

### Chapter 1 : What is beauty? Appearance? behaviour? | Playing by the book

*Tale of the White Crow is a journal. Some readers may object to the broken English translation, but I found it strangely appropriate. I have only two small criticisms: the journal simply ends - I very much wanted to know what became of the author.*

Whether they are sharing or thieving the food we grow, consuming the soft tissues of our dead, or delighting us with their company, corvids have infiltrated the most intimate parts of our lives. It is this juxtaposition that I think made our human ancestors look upon those glossy feather and conclude they must have some greater tie to creation than their other avian kin. This may be one of the earliest stories of a woman marrying below her class for love. Why the crow is black According to Muslims Muhammad, born sometime around CE, is considered to be the founder of Islam and the last profit sent to earth by God, according to the Islamic faith. Apollo sent a raven to gather water for a feast but the raven was distracted by an unripened fig tree. Determined to obtain the figs, the raven waited until the tree ripened, ate his fill, and then captured a watersnake to bring back to Apollo. The watersnake, the raven explained, was the reason he was late and unable to collect the requested water, but Apollo saw through the lie. Since the raven must now wait, his voice is hoarse from thirst. They had elected the owl and were beginning to organize his lavish coronation, when the crow arrived. The crow laughed at their decision, protesting that the owl was too ugly, his features without tenderness, and his nature without pity. Furthermore, Garuda, the eagle mounted Vishnu was already their king and to take another was a sin that could result in severe punishment by the Gods. They have fought ever since. According to the Haida tribe of the Queen Charlotte Islands, Greater Raven was the creator that first called earth into being on the endless sea. He then made humans out of both rock and leaf. The people of rock were as I can well imagine more difficult to shape and were never finished. The people of leaf, on the other hand, were quickly completed and ready to roam the land. The raven instructed them that, like the leaf, they must eventually fall and rot back into the earth and thus death entered the world. Unlike Greater Raven, Lesser Raven was both a trickster and had a voracious appetite. To satisfy his hunger, Lesser Raven filled the earth with food, but feared he would be unable to find it, as at that time the earth was still dark. Seeking a solution, Raven flew through a hole in the sky where he found another world much like our own. When she drank the water and the needle, Lesser Raven impregnated her and was later reborn as her son. The infant charmed the Chief and his wife and was granted permission to play with the box containing the light of day. Suddenly, Raven took his original form and flew back to earth through the hole in the sky, taking the box with him. Later, he broke the box out of anger and filled the sky with the sun, moon and stars. Seeing their distress, a raven killed one of his companions to show the grieving couple how to dig a hole and bury the body. To thank the raven for his kindness, God feeds baby ravens until their feathers turn black after which their parents take over. My thanks to Borgia Sax and his terrific book, Crow, which was the factual source and inspiration for this post.

### Chapter 2 : Iveta Melnika (Author of Tale of the White Crow)

*"The Tale of the White Crow" is a straightforward, diary-form narrative written by Iveta Melinka: an adolescent girl growing up in Latvia.*

As such, her account honestly details not only key social and political issues unique to the country at this time as it gained fledging independence, but also chronicles her own – more universal – concerns of growing up, parental disputes, peer pressure and relationships; as she seeks to establish her own independence on her journey into adulthood. I should clarify here that this is not a fictional narrative, rather the edited actual diary of the author, produced in tandem with the American publisher David Pichaske – a Fulbright lecturer in Latvia at the time who met Iveta in a film class. As he states in his brief, yet insightful, preface to the book: I gradually discovered, however, that Iveta had a better story to tell than I did. In some ways she was a better story-teller: I had a ton of photos, but Iveta had a life. Indeed the title of this work comes from her analogy of her, and a select few friends, at her school - whilst the majority of her peers are the norm: It is heartening, and a sign of her growing maturity during the course of this book, that she comes to see this as strength rather than a weakness. The book itself, whilst in diary form, does not follow a rigid day-to-day format, rather it is split up into individually numbered chunks of narrative which often skip days or even weeks. I must emphasise here that, whilst this is essentially a diary transcript, Iveta has an effective descriptive ability that raises this above the average journal. Her sense of teenage isolation and awkwardness could easily have become cliched but is actually portrayed in an engaging way - and also her descriptions of the very real sense of uncertainty and potential threat felt by the populace, as independence drew near yet the Soviet forces belligerently remained in situ is palpable and effectively written. Similarly, her description of the disillusionment amongst the older generation post-independence – represented by her parents – is both sensitively and poignantly portrayed. Throughout the early stages of this book, the family is desperate to move out of their communal apartment and hope that the new regime will lead to this. It ultimately does, but their relocation to a flat in a Soviet-era high rise on the outskirts of town largely populated by Russians equally disillusioned by their reduction of status as a consequence of independence neatly demonstrates that independence in this region as a whole has not been without its problems and hardships for the people who fought for it. The tensions between the long-subjugated natives of this country and the Russians who moved here under Soviet rule and enjoyed a certain privileged status until independence is a striking one. I have encountered this in a number of previous locations along the borders of the former USSR. This US-funded church, it turns out, is an unofficial evangelical mission operating throughout the former Soviet Union and which has recently established a foothold in Latvia post-independence. I found this a bit of a shame as a reader, as this curtailed some of the elements of her narrative that I could empathise with – although I guess this is partly the point: Also, I do feel here that in describing the insidious influence of this US-based sect upon her youth, Iveta is well aware of the obvious analogy to be made in terms of Western influences filling the influential void left by the Soviet society within Latvia – often for self-serving rather than altruistic ends. And this is no bad thing - it demonstrates, as I hope this journey does as a whole, the value of literature in reflecting not only individual countries, but in the growing global nature of our world. The publisher, David Pichaske, sums this point up excellently in his preface to this book:

### Chapter 3 : The Manciple's Prologue and Tale

*The Grand Chief Crow of the country declared: throw the ugly white crow into the deepest Pacific ocean. Bounding to the Grand Chief's decision, lot a whole crows flew towards the centre of the great Pacific ocean, chuckling and knuckling, cheering and tearing.*

In those ancient times the people had neither horses nor firearms nor weapons of iron. Yet they depended upon the buffalo hunt to give them enough food to survive. Hunting the big buffalo on foot with stone-tipped weapons was hard, uncertain, and dangerous. The crows made things even more difficult for the hunters, because they were friends of the buffalo. Soaring high above the prairie, they could see everything that was going on. Whenever they spied hunters approaching a buffalo herd, they flew to their friends and, perching between their horns, warned them: They are creeping up through that gully over there. They are coming up behind that hill. The people held a council to decide what to do. Now, among the crows was a huge one, twice as big as all the others. This crow was their leader. One wise old chief got up and made this suggestion: He put it on the back of a young brave, saying: They will think you are one of them, and you can capture the big white crow. The big, shaggy beasts paid him no attention. Then the hunters marched out from their camp after him, their bows at the ready. As they approached the herd, the crows came flying, as usual, warning the buffalo: Watch out for their arrows. The hunters are close by, just over the hill. No matter how the crow struggled, he could not escape. Again the people sat in council. Of course, the string that held the stone burned through almost at once, and the big crow managed to fly out of the fire. But he was badly singed, and some of his feathers were charred. Though he was still big, he was no longer white. But ever since, all crows have been black.

## Chapter 4 : Why the crow is black and other mythology |

*The Canterbury Tales The Manciple's Tale When Phoebus lived on this earth, he was a lusty bachelor and a fine archer, slaying serpents and singing with great musical harmony. He was the most handsome and chivalrous knight in the kingdom and one day taught his white crow how to speak the language of humans.*

