

PARKER KATIE LANGLOH

THE EUAHLAYI TRIBE: A
STUDY OF ABORIGINAL
LIFE IN AUSTRALIA

Katie Parker
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of Aboriginal Life in Australia**

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INTRODUCTION

No introduction to Mrs. Langloh Parker's book can be more than that superfluous 'bush' which, according to the proverb, good wine does not need. Our knowledge of the life, manners, and customary laws of many Australian tribes has, in recent years, been vastly increased by the admirable works of Mr. Howitt, and of Messrs. Spencer and Gillen. But Mrs. Parker treats of a tribe which, hitherto, has hardly been mentioned by anthropologists, and she has had unexampled opportunities of study. It is hardly possible for a scientific male observer to be intimately familiar with the women and children of a savage tribe. Mrs. Parker, on the other hand, has had, as regards the women and children of the Euahlayi, all the advantages of the squire's wife in a rural neighbourhood, supposing the squire's wife to be an intelligent and sympathetic lady, with a strong taste for the study of folklore and rustic custom. Among the Zulus, we know, it is the elder women who tell the popular tales, so carefully translated and edited by Bishop Colenso. Mrs. Parker

has already published two volumes of Euahlayi tales, though I do not know that I have ever seen them cited, except by myself, in anthropological discussion. As they contain many beautiful and romantic touches, and references to the Euahlayi 'All Father,' or paternal 'super man,' Byamee, they may possibly have been regarded as dubious materials, dressed up for the European market. Mrs. Parker's new volume, I hope, will prove that she is a close scientific observer, who must be reckoned with by students. She has not scurried through the region occupied by her tribe, but has had them constantly under her eyes for a number of years.

My own slight share in the book as it stands ought to be mentioned. After reading the original MS., I catechised Mrs. Parker as to her amount of knowledge of the native language; her methods of obtaining information; and the chances that missionary influence had affected the Euahlayi legends and beliefs. I wrote out her answers, and she read and revised what I had written. I also collected many scattered notices of Byamee into the chapter on that being, which Mrs. Parker has read and approved. I introduced a reference to Mr. Howitt's theory of the 'All Father,' and I added some references to other authorities on the Australian tribes. Except for this, and for a very few purely verbal changes in matter of style, Mrs. Parker's original manuscript is untouched by me. It seems necessary to mention these details, as I have, in other works, expressed my own opinions on Australian religion and customary law. [MAKING OF RELIGION, second edition; MYTH, RITUAL,

AND RELIGION, second edition.] These opinions I have not, so to speak, edited into the work of Mrs. Parker. The author herself has remarked that, beginning as a disciple of Mr. Herbert Spencer in regard to the religious ideas of the Australians – according to that writer, mere dread of casual 'spirits' – she was obliged to alter her attitude, in consequence of all that she learned at first hand. She also explains that her tribe are not 'wild blacks,' though, in the absence of missionary influences, they retain their ancient beliefs, at least the old people do; and, in a decadent form, preserve their tribal initiations, or Boorah. How she tested and controlled the evidence of her informants she has herself stated, and I venture to think that she could hardly have made a better use of her opportunities.

In one point there is perhaps, almost unavoidably, a lacuna or gap in her information. The Euahlayi, she says, certainly do not possess the Dieri and Urabunna custom of Pirrauru or Piraungaru, by which married, and unmarried men, of the classes men and women which may intermarry, are solemnly allotted to each other as more or less permanent paramours. [See Mr. Howitt's NATIVE TRIBES OF SOUTH-EAST AUSTRALIA, and my SECRET OF THE TOTEM, chapter iii.] That custom, for some unknown reason, is confined to certain tribes possessing the two social divisions with the untranslated names MATTERI and KIRARU. These tribes range from Lake Eyre southward, perhaps, as far as the sea. Their peculiar custom is unknown to the Euahlayi, but Mrs. Parker does not inform

us concerning any recognised licence which may, as is usual, accompany their Boorah assemblies, or their 'harvest home' of gathered grass seed, which she describes.

