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A FURTHER ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST SALMON CEREMONY

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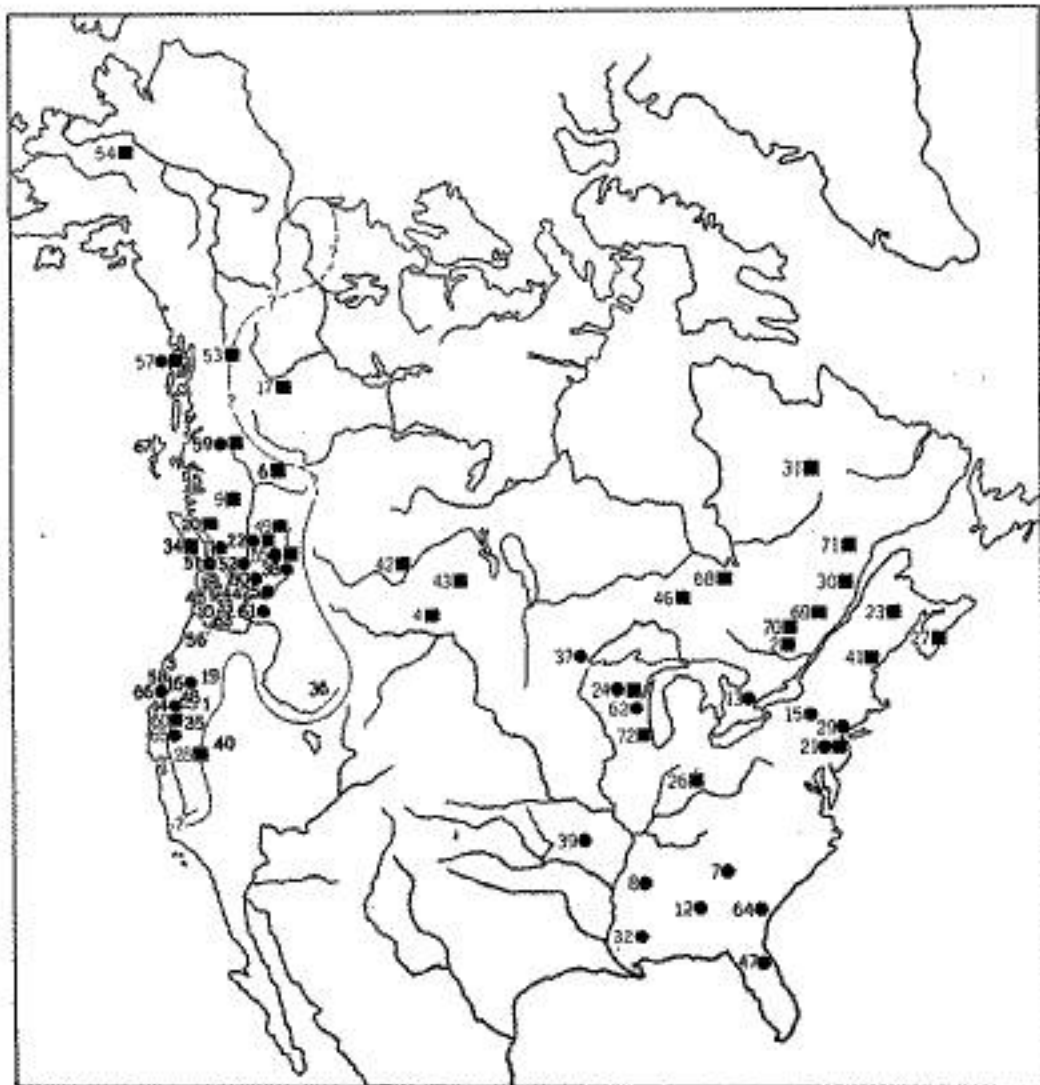


FIG. 1.—The Distribution of the First Salmon, First Fruits, and Bear Ceremony in North America (Bold face figures represent the First Salmon Ceremony; circles, First Fruits; squares, Bear Cult. The distribution of the salmon is included within the boundary line. For references see pp. 159-160.)

CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|------|
| A Further Analysis of the First Salmon Ceremony..... | 135 |
| I. Additions and Corrections..... | 137 |
| II. Relation to the Ceremonial Pattern..... | 139 |
| III. The Diffusion of the Ceremony..... | 146 |
| IV. The Attitude Toward the Salmon as Expressed in Beliefs and Taboos..... | 150 |
| V. Relation to other First Fruits Ceremonies and the Bear Cult.... | 156 |
| Distribution of First Salmon, Bear, and First Fruit Rites with References to Source..... | 159 |
| VI. The Relation of the Ceremony to Mythology..... | 161 |
| VII. Summary..... | 166 |
| Bibliography | 168 |
| Appendix | 171 |
| Additional Description of a Wishram First Salmon Ceremony..... | 171 |
| Bella Coola Attitude toward Salmon..... | 171 |
| Bella Coola Taboos..... | 171 |
| Bella Coola Attitude toward Twins..... | 171 |
| Kwakiutl Olachan Rite..... | 172 |
| Vita of Erna Gunther..... | 173 |
| Bibliography | 173 |

TABLES

| | |
|--|------------|
| I. Ritualization of Normal Handling of Salmon..... | Facing 147 |
| II. Distribution of Salmon Myths..... | 164 |

TEXT FIGURE

| | |
|---|-----|
| 1. The Distribution of the First Salmon, First Fruits, and Bear Ceremony in North America..... | 131 |
|---|-----|

A FURTHER ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST SALMON CEREMONY

A recent paper¹ gave briefly the distribution of this ceremony and indicated its significance in the ceremonial life of the tribes which participate in it. It became clear after the paper was finished that it touched on many points which are worth further investigation. It is the purpose now to discuss especially the integration of the ceremony with the ritual life of the people who practice it, and the relation of this ceremony and the attitude which fosters it, to similar rituals current in the same area, especially, the first fruits ceremonies and the bear cult.

The salmon ceremony is performed by a large group of tribes on the North Pacific Coast and as far inland as the salmon runs. The area covered by the ceremony is not entirely coextensive with the territory in which salmon is caught. None of the tribes who catch the salmon practice agriculture, but depend largely on fish. The fish is eaten fresh during the season and also dried for winter use. The salmon runs occur from early spring through the summer, varying according to locality; for instance, in the Yukon River the dog salmon runs in July; in the Klamath River the salmon comes upstream in large numbers in spring and fall, but there is so much water in the river that some variety of salmon can always be taken. This is true of many streams in this area but the winter salmon usually is of poor quality so that, even if the coming of the new run does not save the people from actual starvation, it gives a welcome fresh food supply. In most streams this spring salmon run comes in prodigious numbers, and is awaited with great eagerness. It presents an occasion for expressing the attitude of veneration which is held throughout the area toward the salmon.

When the first salmon comes upstream, each group, according to its ceremonial pattern, celebrates the first catch by ritualizing each step in handling the salmon from the catching to the eating. This ritual is simple or elaborate according to the tendency of the group. One of the major problems in analyzing this ceremony is its relation to the ceremonial pattern of each group that has adopted it.

Another problem involved is the diffusion of this ceremony. Its spread, as was stated before, is not coextensive with the salmon fishing area. Some of the gaps are probably due to lack of ethnographic knowledge, but there are other groups for which definite negative evidence is given. Why is this ceremony adopted by some groups and disregarded by others? Beyond the general diffusion of the ceremony, there is a more minute problem, namely: how many specific features of the ceremony are common to a number of tribes?

The salmon ceremony is based on a veneration for the salmon which is present even among groups where it has not been crystallized into a set of

¹ Gunther, Erna. Analysis of the First Salmon Ceremony (AA, n.s., 28, 1926, 605-617).

rites. These groups, as well as those who practice the ceremony, have various taboos connected with the salmon which carry out this attitude. An analysis of these taboos will show to what extent the salmon has become the object of special behavior.

This attitude of veneration is a pattern of behavior toward many animals in a territory larger than the salmon fishing area. This is especially developed in relations to the bear, about which a cult has grown up that resembles the salmon taboos in many respects. Furthermore in the same area, there is a sporadic appearance of first fruits ceremonies, the only instance outside of agricultural groups in North America. The basic attitudes underlying these cults as well as the actual ritual pattern so closely resemble one another that it seems profitable to consider their possible interrelation.

Finally, it was pointed out in the earlier paper that the mythology of these tribes bears out the attitude toward the salmon expressed in the ceremony. These myths may have some direct bearing on the ceremony. They may dictate the ritual or explain it. The types of myths and their position in the folktales of each group will also show their relative importance.

This problem involves a consideration of the mechanism of diffusion and the transformation of a cultural trait as it is assimilated into each tribal pattern. Throughout the North Pacific Coast there is the feeling of veneration for the salmon which in some places has developed into a ritual and elsewhere has remained only a series of taboos regulating actions toward the salmon.

I. ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS

The salmon ceremony which is to be discussed in the present paper is found on the Pacific Coast from the Tsimshian on the Skeena River to the Northern Maidu of north central California and eastward as far as the Lemhi Shoshoni and the Paviotso of Pyramid Lake, Nevada. Its distribution among the tribes of this area was discussed in the previous paper, but further work reveals some additions and a few corrections.

The ceremony, of which several detailed descriptions will be given in the course of the paper, celebrates the arrival of the salmon in its first run of the season and consists in handling the fish ceremonially and eating the first catch in festivity. The details of this procedure vary according to the ritual pattern of each tribe. Among the marginal groups it is an open question whether to include their rituals with the first salmon ceremony. With more intensive analysis of the ceremony it becomes clear that these peripheral examples should be included. The Lemhi Shoshoni and the Paviotso do not have the true salmon but a salmon trout. They celebrate the first run of the season in the same way the salmon is celebrated on the coast; therefore they were included in the earlier study and allowed to remain in this one. It was stated in the first paper that the Klamath ate sparingly of the salmon and performed no ceremony. On being questioned again, the Klamath informant gave the ceremony which they perform for the first sucker saying that this fish was treated ceremonially instead of the salmon.² Suckers are found in Klamath Lake and the rivers that flow into it, in abundance. For this reason the Klamath ceremony will be included in this study.

In Northern California, the Achomawi were listed as one of the tribes without a ceremony, but on closer reading of Kroeber's Handbook of California Indians this brief statement is found:

"There is mention of a first salmon ceremony, suggestive of the northwestern new year's rituals. Old men fasted in order to increase the run of fish, while women and children ate out of sight of the river. But no further details are known."³

Every observer of early Chinook life has commented on their performance of the salmon ceremony.⁴ Even when the tribe was fast disappearing they still clung to that part of their salmon taboos which seemed most important, burning the heart to prevent its mutilation by dogs. The localized salmon taboos are fully expressed in the mythology. Coyote in his progress up the river institutes the taboos for each fishing place.⁴ A similar tale is told by the Kathlamet.⁵ Their culture was probably as closely related to the Chinook proper as they were related linguistically. On the basis of this evidence it is

² Spier, ms.