White Crow hides the Animals A Kiowa Legend Out on the plains there was a camp where the hunters were never successful. They could not understand this. Every time they went out to hunt, the game scattered and hid where it could not be killed. This caused the people to starve. The people did not know that there was someone who went out and told all the buffalo and deer within reach that the hunters were coming and to hide. There was a man in camp who could turn himself into a white crow. He went out and told all the animals to make their getaway. This person, White Crow, would come back later in the day when no one could see him and turn himself back into a man. The starving people moved their camp in various directions trying to find where the game went. White Crow did not move. Under his lodge was a hole where all the buffalo were. This is where he got his food. When the people returned to one camp, they found this man still living there. He said, "Why did you come back? I have nothing to eat. I have been having just as hard a time as you. I have had nothing to eat since you left. The players smelled the odor of buffalo fat coming from the direction where the man was standing. They noticed that the man had on a good-looking buffalo hide, turned inside out to disguise its newness. He also had a sacred stick rubbed with buffalo fat that they could smell. He did not like their looking at him. He slipped away so they could not ask him questions. Coyote was there in that village. Owl and Dragonfly were the ones chosen. Coyote told them to lie down in the grass and watch White Crow wherever he went. Dragonfly watched so hard, his eyes came out. Owl strained his eyes until they became larger than ordinary eyes. Owl watched the man until he saw him go down in the ground. When Owl came back, coyote told the men to gather everyone together and announce they were moving camp. Coyote was going to change himself into a little pup and they were to leave him behind. White Crow had a daughter, Coyote told them. The little girl found him and brought him to her lodge. When White Crow came in he asked to examine the dog. He saw that there were no whiskers and he told his daughter that he was afraid of this. He said it was a person disguised as a dog. But the girl said she wanted to keep it anyway. She refused to throw it away. She gave it a piece of meat while her father went out to warn all the game to be alert. One day when the man was gone, the little girl removed the stone that covered the buffalo hole. She called the puppy over to look into the hole, but he acted as if he was afraid. Look in here pup, see what we have. Suddenly he jumped into the hole, and turned into a man and began to holler, "Scatter all over the world! Coyote turned himself into a cocklebur and stuck himself on the fetlock of the last buffalo that went past the girl, who was waiting for him with a club. I was afraid something like this would happen. Now we are going to have a hard time. This made White Crow angry. He directed the buffalo and the other animals to hide from the hunters. Soon the people were starving again. White Crow let them know he was going to make it harder than before. He flew over the camp saying, "I want you to know it was me who kept you from killing the buffalo before. You are not going to kill meat animals any more. They would have to follow his instructions carefully. They were to announce that everyone should move over to a forest a few valleys away. Coyote would turn himself into a bull elk and hide in the brush where White Crow would not see him. When the people came along they were to kill and butcher him, but they were to leave behind his skeleton and his head with the antlers attached. So, the next morning, the people moved to where he had directed them and some of them went out to look for game. A hunter scared up the elk, chased him, and killed him. They butchered him the way they had been told. While they had been chasing him, White Crow had flown over Elk and said, "I wonder how I overlooked you. I should have told you they were hunting and to hide. I am to blame. But you can run fast and save yourself. He lit on its antlers and thought to himself, "I know this is not an elk, I know what Coyote did before. This is just Coyote, who has disguised himself again. I will test him and find out. I know you are Coyote! He stopped just as Coyote was about to cry out. He struck with his beak. When he stuck his head in between them, Coyote closed his ribs and held White Crow in a vise. Then he got up and turned himself into a man. I will not do

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anything bad again. I will be good to you all. Please, turn me loose! Coyote said, "Now I have caught you and I am going to take you to camp and let the people do as they please with you. Now that we have him, what shall we do with him? I want to see the one who has caused us to starve. As she was doing it, White Crow got out of her hands and flew up into the air. He circled the camp, laughing. This time I am really going to starve you! I will get him. I will be good. Have compassion on me. She gave him to Coyote. Coyote ordered the men to go and get firewood. They built a big fire and put White Crow in it until he was burned all black. Then Coyote said, "I am going to make it so you can never do anything your own way. All your life you are going to be a bird flying about looking for scraps. You are going to be frightened by everything.

### Chapter 5 : Legend of the White Cowl - Wikipedia

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### Chapter 6 : Notes on The Manciple's Tale from The Canterbury Tales

*experience in Tale of the White Crow: Coming of Age in Post-Soviet Latvia Ellis Press, Wales Illustrated: In a Series of Views, Comprising the., Volume 1 In a Series of Views, Comprising the Picturesque Scenery, Towns, Castles, Seats of the Nobility & Gentry, Antiquities, &c.,*

### Chapter 7 : [PDF/ePub Download] tale of the white crow eBook

*Then he turned to the crow, calling it a traitor, mourning his wife, and accused the crow of lying to him - and then, to "quite anon thy false tale", pulled out every one of the crow's white feathers, made him black and took away his song and his speech, slinging him out of the door and leaving him to the devil.*

### Chapter 8 : Tale of the white crow ( edition) | Open Library

*The Manciple's Tale is part of Geoffrey Chaucer's The Canterbury www.nxgvision.com appears in its own manuscript fragment, Group H, but the prologue to the Parson's Tale makes it clear it was intended as the penultimate story in the collection.*

### Chapter 9 : Dead Time | The Crow Wiki | FANDOM powered by Wikia

*In anger, he pulls out the crow's white feathers and replaces them with black ones. Then before throwing him out, Phoebus removes the crow's ability to sing and speak. The Manciple ends his tale by admonishing all people to restrain their tongues.*