

## DIFFERENTIATION OF INDIAN CULTURES ACCORDING TO GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS

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WHILE admitting the basic unity of Indian culture, scientists have discovered well defined variations in different parts of the country. On the evidence of material culture characteristics and archeological finds they have traced a close connection between the environment of a given locale and the culture of the indigenous tribes. The purpose of the present article is to demonstrate first that there are distinct differences in the culture originally found among the Indians living in localities of different environment; second, that these differences were caused by the environment and reflect it. Three of these cultural areas, already mentioned as the Great Lakes section of the Eastern Woodland Area, the Plains area, and the Southwest area, will be contrasted in the matter of physical environment, material culture of resident tribes, and subject matter of literary expressions of these tribes.

Archeological and ethnological research has divided the American continent into several "culture areas", or separate geographical divisions. In each of these the climate, topography, fauna, and flora constitute a distinctive environment. Each of these major environmental or cultural areas seem to have produced its own peculiar type of culture among the tribes who lived within its limits. Tribes who left one area and entered another tended to drop their former folk-ways and adopt those prevailing in the new environment. For instance the kind of food, the manner of hunting, type of weapons or of houses would obviously be determined by available natural resources.

The culture map, (reproduced here) of W. H. Holmes, archeologist, reveals eleven cultural areas north of Mexico. Clark Wissler, ethnologist, has prepared a similar map (also reproduced here) with

nine areas. Although the maps agree quite closely, the divisions of Wissler are, for literary purposes, more convenient. His decision is based on related "material culture" characteristics, such as food, shelter, transportation, etc., which are more frequently and plainly reflected in songs, speeches, and rituals than the archeological findings of Holmes. The criteria of the latter include: type of buildings, methods of burial, ceramic arts, types of stone and bone weapons and other implements, few of which are discriminated with accuracy by the Indians in their compositions.<sup>1</sup>

The problem of dividing the continent into a definite number of geographical areas which produced separate types of culture is, for several reasons, a difficult one. Although the experts Holmes and Wissler agree fairly well in the larger divisions west of the Mississippi river, they are by no means in accord as to the number of distinctive areas in the east and south. The following table indicates

<sup>1</sup>The complete topical list of data used by Wissler in characterizing the material culture of an area is of sufficient interest to be reproduced here:

1. Food: *a*, methods of gathering and producing vegetable foods; *b*, hunting; *c*, fishing; *d*, agriculture and domestication; *e*, methods of cooking; *f*, manufactured foods (Details of methods and appliances in every case.)

2. Shelter: details of structure for *a*, seasonal types; *b*, permanent types and *c*, temporary shelters.

3. Transportation: methods and appliances for land and water.

4. Dress: materials and patterns; sex differences, *a*, headgear and hair dress; *b*, footgear; *c*, handgear; *d*, body costume; *e*, overcostume.

5. Pottery: methods of manufacture, forms, uses, colors, technique of decoration.

6. Basketry, mats, and bags: materials, kinds of weave, forms, uses, technique of color and decoration.

7. Weaving of twisted elements: materials, methods of twisting thread and cord, weaving frames or looms, technique of dyeing and pattern-weaving, kinds and uses of products.

8. Work in skins: *a*, dressing, methods, and tools; *b*, tailoring and sewing; *c*, technique of bags and other objects; *d*, use of rawhide.

9. Weapons: bows, lances, clubs, knives, shields, armor, fortifications, etc.

10. Work in wood: *a*, methods of felling trees, making planks, and all reducing processes; *b*, shaping, bending, and joining; *c*, drilling, sawing, smoothing; *d*, painting and polishing; *e*, use of fire; *f*, tools; *g*, list of objects made of wood; *h*, technique of carving.

