

Corvid Conversation

Complicated Coexistence with Humans

American Crow



- + straight beak
- + generally smaller



- + short rhythmic "caw"s
- + smooth neck feathers



- + consistent flapping
- + fan-shaped tails
- + shorter primaries

Common Raven



- + slight point on beak
- + "nasal" feathers extend



- + deeper raspy "croak"
- + long shaggy neck feathers



- + soaring/ aerobatics
- + wedge-shaped tails
- + longer primaries



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k9-wTnqlidY>



Good and Bad Press

Because of its black plumage, croaking call, and diet of carrion, the raven is **often associated with loss and ill omen**. Yet, its symbolism is complex. As a talking bird, the raven also represents prophecy and insight. Ravens in stories often act as psychopomps, connecting the material world with the world of spirits.

- https://www.google.com/search?q=The+birds+movie+crows&sxsrf=ALiCzsYehBQqFqC7ybo5pbekbaPWWyVCwA:1670692518238&source=lnms&tbn=vid&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwivgtDQxu_7AhV1BEQIHXXCBg8Q_AUoAnoECAIQBA&biw=1600&bih=700&dpr=1#fpst=ate=ive&vld=cid:f22c609c,vid:hplpQt424Ls
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NwlupdANKt0> (Horror)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0fYgWxx9HJU> (The Raven)
- <https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/crows-give-homemade-art-to-man-who-helped-them/>
- <https://vt.audubon.org/news/birding-home-ciara-crows> (VT)
- <https://www.audubon.org/news/watch-short-film-canuck-i-explores-bond-between-crow-and-his-human>
- https://www.ted.com/talks/joshua_klein_a_thought_experiment_on_the_intelligence_of_crows?language=en (TED talk)

Ravens in Folklore

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UqUsdp7ix3o> (11 mins—good overview)
- <https://avesnoir.com/>

Ancient Egypt

Crows were sometimes shown in reliefs, often stealing [fruit](#) in the orchards. Especially gruesome is their appearance on the Narmer Palette, where they are shown pecking at the corpses of slain enemies.

Pectorals worn by royalty, featuring crows, have been found. Crow feathers have also been found in tombs.

They are said to be a symbol of good luck, and were god's messengers in the mortal world. Associated with guidance in battles and premonitions in times of war.

The ancient Egyptians did not distinguish between different types of crows or even between crows and ravens, seeing them as a single species.







