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Page 358 Transcription (revised Boas-Hunt alphabet)

At all these festivals masks are occasionally worn which represent the ancestor of the clan and refer to its legend. I will give one example: In the potlatch of the clan Kwəkwakw!em of the Q!omoyɛʷe, a mask representing one of the forefathers of the present clan (not their first ancestor), whose name was Nō'lis or Watsə appears,—a double mask, surmounted by a bear (→ [fig. 5](#)).



The bear broke the dam which prevented the property of No'lis going up the river. The outer mask shows No'lis in a state of rage vanquishing his rivals; the inner side shows him kindly disposed, distributing property in a friendly way. His song is as follows: ¹



1. A bear is standing at the River of the Wanderer who traveled all over the world.
2. Wild is the bear at the river of the Wanderer who traveled all over the world.
3. A dangerous fish is going up the river. It will put a limit to the lives of the people.
4. Ya! The siseyul² is going up the river. It will put a limit to the lives of the people.
5. Great things are going up the river. It is going up the river the copper of the eldest brother of our tribes.

Another song used in these festivals is as follows: ³



1. The heat of the chief of the tribes will not have mercy upon the people.
2. The great fire of our chief in which stones⁴ are glowing will not have mercy upon the people.
3. You, my rival, will eat what is left over when I dance in my grease feast, when I, the chief of the tribes, perform the fire dance.
4. Too great is, what you are doing, our chief. Who equals our chief! He is giving feasts to the whole world.
5. Certainly he has inherited from his father that he never gives a small feast to the lower chiefs, the chief of the tribes.

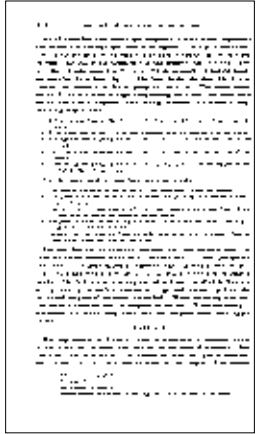
The clan Hæ'naleno have the tradition that their ancestor used the fabulous double-headed snake for his belt and bow. In their potlatches the chief of the gens appears, therefore, dancing with a belt of this description and with a bow carved in the shape of the double-headed snake. The bow is simply a long carved and painted stick to which a string running through a number of rings and connecting with the horns and tongues of the snake is attached. When the string is pulled, the horns are erected and the tongues pulled out. When the string is slackened, the horns drop down and the tongues slide back again (→ [Plate 15](#)).



IV. MARRIAGE.

Marriage among the Kwakiutl must be considered a purchase, which is conducted on the same principles as the purchase of a copper. But the object bought is not only the woman, but also the right of membership in her clan for the future children of the couple. I explained

1 → [See Appendix, page 670.](#)
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**this mask Belong to the yā'ex·agəmeʷ [ʷnɛ'mema] of the q!omoyɛʷe
 this mask is shown By the chief when he gives a Big Potlatch to all the Defferent tribes
 ...[it represents the ancestor] yɛx·agəmeʷ (Hunt 1931, p. 4891).**

The bear broke the dam which prevented the property of No'lis going up the river. The outer mask shows No'lis in a state of rage vanquishing his rivals; the inner side shows him kindly disposed, distributing property in a friendly way. His song is as follows: ¹



**Grizzly Bear song of the Kwəkwakw!əm of the Q!omoyɛʷe
 Baɣwɛs Bear song belong[ing] to Nulis (Hunt 1932, p. 5436).**

1. A bear is standing at the River of the Wanderer who traveled all over the world.
2. Wild is the bear at the river of the Wanderer who traveled all over the world.
3. A dangerous fish is going up the river. It will put a limit to the lives of the people.
4. Ya! The sisɛyul² is going up the river. It will put a limit to the lives of the people.
5. Great things are going up the river. It is going up the river the copper of the eldest brother of our tribes.