11. Work in stone; processes, forms and uses.

12. Work in bone, ivory and shell.

13. Work in metals.

14. Feather work, quill technique, bead technique, and all special products not enumerated above.

For more complete details see statements by the two leading experts in this field: Clark Wissler, "Material Culture Centers of the North American Indians", *Anthropology in North America*, pp. 76 ff., especially pp. 77-78; and "Correlation Between Archeological and Culture Areas in the American Continent", *Holmes Anniversary Volume, Anthropological Essays*, Washington, 1916, pp. 481-490. W. H. Holmes, "Areas of American Culture Characterization" etc., in *Anthropology in North America*, pp. 42 ff. Otis T. Mason, "Environment", *Hodge I*, pp. 427-430.



Artifact (Archaeological) Areas According to Holmes



Material Culture Areas According to Wissler

the areas in the east and south. The following table indicates the areas selected by Wissler as compared with those of Holmes:

Areas of Wissler	Areas of Holmes.
1. Eskimo (Arctic Shoreland) Area.	No. X
2. Mackenzie Area.	Part of No. XI
3. North Pacific Coast Area	No. IX
4. Plateau Area	No. VIII
5. California Area.	No. VII
6. Plains Area	No. V
7. Eastern Woodland Area	No. IV and part of No. I
8. Southwestern Area	No. VI.
9. Southeastern Area.	No. II and III, and part of No. I <sup>2</sup>

Since the purpose of the present discussion is literary, not archeological or ethnological, a complete statement regarding environment and material culture will not be given here. The latest conclusions regarding material culture and environment are, however, both interesting and pertinent.

"The striking agreement between culture and artifact areas

<sup>2</sup>See W. H. Holmes, "Areas of American Culture Characterization" etc., pp. 42 ff. Clark Wissler, "Material Culture Centers of the North American Indians", pp. 76 ff; and "Correlation Between Archeological and Culture Areas in the North American Continent", *Holmes Anniversary Volume, Anthropologica<sup>1</sup> Essays*, Washington, 1916, pp. 481-490, and Otis T. Mason, "Environment", *Hodge I*, pp. 427-430.

The fairly close correlation between Wissler's culture-trait map and the archeological areas of Holmes has been commented on by the latter. He points out that the cultures localized in the areas indicated by Holmes must be the original and only ones there, "and that their development has been merely an expansion along their original lines." Follows a further explanation of the differences: "If the Iroquois were withdrawn and placed in the south whence they seem to have come recently, the mound peoples of Ohio reinstated, and the extinct Florida tribes revived, we should perhaps have a close agreement between the two maps."

The mound culture north of the Ohio river was probably an intrusion from the south. "Thus it seems that the chances favor there having been for a long time a tendency toward three culture areas in eastern United States; the northern, the southern, and the Gulf Coast." Most of eastern Canada from the point of view of material culture only "was continuous with the Diné area, which would bring it into close agreement with Archeological [Holmes] XI. . . . Thus on both continents there is a very close general agreement between the locality occupied by the historic cultures and the archeological areas." —Wissler, "Correlation Between Archeological and Culture Areas in the American Continents", pp. 481-2.

cannot be due merely to one being continuous with the other, but must signify that cultures were scarcely ever *moved out of their habitats*. Languages seem to have travelled more, but the suggestion is that the somatic type was stable, or at least able to submerge all intruders. According to this interpretation, *cultures, somatic types, and to a considerable extent, languages as well*, grew up in single geographical areas, a condition giving us a kind of accidental correlation. . . . What we seem to have is a tendency toward identity within each geographical area, strongly marked in the case of culture, far less noticed in language but still in evidence."<sup>3</sup>

The stability of certain literary themes within these areas seems quite as marked as that of the culture and languages mentioned by Wissler. Although there are numerous cases of myths travelling from one area to another, the songs and speeches, on the contrary, remained quite permanent.

