beak forward and downward (2/4); see Graph 1 (p.79) for these recordings of recurrences. The first 'anger' attitude is B4 on the Graph, and the other demonstrative-aggression is recorded in B1, B2, and B3.

Defensive-Threat Display:

The imposing display could also have developed into a defensive threat by the subordinate bird towards the dominant one, or in another case, by a juvenile towards a dominant adult. Thus, the attitude is assumed in response to fear or a threat which was imposed upon this subordinate bird. It is expressed by a partially crouched position, if it is not in the air while flying (Harlow, 1922:402). The head and upper neck feathers are fluffed with no ears. The head and neck might be held somewhat forward (stressing the threat attitude), or pulled back (in defense, which can develop into submission), with the beak held at varying degrees of 'open-ness' according to the intensity of the defensive-threat. Calls or sometimes beak-snaps are issued with these defenses. An example of this attitude is that of the Antagonistic Kaaas observed by Brown which were "given from a defensive-threatening position

consisting of a low crouch with the head turned upwards towards the dominant bird, and the mouth wide opened, while giving a long quavering Kaaa". (1974:32) This particular display recorded by Brown was very much a defensive one. In general, the defensive-threat displays do not employ a 'fluffed' appearance, as can be seen from Graph 1 which shows that this attitude as compared to the other three is the only one which does not exhibit ears, head feathers, and wings out. In summary then, the most consistent physical attributes associated with the defensive-threat displays are: a partially crouched, horizontal position (2/3), and opened beak turned upward (3/3), and the head turned upward in defense (2/3) or forward in threat (1/3).

Figure 21 is a raven bowl and the medium is basalt stone. The medium should be considered when looking at the detail of the design elements and the form generally, understanding that not one element would be a casual happening but a carefully contrived component of the whole form. Firstly, before looking at specific elements, the 'sense' or mood of the bowl of a defensive or submissive raven is conveyed due to the low crouched position (facilitated by the bowl form, and also the nature of the medium), and the upturned head and beak, but with an extended neck form which strongly suggests a defensive raven because a submissive bird would most usually have his head drawn back or sideways.

To look at more specific details, notice that the bristles ridge between the beak and the brow has been depicted, and the brow (like a heavy three-dimensional formline ovoid around the



Figure 21.
Raven bowl, basalt.

the eyes) is indicated but not in an exaggerated ear form. The beak is thick, the nostrils are depicted, and a line over the 'bridge' of the beak articulates the presence of the lores bristle blanket. The eyesocket is quite deeply concaved, swelling out into a wider cheek area which extends into the beak line. The eye is large with an 'intelligible' expression, and angles naturally in towards the beak (to be further discussed in Section 3). The angle at which the head is held away from the crouched body, looking outward-forward and slightly upward is certainly expressive of a non-aggressive, defensive attitude (see C3 and C4 on Graph 1, p.79). Even in this stone medium not only the wings and tail have been

depicted, but the feathering elements of each have been articulated. Notice the U elements in shallow relief inside the five primary tail feathers. Again, as it was found to recur in the depictions seen in Section 1, it is a large ovoid for the shoulder joint and two U forms which designate the natural physical features of the wing. Once again (as seen in Figures 4 and 6) a pun is made with the upside down eye inside the wing ovoid. What happens, then, when the raven spreads his wings to fly to the sky? Raven is indeed a trickster; he has eyes in his head, in his wings, and in his tail (Figure 19).

As a heuristic device, the stone raven represented two things. Firstly, in accordance with the behavioral defense display, it expresses some of the characteristic attributes, and secondly, it illustrates that particular elements and forms were deliberately formed to achieve an overall and specifically desired effect. It can be safely assumed that not one element depicted in this bowl simply 'happened', but that each was 'brought out' of the stone. For example, the upward turned head, neck, and beak must certainly have been forethought and desired, for it seems that it would have been far easier not to have formed the extended neck element at all.

Submissive Displays:

Submissive postures are assumed by either male or female ravens in expression of a juvenile or socially subordinate status, or in sexual submission.

If the excited self-assertive imposing displays elicit an appropriate response, then a pre-copulatory posture is assumed. In the case of the female, the posture is sexually submissive in which

case she crouches horizontally low to the ground with her chest touching, spreads her wings widely to touch the ground with their tips, and spreads and lifts her tail up above the horizontal plane. The intensity of this display causes her wings to quiver rapidly in an "exaggerated movement". (Brown, 1974:89) See Diagrams Q and R.

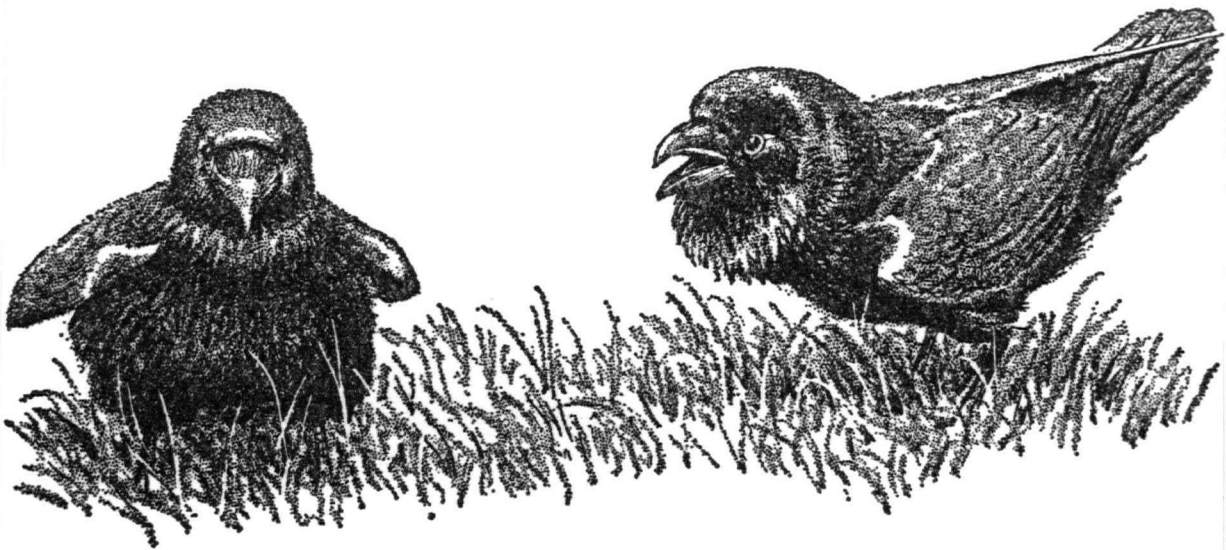


Diagram Q. Male (right) imposing to female (left) in submission.

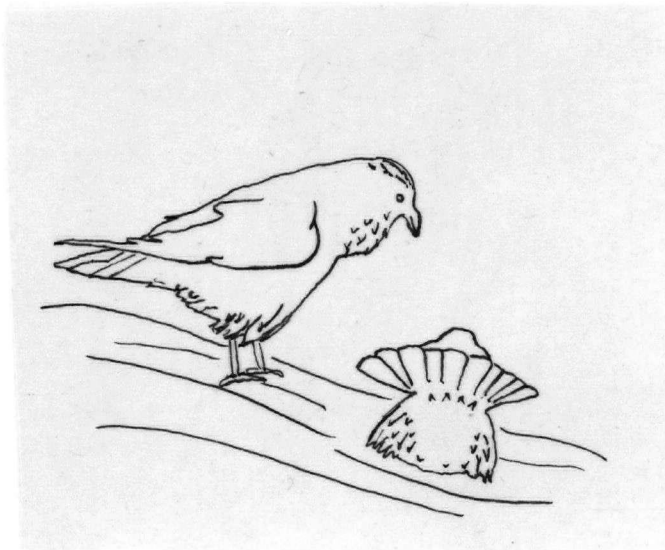


Diagram R. Female (right) in sexual submission; tail up, wings down.

The male response is an acute horizontal one with a partially spread tail above the horizontal plane, and spread wings. He flashes his nictitating membrane while emitting a call (Kroo yoo yoo, (Gwinner in Goodwin, 1976:143), or Chrujuju (Lorenz, 1952:31)). He flattens his feathers, becoming completely sleek, and holds his beak either forwards or downwards, and will either mate with the female, or taper the display by assuming the female pre-copulatory posture. (Goodwin, 1976:143)

Submissive behavior other than that of sexual submission is expressed by a low crouching or squatting posture with sleek plumage, with the head and neck drawn back, and the beak held either towards but lower than that of the dominant bird, or off to one side. Figure 22 clearly expresses these physical attributes of the submissive attitude. It is immediately striking because of the low crouch-



Figure 22. Raven helmet, wood.

ed position with the low dropped wing, the outward spread from the shoulder, and the lifted spread tail (see D3 on Graph 1, p.79). This rendering of the raven certainly is expressive of a submissive display, for all the typical attributes are depicted. While the head and neck are definitely not drawn back, they are demonstratively reaching forward as in an imposing or calling gesture (as in Figure 16). This depiction of the neck and head position could be more the gesture of the submissive bird looking toward the dominant bird, but in a lower position, (as expressed in Diagram S).

In summary of the submissive display then, the following attributes are expressive of this behavior: the crouched posture (3/4), the head and beak drawn close to the body or downward (2/4), the wing outward and down (2/4), and the tail spread and held up (3/4). Submission often develops from a defensive position, and can at one level be seen as an extreme form of defense position, yet definitely of a distinct attitude of submission. Again, then, it is in part a matter of degree which distinguishes the submissive position from that of defense (as it was also realized between demonstrative-aggressive behavior in relation to the imposing attitude).

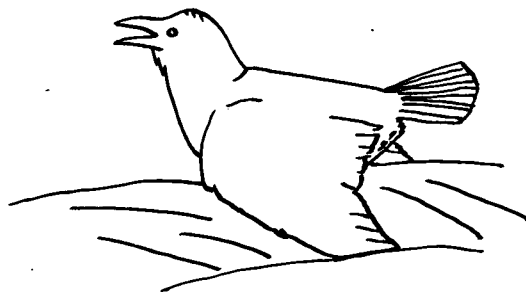


Diagram S. Submissive raven: wings down head toward dominant bird.

GRAPH 1.

	IMPOSING												DEFENSIVE-											
	A				B				C				D				E				F			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4	5	6
EARS	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X												
HEAD FEATHERS RUFLIED	X	X	X	X						X	X	X												
FLATTENED																								
THROAT LANGUETS	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X												
FLASHING							X		X															
HUMP	X	X									X													
PANTS	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X												
TAIL SPREAD			X		X	X																		
UP						X																		
DOWN	X	X					X	X			X													
WINGS OUT	X	X	X	X					X		X	X												
SPREAD																								
BACK				X				X	X															
FOREWARD																								
UP					X	X	X	X			X	X												
DOWN																								
LATERAL	X	X		X	X																			
FLATTENED							X																	
CROSSED											X													
MOVING																								
HEAD HIGH	X	X											X											
FOREWARD	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X												
LOW											X	X												
DOWNWARD											X	X												
BOWING		X	X																					
TURNED UPWARD													X											
DRAWN BACK																								
BEAK																								
OPEN											X													
UPWARD													X											
DOWNWARD											X	X												
FOREWARD											X	X												
SNAPPING											X													
BRISTLES																								
RIDGE																								
TONGUE																								
EYE																								
ANGLED																								
NICTITATING	X	X		X			X		X		X	X												
POSITION HORIZONTAL	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X												
LOW																								
UPRIGHT		X	X							X														
CROUCHED																								
UPSIDE DOWN							X																	
FLYING							X																	

GRAPH 1: PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES OF BEHAVIOR DISPLAYS

GRAPH 2

A IMP. B D.A. C-D-T-Ds

FIGS: 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22

	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
EARS	X	X	X	X					X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
HEAD FEATHERS RUFFLED																X	X	X		
FLATTENED																				
THROAT LANCETS					X															
FLASHING																				
HUMP																				
PANTS																				
TAIL SPREAD	X			X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X			X		X
UP													X	X			X			X
DOWN																		X		
WINGS OUT	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
SPREAD	X	X												X			X			
BACK	X			X	X						X	X	X							
FOREWARD						X	X	X	X	X										
UP	X																			
DOWN																X	X			X
LATERAL				X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X		X			X
FLATTENED																				
CROSSED																				
MOVING																				
HEAD HIGH		X																		
FOREWARD	X											X	X	X	X		X			
LOW																				
DOWNWARD																				
BOWING																				
TURNED UPWARD																		X	X	
DRAWN BACK												X	X							
BEAK	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
OPEN		X	X								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
UPWARD													X							
DOWNWARD																				
FOREWARD	X										X	X	X	X			X			
SNAPPING																				
BRISTLES			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					X	X			X	
RIDGE	X	X								X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	
TONGUE	X	X											X							
EYE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
ANGLED				X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X
NICTITATING												X			X					
POSITION HORIZONTAL	X			X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X				X		
LOW																			X	X
UPRIGHT																X	X			
CROUCHED														X				X	X	
UPSIDE DOWN																				
FLYING	X											X								

GRAPH 2: ATTRIBUTES OF RAVEN IN MATERIAL REPRESENTATIONS

In looking at Graph 1, it becomes evident that recurring attributes of the raven's physical behaviors can be recognized as characteristically expressive of a particular attitude, not only in themselves but in relation to each other. The following is a summary of some of the most outstanding of them.