Any reader of Mrs. Parker's book who has not followed recent anthropological discussions, may need to be apprised of the nature of these controversies, and of the probable light thrown on them by the full description of the Euahlayi tribe. The two chief points in dispute are (1) the nature and origin of the marriage laws of the Australians; and (2) the nature and origin of such among their ideas and practices as may be styled 'religious.' As far as what we commonly call material civilisation is concerned, the natives of the Australian continent are probably the most backward of mankind, having no agriculture, no domestic animals, and no knowledge of metal-working. Their weapons and implements are of wood, stone, and bone, and they have not even the rudest kind of pottery. But though the natives are all, in their natural state, on or about this common low level, their customary laws, ceremonials, and beliefs are rich in variety.

As regards marriage rules they are in several apparently ascending grades of progress. First we have tribes in which each person is born into one or other of two social divisions usually called 'phratries.' Say that the names of the phratries mean Eagle Hawk and Crow. Each born Crow must marry an Eagle Hawk; each born Eagle Hawk must marry a Crow. The names are derived through the mothers. One obvious result is that no two persons, brother and sister maternal, can intermarry; but the rule

also excludes from intermarriage great numbers of persons in no way akin to each other by blood, who merely share the common phratry name, Crow or Eagle Hawk.

In each phratry are smaller sets of persons, each set distinguished by the name of some animal or other natural object, their 'totem.' The same totem is never found in both phratries. Thus a person marrying out of his or her phratry, as all must do, necessarily marries out of his or her totem.

The same arrangements exist among tribes which derive phratry and totem names through the father.

This derivation of names and descent through the father is regarded by almost all students, and by Mr. J. G. Frazer, in one passage of his latest study of the subject, as a great step in progress. ['The Beginnings of Religion and Totemism among the Australian Aborigines,' FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW, September 1905, p. 452.] The obvious result of paternal descent is to make totem communities or kins local. In any district most of the people will be of the same paternal totem name – say, Grub, Iguana, Emu, or what not. Just so, in Glencoe of old, most of the people were MacIans; in Appin most were Stewarts; in South Argyll Campbells, and so on.

The totem kins are thus, with paternal descent, united both by supposed blood ties in the totem kin, and by associations of locality. This is certainly a step in social progress.

But while Mr. Frazer, with almost all inquirers, acknowledges this, ten pages later in his essay he no longer considers the descent

of the totem in the paternal line as necessarily 'a step in progress' from descent in the maternal line. 'The common assumption that inheritance of the totem through the mother always preceded inheritance of it through the father need not hold good,'[IBID. p. 462.] he remarks.

Thus it appears that a tribe has not necessarily made 'a great step in progress,' because it reckons descent of the totem on the male side. If this be so, we cannot so easily decide as to which tribe is socially advanced and which is not.

In any case, however, there is a test of social advance. There is an acknowledged advance when a tribe is divided into, not two, but four or eight divisions, which may not intermarry. [IBID. p. 454] The Euahlayi have four such divisions. In each of their intermarrying phratries are two 'Matrimonial Classes,' each with its name, and these are so constituted that a member of the elder generation can never marry a member of the succeeding generation. This rule prevents, of course, marriage between parent and child, but such marriages never do occur in the pristine tribes of the Darling river which have no such classes. The four-class arrangement excludes from intermarriage all persons, whether parents and children or not, who bear the same class name, say Hippai.

Among the central and northern tribes, from the Arunta of the Macdonnell hills to the Gulf of Carpentaria, the eight-class rule exists, and it is, confessedly, the most advanced of all.

In this respect, then, the Arunta of the centre of Australia

are certainly more advanced than the Euahlayi. The Arunta have eight, not four, intermarrying classes. In the matter of rites and ceremonies, too, they are, in the opinion of Messrs. Spencer and Gillen, more advanced than, say, the Euahlayi. They practise universal 'subincision' of the males, and circumcision, in place of the more primitive knocking out of the front teeth. Their ceremonies are very prolonged: in Messrs. Spencer and Gillen's experience, rites lasted for four months during a great tribal gathering. That the Arunta could provide supplies for so prolonged and large an assembly, argues high organisation, or a region well found in natural edible objects. Yet the region is arid and barren, so the organisation is very high. For all these reasons, even if we do not regard paternal descent of the totem as a step in progress from maternal descent, the Arunta seem greatly advanced in social conditions.

Yet they are said to lack entirely that belief in a moral and kindly 'All Father,' such as Byamee, which Mrs. Parker describes as potent among the less advanced Euahlayi, and which Mr. Howitt has found among non-coastal tribes of the south-east, with female descent of the totem, but without matrimonial classes – that is, among the most primitive tribes of all.