For the purpose of the present discussion analysis will be made of compositions from tribes representing three major areas (according to the map of Wissler): the Ojibway of the Eastern Woodland Area (No. 7), the Siouxans of the Plains Area (No. 6), and the Pima of the Southwestern Area (No. 8). The selection of areas was in large part determined by the fact that they exhibit very plain contrasts to each other. It is quite possible, even probable that Indian literature from all the areas of Wissler would plainly reflect the distinguishing characteristics of the environment in which it was produced. The space required in presenting selections from each of these areas would, however, far exceed the limits of this discussion. In any case, the areas mentioned afford for comparison a wide variety of culture types and levels, and also of compositions. It is believed that the evidence utilized here will be sufficient to prove several important points: the subjects of Indian thought and speech were invariably taken from the immediate environment; these subjects changed or were modified largely to reflect a new environment; traditions reflecting a former environment, though lingering for a time, finally became archaic and were forgotten; environment, material culture (the physical occupations and artifacts of the Indian), literary composition, are all closely related.

The territory occupied by the famous Ojibway tribe comprises a large part of the entire Upper Mississippi and Lakes Area (Wissler).

<sup>3</sup>Wissler, "Correlation Between Archeological and Culture Areas", pp. 487-8.

According to tradition the Ojibways, an Algonquian tribe, migrated westward from some point on the Atlantic seaboard near the Gulf of the St. Lawrence River. Their route lay along the St. Lawrence River, Lake Huron, to Fond du Lac on Lake Superior. It is reported that after a protracted stay at the falls of Sault Ste. Marie they separated from the Ottaways and Pottawatumees there, and separated into two large divisions. One of these occupied the country about the northern shore of Lake Superior, while the others went to the South. By dint of continuous fighting with the resident Sioux and other tribes they managed to spread out over an area including "all that portion of the state of Michigan lying north of Green Bay and west of the Straits of Michimilimackinac, bordering on Lake Superior, the northern half of Wisconsin, and the northeastern half of Minnesota. . . . Besides this they occupied the country lying from the Lake of the Woods, over the entire north coast of Lake Superior, to the Falls of St. Mary's and extending even east of this point into Upper Canada. They literally girdled the great "Father of Lakes". . . . They occupied, through conquest in war against the Dakotas, all those numerous lakes from which the Mississippi and the Red River of the North derive their sources."<sup>4</sup> They constituted one of the largest single tribes in North America: as late as 1905 their total strength was between 30,000 and 32,000. Earlier estimates varied somewhat, but were generally less than this number.<sup>5</sup>

The Ojibway territory was mostly forest and lake country. Warren, writing in 1850, describes it in poetic style. "The Ojibways reside almost exclusively in a wooded country: their lands are covered with deep and interminable forests, abounding in beautiful lakes and murmuring streams, whose banks are edged with trees of the sweet maple, the useful birch, the tall pine, fir balsam, cedar, spruce. . . . In many of these lakes which lie clustered together within an area of several hundred miles the wild rice grows in large quantities . . . affording the Indian an important staple of existence."<sup>6</sup> Warren mentions Prairie Rice Lake, forty miles north of the lower rapids on Chippewa River, as typical Ojibway camping ground. "The lake being miry-bottomed, and shallow, is almost entirely covered with wild rice. . . . so thick and luxuriant . . . that the Indians are often obliged to cut passage ways through it for their bark canoes. From the manner in which they gather the rice,

<sup>4</sup>Warren, *History of the Ojibways*, pp. 37-8, and pp. 76 ff.

<sup>5</sup>Hodge I, "Chippewa", pp. 279-80.

<sup>6</sup>Warren, *op. cit.*, pp. 175-6.

and the quantity which a family generally collects during the harvesting season, this laké alone would support a body of two thousand Indians. . . . The country surrounding the lake is sparsely covered with pine trees, through which fires appear to have occasionally run, burning the smaller trees and thickets, and giving the country a prairie like appearance. . . .”<sup>7</sup>

In this territory of woods and lakes, they led a semi-hunting, semi-agricultural existence, depending on game, wild fowl, fish, and wild rice for subsistence.<sup>8</sup> They were also engaged in bitter warfare with the Iroquois, who attempted to invade them from the east, and with the Sioux, their ancient enemies, whom they actually ousted from the country to the west.<sup>9</sup>

The annual program of this tribe demanded that the spring and summer, when hunting was poor and the leaves afforded good protection, be seasons of regular hostilities. The scattered bands being united into larger settlements, the men spent their time in ceremonial dancing, raiding Siouan enemies, and other festivities. The women, “usual drudges of the wild and lordly red hunters”, as Warren says, also enjoyed themselves “in making their lodge coverings and mats for use during the coming winter, and in picking and drying berries”.<sup>10</sup> At this time, too, all those who had lost relatives at the hands of the Sioux held intensive mourning celebrations, with the view of inciting themselves to revenge.