One of the broader observations is that the two attitudes of domination - A. Imposing and B. Demonstrative-aggressive - incorporate a greater range of possible attribute variations and behavioral expression. They both employed attention-catching displays of feathers, such as flared throat lancets (sometimes flashing), fluffed head and body feathers, and spread and stretched wings and tail. They were combined in differing ways to accentuate physical size and reinforce the impression of aggression or domination. Feathers were generally not relaxed but in some way tensed (ie: fluffed), erected or spread (except for the one instance when the feathers were specifically 'flattened' which could be regarded as another expression of tension). The throat lancets were displayed in many of the dominating attitudes, but never in either the Defensive-threat or Submissive positions. Upright posture alone (to be distinguished from the 'bowing' display which alternates between upright and a low horizontal dipping or bowing (see A2 and A3)) and clearly indicates dominance and aggression. The head, neck and beak stretched outward and forward is a distinctly dominant display signal (A and B), and is sometimes accompanied by the

7. When (+) or (-) accompany an "x" on the graph, it indicates "more" or "less" accentuated than what was observed to be 'normal' (as recorded by Brown). To spare unnecessary detail, redundant terms such as "beak closed" as well as "beak open" were omitted. If the

flashing of the nictitating membrane (the nictitating membrane and the throat lancets were consistently associated, see A1, 2, 7 & 9).

In the non-dominating display - (C) Defensive-Threat and the (D) Submissive - the overall position was low and/or crouched with the neck, head and beak a central signal of the attitude. The neck was often drawn back and low, and/or the head was turned upwards toward the more dominant bird (as was seen in Diagram S and Figure 22). The beak was often held open as a warning in defense against the dominating or imposing bird, or to the side or downward in a completely submissive attitude. The only sign of aggression in either of these two displays was in some defensive threats where a forward-looking, widely-opened beak, sometimes with 'snapping', signalled to an aggressive or more dominant bird. Generally these two displays were characterized by low positions with a low beak position even if it was turned upward.

Briefly, then, a list of the fundamental attributes of each attitude will be helpful (see the full listing of each display of all four behaviors in Appendix B, p.132-137.)

Imposing: ears
lancets
wings outward
head and beak forward
nictitating membrane

Demonstrative-Aggressive:
ears and head feathers
wings out and up
head and beak forward-
downward

Defensive-Threat:
crouched/horizontal
beak open, turned upward
sleek feathers

Submissive:
crouched
head and beak close to
body
wings downward
tail spread and up

7.(con't) beak was not marked as "open" then it can be assumed that it was closed. In the case where the head feathers were recorded as "flattened", this is not the same as normally relaxed and smooth carrying of the feathers which can otherwise be assumed.

Upon looking at Graph 2, one of the most striking features is the recurrence of the eye and beak elements, both of which have often been accentuated (+). The wings and tail and head are the three most expressive parts of the body, over and above the feather features, such as the throat lancets, the hump, and the pants, which were not existent in the material expressions. It is significant that the one feather feature which was prominent was the 'ears' which were also recorded as important by their recurrence in the displays in Graph 1. The ears were seen in the material depictions in Graph 2 to be expressive of dominant attitudes, Imposing and Demonstrative-Aggressive, and not of the Defensive-Threat (#21) or the Submissive (#22) displays which is consistent with their appearance in the graphing of the natural physical attributes of these displays in Graph 1.

The head, wings and tail were variable in both graphs, but certainly indicative of the differing attitude displays. For example the dropped wing of Figure 22, the helmet, was one of the key physical signals of the submissive display (see D3 on Graph 1). There was more flexibility of the wing positions in the other three attitudes of the material expressions as there was in the natural displays. Figure 21 was consistent with the recordings of Defensive-Threat displays on Graph 1 in that no particular wing, tail or feather display was noticeable, because it was the crouched position and the head and beak (turned upward, open) which were primarily expressive of the attitude.

Although the physical attributes of the raven positions were represented consistently with the natural displays, certain attri-

butes were emphasized, most notably, the head of the raven, and specifically his eyes and beak were accentuated. The differing positions of the head, and the way in which it was so often depicted in the objects as disproportionately large and clearly detailed in the beak and eye elements, indicated its relative importance. As it was emphasized in the descriptive sections of each behavioral attitude, the position of the head was reflective of the 'mood' of the bird. The forward-stretched head and beak (ie: Graph 2, # 15, 16, 17, and 20) expressed dominant attitudes, and a less forward upward-turned head and beak indicated defense or submission. The way in which the head was positioned necessarily determined the position of the beak and eye which were seen to be emphasized in the material representations of the raven.⁸

Beyond the direct one-to-one correlations of the physical attributes of the natural bird raven and the material elements that depict them, there has been seen in this Section 2 another dimension of depicting the quality of the behavior of the raven. It has been learned that the raven exhibits various combinations of physical attributes in expressing his attitude in display, all of which are more or less predictable (ie: ears, spread wings, head high...) and common to all ravens. Beyond this, however, because the raven is an exceedingly intelligent bird and much of its behavior is learned (not innate) and thus idiosyncratic (recalling too that pair relationships are the most predominant in the raven's behavior), there exists a whole range of behavioral expressions which are not necessarily common to all ravens, and are not predicatable but plastic

8. See Appendix C for computer analysis of the raven's behavioral display attitudes.

and highly individualistic. So whereas the physical attributes are recognizable and constant, the range of possible behaviors manifested and expressed by differing combinations of the attributes, are variable and non-predictable.

It seems that the depictions of the raven particularly in Section 2 (most of which were three-dimensional) did go beyond the one-to-one correspondence of the physical parts (and thus the mere implication of behaviors), to a somewhat more comprehensive expression of the movement and behavior exhibited in the displays. Thus, they are not simply 'depictions', but also 'expressions' which convey to some extent the 'sense' of the display. Think, for example, of the way in which the raven is hovering over the sculpin on the helmet (Figure 20); there is some dimension of the behavioral expression captured there. It is not that the combination of physical components are depicted, but that some 'sense' of the overall expression of the raven's behavior (in part due to the three-dimensional effect) is realized in the form. Figure 16, the 'calling' raven, also conveyed a 'sense' of movement and tense vibration as compared to Figure 19, the upright raven tattoo, of two-dimensional depiction also of a calling raven (indicated by the vibrating tongue) but which somehow remained relatively static. Certainly that particular tattoo achieved a suggestion of calling and an active raven in a way that Figures 4 ('split' raven) and 5 (blanket-border raven) could not, and yet in relation to Figure 16 it still lacked the 'alive' quality.

This dimension of behavior will be further realized when looking

at the illustrations in Section 3, all of which in some way focus on the head of the raven, particularly the beak and the eye which thus far seem to have been the most essential components of the raven's expressive behavior. These material representations of the raven will be considered in the light of ethnographic and zoological dimensions of the Raven/raven.

3: THE BEAK, EYE AND VOICE OF THE RAVEN
IN HAIDA MATERIAL REPRESENTATIONS

It has become by now abundantly clear that the beak of the raven is the central expressive element of his attitudes and manifested behaviors, as seen in the foregoing material forms of the bird. Indeed, not only in his natural biological existence but also as the mythical personality in the Haida culture, is the raven's beak of utmost practical and symbolic importance. This section will study more closely these three dimensions of the raven's beak.

The raven's beak is at one and the same time a formidable weapon of offense and defense with strong cutting edges and a slightly hooked sharp tip, and also a versatile tool for manipulating all kinds of food and objects. In the Haida myth cycle of Raven's travels is Raven's beak also an important tool and symbol, being certainly indispensable in bringing about his wants. Raven's (Nañkî'lsLas) entire cycle of adventures began with his flight up into the sky in the form of the bird raven and stuck his beak into the clouds to reach sky-country where he caused himself to be born:

...unable to find a foothold; and at last, looking
at the neighbouring sky, he became fascinated with it.
Then he ran his beak into it and climbed up...
(Swanton, 1905a:73)

Having arrived in sky-country, Raven began his travels by crawling into the skin of the chief's daughter's child.

Another story reveals a different act than that recorded above, wherein Raven flies down from the sky, pierces his uncle's house

and then 'becomes';

...he looked down...The smoke of his uncle's house
looked pleasing...After he had flown for a while he ran
his beak into it from above, crying as he did so, "G.ao."
...He then came what he had been before...

(Ibid.:122)

Thus, the Raven's beak enables him to 'cause himself to be born'
and to 'become' or transform himself at will. Many references to
the mythological Raven's beak recur, and thereby emphasize its
importance as a tool which manipulates 'things' and enables the
Raven to manipulate events of the world and its people (Raven
the trickster-transformer). The large size of Raven's beak is
conspicuous in nature (see Diagram T) and is referred to in the
Haida ethnographical accounts. Newcombe recorded in his "Notes"
Haida Chief Edensa's account of the origin of the chief's raven



Diagram T.

rattle, in which he said:

...the chief saw a bird swimming in the sea, with a long beak something like a raven's... (#4a:1)

The length of the beak was emphasized, and the statement indicates that the raven's beak was a constant symbol with which others could be compared. Figure 23 also emphasize the prominence of the raven's beak in yet another way. This Figure illustrates one of the myths of Raven who, in the form of a halibut lost his beak when trying to steal bait from the hooks of the halibut fishermen. At the top of the spoon handle the raven's beak can be seen with the human head (a) and in the middle the raven is inside the halibut (b) and at the bottom Raven's beak is shown hanging down from the man's bottom lip (a woman's labretted lip). Thus as a result of his trickery, Raven lost his beak. This spoon handle implies a few things about the Raven. Firstly, it carefully emphasizes his beak as a formidable entity, being at least twice as large at the base of the handle than at the top (facilitated in part, certainly, by the natural shape of the horn, but also definitely a result of a preconceived form and design). Also it conveys the trickster dimension of the Raven who gets himself into trouble by attempting rascally tricks, and also his transformational capacities in that he is man-raven and halibut-raven. It was Raven's beak which enabled him 'to become' as he had been before and in this object it is the raven's beak which enables him to transform himself into other animals or people, or to be both at the same time. There is a visual trick in the bottom beak of the spoon handle, the 'nostril's' defining lines merging with the beak rim

which creates, in effect, what appears to be the back part of an eyesocket which is further developed by the simple ovoid inside the nostril. Thus, in the raven's beak exists both a nostril and an eye. This relationship between the raven's beak and his eye is further developed throughout this section.



Figure 23. Raven-halibut spoon handle.

A simplified depiction of Raven's beak is seen in Raven-Fin, about which Swanton recorded that it

represents the killer-whale with a raven-beak at the end of its dorsal fin, or Raven-Fin (Tc'iliā'las).
(1905a:142)

That statement equates Raven with his beak; thus his beak is a prime symbol of his entity as Raven. In another source:

...a reef on the west coast of Graham Island appears to the natives like a raven's beak standing up, and the being dwelling there came to be thought of as a killer-whale with a raven's beak upon the end of its dorsal fin. This was Raven-Fin (Tc'iliā'las). (Ibid.:18)

It was the highest ranking of the killer whale chiefs who was thought to have lived under the Raven's beak.

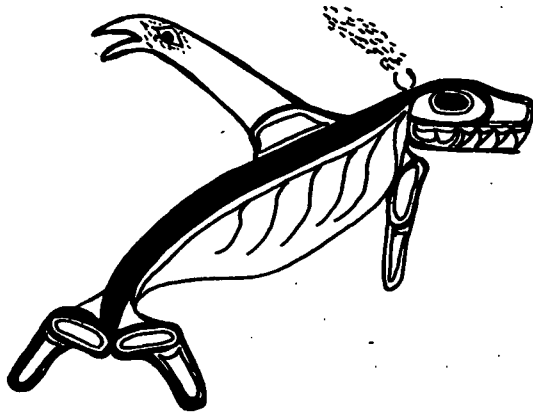


Figure 24, Raven-Fin (Tc'iliā'las).

