THE DISTRIBUTED TEXT IN DIGITAL MEDIA:

A collaborative project to annotate
Franz Boas's historic 1897 monograph
in print and digital editions,
and to link it with archival material
and current indigenous knowledge.

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() Constant

THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND THE SECRET SOCIETIES OF THE KWAKIUTL INDIANS,

BY

FRANZ BOAS.

BASED ON PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS AND ON NOTES MADE BY MR. GEORGE HUNT.

From the Report of the U. S. National Museum for 1895, pages 311-737
with fifty-one plates.

WASHINGTON:

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The Range of Materials

Textual Resources (APS/Columbia):

- Boas's field notebooks from 1893-1896, plus later ones with notes regarding this text.
- Hunt's original manuscript pages (at least 30 pgs).
- Hunt/Boas correspondence and museum accession files (hundreds of pgs).
- Hunt's additional narrative texts and songs (in manuscript and published in 1905-06; ca. 45 pgs).
- -Hunt's corrections and additions to the 1897 text, orthography, object captions, songs etc (ca. 850 ms. pgs).
- Sections from Boas 1966 publication utilizing Hunt's corrections (ca. 100 pgs).

Photographic Resources:

- Original and additional negatives from 1893 Chicago World's Fair (Peabody Museum; AMNH): ca. 20 images.
- Original and additional negatives from 1894/5 Ft. Rupert fieldwork (AMNH; NAA): ca. 170 images.

Material Culture Resources:

- Jacobsen and Boas Collections (Ethnologisches Museum Berlin): ca. 125 objects.
- Boas/Hunt and Swan collections (National Museum Natural History): ca. 75 objects.
- Boas/Hunt collections (American Museum Natural History): ca. 20 objects.
- Boas/Hunt collections (Field Museum): up to 13 objects.
- Boas collection (Canadian Museum of Civilization): objects. 3 objects.
- Misc. collections (British Museum): 3 objects.
- Other collections: 4 objects.
- Boas research drawings (AMNH): ca. 100 items.

Phonographic Resources:

- Boas cylinder recordings from 1893 World's Fair or later (Ethnologisches Museum Berlin; Archive of Traditional Music): among ca. 160 cylinders/disks.
- Gilman cylinder recordings from 1893 World's Fair (American Folklife Center): 18 recordings.

the boat rock considerably, but I did not become seasick. The captain was kind enough to set me ashore. After some whisting a cance arrived. It was George Hunt, who had been on the shore when I arrived and had seen the boat. We went up to his house, which consists of one room. It has some kind of partitions, though. Considering the fact that he has six children, two of whom are married and also living there, you can imagine how crowded the house was

Saturday, November 17: As I told you, I have had no time to write. Day before yesterday I was interrupted by a few Indians and there-fore could not continue my letter. Hunt has another little house, built in the same place in order to have more room. I am sleeping there now. The house is not finished, except for the outside; there is no heater yet. The first morning we discu sed what I planned to do, and I invited all the Indians to a feast, which took place in the ernoon.4 That was a sight! There were about 250 Indians in the house-men, women, and children. They were painted red and black, and wore jewelry; each was dressed in his cedar bark cloak. The lower tribal units [?] came first, and when they were all here, the members of the secret societies arrived. When they arrived everything was dead silent. Their place is behind the fire in the back of the room. Welcoming speeches were held for me and I was given the name Heiltsakuls, "the silent one" [or literally, the "non-speaking one"].6 Then the master of ceremonies called the singers and told them what to sing. Every tribe-there were three tribes presentsang two songs, after which my "feast" came: hard tack and moasses. Before we ate I made my speech. I said that I had wanted to come for a long time and that I was glad to be here now. Then I spoke to the people who had been in Chicago and gave them

Boas 1894 (Rohner 1969)



Hunt to Boas (1.14.1896)

The Indians of British Columbia,

takes place about midwinter. There was excitement in all the houses. Here preparations were made for feasts, there the approaching ceremonies were earnestly discussed. Others were busy collecting all their property in order to pay oil debts, which is considered one of the most important transactions in the life of these

Boas (1896)

X. THE WINTER CEREMONIAL AT FORT RUPERT, 1895-96.

In the preceding chapter I have given a general description of the ceremonial of the initiation of a single novice. When the ceremony is actually in progress, there are several novices to be initiated, feasts are being held, and numerous incidental ceremonies are performed which depend upon circumstances, such as atonement for mistakes, rivalry between chiefs, and so forth. In order to make clear the character of the ceremonial, I will describe in the present chapter the ceremonial as it actually took place and so far as I witnessed it in the winter of

THE KWAKIUTL INDIANS.

