

# Raven Travelling: Page One

A Lost Haida Text by

Skaai of the Qquuna Qiighawaai

Transcribed at Skidegate in October 1900

by John Swanton

*Edited & Translated by*

*Robert Bringhurst*

## **Introduction**

Haida is one of the dozens of Native American languages in which a substantial oral literature has been transferred to written form. In this case and in most such cases, it is ludicrous to speak of anonymous folktales. In Haida, what we have is nothing less than a major classical literature—one which would be admired worldwide if it were freed from the deadly combination of critical neglect and uncritical awe with which outsiders often respond to Native American intellectual and literary traditions.

The home territory of this literature is Haida Gwaii, “the Islands of the People,” which are shown on most maps as the Queen Charlotte Islands, off the northern coast of British Columbia. These islands were once ringed with small beach-front villages of seahunters, whose population at the time of European contact has been estimated at about 10,000. After the smallpox epidemics of the 19th century, scarcely 1000 Haida were alive. This remnant was concentrated in the two mission villages of Skidegate and Masset, and in the southern Alaskan settlements of Hydaburg and Kasaan.

All the important texts in classical Haida were manually transcribed by one man, the American linguist and ethnologist John Reed Swanton (1873–1958), who spent the fall of 1900 and the spring and summer of 1901 in Haida Gwaii on assignment for the Bureau of American Ethnology and for Franz Boas at the American Museum of Natural History. Swanton recorded some 150 narratives and a number of short songs in both the southern and northern, or Skidegate and Masset, dialects of Haida. The southern and

northern texts differ not only in language but in literary form, and for the student of oral narrative poetry, the southern or Skidegate texts are considerably the more important.

The two most capable oral poets Swanton recorded are Walter of the Qaayahllaanas (born in the village of Qaisun circa 1850, and baptized in the 1890s as Walter McGregor) and his older colleague Skaai of the Qquuna Qiighawaai of Ttanuu (born in the village of Qquuna circa 1840, and baptized at Qadasghu on 31 January 1894 as John Sky). Both were speakers of the southern dialect, and both were living at the mission village of Skidegate—known in Haida as Hlghagilda—in 1900, when Swanton arrived.

Skaai in particular impressed Swanton as a poet of great gifts. The two men met on Monday, 8 October 1900, in the Skidegate house of the headman of Ttanuu, where the poet was living. Introductions were made by Swanton's Haida assistant, Henry Moody of the Qaagyals Qiighawaai, whose active participation was indispensable to the transcription process, and the three men worked together intensely for the remainder of the month. On Sunday, 14 October, Swanton wrote a long letter to Boas. He has been working, he says,

with an old man in the village who has a crippled back but is admitted on all hands to tell the old legends very correctly. His first story covers 126 pages with twelve or thirteen lines to the page. The second is not yet complete but will probably cover about seventy. It seems that a certain set of tales were told ... in a definite order.... Of this series the Raven story comes last, and this old man is almost the last in Skidegate who remembers the whole of it.... I consider him quite a find....<sup>1</sup>

Out of Swanton's year among the Haida came five books, published between 1905 and 1912. All are of interest to the student of oral literature—but it is important to realize that the most important fruits of Swanton's work were never published at all.

All the narratives that Swanton collected in the northern dialect of Haida were published in bilingual form in 1908 as *Haida Texts: Masset Dialect* (Publications of the Jesup North Pacific Expedition, vol. x.2. Leiden: E.J. Brill). The songs, both northern and southern dialect, were published (again in bilingual form, but without music) in 1912 as *Haida Songs* (in one volume with Franz Boas, *Tsimshian Texts: New Series*, publications of the American Ethnological Society, vol. 111. Leiden: E.J. Brill). The crucial texts in the southern dialect were not so fortunate. Swanton prepared them meticulously for publication in a volume to be issued by his employer, the

Bureau of American Ethnology, but when that volume came from the press, only a few brief sample texts were included in the Haida language. The masterpieces of Haida oral literature had been published, to Swanton's dismay, only in his English prose translations, which give little clue to the style of the originals. (The resulting volume is *Haida Texts and Myths: Skidegate Dialect*, BAE Bull. 29. Washington, DC: Bureau of American Ethnology, 1905.)

