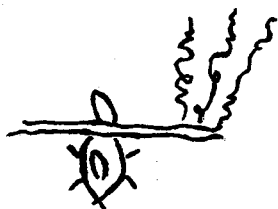


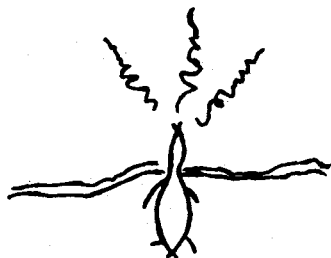
Midē (shaman) picture-songs collected & translated by Howard A. Norman between July & December 1971 from three "separate" bands of the Canadian Ojibwa. Earlier workings with the picture-songs were done by Hoffman & Densmore in their extensive Ethnology Bureau reports.

OJIBWA PICTURE SONGS



1.

I should have known this!
turtle
was here all along
splashing us
& we thought it was waves



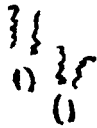
2.

noise
at the center of the lake
I knew otter
would keep his promise



3.

crane's shown up again
dressed like fog
(but) making crane noises through it



4.

I know he's fat
he who left it
even his tracks make noise!



5.

what's this
you don't think I knew this would happen?
that bear
grumbling through the woods



6.

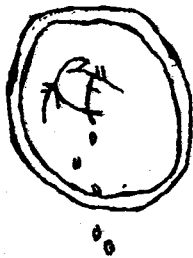
the reason it's hard
he's surrounded himself with it

[porcupine]




7.

sure I got it allright
are you me over again?



8.

sure!
all the clouds are dark
crow
wants us (all) to dress like him
must be time for it

NOTE. All of these picture-songs deal with the asking for & receiving of medicine (the "it" in most cases refers to medicine). In picture-song #1 the lines twisting up from the water indicate noise the turtle makes with his waves, & in #2 noise comes from the otter. In #3 crane shows up with medicine & makes his own "noise" through fog. In #4 the lines coming from the tracks indicate noise made by the tracks themselves (it's also told that one can hear bear tracks, especially after they've stood in one place eating berries — likewise the tracks of the heavy moose.) The  in #5 indicates locomotion. In #6 the porcupine's medicine (at the base of his quills) is naturally protected & not easily given up, but possesses exceptional healing powers. (In another midē narrative a fox surrounds himself with quills to attract shamans, for his own medicine utilizes little "calling" power & is often left on the margins of a village with no other sign of the fox.) In song #7 the midē is telling his spirit-voice he received the medicine from him. When sung, this is accompanied by midē drums taking successive (responsive) turns from opposite ends of the village. In song #8 crow is designated "inside" the sky (or his clouds) & dropping medicine. The pictographs were present as/on separate fragments of longer, complete midē scrolls & incised on the soft inner surfaces of birchbark.

— H. A. N.