Here the raven of Raven-Fin is signified merely by his opened beak and and eye within it. This simplified tattoo merits acknowledgement, for while no effort has been made to distinguish between the head and the beak (the beak is the head), the entire projection

from the whale's back (while at the same time being a fin) is shown as a beak shape, and yet the presence of the eye suggests that it is also Raven's head. That the head of Raven is shaped like his beak is a strong statement, represented in a simple tattoo, of the relationship between the raven's head and beak, and of the eye and beak. Again, the emphasis on the raven's beak and his eye can not be overlooked.

Figure 25 is at this point an instructive depiction of the raven. Again the head is constituted almost entirely by his beak and eye. The proportion of the beak to head is not unnaturally represented (see Diagram U) and yet through the detail and careful sculptural work is highly emphasized.



Diagram U.
Raven's
beak/head.

Figure 25. Raven ladle.

Figure 25 is a ceremonial ladle the entire handle of which is formed by the raven's head, and the bowl being his body. The forms are deeply sculptured, with concaved curves accentuating the forms of the head, simulating the natural space relation between the eye and beak. The beak is a thick and solid projection (again as is the natural state; Diagram U), with the mandibles designated as closed by a deep line, and the two 'rims' of the mandibles delineated by a defining line, the top one of which merges into the full shape of the nostril. The similarity in the proportions of both Figure 25 and Diagram U, the contrived and the natural, is striking. The form of the rounded beak 'rim' corner (where the two mandibles meet under the eye) is depicted very accurately to the natural shape developing the 'flared' or swollen outward pronouncement from the cheek. (also clearly seen in Diagram T). When this ladle is seen from the front perspective, (as in Figure 26) the widening of the rim corners, or conversely the gradual tapering of the beak towards the tip can clearly be seen.

Both the Raven-Fin and the raven ladle bring about another important aspect of the Raven/raven. One can hardly discuss the significance of the raven's beak without at the same time considering two integrally related attributes: the raven's eye and his voice. Firstly the relationship between the beak and the eye should be understood.

It is clear that the raven's beak is not only functional in the sense of its utility as a tool, but it is also reflective of his mood either in a display or in response to another raven. It can

be an affectionate connection between two ravens engaged in "allo-preening" or "billing", both of which strengthen and secure pair-bonding. The beak can also be employed in "beak-snapping", as an antagonistic expression for example between two competing males, and it can strike a deadly blow to an enemy or food kill.

As well as being a functional tool, the raven's beak also transmits part of the visual message in a display posture. How and where it is placed demonstrates in large part the 'attitude' of the displaying raven. For example, as it was learned in the Defensive-Threat posture, the raven held his beak open to varying degrees according to how intense the threat or defense was (see for example chart listing (Appendix B) C1, the "Antagonistic Kaaa"). In a submissive posture, the raven will hold his beak either to one side or downwards so that it is below the level of that of the dominant bird, whereupon a slight raising of the beak would be a signal to 'keep your distance'. which would be accompanied by other signals to constitute the entire display. A widely opened beak is definitely a threat signal, and if coupled with "beak-snapping" would constitute one of the strongest aggressive displays.

Thus it is obvious that the position of the eye is in large part predetermined by the position of the beak. However, within each position the eye has a certain range of movement in the eye-socket itself. It is important to realize the physiological positioning of the raven's eyes which are not set completely to the extreme outside of the head, but slightly more forwards towards the 'front-side' with the eyeball actually angling inwards toward the

the beak (see Diagram U and V). Thus the distance between the eyes near the beak is narrower than that at the extreme outward points at the back portion of the eyeball. This gives the raven the benefit of both 'front' and 'side' vision, facilitating a greater range of sight: that of the panoramic perspective, and also that of sharp detailed focus on a particular object directly in front of him.

There are more subtle characteristics of the ravens' eyes:

The eyes are important indicators of mood and intention in the Raven as in man. Captive ravens often respond at once to a friendly, intimidating, or aggressive look with appropriate calls or gestures. Gwinner makes the point that although it is difficult to define differences of the eye expression even people not at all familiar with ravens can tell at once whether the bird's look is hostile, appeasing, or friendly. All that can be said in written description is that in hostile contexts the eyelids tend to be widely open and the pupils dilated, in friendly contexts the eyelids to be slightly closed and the pupils somewhat contracted. (Goodwin, 1976:144)

Smith indicated in the telling of his experiences with his raven who liked to clown and elicit laughter from his human friends, but could not laugh as humans did at his own self: "It was almost the only human achievement that he did not attempt...his eye showed that he knew it all." (1909:171)



Diagram V. Raven's eye-to-beak space relation.

Figure 26 is a more detailed look at the same ladle seen in Figure 25. It impresses some of those characteristics discussed about the eye of the raven. The head, first of all, is distinguished and defined by the deep line which curves around behind the eye and cheek area. This ladle generally is sculptured in a style which conveys a sense of 'aliveness', and represents very accurately the real proportions and space relations of the physical features of the raven's head. The bold rounded, almost 'full' lines of the beak, eye, cheek and brow are distinct. The angling of the eyes towards the beak, the full wide corners of the mandibles, and the convex tapering of the beak towards the tip are all well developed. These features are more easily realized if seen in relation to a similar yet completely individual rendering of the raven's head. Figure 27 has been included for the exercise of such a comparison. It too is a bold and uncomplicated representation as is the ladle, but works with sharper lines and more angular forms than does the ladle which is formed by flowing rounded lines and curves. Some 'sense' of the attitude of the raven is conceived in each one of these objects. The raven of the ladle does not show angular projected ears as does the forehead mask and its beak is closed, not open with lines accentuating the 'pulled back' tension of a perhaps calling beak. The ladle shows 'soft' lines and curved forms, the latter shows definite and geometric elements, and yet each one is an enlightening and accurate representation of the natural attributes of the raven. It seems that the ladle conveys the passive, non-assertive attitude of the raven, while the mask demonstrates a dominating active and aggressive raven.



Figure 26. Raven ladle.

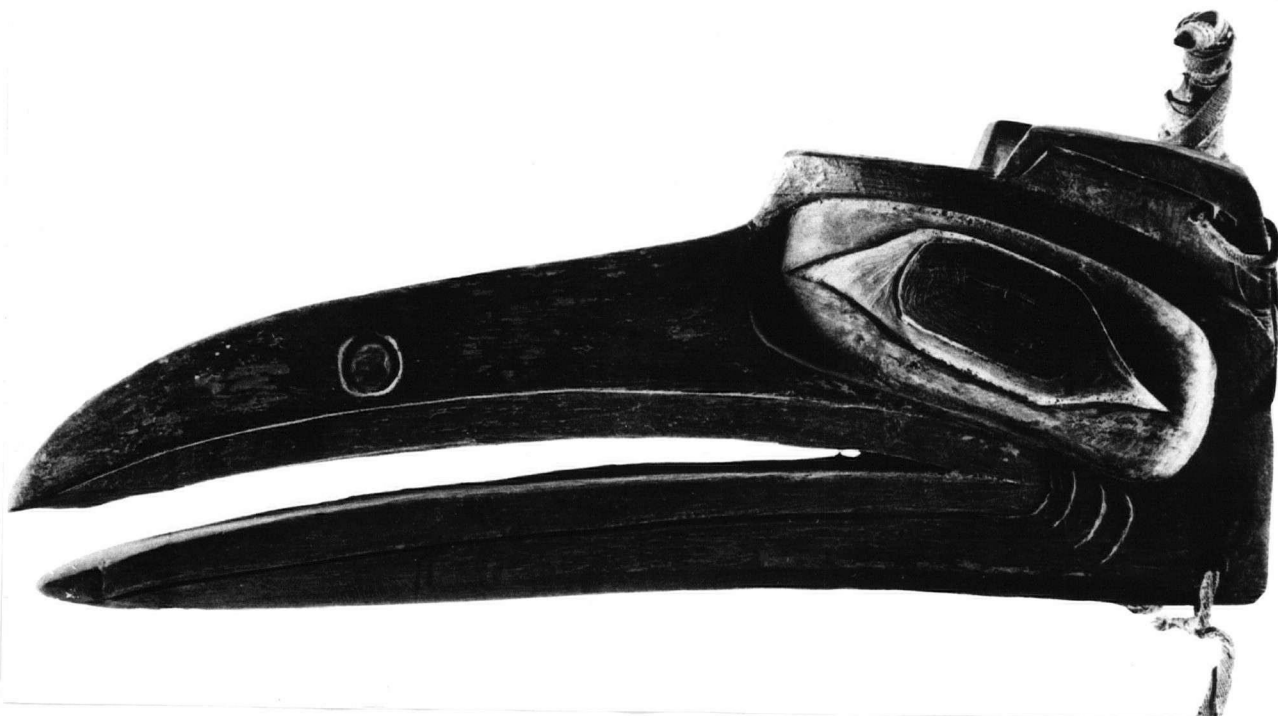


Figure 27. Raven forehead mask.

It seems that the eyes of both Figures 26 and 27 were expressive of the 'speaking' quality of the raven's eyes discussed by Goodwin; the way in which they were carved certainly extended some message beyond their mere existence. There is a peculiar twist to the understanding of the eye of the raven. It has been learned that the raven not only 'reads' the expression of his fellow ravens' and man's eyes, but also directs his own mood out through his eyes. He holds a high respect for the eye of both his raven and human friends, as Lorenz reported of his raven friend " (he) will no more think of pecking at your eye than he will at that of one of his own kind." (1952:189)

While the raven has an obvious respect for the eye as a transmitter and receiver of mood and messages, he also recognizes its vulnerability and will exploit that to his fullest advantage, for example when it becomes his point of attack in killing an animal. One instance tells about the attack of several ravens after a deer: "The eyes are the first parts attacked and are generally speedily plucked out and the poor animal will flounder about until it kills itself." (Kumlien in Bent, 1946:194) Several reports tell of the raven attacking the eyes: "Ravens...are destructive to lambs for they peck out their eyes." (Raine, 1892:132); and when a raven finds a dead sheep, it "pecks out the eye and part of the tongue and devours them" (Smith, 1909:98). Smith concludes from his observations that

His method is always the same, and has been noticed to be so from the earliest times. He goes straight at the eye, which one blow from his powerful beak will destroy.
(Ibid.:96)

One learns when reading through the Haida ethnographic literature and the myth cycles that several references are made to the Raven pecking out eyes, which is in the light of his natural behaviors not a surprising act. One important reference is when, shortly after Raven caused himself to be born, and having stayed in the sky chief's house for only a short time, he was prompted by hunger to sneak out of the house for four nights in succession to peck out the right eye from every person in the four out of five rows of the town, and eat them.⁸ One cannot disregard that it was hunger that ^{motivated} raven to eat the eyes of the Haida people.

One last feature of the 'eye issue' of the raven which is perhaps integral to a more complete understanding is his flashing of the nictitating membrane over his eye at peculiar moments of display. This flashing renders him momentarily blinded, and increasingly 'whitens' his eye with mounting excitement. For example, at an intense and climatic moment in courtship, just before possible mating, both the male and female hold the membrane over their eyes for the duration of several seconds (Goodwin, 1976:143). Lorenz remarked that the membrane "...suddenly looks white, especially if the excitement increases. It seems strange that the bird should render himself blind in this manner at the very moment when he is preparing to be so active." (1952:31)

With this dimension of the raven's behavior manifested in his eye, it is thought-provoking at this point to look at Figures 28, 29 and 30, which are not merely 'depictions' of the structural

8. Recorded in Newcombe's Notebooks #46, Provincial Archives, Victoria, B.C. This flood story was told to Newcombe by Henry Moody, dated December 23, 1903.

features of the raven's eye and beak. They imply active behavior.



Figure 28. Raven mask.



Figure 29. Raven mask.

This mask was collected by C.F. Newcombe in Masset, 1911.

At first glance Figures 28 and 29 appear to be duplicates. They are except for one difference - the eye in 28 shows a leather flap pulled down which reveals a black ovoid pupil, and the eye in 29 shows the leather flap pulled up over the black pupil which reveals a red pupil. For what reason would extra thought and effort be expended on creating this flap which was controlled by strings by the person who danced with this mask? The open/close eyes plus the snapping beak in a dance must have created quite a dramatic effect. But are they open/close eyes? If so, one must wonder why the entire eye 'white' was painted around the 'closed' red pupil. If a truly closed eye was to be shown, would not an all-black eye be more convincing, considering that dances were probably in darkness around firelight? The red eye in firelight would not show up very much, and the specific impression of these details of this mask's eyes is that it was not the open/close aspect of the raven's eyes that was desired. With the knowledge of the raven's nictitating membrane activity, one cannot help but associate that behavior with the peculiar eyes of this mask. When a raven in nature flashes a very white eye (membrane) against his otherwise totally black self, the contrast effects quite an impression. The time at which such a 'flash' happens is one of heightened excitement and tension. Perhaps this mask wants to convey just that climatic moment in the context of dance, while at the same time 'snapping' the beak opened and closed rapidly. In the raven's natural behavior the combination of these two

activities effects one of the most demonstrative and aggressive behaviors (see B3 on Graph 1). It is also indicative that ears^{and head feathers} are accentuated on this mask, again an attribute associational with imposing and aggressive behaviors, never employed in non-aggressive displays.