³ Kroeber, BBAE 78:313.

⁴ See appendix.

⁴ Boas, BBAE 20:101-106.

⁵ Boas, BBAE 26:45-49.

perhaps legitimate to claim that the Kathlamet as well as the other Chinook had a first salmon ceremony.

In the northern part of the salmon area there are two additions to be recorded. On inquiry, Father Morice states that the Carrier, when the first salmon is caught, proclaim the news in a sort of chant which is taken up by all who hear it. He adds that since the coming of the salmon is of great importance to these Indians, there may have been more ceremony before their culture disintegrated.⁶ On the basis of this slender evidence it is perhaps wiser to include the Carrier rather than to omit them, for even singing gives a ceremonial greeting to the salmon and from a tribe as simple in all their habits as the Carrier, one can scarcely expect more.

It has always seemed strange that the Haida and Tlingit, who have a rich ceremonial life, an abundance of salmon and the Salmon Boy myth which shows the reverential attitude toward the fish, should not have the ceremony. There is only one slight clue among the Haida that points to a deviation from the regular fishing routine. "When the first salmon were brought in, (from the fishing grounds to the village) it was customary to allow anyone to go down and take one."⁷ It is customary in many tribes, especially for hunters both of sea and land animals, to give freely of their bag. Whether the Haida custom is related to this or whether it is an attenuated form of salmon ceremony is not clear. For the purpose of this paper it will be arbitrarily classed as the latter.

Mr. Marius Barbeau states that he does not believe that the salmon ceremonies are as important among the northern tribes as they are further south.⁸ This will perhaps explain the absence of the ceremony from such groups as the Kaska and Tahltan.

On the map accompanying the earlier paper there are several errors. The Makah are credited with a salmon ceremony which they do not have and the Tolowa who have a salmon dance like that of the Karok were unmarked.

⁶ Morice, letter.

⁷ Swanton, Mem. AMNH 8:69.

⁸ Barbeau, letter, November 4, 1927.

II. RELATION TO THE CEREMONIAL PATTERN

Ceremonies, like all other cultural traits, whether they are borrowed or developed within the group, are adjusted to the pattern evolved by the group for that kind of activity. This is true of the salmon ceremony. The relation of this ceremony to the local ceremonial pattern will be shown by analyzing the situation among several tribes, chosen for the divergence of the rite among them.

It is frequently found that a tribal group has more than one cycle of rituals. The Tsimshian, for example, have an elaborate ceremonial life with the potlatch and secret societies as a nucleus and the acquisition of social prestige as a goal. But scattered through the year, independent of these important rituals, are a series of minor ceremonies, connected with every incident of life. The salmon ceremony is one of these. Being outside of the great ritual cycle does not, however, relegate this ceremony to a position of unimportance. Quite the contrary: the reason for the ceremony is to welcome the salmon, which is one of their principal foods, and therefore very important economically. All the shamans of the village assist in the performance.

Although there are two cycles of ceremonies current among the Tsimshian, the ritual pattern, the ceremonial paraphernalia and the acts which are considered ceremonial in character are largely the same. A careful analysis of the first salmon ceremony, as described by Boas from the mythology, will show that every step is derived from the regular ceremonial procedure of the tribe.

"When the first salmon has been caught, four old shamans are called to the fisherman's platform. They bring along a new cedar bark mat, bird's down, red ochre, and other paraphernalia belonging to a shaman."⁹ There are four shamans because four is the ceremonial number of the Tsimshian. The shaman is present because he is the normal ceremonial leader. The use of a new mat may be traced to two customs: in the first fruits ceremonies of the Lillooet as well as their salmon ceremony new utensils are used; and furthermore, Tsimshian custom dictates that "when a visitor is led into a house, a good new mat is spread for him."¹⁰

"They spread the cedar-bark mat on the platform, and the shaman fisherman puts on his attire, holding the rattle in his right hand, the eagle tail in his left." In some accounts it is definitely stated that the shaman changes clothing with the fisherman. This change of clothing might be interpreted as an attempt to make the shaman and fisherman seem one. The eagle tail in the left hand and the rattle in the right is a typical position for a shaman at work.

"The shamans take up the mat at its four corners and carry up the salmon (in the same way as a guest is welcomed); the fisherman shaman going ahead of them, shaking his rattle and swinging his eagle tail." A person who is the

⁹ Boas, RBAE 31:450. All subsequent quotations for this ceremony are from the same source.

¹⁰ Boas, RBAE 31:437.

object of ceremony is carried in a blanket, the four corners held by four men. A bride is carried on an elkskin blanket to the house of the groom's father. Four men hold the corners of the blanket.¹¹ Also a bridegroom and his companions are carried into the bride's house when he comes to marry her.¹²

"The salmon is carried to the chief's house; and all the young people who are considered unclean are ordered to leave the house, while all the old people enter in front of the procession." It is appropriate that the ceremony should be conducted in the chief's house for all honored guests are received there. The taboo against young people is not derived from the ceremonial pattern but from the general attitude toward the salmon. Menstruating women, pregnant women, or those who have just given birth to children must not eat salmon or handle it. Only old women may work on salmon nets.

"All the shamans in the village dress up and come in, following the salmon." It is customary for the Tsimshian shamans to work in close cooperation. For instance: "When a person is sick, then the wife or the husband of the sick one will offer much property to the male shaman to treat the patient. Then the male shaman assembles all his shaman friends, sometimes ten or eighteen . . ."¹³ This cooperation among shamans is a peculiarly local trait, evidently not occurring among the Haida and Tlingit where the shaman is a solitary person, much feared by the laity. Again the Puget Sound shaman works independently except in such dramatic shamanistic performances as the *Sbətətəda'q* or soul hunting expedition. There as many shamans work together as the person sponsoring the performance can afford to engage, but they are independent. The reason for the many shamans in this instance is to display wealth, since one man can perform, as he does among the Klallam, just as well as the many.

"Inside [the house], the salmon is placed on a large cedar board, and the shamans march around it four times. Meanwhile the singers sit down in their proper places around the house, and the fisherman shaman calls two old women shamans to cut the salmon." Four, the ceremonial number appears again. The singers take the position they always occupy during rituals. The fact that the shaman calls two women shamans to cut the fish is borrowed directly from shamanistic procedure. Where a shaman attends a sick person his helper is always a female shaman.

"They take up their mussel-shell knives, while all the people keep quiet. They call the salmon by its honorary names—Chief Spring Salmon, Quartz Nose, Two Gills on Back, Lightning Following One Another, and Three Jumps." Honorific names are of great importance and significance. That the salmon should be addressed in this way while being cut up, shows very clearly that the ceremony is partly one of propitiation. The use of honorific names is important in a culture where names are high social privileges. The Bella Coola call the salmon by an archaic word for "salmon," a custom which

¹¹ Boas, RBAE 31:533.

¹² Boas, RBAE 31:531.

¹³ Boas, RBAE 31:558.

may be regarded as equivalent to this Tsimshian custom. Cutting the fish with musselshell knives lifts the act out of the daily routine, by using an implement which has been supplanted. This falls into a class with the use of the archaic word.

Throughout this ceremony the normal procedure in handling the salmon has been ritualized according to the ceremonial pattern of the Tsimshian. It has not been fitted into any one ceremonial pattern, but each ritual action has been drawn from the ceremonial behavior of the group. The ceremony belongs outside the important social rituals as do all the other first fruits ceremonies, but of this series the salmon ritual is the most elaborate, and probably of greatest significance to the group.

Among the Bella Coola the salmon ceremony is found in a similar situation. The Bella Coola are a Salish group, who after coming to the coast, adopted with avidity all the Kwakiutl ceremonial organization which they found around them. But the salmon ceremony, again, does not belong to this group of rituals. It may possibly be that they brought the ceremony with them, for there is not an act in the ritual which could not belong to the ceremonial complex of an Interior Salish group.

The Kwakiutl have several salmon rituals, each for a specific variety of salmon. This is a thoroughly Kwakiutl characteristic, for their life is exceptionally full of ritual acts. Here again, the salmon ceremony belongs to the minor rituals. It is not conducted by shamans as among the Tsimshian, but by the fisherman and his wife who have the appropriate family prayers. The procedure is as follows:

When the first dog salmon of the season is caught, the wife of the fisherman goes to meet him and prays to the salmon, "O Supernatural ones, O Swimmers, I thank you that you are willing to come to us. Don't let your coming be bad, for you come to be food for us. Therefore I beg you to protect me and the one who takes mercy on me, that we may not die without cause, Swimmers" The woman replies, "Yes," to herself. They go up the bank. When they finish cutting a speared salmon the woman gathers the refuse in a basket and pours it in the water at the mouth of a river, for various kinds of salmon come to life when the intestines are thrown in the water. The anal fin of a speared salmon must always be broken off at the intestines but when a salmon is caught with the hook, it is cut off lest the fisherman's line break. Those who clean salmon must be very careful about this.¹⁴

When the first four silver salmon have been caught by trolling, the wife of the fisherman meets him on the beach. She prays to the silver salmon and picking up the four with her finger, puts them on the beach in front of their house. She cuts the salmon with a fish knife so that the head and tail are left on the back bone. She sets up roasting tongs on the beach and puts the salmon on them so the eyes project on the tongs. After the refuse has been

¹⁴ Boas, RBAE 35:609-610.

thrown in the sea, the tongs with the eyes are taken to the fire in the house. As soon as they are blackened the fisherman calls his sept (numaym) to eat the roasted eyes for if they are kept in the house overnight the silver salmon would disappear from the sea. The guests sit in the rear of the fire. The housewife spreads new food mats and places the tongs with eyes before the guests. The person of highest rank prays to the food and after they have eaten, they drink water. They are careful not to wash their hands afterwards. The bones and pieces of skin are folded up in the food mat and thrown in the sea. The guests leave after eating.¹⁵

These are exceedingly simple, dignified rituals. Every significant act in the daily life of the Kwakiutl has a prayer connected with it. For instance, when a canoe-builder has almost felled the tree he is going to use he takes four chips of wood and throwing one behind the foot of the tree, he says, "O supernatural one! Now follow your supernatural power!" Throwing another, he says, "O friend! Now you see your leader, who says that you shall turn your head and fall there also." He throws a third chip and says, "O life-giver! Now you have seen which way your supernatural power went. Now go the same way." He throws the last one saying, "O friend, now you will go where your heartwood goes. You will lie on your face at the same place." After he says this he answers himself, saying, "Yes, I shall fall with my top there."¹⁶

When a woman cuts the roots of a young cedar tree she prays, "Look at me, friend! I come to ask for your dress, for you have come to take pity on us; for there is nothing for which you can not be used, because it is your way that there is nothing for which we cannot use you, for you are really willing to give us your dress. I come to beg you for this, long life-maker, for I am going to make a basket for lily roots out of you. I pray, friend, not to feel angry with me on account of what I am going to do to you, and I beg you, friend, to tell your friends about what I ask of you. Take care, friend! Keep sickness away from me, so that I may not be killed by sickness or in war, O friend!"¹⁷

The fisherman catches four silver salmon and the canoe-builder throws four chips behind the tree because the Kwakiutl, like the Tsimshian, have four as their ritual number. There is a very definite formula to these prayers. The animal or plant prayed to is called, "Friend, Supernatural One." It is thanked for giving of its substance. It is asked to keep illness and death from the devotee. The canoe-builder answers his prayer as does the wife of the salmon fisherman.

