

<u>Types of feasts</u>	Succession	Succession
	Cleansing	Fasting
	Marriage	
	Naming	

Joshua Sabasa to Beunon, 1916, g. txata.

There was another kind of fasting, by the successor of the deceased head of a house. It was divided into three seasons or parts before it ^{was} could be ~~considered~~ ^{acknowledged} complete and he could assume the position.

If the head of a house died, his successor would usually be his oldest nephew. Before the nephew would receive full recognition in the tribe he would have to fast. Immediately after the death, he covered his face with charcoal, ashes and dirt and secluded himself in great grief. After a length of time he returned and gave a feast known as 'wix do'otsk "the black feast" or "mourning feast" where ^{fasting} black

Later he would give another feast and erect a pole over the grave of his uncle. This was the 'wix max's "the taking up feast". He invited the where ^{up} taking entire tribe and distributed much wealth.

He still had one more feast and this last one was more important than the others. He would have to go away to some spaxno's (place of supernatural beings) and there he would fast and be alone for a long time. He would also make for himself or acquire a naxno's (supernatural) to exhibit to the people at his next feast or potlatch; and he would also have to have new songs to sing at the feast. It was at this feast that the nephew ^{recorded} threw away all signs of mourning for his uncle, and assumed his uncle's position. Also at this feast he appeared before the people for the first time with a red stripe on each cheek, and the feast was known as



wil x mes .
where partakes red

Each time he gave a big feast he was privileged to wear an additional red strip on his face, and he becomes a very important person in the tribe.

Not everybody could ^{afford to} give many feasts of this kind. Often the host became very poor because he had given away all his wealth, but he was highly regarded in the tribe. He was assisted in these feasts only by his nephews and own immediate maternal relatives, and these would have to be paid back, but not until some member gave a feast and then the person would donate liberally.
(If you help me in my feast, I help you in yours)

There are other forms of feasts among the q, txa'ta. One is known as the
sa'iyɔ'kɔɔ "to wash off" . If any accident (not a
off wash serious accident) occurred

that brought the ridicule of the tribe, such as slipping or making a mistake or falling overboard, the feast was given by the person who met with the accident, so that no more would be said about it.

A Tutska example inserted by Beynon:

In 1913, up the Nass River, a Port Simpson chief saxsa'xt (qispɔwudwa'dɔ) was called upon to interpret during a church service. He was very nervous and fainted away, and was taken from the church building. After the Port Simpson people went away to their houses, the Nass qispɔwudwa'dɔ people, much ashamed, got together and gave a feast to wash away the memory of the accident. They announced "We will forget about the accident to the qisp. chief," and no more was said about it.

Marriage feasts:

And then there are the feasts before marriage. When a man wanted to marry, or at least when his mother and uncle thought he should marry, they would pick out the woman whom they thought best for the young man and the mother would go and speak to the parents and relatives of the intended bride. This was known as *də d a l g. a' s k* "speaking for"

1. After consent had been obtained, the man's people would call a feast "for all his maternal relatives and members of his phratry" i.e. if he were a *lax sk i k* he would invite all *lax sk i k s* to his first feast before marriage. Here the marriage would be formally announced to everyone.

2. Then [was] the marriage feast provided by the relatives of the woman, to which the entire tribe was invited. Although provided by the bride's relatives, this would have to be paid back by the groom.

The groom gave "a huge gift (a sort of dowry)" to the bride's mother. She in turn called the groom's maternal relatives and gave them all gifts. The latter ceremony is known as *x k e t* (presenting), and these gifts were not returnable.

Naming Feast: Then there is the feast of assuming a name, when a young man assumes the position of *lax k a g e t*. This is known as *o' i g.* "to assume" (Byron asked many people, but did not find out if this was a Tsimshian or foreign word). [This was also the feast] when assuming or exhibiting a new crest or erecting a new Totem pole.

The above were about the only regular feasts among the qitxáta in ancient days.

But a chief, whenever he wished anything done or any favours done by anyone, always gave a feast to make known his wants "and he always got what he wanted."

The ranking of the feasts or pottlaches was

1. x m e s

2. 'o i g.

The others then came all of the same rank.

It was not considered good form to give a feast without some purpose or other of benefit to the giver of the feast.