Figure 30 enables one to see the natural widening of the beak as it extends toward the head from its tip, swelling into the corners of the cheek area (as was seen so naturally depicted in Figure 26). Note also the concave sides of the lower mandible which follow the curve of the beak. The beak is shown to be relatively short (extremely long and heavy masks were difficult for one dancer to manoeuvre) and deep. The relation of depth of the lower mandible to the upper mandible is true to the natural structure. The relation of the eye position to the beak is well defined, with the eye angling inwards^{to} the base of the beak; Thus this mask while remaining true to the natural structures of the raven's head also, through the possible action of the beak and the eyes, simulates the active expression of mood and attitude.

The second significant aspect of the beak which is essential to the understanding of this bird is the voice. It should be recognized that in each rendering of the raven seen, an opened beak could be meant to imply a calling voice; for how else can the voice which is so important a characteristic of the communicatory behavior be depicted? It has been seen, for example in Figure 19, that a 'vibrating' tongue has perhaps indicated a calling raven, and in Figure 27, the lines behind the beak's rim corners perhaps stress



Figure 30. Raven mask.

the physical tension of a calling beak. However, in so many of the depictions throughout this study, the raven has been represented with an opened beak, the possibility of which could be the calling voice.

The voice of the raven has been recognized as unique in its versatility and mimicry. "His voice is so human that it has often been mistaken for a man's" wrote Smith in 1909 (159). The raven has been described as that "loquacious" bird with a complex repertoire facilitated physiologically by a well developed syringeal musculature and which is sophisticated in its complexity because of his intelligence and highly evolved social organization.(Brown) Brown referred to Gwinner's work (1964) in suggesting that per-

haps the reason that the raven incorporates a wider range of vocal expression than for instance the crow, is due to the "need for increased acoustic communication in this behaviorally complex species, especially in view of the plasticity and elasticity of instinctive behavior patterns." (1974:10) It is significant at this point to realize the degree to which the raven's vocal capacities are learned. Kranmer observed that:

...ravens reared without exposure to experienced ravens fail to develop their entire vocal repertoire, while others reared with adults develop all calls.
(in Brown, 1974:126)

Because of the learning process there is much individual variation used in conjunction with innate calls. Gwinner observed that raven pairs use variations of innate calls and learned sounds from other sources to constitute a specific signal between them, which

...may function to facilitate immediate recognition at a distance as well as, presumably, to enhance the emotional bond between them. (in Goodwin, 1976:142)

Gwinner reported in another study of a pair of ravens that they did in fact express rudimentary language roots:

The male (raven) imitated the barking of a dog and the female the gobbling of turkeys. When the male escaped on two occasions, the female barked and the male returned. When the female was transferred to another aviary, the male sat permanently in the corner of the cage from which he could catch a glimpse of her aviary and gobbled like a turkey. (in Koeler, 1952:90)

It is significant, surely, that this bird of all birds who has been in many cultures over centuries recognized for his multi-vocal capacities, is in the Haida culture the culture hero, the personified Raven, called Nañkí'lsLas, translated as "He-whose-

Voice-is-obeyed", "because whatever he told to happen came to pass". (Swanton, 1905a:27) Before he "earned" his name, he was called "The-One-who-is-going-to-be-He-whose-Voice-is-obeyed" (Nañkî'lsLas-in-Potency). (Ibid.) Newcombe reported Moses McKay as saying "This (Xaina pole) belongs to Chief Nañkî'lsLas, "one who makes things happen by his word"." (Notebooks #46, 1903-06)

Indeed the raven's voice is a particularly significant symbol in the Haida world order:

Very early next morning, before daylight had come or the raven had called, the guests began to sing.
(Swanton, 1905a:177)

Very early next morning, before daylight came and the raven called,...they began to sing. They sang until daylight, but when the raven called they stopped and went out.
(Ibid.:178)

Early next day, while it was yet dark...the raven called and day broke.
(Ibid.:180)

The raven's voice clearly symbolizes the distinction between night and day, dark and light, and delineates what activities and events take place within those dichotomies of time. Thus, raven's 'bringing of light' each day, and therefore of time and order is like a re-enactment of the Raven's bringing of primal light from dark:

In the shape of a raven before the world existed, he (Raven) brooded over the intense darkness, until after eons and ages, by the constant flapping of his wings, he beat down the darkness into solid earth...in order to light up the new formed globe he travelled far and wide.
(Deans, "Tales...:24)

Yet before the great flood, and thus before Raven created order, his voice was at that time also symbolic of a distinction, but of a different notion of time than that which accompanied his creation of the Haida world. In a Masset version of the myth of Raven giving

a feast for the supernatural sea-monsters, he called at dawn, and they all became stone. (Swanton, 1905b:316) This was, in a sense, before time, or 'in timelessness', in no time and in no order. It was supernatural time, as symbolized by the quality of stone. The Raven continued to have such an effect on the supernatural beings after the flood when he created natural time. When the raven called at dawn, however, they no longer became stone but merely 'fell' and thereby ceased their supernatural activities:

Supernatural beings always hunted at night, and returned before the raven cried. If they did not succeed in getting back, as soon as they heard it (the raven's cry) they fell down. (Swanton, 1905a:27)

The tale about the ghosts also illustrates the break between the activity of dancing and their 'falling' at the raven's calling at dawn:

One night, when all the people of a certain town near Ninistints country were out hunting, the corpses came out of their grave-boxes, went into the chief's house and began dancing...morning came to dawn, and suddenly the raven cried. At once all the corpses fell; and when the hunters reached home, they found the chief's house full of bones. (Op. Cit.)

Each one of these consequences of the raven's call demonstrates how supernatural beings and events were relegated to their proper place at the appropriate time; in this way the call of raven effected a strict division between natural and supernatural time, day and night, and thereby ordered their respective events. It is interesting that this division effected by the raven's voice, is enacted through 'falling'. The expression "to fall" in Haida idiom means 'to die' (ie: fall off the edge of the earth).⁹ Thus the notions accompanying 'to fall'

9. There are other references to 'falling': Swanton recorded in his notes on the WĀ'ŁGAL potlatch: "The one who was going to be initiated sat waiting in a definite place...When the chief had

do not only seem to imply 'to be out of sight', to be immobile, or perhaps to be frozen in time, but also quite definitely 'to be dead' in other words to cease to exist, at least until the next appropriate period of time within the order enabled the activity to be resumed. Thus, it was the voice of Raven, he who 'had no beginning, neither will (he) have an end' who effects daily the order that he originally created within time. (Deans, "Tales..." :24)

Raven was effective beyond the elements of dark and light, and the system of time. He brought a social and natural order within time, and therefore necessarily he brought life and death.

A supernatural being who lived in one of the five aerial houses, "Wi'git", was considered to be identical with the Raven (Nañki'lsLas).¹⁰ (Swanton 1905a:15) He held authority over the shaman's house, and kept count of every Haida child that was born by first hearing its cry, and then pulling a stick from his collection to predetermine according to its length what the life duration of the child would be.

The line dividing life and death was thought by the Haidas to

9. (con't) ...danced around the fire awhile, he threw feathers upon the novice, and the noise was heard in the chief's body. Then the novice fell flat on the ground, and something made a noise inside of him. When that happened, all the "inspired" said, "So and so fell on the ground." (Swanton 1905a:164)

Again reported in the Dress Spirit Performance: "When they had sung his own spirit-songs for him (the town chief) around the fire awhile, he put the power into one who was going to be inspired and, when his spirit (whistle) sounded, the novice fell on her face. (Ibid.:172)

Once again in the description of the SÍ'KIA potlatch: "These novices were "inspired" by the "good spirit" (s'a'ala) through the medium of the visiting chiefs. They fell to the ground and made the spirit circuit through the town... (Ibid.:176)

10. Wigit is also a Tsimshian word for Raven, meaning "Large Person".

be a thin one; one could easily "fall off" (ie: end his life quickly), as if to 'fall off the edge of the earth', the structure of which they thought of as a flat circle. It seemed, in a symbolic sense, that the Raven's voice which announced day from night, light from dark, and natural and supernatural realms within time, also brought the origin of life to the Haida people, and yet also forewarned their death. A Masset man said:

When there was going to be a death in the village, the raven would call for some time. (Swanton, 1905a:27) ¹¹

and also

when it (raven) ruffled its feathers and made itself look big, a death would soon take place. (Ibid.) ¹²

Each one of these statements indicates that the Haida expected a particular human event to take place as a direct consequence of

11. Boas wrote in the "Cries of the Raven" of the Kwakiutl's belief that the cries of the raven foretold events, and that it was a special man, whose afterbirth had been pecked at by the ravens when he was born, and would understand their cries. Out of the list of calls, the following two were directly associated with death: *gaga ha hgae* - a chief (or somebody else) died. *xagaq xagaq* - a woman is going to die. (1913:606)

12. It is interesting to note the following story of the Makah people, which indicates similar associations of physical behaviors of the raven and the event of healing (giving life). It was told to Swan by Captain John, a Makah chief who had been very ill: Captain John...heard a rustling sound in the air, at which he became frightened and covered his face with his blanket, whereupon a raven alighted within a few feet of him and uttered a hoarse croak. He then peeped through a corner of the blanket and saw the raven with his head erect, its feathers bristled, and a great swelling in its throat. After two or three unsuccessful efforts, it finally threw up a piece of bone about three inches long, then uttering a croak it flew away... It was later realized that the bone was a medicine man sent to Captain John by his guardian spirit, which was true, as he recovered in three days time. (Swan, 1869:63)

specific physical characteristics of the raven (ruffled feathers) and his vocal signals (repeated callings). The futuristic notion of the event of the human death depended on the behavior of the raven; the fact that the happening which the raven forewarned was a death opens up another dimension of the understanding of the Haida conception of the Raven/raven.

Raven is black. His voice is heard and listened to, and it effects responses by the people both in thought and in action. The raven's voice announces life (light) and foretells a death. As Moses McKay said: "Chief Nañkî'lsLas, "one who makes things happen by his word."" (Newcombe, Notebooks #46) Thus, when the raven ruffled his feathers to look 'big', opened his black beak to call the coming of death, he symbolized more to the Haida mind than his mere physical presence could convey to the mind of the uninitiated. His bigness, blackness and 'word' all combined to effect a powerful message.

It is known that raven birds like high places such as a tall cedar or a rock cliff, and therefore although he keeps himself at a spacial distance, the raven is in essence closer than that space through his voice and ominous black stature. In Haida thought, height is associated with power, for example in reference to shamans who upon death go to their own island where the most powerful live at the top and the lesser proportionately lower down. (Swanton, 1905a:37) The raven's ruffled feathers, in effect presenting him as 'big', also indicate power, as is true of the bird's natural physical expressions employing ruffled

feathers to display attitudes of dominance and imposition (refer to Graph 1, p.79). In forewarning death, the raven's physical 'bigness' together with his prophesying voice is integral to the whole message. In Haida thought there are references to bigness being indicative of powerful, an example being inversely implied by the Above-People who were "so small in size that they lacked the necessary power" to help sick people. (Ibid.:15) The raven who can make himself look big in actual size is also big in the symbolic size of time, for he has no beginning or end. And thus when he flies down from the sky to announce the death of a human life, he simultaneously announces that he is not bounded by time, but is the embodiment of timelessness in which he can do what he wills and make things happen by his word. His blackness is also an essential part of his message of his omnipotence and eternal presence. As it was discussed earlier in this study, the raven bird is entirely black but with an iridescent shimmer. His beak, tongue and inside mouth are also black (perhaps his voice is black?). Thus when his voice announces death his blackness which symbolizes his immortality at the same time is associated with death.¹³ Another related example is when The-Spirit-of-Mourning with "her face blackened" and her hair singed would sing songs behind a town where there was to be a death.

Another incident of the raven's beak opening to voice his calling of a natural event was described by Deans:

13. Recall the fact that ravens mate for life and return to the same nesting area each spring. Thus over the generations, and all ravens being all-black and appearing ostensibly the same, the notion of longevity and immortality that are associated with ravens is understandable.

The following method or procedure to obtain a fair wind though not confined in practise to medicine-men, but known to most of the Haidas...An indian fasting, shoots a raven, quickly singes it in the fire, and then going to the edge of the sea, sweeps it four times on the surface in the direction in which the wind is desired. He then throws it behind him, but afterwards picking it up, sets it in a sitting position at the foot of a spruce tree, facing towards the required wind. Propping its beak open with a stick, he then requests a fair wind for a certain number of days, and going away lies down and covers himself up... (1899:124)

It is specifically with his beak opened that the raven is believed to have the power to call upon or conjure the nature elements.