Another song used in these festivals is as follows: ³



[A] great greas[e] feast song of yāqewed of gexsem of the gwetela (Hunt 1932, p. 5436)

1. The heat of the chief of the tribes will not have mercy upon the people.
2. The great fire of our chief in which stones⁴ are glowing will not have mercy upon the people.
3. You, my rival, will eat what is left over when I dance in my grease feast, when I, the chief of the tribes, perform the fire dance.
4. Too great is, what you are doing, our chief. Who equals our chief! He is giving feasts to the whole world.
5. Certainly he has inherited from his father that he never gives a small feast to the lower chiefs, the chief of the tribes.

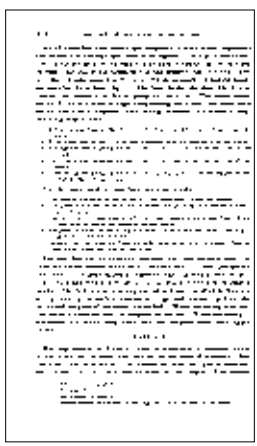
The clan Hae'naleno have the tradition that their ancestor used the fabulous double-headed snake for his belt and bow. In their potlatches the chief of the gens appears, therefore, dancing with a belt of this description and with a bow carved in the shape of the double-headed snake. The bow is simply a long carved and painted stick to which a string running through a number of rings and connecting with the horns and tongues of the snake is attached. When the string is pulled, the horns are erected and the tongues pulled out. When the string is slackened, the horns drop down and the tongues slide back again (→ [Plate 15](#)).



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Page 358 Transcription (revised B)

At all these festivals mas its legend. I will give one exar representing one of the forefat Wats appears,—a double ma



The bear broke the dam which No'lis in a state of rage vanqu in a friendly way. His song is



1. A bear is standing at tl
2. Wild is the bear at the
3. A dangerous fish is going up the river. It will put a limit to the lives of the people.
4. Ya! The siseyul² is going up the river. It will put a limit to the lives of the people.
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Keywords	<input type="text" value="Separate terms with a comma"/>	Prerogative set	<input type="text" value="Select One"/>
Tags	<input type="text" value="Separate terms with a comma"/>	Name of prerogative holder	<input type="text" value="Select One"/>
Object type	<input type="text" value="Select One"/>	Consultant	<input type="text" value="Select One"/>
Collection location	<input type="text" value="Select One"/>	Collector	<input type="text" value="Select One"/>
Language group	<input type="text" value="Select One"/>	Date of collection/ composition	<input type="text" value="Select One"/>
Kin group ('na'mima) affiliation	<input type="text" value="Select One"/>	Repository location	<input type="text" value="Select One"/>

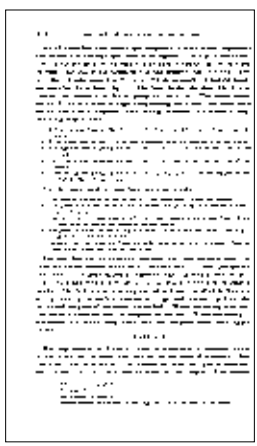
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Revised Boas-Hunt
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58 Transcription (revised Boas-Hunt alphabet)

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Page 358 Transcription (revised Boas-Hunt alphabet)