To supplement these three collections of Haida texts, Swanton published two important studies: *Contributions to the Ethnology of the Haida* (Publications of the Jesup North Pacific Expedition, vol. v.1. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1905) and a short work on the language, *Haida: An Illustrative Sketch* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1910).<sup>2</sup>

**S**wanton began the editing of the Skidegate texts in October 1901 and finished his typescript by the end of 1902. Sometime after 1905, when the Bureau had failed to print the texts as expected, the unpublished typescript was transferred to Swanton's mentor, Franz Boas at Columbia University—evidently in the hope that Boas could arrange for its publication. Boas was indeed responsible for seeing that the Masset texts and the Haida songs were eventually published in full bilingual form, as Swanton desired, but he did not arrange for publication of the Skidegate originals.

In the 1920s, the Skidegate manuscript was studied and annotated by another anthropologist, Theresa Mayer Durlach, whose line numbers are now to be found in the margins.<sup>3</sup> In 1942, on Boas's death, the manuscript was transferred with many of Boas's other papers to the American Philosophical Society Library in Philadelphia. It rests there today, as Ms Boas Coll. N1.5, or to insiders, item 1534 in John F. Freeman's *Guide to Manuscripts Relating to the American Indian in the Library of the American Philosophical Society* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1965). The manuscript was also microfilmed around that time, and microfilm copies have made their way to interested scholars around the world—including Haida students, who have access to these texts and others through an archive of their own at the Queen Charlotte Islands Museum in Skidegate.

The Skidegate manuscript is a handsome and legible typescript, in the old phonetic alphabet used by Boas and all his students. It bears Swanton's emendations in ink on every page. But sometime between 1905 and 1942—

that is to say, before its transfer to Philadelphia and before it was micro-filmed—page one of the Skidegate manuscript was lost. Because the first text in the pile was Skaai's story of creation, this loss is not insignificant. What is missing from the Skidegate manuscript is the opening of a Native American Genesis, a great Haida poet's vision of the birth of the world. Restoration of the text from Swanton's original field notes has not been feasible, since almost all of the notebooks from his months at Skidegate have also disappeared.

In March 1992, I was rooting through the Swanton papers at the Smithsonian Institution. The Smithsonian catalogue listed a letterpress book, donated to the archives in 1972 by John Reed Swanton, Jr. When I asked for it, I was handed not a letterpress book but an old brown binder full of wrinkled onionskin. To the cataloguer, this is Ms 7047, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC. To me, it turned out to be something more. Moments after I opened it, I realized that I was looking at Swanton's uncorrected carbon copy of the Skidegate texts. Then I brushed my hand across the page, and whole sentences vanished before my eyes. The carbon was so fragile I could send entire paragraphs to oblivion with the simple touch of a sleeve. But I had not, in my clumsiness, damaged page one. Within an hour, we had copies of the missing page.

At the top of page one is a title—*Xhuuya qagaangas*, "Raven Travelling." Beneath that is the opening of a two-hour poem, in the voice of the poet Skaai of the Qquuna Qiighawaai, or John Sky. It is not *the* Haida vision of creation, but *a* Haida vision, spoken in the ruins of a culture a century ago by an old man with a crippled back and a beautiful mind.

The opening of the poem—page one and some of its sequel—is reproduced below in Haida and in my English translation. I've made a number of small corrections to the Haida text as Swanton transcribed it, but in general I follow his phonetic judgements very closely. The language is classical southern Haida, which was already archaic in 1900, and the text has *not* been modernized to accord with the pronunciation and syntax of more recent speakers at Skidegate. I have, however, converted it to a typographic format designed to reflect the formulaic structure and pace of the original oral narrative, and to a simpler orthography than the one Swanton used.

A copy of the missing page in Swanton's own orthography is now on

deposit at the American Philosophical Society Library in Philadelphia, with the rest of the Skidegate manuscript, and in Skidegate itself at the Queen Charlotte Islands Museum.

### Guide to the Alphabet

Short vowels are written once (*a, i, u*) and long vowels are written twice (*aa, ii, uu*). Consonants include the following:

'	glottal stop, except between <i>n</i> and <i>g</i>	<i>qq</i>	glottalized <i>q</i> (glottalized unvoiced uvular stop)
<i>dl</i>	λ (voiced lateral stop)	<i>tl</i>	λ (unvoiced lateral stop)
<i>gh</i>	uvular <i>g</i> (voiced uvular stop)	<i>tt</i>	glottalized <i>t</i>
<i>hl</i>	ɬ (unvoiced lateral fricative)	<i>ttl</i>	glottalized λ
<i>kk</i>	glottalized <i>k</i>	<i>tts</i>	glottalized <i>t</i> s
<i>ng</i>	ŋ (velar nasal: <i>ng</i> as in <i>wing</i> )	<i>x</i>	unvoiced velar fricative ( <i>ch</i> in German <i>ich</i> )
<i>n'g</i>	<i>n</i> + <i>g</i> ( <i>ng</i> as in <i>Wingate</i> )	<i>xh</i>	unvoiced uvular fricative ( <i>ch</i> in Scottish <i>loch</i> )
<i>n'gh</i>	<i>n</i> followed by uvular <i>g</i>		
<i>q</i>	uvular <i>k</i> (unvoiced uvular stop)		

## Xhuuya Qagaangas

Aanishau tangagyangang, wansuuga.

L xitghwaangas, Xhuuya a.

Tlgu qqaugashlingaay gi la qiingas.

Qaudihau gwaayghutgwa nang qaadla qqaayghudiyas

lagu qqaughaayghan lagha xiidas.

Aa tl sghaana qidas yasgagas giinuusis gangang

lagu gutgwi xhihldagahldiyaagas.

Ga sghaanagwaay ghaaxas la ttista qqa sqqagilaangas,

tlgwixhan xhahlgwi at wagwi a.

Ghaadagas gyanhau, ising ghaalghagang, wansuuga.

[Nangkilstlas nagma ghahau tadt tsigha'awagan.

Singghalghada l qaaxuhls gyan l kindagaangas.

Sta la xitkkuudahldajasi

gyan gaguu la qqaughaawas guxhan la qqaugingas.

Gyan nang qqaayas taaydiyas gam lagwi qiixhaganggas.  
Qaudi ising ising l qaaxuhls gyan kindaangas  
gyan sta la kkuugwijaasi gyan l qqaaugangas.  
Gangang la suugang.

Qaudihau ghaatxhan l skujuu dayasta la kyanangas:  
«Jaa, gaasintlau daa suugangang ‘aa,’ kilstlaay?»

«Gam hau hla guudangangghi suugangangga.  
Sghaana qidas tsiyahlingaay gaawun diigi suuwus.  
Ghaagaanhou hl suuwugangga.»

Gyan han la la suudas,  
«Hla tlguhlghaasang.»<sup>4</sup>

Gyanhou lasta ising l xitghwang qaudi,  
aanang qaxustagha ghaadasis.  
Gyagang la qiyastahlguhling, wansuuga.  
Gyanhou gha la xitxyawuhlasi.  
Gyanhou gudang ghi la gijahlasi gyan agang la danggaahlasi.

Lnaaghaay guutgha statliiyihlasi  
gyan qqaadaxustagaay gan nang laana augas giitga qiighaawas.  
Gyanhou singxayas tl qqaastldlhagas.  
Gyanhou l sttagusta nang ghaaxhas la hlghuntlstas  
gyan ghi la qaajas.  
Ladla silaaygha dlgudyasi.

Daghalaygha l tsin’gha l ginangas  
gyan lagi la tl dlstlas.  
Gyanhou la la dlndlhlayas gyan l sttagu la dadatldayas.  
La la danggyaaxhaayas.  
Ising gutgghi la la isdas.  
Gyan daghalaygha ising gangang la la isdas  
gyan sihlgyang l augha gi la la dlstlas.

Aasiigu l qquudasi.  
Gam l xhihliigha ttl abaangas.  
Ghaatxhan singxayas gyan ttl taystldlhagas  
gyan ttl qqaastldlhagaay dluu,  
xhiilang la qqaahludayas.  
Naxha gut agang la guudangadas.  
Gutgangang ttl qqaastldlhagas.

Gyanhau ghaghwaangkkiyagha l dldajaadaayas.  
Ghistaghang la xitxiisdaayas gyan l qaaxuhls.

Kun'gidaygha nang ttiiji hlghagha naawasi l qingdiyas.  
Gyanhau l gaawas l qqaau qaudi.

Giina la skyuustltsas,  
gyan l augh qqaatgu stlghusinggaayas  
tlgwi la (2)<sup>5</sup> stlstaayas,  
gyan silaay la kitxaalas,  
gyan waghii giina la skyuugyaangas la skyuuwagasghas.  
Gyan ghaayxhadaay at gutghi la kkinhlghahldiyasi  
tlaaguda la taadiyasi.  
Wagu kumdalgangasi.  
Gan agang la qquqqadiyasi.  
Ahlsi kun'gidaay sta la qingdiyasi.