The sitting position is perhaps symbolic of power and respect as it is in the instance when a Haida man dies and his body is "sat up" before being put into the grave-box. (Swanton 1905a:52) It is also significant that at this time of death, the man's friends and relatives "cut their hair close to the head and put pitch on their faces" (ie, make their faces black). (Ibid.)

Thus, in attempting to summarize the radial associations with the raven's beak, one's thought must encompass the knowledge of its natural capacity to carry food to bring life and to kill, and its act of opening to sound its many calls which might conjure up natural elements and announce the breaking of daylight, or forewarn villagers of a death. His beak is a naturally and supernaturally practical tool with which he can therefore 'trick' and 'become' whatever he chooses. With his beak, Raven can cause himself to be born, and with his voice he can 'make things happen by his word'. Thus, when the raven calls at daylight each day, his voice symbolizes for the Haida people their life in their world as they have known it since the time of Nañkî'lsLas.

CHAPTER V

THE HAIDA RAVEN/RAVEN AS SYMBOLIC ANIMAL

In bringing together the array of ideas associated with the Raven/raven, a thought-provoking picture emerges. At another level of thought he goes beyond the overt and direct associations seen in the correlations throughout this study to something of a more sublime symbol of the human condition.

As Willis said of the primary symbolic beast:

The answer (to their supreme symbolic function) is probably to be found in the common relation which all these primary symbols bear to the value-loaded structures of which they are, as it were, projected distillations.
(1974:128)

The idea of "projected distillations" brings to mind Evans-Pritchard's statement that "on the creatures are posited conceptions and sentiments derived from elsewhere other than them." (in Levi-Strauss, 1962:82) Perhaps it is true that as Willis stated, "The meaning of the symbolic animals remains always, like the animal itself, in some measure beyond conscious and rational comprehension." (1974:10), and that the answer if there be one, is found in the self-transcendent state of man in his universe.

After having thought of the Raven/raven throughout this study in his varying dimensions, there does arise to some degree a 'distilled' insight into his bringing of life-meaning or perhaps 'ultimate value' of life to the Haida world.

The stories of Raven related "how matters came into their present condition" (Swanton, 1905a:72); how, after the flood he brought social and natural order to the Haida world. With the help of his wings and his beak, he flew up to the sky and caused himself

to be born, and thereafter to bring light from darkness each day with the word of his voice. The distinction made by raven's voice of night and day, necessarily brings to consciousness the associated dichotomies of the Haida reality. From the "boundless" chaos of flood-time, Raven brought order to the cosmic elements and within the social and natural realms of Haida life. He effected a distinction between natural and supernatural time, and regulated life and death within that order. Thus he formulated structures within time and space within which he himself was not bounded.

As a reflection of the cosmic order created by Raven, the example of the role of a Haida chief in a potlatch initiation ceremony provides insight. The chief was considered to be an "inspired" one, one who was initiated and had knowledge. Those who were uninitiated or 'uninspired' were those who "had a dark face", or a 'stopped-up mind': "Persons who had never been possessed were spoken of as "Those whose minds were stopped up"." (Ibid.:161)

To 'become inspired' was for the uninitiated to join the society and be "possessed" by a spirit. It was the chief who was in the position socially and spiritually to impart the "inspiration" or knowledge to the novices. To hold the powers of "inspiration" was believed, as within the Haida secret societies, to be "bordering on the edge of the supernatural." (in "A Study of Haida Secret Societies":12) Shamans were possessed by supernatural beings, and the spirit of the supernatural being would 'come through' a particular shaman to the people. (Recall Figure 18, a tattoo of Tca'maos, the raven-killer-whale monster, drawn by John Wi'ha. Henry Moody

said in regard to this monster that 'the shamans identified Raven with Tca'maos in some way, stating that when the Tca'maos spoke through them, it was the same as though Raven were speaking through them'. (Swanton, 1905a:142)) Thus, the shaman was diligent in trying to perfect himself in 'cleanliness' to be "clean" almost "like glass" so that the spirit of the supernatural being could enter him easily. (Ibid.:40) The chief in the initiation ceremony almost 'became shamanic', in the sense that he neared the supernatural and had spiritual authority over the "uninspired". Because the chief was "inspired", he could make supernatural power "come through" initiates in a similar way as the shaman could bring the supernatural beings to the people by 'bringing them through' his own self. "Some people almost became shamans", and some people did at particular times, if they were of the appropriate social position, become shamans temporarily:

At the death of a shaman, the shaman's nephew "ran around on top of the house, shaking a rattle and calling in the shaman's supernatural power. Then the "power" was apt to come through him for a short time. He became temporarily a shaman. (Ibid.:53)

The Haida men would, if they were of high rank, strive to become more powerful through fasting, successful hunting, sweat-bathing, all of which oriented him towards becoming "clean" so as to be ready to receive the supernatural spirit's power. By "keeping run of the days", in other words by abiding closely to the regulations (ie: keeping time), a man could attempt to become closer to supernatural power.

This structured order of the differentiations of social rank and spiritual power was indirectly created by Raven as a part of the total order which he effected after having stuck his beak into the sky and causing himself to be born. After bringing light from continual darkness, Raven brought together the extant elements and beings into a natural order of distinct classes and a social order wherein the system of rank, prestige,^{and} reciprocity was set into motion. Time was a necessary component for the continuation of the order within the dark/light, and supernatural/natural dichotomies. Thus, within time and space, supernatural beings, humans and animal beings were all relegated to their respective realms which were to be adhered to so as to maintain the total order of the Haida world-reality. Each entity had its place, and each one had an effect upon the other; the balanced tension between them all was maintained by the intractions between the different realms, and in the observance of specific rituals and regulations. Thus, potlatches, initiations and secret societies were all a part of realizing that reality.

In calling daylight from night each day, the Raven/raven at the same time symbolically called in order from chaos, natural time from supernatural timelessness, 'inspiration' from the 'uninspired' state, and the regulation of events through this establishment of time and space in the Haida universal reality.

When thinking over the ideas and qualities associated with Raven/raven, one comes to ask, 'is Raven an animal, a man or both?', 'or is he perhaps something other than man and animal?'. Swanton wrote of the Haida conception of animal beings:

Every kind of quadruped and bird seems to have a human form and an animal disguise, and each might help or harm men...According to the Haida spirit theory, every animal was, or might be, the embodiment of a being who at his own pleasure could appear in the human form...When speaking generally of supernatural beings, the Haida seem to separate them in mind more sharply from the animals.
(1905a:25)

Certainly it was not an ordinary Raven who survived the flood and 'in the form of a raven' flew up to sky country and stuck his beak in to climb up. This Raven being who possessed both human and bird attributes could change his black feathers for human garments at will.¹

Raven was a hero, a transformer and a trickster. He was both hero and man, and he was revered by the Haida people and jeered for his foolery. As a reflection of the reverence paid to him, Raven was called by the people of the Raven clan at Masset "grandfather". He was listened to carefully by the people "because whatever he told to happen came to pass." (Swanton, 1905a:28) This attitude is reflected in the following Haida songs:

Be careful. Is this you, Grandfather?
Be careful. Is this you, Naŋkí'lsLas?
Take care. This is perhaps the one that touched the sky.²
(Ibid., 1912:9)

The people listened to him carefully, as "Some say that He-whose-Voice

1. Evans-Pritchard wrote of the trickster of the Zande people that they are not distinctly either animal or human, and yet if the Zande are asked, "they will say that they are animals" (1967:25)... "animals acting as persons and persons in animal forms". This paradox is reflected in their language by using the proper animal gender when referring to animals generally, but fluctuating between the animal gender and human pronoun when telling their tales of their trickster, Ture.

was-obeyed was a great man" , and when the first part of his tale, "The Old Man's Story" was being told, the chiefs prevented the young men from laughing. (Ibid., 1905a:28) However, at the point of the story when Raven "assumed the skin of a raven when he did rascally tricks", the men were allowed to laugh. (Ibid.) For it was then the trickster Raven, "always playing tricks upon people, who often tried, but in vain, to catch him, as he was constantly changing his form" (Ibid.:133) Thus, Raven was for the Haida people a hero being, a transformer-creator and a trickster, encompassing the qualities of the bird and the hero and man;

This is why you are a boy
Nañkî'lsLas has become a human being.
(Ibid., 1912:8)

In the song above the Haidas sing that the Raven became after the flood a human being too, and that he created the possibility that a boy might be born to give potlatches, and give property to many people in his house.

Just what does this all mean; what are these all-encompassing qualities of Raven/raven and what did he essentially symbolize to the people?

As Willis wrote that the central symbolic animal of a culture was a distillation of "the way human beings conceived of themselves and the ultimate meaning of their own lives (1974:7), similarly Ricketts said of the North American trickster figure that

2. Another Haida song indicates the reverence for Raven's power: (He) listens for grandfather's wave,¹ He listens for grandfather's wave;

But afterwards he goes along upon grandfather's sea,
stopping every now and then on the way.

1. The "grandfather" here referred to is probably Raven. (Swanton, 1912:22)

...trickster-fixer is the embodiment of a certain mythic apprehension of the nature of man and his place in the cosmos...The trickster is man, according to an archaic intuition, struggling by himself to become what he feels he must become - master of the universe. (1956:336)

Is Raven/raven man's prototype; man's reflection of himself?

Evans-Pritchard wrote of the Zande Trickster "Ture" tales that

the opposite to the ordinary appears in the characters... It is as if we are looking into a distorting mirror, except that they are not distortions. We are really like that... He (Ture) is really ourselves...beneath the layer of consciousness we act as Ture does. (1967:30)

That the trickster is essentially a mirror image of man's essential self was what Willis finally came to at the end of his study, saying that the symbolic animal of a culture had a peculiar capacity to carry this 'supreme symbolic function', to effect a world-transcendent meaning with an involvement of the "whole being" of man, over and above a merely 'intellectual comprehension'. Thus, the symbolic animal was in this way functional in being

...at once close to man and strange to him, both akin to him and unalterably not-man,...able to alternate as objects of human thought, between the metonymic mode and the distanced, analogical mode of the metaphor. (1974:28)

He said that the animal symbol, being both inside and outside man, and both within and yet distinctly outside of and beyond man's society, could therefore symbolize "the duality in the human society and the human self between the real and the ultimate ideal". (Ibid.:9) Thus, the Raven symbolically demonstrates his part in the dualism by his active mediation between opposing situations and states of being (earth and sky; raven and man). Yet at the same time he is not alienated from man in the sense of being an obscure god, but achieves

his goals within his raven-man capacities. Thus, while at one time acting in a clever way, for example 'causing himself to be born', he also blunders as a result of his own foolery, in the example when he lost his beak on the halibut hook (recall Figure 23). He embodies both supernatural and normal 'earthly' characteristics, and yet is capable of being beyond man, and very close to man. Thus, at one level the Raven as trickster behaves in a similar way as does man, and can therefore be understood and identified with by man. Perhaps the Raven trickster is reflective of man's primal self, the 'unsocialized' and 'unconditioned' man before culture's taboos and social constructs moulded him into being what he is today. Radin stated in his study of the North American Trickster figure that as a symbol the trickster

contains within itself the promise of differentiation,
the promise of god and man...for he represents not only
the undifferentiated and distant past, but likewise the
undifferentiated present within every individual...
And so he became and remained everything to every man -
...if we laugh at him, he grins at us. What happens to
him happens to us. (1956:168)

Is Radin's "undifferentiated" past and present that element of chaos in all people, that which is latently there but suppressed in our orderly systems of natural and social interactions? Is it that element in the people which 'bubbles up' to consciousness when the Haidas respond in laughter to the raven stories? That which they laugh at in the trickster is also that same act in themselves. Thus, as mirror of man, the Raven is the symbol which enables man to transcend his self. When he listens in both seriousness and laughter to the Raven tales being told, and watches the Raven mask (recall Figures 28-30) with flashing eyes and a snapping beak, man

experiences transcendence. The myths, dance and song are explanations of the world reality, and man's place in the cosmos. Trickster is man's prototype, and demonstrates to each of the watching people that they are in their mind's eye watching themselves in Raven. Thassen-Thienemann explained

...the process by which one separates these feelings (emotions) from the subjective pole of the self and translates them into an independent objective reality...This reaches the very core of human existence. Man wants to transcend the subjective limitations of his Self and translate subjective experiences into objective realities. Only then can he grasp this part of his inner Self as any part of the world. (1968:128)

Insodoing, man comes to understand himself as a part of his world. He is, in being qualified by the spirit, his symbolic inner reality, compelled to 'know' and then go beyond his worldly reality, and through Raven, he attempts to do just that, almost as if 'testing his limits' of existence in his reality; as if reaching out as far as possible to expand his realm of experience and attempt to understand that experiencing. In seeing himself objectively in Raven, both as an individual self and as a collective self, man does in some sense go beyond self. Raven does, therefore, transform the unknown into the known, the meaningless into the meaningful (Jung in Radin, 1956:196), as he did in the symbolic acts of transforming the chaos of disorder and timelessness into an ordered worldly structure within time. By directly challenging the 'unknownness' of existence, the Raven, and man, attempt to attain that ultimate transcendence - that of immortality; that final conflict of life-existence between man's mortal nature and his desire for immortality. What follows is that philosophical paradox: that recognition that in the face of his desire to be immortal, or 'not to die', man had

to know that it was the Raven who in creating life also necessarily brought death - he announced death with his voice, - and kept immortality for himself; 'he had no beginning, neither will he have an end'. Ricketts resolved this conflict by explaining that there is this unending thought process in the mind which

exists in a tension between the two poles: the acceptance of the world as it is; and the belief that man alone can change the world, even as the trickster did before him. That is to say, this viewpoint acknowledges (even as the trickster is forced to do), that there are limits to the possibilities open to man. (1956:348)

There exists, then, the tension between the "possible" and the "given" (Ibid.). It would seem that the ultimate 'given' would be the gift of immortality, and yet it is the Raven himself who while 'not dying' himself, ordered the life and death cycle within the Haida world. What escape does he offer to the Haida people?

