

Name

v

Houses

v

Names

v but scanty

Crests

v

Territories

v Map.

Origins

v

Myth Abstracts

Origin of gitg.a'ata. Clifton 1952 OK. (Lundham)

How the gitg.a'ata originated. Patalas 1947 OK.

Origin of the laxsik in the gitg.a'ata



/ / / taken over  
 by gitxaita.  
 I gispaudwardo  
 II laxskik  
 III ganhoda  
 X laxkida

Common  
 Ganders -

Hecate Strait

BANKS IS

PITT IS

ESTEVAN IS

GIL IS

GRISSELL I.

ARISTAZZAZAL

ROYAL IS

KITINGOT

Grenville Channel

Douglas Chan

gispaudwardo

gispaudwardo

ganhoda

laxskik

gan

RANCESS

Common Ganders -

gitga'at's origins

I 'waxmən (qispəwudwa'də)

Chilton, 1939.

sqaw's myth. From gitwinksitk on Nass;  
from there to wilaxyp, the big plateau between  
Sheena and Nass. Their original place at the headwaters  
of the Sheena was called lu gwətg. an ga'at  
in about place of canes

Tribal  
name

The ~~q~~ ga'at was a ceremonial cane, and wherever  
it was kept was called ga'at, and the people were  
qisga'at "people of the cane". The cane is still in  
existence. Formerly it was shown on a totem pole.

Also

xiii ni-smu'lx same group as 'waxmən

II taxatwe.tk (taxski.k)

Clifton 1939.

of yal'am he says: "same origin [as others], from Haida. Semi-independent status

of gamgagol, he says "of Haida origin, family of gitawé's of Kunstint's"

originally of royal rank but fell from it

IV huhu.tk (taxski.k)

They came from Fun Island laxkwot dzi-ts  
on where spouting  
(where clams squirt out of the sand).

They are not related to other taxski.k groups. After they left Fun Island they associated with the other eagles at gitama't and gitga'a't. Some went to gitlip (namely, widəpxa'n). At gitamat there is a huhu'tk, and at gitxata there is also a huhu'tk.

III 'winamɔːlək

(g. anha'dɔ)

Clifton 1939.

We have heard of his exploits at Mitlakatla Pass, where he killed many people, using his <sup>abalone</sup> pearled bow as a lure.

He went to gitxata and established a village laxkwəttag. It is a house he built at on about <sup>eye</sup> ~~house~~ Kitkatla, the length of the island. From there they went to gitg'a'at, seeking refuge all the time.

VI niːsna mo - same origin, same group as winamɔːlək

VII tsu'xgɛ. same

~~VIII wəhəwɛxs ~~same~~~~

XI tamg. aus same

V haq, lax ε'  
X t'sa'box  
XII gaugau

(lax k<sub>1</sub>bu)

The lax k<sub>1</sub>bu were of local origin, at 7 Mile Creek between Hartley Bay and Lowe Inlet. They have no relatives elsewhere.

They formerly owned Lowe Inlet and Hartley Bay, and outnumbered all others in the area, but through wars with the Imshean, q' txa'ta, and q' t g. a'at, they were reduced and finally ~~joined~~ took refuge with the q' t g. a'at and joined them. They are now extinct.

VIII 'wi·haiwe·x5

(g.anha'də)

Of git'andə, Tsumshun, origin, from house  
of tsag.amq'iske'itks.

IX ni·syag·e's

(g.anha'də)

This house is of gidostsu origin. Extinct here.

They have same myth as ni·skiwe of the  
gitzaxtet.

Narrative: The Origin of the qitg.a'oto  
H. Clifton to Beynon, 1952.

We qispawudwa'do originally lived at Zembaham. One spring after the first salmon had arrived, it began to snow. A foolish youth rebuked the chief of the skies for this. It began to snow heavily and the houses were almost covered. Famine came. One day a robin carrying a spray of ripe elderberries appeared in a smoke hole, and the chief, concluding that it was summer somewhere close by, decided to move.

They migrated a short distance, caught salmon, and recovered their strength. The chiefs, tsibasa', 'wam'damtk, and saxsa'axt decided to go down river, "We have relatives who have gone before us, when q.a'o's' children retaliated... We will try to join them."

When they got to the canyon they met their relatives tam'nu'ox and ni.stox'ik who were established there. They continued downriver. When they came to a large stream, 'wam'damtk planted his ceremonial cane in the ground and claimed the stream, naming it kso'ang.a'oto "waters of cane". tsibasa' went on to laxkla'n and joined wise'ks as a qitxa'ta. saxsa'axt went to Metlakatla and joined the qitwilq'ots.

Later, 'wam'damtk went on down the coast and built the village of t'sawenxtam q.altsa'p "Village on the point" on Gil Island. They intermarried with the laxkibu at Howe Inlet. Angered by a taunt from his brother gunaxna'ik about his little houses, 'wam'damtk moved to Old Town and planted his cane once more. "Here will be the village of the qitg.a'oto." This cane represented his crest, the fireweed. He built his



piyalsam welp 'Star House', gave a great  
pottatch, and assumed a white grizzly crest  
(from a bear he had seen on Princess Royal Island  
- the Kermodé Bear).