Here occurs a remarkable difficulty. Mr. Howitt asserts, with Mr. Frazer's concurrence, that (in Mr. Frazer's words) 'the same regions in which the germs of religion begin to appear have also made some progress towards a higher form of social and family life.' ['The Beginnings of Religion and Totemism among the

Australian Aborigines,' *Fortnightly Review*, September 1905, p. 452.] But the social advance from maternal to paternal descent of the totem, we have seen, is not necessarily an advance at all, in Mr. Frazer's opinion. [IBID. p. 462.] The Arunta, for example, he thinks, never recognised female descent of the totem. They have never recognised, indeed, he thinks, any hereditary descent of the totem, though in all other respects, as in hereditary magistracies, and inheritance of the right to practise the father's totemic ritual, they do reckon in the male line. By such advantage, however it was acquired, they are more progressive than, say, the Euahlayi. But, progressive as they are, they have not, like the more pristine tribes of the south-east, developed 'the germs of religion,' the belief in a benevolent or ruling 'All Father.' Unlike the tribes of the south-east, they have co-operative totemic magic. Each totem community does magic for its totem, as part of the food supply of the united tribe. But the tribe, though so SOLIDAIRE, and with its eight classes and hereditary magistracies so advanced, has developed no germs of religion at all. Arunta progress has thus been singularly unequal.

The germs of religion are spoken of as the results of social advance, but, while so prominent in social advance, the Arunta have no trace of religion. The tribes northward from them to the sea are also very advanced socially, but (with one known exception not alluded to by Mr. Frazer) have no 'All Father,' no germ of religion.

From this fact, if correctly reported, it is obvious that social

progress is not the cause, nor the necessary concomitant, of advance in religious ideas.

Again, the influence of the sea, in causing a 'heavier rainfall, a more abundant vegetation, and a more plentiful supply of food,' with an easier and more reflective life than that of 'the arid wilderness of the interior,' cannot be, as is alleged, the cause of the germs of religion. [IBID. p. 463.] If this were the case, the coastal tribes of the Gulf of Carpentaria and of the north generally would have developed the All Father belief. Yet, in spite of their coastal environment, and richer existence, and social advance, the northern coastal tribes are not credited with the belief in the All Father. Meanwhile tribes with no matrimonial classes, and with female descent of the totem – tribes dwelling from five to seven hundred miles away from the southern sea – do possess the All Father belief as far north as Central Queensland, no less than did the almost or quite extinct tribes of the south coast, who had made what is (or is not) 'the great step in progress' of paternal descent of the totem.

Again, arid and barren as is the central region tenanted by the Arunta, it seems to permit or encourage philosophic reflection, for their theory of evolution is remarkably coherent and ingenious. The theory of evolution implies as much reflection as that of creation! Their magic for the behoof of edible objects is attributed to the suddenness of their first rains, [IBID. p. 465.] and the consequent outburst of life, which the natives attribute to their own magical success. But rainmaking magic, as Mrs.

Langloh Parker shows, is practised with sometimes amazing success among the Euahlayi, who work no magic at all for their totems. Their magic, if it brings rain, benefits their totems at large, but for each totem in particular, no Euahlayi totem kin does magic.

Again, agricultural magic has been, and indeed is, practised in Europe, in conditions of climate unlike those of the Arunta; and totemic magic is freely practised in North America, in climatic conditions dissimilar from those of Central Australia.

For all these reasons I must confess that I do not follow the logic of the philosophy which makes social advance the cause of the belief in the All Father, and coastal rains the cause of social advance. The Arunta have the social advance, the eight classes, the relatively high organisation; but they have neither the climatic conditions supposed to produce the advance, nor the religion which the advance is supposed to produce. The northern coastal tribes, again, have the desired climatic conditions, and the social advance, but they have not the germs of religion found in many far inland southern tribes, like the Euahlayi, whose social progress is extremely moderate. We thus find, from the northern coast to the centre, one supposed result of coastal conditions, namely, social progress, but not the other supposed result of coastal conditions, namely, the All Father belief. I do not say that it does not exist, for it is a secret belief, but it is not reported by Messrs. Spencer and Gillen. On the other hand, among tribes of the south-east very far from the coast, we find the lowest grades