895—96. At that time three tribes had assembled at Fort Rupert Tsit/xis)—the Kwakiutl, the Koskimo, and Nü'q'oaqtôq. The Koskimo included also the G-ō'p'enôx, L'ā'sq'enôx, and Gua'ts'enôx. I eached Fort Rupert on November 15, 1895, and shall record here what saw.

On the 16th of November one of the Nā'q'oaqtôq gave a feast. The wakiutl had their seats in the rear of the house, the Koskimo at the right hand side, the Na'q'oaqtoq on the left hand side. When all had assembled, the chief speaker of the Na'q'oaqtôq said: "Welcome, friends. Now that you have all come in, take the handles of your batons and sing." Then the batons were distributed. Planks were laid for beating time. While the people were still coming in, one of the quë'tsEm (quë'qutsa) began to tease a fool dancer, who intended to give up his dance and to become a que'qutsa. He pulled his nose, rubbed it with snow, and threw snowballs at it. As stated before, the fool dancer is supposed to have a long nose, and to resent all allusions to the nose. He does not allow it to be touched. The quē'qutsa tried in this manner to excite him so as to prevent him from leaving the seal society and becoming a que'qutsa. Finally, a number of que'qutsa joined the first que'tsEm. They pulled the nose of the fool dancer, spat on it, and smeared it with grease, notwithstanding his endeavors to escape them. Finally, they tied him to one of the house posts and continued to maltreat his nose. Now the Kwakiutl sang two songs. They were followed by the Koskimo, who sang two songs in their turn. Meanwhile the meal, which consisted of soap berries, had been prepared, and the speaker held up a dish which was intended for the first hā'mats'a. He shouted: "This is the dish of Yaqois." The dish was carried to him. The members of the seal society received their shares in order, next the women, and finally the que'qutsa. Now the host turned to the fool dancer who was tied to the post, and whom the people were teasing again. He said: "I will ask your friends to stay at their places for a little while because I am cooking for you, and wish to feed you." Then several of the fool dancers came to his assistance. They licked the grease off from his nose, untied him, and took him back to his seat. As soon as the dishes were distributed, the host's assistants began to prepare the second course, which consisted of rice. While the people were eating, the different societies uttered their cries:

"The hens are pecking!"

NAT MUS 95-35

"The great seals keep on chewing."4

"G-äxmens nenemo'k" wi'laëlela. Wai'g"a d'axla'litaxs t'à'miayu qa s We came friends all in the house. Go on! take at the handle lâ'g"ustâlag"aös, nënzmo'k".

"pupward (sing), friends.

"tê'alvalag Yā'qots.

"Trinka'ig"a qasqāb'.

"Yā'laxlolar qann'eosig"a më'emkoatsë'k". After:

The Winter Ceremonial 179

acquired in marriage, being given to them by their fathers-in-law. The Cannibal dancers, as well as all other dance groups, each of which forms a social unit during the ceremonisi, are in no way related among themselves, either by descent or by acquisition of their position by marriage. Nevertheless, when dancers are called to perform, they may be called up in the order of numwyma to which they belong.

The conditions among the Sparrows are different, because their positions as officers are strictly determined by partilineal descent in the male line and according to primogeniture. Females, even if first-born, cannot officially

THE WINTER CEREMONIAL AT FORT RUPERT, 1895

In 1895, when I spent part of the winter at Fort Rupert, the winter ceremonial was still alive, but the procedure was highly complicated, because three tribes, the Kva'grul, Koskimo, and *Na'k'kwax'dx'w were assembled and had joined in the celebration. The characteristic traits of the ceremonials of these tribes have been discussed in the preceding chapter, and the tribal differences made the whole picture somewhat confused.

When the winter ceremonial of a single tribe is in progress, much of what actually happens depends upon circumstances. Feasts are being held, marriage debts are repaid, potlatches of various kinds are held. Besides this, mistakes made in ceremonies or accidents to performers modify the orderly orneculure.

The character of the winter ceremonial can best be described by a record of what I saw in the winter of 1895.