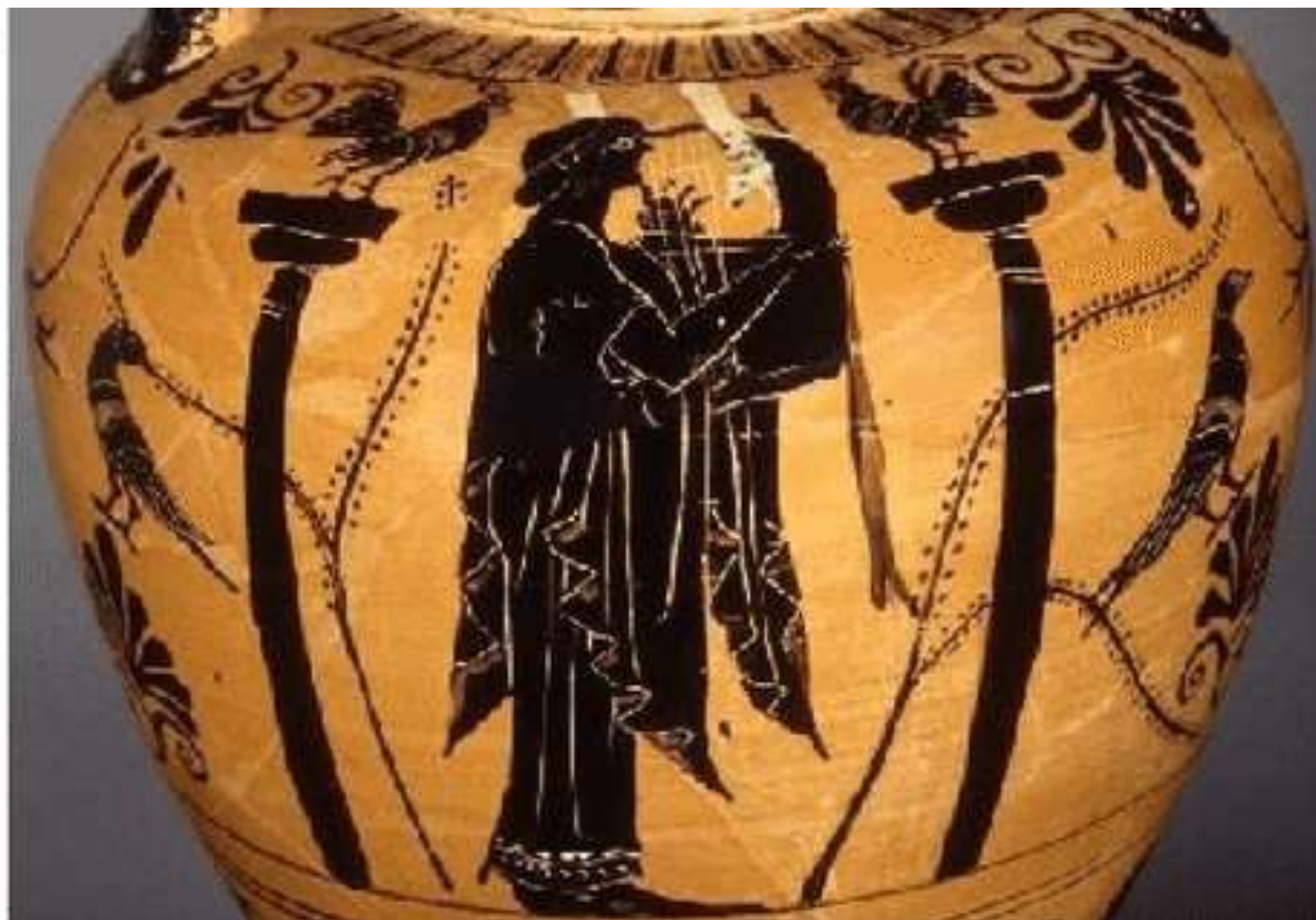
alamy - 2HE1C0M



Ancient Greece

Briefly, Apollo fell for the Greek nymph Coronis, a Thessalian princess, and got her pregnant. She then was unfaithful to him with a mortal, which was unwise. A raven told Apollo the bad news, and he killed her. He rescued the unborn boy, however, and took him to the centaur Charon, who knew the arts of healing, to rear.

The boy grew up to be the healer-god Asklepios, who in his turn offended the gods by reviving the dead, and was killed by Zeus, despite Apollo's intercession.

a**b**

Aesop—The Crow and the Pitcher

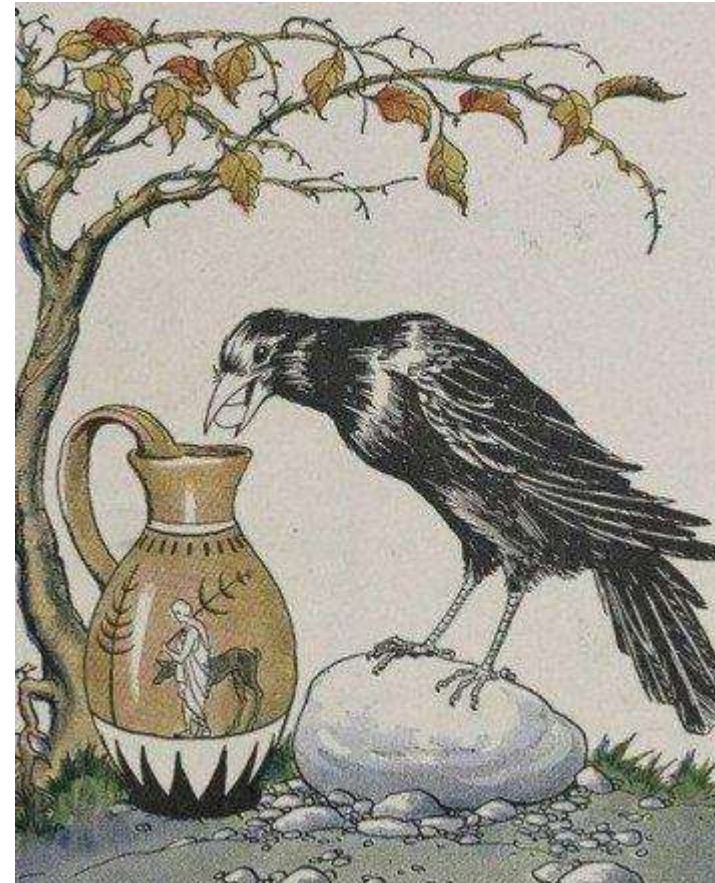
In a spell of dry weather, when the Birds could find very little to drink, a thirsty Crow found a pitcher with a little water in it. But the pitcher was high and had a narrow neck, and no matter how he tried, the Crow could not reach the water. The poor thing felt as if he must die of thirst.