Images

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Fig. 5



Fig. 5



Fig. 5.1



Fig. 5.2

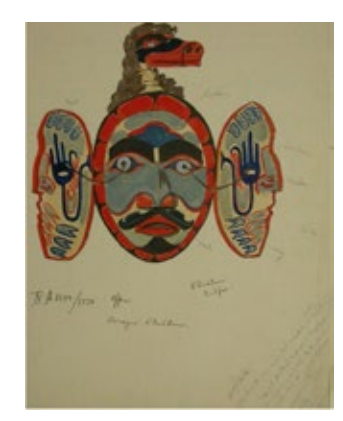


Fig. 5.3

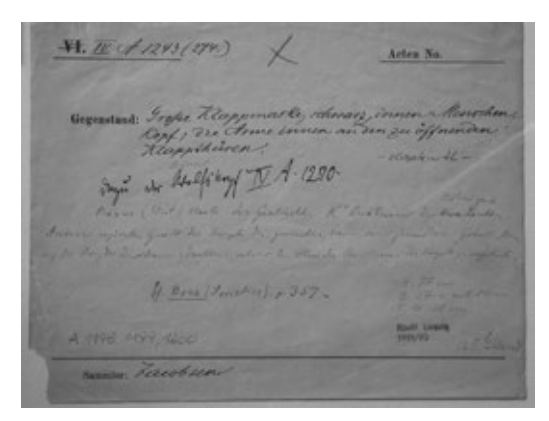


Fig. 5.4

357 5 'al'omwá'ya' on wolf on forehead ya'x'ag'emí mask of the gomoyáye this mask was shown by L'igohas here in Fort Rupert when he gave away blankets, canoe canoes to all the different tribes

Fig. 5.5

Pl. 357, Fig. 5. Mask (of the Ya'x'ag'emí, worn by L'igohas) of the al'omwá'ya', When giving away baskets and canoes to all the tribes, it is called al'omwá'ya' wáta (= Having-wolf-on-forehead), or ya'x'ag'emí (= Ya'x'ag'emí' mask).

Fig. 5.6



Fig. 5.7



Fig. 5.8

wáta, and their yá'x'ag'emí for just rather much as they 357-155. This mask belongs to the yá'x'ag'emí of the gomoyáye this mask is shown by the al'ig when he gives a big ballah to all the different tribes, and it is never given to anyone unless he has a son born from his wife when his father dies without one. Then his son has to use it, and the al'ig of the tribe that is the yá'x'ag'emí or yá'x'ag'emí for they have a yá'x'ag'emí yá'x'ag'emí among them and their yá'x'ag'emí is a wolf head on a staff on a wolf mask, and many tribes because it is shown by the al'ig ballah of the yá'x'ag'emí

Fig. 5.9

Plate 15



Pl. 15

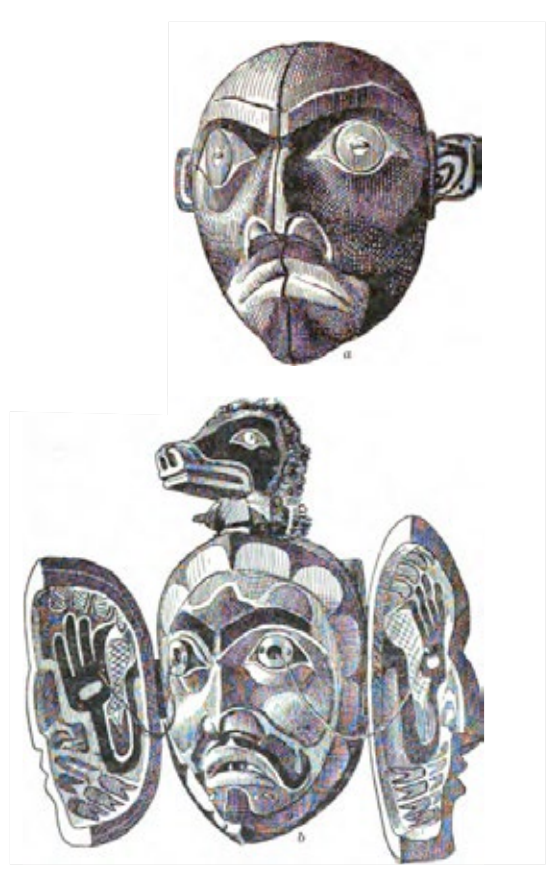


Pl. 15.1

Annotation

X Close

Fig. 5 (from page 357)