He offers self-transcendence. When the people laugh at Raven they laugh at themselves. He who transformed the meaningless into the meaningful also gave man the ability to laugh at himself, and ultimately, then, at his own death. Death, laughable? Who is Raven fooling? He is not fooling himself, and he is not fooling the Haida people. Perhaps it is just that message that Raven gave to man, laughable death. By laughing at Raven (and therefore at themselves), man is able to come to some balance inside himself in the face of life and death, and also to a larger unity within the social group. It is that tragedy and comedy of the human existence, but to be able to laugh at death outright, Raven gave the people the gift of ultimate acceptance of it, and therefore in a symbolic sense, the true beginning of life. Every time he laughs at Raven, he revitalizes

his individual and collective life. Raven is the symbolic figure of that transcendent quality of man's life; as long as man is willing to look into that mirror, he will see himself. The raven is always there.

In bringing light from darkness, an ordered reality from chaos, Raven created for the Haida people a meaningful and known world-reality from the unknown and meaningless chaos before the order of human life. He effected, then, a balance between the tension of the opposing states of darkness and light, the darkness of the 'uninitiated' mind (a dark face) and the enlightened initiated mind of knowledge, the equilibrium of life and death. Raven did not necessarily combine these states to effect a synthesis, but he existed between them, and thereby created a unity through man's consciousness of the two poles. Raven tricked and he transformed; Raven was both; he existed between the opposing states and qualities of existence within and without the worldly reality. As the cosmic pole of the house (and perhaps that parallel symbol of the cone of the hat), Raven/raven moved between the three cosmic levels - heaven, earth and the underworld - with ease, and enabled man to follow him in his mind (his 'consciousness'), and thus go beyond his own earthly measure.

What more effective symbol of the animal world could there be to express these polarities of human life than the raven bird himself, with his peculiar qualities of physical presence and appearance? Raven, the bird who can spread his black wings and fly into the sky beyond where the human eye can see, and twirl and tumble in effortless control therein. Raven, the bird who is as black as night and can flash the white of light over his eye in a second, he who can open his beak to sound the voice

which calls in the light and life of day (the time of time) and the dark of death. Raven/raven, the natural and mythical being who is both bird and man, the being who ordered the cycles of life and death, and the exchange of man and animals souls within time and space. Raven/raven, the natural and supernatural spirit of the earth and the sky, the symbol of balance between mortal existence and immortal transcendence; Raven/ raven, the metaphor of man beyondman; Raven, he who makes things happen by his word.

APPENDIX A: THE RAVEN: LIFE-CYCLE, PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES AND BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS

The raven belongs to the family Corvidae (Crow family) of the Passerine order (perching birds), and is designated as the species "raven" in the scientific nomenclature by the name corax, which follows the family name Corvus. Of all the corvine species, the raven (Corvus corax) has the widest geographical distribution.

Of the many Corvus species, there are two subspecies which are recognized as being North American: sinatus and principalis. This paper deals specifically with the Northern Raven (Corvus corax principalis), whose range in the Northwest North American continent extends from the Aleutians, northern Alaska, northern Yukon, northwest Mackenzie, throughout the Queen Charlotte Islands, and down to central and southeast British Columbia. (Ridgway, 1959:617)

The Northern Raven differs from the Common or American Raven (Corvus corax sinatus) in that it is a larger bird with a heavier beak and tarsus. However, both subspecies are basically similar in their behaviors and physical characteristics, with some differences due to environment (food availability, nesting sites) and individual variability.

Before focussing on more particular aspects of the raven, it is helpful to understand his annual life cycle. Beginning, then, with the flurry of activity of their courtship displays in the early spring months of February and March, the raven seeks to find a life-time mate. (Harlow, 1922:49; Tyrell, 1945:4) Throughout this time the ravens exhibit more elaborate physical displays, flight patterns

and vocal expressions. Once they have paired they will assiduously defend the territory around their nesting site while they collect materials for the building of their nest. Their nest is built high up either on a rock cliff or a conifer, either site being strategically chosen for protection.¹ The actual building of the nest is accomplished by the female, which when completed is a large structure secured at its base with heavy sticks or bones with mud, with an inside cup of soft lining (deer hair, moss, bark, or wool), and a rim stretching from three to four feet across. Three to seven days elapse before the female begins to lay her clutch of three to seven eggs. They are incubated primarily by her for the duration of three weeks, while she is fed by the male. Both parent birds are responsible for the protecting and feeding of the young with regurgitated food for approximately four weeks. They are very defensive of the young and will chase away intruders in flight while striking at them with their beaks. (Harlow, 1922:410)

The young hatch as awkward pink-skinned things unable to utter but a small single sound. However, within the first week they open their eyes and grow pinfeathers and disproportionately large beaks and feet. (Tyrrell, 1945:6) They develop their full immature plumage within four weeks in the nest. The wing and tail feathers are a shining black with green and purple highlights as is adult plumage, but the head and body feathers remain the dull brown-black characteristic of the immature plumage. Once their wing

1. For detailed information on the entire procedure of courtship, nest-building, egg-laying and incubation, and the rearing of the young, see Harlow's "The Breeding Habits of the Northern Raven in Pennsylvania", in The Auk, Vol. XXXIX No. 3, 1922: 399-410.

and tail feathers are full, they are ready to fly from the nest which they do, but remain with their parents who continue to feed and protect them for some time. It is four years before the young become fully matured adults, and at this time too their pink mouth rim and lining will have become completely black as is the rest of their body. The eyes too, which are a light blue in juvenile years, become a dark brown-black with adulthood. Ravens show sexual responses long before they are capable of reproduction, for example when the female assumes a pre-copulatory position. (Lorenz, 1952:27)

The whole family moults their plumage throughout the summer months; the adults losing their primary wing feathers symmetrically which ensures a maintenance of balance in distance and everyday flying.

There is little information concerning the winter activities of the Northern Raven. Since they are year-round residents, they must indulge in some particular winter behavior patterns; however little, in relation to the other aspects of the raven's life, is recorded. Coombes observed that ravens do not flock in the daytime throughout the winter months from January to March for the purposes of food, indicating that perhaps there is a social purpose in the gathering. (1948) Brown observed that through the non-breeding portion of the yearly cycle, both adults and non-breeding birds would congregate. (1974:103) They return to their same nesting areas and often nest in the same nest in the following spring.

The physical attributes of the raven have been dealt with earlier in this study, however some further points can be covered here. The blackness of the raven's feathering is a result of the

dark melanin pigment which enables the raven to absorb solar energy more readily than do birds with lighter coloured feathers, and thereby maintain more efficiently a constant body heat in cold habitats where sunlight is often of low intensity. (Heppner, 1970) Black is easily seen against backgrounds and lends to an easy 'sighting' from the distance which can be a social advantage. (Goodwin, 1976:14)

The lanceolate feathers which are developed only with mature plumage are with "choking", prime examples of what he termed "'releasers', namely instinctive behavior patterns which have the sole biological purpose of releasing a corresponding instinctive pattern in a partner of the same species." (Lorenz, 1952:32)

Bristles are highly developed in the passerines, and according to Stettenheim (1973:230) they seemed to have evolved from contour feathers for particular functional reasons. Semibristles are a development which look 'somewhere between' bristles and feathers morphologically. The bristles are composed of a heavy melanin pigment which protects them from photochemical change. They function as a screen over the nostrils and ears to prevent dirt from entering, and in the case of eating carrion, to keep out the juices. Stettenheim said that the downward and outward projecting bristles on the upper and lower mandibles respectively aid in keeping food in the bird's mouth. (Ibid.:229) Some behavioral displays employ the bristles on top of the head which are erected upwards and outwards by little skin muscles which have the capacity to extend them to their maximum length and height, to form 'ears'.

The intelligence of the raven has arrested the attention of many people of various cultures for centuries. It is not the intention here to define and describe his intellectual abilities, but to demonstrate them in part through examples of both scientific and non-scientific experiences and observations (some of which have been incorporated in earlier sections of this study). Later explanations of the raven's habits with food, his vocal capacities and flight patterns will imply the thinking capacities of this bird.

In the more scientific and constructed experiments, Otto Koeler has written two articles, both of which demonstrate the thinking ability of the raven. He wrote in his "Prototypes of Human Communication Systems in Animals", that the "higher animals are close to human beings in non-verbal thinking, sensory abstraction, ability to expand concepts, transmission, and visual and aural Gestalt perceptions." (1952:90) The basic question with which Koeler was dealing was 'how did man arrive at language' through preliminary and "rudimentary naming of non-verbal images". (Ibid.) He cited the study by Gwinner of the pair of ravens who 'barked like dogs and gobbled like turkeys' (cited in this study, p.104). Koeler demonstrated in his article "Non-Verbal Thinking" that the raven has the capacity to see, think and operate with number sequences in a non-verbal counting number, which is seven; (in non-verbal counting humans can also operate up to the number seven).² He matched a 'sample dish' with many item choices with the 'domino

2. Lorenz said that in relation to the raven's capacity to operate non-verbally with seven objects, "As far as we know from parallel experiments with human beings, man does exactly as well or as badly as animals in non-verbal counting, that is if he is prevented the names which signify numbers for him." (1952:96)

pattern' in front of the raven; each one having the same number of dots on them. The experiment was made increasingly difficult by a rearrangement of the dots into 'non-domino' patterns with materials other than dots. The raven, without the help of all previously helpful clues, understood and 'thought' it out even better than before. (Ibid.:96)

It is unquestionable that much of the raven's behavior is learned. Because of his developed brain he is provided with an intelligence which facilitates the learning process, and it is therefore understandable that his character is 'elastic and plastic' (Brown:10) due to the individual idiosyncracies which are a result of differently learned experiences. Much of what the raven does, then, is only in part an innate response, and for the other part a learned and consciously prepared action.

Many of the raven's food gathering strategies are direct demonstrations of an intelligent plan. Like man the raven is omnivorous, and thus any food source is one of possible perusal by the raven. He is described as the bird who eats anything edible, dead or alive, which he can catch, pick up, break up or kill. He is both a scavenger and a predator, feeding on carrion to a great extent if it is available, and preying on other animals and other birds.³ In short, the raven will almost always find food. His technology for doing so is primarily his beak (for tearing, breaking, striking and carrying),

3. There are many stories about the contrasting observations of the continual diversity of the raven's dietary behaviors. Most sources in the bibliography include section on 'food'; however for in-depth analysis of the raven's diet, see particularly: Nelson (1934), Harlow (1975), and Hering (1934).

and his claws which can be employed to carry food but more often to grasp prey while he strips feathers or fur, and his powerful wings which permit sustained flight in chasing to tire a kill.

The raven procures food primarily as an individual, but also as one in a group as in Kumlien's report of an 'arranged' killing of a deer when six ravens exploited the advantages of a 'flock and relay' technique, so as to tire the deer and not themselves. Ravens also prey as a cooperative pair, for example when two ravens circled over a seal, one landing in the ice hole to prevent the seal's escape into the water, and the other raven attacking the seal and keeping it at a distance from the ice hole. Another pair of ravens alternately chased and attacked a hare. (Kumlien in Bent, 1945:194) Ravens are clever in recognizing a sick, injured or dying animal as a potential food source, even if it is a food for which they would normally not have interest. Because of their intelligence, ravens plan strategies to exploit the labours of other animals. Bent related a story of a raven who worried a turkey vulture to the extent that the vulture disgorged his food which the raven promptly stole. (R.J. Murray in Bent, 1945:195) The raven is an adamant food cacher, and in times of hunger stores food.