The ceremonial unit for rituals not controlled through the secret society, is the sept (numaym). The members of the fisherman's sept are called for the salmon ceremony. For larger feasts, members of the host's sept go as

¹⁵ Boas, RBAE 35:611-612.

¹⁶ Boas, RBAE 35:618.

¹⁷ Boas, RBAE 35:617.

messengers to invite the guests. Minor feasts are prepared by the host and his wife. At the huckleberry feast the host's wife serves the guests who depart as soon as they have finished eating.¹⁸ Guests are always seated behind the fire in order of rank. Finally, disposing of the refuse is one of the most widespread regulations regarding the salmon, based on the concept of their immortality.

Both the Tsimshian and the Kwakiutl have adopted the salmon ceremony into their set of minor rituals. This ceremony is one of the few performed by the Kwakiutl which does not add to the social prestige of the person giving it, but is for the good of the tribe. With the Tsimshian the salmon ceremony falls in a class with their first fruits rituals. These ceremonies being outside the great ceremonial cycle of these groups, they have taken on all the characteristics of their exoteric rituals.

The situation in Northwestern California is the reverse. It happens that among the Yurok the greatest salmon run comes in the fall, at the height of the ceremonial season. Here the salmon ceremony has been incorporated into the esoteric rituals of these groups and integrated most thoroughly with the ritual pattern of the group.

Kroeber has summarized very neatly the purpose of ceremonialism among the Yurok:

The major ceremonies of the Yurok reveal the following qualities:

1. The motive is to renew or maintain the established world. This purpose included bountiful wild crops, abundance of salmon, and the prevention of famine, earthquakes and flood. To a greater or less extent, the expression of these objects takes on the character of a new year's rite. This is particularly plain in the first salmon ceremony at Wetkwan and the fish dam building at Kelpel.

2. The esoteric portion of the ceremony is the recitation of a long formula, narrating, mostly in dialogue, the establishment of the ceremony by the spirits of prehuman race and its immediate beneficial effects. This formula is spoken in sections before various rocks or spots that mark the abode of these spirits. The reciter is an old man, usually accompanied by an assistant; any prescribed symbolic acts are performed by them alone.

3. After the recitation of the formula or the major portion, a dance begins, and goes on every afternoon, or morning and afternoon for five, ten or more days.

4. The localization of these ceremonies is extreme. The formulas abound in place names. They are spoken at a series of places in and about the village which are exactly prescribed.¹⁹

The building of the salmon dam at Kelpel can be fitted exactly into Kroeber's characterization of the ceremonies at large. The formulist who is in charge of the ceremony fasts for a few days preceding the ceremony and visits sacred places. In the actual building of the dam a larger number of villagers participate than in other ceremonials where there is no material object to be accomplished. The labor of sixty men is required for ten days.

¹⁸ Boas, RBAE 35:754.

¹⁹ Kroeber, BBAE 78:53-54.

The materials are secured at certain places and in specified ways, sanctity being attached to every action. In spite of the ceremonial character of the occasion there is merrymaking throughout, reaching its climax on the last day when the formulist's assistant "wearing a beard and impersonating a Karok who has eloped with another man's wife, pretends to be fleeing vengeance and allows his canoe to be capsized in midstream. He swims to Kelpel, crouches, and the mass of men, armed with long poles, clash them together over his head and lay them on his back until he is covered from sight." Before the dam is finished an imitation deer dance is held and the day the work is really completed the real dance is made. A few days later the people gather again and for twelve to sixteen days there is dancing.²⁰

In every feature this corresponds to the ritual pattern of the group. The same is true of the Karok and Hupa ceremonies. The ritual pattern resembles that of the Yurok to a great extent and the salmon ceremony has been thoroughly assimilated into that pattern. The ceremony in all three groups has been taken out of the hands of the people at large and carried out by a special group versed in the esoteric knowledge the ritual requires. Such a body of esoteric knowledge is built up here about all the rituals and clearly has developed by the efforts of this priestly class.

On the other hand, the neighbors of the Karok, the Shasta, had no community dances and very little ceremonial life. They knew the ceremonies of the people on the lower Klamath and believed that the Yurok at the mouth put medicine on the first salmon to bring the fish up the river, so they let it pass unmolested. After the first fish had passed, some were caught and hung up to dry. No salmon could be caught until this fish had been dried and a portion eaten by all who fished at that particular station.

It is interesting that these people are so poor ceremonially that they have to depend on another group for their "medicine." They knew the elaborate dances of the Karok and Yurok but made no attempt at imitation.²¹ The concept of dancing for the good of the community or for world rejuvenation does not exist with them. Since there is nothing in their mythology that links up with the ceremony, we have here an instance of the diffusion of the ceremony to wholly unreceptive ground.

These instances of the salmon ceremonies will serve to show the extent to which these rites have been assimilated into the culture of the groups that practice them. Where there is a full ceremonial life, the ceremony partakes of this ritualistic wealth, whereas in simpler cultures it remains but a pause in the everyday routine. On the northwest coast where the ceremonial life clusters about the potlatch and the secret society rituals, the salmon ceremony, although following the local form of ritual, remains a thing apart. It is not a step in the all-important pursuit of wealth and social prestige. Quite to the con-

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 58:60.

²¹ Kroeber, *BBAE* 78:304.

trary, it is one of the few rites performed for the good of the whole group, to the social enhancement of no single individual. It might therefore be possible that this ceremony, together with the other first fruits ceremonies in the area, belongs to an older stratum of ceremonial life which existed before the elaborate superstructure of social rank and secret society organization developed. This supposition is also borne out by the fact that the salmon ceremony and first fruits rituals are quite uniformly among the people marginal to the Northwest Coast proper, especially in the Salish groups.

In Northwestern California the ceremony has been completely assimilated into the ritual life of the groups, even having a definite place in the ceremonial calendar. It has been endowed with a set of esoteric formulae and needs a formulist to repeat these to perform the ceremony. Of recent years the only person who knows the formula has refused on account of personal sorrow to repeat it, so it has been impossible for the Yurok to build the salmon dam and have the ritual. With her death even the possibility of having the ceremony will probably also disappear.

TABLE 1. RITUALIZATION OF NORMAL HANDLING OF SALMON

| | Malin | Wahashin | Carrier | Beche Bay | Beche Bay | Develon | Engah | Khalan | Sedha | Stadha | Lilhoon | Wahashin | Der. Olinak | Chook Ingo | Karhuan | Maquah | Peytes | Seh-meh | Quahet | Tchusook | Alon | Hops | Lauk | Blank | Yook | Yukna | Khuwah | Roan | Dr. Mida | Lombi | Peetico | | |
|-----------------------------|-------|----------|---------|-----------|-----------|---------|-------|--------|-------|--------|---------|----------|-------------|------------|---------|--------|--------|---------|--------|----------|------|------|------|-------|------|-------|--------|------|----------|-------|---------|---|---|
| Caught by specified person | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Carried in specified manner | - | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | - | + | + | - | - | - | - | - | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | + | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Cut by specified person | - | + | - | - | + | + | + | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Cut in ritual manner | - | + | - | - | + | + | + | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Cooked in ritual manner | - | - | - | + | + | + | + | + | - | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | |
| Eaten by: All present | - | - | - | - | + | + | - | + | - | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Old men | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Children | - | - | - | - | - | - | + | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Communal feast | - | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | + | + | - | + | - | - | - | + | - | - | - | + | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Dance held | - | - | - | - | - | + | - | - | - | + | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | + | - | - | - | + | + | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Prayer recited | - | - | - | + | + | + | - | - | + | + | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | + | - | + | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Boon thrown in water | - | - | - | + | + | + | + | - | - | - | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |

1 Boon thrown into sea.
2 Prayers recited.
3 Dream recited.

4 Fish catch may be taken by anyone.
5 Boon burned.
6 Chanted when first salmon was caught.

7 By all except host.
8 Features belonging to Dugwonn Khalan, others to Beche Bay Khalan.

III. THE DIFFUSION OF THE CEREMONY

The salmon ceremony is not co-extensive with the salmon area, but in that part of the area where it is found, the distribution is almost continuous. The greatest discrepancy is found in the north where the fish runs in rivers north to the Yukon, while the Tsimshian on the Skeena and Nass Rivers are the most northerly to have the ceremony. The ritual also is not found as far inland as the salmon run. The Thompson and Shuswap on the eastern margin of the area of the ceremony depend largely on salmon, but do not celebrate its arrival. Farther south, the eastern outpost of the ceremony is among the Lemhi Shoshoni and the Paviotso of Pyramid Lake. Among the latter, incidentally, the run is that of whitefish or salmon trout in place of the true salmon. To the south there is nothing known of the treatment of the fish beyond the Northern Maidu. Roughly the distribution of the salmon is from Monterey Bay to Bering Strait, although a few are taken in the Salinas River, the most southerly stream of any size to flow into the Pacific. The salmon ceremony is therefore known from the Tsimshian on the north to the Northern Maidu on the south and as far inland as the Paviotso of Pyramid Lake.

Since the ceremony is not co-extensive with the salmon area, it cannot be held that it is in spontaneous reaction to the salmon. Throughout this area economic life varies but little, and salmon is an equally important item of food almost everywhere.

In other features of culture the groups performing this ceremony differ more widely, but rather in the degree of integration of the culture, than in fundamental structure. In the northernmost part of the area, along the coast, an elaborate social and ceremonial structure is built about the potlatch and social ranking. Marginal traces of these are found southward to the Columbia River. Northwestern California also has an elaborate ceremonial life, a social life based on wealth and the display of wealth. Beyond this point comes a real change. The Northern Maidu are typically central Californian, while such outposts as the Lemhi Shoshoni and the Paviotso have a Great Basin culture founded on entirely different principles. In view of the wide variations in ceremonial life, one would not expect to find this ceremony repeatedly developed in the several areas, and developed on precisely the same lines. This together with continuous distribution of the ceremony can point to only one explanation of its presence, namely through diffusion.