of social progress, but we also find the All Father belief. I am ready, of course, to believe that good conditions of life beget progress, social and religious, as a general rule. But other causes exist; speculation anywhere may take crudely scientific rather than crudely religious lines. Especially the belief in ancestral spirits may check or nullify the belief in a remote All Father. We see this among the Zulus, where spirits entirely dominate religion, and the All Father is, at most, the shadow of a name, Unkulunkulu. We may detect the same influence among the northern tribes of Australia, where ancestral spirits dominate thought and society, though they receive no sacrifice or prayer. Meanwhile, if we accept Mrs. Parker's evidence, among the Euahlayi ancestral spirits are of no account in religion, while the All Father is obeyed, and, on some occasions, is addressed in prayer; and may even cause rain, if property approached by a human spirit which has just entered his mansions. Clearly, climatic causes and natural environment are not the only factors in producing and directing the speculative ideas of men in early society.

We must also remember that the neighbours of the Arunta, northwards, who share certain peculiar Arunta ideas, possess, beyond all doubt, either the earliest germs of belief in the All Father, or that belief in a decadent condition of survival. This is quite certain; for, whereas the Arunta laugh at all inquiries as to what went before the 'Alcheringa,' or mythic age of evolution, the Kaitish, according to Messrs. Spencer and Gillen, aver that an

anthropomorphic being, who dwells above the sky, and is named Atnatu, first created himself, and then 'made the Alcheringa,' – the mythic age of primal evolution. Of mankind, some, in Kaitish opinion, were evolved; of others Atnatu is the father. He expelled men to earth from his heaven for neglect of his ceremonies, but he provided them with weapons and all that they possess. He is not TROS FERRO SUR LA MORALE: he has made no MORAL laws, but his ritual laws, as to circumcision and the whirling of the bull-roarer, must be observed as strictly as the ritual laws of Byamee of the Euahlayi. In this sense of obedience due to a heavenly father who begat men, or some of them, punished them, and started them on their terrene career, laying down ceremonial rules, we have certainly 'the germs of religion' in a central tribe cognate to the Arunta.

Mr. Frazer detects only two traces of religion in the centre, omitting the Kaitish Atnatu, ['The Beginnings of Religion and Totemism among the Australian Aborigines,' FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW, September 1905, p. 452, Note 1.] but I am unable to see how the religious aspect of Atnatu, non-moral as it is, can be overlooked. He is the father of part of the tribe, and all are bound to, observe his ceremonial rules. He accounts for the beginning of the beginning; he is the cause of the Alcheringa; men owe duties to him. We do not know whether he was once as potent in their hearts, and as moral as Byamee, but has DOGRINGOLO under Arunta philosophic influences; or whether Byamee is a more highly evolved form of Atnatu. But it is quite certain that

the Kaitish, in a region as far almost from the north sea as that of the Arunta, and further from southern coastal influences than the Arunta, have a modified belief in the All Father. How are we to account for this on the philosophic hypothesis of Oceanus as the father of all the gods; of coastal influences producing a richer life, and causing both social and religious progress?

Another difficulty is that while the Arunta, with no religion, and the Kaitish, with the Atnatu belief, are socially advanced in organisation (whether we reckon male descent of the totem 'a great step in progress,' or an accident), they are yet supposed by Mr. Frazer to be, in one respect, the least advanced, the most primitive, of known human beings. The reason is this: the Arunta do not recognise the processes of sexual union as the cause of the production of children. Sexual acts, they say, merely prepare women for the reception of original ancestral spirits, which enter into them, and are reincarnated and brought to the birth.

If the women cannot accept the spirits without being 'prepared' by sexual union, then sexual union plays a physical part in the generation of a spirit incarnated, a fact which all believers in the human soul are as ready as the Arunta to admit. If the Arunta recognise the prior necessity of 'preparation,' then they are not so ignorant as they are thought to be; and their view is produced, not so much by stark ignorance, as by their philosophy of the eternal reincarnation of primal human spirits. The Arunta philosophers, in fact, seem to concentrate their speculation on a point which puzzled Mr. Shandy. How does the animating

principle, or soul, regarded as immaterial, clothe itself in flesh? Material acts cannot effect the incarnation of a spirit. Therefore, the spirit enters women from without, and is not the direct result of human action.