In the autumn, after the wild rice had been gathered and stored (mostly by the women), the bands moved in a body to a designated rendez-vous “to search for meat on the dangerous hunting grounds of their enemies. . . . Long Prairie . . . was at this time the favorite resort of these bands of the Dakota tribes now known as the Warpeton and Sisseton. It was in the forests surrounding this isolated prairie, that herds of the buffalo and elk took shelter from the bleak cold winds which at this season of the year blew over the vast western prairies where they were accustomed to feed in summer; and here the Dakotas in concentrated camps of over a hundred lodges, followed them to their haunts; and while they preyed on them towards the west, the guns of the Ojibways were often heard doing likewise towards the east. The hunters of the two hostile camps

<sup>7</sup>Warren, *op. cit.*, pp. 308-11.

<sup>8</sup>Hoffman, “The Medewiwin”, *7th Annual Report B. A. E.*, p. 149. Warren *op. cit.*, pp. 39-40.

<sup>9</sup>Warren, *op. cit.*, pp. 38, 163 ff., etc.

<sup>10</sup>Warren, *History of the Ojibways*, p. 265.



prowled after their game, "in fear and trembling", and chance encounters of Ojibways and Sioux resulted in frequent forays and assassinations.<sup>11</sup>

Scattered over a region 1000 miles wide from east to west, the Ojibway were divided into a large number of villages, bands, and local divisions. These (roughly) territorial bands were grouped into ten larger divisions or sub-tribes within areas. These in turn were organized into five major fraternities. Inside the ten subdivisions were numerous gentes (with representatives in most, or all local bands). Each of the gentes was named for an animal totem: Crane, Catfish, Loon, Bear, Marten, Reindeer, Wolf, Pike, Lynx, Eagle, Rattlesnake, Moose, Gull, Hawk, etc. The members of the gens, theoretically at least, possessed certain of the characteristics of the animal, their totem. The chief of these were the Crane, Catfish, Bear, Marten, Wolf, and Loon families, who composed eight-tenths of the tribe.<sup>12</sup> The interior cohesion of the whole tribe was very loose; concerted action of any sort being only temporary in time of war.

After a long series of wars with the Dakotas and with the British, the Ojibway finally ceded most of their valuable forest and mine lands to the Government. They are now on reservation in Minnesota and Michigan and Wisconsin to the number of nearly 18,000. Nearly 15,000 are also on reservation in Canada.<sup>13</sup>

Very striking reflections of the natural environment are seen in the council speeches of the Ojibway as reported by William Warren and, more recently, by Mr. Lew Sarett.<sup>14</sup>

Warren reports that he assisted at an Ojibway ceremony in which a sea shell figured prominently. On asking the meaning of this he received the following reply from an old medicine man.

"While our forefathers were living on the great salt water toward the rising sun, the great Megis (sea shell) showed itself above the surface of the water, and the rays of the sun were reflected for a long time from its glossy back. It gave warmth and light to the An-ish-in-aub-ag (red race). All at once it sank into the deep, and

<sup>11</sup>Warren, *op. cit.*, pp. 270 ff., and 127.

<sup>12</sup>Warren, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-50.

<sup>13</sup>Hodge, I, "Chippewa", pp. 279-280.

