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This page is about the meaning, origin and characteristic of the symbol, emblem, seal,

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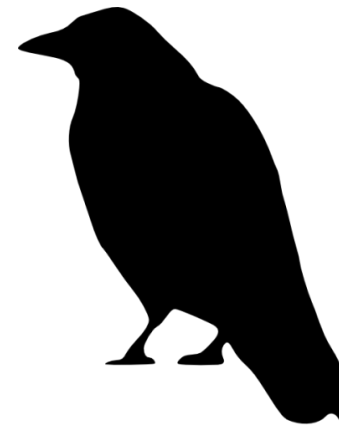
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Although the raven has a widespread reputation for ill fortune, this is not the case everywhere you go, and even where it is, there are subtle layers of meaning assigned to this bird that some may not be aware of.



In western culture, the raven often carries negative symbolism (though there are exceptions, as we'll see later). In the Bible, for example, the raven is the first bird sent out from Noah's Ark in an attempt to locate dry land, but it returns empty-handed. This sets up a dichotomy between the raven and the "pure" symbolism of the dove, which is sent out later and returns with a branch. Among the Celts, the raven is closely associated with death and is a symbol of the battle goddess Morrigan. In this case, the symbolism has its roots in reality; like crows and vultures, ravens are carrion birds that feed on dead and decomposing bodies, just as there would be following a battle. This association with death has lent the raven further symbolism as a creature whose appearance alone is an omen of death, as exemplified by Edgar Allen Poe's famous 1844 work "The Raven".

On the other hand, there are also plenty of examples where the raven is seen as a positive symbol. By many standards, the raven is a highly intelligent bird and has been known to imitate human sounds and even words with uncanny accuracy (as in Poe's



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poem). This gives the bird a strong reputation as a wise and clever creature. In Norse mythology, for example, two ravens named Hugin and Mugin (translated as 'thought' and 'memory') are the messengers of Odin, king of the gods who is famed for his knowledge and wisdom. Among certain Native American tribes as well as the Inuit people, the raven is an even more significant figure. Depending on the story, the raven is seen as the creator of life, as a hero figure that brought light to the world, or even the one who instructed the first humans how to live.

All of these diverse and seemingly contradictory associations make the raven one of the most fascinating birds to study from a symbolic viewpoint.

Graphical characteristics:

Asymmetric, Open shape, Monochrome, Contains both straight and curved lines, Has no crossing lines.

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