The distribution is not absolutely continuous but doubtless some gaps are due to lack of ethnographic knowledge,²² while others occur in groups whose meagre ceremonial life would not point to the inclusion of the ritual. There are, however, enough contiguous groups to show that the ceremony spread over the area where it is now found.

²² All judgments made here are on the basis of the scanty information available and might have to be altered materially if more data were obtained.

It was shown above that in every group where the ceremony was found it had been completely assimilated into the ritual pattern of the tribe. Then how much was diffused? Regardless of what ritual elaboration there has been, one feature is constant everywhere: what has been elaborated is the normal handling of the salmon. The fish is caught, carried ashore, cut, cooked and eaten normally. Every group, performing the ceremony, has taken several of these features and ritualized them according to its ceremonial pattern. The accompanying table uses as headings the normal handling of the salmon and shows the number of groups that have elaborated each step.

This tabulation shows clearly a surprising amount of divergence. If the details of the ceremony are considered this divergence becomes even greater. Comparing the ceremonies of two neighboring and culturally related tribes will show this. Both the Kwakiutl and Bella Coola do not detail any specified person to catch the first salmon, but once it is taken, it is carried ashore ceremonially. The Bella Coola keep the salmon under water until a mat is spread on skunk cabbage leaves to receive the fish. It may not touch the ground. The Kwakiutl fisherman's wife meets him on the beach and receives the salmon, she being the one who officiates at the cleaning and cooking of the fish. The Bella Coola do not delegate the cutting of the fish to any particular person, nor is the fish cut in a ritual manner. The Kwakiutl woman cuts the fish with a special knife and follows exact directions. The Kwakiutl set the salmon on roasting tongs so the eyes project on the tongs while the Bella Coola roast the fish in the usual manner. No statement is made about the eating of the fish in the Bella Coola ceremony, but for the Kwakiutl we know that the sept of the fisherman is invited.

These differences in the details of the ceremony are due to the fact that the handling of the fish has been ritualized in each group according to its own ceremonial pattern. This is also borne out in the discussion earlier in the paper of the relation of the ceremony to the ritual of each group.

In the development of this ceremony it is inevitable that there should be some details which coincide. It is difficult to decide whether these likenesses are due to local diffusion or whether they agree because of the ritualization of a common procedure based on common ceremonial habits. There are some instances of both processes.

Among the Lillooet, the salmon weir poles are decorated and a boy is sent out to pray at the fishing stations just before the salmon run is expected. Then when the fish appear the shaman in charge of the ceremony sends a man out to take the first fish. In Northwestern California the formulist who is in charge of the ceremony spends a number of days before the ritual praying at fishing stations and fasting. During the ceremonial period he catches the first salmon. The Northern Maidu shaman catches the first salmon and no one is allowed to catch any fish until he is successful. He then cooks the fish where it was caught and gives a piece to each person there.

It would be difficult to prove that these similarities are due to diffusion.

Beyond these preparatory rites there is no further agreement between the Lillooet and the Northwestern Californian ceremonies, or between either of these and the Northern Maidu. Rather these likenesses are due to common ritual habits.

In the cutting of the fish there are a number of more exact correspondences. The Tsimshian specify that the tail must not be broken off, but cut with a mussel shell knife. The Kwakiutl woman breaks off the tail of a speared salmon, but cuts off that of one caught on the hook. The Cowichan cut off the tail also. Since all these people believe in the immortality of the salmon, this regulation against breaking off the tail may be a desire to prevent the splintering of the bone and thus losing some of the bones. In such an event, the salmon, according to their belief, would not fully revive. The Nisqualli and Chinook, on the other hand, require that the fish be cut lengthwise and not transversely. These two groups have very simple salmon ceremonies which are almost identical, so it is likely that these features are due to diffusion. In the northern group the ceremonies do not resemble one another to a great extent, yet the appearance of such definite details as these specifications as to the cutting of the fish, in tribes as close together as the Kwakiutl, Nootka and Cowichan would also point to the diffusion of these particular elements.

The ceremonial eating of the salmon is one feature that occurs in every form of the salmon rite. The particular group which partakes of it, however, varies greatly. In tribes where the ritual is performed by a shaman, a chief, or some other ceremonial leader, he either eats the first salmon himself or apportions it to those who may eat it. In Northwestern California, the Karok, Hupa or Yurok formelist together with his assistant eats the salmon. The Chinook and Nisqualli shamans eat the first fish. In both these groups the correspondence of these features may be due either to a local diffusion or to the similarity of ritual pattern. As was said before the Chinook-Nisqualli instance is probably one of the few cases where it seems feasible to assume that there has been actual diffusion of the ceremony.

There is another significant feature in the selection of those who may eat the first salmon. Only those who are ceremonially pure are allowed to partake of it, for the inclusion of others would offend the salmon and stop the run. Those excluded are generally persons who have recently had contact with death, parents of recently born children, menstruating women, and adolescents. Sometimes these are automatically excluded by allowing only children, as with the Songish, or very old people, as with the Wishram, to eat the fish. Even where theoretically the whole tribe eats the salmon, these groups are generally barred. This exclusion of the ceremonially impure is probably not due to diffusion but is based on the common belief that these people will offend the salmon, a taboo to be discussed more thoroughly later in this paper.

There are a few minor similarities that are not inherent in the normal treatment of the salmon. The Bella Coola wind red cedar bark about a stick

to which the line of the first salmon is attached. The Lower Lillooet decorate the weir poles with feathers. These two groups although not contiguous, are close enough to make it possible that this arbitrary act spread from one to the other. Both these tribes take great care that the first salmon does not touch the ground. The Songish and Cowichan carry the fish in the outstretched arms so their hands do not touch it, and the Tsimshian carry the fish on a mat. These also are arbitrary acts which have probably been transmitted.

On the whole, those cases are resolved as indicating diffusion, first, where the tribes sharing the custom are contiguous, and second, where the act is arbitrary and not inherent, in the special form, to handling the fish. It seems, however, that the greater part of the resemblances are due to the fact that these acts are the ceremonial stock in trade of the whole area. These acts have, therefore, not been diffused as part of the salmon ceremony, but in general, there was transmitted the attitude of reverence toward the salmon and the idea of ritualizing the handling of the first salmon.

Hence we are dealing here with the diffusion of a sentiment and a tendency toward ritualization, with later elaboration along the lines suggested by the ceremonial patterns of the groups, which are themselves largely common property in general nature, although they differ in details.

IV. THE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE SALMON AS EXPRESSED IN BELIEFS AND TABOOS

The motive underlying the salmon ceremony belongs to a group of widespread beliefs attributing a conscious spirit to food plants and animals. Therefore, before it is safe to eat either the plant or animal this spirit must be propitiated by a ceremony or an offering. With agricultural people this gives rise to harvest festivals; with food gatherers, hunters and fisherman the first gathering or catch of the season is the occasion for ceremony.

Since the plant or animal is endowed with a conscious spirit, it can either present itself in abundance or not appear at all. Hence a second motivation for ceremony: an appeal for abundance. Coupled with that, especially in hunting and fishing, is the petition for luck.

It will be shown later that the salmon ceremony as practiced on the North Pacific Coast is related to the sporadic first fruits ceremonies found in North America. In this area the general attitude toward salmon is developed in a specific manner.^{22a} Throughout, there exists the feeling that the salmon is a person, living a life very similar to that of the people who catch him. The salmon have a chief who leads them up the streams during the run. In performing the ceremony over the one actually caught first, they believe that they are honoring the chief of the salmon.

The Tsimshian concept illustrates this point very well. They believe the earth to be flat and surrounded by an ocean, beyond which there are several countries, one being that of the spring salmon. The cottonwood leaves which have fallen into the river are "salmon" for these salmon people. In the spring they send out scouts to see if the leaves have fallen or "if the salmon are in the river." As soon as the salmon scouts find them, the salmon people start on their journey to the Skeena River. On their way the spring salmon, who are regarded as the leaders, tell the other varieties when they are to start out.²³

This conception is carried out in the belief that a Tsimshian shaman can see what is going on in the village of the spring salmon and when he sees them starting up the Skeena River, he knows they will arrive eight days after the breaking of the ice. Being able to see into the salmon world is a very important function of the Tsimshian shaman.²⁴

The Cowichan of the Fraser River Delta believe that the salmon country is toward the sunset. Their chief sees that the rules regarding the salmon are obeyed.²⁵

Linked with this idea is the concept of the immortality of food plants and animals. Therefore, if the bones and refuse are properly disposed of, the ani-

^{22a} See appendix.

²³ RBAE 31:454.

²⁴ Boas, RBAE 31:474.

²⁵ Boas, BAAS 1894:463.

mal will revive and return another season. This idea is spread far beyond the salmon area and also applied to other animals. The salmon bones and refuse are generally disposed of by throwing them into the water, where they revive and return to the salmon country, but in a few instances they are thrown into the fire. This is done by the Tsimshian and Tillamook,²⁶ two peoples so far apart that one can scarcely claim diffusion, especially because the other practice is found quite consistently between them. Very little is known of the Tillamook, so the custom cannot be explained by relating it to similar practices in regard to other animals, but this is possible for the Tsimshian. The bones and unused parts of mountain goats are burned, for until this is done the mountain goat spirit is sick.²⁷ Similarly porcupine bones are thrown in the fire to protect the animal from sickness.²⁸

The tribes who throw the bones of salmon into the water are: Bella Bella, Kwakiutl, Nootka, Bella Coola, Cowichan, Songish, Lillooet.²⁹ This group forms a compact, continuous distribution within the larger area of the salmon ceremony.

Related fundamentally to the same idea is the custom of not breaking the salmon bones. This is specifically stated for the Bella Coola, Siciatl and Tsimshian, while the Chinook and Quinault take great care that the heart of the salmon shall not be eaten by a dog or otherwise mutilated.³⁰ They either roast and eat the heart or burn it, but never throw it into the water. On the diminishing of the Chinook tribe the salmon ceremony was no longer performed, but the heart of the first salmon was always disposed of, for if it were mutilated the fishing would be spoiled.³¹

Another custom may be associated with these practices, namely that the first salmon must be eaten before sun down or may not be taken home. The Kwakiutl believe that if the roasted eyes of the silver salmon are kept in the house over-night, the fish will disappear.³² The Chinook always eat the first catch before sunset.³³ The Klamath gave the alternative custom relative to the sucker when questioned about a salmon ceremony. At one spot on the banks of the Sprague River, the first sucker is roasted to ashes so that many will come. Those which follow cannot be taken home but must be roasted there on the

²⁶ Boas, RBAE 31:449.