<sup>14</sup>Mr. Lew Sarett, of Northwestern University, is one of the most distinguished of Warren's successors in the study of Indian, particularly Ojibway, lore. He is the author of two collections of verse, *Many, Many Moons* and *The Box of God*. These are notable for being accurate and at the same time poetic transcriptions of Indian thought.

for a time our ancestors were not blessed with its light. It rose to the surface and appeared again on the great river which drains the waters of the Great Lakes, and again for a long time it gave life to our forefathers and reflected the rays of the sun. Again it disappeared from sight and it rose not, till it appeared to the eyes of the An-ish-in-aub-ag on the shores of the first great lake. Again it sank from sight, and death daily visited the wigwams of our forefathers, till it showed its back, and reflected the sun once more at Bow-e-ting (Sault Ste. Marie). Here it remained for a long time, but once more, and for the last time it disappeared, and the An-ish-in-aub-ag was left in darkness and misery, till it floated and once more showed its bright back at Mo-ning-wun-a-kaw-ing (La Pointe Island), where it has ever since reflected back the rays of the sun, and blessed our ancestors with life, light, and wisdom. Its rays reach the remotest village of the Ojibway."

On being quizzed further the old man explained that the shell symbolized the Me-da-we religion, or grand medicine ritual of the tribe. The appearance of the shell indicated the places where the medicine lodge had to be erected on the migration westward. The story undoubtedly has a deeper significance than this. It seems logical that the tribe once lived on the Atlantic coast.<sup>15</sup> In such a case, shellfish formed an important article of diet and were symbolic of all things most vital to the tribe.<sup>16</sup>

This speech shows plainly the effect on the Indian mind of those things most essential to his life. The wandering Ojibway deified the sea shell from which he derived his food; and imbued it with the magic properties with which all nature was (to him) endowed. The legend then became confused with religious rites in a fashion similar to that of the White Thanksgiving and Christmas beliefs and rituals. An inland tribe could never have originated this legend.

According to the "culture area" theories of Wissler and Holmes, a certain type of culture is indigenous to a given locale, and tends to impress itself upon newcomers there. The ritual and legend of the shell was therefore a last vestige of a former culture, carried over into the new area, and was fast being forgotten. According to Warren's account the speech of the ancient shaman was full of

<sup>15</sup>Warren estimates that the migration probably began shortly after the year 1300, and lasted for 200 years. See *History of the Ojibways*, pp. 88 ff.

<sup>16</sup>See N. C. Nelson, "Wixi of the the Shellmound People", *American Indian Life*, pp. 273-287, and Edward Sapir, "Sayach'apis, a Nootka Trader", *Ibid.*, pp. 297-323, especially pp. 302 ff., on importance of sea food to coast tribes.

archaic and obscure phrases, impossible to translate literally. Another and doubtless later version of the legend substitutes for the shell the otter, an animal indigenous to the newer environment of the lake country.

Conclusive proof of the tendency of the literary culture of the Indians to accord with other phases of their culture is seen in the sacred objects of the Omaha "tent of war". These objects, among them a sacred shell and a cedar pole, were carefully wrapped up and preserved by the ancient medicine men. The Omaha, a Missouri plains tribe, were supposed remotely to have migrated from some point far in the east. The traditions concerning the sacred objects were forgotten even by the ancient keepers, though the articles themselves were still blindly revered. Concerning the "sacred shell" Miss Fletcher, an authority on the Omaha tribe, remarks: "Shells were formerly used to carry coals of fire. In ancient ceremonies in which this shell had a part, it may have served such purpose actually or symbolically. That it was connected with fire seems probable from the superstition that it would cause great heat if it ever touched the ground. . . . In the account of the shell society [a tribal fraternity] it will be seen that the shell was connected with death and the continuation of life after death, as well as with water and the beginnings of life. Osage myths associate the shell with the introduction of life on the earth.

If additional light is ever thrown on this Sacred Shell of the Omaha tribe it will probably be the result of study of some cognate tribe which may have preserved some tradition of a ceremony in which a shell of this kind was used.<sup>17</sup> To the present writer it seems quite likely that the Ojibway tradition is the explanation sought by Miss Fletcher. Both cases are illustrations of the analogous development and changes of material culture and literature. Thus the Indian, like the white man, tended to forget the old gods and the old myths as the conditions of his life changed.