Then an idea came to him. Picking up some small pebbles, he dropped them into the pitcher one by one. With each pebble the water rose a little higher until at last it was near enough so he could drink.

In a pinch a good use of our wits may help us out.

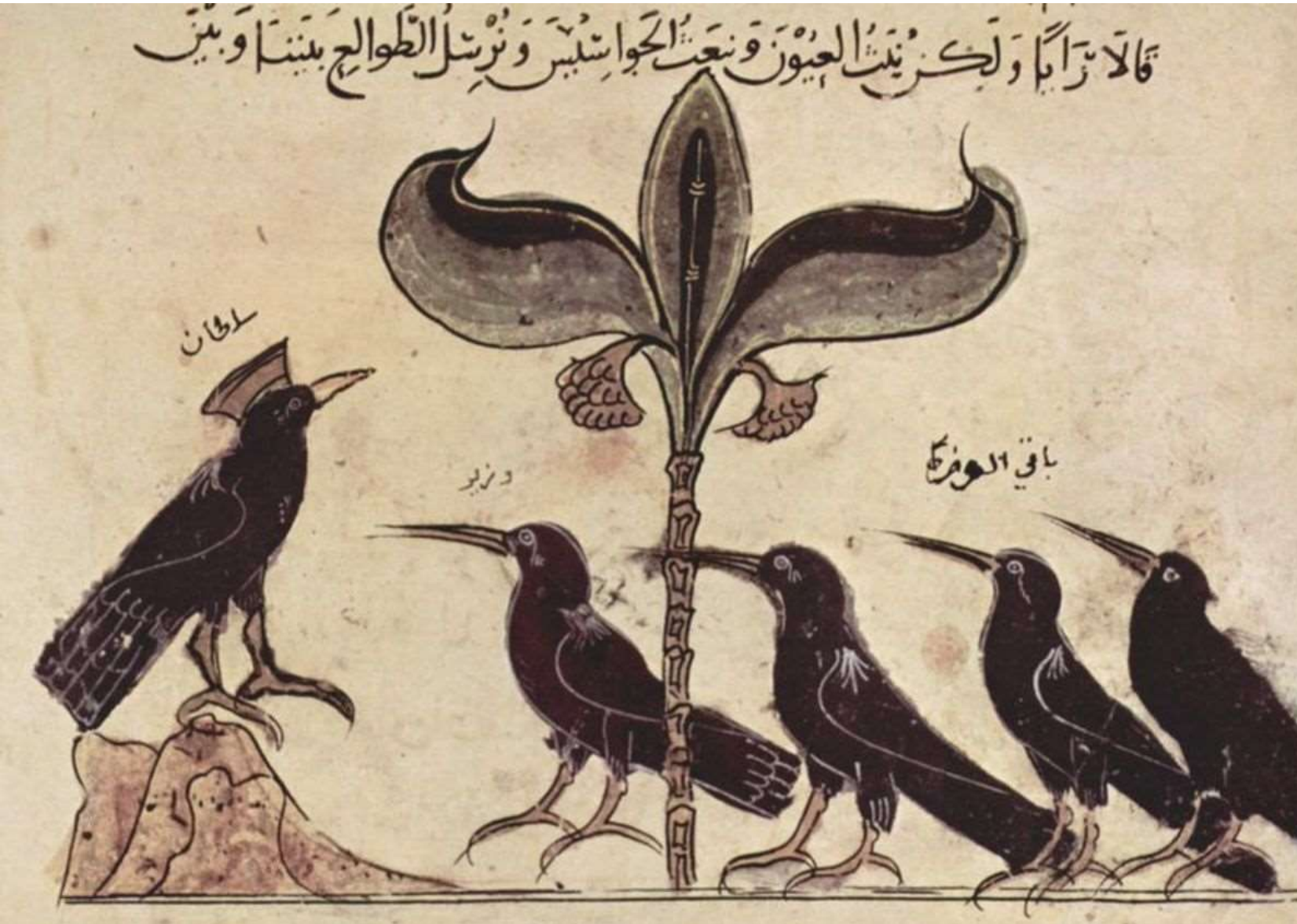
<https://www.newscientist.com/article/dn25303-physics-minded-crows-bring-aesops-fable-to-life/>