Johan Adrian Jacobsen collected this transformation mask (Fig. 5.1) for the Berlin Museum around 1883; however, he recorded no collection location nor specific information about it. Soon after, Jacobsen published an illustration of the mask in the account of his travels along the North Pacific Coast (Fig. 5.2), although with no direct reference to it in the text (Jacobsen 1884:128, 1977:78). Likely around 1894, Boas used a colored painting of the mask by Albert Grünwedel (Fig. 5.3) to solicit information about it. According to his notes on the painting, it depicted an ancestor figure in two emotional states—one on the outer and one on the inner face—surmounted by a bear that played a key role in an ancestral encounter. He further identified it as belonging to the ^εne^εmema “K'kwā'kum” (Kwekwakw!em) of the “Qōmōyūē” (Q!omoyē^εwe) Band, and referred to a “Bax'us” (Baχwes) song related to the mask's use, but did not record lyrics for it. These field notes likely provided the basis for the information that Boas added to the Berlin museum's catalogue card for the object (Fig. 5.4), possibly around 1895.

Boas's description of the mask in the 1897 text also seems to be drawn from these field notes. However, he leaves some of the notes out (identification of the anatomical parts painted on the mask's inner and outer faces), and he adds new material: a name for the ancestor in question, “No'lis,” along with the lyrics to a song used with the mask. The original Kwak'wala of the song, with an interlinear translation, is given in the → Appendix on pg. 670-71. The mask is noteworthy as one of the few illustrated in the book's section on potlatches, as opposed to the “secret society” sections, and as an indicator that Boas recognized the difference between the two types of mask and their context of use. Boas may have chosen it to illustrate his discussion of the distribution of property during potlatches because the song he linked to the mask invokes property.

At some point, likely in the early 1920s, George Hunt recorded a different ancestor's name, “yex-agem[e],” next to Fig. 5 in his personal copy of the 1897 book. In his 1921 manuscript, he expanded on this note, calling Fig. 5 “ālānemegēwālā ya^εex-agem^ε or wolf on forehead yā^εex-ageme^ε mask of the q!omoyē^εwe,” (Fig. 5.5; see also Fig. 5.9), differing from Boas both in the interpretation of the mask's top figure and in the kin group, the Ya^εex-ageme, that he identified as the owners. Hunt further commented that “this mask was shown By L!āqo^εas Here in Fort Rupert when he give away Blankets and canoes to all the Defferent tribes,” information Boas retained in his unpublished manuscript of 1924 (Fig. 5.6). L!āqo^εas was evidently the Ya^εex-ageme chief of that name whose many potlatches are the subject of a long series of texts published in Boas 1925. Kwakwaka'wakw community researchers have collected genealogical and historical information that explains how the stewardship of Ya^εex-ageme hereditary prerogatives subsequently came to be in the hands of members of the Kwekwakw!em group of the same band, in particular the successive inheritors of the name Nolis (Nulis), thus providing context for Boas's initial, incomplete documentation of the mask.

Masks representing the same figure have been claimed and displayed by a successive series of chiefs holding the title Nulis throughout the 20th and into the 21st centuries, and it is now known as the Nulis mask. One version was carved in the 1930s or 40s (Fig. 5.7) and collected by the UBC Museum of Anthropology in 1973 (Hawthorn 1979:243; see also Mayer and Shelton 2009:39). Another version, carved in the 1980s by Hank Speck, is currently (in 2012) claimed by the present Chief Nulis, Ed Newman, who had it danced at his 2011 potlatch in Alert Bay (Fig. 5.8). While none were direct copies of the previous versions, each represents a manifestation of the same chiefly prerogative. It is not currently known whether publication of the earlier masks in Boas and Hawthorn facilitated the creation of the subsequent versions or if they were carved based on memory, direct instruction, or general familiarity with the motif.

The mask collected by Jacobsen was pilfered by the Soviets at the end of WWII and sent first to Leningrad and later to Leipzig, from where it was returned to Berlin in 1992. It has a spruce root bite piece on the back (indicating that it was rigged to be worn on the face, unlike some chief's masks meant only to be held), it shows signs of once having had hair plugs (now missing) inserted into the top rim, and of having been re- or overpainted at some point prior to collection (suggesting that it may have been used on multiple ceremonial occasions or transferred between owners).