Boas, UCal 20:9.

²⁷ Boas, RBAE 31:448.

²⁸ Boas, RBAE 31:449.

²⁹ Bella Bella, Boas, RBAE 31:886-887.

Kwakiutl, Boas, RBAE 35:611-612.

^{*} Nootka, Boas, BAAS 1890:599.

Bella Coola, Boas, Mem AMNH 2:77.

Cowichan, Boas, BAAS 1894:461.

Songish, Boas, BAAS 1890:569.

Lillooet, Teit, Mem AMNH 4:280-281.

³⁰ Bella Coola, Mem AMNH 2:77.

Siciatl, Hill-Tout, JAI 34:33.

Tsimshian, RBAE 31:206.

Chinook, Swan, 107.

Quinault, Cobb, Pacific Salmon Fisheries, 23.

³¹ Swan, 107-108.

³² Boas, RBAE 35:611.

³³ Franchère, 260.

bank. If they are taken home the fish will not come any longer.³⁴ The Puyallup are cautioned to kill only as much dog salmon as they need, for the salmon will take the soul of a wasteful person. When the salmon reaches his home in the ocean the person will die.³⁵ All these taboos can be traced to the idea that the salmon is regarded as a person who allows himself to be caught and on reviving returns to his own country.

In Northwestern California these concepts of personality and immortality for the salmon are also current. The first salmon said, "I will not be caught," and he deposited his scales in the fish nets and they became salmon. The first salmon then went back to the ocean.³⁶ In their formulae repeated at the salmon ceremony, the coming of the great salmon leader from the miraculous country across the ocean, is recounted.

In the salmon ceremony the fish may usually be eaten only by those who are ceremonially clean. This excludes menstruating women, those who have had recent contact with the dead, parents of recently born children, and youths who have not reached puberty. For example, the Cowichan prohibit widows, widowers, menstruating women and youths from eating at the ceremony.³⁷ Their neighbors, the Lillooet, do not allow an unmarried adult woman, a menstruating woman, orphan, widow or widower to eat of the first fish, for the run would be poor if they did.³⁸ When the procession with the first salmon approaches the chief's house, the Tsimshian shaman orders all young people who are unclean to leave the house.³⁹ In many other instances it is specified that only the old men or only the children eat of the first catch, thus eliminating this undesirable group.

Not only is the first catch taboo to the ceremonially unclean, but at any time those who have had contact with birth, death or puberty are prohibited from eating fresh salmon. The parents of a newborn child are prohibited from eating fresh salmon among the Songish and Snanaimuq,⁴⁰ while the Yurok specify that the father of the child must eat apart and touch no fresh salmon or meat for five or six days, with the same prescription of fifty days for a normal birth and sixty after a still birth, on the part of the mother.⁴¹

The immediate survivors of the dead are similarly restrained from eating salmon. The Songish not only will not allow a widow or widower to eat salmon, but they must keep away from the water for fear that their presence will drive away the fish.⁴² The Lillooet claim that salmon are particularly susceptible to the influence of dead bodies, so all recently bereaved must avoid

³⁴ Spier, notes.

³⁵ Ballard, personal communication.

³⁶ Kroeber, BBAE 78:68.

³⁷ Boas, BAAS 1894:461.

³⁸ Teit, Mem AMNH 4:280.

³⁹ Boas RBAE 31:450.

⁴⁰ Boas, BAAS 1890:21.

Boas, AA 1889:321.

⁴¹ Kroeber, BBAE 78:45.

⁴² Boas, BAAS 1890:24.

eating the fresh fish. Elderly persons can shorten the period of taboo.⁴³ The Siciatl like the Songish do not allow the survivors of dead relatives to go near a creek in which the salmon run during the early part of the season; neither may they eat fresh fish.⁴⁴ The Wishram do not allow the father of a still born child or one that dies in early infancy to go near a fishing station, otherwise the run would stop. The bereaved parents may not eat salmon for five days and must go into a sweatlodge every day to purify themselves. The same taboo holds if a man's wife dies.⁴⁵

Those prohibitions against eating of fresh salmon by mourners and women who have recently born children or are in the menstrual period are widely spread. In most groups the same taboo holds for fresh meat. It is almost universal for the immediate relatives of the dead to fast either during the burial period or for a brief mourning period. In groups where the custom is not outright fasting there is at least a restriction of diet, this generally being the elimination of fresh meat and fish. The rationalization of these taboos is twofold. Some peoples believe that eating meat or fish at this time will cause illness; others maintain that the animal or fish will be offended at being brought in contact with death. With the salmon, it would seem to be the second of these reasons which underlies the taboos. In almost every instance the reason given for prohibiting mourners from eating fresh salmon is that the fish will be offended and cease to run in that locality. These taboos connected with mourning are found consistently throughout the salmon area and beyond. Possibly the puberty and menstrual customs are the most widespread.

In the salmon area the person who is ceremonially unclean not only does not eat salmon, but may not approach the waters where the salmon run, with the same idea that their presence would offend the fish so that they would no longer come. A Bella Coola or Tsimshian girl at puberty may not eat fresh salmon or go near the sea or the rivers for one year.⁴⁶ Among the Klamath where the salmon taboos are transferred to the sucker, a girl at puberty and during menstrual periods may not eat fresh fish or meat, because if she did she would get "consumption" and die. This instance and that of the Northern Shoshoni, both on the very margin of the salmon area, are the only ones listed where the person transgressing the taboo may be injured, elsewhere it is always the fish or game that will be offended.^{46a}

In defining these customs for the Ute of the Great Basin, Lowie draws the following conclusions:

It is clear that a family likeness pervades the Shoshonean menstrual customs and that the abstention from flesh is the most persistent trait in the complex. This is a point of great comparative value, for this taboo seems to be practically always associated with the puberty usages of California tribes and extends with the qualification that fresh meat or fish is forbidden, as far north as Tahltan territory.⁴⁷

⁴³ Hill-Tout, JAI 35:139.

⁴⁴ Hill-Tout, JAI 34:33.

⁴⁵ Spier, notes.

⁴⁶ Boas, BAAS 1889:838.

^{46a} See appendix.

⁴⁷ Lowie, PaAMNH 20:274.

This area could be extended even further. At least one instance of similar taboos is on record for the Southeast. The Creeks prohibit a woman in her menstrual period or after confinement from eating fish or venison or anointing herself with bear grease. Also after attending a burial a person abstained from eating fish.⁴⁸ These taboos, it will be remembered, are found in an area where there are first fruits ceremonies and where first catches of fish and game are especially treated. It cannot be claimed that these two sets of behavior always travel together, for without doubt, the dietary restrictions are much more widespread, but their occurrence together in such widely divergent areas is not without interest.

Among the salmon fishing peoples there generally exists a taboo against the use of salmon and game at the same time. This prohibition against using together two kinds of food obtained from different sources is widespread and sporadic among primitive people. The rational basis for these taboos is frequently that the two seasons do not coincide. In fact it is only for a brief transitional period when the two products are available, that the taboo is effective. An excellent example of this taboo is the rigid distinction made by the Eskimo between land and sea products. The Nootka do not eat salmon and venison at the same time. The Yurok do not use salmon or any other fish at the same time with bear meat, grouse eggs or acorns blackened by prolonged soaking.⁴⁹ This taboo is, then, another expression of the desire not to offend game.

The most important of the remaining taboos is the relation between twins and salmon. This is peculiar to the North Pacific Coast and there limited to a fairly compact group, the Tsimshian, Kwakiutl, Nootka, Makah and Klallam. In most of these instances, the relation is expressed in a different manner.

Among the Tsimshian twins have supernatural power to call the salmon and olachen. The Kwakiutl twins of the same sex were salmon before their birth. Their father dances for four days after their birth swinging a large square rattle. By swinging the same rattle the twins can produce favorable weather, or cure disease. Both the Nootka twins and their father have close connection with the salmon. The father of twins is regarded as an instrument of the salmon world and during the fishing season devotes all his time to singing songs and performing secret rituals to give his tribesmen a maximum catch. The birth of twins forebodes an unusually big salmon run. It is likely that there may be some idea among the Nootka corresponding to the Kwakiutl conception that twins are salmon before birth, for if a Nootkan twin child sees a salmon mistreated he involuntarily bursts into tears.⁵⁰

Swan relates of the Makah that when twins were born during the fishing season on Tatoosh Island, the parents were sent back to the mainland and prohibited from eating any sort of fish.⁵¹ The Klallam follow the same procedure.

⁴⁸ Swanton, BBAE 73:384-385.

⁴⁹ Kroeber, BBAE 78:69.

⁵⁰ Sapir in Hastings, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, 594.

⁵¹ Swan, *Smith. Cont. Know.* 16:82.

The parents of twins are required to move away from the shore into the woods as soon after the birth as the mother can walk. They are not allowed near the water for one year and the father may not hunt or fish. During this time they may not eat fresh fish or meat.^{61a}

Beyond this area there is evidently no such association. At least it is disclaimed by the Wishram and Klamath,⁶² and not mentioned for the Yurok, all rather typical tribes of the southern salmon area. Although there are few primitive groups who do not pay some attention to twins, this association of twins and salmon seems to be restricted to this very small group within the salmon area.

All these taboos which are practiced toward the salmon are not limited to this particular area; neither are they practiced even there exclusively toward the salmon. Many of these groups believe just as firmly in the immortality of other animals but it happens that no set of rites has crystallized around the beaver or deer, for example. The Lillooet, Thompson and Shuswap throw beaver and deer bones in the water, while a Yurok does not wash his hands in running water after eating venison because the deer would drown.

We find therefore that the ceremony and the various taboos related to the salmon are based on the same fundamental concept, the immortality and conscious personality of the animal, and the desire not to offend it so that it may come in abundance.

^{61a} See appendix.

⁶² Spier, notes.

V. RELATION TO OTHER FIRST FRUITS CEREMONIES AND THE BEAR CULT

In North America there is a sporadic occurrence of first fruits ceremonies, a ritual feature generally associated with the Old World. There are two distinct areas of distribution of these ceremonies, one east of the Mississippi River where the most significant ritual of this kind is held for the corn, and the other in scattered groups along the Pacific Coast where the ritual is always performed for wild products. Although the complete distribution of the first fruits ceremonies of the east is not given here, the groupings obtained are sufficient to assume that they are connected. The ceremony is a harvest festival, conducted before it is permissible to eat of the new crop. The ceremonial eating in the southern part of the area is generally preceded by the taking of an emetic to purify the participants. The event not only celebrates the ripening of the corn but in many places marks the beginning of a new year, and at this time the village is thoroughly cleaned, the people make new clothing and household goods, and new fires are lighted.