- *An illustration of a crow from the 1921 book "An Argosy of Fables"*



Arab World

Crows are depicted in ancient Arab artwork. In the Arab world, the crow is known as the "father of omens", or *Abu Zajir*. Manuscripts of fables such as The Fables of Bidpai (also known as Kalila and Dimna) dating back to the 13th century can be found in modern-day Middle Eastern countries such as Iraq and Syria. Many of these manuscripts feature handpainted illustrations of crows in the fables about them, such as The Fable of the Fox and Crow and the Crow King <https://www.medievalists.net/2022/05/kalila-wa-dimna-ancient-ales-for-troubled-times-exhibition-to-take-place-in-london/>



Badb

Badb is usually translated as the Irish word for a crow, the animal that the goddess often appears as. It can also be related to a word for war, such as the Old Norse *boð*, suggesting that battle and black birds were virtually synonymous in ancient Europe.

Crows and ravens were associated with war and disaster in many ancient cultures. They often fed from the bodies of the dead and were known to circle over battlefields as blood was shed.

They are also exceptionally intelligent birds, which may have led to their association with prophecy.

Some historians believe that crows and ravens learned to recognize the signs of an impending battle, such as the sight of soldiers assembling in formation or the smells associated with war camps. This allowed them to start gathering before the battle actually began, making it seem as though they could see the future.

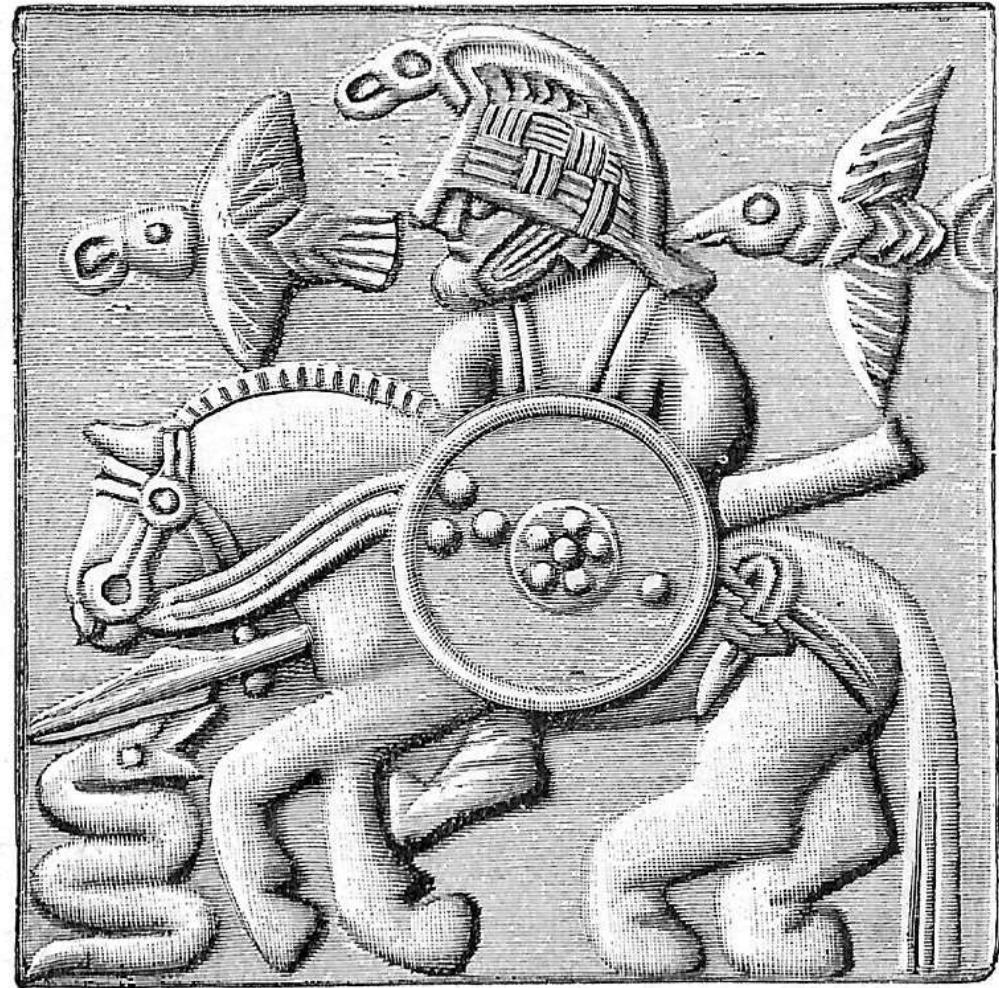
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gt_Jkt8SwTA&t=32s (23 mins)

