

which occur in other bodies of mythology in a consistently brief form. The *Cowlitz*, *Humptulip*, *Quileute* and *Quinault* have the story.

Wolf and Coyote send Dog for fire; Dog stays with the people who feed him; consequently Wolf and Coyote always fight Dog (*Cowlitz* MAFLS 27:191).

The four Wolves give their younger brother, Dog, scraps to eat; Dog, left at home to tend the fire, neglects it; he is sent to the people for fire and stays with them; dogs can escape Wolves only by urinating in their eyes (*Humptulip* MAFLS 27:307).

In the *Quileute* and *Quinault* versions it is within a longer myth in which the Earth People wage war upon the Sky People that the motivation for Dog's errand for fire is found. Earth People find themselves in need of fire in the cold upper regions:

In the *Quileute* myth Snowbird is sent to a house for fire and fails to return; Dog is dispatched, is fed by the Sky People and stays with them; Rabbit succeeds in bringing his fellow-warriors fire (CUCA 12:81).

In the *Quinault* myth Robin and Dog are so comfortable with the Sky People that each forgets to return with a firebrand; Dog is fed camas (MAM 4:109).

A *Kathlamet* myth, a composite of various elements of the preceding versions, is noted below for its comparative interest.

Beaver successfully obtains fire from the Sky People by a ruse; the Earth People then dispatch Skunk, Robin, Mouse and Rat to seek an entrance to the Sky People's house; Robin warms himself at a fire belonging to two old women and remains with them; when he returns home some time later his belly is burnt red from the blaze (BBAE 26:68).

D. TALES WITH HISTORICAL ELEMENTS

37. *Turtle's War Party (Mock Plea)*

Turtle assembles Water People for a war party
 Watersnake refuses to take part
 The party turns back; Turtle advances alone
 Turtle kills a Nez Percé chief
 Turtle is discovered with chief's scalp
 Turtle mocks death by pounding with a rock and burning; he pleads against being drowned
 Thrown into water, Turtle returns home and holds scalp dance

Turtle had a house at Chatcolet. One day he said, "Come to my place, all of you who belong in the water."

The turtles, fishes and all the water animals came. At night Turtle took a blanket and sang: "hi . . . ahi . . . a . n." All the people took hold of the blanket and began hitting it with a stick as they sang. Snake however was too proud and haughty to take part. He merely walked some distance away with his striped blanket pulled up to his nose and looked on.

In the morning Turtle said, "I'm going on a raid to the Nez Percé country."

All the Water People started off with him. They had not gone far when night came on. Turtle clubbed the blanket and sang. The next morning they went on but on the second day had gone only as far as Plummer. The second night they sang and drummed again. In the morning the chief, a big salmon, said, "We'll turn back. You know we belong in the water. My children (people) are dry."

Then Turtle said, "You can go to Spokane for all I care! I started and I am going to reach my goal. I won't turn back."

The fish all turned back. Turtle went on alone. Before night he came to Fort Lapwe, a place in the Nez Percé country at the foot of a very steep hill. On the top of the hill he sat down. He saw the people on the other side of Snake River. He waited until dark. Then he went down to the water where he crawled because it was his element. The people however did not walk but moved like fish. Turtle crawled up to the shore. There he saw many houses. He went in among the tents. There he discovered the chief's house because many people were going in and out to smoke.

After they had all come out, Turtle crawled in and hid in the space between the main house poles and the door.¹ He listened until the chief snored, "xu xu."

Turtle took his knife and cut off the chief's head at the throat. He never moved or made a sound. Then Turtle took hold of his hair and cut his scalp off entirely. He pulled up the blanket over the chief and went off with the scalp under his arm. Then Turtle went to sleep. In the morning the people began to pass the chief's house on the way to the sweat-house.

His wife said, "He is still asleep." She cooked, but when the food was ready she was too kind to waken him. When the sun was very high the people came back from sweating and said, "Where is the chief?" The woman said, "He is still sleeping." "Why is that? It is too long to sleep." "My breakfast is already cold."

He still did not stir or make a sound. Then the wife thought, "I'll look at him." She turned back the blanket, "Why, he's dead!"

¹This was the place where things were often stored.