This harvest ceremony in the Southeast sets a ritual pattern which the Creeks, at least, have carried over to other traits. The first acorns or fruits gathered were not eaten, neither was the first fish caught in a new fish weir, nor corn from a newly broken field.⁵³ Hunters gave the first deer killed to the shaman who had helped them through repeating formulac.

On the Pacific Coast there are two distinct groups of tribes, celebrating first fruits ceremonies and then a wide scattering of peoples who share the custom to a limited degree. The compact groups center about the lower Fraser River and in northwestern California. In the Northwestern Californian group there is an echo of the concept found in the Southeast, namely, the coincidence of the first fruits rituals and the opening of the new year. This is true for the Hupa and Karok especially, and shared to a lesser degree by the Yurok.⁵⁴ In this area the first fruits ritual is localized and performed for a particular product in each place. The Hupa catch the first salmon at Haslinding while the lamprey ceremony is performed in another part of the valley.⁵⁵ In autumn the first acorns are treated in a similar way. The acorn ceremony is also performed by the Yuki who catch salmon but have no ritual for it.⁵⁶

In this area there can be no doubt but that the salmon ceremony has been completely assimilated into the ritual pattern and has become one of these first fruits ceremonies, the most important rituals of the year.

Going northward from these groups the salmon ceremony alone is to be found through Oregon and southern Washington except among the Che-

⁵³ Swanton, BBAE 73:383-384.

⁵⁴ Kroeber, BBAE 78:53.

⁵⁵ Kroeber, BBAE 78:134.

⁵⁶ Kroeber, BBAE 78:188.

halis, who have a lamprey ceremony. On Puget Sound there are again some first fruits ceremonies, but of a much simpler nature than those of California. The Snohomish have a simple feast at which all the guests, but not the host, eat of the *pièce de resistance*, when the first salmon or deer are caught and when the first berries are picked.⁵⁷ This tribe is the southernmost outpost of the second group of first fruits rituals. Among the Interior Salish both in Washington and British Columbia and along the Lower Fraser to the coast there is a compact area of these ceremonies. The Interior Salish of Washington, together with the Sahaptian Methow and Wenatchee, have a salmon ritual and a deer ritual following the same pattern, the former performed in the spring, the latter when the first snow had fallen.⁵⁸ It is especially mentioned for the Okanagon, but probably applies also to the others of this group, that first berries are eaten ceremonially in the manner current in the Plateau of British Columbia.⁵⁹ The Thompson and Lillooet, both typically tribes of this area, have ceremonies for the first berries. When half the berry crop is ripe, the Lillooet chief calls the people to pick them. The people paint all exposed parts of their bodies red and are seated before the chief. He holds up a birch bark tray with the various kinds of berries to the mountain and says, "Qailus, we tell you, we are going to eat fruit." He addresses each mountain, and walking sunwise gives each person present a berry to eat. Then the women gather berries, but only enough for one day's meals, for to keep them overnight would be unlucky.⁶⁰ There are other first fruits ceremonies of the same pattern performed by the Thompson, the Stsæelis and other Cowichan of the Fraser Delta. The berry ceremony does not occur again between this group and the Tsimshian, whose ritual is similar to that of the Interior Salish.

The other first fruits ceremonies of the coast are sporadic rituals connected with fishing, especially with olachen fishing.^{60a} The Tlingit handle the first olachen carefully, address it as chief and give a festival in his honor. Then the fishing proceeds in the usual way.⁶¹ The Tsimshian roast the first olachen ceremonially and pray for plenty of fish.⁶²

All these western examples of the first fruits ceremony occur in the salmon area. In Northwestern California, the salmon ceremony is shared by all who have the other first fruits ceremonies, except the Yuki. The Interior Salish tribes who depend so largely on salmon, curiously enough do not all perform the ceremony. The Lower Lillooet have an elaborate ritual and show great reverence for the salmon, but the upper division of the tribe does not share it. Neither do their close neighbors, the Thompson and Shuswap.

It is clear that the salmon ceremony in Northwestern California belongs to the first fruit complex there, but with the North Pacific Coast this is not so obvious. While the Thompson, Shuswap and Upper Lillooet have other first

⁵⁷ Haeberlin-Gunther, ZE 1924:17.

⁵⁸ Curtis, 7:78.

⁵⁹ Hill-Tout, JAI 41:132.

⁶⁰ Teit, Mem AMNH 4:282.

^{60a} See appendix.

⁶¹ Dall, 413.

⁶² Boas, BAAS 1889:747.

fruits ceremonies and no salmon ritual there are other groups in the vicinity for whom the reverse is true. It is impossible to prove that one or the other is earlier, but it is obvious that the ritual pattern of both ceremonies is the same. The same attitude underlies the ceremonies. There is always a propitiation and a supplication for abundance.

The attitude at the basis of the salmon ceremony is also shown toward the bear. From eastern Siberia to the Atlantic shores of North America there is spread a series of customs turning on veneration of the supernatural power attributed to the bear. To some extent the area of the salmon ceremony coincides with this wider distribution, especially in the north. But more interesting than the overlapping of this distribution is the fact that the ritual pattern of the two ceremonies is largely alike. There are prayers of propitiation to the bear, the animal is butchered in a certain fashion, only a particular group is allowed to eat of the animal, the refuse is especially disposed of. All these are features of the salmon rites and agree even in the specific way of doing them. One of the most widespread taboos in regard to the bear is that the bones must be kept away from dogs which is the same reason given for burning the salmon heart or throwing the bones in the water. The Kwakiutl treat the bear much as they do the salmon, as an honored guest. Those who are ceremonially unclean may not partake of the bear, just as they are forbidden to eat of the salmon.⁶³

Again the bear and the salmon are not alone in being the object of these taboos. They concern other animals in the same areas, but they have not been so thoroughly crystallized into a set of rites. The Interior Salish Thompson, Shuswap and Lillooet also throw deer and beaver bones into the water. The Skaulits always throw sturgeon bones into the water.⁶⁴ The refuse from butchering a mountain goat is carefully disposed of by the Tsimshian and Lillooet. The Ten'a throw goose, duck and swan feathers into the river that they may change back to birds; fish bones into the water and animal bones into the forest.⁶⁵ In every instance there is attributed some supernatural power to these animals and the effort is made not to offend them by being careless with their bodies so that they will come abundantly.

These concepts and the specific ways of expressing them are found over a wide area of northern North America. In some instances they have crystallized into rituals, elsewhere they remain taboos individually observed. On analyzing the situations where the ceremonies have developed, it will be found that almost invariably it has been in connection with a seasonal animal or product. The dramatic and spectacular arrival of the salmon, the ripening of the berries which have been watched from the time they blossom in the spring, the harvesting of the corn, the gathering of the acorns, are all seasonal events. There is a definite occasion which presents itself for celebration. That the seasonal occurrence of game intensifies the ceremonial response is clear. On the

⁶³ Hallowell, *AA.*, n. s., 28, 1-175.

⁶⁴ Hill-Tout, *JAI* 34:339.

⁶⁵ Reed and Parsons, 339.

other hand where game is available at all times, but the hunt is set at a definite time, there is also this tendency toward ceremony. The bear could be hunted throughout the summer and fall, but instead he is attacked in the spring when he emerges from hibernation or even driven from his lair. The intensive whale rituals are performed only by those tribes who go out to sea on whale hunts, which are conducted at a definitely determined time. Contrarywise the beaver, the deer, the porcupine and the mountain goat, although perhaps better and more easily obtainable at certain seasons, are hunted casually and so present no occasion for a ritual.

DISTRIBUTION OF FIRST SALMON, BEAR, AND FIRST FRUIT RITES WITH REFERENCES TO SOURCES

| | SALMON | BEAR | FIRST FRUITS |
|----|--|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | Achomawi, BBAE 78:313 | | |
| 2 | | Algonkin, Hallowell 139 | |
| 3 | Alesea, U Cal 20:9 | | |
| 4 | | Assiniboin, Hallowell 71 | |
| 5 | Bella Coola, Mem AMNH 2:78 | | |
| 6 | Carrier, Morice letter Sept. 28, 1927 | Carrier, Hallowell 141 | |
| 7 | | | Cherokee, Trans. AES 3:75 |
| 8 | | | Chickasaw, JAFL 20:50 |
| 9 | | Chilcotin, Hallowell 142 | |
| 10 | Chinook, CNAE 1:196 Swan 107 Franchère 260 Bancroft 1:233 | | |
| 11 | Cowichan, BAAS 1894:461 | | Cowichan, BAAS 1894:461 |
| 12 | | | Creek, Adair 96-111 |
| 68 | | Eastern Cree, Hallowell 139 | |
| 72 | | Forest Potawatomi, Hallowell 140 | |
| 67 | Haida, Mem AMNH 8:69 | | |
| 13 | | | Huron, Summary Report 10 |
| 14 | Hupa, U Cal 1:23 | | Hupa, BBAE 78:134 |
| 15 | | | Iroquois, Summary Report 471 |
| 16 | Karok, BBAE 78:104 | | Karok, BBAE 78:102 |
| 17 | | Kaska, Hallowell 141 | |
| 18 | Klallam, U W 1:202 | | |
| 19 | Klamath, Spier ms. | | |
| 20 | Kwakiutl, RBAE 35:609, 611, 1318 BAAS 1890:614 | Kwakiutl, Hallowell 74 | |
| 21 | | Lenape, Hallowell | Lenape, Indian Notes 144 |
| 22 | Lillooet (Lower), Mem AMNH 4:280 | Lillooet, Hallowell 142 | Lillooet, Mem AMNH 4:282 |
| 23 | | Malecite, Hallowell 68 | |
| 24 | | Menominee, Hallowell 140 | Menominee, AA 13:556 |
| 25 | Methow, Curtis 7:78 | | Methow, Curtis 7:78 |
| 26 | | Miami, Hallowell 72 | |
| 27 | | Micmac, Hallowell 68 | |
| 71 | | Mistassini, Hallowell 66 | |
| 28 | | Miwok, Hallowell 76 | |
| 29 | | | Mohegan, Pa AMNH 3:194 |
| 30 | | Montagnais, Hallowell 137 | |
| 31 | | Naskapi, Hallowell 137 | |
| 32 | | | Natchez, BBAE 43:113 |
| 33 | Nisqualli, CNAE 1:196 | | |