Odin's Ravens

In [Norse mythology](#), **Huginn** (Old Norse: "thought"^[1]) and **Muninn** (Old Norse "memory"^[2] or "mind"^[3]) are a pair of [ravens](#) that fly all over the world, [Midgard](#), and bring information to the god [Odin](#). Huginn and Muninn are attested in the [Poetic Edda](#), compiled in the 13th century from earlier traditional sources: the [Prose Edda](#) and [Heimskringla](#); in the [Third Grammatical Treatise](#), compiled in the 13th century by [Óláfr Þórðarson](#); and in the poetry of [skalds](#). The names of the ravens are sometimes modernly [anglicized](#) as **Hugin** and **Munin**.

In the *Poetic Edda*, a disguised Odin expresses that he fears that they may not return from their daily flights. The *Prose Edda* explains that Odin is referred to as [Hrafnaguð](#) (O.N.: [['hɾavna guð](#)]; "raven-god") due to his association with Huginn and Muninn. In the *Prose Edda* and the *Third Grammatical Treatise*, the two ravens are described as perching on Odin's shoulders. *Heimskringla* details that Odin gave Huginn and Muninn the ability to speak.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kRGLMZsb4KM>





Native Americans of the Pacific Northwest

In northern Northwest Coast mythology, Raven is the powerful figure who transforms the world. Stories tell how Raven created the land, released the people from a cockle shell, and brought them fire. Raven stole the light and brought it out to light up the world.

The raven in these indigenous peoples' mythology is the [Creator of the world](#), but it is also considered a [trickster](#) God. For instance, in [Tlingit culture](#), there are two different raven characters that can be identified, although they are not always clearly differentiated. One is the creator raven, responsible for bringing the world into being and who is sometimes considered to be the individual who brought light to the darkness. The other is the childish raven, always selfish, sly, conniving, and hungry. When the Great Spirit created all things, he kept them separate and stored them in cedar boxes. The Great Spirit gifted these boxes to the animals who existed before humans. When the animals opened the boxes all the things that comprise the world came into being. The boxes held such things as mountains, fire, water, wind, and seeds for all the plants. One such box, which was given to Seagull, contained all the light of the world. Seagull coveted his box and refused to open it, clutching it under his wing. All the people asked Raven to persuade Seagull to open it and release the light. Despite begging, demanding, flattering, and trying to trick him into opening the box, Seagull still refused. Finally, Raven became angry and frustrated, and stuck a thorn in Seagull's foot. Raven pushed the thorn in deeper until the pain caused Seagull to drop the box. Then out of the box came the sun, moon, and stars that brought light to the world and allowed the first day to begin.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CeB5Nn1yfjA> –Origin story
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eAKHGe6x8n8> (Tricksters)





Kiwitadani © 01

Raven Transformation Masks

In the art, Raven is characterised by a strong, straight, tapering beak, sometimes very slightly curved or squared at the tip. If Raven has ears, they are not prominent and his long wings are often folded close to his body. He is often painted black.

- The Raven mask used by the Kwakwaka wakw for ceremonies does not have a cedar bark fringe, but the Cannibal Raven mask for the Winter Ceremony or Hamata
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_5s29JbsPM
- <https://umistapotlatch.ca/objets-objects/index-eng.php?nojs=true&object=02.05.006> (shorter)





The core feature is the [HoloLens](#), Microsoft's holographic headset, which is enclosed in a 3D printed shell that opens to reveal the human inside.

During the project, Microsoft employees introduced Hunt to a number of modern technologies that can be used to aid artistic expression. Check out the result in the video below:

- <https://all3dp.com/raven-head-3d-printed-transformation-mask-is-a-stunning-artistic-and-tech-collaboration/>









<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eAKHGe6x8n8>

Preston Singletary

Preston Singletary: Raven and the Box of Daylight features works from internationally acclaimed artist Preston Singletary (Tlingit American, b. 1963), and tells the story of Raven, the creator of the world and giver of the stars, moon, and sun.