Ising singxayas gyan taaystlaayas  
gyan ising l qaaxuhlas.  
L gau qaudi ising giina la skyuustltsas  
gyan la skyuughasghasi  
gyan ghayxadaay at gut sikhii la kkinjigulaangasi.  
La sqqagaagyalasi gyan la taawasi gu ghan agang la qquqqaagasi.  
Kun'gidaay ghiista nang ttiiji hlghaagas qingaghadiyasi.  
L uugiigas,  
gyan ghagwaangkkiyaay ghii taayttsaasi.

Singgahlanaay gu lnagaay ghatliihlxhan waagha xilangdaasi.  
Aasi la gudangdiyasi.  
Lnagaay ghatliihldaayaagani,  
gyan ghastansing xhangii iinaghwaay gawuhlghiyalagani.  
Gyanhau nang qqayaagas ghansta siwung, wansuuga.  
«Jaa, hau tl giidagha qiigan hau waadiga.  
La hla qingghu.  
Ttl qqaasdla atxhanhau ghiistaghang ttl gyaaxhattlxagangga.»

Gyanhau l tsin'gha lagi kkuuxu gya'at isdaayas,  
gyan gha la ttl dlskiidas.  
Gyanhau l tsin'gha kihlguulaayas gyan nang qaaxuhls.

«Hala nang giidagha qiighan ghan giitqaghandaaga gwa-gwa-aa-aa.»  
Gyan lnagaay tl giijatdaghaagasi dluuxan

tł stajuugixhas suugħa la tł ghaginggyagans gu la għan tł suuwidiyas.  
Qaudiħau la gut agang tł dlghatguħldas  
għan lagi tł qiyatajas.  
Squulagi għaadang l għatgaajghuulangdailas  
għan l għatghaaskitgiyas.

Għanhau l gaayguugiigwanganas kiyahl la sghayihlgwanganas.  
Qaudiħau kihlsindihlgang la qqaadigas.  
L qqa qaudi han giina l suuwudas,  
«Dang tsin'gha quuniigaay gwaahlang dang qaattsixhalga.»  
Gii la xaahlattłxhaayasi  
għan gam giina gut għahlghaagħanganas.  
Għan ising l gaayghagiighwang qaudi  
ising gangang giina l suuwudasi.  
Gii la xatłdaayasi.  
Gam giina gut għahlghaagħanganas.  
Għanhau kkuuxwaay xhangii ghii la qingttłxhaasi.  
Yaaxħudada dljittłxhas.  
«Dang tsin'gha quuniigaay gwaahlang dang qaattsixhalga.»  
Han l suuwus atgudluu l ttagas.

Għanhau l qaahlaywas.  
Hlqyaama qaaji sqqasting hlghii l gaayghaghadaangdiyas.  
Għanhau gut la qaagaayasi.  
Ttiis gyaghan qaaji sting gut ttagħanii la qaagyas.  
Għanhau gut la qaattaalasi.  
Sagaay laaghan għiidas gangaaxhan tsighangaay laaghan għiidas.

Għanhau naay qqiyuugi la gyaxhattłxasi.  
Għanhau laghan la għaaguyingttsaayaghan.  
«Hala qaattsi ttakkingħa,  
diigha daa gyasildagħasas dangħa kiiyinga (3) gan.»

Għanhau ghii la qaattsa'asi.  
Tajxwaa nang qqaayaga sqqin gangang għiida qqaawuwas.  
Għanhau kun'gidaygha għuuda kkuskxayawasi la la diighłdaayasi,  
għan lagi la la skkastłsghaayagani gangaaxhan  
gut għiista la la danttsistatłihlas.  
Għan għiista giina skkadala sghwana kkaangalxyahlkkamdahlsi  
nang sghwaana ising kkaangalhlghaahls  
għan han la la suuwudas lagila xħastliyaay dluu,

«Diihau dang iiji.

Waa'asing dang iiji.»

Tajxwaaxhit lalaghaay gutgha kunhuusi

ungut giina ghuuhlgahl stlapdala ganhlghahldaayasi la suuwudasi.

Gyan han la la suuwudas,

«Aanis hla qqaaystlgiighutstlang

giina l ttiiji qquhlang la at xutskidang.»