I reached Fort Rupert on November 15, unfortunately too late to see the impressive opening of the ceremonial season. On the sixteenth of November one of the "Na'k!wax'da'x" gave a feast. The Kwakiutl had their seats in the rear of the house; the Koskimo, at the right-hand side, and the "Na'k!wax'da"x", on the left-hand side. When all had assembled, the chief speaker of the 'Na'k/wax'da'x" said: "Welcome, friends. Now that you have all come in, take the handles of your batons and sing." Then the batons were distributed. Planks were laid for beating time. While the people were still coming in, one of the head Sparrows began to tease a Fool dancer, who intended to give up his dance and to become a Sparrow. He pulled his nose, rubbed it with snow, and threw snowballs at it. As stated before, the Fool dancer is supposed to have a long nose and to resent all allusions to it. He does not allow it to be touched. The Sparrow tried in this manner to excite him so as to prevent him from leaving the Seal society and becoming a Sparrow. Finally, a number of Sparrows joined the first head Sparrow. They pulled the nose of the Fool dancer, spat on it, and smeared it with grease, notwithstanding his endeavors to escape them. Finally, they tied him to one of the house posts and continued to maltreat his nose. Now the Kwa'g'ul sang two songs. They were followed by the Koskimo, who

Boas (1966)

Original field manuscript

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He must carry a wing bone of an eagle and drink through it, as his lips must not touch the brim of his cup. He also wears a copper nail to scratch his head with, as his nails must not touch his skin, else they would come off. For sixteen days after he has eaten human flesh be must not eat any warm food, and for four months he is not allowed to blow hot food in order to cool it. For a whole year he must not touc's his wife, nor is he allowed to gamble or to work. When the dancing season is over, he feigns to have forgotten the ordinary ways of man. and has to learn everything anew. He acts as though he were very hungry all the time.

The whole ceremonial of bringing back the novice is, according to the ideas of the Kwakiutl, a repetition of the same ceremonial performed by the wolves who attempted to bring back their novices; and the following tradition, which, however, is not complete in all its details. is made to account for its origin:1

Mink made a salmon trap back of Qā'logwis, the village of the Kwakiutl. The different tribes held a winter ceremonial, and the sons of the chief of the wolves had disappeared in the woods. While there they spoiled Mink's salmon trap. For three days they did so. Then Mink became angry. He made up his mind to watch who was tampering with his salmon trap. He went there in the evening and hid near his salmon weir. Now the four sons of the wolf, who had disappeared in the woods, came. They went right up to the salmon weir and took out the salmon that had gone into it. Then Mink said to himself, "You are the ones who tampered with my weir." They sat down and ate the salmon raw. Mink crawled up to them from behind and killed them with his club. He cut off their heads, and went home carrying the four heads. Nobody knew that he had killed them; even his mother did not know it.

Now the wolves were going to bring back their novices after two days. When the time came for bringing the novices back, Kuē'kuaxāoe was master of ceremonies. Mink closed all the holes and chinks of his own house, and tied ropes of cedar around it to strengthen it.

Before daylight Mink went in his canoe to Me'mk umlis. He made a salmon weir of stones. Then he went and sat down on a rock. He looked at his weir. "What fish is in my trap?" he said. "A small bull head," replied the trap. Then he scratched his head. "Oh, that is pretty; I am working hard looking after my trap! Throw it into the water!" He asked again, "What fish is in my trap?" It replied, "A small flounder." He threw it into the water, and then the trap had caught first an eel, then a dogfish, a perch, a silver perch, a cohoes salmon, a dog salmon, a humpback salmon, a steel-head salmon, a spring salmon, and finally a si'siul. Then he said, "That is it; that is it!" and he was glad. He took the si'sink out of his trap and put it down on the rock. He broke off hemlock branches, laid them into his cance, and put the fish on top of them. Then he went home to his house at Appendix, page 725.

Cross refs:

THE KWAKIUTL INDIANS.

[To page 538.]

L'E'SELAG-PLA 70 ALO"LENOX.

