

"washing out"

yokso feast in recent times. Speech

From Narr. Early traders with the Tsimshian  
Beynon (no informant) 1949 Beynon was guest.

[The incident happened  
in 1914. see  
Beynon 1922 memoirs]

At Pt. Simpson three men were arrested for intoxication  
ni:sgat'i:s and ni:s'at'net's (qinax'angik shuf and  
headman) and t'amnu'nx (qilodza of royal house).  
t'amnu'nx was tried first and pleaded guilty; the other  
two were released on a technical point, and then  
t'amnu'nx himself was released. The people still  
regarded them as guilty, and feelings rose. The  
only thing to do was to give a yokso feast.

The three were joint hosts at the feast.  
The people came in ~~their~~ the guise they used in  
light-hearted and unimportant feasts. Each tribe  
had a special <sup>nickname</sup> name, such as Boston men, Thugets,  
lu'sans (Russians) etc. The messengers impersonated  
Thugut and Japanese.

(Beynon) When all the guests had been seated in their  
places, the qinax'angik and qilut'sans tribesmen  
stepped in, garbed in their conception of the qidag'awits  
and Japanese manner, singing songs in those tongues  
and dancing in a foreign manner. Then the guests were  
fed. The meal opened and closed with a prayer.

Then the qinax'angik <sup>lakaget</sup> spokesman for wice'ks  
spoke: "Chiefs, Chiefs of the Tsimshian tribes;  
lakagiget who counsel their chiefs. wice'ks and  
'alimlaxε and ni:s haidε are all happy, together  
with their tribesmen, that their chief and brother  
ni:sgat'is and his lakaget ni:s'at'net's are  
safe and have escaped the storm that their adventure  
placed them in. We as a tribe have already  
admonished them. Now we have gathered you together  
that you may add to what we have already said

Quotes



to them. This was what our older fathers did. When they wanted to reprimand any of their own people who were becoming insubordinate, the chief would call a feast publicly to reprimand and advise them. That is what we want you to do now, chiefs and *Iskaqiget*. You will give them your wisdom. When that is done, no more will be said about the adventure. It is now finished.

That is why my masters *wice'ks*, *'alim'axe'*, and *ni-shaidz* are happy you have all come."

Then *ni-spins* of the *qiludzaus* spoke:

"Chiefs, Chiefs, headmen, headmen. In the same manner that *wice'ks* feels, so it is with *ni-stku'mik* and his people, ~~is~~ now that his brother *tomnu'nx* has got through the same storm as struck the canoe of *wice'ks*. He also ~~wants~~ <sup>wishes</sup> that you speak to and advise *tomnu'nx* in the proper deportment of a chief. There is one thing more I want to add. The Japanese (*qiludzaus*), on hearing that *ni-stkumik* was having trouble, sent their young men and women over to assist him. They will entertain you. You young men of other tribes, try to capture these Japanese women, and we will keep them here."

One after another the tribes spoke, all agreeing that no further reference was to be made to the incident. It was extinguished, or "washed out."



Feast  
se'ks (qinaxangik) first feast  
on way to Pass.

Beynon, 1918, (typed)

Beynon attended a feast at Port Simpson in January 1918 given by chief se'ks of the qinax'angik. It was meant to be a revival of an old custom, and was <sup>pretended?</sup> supposed to have taken place at knome's liver where the people made their first camp on the way to the Pass for eulachons.

se'ks always made it a point to be there first and to give a feast to the others <sup>when</sup> they arrived. The food was always that gathered the previous summer and fall, regarded as a valuable article at that time of the year. When it was brought out it was referred to as the food of such and such a place. It was announced that se'ks always had the honour of giving this first feast on the way to the Pass.



Displaying a crest

Feast to display a crest.  
Stagecraft

ni-snawe (q. ludzaw's chief) displays his tkuwel'kstkəm mēdiək  
(informant says <sup>at "adoption"</sup> assumption of crest, Beynon thinks he means "showing").

Sidney Campbell (ni-slu't) to Beynon, 1922, <sup>new</sup> Mtlakātla

*Prince Grizzly*  
The chief ni-snawe was going to show all the  
Hemshian people his crest tkuwel'kstkəm mēdiək,  
which he had erected as a Totem pole in front of  
his house. He was going to show that this pole was  
his exclusive property. He told his medicine men  
and sorcerers (including Campbell) that he wanted a  
visit of the <sup>prince of</sup> grizzly bears to his house dramatized.

The assembled guests found a small boy sitting  
unconcernedly by the fire, facing the rear of the  
house, and a pole extending from the fireplace  
to the rafters. The singers then sang of a  
great bear who was a prince, and was going to  
visit the house. A great grizzly entered and  
went toward the fire. The boy struck the bear  
with a stick, and the bear struck back, tearing  
off the boy's scalp. Screaming, and with blood  
streaming down his face, the boy ran to the rear  
of the house. The grizzly climbed up to a perch  
on the pole, where the singers sang to appease  
its wrath. Then ni-snawe showed all the  
guests his crest, the "prince of grizzlies".

This dramatization was prepared as follows:  
"First we had to get a small boy who would  
be willing to sit by the fire and tantalize  
the bear. This was difficult, because the  
children dreaded the halait, who was regarded  
as supernatural. But we got a boy, and paid  
him a new shirt (this was shortly after the  
Hudson's Bay started to trade here). We shaved  
off his hair, and made a new scalp filled with  
deer's blood. The grizzly was two men in a grizzly skin.