In a 1950 essay, André Breton, founder of the Surrealist movement, illustrated the Berlin mask as pictured in Boas (1897) and drew on Boas's original interpretation to suggest the power of such mechanical masks from the Northwest Coast to embody philosophical notions of transformation (in *Neuf: Revue de maison de la médecine* [June 1, 1950], reprinted in Mauzé [2013:293]).

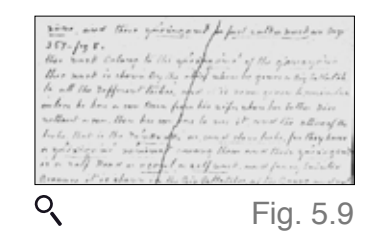
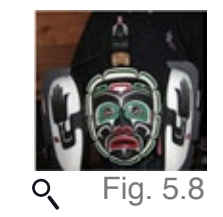
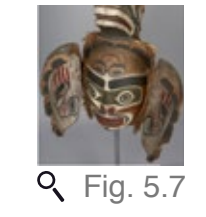
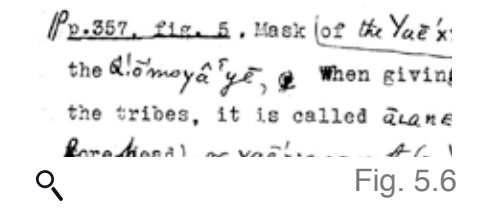
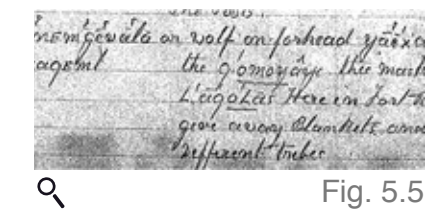
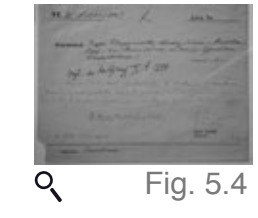
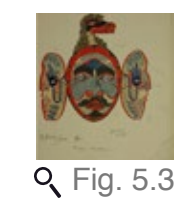
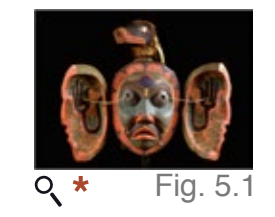
The Berlin mask was also published in Bolz and Sanner (1999:180).

POTLATCH MASK OF THE K'KWA'KUM.

Double mask capable of being opened and closed by means of strings.
 (a) Outer view, representing the ancestor in an angry state of mind, vanquishing his rivals. (b) The mask opened, representing the ancestor in a pleasant state of mind, distributing property.
 (IV A, No. 1243, Royal Ethnographical Museum, Berlin. Collected by A. Jacobsen.)

wolf-on-forehead yā^εex-ageme^ε mask of the q!omoyē^εwe (Hunt 1920, p. 1878) (see Fig. 5.5)

yā^εex-agem^ε or fast walker mask (Hunt 1931, p. 4890) (see Fig. 5.9)



Click for more



Page 358 Transcription (revised Boas-Hunt alphabet)

Fig. 5.1

X Close*

Transformation Mask collected around 1883 by Johan Adrian Jacobsen (IVA 1243, Ethnologisches Museum Berlin)

Related media






-  * Song recorded at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, 1893. [Peabody Museum, Harvard; American Folklife Center, Library of Congress]
-  * Dance performance filmed by Franz Boas in Fort Rupert, 1930. [Burke Museum]

[NOTE: The audio and video content here does not relate to this mask; they are included for demonstration only. During the course of the project, we hope to identify the cultural content and current custodians of the performances captured by such recordings in consultation with the Kwakwaka'wakw.]



