

THE STARS

For we are the stars. For we sing.
For we sing with our light.
For we are birds made of fire.
For we spread our wings over the sky.
Our light is a voice.
We cut a road for the soul
for its journey through death.
For three of our number are hunters.
For these three hunt a bear.
For there never yet was a time
when these three didn't hunt.
For we face the hills with disdain.
This is the song of the stars.

(Passamaquoddy Indian)

BEAN FLOWER

Bean flower,
Black & white
Like the heart of that dark man
Who loves two women.

Long live the apple.
Its tears are sweet.
This world has reason
To be bitter.

Little star of heaven
Lend me your brightness,
For the life of this world
Is a dark night.

(Quechua)

A SONG OF CHANGES

The light becomes dark.
The night, & again the night,
The day with hunger tomorrow.
The Maker is angry with us.
The Old Ones have passed away,
Their bones are far off, below.
Their spirits are wandering—
Where are their spirits wandering?
Perhaps the passing wind knows.
Their bones are far off, below.
Are they below, the spirits? Are they here?
Do they see the offerings set out?
Tomorrow is empty & naked
For the Maker is no more there,
Is no more the host seated at the hearth.

(Gabon Pygmy)

GHOSTS & SHADOWS

The soul is a dark forest.

—D. H. Lawrence

Ghosts in this forest, shadows
thrown back by the night
Or in daylight

like bats that drink from our veins
& hang from moist walls, in deep caves
Behind this green moss, these awful white stones
We pray to know who has seen them
Shadows thrown back by the night
We pray to know who has seen them

(Gabon Pygmy)

LILY EVENTS

- (1) A man and woman looking for lilies.
- (2) All the people going down to look for lilies.
- (3) Mud taken up looking for lilies.
- (4) Washing the lilies in the water to remove the mud.
- (5) Washing themselves off after the mud has got on them.
- (6) Lilies in a basket.
- (7) Walking from the lily place "to go look for a dry place to sit down."

(Australia: Arnhem Land)

SONG OF THE DEAD, RELATING
THE ORIGIN OF BITTERNESS



(Set One)



To learn to do things here
is bitterness

Ssu-ssa-zo of Shu-lo

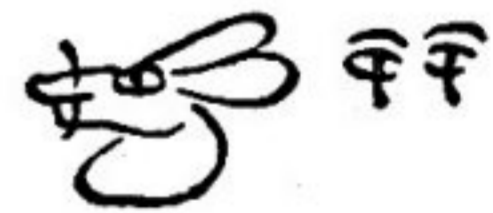
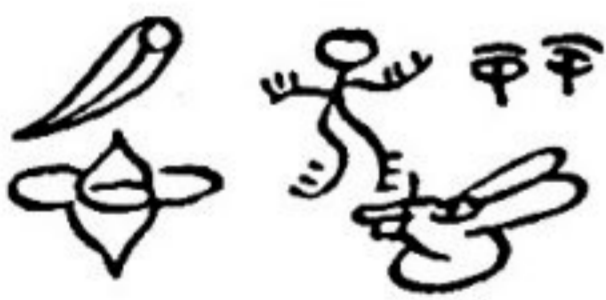
when he was old but
didn't know it



made a yellow
wooden bowl

went to wash gold in it

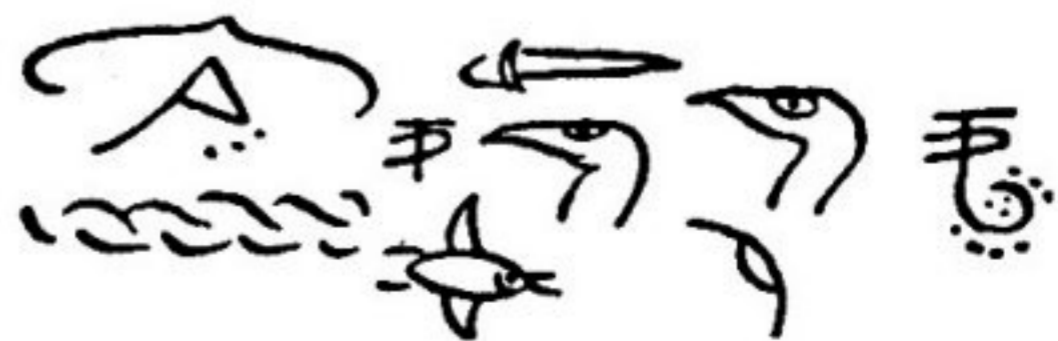
Ssu-ssa-zo's shadow
was projected on
the water



he saw his shadow
reflected on the
water

his own shadow

that he saw reflected



he was old then & he
knew it

on the horizon where the clouds touch
heaven
the old crane still didn't know that
he was old