Through an immersive, multisensory experience, Raven takes visitors on a journey of the transformation of darkness into light. In addition to Singletary's striking glass pieces, the exhibition features storytelling paired with original music, coastal Pacific Northwest soundscapes, and projected images.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=idmOOh2VbpQ>
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qy_WlrfWG38 Raven Steals the Light



Cindy Carlsson
www.ExplorationVacation.net

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Samjokgo: The Three-Legged Crow of Korea

In Korea, legends have existed for millennia about the three-legged crow, or the Samjokgo (삼족오) as it's known in the Korean language.

The Samjokgo was especially prevalent in the ancient kingdom of Goguryeo (modern-day North Korea and much of modern-day northeast China. Also spelled "Koguryo"). Depictions of the Samjokgo can be found in mural paintings in ancient tombs all across the lands of the former kingdom.

Unlike other northeast Asian nations that revered the dragon and the tiger, the Samjokgo was revered by the people of Goguryeo. It was thought to be an extremely powerful bird. So powerful that its power was greater than that of the dragon and phoenix, which were revered by Goguryeo's neighbors in modern-day China, Japan, and South Korea.

Legend of Samjogo

There are two Korean legends that feature the three-legged crow.

First is the orally transmitted legend of Mt. Geumo, located in Gumi, North Gyeongsang Province. Mt. Geumo was originally called Mt. Daebon (Great Roots). An envoy from Tang China followed an iridescent bird to this mountain, where he disappeared. The mountain has since been called Mt. Geumo, meaning golden crow.

Second is the legend of Yeono and Seo, a husband and wife who lived on the eastern coast in the kingdom of Silla. In the 4th year of King Adalla's reign (157), the couple rode on a floating rock and went to Japan, where they were enthroned as king and queen, while back in Silla, light from the sun and the moon disappeared. An official who examined the phenomenon reported that it was due to the move of the energy of the sun and the moon from Silla to Japan. King Adalla sent an envoy to Japan and requested Yeono and Seo to return, but Yeono responded that the problem would be solved if silk fabric woven by Seo was taken to Silla for a ritual to the heavens. When they did as told, light was restored to the sun and the moon.

In the Mt. Geumo legend, the sun bird crow is featured as a central element in the geographical name, and in the the legend of Yeono and Seo, the crow appears as a personification, as reflected in the names of the husband and wife, which both bear the Chinese character 烏, meaning crow. Considering that the sun is a celestial being that also stands for the king in the terrestrial world, the crow in the Mt. Geumo legend has been diminished, from a symbol of political power to a mere divine object.

In the legend "Sageumgap (The King Shoots an Arrow into the Zither Case), " the crow appears as a divine harbinger that delivers the message that the king is about to be killed by his subjects, which saves the king's life. To commemorate the crow, the king designated the first full moon of the first lunar month (Grand Full Moon) as Ogiil (Crow Commemoration Day), observed with a ritual offering sticky rice as sacrifice, rooted in mythological worship of the three-legged crow.

The three-legged crow is an important symbol of Goguryeo's cultural legacy that serves as a reference in the relationship between sun worship in Goguryeo and mythological symbolism.





Japan

In Japanese mythology, this flying creature is a raven or a jungle crow called Yatagarasu (八咫鳥, "eight-span crow") and **the appearance of the great bird is construed as evidence of the will of Heaven or divine intervention in human affairs.**

In Japanese mythology, the appearance of Yatagarasu is construed as evidence of the will of Heaven or divine intervention in human affairs. It is generally accepted that Yatagarasu is an incarnation of Taketsunimi no mikoto, but none of the early surviving documentary records are quite so specific. The shinto goddess Amaterasu was also said to transform into a Raven (or the raven transforms into the goddess) as worship of Amaterasu to the exclusion of other kami has been described as “the cult of the sun”.

On many occasions, it appears in art as a three-legged bird, although there is no description stating that the Yatagarasu was three-legged in the Kojiki.