The south-eastern tribes, with female descent of the totem, and with no belief in the universal and constant reincarnation of ancestral spirits, take the 'schylean view, according to Mr. Howitt, that the male is the sole originating cause of children, while the female is only the recipient and 'nurse.' These tribes, socially less advanced than the Arunta, have not the Arunta nescience of the facts of procreation, a nescience which I regard as merely the consequence and corollary of the Arunta philosophy of reincarnation. Each Arunta child, by that philosophy, has been in being since the Alcheringa: his mother of the moment only reproduces him, after 'preparation.' He is not a new thing; he is as old as the development of organic forms. This is the Arunta belief, and I must reckon it as not more primitive than the peculiar philosophy of reincarnation of ancestral spirits. Certainly such an elaborate philosophy manifestly cannot be primitive. It is, however, the philosophy of the tribes from the Urabunna, on Lake Eyre (with female descent of the totem), to the most northerly tribes, with male descent.

But among none of these tribes has the philosophy that extraordinary effect on totemic institutions which, by a peculiar and isolated addition, it possesses among the septs of the Arunta nation, and in a limited way among the Kaitish.

Among all tribes except these the child inherits its totem: from the mother, among the Urabunna; from the father in the northern peoples. But, among the Arunta and Kaitish, the totem is not inherited from either parent. According to the belief of these tribes, in every district there is a place where the first human ancestors – in each case all of one totem, whichever that totem, in each case, might happen to be – died, 'went under the earth.' Rocks or trees arose to mark such spots. These places are haunted by the spirits of the dead ancestors; here they are all Grubs, there all Eagle Hawks, or all Iguanas, or all Emus, or all Cats. Or as in these sites the ancestors left each his own sacred stone, CHURINGA NANJA, with archaic patterns inscribed on it, patterns now fancifully interpreted as totemic inscriptions. Such stones are especially haunted by the ancestral souls, all desiring reincarnation.

When a woman becomes aware of the life of the child she bears, among the Arunta and Kaitish, she supposes that a local spirit of the local totem has entered her, and her child's totem is therefore the totem of that locality, whatever other totems she and her husbands may own. The stone amulet of the ancestral spirit, WHO IS THE CHILD, is sought; if it cannot be found at the spot, a wooden CHURINGA is made to represent it, and it is kept carefully in a sacred storehouse.

Even in the centre and north, where the belief in reincarnation prevails, this odd manner of acquiring totems is only practised by the Arunta tribes and the Kaitish, and only among them are the

inscribed stones known to exist as favoured haunts of ancestral spirits desiring incarnation. The other northern tribes believe in reincarnation, but not in the haunted sacred stones, which they do not, north of the Worgaia, possess; nor do they derive totems from locality, but, as usual, by inheritance.

It thus appears that these Arunta sacred stones are an inseparable accident of the Arunta method of acquiring the totem. How they and the faith in them cause that method is not obvious, but the two things – the haunted sacred stone, and the local source of totems – are inseparable – that is, the former never is found apart from the latter. Now such stones, with the sense and usage attached to them, cannot well be primitive. They are the result of the peculiar and strictly isolated Arunta custom and belief, which gives to each man and woman one of these stones, the property of himself or herself, since the mythical age, through all reincarnations.

One cannot see how such an unique custom and belief, associated with objects of art, can be reckoned primitive. Yet, where such stones do not exist, the usage of acquiring totems by locality does not exist; even where the belief in reincarnation and in local centres haunted by totemic spirits is found in North Australia. [For an hypothesis of the origin of the CHURINGA NANJA belief, see my SECRET OF THE TOTEM, chapter iv.]

On these grounds it appears that the hereditary totem is the earlier, and that the Arunta usage is the result of the special and inseparable superstition about the sacred stones. It may be

a relatively recent complication of and addition to the theory of reincarnation. Meanwhile, the belief and usage produce an unique effect. The Arunta and Kaitish, we saw, are so advanced socially that they possess not two, or four, but eight matrimonial classes. The tribe is divided into two sets of four classes each, and no person in A division (nameless) of four classes may marry another person of any one of these four, but must marry a person of a given class among the four in B division (nameless). The succession to the class is hereditary in the mate line. But any person among the Arunta, contrary to universal custom elsewhere, may marry another person of his or her own totem, if that person be in the right class of the opposite division. Nowhere else can a person of division A and totem Grub find a Grub to marry in the opposite division B. But this is possible among the Arunta and Kaitish, because their totems are acquired by pure accident, are not hereditary, and all totems exist, or may exist, in division A and also in division B.