| | SALMON | BEAR | FIRST FRUITS |
|----|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| 34 | Nootka, BAAS 1890:599 | Nootka, Hallowell 74 | |
| 35 | No. Maidu, BAMNH 17:198 | | |
| 36 | No. Shoshoni, Pa AMNH 2:218 | | |
| 37 | | | Ojibway, RBAE 19:1091 |
| 38 | Okanagon, Curtis 7:78 | | Okanagon, Curtis 7:78 |
| 39 | | | Osage, Trans U P 2:171 |
| 40 | Pavlotso, Pa AMNH 20:306 | | |
| 41 | | Penobscot, Hallowell 67 | |
| 42 | | Plains Cree, Hallowell 70 | |
| 43 | | Plains Ojibway, Hallowell 139 | |
| 44 | Puyallup, Ballard letter | | |
| 45 | Quinault, Olson ms. | | |
| 46 | | Saulteaux, Hallowell 138 | |
| 47 | | | Seminole, RBAE 5:522 |
| 48 | Shasta, BAMNH 17:430 RBAE 78:294 | | |
| 49 | | Shuswap, Hallowell 142 | |
| 50 | Snohomish, ZE 1924:72 | | Snohomish, ZE 1924:17 |
| 51 | Songish, BAAS 1890:569 | | Songish BAAS 1890:596 |
| 52 | Stsæ'lis, JAI 34:330 | | Stsæ'lis, JAI 34:330 |
| 53 | | Tahltan, Hallowell 141 | |
| 54 | | Ten'a, Hallowell 144 | |
| 69 | | Tete de Boule, Hallowell 142 | |
| 55 | | Thompson, Hallowell 142 | Thompson, Mem AMNH 2:349 |
| 56 | Tillamook, U Cal 20:10 | | |
| 57 | | Tlingit, Hallowell 74 | Tlingit, Dall 413 |
| 70 | | Timiskaming Algonkin, Hal- lowell 139 | |
| 58 | Tolowa, CNAE 3:67 | | |
| 59 | Tsimshian, RBAE 31:450 | Tsimshian, Hallowell 60 | Tsimshian, BAAS 1889:847 |
| 60 | | Wailaki, Hallowell 76 | |
| 61 | Wenatchee, Curtis 7:78 | | Wenatchee, Curtis 7:78 |
| 62 | | | Winnebago, RBAE 37:384 |
| 63 | Wishram, PAES 2:183 Spier ms. | | |
| 64 | | | Yuchi, U P 1:112-131 |
| 65 | | | Yuki, BBAE 78:183 |
| 66 | Yurok, BBAE 78:60 CNAE 3:56 | | Yurok, BBAE 78:53 |

NOTE: The figures preceding the tribal names refer to the numbers on the map.

VI. THE RELATION OF THE CEREMONY TO MYTHOLOGY

It has been shown that the salmon ceremony has been thoroughly integrated with the ritual life in the various groups which practice it and that the fundamental attitude on which it is based is expressed also in a series of taboos and beliefs. In other words, this attitude of veneration of the salmon is an integral part of the culture of these groups. It is then to be expected that there should be some reflection of this in the mythology.

Throughout the area where the ceremony is performed and even in the groups which do not have the ritual there are myths about the salmon. These myths show a striking uniformity, dealing invariably with salmon taboos and beliefs, often giving the local variant of these customs. This is often indirectly done, especially if there is a well built novelistic plot to the tale. Generally these myths fall into the cultural divisions of the area, with one type centering about the Kwakiutl speaking groups on Vancouver Island and the mainland opposite, another about Puget Sound, and a third among the Interior Salish and southward to California.

These myths readily fall into four major groups:

1. Raven and the salmon
 - a. Raven carves a salmon out of wood
 - b. Raven marries Salmon Woman
2. The Salmon Boy Myth
3. Salmon origin tales
4. Miscellaneous tales
 - a. Taboo and belief tales
 - b. Novelistic tales

The first group with very few exceptions is found only in the northern part of the area and belongs to the Raven cycle. The tales either appear independently or the two incidents are told in sequence as one story. In the first episode (A of the table, page 164) Raven carves a salmon of wood and finds that it has no soul, or it is tough or cannot swim. So he goes to the salmon country to get whatever the fish lacks. The second tale (B of the table) relates the marriage of Raven and Salmon Woman (a variant being that he abducts the daughter of the salmon chief) who produces salmon by magical means. Raven's hair catches on the drying salmon, he insults them, and Salmon Woman leaves him, taking all the fish with her.

The first episode alone is found only in two Kwakiutl speaking groups, the River's Inlet and Newetee, and among the Bella Coola, almost contiguous groups. The second tale has a much wider distribution, occurring in the three groups mentioned above, then inland from the Bella Coola to the Chilcotin and Lillooet and northward to the Tsimshian, Haida and Tlingit. The two episodes combined into one tale (AB of the table) is again found

in the first mentioned groups, where both episodes occur among the Chilcotin who do not tell the first episode alone.

These tales have nothing in common with the ceremony except that the disappearance of the fish after Raven insults them stresses the need for reverence toward the salmon.

The myth of Salmon Boy has a more direct connection with the ceremony in that it describes the ritual for the first salmon. The plot varies but little. A boy is taken to the salmon country, where he is told to club a child when he wants food, eat and throw its bones into the water. The child revives immediately. The boy returns to his father's village in the salmon run and is caught by his father. He teaches his people how to treat the salmon.

This tale (C of the table) is found in thirteen tribes of whom five have the ceremony. It cannot be said that this myth dictates the ritual or determines its presence, but it is, no doubt, explanatory. The pattern of this story occurs again in a Lillooet tale about the mountain goat. A young hunter treats the mountain goat he kills disrespectfully so their chief's daughters lure him to their camp. The chief sends out two boys and sends the hunter out for goats. He shoots the boys and they are carefully brought in and butchered; the blood is soaked up with leaves and offal are thrown in the lake. The hunter later skins a goat and hides the cartilage. The goat has a bleeding nose. When the hunter returns to his people he instructs them in butchering mountain goats.⁶⁶ The Skaulits have a similar myth about the sturgeon.⁶⁷

Salmon origin tales take on a very definite pattern among the Interior Salish tribes. Coyote is the culture hero-trickster of these groups and the coming of salmon is always due to his efforts. The typical version is that Coyote transforms himself into a plank, a dish or a baby, floats into a salmon trap and is cared for by the two women who own it. In their absence he breaks their dam and liberates the salmon. This version is found in Kutenai, Thompson, Shuswap, Lillooet, Flathead, Nez Percé, Okanagon, Sanpoil, Seshelt, Snohomish, Wishram.⁶⁸ All these groups tell this story in their sequence of Coyote adventures. From the Wishram southward the tale is attached to the culture hero who brings the salmon from the place where it is hidden by its owner. The Klamath variant is an interesting transition. The culture hero (Kemukumps, Old One) made a dam where the people could fish. The people above got no fish at all, so they hired Loon to break the dam, with the approval of the culture hero.⁶⁹

In Northwestern California the Hupa, Yurok and Wiyot⁷⁰ have a tale clearly connected with the Coyote tales and the Klamath version. The culture hero deceives the woman who owns the salmon and liberates them by breaking a dam.

⁶⁶ Hill-Tout, JAI 35:195, 196.

⁶⁷ Hill-Tout, JAI 34:365.

⁶⁸ Boas, BBAE 59:301, except Snohomish, Haeberlin, JAFL 37:404.

⁶⁹ Spier, ms.

⁷⁰ Kroeber, BBAE 78:73, 119.

This continuity of distribution from the Plateau of British Columbia to northwestern California may be indicative of other cultural affiliations. The Lillooet and the Hupa and Yurok are the only groups who have preparatory rites before the salmon ceremony. In the light of this, the prophesying dreams of the Wenatchee, Methow, Okanagon and Nespelim may be considered as an expression of this same idea. This salmon origin tale has the widest distribution and the most consistent of any one salmon story. On the other hand, since to a large extent, it is so firmly woven into the Coyote cycle, the interest in the salmon is probably an incidental matter.

The miscellaneous group of salmon tales includes a variety of stories that explain taboos and beliefs related to the salmon. They are largely minor tales in the mythologies that include the more important salmon stories. The Tlingit tell the tale of a man who found a salmon on the beach during a famine. The salmon told the man to put him back in the water. Then plenty of fish came. Later another salmon told the man to eat him and put his bones under his pillow. The man finds two babies, one of whom becomes a hero.⁷¹

Faintly resembling this is the Sklqomic tale of the father of twins who dreams that he should put the bones of all the fish in the river in a box. After he does this he dies and no more fish come until another man in a trance discovers this. The Tsimshian Salmon Boy myth emphasizes the same belief in the incident of the salmon chief's illness due to keeping dried salmon more than one season.

The Stsæ'lis, Sklqomic and Lillooet have an interesting tale. Two children develop out of the roe of salmon and proceed to adventures characteristic of the mythology of this region.⁷²

In Puget Sound, especially the southern end, from the Snuqualmi to the Puyallup, there are numerous short tales each expressing some salmon taboo, as not ridiculing the humpback for his appearance (Snuqualmi), or doubting the return of the salmon (Skokomish), or the quarrel among the varieties of salmon over the use of a stream and the agreement to run at a certain season (Puyallup).⁷³

The Chinook and Kathlamet⁷⁴ have in their Coyote stories the establishment of local salmon taboos as Coyote moves upstream and fishes in each place. This localizing, so typical of northwestern California, is found also in the Klamath myths. The Tillamook have two salmon stories, dealing with behavior toward the salmon.⁷⁵ These tales resemble more closely the Puget Sound type than the Kathlamet, Klamath or Californian variety. The Snohomish and Chinook⁷⁶ have tales of remarkable likeness. A chief offers his daughter to the one who can split elkhorn. Salmon succeeds and is killed by

⁷¹ Swanton, BBAE 39:196.

⁷² Hill-Tout, JAI 34:342; Hill-Tout, BAAS 1900:541; Hill-Tout, JAI 35:185-189.

⁷³ Ballard.

⁷⁴ Boas, BBAE 20:101-106; Boas, BBAE 26:45-49.

⁷⁵ Boas, JAFL 11:24, 142.

⁷⁶ Haeberlin, JAFL 37:384; Boas BBAE 20:77.

the wolves who in turn are killed by his son. These tales involve no taboos or beliefs and are purely novelistic with the salmon as a character.

The tribal distribution of the tales discussed here has been plotted in the accompanying table. It shows clearly several definite distributions that overlap only to a slight degree. The Raven tales are segregated in the north, the salmon origin tales thru the Interior. The miscellaneous tales are limited to groups that have no definite cycles of stories. In these mythologies salmon is not a character, except in a few novelistic tales where his exploits are in no way contingent on his usual supernatural attributes. It would seem rather that in these various groups, a local type of myth has become explanatory of the salmon taboos and beliefs. The only exception to this is the Salmon Boy myth which has a definite pattern of its own that it retains throughout its distribution.