- https://www.google.com/search?q=three+legged+crow+legend&source=lmns&tbm=vid&bih=700&biw=1600&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwi_IYOCw-7AhX4m44IHfXCBssQ_AUoA3oECAEQAw#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:d82afc39,vid: Q4uevX28H4
- <https://www.tokyoweekender.com/2017/07/the-misunderstood-crows-of-tokyo-why-they-dont-deserve-their-bad-boy-image/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGPgknpq3e0&t=5s> (David Attenboro)











Kawanabe Kyōsai: Japan's Legendary Crow Painter

One of Japan's last great artists from the 19th century was Kawanabe Kyōsai. Kyōsai was an artist who emerged at a time when Japan was rife with corruption in the ruling Edo shogunate, which imposed strict censorship on the populace. He stayed popular throughout the Meiji period when Japan opened its doors to the outside world. Kyosai was an artist and political satirist famous for his paintings and woodcuts of demons, satirical paintings of Japanese politicians (which got him arrested by Edo authorities on a few occasions), ladies in kimonos, and of crows. In fact, his crow paintings were so popular among foreigners that he had a seal made which featured the phrase "crows flying over every land"

https://www.artelino.com/articles/kawanabe_kyosai.asp

https://www.google.com/search?q=kawanabe+ky%C5%8Dsai&source=lmns&tbm=vid&bih=700&biw=1600&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwipo8uMq-77AhVWgY4IHfE1DrsQ_AUoA3oECAEQAw#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:9c86c2dd,vid:NzH1hChFVoA (use this)



Audubon

John James Audubon was a Franco-American ornithologist, taxidermist, painter, and leading naturalist. Audubon had a passion for birds from the time he was a child and this passion would lead him to make thousands of drawings and paintings of them in his lifetime. His greatest work is the book "Birds of America", which contains his illustrations of 497 species of North American birds. This book remains one of the greatest books ever written on ornithology.

Audubon depicted almost every known corvid species in North America, including crows. One of the birds featured in this book is the American crow (right). Audubon drew the birds in their natural environment and captured on paper not only the birds, but trees and plants of the time as well.



Corvus corax
Male
House Crow



Raven
CORVUS CORAX
Male

From the collection of the British Museum

Georges-Louis Leclerc

During his lifetime he published a 36 volume set of encyclopedias on the natural world titled *Histoire naturelle, générale et particulière*. This set contained some very vivid and beautiful illustrations of wildlife drawn by a number of French artists. A posthumous work published in 1853-55 titled *Oeuvres Completes de Buffon* is a book about birds and is full of illustrations taken from *Histoire naturelle*.

Both works contain a number of amazingly detailed illustrations of crows and corvids, including ordinary black crows, jackdaws, and hooded crows. Along with Audubon's works, they remain some of the most detailed depictions of crows ever drawn.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vY85hAs1XRY&t=25s>



LA CORBEILLE DE CORNEILLE. D'APRÈS
J. B. L.



Edgar Allen Poe

- https://www.google.com/search?q=poe+raven&sxsrf=ALiCzsbwWkUOatr-pt-gXXWe87Jpmzni0A:1670693179026&source=Inms&tbm=vid&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwj0qNuLye_7AhXHK0QIHQImB7AQ_AUoAnoECAIQBA&biw=1600&bih=700&dpr=1#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:72dd9d54,vid:wAdQ3CcPHQU
- https://www.google.com/search?q=poe+raven&sxsrf=ALiCzsbwWkUOatr-pt-gXXWe87Jpmzni0A:1670693179026&source=Inms&tbm=vid&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwj0qNuLye_7AhXHK0QIHQImB7AQ_AUoAnoECAIQBA&biw=1600&bih=700&dpr=1#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:12a1102b,vid:GLbe4JwE6-0
- https://www.google.com/search?q=poe+raven&sxsrf=ALiCzsbwWkUOatr-pt-gXXWe87Jpmzni0A:1670693179026&source=Inms&tbm=vid&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwj0qNuLye_7AhXHK0QIHQImB7AQ_AUoAnoECAIQBA&biw=1600&bih=700&dpr=1#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:12a1102b,vid:GLbe4JwE6-0



Van Gogh



Wheatfield with Crows is one of Van Gogh's re-created memories of the north, and is believed to be the last work of Van Gogh. In early July of 1890, Van Gogh traveled to Paris, alone, to stay with Theo and his wife Jo. Theo was in poor health and was having financial problems, which was an enormous worry to Van Gogh who was keenly aware of the burden he was on his brother and his family. In addition, the baby was ill and Jo too was suffering from exhaustion. Van Gogh returned quickly to Auvers but rapidly became severely depressed. Writing of this picture shortly before his suicide, Van Gogh conveyed something of its tragic mood: "Returning there, I set to work. The brush almost fell from my hands...I had no difficulty in expressing sadness and extreme solitude".