The raven is well noted for his complicated flight patterns which are in many instances complex aerial acrobatics, particularly at the time of courtship and mating. Bent reported Dr. Samuel Dickey's observations of a raven flying several hundred feet up in the air with a stick in his beak:

Then it would toss the stick loose from its hold, would snap at it, thrust forward the body to take it again, and even drop the stick and plunge admirably downward, taking the stick from the air before it struck the ground. (1945:188)

Southgate wrote a story about the raven's peculiar flight to avoid the chase of a duck hawk:

The raven...continued its slow deliberate flight along the range...it flipped over on its back with its feet up in the air and warded off the blow...The raven did not seem to use its wings in turning over but was upside down in a fraction of a minute...The raven turned over again just as quickly as it had turned onto its back...This performance was repeated eight times.
(in Bent, 1945:199)

APPENDIX B: PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES OF THE RAVEN IN DISPLAY

Imposing Displays

- 1) Kikkoo Given by males in close proximity in "imposing cocks" position.
ears
head feathers
throat lancets (+)
hump
pants
tail down
wings out and lateral at wrists
nictitating membrane
horizontal position
- 2) Koww Given by males in "imposing cocks" position, to attract females and warn off rival males. Often allopreening or billing follows.
ears
head feathers
throat lancets (+)
hump
pants
tail down (+)
wings out and lateral at wrists
nictitating membrane
horizontal position, alternating with upright stance as the male 'bows' or pumps his head up and down as he calls.
- 3) Chrrua A "bowing ceremony" (Lorenz) which is directed from the male to the female, and leads to more intense courtship displays.
throat lancets
head feathers (+)
pants
tail spread
wing elbows out
horizontal-upright position; bowing
- 4) Kulk Given by males to attract a partner and intimidate rival males. Often given by a raven in the context of billing between two ravens. Given by a male or female.
ears (+)
throat lancets
pants
wings out and lateral
horizontal position

APPENDIX B

Imposing Display:

- 5) Krrrk Male example:
Given exclusively by perched ravens; male to other males in "imposing cocks" position; sometimes to one or more subordinate birds.
ears
throat lancets
pants
tail spread
forewing up and lateral
horizontal position

Female example:
Given by female to a male. Often billing followed or preceded Krrrk. Often given in association with a males's Kikkoo display.
mostly sleeked plummage
ears (-)
throat lancets (-)
tail down
forewing up and lateral
crouched position
horizontal position (+)
- 6) Kwoo (soft) Given mostly in feeding and nesting areas by males in "imposing cock" position, often directed towards another imposing cock.
ears
throat lancets
pants
tail spread (+) and up above horizontal
wings lifted high over back (+)
horizontal position; head forward in calling
- 7) Kukwik Given by both male and female.
ears (-)
throat lancets- flashed by jerking out and back
tail down
wings lifted and flattened
nictitating membrane
horizontal position; head forward in calling
- 8) Krrk-Chirk Given in feeding and nesting areas, by a bird showing imposing cock characteristics.
ears
throat lancets
pants
tail down (+)
foreparts of wings up and back
Given together with an aerial display where bird flipped over onto its back, pulling its primary

APPENDIX B

Imposing Display:

wing feathers back and "cupping" his wings, then flipping right side up again. The Krrr-Chirk was voiced as he rolled upside down; this flip was repeated four more times. (Brown:87)

Beak Snaps Given by male birds with imposing appearance towards other imposing males or "sleeked" birds, either male or female.

ears

pants

throat lancets

tail spread (+) and down (+)

forewings raised out and up (-)

upright posture

head high

beak forward, snapping

9) Chrujuju Follows the Chrrua call (lorenz). Is a peculiar 'choking' movement by the male bird towards the female.

ruffled head

throat lancets

wings spread out and back

nictitating membrane (+)

APPENDIX B

Demonstrative-Aggressive Displays:

- 1) Kaww
Given by a large and dominant bird in flock situations; functions as an alert or warning to others.
ears
throat lancets
pants
upright position
- 2) Kikkoo
Given as a rivalry display between males which is more intense than the imposing display listed above from the female to the male, and is repeated more often.
ears
head feathers
throat lancets (+)
pants (+)
forewings out, crossing above tail
lower body feathers erected
head and neck bent downwards
beak down
nictitating membrane
- 3) Kulp
Given in association with pairbonding and rivalry behavior between males.
ears
head feathers
pants (+)
throat lancets (+)
tail down
wings out and up at wrists
head forward down
beak open
beak-snapping
nictitating membrane
low horizontal position
- 4) Demonstrative display
Develops from the 'bowing ceremony' in anger, instead of further courtship display. (Lorenz)
head feathers flatten 'abruptly'
ears (+)

APPENDIX B

Defensive-Threat Display:

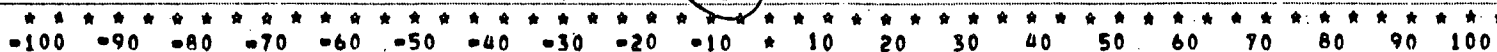
- 1) Kaaa An antagonistic call, given primarily by juvenile birds in defensive-threat position towards an approaching or threatening dominant bird(s). Also given in association with fighting over food, in which case each bird flew in the air at each other with wings and feet 'flailing'.
head turned upwards to dominant bird
beak opened widely
crouched position
quavering Kaaa
- 2) Kuwagh Given frequently in nesting sites by both adult birds.
- 3) Kaww A distress call, given as a nest defense which increases in intensity when the young have hatched. The adult birds sometimes fly over the head of the intruder or call from the treetops.
head and neck stretched forward and upward
beak open
- 4) Kruk Given mostly while flying, sometimes perched, in defense. Similar to distress Kaww, but less intense.

APPENDIX B

Submissive Displays:

- 1) Kowulkulkulk Given by female birds towards males in imposing posture, who had for example just given a Kikkoo display. This display by the female is generally a pre-copulatory one.
head feathers fluffed
pants (-)
tail spread (+) above horizontal plane
forwings and tips lifted up and out; tips pointed posteriorally "in exaggerated movement" (1974:90)
crouched position
low horizontal in calling
- 2) Subordiante male of the dominant male giving Koww calls (listed previously under the Imposing Display category),
showed submissive behavior position.
crouched position
head drawn back
- 3) Copulatory display After the Kowulkulkulks from the female to the male in imposing display who was flashing his nictitating membrane while bowing his head and flashing his throat lancets, the female assumed copulatory position (1974: 3)
squatting
breast on ground
tail spread (+) and above horizontal (+)
wings spread out (+) to touch ground at tips

2 DIMENSIONS


$$\frac{1}{\infty}$$

D-A = DEMONSTRATIVE - AGGRESSIVE
IHP = IMPOSING
D-T = DEFENSIVE - THREAT
S = SUBMISSIVE

VECTOR PLOTS

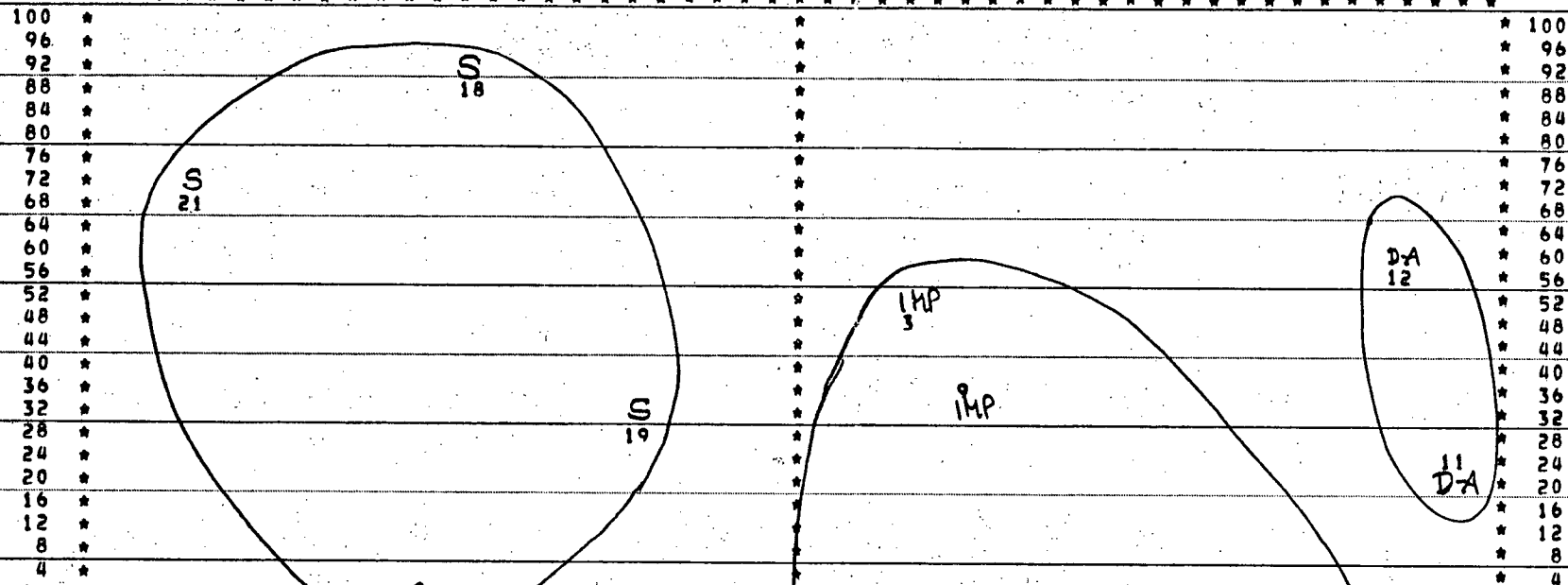
VECTOR 2 PLOTTED AGAINST VECTOR 1

VECTOR 2

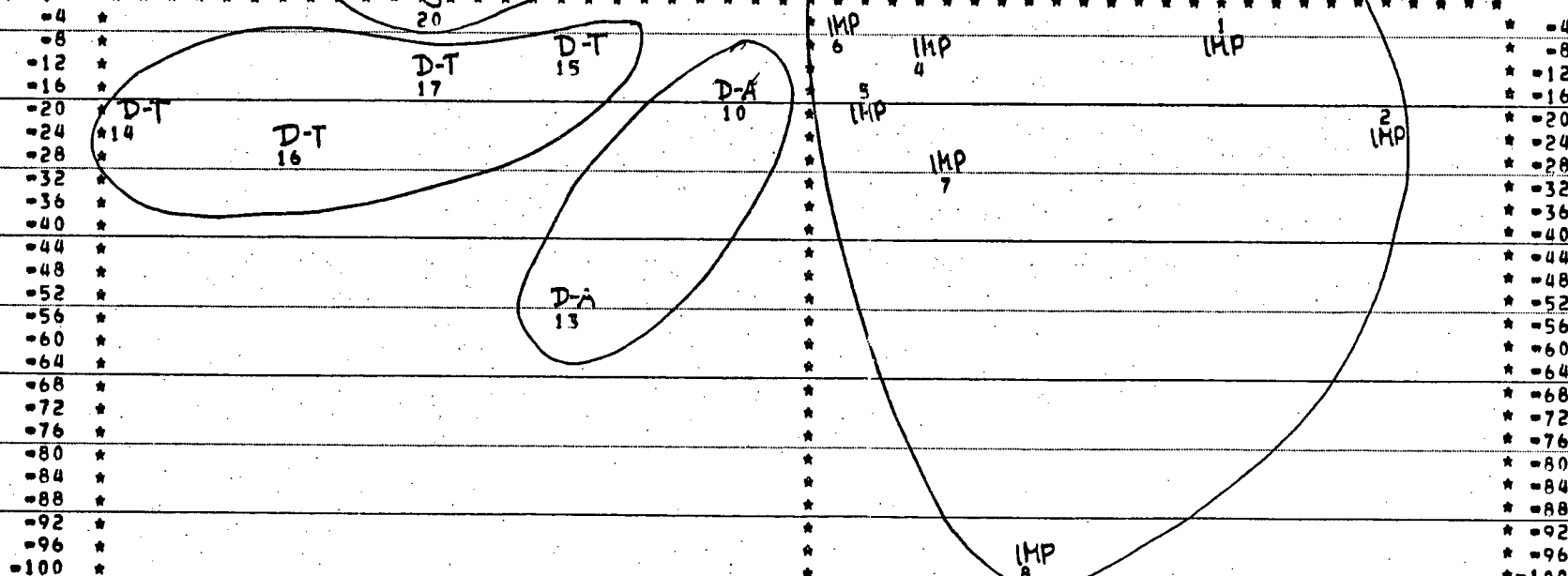
2 DIMENSIONS

-100 -90 -80 -70 -60 -50 -40 -30 -20 -10 * 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