This salmon mythology occurs much more widely in the salmon area than the ceremony. Where the two occur together it is clear that the mythology does not determine the ritual, but in some instances is explanatory of it. The ceremony and the mythology are based on the same fundamental attitude toward the salmon and may be regarded as interrelated cultural traits, but it cannot be claimed that one is determined by the other; at most the mythology is explanatory.

TABLE II. DISTRIBUTION OF SALMON MYTHS

| | | | | |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Tlingit..... | .... | B | .... | C |
| Haida..... | .... | .... | .... | .... |
| Masset..... | .... | B | .... | .... |
| Skidegate..... | .... | B | .... | C |
| Kaigani..... | .... | .... | .... | C |
| Tsimshian..... | .... | B | .... | C |
| Nass..... | .... | B | .... | .... |
| Kwakiutl..... | .... | B | .... | .... |
| River's Inlet..... | A | B | AB | .... |
| Newette..... | A | B | AB | .... |
| Bella Bella..... | .... | .... | .... | C |
| Bella Coola..... | A | B | AB | C |
| Chilcotin..... | .... | B | AB | C |
| Shuswap..... | .... | B | .... | C |
| Stsæ'lis..... | .... | .... | .... | C |
| Sk'qomic..... | .... | .... | .... | C |
| Nootka..... | .... | .... | .... | C |
| Siciatl..... | .... | .... | .... | C |
| Quinault..... | .... | .... | .... | C |

REFERENCES FOR THE SALMON MYTH IN TABLE

Tlingit

(B) Swanton BBAE 39:108.
(C) BBAE 39:301.

Haida

Masset (B) Swanton Mem AMNH 14:303,330.

Skidegate (B) Swanton BBAE 29:26.
(C) BBAE 29:7-14.

- Kaigani (C) Swanton MemAMNH 8:243.
- Tsimshian (B) Boas RBAE 31:76.
(C) RBAE 31:192.
- Nass (B) Boas BBAE 27:32.
- Kwakwaka'wakw (B) Boas, Sagen 159; Boas CUCA 2:49.
(AB) Boas CUCA 2:169; Boas MemAMNH 5:330
- Rivers Inlet (A) Boas, Sagen 209.
(B) Boas RBAE 31:669.
(AB) Boas, Sagen 210; RBAE 31:669.
- Newette (A) Sagen, 174.
(B) Sagen, 174.
(AB) Sagen, 175.
- Bella Bella (C) RBAE 31: 886.
- Bella Coola (A) Sagen, 242.
(B) Boas MemAMNH 2:94; Sagen, 246.
(AB) Sagen, 242; MemAMNH 2:94.
(C) MemAMNH 2:73.
- Chilcotin (B) Farrand MemAMNH 4:18.
(AB) Ibid.
(C) MemAMNH 4:24.
- Shuswap (B) Teit MemAMNH 4:637.
(C) MemAMNH 4:690.
- Sts'at'imc (C) Hill-Tout JAI 34:331.
- Sk'lgomic (C) Hill-Tout BAAS 1900:520-522.
- Siciatl (C) Hill-Tout JAI 34:46.
- Nootka (C) Boas RBAE 31:919.
- Quinault (C) Farrand MemAMNH 4:112.

VII. SUMMARY

It has been shown that on the North Pacific Coast and inland, as far as the salmon ascend the streams, there is a ceremony performed when the first salmon is caught. The distribution of this ceremony is not as wide as the occurrence of salmon but spread over a fairly continuous area. In every tribe where the ceremony is performed, the ritual has been integrated with the ceremonial pattern of the group, being simple or elaborate according to that pattern. The specific similarities between the ceremonies are due to likeness of ritual pattern of the tribes involved and not due to diffusion of this ceremony. In no case did the ceremony itself spread from one group to another, but the idea of ritualizing the taboos toward the salmon, which were already present, was diffused.

This attitude of veneration which is ritualized in the ceremony is also expressed in other practices and taboos. The concepts underlying this attitude of veneration are the belief in the immortality of the salmon and the conscious will of the fish in allowing himself to be caught. These concepts are also held toward other animals, as well as toward plants. This is expressed in the first fruits ceremonies found in the same area. It is also expressed in the bear cult. The area of the salmon ceremony is entirely within the territory covered by the bear cult, which spreads from eastern Siberia through northern North America. Generally it was found that while this attitude is held toward many animals and expressed in special behavior toward them, wherever the animal or plant makes a definitely periodic appearance this attitude is intensified and frequently becomes the basis of a group ceremonial.

The mythologies of the tribes practicing the salmon ceremony contain some tales explanatory of the taboos and beliefs regarding the salmon, but it cannot be claimed that these myths determine the presence of the ceremony or its ritual. The majority of these myths are part of the cycles of tales centering about Raven or Coyote and it seems that the salmon episodes are only incidental.

The attitude of veneration toward certain game animals of which the salmon ceremony is one ritualistic expression is highly developed only in northwestern North America. It is the basis of the widespread bear cult and the first fruits ceremonies of the Pacific Coast. Its linkage with the belief in the immortality of game and its conscious will to be caught gives rise to a set of propitiatory rites that are exceptional in North America culture. The harvest festivals of the Southeast and Eastern Woodlands are feasts of thanksgiving for the abundance of crops and do not seem to have the same underlying attitude. In every salmon ritual it is clear that the welfare of the animal is most important and the taboos regulate conduct that his spirit may not be offended.

In this complex there are two features of almost universal distribution: the first fruits ritual and a definite relationship toward animals. Among primi-

tive people there is frequently the belief that a new thing is sacred and requires a ritual to remove the taboo. This is done through the ceremonial eating of the product or through sacrifice to the dead or to the chief. These expressions do not involve the attitude toward the plant itself which is so characteristic of northwestern North America. When first fruits are given to the chief or sacrificed to the dead, it is to honor him, more than to honor the thing which is being given. A feeling of definite relationship toward food animals is most strongly developed in Australia. But there the behavior is prompted by an attitude of coercion rather than conciliation as in our American instance.

It would seem then, that in northwestern North America we have a definitely local interpretation of two widespread cultural features, which is an isolated example in the New World.

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The following abbreviations are used:

- AA American Anthropologist.
 BAAS Reports, British Association for the Advancement of Science.
 BBAE Bulletin, Bureau of American Ethnology.
 CNAE Contributions to North American Ethnology.
 CUCA Columbia University Contributions to Anthropology.
 Indian Notes Indian Notes and Monographs, Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation.
 JAFJL Journal of American Folklore.
 JAI Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute.
 Mem AMNH Memoirs, American Museum of Natural History.
 Pa AMNH Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History.
 RBAE Report, Bureau of American Ethnology.
 Sagen Boas, Indianische Sagen.
 Smith. Cont. Know. Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge.
 Summary Report Summary Report of the Anthropological Division, Geological Survey of Canada.
 Trans AES Transactions of the American Ethnological Society.
 Trans UP Transactions, Department of Archaeology, University of Pennsylvania.
 U Cal University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology.
 UP University of Pennsylvania, Anthropological Publications, University Museum.
 UW University of Washington Publications in Anthropology.
 ZE Zeitschrift für Ethnologie.

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APPENDIX

The information added here was received too late to incorporate in the paper. The Wishram notes were contributed by Doctor Edward Sapir, the Kwakiutl information by Professor Franz Boas, and the Bella Coola notes by Mr. T. F. McIlwraith.

ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTION OF A WISHRAM FIRST SALMON CEREMONY

When the first single fish comes in spring (especially Chinook salmon) and is caught, it is roasted and all old people are called and they eat this first fish. This gives good luck for that season, particularly for that fishing place where the first fish was caught. Before the fish is eaten, there used to be lots of talk.^{3a}

BELLA COOLA ATTITUDE TOWARD SALMON

The Bella Coola undoubtedly consider that all living creatures are, in a sense, supernatural. This does not imply that they are superior to humans, but rather that they belong to a different plane, sometimes superior, sometimes inferior. The salmon, probably owing to their great economic value, figure prominently. For instance, the older people have no doubt concerning the immortality of the fish. When the latter "die" they are merely freed from the flesh and return the following year.^{32a}

BELLA COOLA TABOOS

In former times, adult women were not allowed on the river bank during the early part of the salmon run. This prohibition was discontinued when the sun's shadow cast a diagonal scar on a certain mountain, which took place about the first of August. One of the jealously guarded prerogatives is that of enforcing prohibitions with regard to the river during the salmon run. No refuse must be thrown in the river; no freshly hewn planks can be set afloat; a new canoe must be kept for ten days before launching and no widow or widower of less than a year's standing can embark at the village. Infringement of any of these prohibitions was punished by ducking or beating although it is unlikely that anyone dared intentionally to err.^{40a}

BELLA COOLA ATTITUDE TOWARD TWINS

Salmon are responsible for the birth of twins, although no explanation of this belief is offered. It is believed that twins formerly could understand the speech of birds, animals and fish, and that many of them could assume salmon form at will. The corpse of a twin was formerly deposited, in its coffin, in the crotch of a tree in the river valley. Thenceforth the river cut into this bank from year to year until it undermined the tree, afterward keeping to a single channel. Before an adult woman can eat salmon, the sticks on which it has been exposed to the flames must be removed. If this is omitted, she will bear twins.^{51a}

KWAKIUTL OLACHEN RITE

The Head Chief of the clan flyers of the *Dəna'x-da'x*^a has the right to be the first to dip in his net when the olachen first appear. He watches for them to come up the river and as soon as they appear he takes his dip net and his punting pole to the beach in front of his house to his canoe. Then he takes off his blanket and walks out into the river. He turns around, sitting down in the river and dives. This he repeats four times, then he stands up in the water and says to his tribe, "You have come with us. Now make ready your fishing tackle to catch the fish that is coming up the stream. Now I will go according to my privilege obtained from my ancestor who was the first to fish olachen." Then he takes his canoe and poles towards the fishing place "Eagle Nest." He ties his line to a tree which is always used for this purpose, dips his net three times into the water and the fourth time pushes it down. When it reaches the bottom he hauls it up again and when it is full of fish he lets it hang over the gunwale of his canoe and prays to the fish, "Welcome friends, now you have arrived in this river to play on your playing ground, supernatural ones, you fish. For you have come to bring wealth to me and my tribe, supernatural ones. You have come and we have met alive, long-life-giver, now protect me. Welcome 'Oil Women.' Therefore you came, supernatural ones, that we may eat." Then he lifts his net and pours the fish into his canoe. He puts it into the water again and hauls it up again and pours the fish in his canoe. After he has done so four times he goes home and when he has reached the beach the whole tribe goes into their canoes and begin to fish.

The daughter of the chief has to be the first to string up the first olachen to dry. Three times she pretends to string the fish and the fourth time she pushes the stick through the left gill. Then she puts them over the fire in the house.⁰⁰⁴

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