Mr. Frazer argues that the Arunta is the earlier state of affairs. He supposes that men acquired their totems, at first, by local accident, before they had laid any restrictions on marriage. Later, they divided their tribe, first into two, then into four, then into eight classes; and every one had to marry out of his class, or set of classes. All other known tribes introduced these restrictions after totems had been made hereditary. On passing the restrictive marriage law, they merely drafted people of one set of hereditary totems into one division, all the other totem kins into the other

division. But the Arunta had not made totems hereditary, but accidental, so all the children of one crowd of mothers were placed in division A, all other children in division B. The mothers in each division would have children of all the totems, and thus the same totems now appeared in both of the exogamous divisions. If a man married into his lawful opposite class, the fact that the woman was of the same totem made no difference.

I have offered quite an opposite explanation. Arunta totems were, originally, hereditary among the Arunta, as everywhere else, and no totem occurred in both exogamous divisions. The same totems, later, got into both divisions as the result of the later and isolated belief in reincarnation PLUS the sacred haunted stones. That superstition has left the Kaitish PRACTICE of marriage still almost untouched. A Kaitish MAY, like an Arunta, marry a woman of his own totem, but he scarcely ever does so. The old prohibition, extinct in law, persists in custom; unless we say that the Kaitish are now merely imitating the usual practice of the rest of the totemic races of the world.

Moreover, even among the Arunta, certain totems greatly preponderate in each of the two exogamous intermarrying divisions of the tribe. This must be because the present practice has not yet quite upset the ancient usage, by which no totem ever occurred in both divisions. There is even an Arunta myth asserting that this was so, but it is, of course, of no historical value as evidence. Here it is proper to give Mr. Frazer's contrary theory in his own words: —

'This [Arunta] mode of determining the totem has all the appearance of extreme antiquity. For it ignores altogether the intercourse of the sexes as the cause of offspring, and further, it ignores the tie of blood on the maternal as well as the paternal side, substituting for it a purely local bond, since the members of a totem stock are merely those who gave the first sign of life in the womb at one or other of certain definite spots. This form of totemism, which may be called conceptional or local to distinguish it from hereditary totemism, may with great probability be regarded as the most primitive known to exist at the present day, since it seems to date from a time when blood relationship was not yet recognised, and when even the idea of paternity had not yet presented itself to the savage mind. Moreover, it is hardly possible that this peculiar form of local totemism, with its implied ignorance of such a thing as paternity at all, could be derived from hereditary totemism, whereas it is easy to understand how hereditary totemism, either in the paternal or in the maternal line, could be derived from it. Indeed, among the Umbaia and Gnanji tribes we can see at the present day how the change from local to hereditary totemism has been effected. These tribes, like the Arunta and Kaitish, believe that conception is caused by the entrance into a woman of a spirit who has lived in its disembodied state, along with other spirits of the same totem, at any one of a number of totem centres scattered over the country; but, unlike the Arunta and Kaitish, they almost always assign the father's totem to the child, even

though the infant may have given the first sign of life at a place haunted by spirits of a different totem. For example, the wife of a snake man may first feel her womb quickened at a tree haunted by spirits of goshawk people; yet the child will not be a goshawk but a snake, like its father. The theory by which the Umbaia and Gnanji reconcile these apparently inconsistent beliefs is that a spirit of the husband's totem follows the wife and enters into her wherever an opportunity offers, whereas spirits of other totems would not think of doing so. In the example supposed, a snake spirit is thought to have followed up the wife of the snake man and entered into her at the tree haunted by goshawk spirits, while the goshawk spirits would refuse to trespass, so to say, on a snake preserve by quartering themselves in the wife of a snake man. This theory clearly marks a transition from local to hereditary totemism in the paternal line. And precisely the same theory could, *MUTATIS MUTANDIS*, be employed to effect a change from local to hereditary totemism in the maternal line; it would only be necessary to suppose that a pregnant woman is always followed by a spirit of her own totem, which sooner or later effects a lodgement in her body. For example, a pregnant woman of the bee totem would always be followed by a bee spirit, which would enter into her wherever and whenever she felt her womb quickened, and so the child would be born of her own bee totem. Thus the local form of totemism, which obtains among the Arunta and Kaitish tribes, is older than the hereditary form, which is the ordinary type of totemism in Australia and

elsewhere, first, because it rests on far more archaic conceptions of society and of life; and, secondly, because both the hereditary kinds of totemism, the paternal and the maternal, can be derived from it, whereas it can hardly be derived from either of them.'