Today the houses of 'wamɔ'dɔmtk,  
tsibasa', and saxsa'axt are closely related.  
They are not of the same group as wise'ks  
of gitxa'ta and wise'ks of ginax'angik  
who were in the first migration to leave  
Jerusalem, after the children of gaoɔɔ' retaliated  
(at which time many gispawudwa'ds and some  
g.anha'dɔs came down the river). <sup>Their</sup> crests  
and dogs are alike, but the Fireweed crest  
is exclusive to 'wamɔ'dɔmtk.

Abstract: Origin of the laxski:k in the gitg.a'ato  
Edmund Patalas to Beynon, 1947.

When the gitg.a'ato first came from the  
Nass they consisted of two clans: gispawudwa'do  
under wamodomtk and a few ganha'dos. They  
found the laxkibu' already here. Later, the  
tsolaxhons group of laxski:k, of Haida  
origin, arrived:-

These people originally lived on the Queen  
Charlotte Islands. One day a prince and two  
companions went trout fishing. On the way the  
prince shot a cormorant and made a hat of its  
skin. Then when they were fishing, the cormorant  
would come to life and eat the trout, until the  
prince in ~~an~~ anger threw it to the bottom of the  
canoe. They went ashore and cooked their trout,  
and a huge frog appeared and sat on the fish.  
In anger the prince threw it in the fire.

That night they heard a voice, <sup>of an old woman,</sup> lamenting  
the loss of the frog, <sup>her son,</sup> and they left for home early  
the next morning. The voice told them of the punish-  
ment that would befall them. One by one, on  
the way home, they fell dead. Only the prince  
was alive when the canoe reached the village.  
He wore his cormorant headdress. When he  
told what had happened, he too died.

Fires enveloped the village and destroyed it.  
One young girl and her grandmother, in a menstrual  
hut in a hole at the back of the chief's house,  
whose entrance was ~~to~~ barricaded with coppers,  
were the only survivors. When they emerged they  
heard a woman singing a dirge. They went  
away, and in their wanderings the old woman  
died.

A huge supernatural eagle appeared to the young girl, now left alone. It offered to carry her to her people in a distant place. It took her on its back and flew towards the mainland. When it grew tired they dropped some pebbles, which became the Gander Islands (nugunwaks), where they landed and rested. Then they went on to a great village, where the eagle left the girl.

She sat on a log near a fresh burial place where a young girl had just been buried. ~~Her~~ <sup>the</sup> mourning parents found her and thought she was their daughter returned to life. She was taken into their house, the sun'axe't Eagle house of Kitimat. This house in turn expanded to gitg.a'at.

Frank Bolton to Beynon, at Kitkatla in 1916.

The gitg.a'atɔ people were a new people not of local origin, as they have very little territory here. Most of their territory is on the Skeena River, and the territory they now have was given them by the Kit'ame'ts. They have no individual hunting territory. The house of ɔntawiwelp was the main house of the gitg.a'atɔ and was their leader when they came from Tamlaham, but now the chief is dzag.amseqisk, gisp. from gid'astu and also ɔntawiwelp from which the house of g.aiyemtkwe branched off.

... the [gitnagwnaks] same group are there [gitg.a'atɔ] known as dzag.amseqisk and a royal house.

# Retaliation of the Mountain Goats

H. Clifton to Beynon, 1952, X.

## Abstract

While the gitg'a'ato were living on the Skeena they became careless and slaughtered many mountain goats, far more than they needed for food. The chief had a daughter, and would not accept any of the suitors who came for her. One night she was taken by the Mountain Goat Prince as his wife. A year later, the hunters saw her amidst a number of goats, and she said she would come home and bring many goat people with her. The mountain goats refused to eat their hosts' food, and in anger the chief ordered them killed. Several escaped, including the woman's mountain goat husband.

The goats wanted revenge and wanted the woman and her son back. In succession they caused a great storm, a flood, and weather so cold that glaciers formed behind the village. Finally the woman returned to her goat husband and the people moved away, down the Skeena. At the mouth of Ecstall River they divided, and one group went up that river, over a divide, and down the Kitkahta River. The other group went around by salt water, past the territory owned by the gidag'anits' large group around Lowe Inlet and the present Hartley Bay, and joined the first to form the gitg'a'ato village.

While on the Skeena the gitg'a'ato were closely connected with the gitwalgots. Their villages were across the river from each other, and their royal houses g'igoksmwe'lp and saxsa'axt had come down the river in the same migration from Tmlaham.

## Informants

Heber L Clifton , 66 in 1939.