Additional views



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- 1 → See Appendix, page 670.
- 2 → See page 371.
- 3 → See Appendix, page 671.
- 4 Stones heated in the fire for boiling the food to be used in the feast.

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Compare Related Materials

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1. Select one of the highlighted passages.

358 REPORT OF NATIONAL MUSEUM, 1895.

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2. Wild is the bear at the river of the Wanderer who traveled all over the world.
3. A dangerous fish is going up the river. It will put a limit to the lives of the people.
4. Ya! The a'siqū² is going up the river. It will put a limit to the lives of the people.
5. Great things are going up the river. It is going up the river the copper of the eldest brother of our tribes.

Another song used in these festivals is as follows:³

1. The heat of the chief of the tribes will not have mercy upon the people.
2. The great fire of our chief in which stones are glowing will not have mercy upon the people.
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² See page 371.
³ See Appendix, page 671.
⁴ Stones heated in the fire for boiling the food to be used in the feast.

2. Select a maximum of three documents to compare their transcriptions.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Boas Fieldnotes ca. 1894	Hunt Manuscript ca. 1895	Boas Preparatory Typescript ca. 1896	Hunt Manuscript 1920s	Boas Revisions 1924	Hunt Manuscript 1930s	Posthumous Publication 1966

Boas Fieldnotes

ca. 1894 (AMNH)



(Geschlossen {Closed}) – Kwakiutl. Das in ein Gesicht stellt die Mis-mis-salame dar. Man auf der Maske ist der Wasco. (Jacobsen). {The image on the face portrays the Mis-mis-salame. The man (creature) on top of the mask is the Wasco.} Bā'xus (song).

[On diagram, indicating mask IVA1243]: K'kwā'kum himself. Wild face.

[On diagram, indicating accessory IVA1270]: bear, who broke the dam of the river of property.

[On second card]: Offen {Open}. Qōmōyūē K'kwā'kum.

Hunt Manuscript

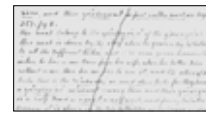
1920s (APS)



ālānēmēgēwālā ya'ex-agēmł or wolf-on-forhead yā'ex-agēmē mask of the q!omoyēwe this mask was shown By L!āqoḷas Here in Fort Rupert when he give away Blankets and canoes to all the Defferent tribes

Hunt Manuscript

1930s (APS)



yā'ex-agēmē or fast walkers. the wolves. all the carveing of there Houses Posts is carved wolf. and Paintings. and their feasting Deshes is wolves or āLā'nēm. or grizzly Bear or nāne. and their yā'ex-agēmł or fast walker mask [is] on → Page 357-fig 5.

this mask Belong to the yā'ex-agēmē [nēmema] of the q!omoyēwe[.] this mask is shown By the chief when he gives a Big Potlatch to all the Defferent tribes. and it is never given to [a] son-in-law onless he has a son Born from his wife when her Father dies without a son. then her son has to use it.

and the others of the [brother] tribe [i.e., nēmema]. that is [part of] the Dē'nāx-da'x^u or sand stone tribe. for they [also] have a yā'ex-agēmē nēmēmōt among them[.] and their yā'ex-agēmł is a Wolf Head or aLEMł. or wolf mask. and [it is] fancy Painted Because it is shown in the Big Potlatches. of the Baḫ[w]es and not in the tslets!eqā or winter Dance[.]

now there are lots of People [who] calls the ya'ex-agēmē crabs. that is mistake. it is true[.] yāx-agēmē for that is [i.e., was?] his name. Befor he went out in his canoe to spear flounders or Pāpā'yā xā Pā'ese and while he looking for the flounder he saw a crab Runing away fast then it was going so fast. that he could not spear it. then yāx-agēmē said yāx-agēmē west!aa q!omāsā. or go to[o] fast the crab there and when yāx-agēmē got lots of children they call them ya'ex-agēmē. and Enemy tribe calls them crabs instade [of] wolves the Right name.