This argument appears to take for granted that the conception of primal ancestral spirits, perpetually reincarnated, is primitive. But, in fact, we seem to know it, among Australian tribes, only in these which have advanced to the possession of eight classes, and have made 'the great step in progress' (if it is a great step), of descent of the totem in the paternal line. The Urabunna, with female descent of the totem, have, it is true, the belief in reincarnation. But they intermarry with the Arunta, borrow their sacred stones, and practise the same advanced rites and ceremonies. The idea may thus have been borrowed. On the other hand, the more pristine tribes of the south-east, with two or four exogamous divisions, and with female descent of the totem, have no known trace of the doctrine of reincarnation (except as displayed by the Euahlayi), and have no doubt that the father is the cause of procreation, save in the case of the Euahlayi, who believe that the Moon and the Crow 'make' the new children.

It would thus appear that the central and northern belief in perpetual reincarnation of primal spirits is not primitive, yet the Arunta method of acquiring totems does not exist save by grace of this belief, PLUS the isolated belief in primal sacred stones.

I am obliged to differ from Mr. Frazer when he says that 'it is easy to see how hereditary totemism, either in the paternal or

in the maternal line, would be derived from' the Arunta belief and practice, whereas 'it is hardly possible that this peculiar form of local totemism [Arunta], with its implied ignorance of such a thing as paternity at all, could be derived from hereditary totemism.'

I do not know whether the other northern tribes share the Arunta nescience of procreation, or not. Whether they do or do not, it was as easy for them to explain all difficulties by a reconciling myth – a spirit of the husband's totem follows his wife – as for a white savant to frame an hypothesis. The Urabunna, with female descent of the totem, have quite another myth – to reconcile everything.

Nothing can be more easy. Supposing the Arunta to have begun, as in my theory, with hereditary totemism, the rise of their isolated belief in spirit-haunted sacred stones, encroached on and destroyed the hereditary character of their totemism. The belief in CHURINGA NANJA is an isolated freak, but it has done its work, while leaving traces of an earlier state of things, as we have shown, both among the Kaitish and Arunta.

If I am right in differing from such a master of many legions as the learned author of THE GOLDEN BOUGH, the irreligion of the Arunta and northern tribes (if these be really without religion) is the result of their form of speculation, wholly occupied by the idea of reincarnation, while the Arunta form of totemism is the consequence of an isolated fantasy about their peculiar sacred stones. Meanwhile the Euahlayi, as Mrs.

Parker proves, entertain, in a limited way, not elsewhere recorded in Australia, the belief in the reincarnation of the souls of uninitiated young people. They also, like the Arunta, recognise haunted trees and rocks, but the haunting spirits do not desire reincarnation, and are not ancestral. Spirits of the dead go to one or other abode of souls, to Baiame, or far from his presence to a place of pain. So limited is human fancy, that here, as in Beckford's picture of hell in VATHEK, each spirit eternally presses his hand against his side. Were this a Christian doctrine, the Euahlayi would be said to have borrowed it, but few will accuse them of plagiarising from Beckford. These myths, like all myths, are not consistent. Baiame may change a soul into a bird.

We may ask whether, with their limited belief in reincarnation, and with their haunted Minggah trees and rocks, the Euahlayi have set up a creed which might possibly develop into the northern faith, or whether they once held the northern faith, and have almost emerged from it. Without further information about intermediate tribes and their ideas on these matters, the question cannot be answered. We are also without data as to whether the nearly extinct southern coastal tribes evolved the All Father belief, and transmitted it to the Euahlayi, to some Queensland tribe, with their Mulkari, and even to the Kaitish, or whether the faith has been independently developed among the tribes with no matrimonial classes and the others. Conjecture is at present useless.