<https://www.google.com/search?q=van+gogh+crows&sxsrf=ALiCzsaHDV8UCunyb1ZzeJBBsmwRvoVt2g:1670628518949&source=lmcs&tbm=vid&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwieslGh2Q37AhY8MEQI>

Peter Reiquam

My work ranges from drawings and photographs to sculptural furniture and large-scale public art projects. Since earning my M.F.A. in sculpture from Yale University in 1984, my primary emphasis has been on the creation of interactive, site-specific installations in a variety of public venues including parks, libraries, college campuses, transit sites and fire stations.

Each project is a unique response to the history, culture and surrounding landscape of its site. Ranging from sculptural seating to rocket ships and giant chess pieces, they serve as contemporary site markers. I strive to create durable, well-crafted and meaningful works that speak to the uniqueness of each site and to do so with a balance of humor, elegance and sophistication. The sculptures are made from a variety of materials; metals, concrete, granite, glass and light.

- https://www.auburnwa.gov/city_hall/parks_arts_recreation/arts_and_entertainment/public_art_program/crow_with_fries



Cardiff Miller

This large installation, 'The Murder of Crows', continues Cardiff Miller's explorations in creating sculptural and physical sound. Ninety-eight audio speakers are mounted around the space on stands, chairs and the wall creating a minimalist flocking of speakers. The structure of the piece tries to mirror that of the illogical but connected juxtapositions that we experience in the dream world. One soundscape moves into another with an electronic dreamscape composition shifting into sound effects such as factory noises, crashing waves or birds wings and then into a guitar and strings composition then into a choir sequence and marching band.

The title for the installation is 'The Murder of Crows', which means a grouping of crows. Sometimes when a crow dies, many other crows flock to the area around the dead bird and caw for over 24 hours, creating a 'crow funeral'. The title also provides a thematic entry into the installation; a basis to create a work that becomes a metaphor for our political situation today.

<https://www.google.com/search?q=the+murder+of+crows&oq=The+murder+of++crows&aqs=chrome.0.0i355i5l2j46i5l2l3j0i5l2l2j46i5l2j0i5l2l3.7375j0j15&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:2bf9dcc6,vid:CKBxLX7bZZQ>



Vicki Banks

The inspiration for FLIP came from meeting industry people whose personal work far out-shined the studio projects they worked on. [Vicki Banks](#) is a prime example of such an artist. She did tons of top tier assistant work on films like Tron and Prince of Egypt, but sculpting is her passion, a passion which has become her full time work. FLIP asked her about her new direction....

<http://flipanimation.blogspot.com/2013/10/vicki-banks-sculptures-are-something-to.html>

<https://www.vulturesculpture.com/the-artist>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L90WdqHrVF0&t=42s>









Vicki Sawyer

"My works are seriously painted, but whimsical." With over 2,500 paintings of birds and other animals wearing natural hats, Vicki Sawyer has perfected the art of *serious whimsy*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7TRElkojlpQ>



Akiko Watanabe

Akiko Watanabe was born and raised in Japan. She studied electrical engineering, Japanese art and culture, and English, and became a professional technical translator of English and Japanese. In 1981 she moved to the San Francisco Bay Area where she and her husband share their home with their large family of rescued cats, who are often the models for her art.



Michael Pape

- Born in Toronto, Ontario, Canada and self-taught, Michael Pape finds many beautiful things such as animals and nature that inspire his paintings. Always fascinated by realistic painting styles, Michael's ability to portray dramatic realism in his paintings takes the viewer to a place where they would like to go, but normally cannot. In trying to capture this realism, each painting's execution can take months, or even more than a year, to finish in either acrylic or a combination of mediums.
- <https://www.theartofmichaelpape.com/>



MICHAEL PAPE 2006 ©

Rick and Diana Rou

Rick and Diana Boufford are a grassroots on fire for live couple who dedicate large amounts of their time to documenting Ravens in Utah, Catalina, and more. Their love for all things living is portrayed through the relationships and lives of ravens and all the different kinds of animals we share territory with. They are currently hard at work on their debut documentary film The Raven Diaries, which you can preview below.

- <https://avesnoir.com/the-raven-diaries/>

Assignment Suggestions...

- Create a linocut or other type of print inspired by crows or ravens
- Use printed text as a background for an artwork
- Illustrate a “page” from a crow or raven legend that you like
- Create a black and white image