A council talk by a speaker of the Ojibway Crane clan corroborates the evidence of the first speech. In answer to a vainglorious harangue claiming first place for the Loon family, the head chief of the Cranes, one Tug-waug-aun-ay, arose. Said he: "The Great Spirit once made a bird, and he sent it from the skies to make its abode on earth. The bird came, and when it reached half way down, among the clouds, it sent forth a loud and far sounding cry, which

<sup>17</sup>Fletcher, "The Omaha Tribe", *27th Rep. B. A. E.*, I, pp. 452-457.

was heard by all who resided on earth, and even by the spirits who make their abode within its bosom. When the bird reached within sight of the earth, it circled slowly above the great Fresh Water Lakes, and again uttered its echoing cry. Nearer and nearer it circled, looking for a resting place, till it lit on a hill overlooking *Bowweting* (Sault Ste. Marie); here it chose its first resting place, pleased with the numerous white fish that glanced and swam in the clear waters and sparkling foam of the rapids. Satisfied with its chosen seat, again the bird sent forth its loud but solitary cry; and the No-kaig (Bear clan), A-waus-e-wug (Catfish), Ah-auh-wauk-ug (Loon), and Mous-o-neeg (Moose and Marten clan), gathered at his call. A large town was soon congregated, and the bird whom the Great Spirit sent presided over all.

Once again it took its flight, and the bird flew slowly over the waters of Lake Superior. Pleased with the sand point of Shaugh-ah-waum-ik-ong, it circled over it, and viewed the numerous fish as they swam about in the clear depths of the Great Lake. It lit on Shaugh-ah-waum-ik-ong, and from thence again uttered its solitary cry. A voice came from the calm bosom of the Lake, in answer; the bird pleased with the musical sound of the voice, again sent forth its cry, and the answering bird made its appearance in the wampum-breasted Ah-auk-wauk (Loon). The bird spoke to it in a gentle tone, "Is it thou that gives answer to my cry?" The Loon answered, "It is I." The bird then said to him, "Thy voice is music—it is melody—it sounds sweet in my ear, from henceforth I appoint thee to answer my voice in Council'."

"Thus," continued the chief, "the Loon became the first in council, but he who made him chief was the Bus-in-aus-e (Echo Maker), or Crane. . . ."

The old man took his seat in silence, and not a chief in that stricken and listening crowd arose to gainsay his words. All understood the allegory perfectly well, and as the curling smoke of their pipes arose from the lips and nostrils of the quiet listeners there ascended with it the universal whisper, "It is true; it is true."

As an explanation of the figure in the above allegory, we will add that the Crane. . . . is the totem of a large section of the tribe. The bird loves to soar among the clouds, and its cry can be heard when flying above, beyond the orbit of human vision. From this "far sounding cry" the family who claim it as their totem derive their generic name of Bus-in-aus-e-wug (Echo Makers). This family

claim, by this allegory, to have been the first discoverers and pioneer settlers of Sault Ste. Marie, and again at Pt. Shaug-ah-waum-ik-ong."<sup>18</sup> In both the above speeches are evident the imaginative and mystical qualities of all tribes in the semi-nomad-hunter stage of culture. The contrast between this and the far more matter of fact council rites of the Iroquois is very striking. One wonders how much validity the astute Iroquois politicians would have accorded such an argument.

In these and all other translations recorded by Warren, we trace very plainly his own florid style of writing. In fact he does not claim to translate literally; but only to reproduce essential ideas. Therefore he makes his Ojibways a trifle too polished for the days before Haskell Institute.

The following speech, quoted from *Many, Many Moons*, is perhaps a more faithful illustration of Indian style—at least at the present day. Yet one can trace a generic likeness, especially in the references to animals and in the Indian mode of reasoning from analogy.