* * * * *



VECTOR 1 * * * * *



-100 -90 -80 -70 -60 -50 -40 -30 -20 -10 * 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

-139-

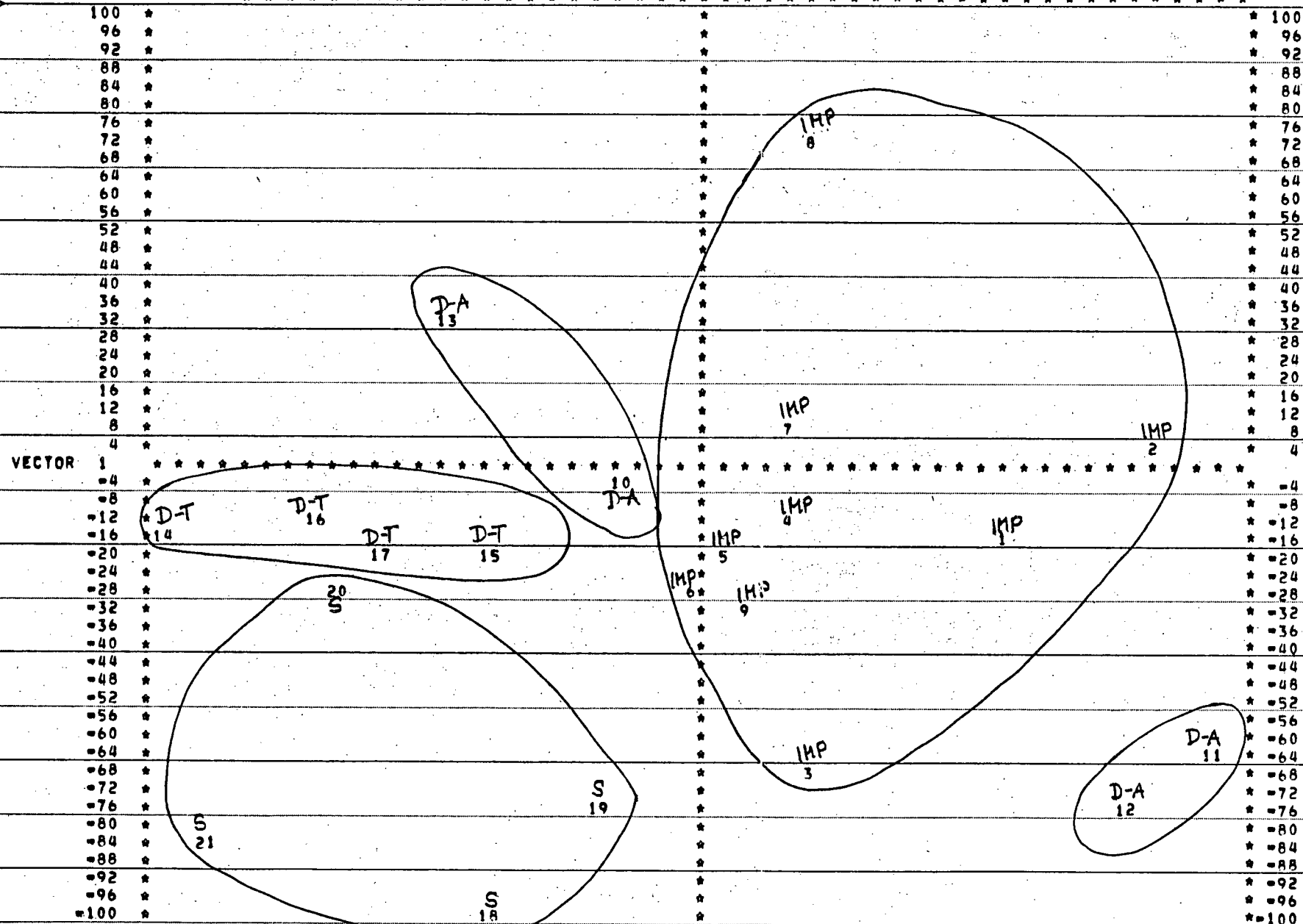
VECTOR PLOTS

VECTOR 2 PLOTTED AGAINST VECTOR 1

VECTOR 2

3 DIMENSIONS

-100 -90 -80 -70 -60 -50 -40 -30 -20 -10 * 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100



-100

-100 -90 -80 -70 -60 -50 -40 -30 -20 -10 * 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

VECTOR PLOTS

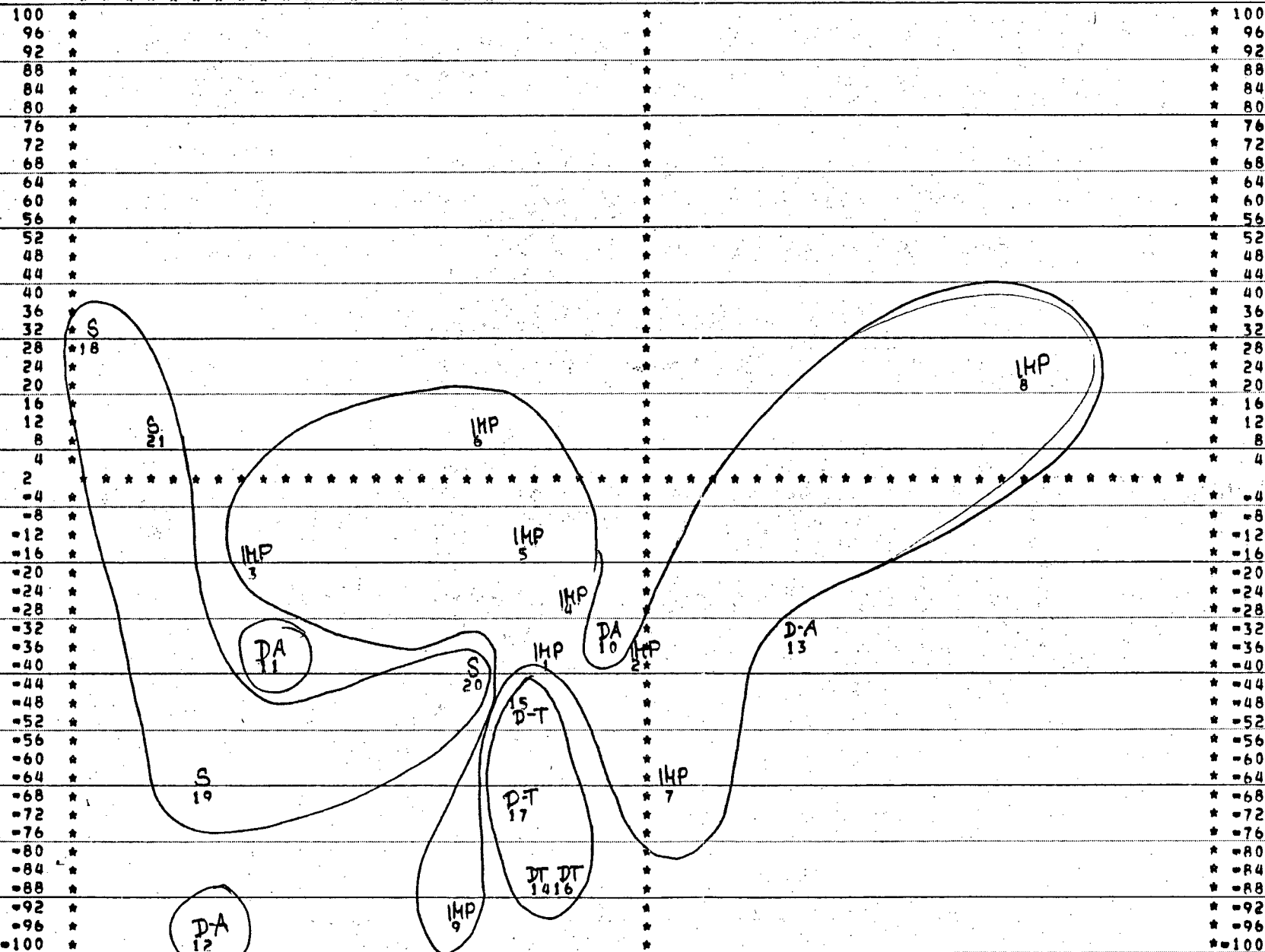
VECTOR 3 PLOTTED AGAINST VECTOR 2

VECTOR 3

3 DIMENSIONS

-100 -90 -80 -70 -60 -50 -40 -30 -20 -10 * 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

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-100 -90 -80 -70 -60 -50 -40 -30 -20 -10 * 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

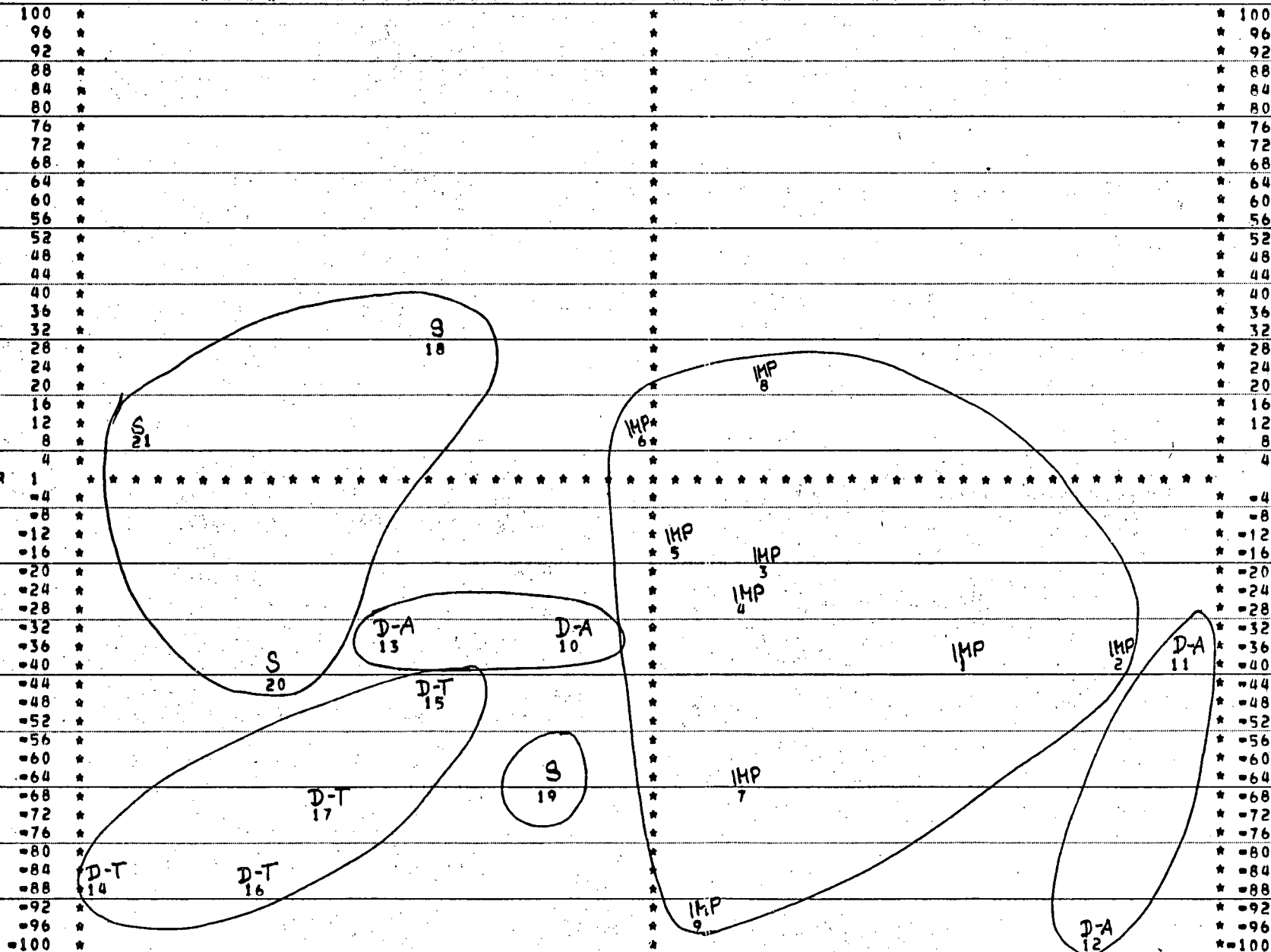
VECTOR PLOTS

VECTOR 3 PLOTTED AGAINST VECTOR 1

VECTOR 3

3 DIMENSIONS

-100 -90 -80 -70 -60 -50 -40 -30 -20 -10 * 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100



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