Lā'wayōguila laē L'ē'sElag-i'la ā'Lēg-aas Qālogwis g-ō'xdEmsa sa 1 Salmon trap made it is mink back of Crooked Beach Kwā'kiul. Ts'ē'ts'ēqa laē da nā'Xua qa is g-ā'yimōlas a'mE'nqawak". Kwakiuti. Winter dance it is all of different

BOAS AND HUNT, KWAKIUTI, TEXTS

the-Sun did. That is the end.

go of him at once, because Owner-of- | "në'x-"laë. Wa, hë'x-"idarm"lä'wisë Southeast-Wind was very much afraid mex*e'daya, ytsa la'x de da'dafaq, qaxs of Born-to-be-the-Sun. Therefore the Lö'max "tdaë k-il" e'dë "mela'lanukwas southeast wind does not blow all the t.le'szlag i'lakwe. Wa, he mis la'g ilatime, on account of what Born-to-be- sox k-ies he'menalaem la ya'lasa 'me- 5 ła'sē qa axā's tlē'snlag i'lakwē. Wā, lar'm la'ba.

Mink kills the Sons of the Wolf.

Born-to-be-the-Sun thought he would get | la'k-festia.

This is a talk about Born-to-be-the- | Grax'm la gwa'gwex stala lax 1.78'sz-Sun when he did mischief to the novices | lag ilakwaxs | la'e "mō'mē'xtaxa x lsā'-[those who had disappeared] of the lasa ya wix ilasa g a la neno na, yixa 10 giver of the winter dance of the first total gama'yas No'ng extâ e, ylx g'i-Wolves; namely, the princes of Head- gamasyasa neno'ne. Wa, la lata pa'la Wolf, the chief of the Wolves. They qaxs k-lea/saë hësha"mëxa tstawu'nxë. were hungry because they had no kind Lan'm'laë x-ts'ë'dëda mo'kwë tōtan'lof food in winter. Then the four princes gamasyasa g l'gamasyas atō lenoxwe 15 of the chief of the Wolves disappeared, qaxs ya**wixlae qaz'da nu's*ne'mixbe because he was giving a winter dance to the myth people. The children of sa'semasa gr'gama'yaxs la'e i.'e'szlagrithe chief had not been away long when slakwe sa'ng aa't ria qa's g a'yōtas qa's

Boas and Hunt (1906)

The Winter Ceremonial.

(1) Mink and the Wolves. / (Told by La'bid, a La'alax - 57 sendayo.) /

The myth people all lived at Crooked-Beach (Qa'logwis) and the Wolves lived at the north end of the village site at Crooked-Beach. (5) Then the Wolves had for their chief Head-Wolf, and the chief had for his wife Wolf-Woman. Four men / were the children of Head-Wolf. Not very friendly were / Head-Wolf and K!wë'k!waxā'was and his younger brothers, / Mink and Raccoon, and Deer, and Land-otter, (10) and Squirrel. It is said that / Head-Wolf and Klwē'klwaxā'wēt did not know each other's mind, / and therefore it is known by the recent men that a long time ago the Wolves / and Klwe'klwaxa'wet and his younger brothers hated each other when first / daylight came into our world. It is said that the (15) Wolves and K'we'k'waxa'we and his younger brothers never met.

Boas (1930)

Kwakiutl Tales

14 late'mtla'wis yexwa'tel. | xwê'tltlac a'mlayasa ö'le'g'nn. la'tlacda tő'x*wide. | tô'x*widzfläeda nā'r.la*ye. lā'dāe | talā'gzmnux**lasa plēplanlomas menexa. (10) lā 'slāeda beklwisē' nē l'itses lā witslenatye begwa'nema. | da'laxa si'siyut, twese'g mx sa si'siyut. 25 g-ăx*lăe g-i'gema*yas, yă'qieg-altses gwê'g ilasta qăê'da | ō'gwu-qala bē'begwanem. k'iê'lak ax lê'lqwelata*yăena*yas. — hê'lax unts | gwe'x cidas qunts k'le'satunts qlapla'la. a'emax unts gwe'l'id la'xox awi'estaxsa (15) 'na'la. - 'wi'g'ilatlatoxents la'. mč'latele. – gwā'la | wel*e'm *nē'k'oL. wāg'ax'ox nu'ye*mesa la'xos wa'yada*yut.qosunts | awi'snagwise. lasmo'xo na'yumt. yesents | Lia'syo'na'kwalaL.