Gyanhau dangat la qaaxulaay dluu

anang hlghaahls la qqaaystlgiitlaagans,

gyan nang xyahlkkamdals tiji la qqutlaayas

la at la xutsidaay dluu

haying wasta gadaasis.

La suudaayagani iila la isdaasi

ghaagaanhou wasta gaadajaagani.

Wiyidhau nang hlghahls gwi la stihls

gyan ttiiji la qqutlas

gyan la at la xutsgidaas

gyan waygi ttatsgidaasi.

Gyanhau nang xahlkkamdals ttiiji la qqutlayas

gyan la at xutsgidas.

Waygi ttatsgiidasi.

Aahau qaayt hlingaay hau iijang, wansuuga.

Aanis la gaaystlgaayaay dluu

gutsta agang la dangdaxhaagangas.

Tlaaguda sghaana qidas gaayu gut tsiiyagas l dlgidaawas.

Qqadaxwa laana ising gangaxhan isisi

la ising ghiihlgii qqaaygistlas.

(4)<sup>6</sup>

# Raven Travelling

*Skaai of the Qquuna Qiighawaai  
told at Hlghagilda, October 1900*

Hereabouts was all saltwater, they say.  
He kept on flying, Raven did,  
looking for land that he could stand on.  
After a time, beyond the Islands, there was one rock awash.  
He flew there to sit.  
Like sea-sausages,<sup>7</sup> gods lay across it,  
putting their mouths against it side by side.  
The newborn gods were sleeping, out along the reef,  
heads and tails in all directions.  
It was light then, and it turned to night, they say.

[Loon was living in Voicehandler's house.  
One day she went out and called.  
Then she flew back in and sat waiting,  
right where she usually sat.  
An old man lay there, not looking up at her.  
She went out a second time and called  
and hurried back in and sat.  
She kept saying the same thing.  
After a time, with his back to the fire, the old man said,  
«Tell me, Great Speechmaker, why do you keep on talking as you do?»  
«I am not talking only from my own mind.  
The gods tell me they need places to live.  
That is why I have been speaking.»

And he said,  
«I am going to make some.»<sup>8</sup>

Now when the Raven had flown a while longer,  
the sky in one direction brightened.  
It enabled him to see, they say.  
And then he flew right up against it.  
He pushed his mind through and pulled his body after.

There were five villages strung out in a line.  
In the northernmost, the headman's favored daughter had just given birth  
to a child.  
When evening came, and they were sleeping,

the Raven peeled the skin off the newborn child, starting at the feet,  
and put it on.

Then he lay down in the child's place.

Next day, his grandfather asked for the child  
and they passed him along.

His grandfather washed him.

Then, he pressed the child's feet against the ground  
and stretched him up to a standing position.

Then he handed him back.

Next day he stretched him again  
and handed him back to his mother.

Now he was hungry.

They had not yet started feeding him chewed-up food.

Then evening came again, and they lay down,  
and when they slept,

he raised his head and looked around.

He listened throughout the house.

All alike were sleeping.

Then he untied himself from the cradle.

He squirmed his way free and went outside.

Something that was half rock, living in the back corner, watched him.  
While he was gone, it continued to sit there.

He brought something in in the fold of his robe.

In front of his mother, where the fire smoldered,  
he poked at the coals.

He scooped out a cooking spot with a stick,  
and there he put the things that he carried.

As soon as the embers had charred them, he ate them.

They slithered.

He laughed to himself.

Therefore he was seen from the corner.

Again it was evening and they lay down,  
and again he went out.

He was gone for a while.

Again he carried things back in the fold of his robe,  
and he brought them out

and roasted them over the coals.

Then he pulled them out and ate them, laughing to himself.

The one that was half rock watched him from the corner.  
He ate them all,  
and then he lay down in the cradle.

When morning came, all five villages were wailing.  
He could hear them.  
In four of the five villages, each of the people was missing an eye.  
Then one of the old people spoke, they say.  
«The newborn baby of the favored child goes out.  
I have seen him.  
As soon as they sleep, he gets up and leaves.»

Then his grandfather gave him a marten-skin blanket  
and they wrapped it around him.  
His grandfather whispered and someone went out.

«Come bring the baby of the favored child outsi-i-i-i-ide.»

And as soon as the people had gathered,  
they stood in a circle, bouncing him up as they sang him a song.  
After a while they let him fall,  
and they watched him go down.  
Turning round to the right he went down through the clouds  
and struck water.  
Then as he drifted about, he kept crying.  
After his voice grew tired, he slept.