Then all the people came. They saw he had been scalped. As they were arranging the body for burial they found Turtle with the scalp under his arm. They said, "This must be the one who killed him." They pulled and pulled at him but in vain. One said, "Throw him on his back and pound him with a rock."

Turtle then ran and cried, "Go ahead and try it! I'll kill some more of you." Meanwhile he hit himself with a rock as if he did not mind the blows. The people said, "No, that won't kill him. Let us throw him into the fire."

Turtle ran on his hind feet like a dog toward the fire crying, "That will only make me tougher so I can kill more of you." "No, that won't do. How can we kill him?" Another suggested, "Let's throw him into the water." And then Turtle covered his eyes with his hands and cried and begged, "a a, don't, please don't throw me into the water!" "Go ahead! Throw him in! That's the way to kill him."

They had not been able to pull him away from the ground for he clung tight to some obstruction, but now they took a stick and he let himself be pried loose. They took him toward the water but as they came near an old man said, "Stop, don't you know that's just his element."

As soon as Turtle heard that he sprang free and jumped into the water. The people said, "He's dead. How can he come ashore again?" The old person said, "Does he not have his home in the water? There he lives from one year's end to another."

The people went to the river. From the other side they heard Turtle singing and waving the scalp "*axiya xiya*." They crossed the river and chased him to the top of the hill but they could not catch up with him, so they turned back.

Turtle came home to Chatcolet. He cut off the branch of a bush to which he tied the scalp. He waved it and kept on singing. The people said, "Turtle must have come back. He brought a scalp." So they had a scalp dance.¹

Each one dressed himself up in his best. He painted his face red and yellow and combed his hair in a different way. He made stripes all over his body with red paint, especially under the arms. Frog and the various fishes, all painted themselves and danced and sang. Turtle kept hold of the scalp. The people danced and gave the war-whoop. Snake just stood with his striped blanket drawn up to his nose like a Nez Percé and never took part in any of the dance.²

¹ The stem is said to mean "make fun of, taunt, an enemy."

² Nowadays the Nez Percé fear the turtle much as many white people fear the mouse. A Nez Percé chief was actually mysteriously murdered and no one was ever able to find out who did it (explanation by interpreter).

Turtle figures as the lone killer in a similar myth of the *Kutenai*:

Turtle goes to a strange town; he kills a chief; he is discovered with the chief's head; he mocks death inflicted by a knife, a bow or an ax; he pleads against death in the water; released in the water, he returns with the chief's head to the tent he shares with Beaver (BBAE 59:22).

An *Okanagon* version opens with the animals' war expedition against the sky forces for the purpose of obtaining fire; Turtle falls from the sky and kills a person (Globus 52:137). His adventures at this point follow the outline recorded for those of the *Kutenai* myth. In conclusion the animals return home from the sky.

In a myth of the *Thompson* chief Rainbow Trout replaces the Coeur d'Alene Turtle as the leader of a war party. The story is concerned however solely with the warring expedition and Chief Rainbow Trout has no individual significance beyond the fact of his leadership.

Rainbow Trout summons the fishes of the interior for a war party into the coast country; some of the party turn back, the rest continue; they wage successful wars against the coast fish and spread into the streams over the country; some return home (MAM 12:350).

Further instances of the use of the Mock Plea appear in other connections in the mythology of the *Tlingit*, *Quinault*, *Chinook* and *Nootka*:

A great swimmer's wife dies; he finds her in a hostile village in the sky; he mocks death by fire, pleads against being thrown into the water and swims away to safety; Spider Woman helps him descend from the sky with his wife (*Tlingit* BBAE 39:251).

Squirrel and Black Diver taunt Bluejay for killing his own child in a Bungling Host episode; Bluejay takes them captive in his canoe; the ropes binding them break continually; Black Diver suggests weeds instead; he bursts them and dives into the water; Squirrel suggests Bluejay confine him in a brush-pile; Squirrel escapes (*Quinault* MAM 4:91).

In the *Chinook* myth Bluejay is similarly tricked by the man he holds captive in his canoe, who suggests sea-grass as more effective than rope for binding him; the man, when thrown into the water, unties his bonds and escapes (BBAE 20:22).