Mink

Told by G1'qalas, a Gwa'waenoxu

tā'tawayux"sila'lāe Llē'anlag i'lāxes tā'wayu. lā'alāe | gwā'le tā'wayās, lā'elāe wztā'so', — 'mā'sos mātslā'yaqos, | tāwayu, — qa 'mā'sbitsla'wes | klwzmā'bitsla'we. — yā, tz!zzstz'ndaxte'laqos. — saš'x smslaxšā. (5) — smā'sos mātslāsyagos, tā'wayu. - qa 'mā'sbitsla wes | pa'esbitsla we. (Then in succession wa'ldzos, xwe'lgwam, në'ta'e, q'wa'k'ila, sa'talam, g'exwa' gwa'x'nis, dzewe'n, go'la, k'!ā'ema, and last:) si'siutbitslawe. | - yū'wis,

Boas (1943)



Berlin IVA1243 (Jacobsen ca.1882)



Jacobsen book (1884)



Boas notes (date ??)

prestige of the rival, but also for the sole purpose of gaining distinction. This is done mainly at the time when houses are built, when totem poles are erected, or when a son has been initiated by the spirit presiding over the secret society of his clau, to which ceremony refer-

ence has previously been made. It seems that in olden times slaves were sometimes killed and buried under the house posts or under totem posts. Later on, instead of being killed, they were given away as presents. Whenever this was done, the inverted figure of a man, or an inverted head, was placed on the pole. In other cases coppers were buried under the posts, or given away. This custom still continues, and in all such cases coppers are shown on the post, often in such a way that they are being held or

bitten by the totem animals (Plate 14). At the time of the initiation of a member of the clan slaves were also killed or coppers were destroyed, as will be described in greater detail later on. The property thus destroyed is called the o'mayn, the price paid for the house, the post, or for the initiation.

The distribution or destruction of property is not always made solely for the purpose of gaining prestige for one's self, but it is just as often made for the benefit of the successor to the

POTLATCH MASK OF THE K"KWA"KUM. Double mask capable of being opened and closed by means of strings. (a) Onter 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. 1943, Royal Ethnographical, Museum Berlin. Collected by A. Jarodam

name. In all such cases the latter stands during the festival next to the host, or, as the Indian terms it, in front of him, and the chief states that the property is distributed or destroyed for the one "standing in front of him" (Lawu'lqame), which is therefore the term used for the chief's eldest son, or, in a more general sense, for the heir presumptive.

Cross refs:

[To page 358.]

- 1. YānanōXlai wā'ya sa yā'lag-ilis sa nā'la. There is a it is the river of traveler around of world.

 bear said the the world the
- 2. Yalā'wiselai nā'na sa wā'ya sa yā'lag-ilis sa na'la. He is wild it is the bear of river of traveler around of the the world the
- 20 3. Yā'xsem lā'laai ts'e'lx aya xa wā'ya sa mā'naensilalisax gins Badness then it is going up the the river

lē'lqoalaLē.

atamem genala on wolf on forhead yaexageone mask of Maexagem! the gomogaye the most was shown by L'ago Las Here in fort Reyent when he give cropy Clambets and comoes to all the

Hunt APS notes (ca. 1922)

1 p. 357. fig. 5. Hask of the Yat ragemen worn by L'e go Las of the dismoya ye, & When giving away baskets and canoes to all the tribes, it is called alanemg " well (= Having-wolf-onforakead), or yaé'x agent (= Yaé'x agent' mask).

Boas APS ms. (pre 1924)



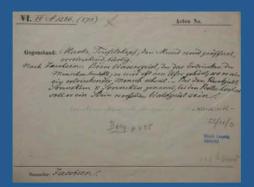


Nulis mask by Hank Speck (1978)Owned by Chief Ed Newman





Berlin IVA1286 (Jacobsen c.1882)



Berlin collection card (with Boas notes, ca. 1887)

them. Thus they hung him onto the beam of the house and began to sing songs which they hoped would appease him. While he was swinging from the beam he still held his knife, and as he could not cut anyone else, he cut his own head. His wounds did not hurt him; on the



contrary, he enjoyed them. After a while he became quiet. Then they took him down. Later on, whenever he came back from war, he asked the people to pull ropes through his back and to haul him up to the roof.