He slept for a while, and then something said to him,  
«Your father's father asks you in.»<sup>9</sup>  
He looked all around.  
He saw nothing.  
Again, when he had floated there awhile,  
something said the same thing.  
He looked around.  
He saw nothing.  
Then he looked through the eye of his marten-skin blanket.  
A pied-bill grebe appeared.  
«Your father's father asks you in.»  
As soon as he said this, he dived.

Then he sat up.  
He was floating against a two-headed kelp.  
Then he stepped onto it.

He was standing—yes!—on a two-headed stone housepole.  
 Then he climbed down it.  
 It was the same to him in the sea as it was to him above.

Then he came down in front of a house,  
 and someone invited him in.  
 «Come inside, my grandson.  
 the birds have been singing about your borrowing something from me.»

Then he went in.  
 At the back an elder, white as a gull, was sitting.  
 And he sent him to get a box that hung in the corner.  
 As soon as he had it,  
 he pulled out the boxes within the box, totalling five.  
 In the innermost box were cylindrical things,  
 one colored like mother-of-pearl and one that was black,  
 and he handed him these as he said to him,  
 «You are me.  
 You are that, too.»  
 He spoke of some slender blue things turning black  
 on top of the screens forming a point in the rear of the house.

Then he said to him,  
 «Set this one into the water, roundways up,  
 and bite off part of the other and spit it at this.»

But when the Raven brought them up,  
 he set the black one into the water  
 and bit off a part of the one like mother-of-pearl.  
 When he spat that at the other,  
 it bounced away.

He did it the other way round from the way he was told,  
 and that is the reason in bounced away.

Now he went back to the black one  
 and bit off a piece of it,  
 and spat that at the other.  
 Then it stuck.  
 And he bit a part off of the one like mother-of-pearl  
 and spat that at the other.  
 It stuck.  
 That is how trees started, they say.

When he set this place into the water,  
it stretched itself out.  
The gods swam to it, taking their places.  
The mainland did the same,  
as soon as he set it into the water roundways up.

NOTES

- 1 Original in the Department of Anthropology Archives, American Museum of Natural History, New York.
- 2 Additional linguistic material of importance includes Robert D. Levine's unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, "The Skidegate Dialect of Haida" (Columbia University, New York, 1977) and Erma Lawrence's (northern dialect) *Haida Dictionary* (Fairbanks: Alaska Native Language Center, 1977, with a grammar by Jeff Leer). Much important work on Haida linguistics has been done in more recent years by John Enrico, but very little of this work has yet been published.
- 3 Durlach's work yielded a useful book: *The Relationship Systems of the Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian* (New York: American Ethnological Society, 1928).
- 4 The section printed here in square brackets was dictated to Swanton separately by Henry Moody's father, Job Moody of the Sttawaas Xhaaydagaay. Swanton inserted it into Skaai's text.
- 5 The bold figures in angle brackets mark the page breaks in the original Swanton manuscript. Thus (2) marks the transition from the lost ms page one—which exists only in the form of an uncorrected carbon copy at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC (manuscript 7047 [Swanton] in the National Anthropological Archives)—to ms page two, which is the first page of the Philadelphia manuscript.
- 6 This is the first one eighth of Skaai's poem.
- 7 *Parastichopus californicus*, called *giinuu* in Haida, and sea-cucumbers or sea-sausages in English, are edible holothurians—tubular animals—living in tidal waters. They are red or brown, with very short, stubby but pointed tentacles. Alive and fresh, they tend to be about 30–45 cm long. Cleaned and boiled, they shrink to resemble hollow sausages.
- 8 See note 4 above.
- 9 The mythcreature behind the invitation is called *dang tsin'gha quunigaay*, "your grandfather the big." The qualifier *quuna*, big, has a special meaning here, analogous to the special meaning of 'great' in the English phrase 'great grandfather.' *Quuna* is used alone to refer to a father-in-law, who is necessarily a senior male of the *same moiety*. In the Haida kinship system, a person's own father is necessarily of the opposite moiety; so is one's mate. The father-in-law—the mate's father—is therefore always of the same side. Among grandfathers, one's mother's father is always of the opposite side, and one's father's father always of the same side. *Tsin quuna* is a male of the same moiety and the grandfather's generation, or indeed of any generation older than that. It means 'male ancestor, older than a father, of the same side.' The relationship between a younger male and such an ancestor is, therefore, potentially one of reincarnation.