Boys name nɔs

Chief's name 'waxmɔn (head chief, qispawudwa'do)

Present name qalɛ'gam taxɛ'

gitq.a'atə

I 'waxmən

(gispəwudwa'də)

'waxmən

nalagətqə'x

haimasqε's

wəxə'it *extinct*

II txatwεtk

(laxski'k)

txatwεtk

waxgə:dəmxaidə

gəmgə'gə'l

yalə'm

III 'wi'nəmə'lək

(g.anha'də)

IV huhu'tk

(laxski'k)

V haq,laxε' }

(laxkibu')

x VI ni'snamə'o

(g.anha'də)

x VII tsu'xqε'

( " )

g.lands VIII 'wi'haiwε'xs

( " )

g.dastu IX ni'syagε's

( " )

X t'sa'bəx

*Extinct, but Clifton's family are perpetuating the names*

(laxkibu')

XI qauqa'u

( " )

x XII təmqa'us

(g.anha'də)

XIII ni'smu'ləx

(gispəwudwa'də)

This list, obtained by Barbeau from Clifton in 1939, is <sup>from</sup> the only one in the notes. It is said to be incomplete.

It is the most uncertain of the lists for the Tsimshian

My dear man has hidden from view  
The robe of the white bear  
That is why the great house survives,  
I am constantly throwing water, my dear man.

A long time later a nephew of g. anug. e'x went  
hunting with gunaxnu'tk and the latter was drowned.  
The gitxa'ta's set out to raid the gitga'a'ta's in  
retaliation. Rather than fight, g. anug. e'x gave  
the white bear crest to the new gunaxnu'tk.

The connection between the gitga'a'ta's and the  
gitwila'gots arose as follows. Once at the fur  
seal grounds at gun'aks (Gander Islands) a  
gidostsu chief xengk met and married a sister  
of saxsa'axt. They had two sons. When they grew  
up the sons were taunted for having no uncles,  
and they and their mother set out to return to  
the gitwila'gots. They only got as far as gitga'a'ta's  
and had to go to their uncle 'wa'm'damtk for  
shelter. He took them in, had them assume their  
names tsag.amsa'gisk and lagaxni'tsk and  
become members of his house. Years later when  
the gitwila'gots needed a male successor for their  
chief they came here and took one of the young  
men, who became their head chief.



Abst: How the Gitxa'ta Originated  
Patalas to Bynon, 1947

The original gitxa'ta came from the Nass and Skeena headwaters and were the offspring of the children of ga'so's. When they left owing to civil wars, one group led by 'wa'mo'domtk came down until they reached kmōdō (Lowe Inlet). The group also consisted of a few ganha'dōs of which his wife was one. kmōdō was already occupied by laxkibu, so they went farther south and established a village called t'satsa't on Hill Island.

'wa'mo'domtk's "brother", ~~the~~ a gitxa'ta chief gunaxnu'tk was jealous of the mes'o's "white bear" crest of 'wa'mo'domtk. One day he taunted his brother's small houses, calling them g.anugε'x "raven snares". 'wa'mo'domtk built a fine large house, invited gunaxnu'tk to a potlatch, and unveiled the house piyalsoṃ wa'lp "Star House" and assumed the name g.anugε'x. gunaxnu'tk still wanted the white bear crest.

Looking for a better place to live, 'wa'mo'domtk moved to Hartley Bay (katqi'u "along the beach") and then ~~to~~ to Old Town. <sup>Here he planted</sup> his ceremonial cane (g.a'at), <sup>his-son g.a'at from Old Cane</sup> named the place gitxa'ta, and built his Star House, with a large painting on the front. The house faced the sun, and he was afraid it would check, so he had a slave woman who did nothing else but throw water on it. From this, the house gets its derge:

I am continually throwing water on the great stars,  
My dear man, my dear man,

gitg.a'ato crests

I waxmo'n

(g'ispawudwa'də)

Clifton 1939.

- (1) g'εmk : sun
2. biyε'ts : stars
3. ma'xe : rainbow
4. lu'aya'ox      Clouds on the horizon  
taking fantastic shapes: almost human.  
Carved as human figures on corner posts.
5. mɔdi'ək
6. 'nεxt
7. dzag.a wɔxtə. "nose curved" a  
bird with a curved back beak, with  
characters of Thunderbird.

II txatwε·tk

(laxski'k)

Clyton 1939

1. xski'k Eagle
2. tpu'n whale
3. gasqε's dogfish [?]
4. stʒɔt beaver
5. txa'o halibut
6. məksiit weasel

IV huhú·tk

(laxski'k)

1. xski'k
2. stʒɔt
3. tpu'n
4. txa'o
5. məksiitk
6. gasqεt dogfish

III ?wi·nəmɔ·lək

(g.anha'də)

Clifton 1939

1. qag raven
2. gaye. bulldhead
3. gamats starfish
4. acwε'lgət thunderbird

all g.anhada same.

VIII wi·haiwε·xs.

same as above.

IX ni·syag.ε's

(ganhada)

same as others above except

adding wi·dzag.əm qε'q "large beak of raven"

V haq, laxε

(lax kibu)

X tsa'bx

XI qauqa'u

1. gibε'o

2. qauqa'u crow