“LITTLE-CARIBOU MAKES ‘BIG TALK’

Boo-zhoo! Boo-zhoo!  
 Me, Ah-deek-koons, I mak-um big talk.  
 Me, ol' man; I'm got-um sick on knee  
 In rainy wedder w'en I'm walk. Ugh!  
 Me, lak moose w'at's ol',  
 I'm drop-um plenty toot'!  
 Yet I am big man! Ho!  
 An' I am talk-um big! Ho!

(Hi-yee! Blow lak moose, ol' man!  
 Ho! Ho!

Hi-yi! Little-Caribou him talk  
 Lak O-mah-kah-kee, dose Bullfrog:  
 Big mout', big belly,  
 No can fight!)

Ugh! Close mout', young crazy buck!  
 You stop-um council-talk,  
 You go 'way council!

<sup>18</sup>Warren, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-88.

Sit wit' squaw!  
 You lak little poh-toong,  
 Lak pollywog tad-pole:  
 No can jump-um  
 Over little piece mud;  
 Can only shake-um tail  
 Lak crazy-dam-fool! . . .

. . . . .  
 Keetch-ie O-gi-ma long tam' ago  
 Was say in Pine Point Treaty:  
 "All de 'Cheebway should be farmer;  
 All will get from Washin'ton gov-ment  
 Good allotment farm land,  
 One hondred-sixty acre each." Ho!  
 Ho! Eenzhun scratch-um treaty!  
 Stick-um t'umb on treaty!

W'at's come treaty? Hah?  
 Eenzhun got-um hondred-sixty acre,  
 But got-um too much little pieces,—  
 Pieces scattered over lake  
 Lak leaves she's blow by wind.  
 In tam'rack swamp by Moose Tail Bay  
 He got-um forty acre piece.  
 Ten mile away, on Lake of Cut-Foot Sioux,  
 In mush-kaig an' in rice-field,  
 He got-um forty acre more,  
 On Bowstring Lake, she's t'orty-mile away,  
 In sand and pickerel weed,  
 He got-um forty acre more.  
 Hondred mile away, on Lac La Croix,  
 W'ere lumberman is mak' big dam  
 For drive-um log,—an' back-um up water  
 All over Eenzhun allotment land,—  
 He got-um forty acre more,—all under lake!  
 How can Eenzhun be good farmer! Ugh?  
 He's gotum land all over lake!  
 He's got-um land all under lake!  
 For Eenzhun be good farmer  
 Eenzhun should be good for walking under water!

Should be plow hees land wit' clam-drag!  
 Should be gadder potato crops wit' fish-net!  
 For Eenzhun be good farmer  
 Eenzhun should be fish!  
 Ugh!  
 I have said it!

(Ho! Ho! Ho!  
 Hi! Hi! Plenty-big talk!  
 How!)"<sup>19</sup>

The songs of the Ojibway also reflect individualities of their natural environment. Miss Densmore, leading expert on Ojibway music, has classified 248 songs according to subject matter. Of these one third contain mention of some manifestation of nature. Her table and comment follow.

	Number	Percentage
Songs mentioning animals . . . . .	30	36
Songs mentioning birds . . . . .	71	21
Songs mentioning the sky . . . . .	17	21
Songs mentioning water . . . . .	11	13
Songs mentioning clouds . . . . .	4	4.5
Songs mentioning the wind . . . . .	4	4.5

“. . . The animals mentioned in the songs are the otter, beaver, weasel, marten, crawfish, large bear, fox, deer, and dog; . . . . The birds mentioned are the crow, loon, owl, raven, plover, eagle, “thunder bird”, and “water birds”. Reference to water occurs principally in songs of the Midewiwin, the emblem of that organization being a shell, and all its traditions being associated with water and with aquatic animals.” The rarity of songs of the horse or buffalo, reflecting contact with plains culture, is notable.<sup>20</sup>

In discovering the reflection of environment in the utterances of the Indians it is important to quote songs in which there is specific reference to the above mentioned subjects. Attention is called to the fact that the actual subject of the song may not be the animal or other manifestation of nature which is mentioned. In a later chapter (X) further compositions will be analyzed for their motivation (i. e., prime subject matter). In the present instance this is secondary to

<sup>19</sup>Sarett, *Many, Many Moons*, pp. 59-61.