In the *Nootka* story Cuttlefish begs a man not to kill him in front of his house, on the shore or in shallow water, for people would say the man's threshold was bloody; the man takes him out into deep water; Cuttlefish wraps his arms about him and drowns him (IS 109).

Bluejay's war party is the subject of a *Shuswap* myth. The expedition has for its goal the conquering of a water monster and thus belongs

in quite a different category from that of Turtle's War Party. The similarity lies solely in matters of war procedure.

Bluejay dances the war-dance, sings his war song, sets out on the warpath with his brothers, kills the water monster, and dances the dance of victory (MAM 4:665).

38. Two-Headed Snakes

Women gathering camas encounter snakes with two heads on each end
A flood reaches the snakes' hole in the cliff and destroys them

Directly north of the old church at Cataldo there is a flat where many camas grow. Women gathering camas would hear teeth knocking together, *otsax tsax*, and would see something coming over the grass. It was a two-headed snake which had to go flat over the grass like a scraper so as to keep its heads in place. Some of the women ran, but some were not quick enough and were struck. Some were knocked down because it was so strong.

There came a rain. Snakes' house was high in a hole in the cliff north of the camas flat. It rained so hard the flood reached the hole and killed the snakes. They were never seen after that.

When I was a little girl I used to hear of snakes with heads on both ends.¹

The Coeur d'Alene narrator of the Two-Headed Snake story claimed it was a true story. The double-headed snake or serpent appears in stories of other tribes as an avowedly mythological being to which supernatural power is commonly attached.

Four myths may be noted for the *Kwakiutl* in which the double-headed serpent puts in an appearance:

A man sees a double-headed serpent and kills it (MAM 5:60); a woman finds the scales of a double-headed serpent and rubs her son's arrows with them (MAM 5:138); a boy washes his hands in the slime of the double-headed serpent and becomes Stone Hand (MAM 5:146); a man rubs his son with the salmon, the double-headed serpent he has killed, and the boy becomes Stone Body (MAM 5:197).

A number of further references to the fabulous snake may be found distributed among the *Lower Fraser*, *Squamish*, *Comox*, *Kwakiutl* and *Newettee* tribes:

A man safely passes the double-headed snake (*Lower Fraser* IS 41); a boy kills the double-headed snake with a head at each end (*Squamish* IS 58); boys in

heaven catch the double-headed snake and instruct it to eat their father-in-law, one head eating at each end (*Comox* IS 68); a man sees a fiery two-headed snake, hurls his spear at it and receives supernatural power for catching seals from it (*Comox* IS 81); men test their power by feeding each other a double-headed snake but they both survive the test (*Kwakiutl* IS 134); two transformers see the beautiful two-headed snake, one kills it and takes its skin and eyes which help him in great displays of power (*Newettee* IS 195). In still another *Kwakiutl* myth some of the beams of the hero's house are represented as being double-headed snakes; these come to life upon festive occasions and kill any evil person who enters the house (IS 166).

In the Coeur d'Alene myth there is no such supernatural adaptation of this alleged natural phenomenon.

39. The Dwarf

A man out hunting loses his powderhorn
A dwarf hangs it on a stump
The man's wife is injured by a dwarf at a waterhole

Once a man went hunting. He had a bandolier with a powderbox of buffalo horn. As he walked along he noticed that the box was missing. He turned back to look for it. He thought, "It must have fallen on the trail whence I came." He searched a whole day without finding it. The next day he saw it hanging on a stump. That's where a dwarf had hung it.

That same man went hunting another time. His wife stayed home. She went to a hole in the ice for water. Far off the man heard screaming. It was the woman crying. He thought, "I wonder what is the matter." He turned back and went past his house toward the water. He saw his wife standing on the ice and there was nothing but blood around her. He said, "What is the matter?" The woman said, "A dwarf hurt me." That's all.

40. Man Caught in a Fire Corral

People impound animals in fire corral
Fire gets beyond control and people rush out
One man is missing
The people look for him at night
They find something in the dark and wail over it
It turns out to be a grizzly bear
The man is found alive, but badly burned

They tell about a time when the people made a fire corral near Sand Point. The grass was burned in a large circle and a small opening was

¹Dorothy's father saw these snakes. Each was about three feet long, as thick as an arm and had two heads at each end. Their den was a hole in the cliff which could not be reached by man from the top or the bottom.