

Pottlatch
Rank
Class

Agitwilygts pottlatch.

Ranking of chiefs.
Speakers

Class differences in pottlatch
Exchanging women to keep
royal houses from extinction

Rayson, Dec. 6, 1917 (typed)

A ceremony took place a few days ago, over the dead body of wihon (gisp, gitwilygts), to choose his successor.

Order of rank:

On the order that the chiefs and tribes were called out, I always got a different version from each informant, (each placing his own house to the fore). But at this ceremony every tribe was placed in its proper rank. The gitwilygts, the host tribe, called no one from their own tribe, but they would rank 4th in the list, according to a gitwilygts man.

I will give the order in which they were called out, "as this was the order of rank of the chiefs"; and also the names of the men who spoke for each chief as there were called out for each chief when he was called out. The chiefs did no speaking: when a chief was called and given his gift, his headman would rise and speak for him, and at this time the headman would also receive his gift.

1. legex
lagaxnitak

As "the head chief of all the Tumshean", legex was the first called out, and after he was given his present, his headman lagaxnitak was called upon to speak for the chief.

^{sgawit (see next page)}
2. gutxe'x (git'and?)
dragamgishaitks (absent)
gisteku (spoke)

As this tribe was related to the tribe of legex they were always called together.

Since there was no *sqagwe't* at the time the chief called was the head chief until such time as they made him *sqagwe't*. The speaker *dzag.amg.ishaitk* was called on but was not present, so the next ranking *lekaget*, *giste'ku* was called to speak.

3. *ni.stkumi.k* (*g.iludza'ax*)

ni.spins (absent)

la'is (spoke) next in rank to *ni.spins*.

4. *seks* (*ginaxangik*)

g.amaye'm (absent)

ni.skwe'la'x (spoke) and said "I alone have the

right to speak for my chief, as that is my rank in this tribe." He was referring to present

conditions, as the present *g.amaye'm* was of *gina'dziks* origin and was not regarded as a full member of the *ginaxangik* ("although on his father's [?] death he assumed his father's name and position in the *ginaxangik*")

5. *ni.swe'xs* (*gina'dziks*)

sedzan (~~called, didn't speak~~)

This tribe was always called out together with No. 4, "as these

two tribes are considered brothers and they have the same royal houses." *Sedzan* was called as speaker "and with him was called but did not speak another man of the same house, who had not yet assumed a name so they called him by an English name."

6. *ni.sho'ot* (*g.tzartet*)

ni.skε

"being the first in rank for the *lekaget*."

g.itw/gets, see above

Claims to name being speaker

succession of son to father's position fully accepted, not

7. nis yag anet (gitsi's)
te gum

He was called upon
at the same time
as No. 6, as they

"brother" of 6

were considered as brothers. (Refers to the present time when there happens to be a relationship between the two closer than just their phratry relationship. They have the same distant maternal relatives, and this was sufficient for the people to call them brothers. It was not the case in the past.

8. nis lag an o's (gitlen)
ni yuks

"The gitlen chief
was called, although
at this present there

no chief, but act
as though there were
one.

is none. Ni yuks spoke for the chief as if one were present, and a gift was put aside for the chief, to be held in trust by ni yuks until a chief assumes his place. "The chief's house is not extinct, but they have never assumed their position."

gitwilgots

The speakers, in addressing the hosts, always addressed the chief of the gitwilgots first, always addressed ligutkwé'tk and saxsa'axt first, and then they would address the guests of the ceremony, "and they would say that their chiefs had heard what they (the hosts) wanted, and from this time they would be recognized by the respective chiefs in their councils as wih>'n, and the other man as

Purpose of prolatel

spring am, and the other as tagayut; all of the same group and belonging to the group of gila xaks of the gitwilgots tribe. They now have been received into the councils of all the chiefs, and will take their positions as letagiget of that tribe and

receive the recognition of all the other tribes."

This was a lekagiget class potlatch

Beynon noticed that the gifts given to the chiefs were smaller than those given to the lekagiget (Chiefs received \$2.00, lekagiget \$3.00, persons not in the first ranks of the lekagiget \$1.00, and children 50 cents). He enquired why.

Class differences "I found that this was not a feast of the chiefs but a ceremony where they were invited, and the persons giving this ceremony were of the lekaget class [and] they will give more to their own class, as the chiefs do when they have such a ceremony." I enquired whether the chiefs always got less than the lekagiget at a lekaget ceremony, and found out from four different informants that such was the rule that could be followed, but it was very seldom followed as it was liable to bring down the displeasure of all of the chiefs. In this case it was done as a matter of economy.

Chiefs may object

A Tushga laxkibu woman married Chief Wallace (ganha'da) of the gitsi's a few weeks ago. ~~At the feast~~, ^{his} brother who had come with her from the Ross gave a feast and asked which ^{Tsimshian} tribe would make itself responsible for the welfare of his sister, as she could no longer be considered as a Tushga, for that would make her liable to taunts from the other women of the chiefs (Wallaces) tribe.

sedzan, laxkibu of the gina'dziks ^{his tribe} spoke up and said that he would be responsible for the woman. She will be regarded as a member of his house and her children would be regarded as members of the gina'dziks tribe.

If this was not done "it" was always the rule that the person coming into another tribe was always looked down upon, no matter what position they may have held in another tribe or nation"

children belong to
tribe and property
of mother

Relationship between $\begin{matrix} ni'swe'ks \\ ni'stkami'k \\ seks \end{matrix}$ and $\begin{matrix} seks \\ he'l \end{matrix}$ | gixka'ka

The close relationship between these three; (3, 4, and 5 above) was mentioned; they had the same Lemlaham origin and went together to gixka'ta where their names are to this day.

These houses have a system of providing each other with women to prevent their lines from going extinct. If seks (ginau) is going extinct, seks of Ketchikan would send one of his nieces. The same with the house of ni'swe'ks ... "they would send ^{princesses?} princes back and forth as they saw that they were needed." "In this way they kept the

three houses up and they never have been extinct.

The same bond exists with the house of he.1
Whenever the houses of ~~he.1~~ ni:swexs were on
the verge of becoming extinct, a woman (it was
always a woman from the house of he.1) was
sent to marry ^{some} Tsimschian chief, and all her
children were of the new tribe of her adoption,
not of the ~~house~~ tribe of her husband.
(Have example of Kishga woman marrying
Wallace, see above)

a gixata woman from
house of he.1 moved to
Tsimschian, married some
chief, and she and her
children are treated
as gixadziiks of
ni:swexs household.

This relationship did not extend to houses
of ni:stkumik or saxsaaxt. Informants said
these two houses came to saltwater at a different
time and did not go to Kitkatla.

The giludzaus (ni:stkumik) exchanged women
with the Nass gispawudwa'ds. royal house as
they were more closely related to them. The present
chief of the giludzaus was born a laxkiba from
the royal house of Kstiyaux. So they did
not get any such assistance from the others above.

Guyon, 1927, from J. Norrison.

"Method of counting in reference to expenditures at feasts"

In reckoning, the fingers would be counted and then the toes, and when twenty was reached it was called $g. \geq 1 / u g e t$.
one person

In referring to Sgagwe's expenditure when he erected his pole, one would say he expended the value of 80 persons. That would give a total of 1600 people who were served with gifts and food. One person equals twenty individuals.