<sup>20</sup>Densmore, *Chippewa Music*, II, pp. 16-17.

the reflection of environment, whether it be incidental or otherwise.

## SONGS MENTIONING ANIMALS

"The big bear  
To his lodge  
I go often."<sup>21</sup>

\* \* \*

"Turtle  
I am sitting with him."<sup>22</sup>

\* \* \*

## SONGS MENTIONING BIRDS

"A loon  
I thought it was  
But it was  
My love's  
Splashing oar."<sup>23</sup>

\* \* \*

"Little plover, it is said,  
has walked by."<sup>24</sup>

\* \* \*

## SONGS MENTIONING THE SKY

"It will resound finely  
the sky  
when I come making a noise."<sup>25</sup>

\* \* \*

"As the wind is carrying me  
around the sky."<sup>26</sup>

\* \* \*

## SONGS MENTIONING WATER

"Across the river  
they speak of me as being."<sup>27</sup>

<sup>21</sup>Densmore, *Chippewa Music*, I, p. 121. The above is the song of a medicine man. "Before beginning this song Main'ans said, 'In my dream I went to the big bear's lodge and he told me what to do. . . . This is what I say in this song which I made up myself. Every *dza'sakid* [medicine man] has his own animal which he sees in a dream and he learns from this animal what he shall do for the sick person'." pp. 121-2.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 262. This is a dream song, referring to a magic "totem" animal.

<sup>23</sup>Densmore, *Chippewa Music*, I, p. 150. Obviously this is a love song.

<sup>24</sup>*Chippewa Music*, II, p. 295.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 270.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 263.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 81.



"A bubbling spring  
Comes from the hard ground."<sup>28</sup>

\* \* \*

SONGS MENTIONING CLOUDS

"Great heaps  
of clouds  
in the direction I am looking."<sup>29</sup>

\* \* \*

"The shifting  
Clouds."<sup>30</sup>

\* \* \*

SONGS MENTIONING THE WIND

"One  
wind  
I am master of it."<sup>31</sup>

\* \* \*

In concluding this discussion of the songs of the Ojibway it is impossible not to mention their curious "symbols of songs which never were sung." These symbols take the form of poles which are erected with banners or frames with pieces of cloth bearing "strange figures outlined in red and blue. . . . Symbols of the sun, moon, and stars are easily recognized and there are also crude drawings of birds. High up on many of the poles are tied bunches of rags that flutter in the breeze and suggest mystery." These painted symbols represent dreams which have never been fulfilled. To this day the young men of the tribe go away to fast and receive inspiration from the supernatural powers. If during such a vigil a dream comes, and is not fulfilled, the man erects a pole bearing the symbols of the song which he heard in his dream but never had the opportunity to sing. "Such a man was supposed to have special power to cure the sick. . . . In the springtime the owner of a pole frequently takes it down, lays it on the ground, and makes a feast. He asks his friends to come and 'preaches about the pole'. If some one 'wishes to secure life', he brings one of his garments with tobacco folded in it and ties the garment around the pole. In the

<sup>28</sup>*Chippewa Music*, I, p. 41.

<sup>29</sup>*Chippewa Music*, II, p. 273.

<sup>30</sup>*Chippewa Music*, I, p. 145.

<sup>31</sup>*Chippewa Music*, II, p. 271.

autumn a similar feast is often held, but the frozen state of the ground makes it impossible to take down the pole.

“ . . . His is the monotonous life of a reservation Indian who can not fully adapt himself to the white man's way, yet beneath it is the memory of a dream and above it is the symbol of a song that never was sung.”<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup>Densmore, *Chippewa Music*, II, pp. 247-50.