After:

n_ 143 gigen!	ซึ่งอ่าเอดู!เบลี	This most is seeme as Nº 141 which belong to
(2)		Lagotas the deced cheef of the to Buthite

Hunt APS notes (ca. 1922)

6. 495. Fig. 144. Sane as fig. 141. The make helonged to Hemediaters comer (appear come), head chief of the Biblish again the than

Boas APS ms. (pre 1924)

Cross refs:

TS'O'NOQOA.

ical museum, perilib.

Although the Ts'ō'noqoa is not an animal, but a fabulous being, as described before, this seems the most appropri-

as described before, this seems the most appropriate place to mention her dance and songs. She is a member of the seal society. She is represented as always asleep. When the dancer enters the house, a rope is stretched from the door to her seat, along which she feels her way. She does not dance, but walks once around the fire, attired in the complete skin of a bear, which

Fig. 124.

HEAD MASK OF NĀ'NAQAUALIL, SET WITH SIND SKINS.
(Scale j.)

V A, No. 564, Royal Ethnographical Museum, Berlin. Collected by A. Jacobson

fits over her body and to which her mask is attached. Figs. 13, 141-144 (pp. 372, 494-496) represent a series of typical Ts'ō'noqoa masks. The

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Following is another Ts'ō'noqoa song of the Kwakiutl:1

- She is the great Ts'o'noqoa who is trying to carry men on her arms, who is causing nightmare, who is making us faint.
- 2. Great bringer of nightmares! Great one who makes us faint! Terrible Ts'o'noqoa



William Wasden Jr. ('Namgis)
with the mask once
belonging to his ancestor
[video interview clip]



David Hunt at the Chicago World's Fair. (Grabill photo, 1893)

upward. In his second dance the hā'mats'a dances standing erect. While in his first dance he is naked, he is now clothed in a blanket. Now he holds his forearms upward, the elbows being near his flanks, the palms forward, the fingers lightly bent. His hands are still trembling violently. His dance consists of rhythmical steps coincident with the beats of the batons. He takes very high steps, so that his knees almost touch his chest. When raising one foot, he bends at the same

time the knee of the other leg, and thus drops his trunk considerably without changing his position (Plate 28). He always puts down the whole sole of his foot.

Report of U. S. National Museum, 1895 .-- Boas

PLATE 28.



DANCE OF THE HĀ'MATS'A.

The peculiar head and neck ring of the dancer were obtained from the Tlingit, his grandmother being of the Tongass tribe.

From a photograph.

Cross refs:

Before: After:



Chicago World's Fair (photographer unknown, 1893)



Revised life group, USNM 1895



Boas posing for life group, 1895



HE'MATS'A COMING OUT OF SECRET ROOM.

From a photograph of a group in the U. S. National Museum.



front. Plate 29 shows the hā'mats'a coming out of the secret room, which is painted with the design of the raven. His attendants, as soon as he appears, run up to the secret room and hold the hā'mats'a at his neck ring. Then he comes forward and performs his dance.



Field Museum, originally made ca. 1906



Milwaukee Public Museum, originally made ca. 1927



First life group, 1895 bound for Atlanta World's Fair

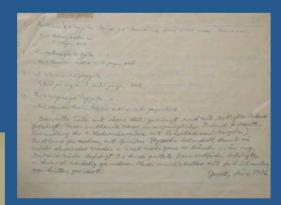


Berlin IVA1242 (Jacobsen ca.1882)



Boas notes (date ??)

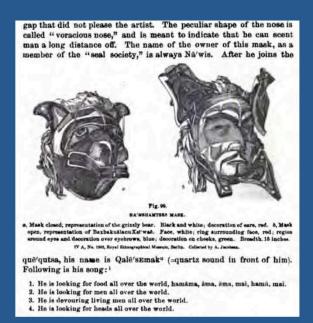




Berlin collection card (with Boas notes, ca. 1887)



Audio recording from Chicago World's Fair, 1893 (by Gilman)



[To page 464.]

SONG OF HA'MSHAMTSES.

1. Hamasa'yā'lag-ilā haisai yē hamāmamai.
Trying to look for food all around yē hamāmamai.
Trying to look for food all around yē hamāmamai.
Looking for men all around the yē hamāmamai.
Looking for men all around the yē hamāmamai.
Life swallowing all around the yē hamāmamai.
Life swallowing all around the yē hamāmamai.
Looking for beads all around the yē hamāmamai.
Looking for beads all around the yē hamāmamai.
Looking for beads all around the yē hamāmamai.

Tune, recorded by p. boas.

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