In one respect a discovery of Mrs. Parker's is unfavourable to

my theories. In **THE SECRET OF THE TOTEM** have shown that, when the names of the phratry divisions of the tribes can be interpreted, they prove to be names of animals, and I have shown how this may have come to be the case. But among the Euahlayi the phratry names mean 'light blood' and 'dark blood.' This, **PRIMA FACIE**, seems to favour the theory of the Rev. Mr. Mathews, in his **EAGLE HAWK AND CROW**, that two peoples, lighter and darker, after an age of war, made **CONNUBIUM** and marriage treaty, whence came the phratries. The same author might urge, if he pleased, that Eagle Hawk (about the colour of the peregrine) was chosen to represent 'light,' and Crow to represent 'dark'; while the phratry animals, White and Black Cockatoo, were selected, elsewhere, to represent the same contrast. But we need more information as to the meanings of other phratry names which have defied translation.

In many other things, as in the account of the **YUNBEAI** of the Euahlayi, their mode of removing the tabu on the totem in food, their magic, their 'multiplex totems,' their methods of hunting, their initiatory ceremonies, their highly moral lullabies, and the whole of their kindly life, Mrs. Parker's book appears to deserve a welcome from the few who care to study the ways of early men, 'the pit whence we were dug.' The Euahlayi are a sympathetic people, and have found a sympathetic chronicler.

A. LANG.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

The following pages are intended as a contribution to the study of the manners, customs, beliefs, and legends of the Aborigines of Australia. The area of my observation is mainly limited to the region occupied by the Euahlayi tribe of north-western New South Wales, who for twenty years were my neighbours on the Narran River. I have been acquainted since childhood with the natives, first in southern South Australia; next on my father's station on the Darling River, where I was saved by a native girl, when my sisters were drowned while bathing. I was intimate with the dispositions of the blacks, and was on friendly terms with them, before I began a regular attempt to inquire into their folklore and customary laws, at my husband's station on the Narran, due north of the Barwon River, the great affluent of the Murray River.

My tribe is a neighbour of that mentioned by Mr. Howitt as the 'Wollaroi,' 'Yualloroi,' or 'Yualaroi.' [Howitt, NATIVE TRIBES OF SOUTH-EAST AUSTRALIA, pp. 57, 467, 694, 769.] I spell the tribal name 'Euahlayi'; the accent is on the second syllable – 'You-ahl-ayi'; and the name is derived from the tribal word for the negative: EUAHL, or YOUAL, 'No,' as in the case of the Kamilaroi (Kamil, 'No'), and many other tribes.

Mr. Howitt regards these tribes as on the limits of what he calls the 'Four Sub-Class' system. The people, that is to say, have not only the division into two 'phratries,' or 'exogamous moieties,' intermarrying, but also the four 'Matrimonial Classes' further regulating marriage. These classes bear the Kamilaroi names, of unknown meaning, Ipai, Kumbo, Murri, and Kubbi; but the names of the two main divisions, or phratries, are not those of the Kamilaroi – DILBI and KUPATHIN.

The Euahlayi language, or dialect, is not identical with that of the great Kamilaroi tribe to their south-east, but is clearly allied with it, many names of animals being the same in both tongues. A few names of animals are shared with the Wir djuri speech, as MULLIAN, Eagle Hawk; Pelican, GOOLAYYAHLEE (Wir djuri, GULAIGULI). The term for the being called 'The All Father' by Mr. Howitt is also the term used by the Wir djuri and Kamilaroi, 'Baime' or 'Byamee.' The Euahlayi, however, possess myths, beliefs, and usages not recorded as extant among the Kamilaroi, but rather forming a link with the ideas of peoples dwelling much further west, such as the tribes, on Lake Eyre, and the southernmost Arunta of the centre. Thus, there is a limited and modified shape of the central and northern belief in reincarnation, and there is a great development of what are called by Mr. Howitt 'sub-totems,' which have been found most in a region of Northern Victoria, to the south of the Euahlayi. There is a belief in spirit – haunted trees, as among the Arunta, and there is a form of the Arunta myth of the 'Dream Time,' the

age of pristine evolution.

The Euahlayi thus present a mixture of ideas and usages which appears to be somewhat peculiar and deserving of closer study than it has received. Mr. Howitt himself refers to the tribe very seldom. It will be asked, 'How far have the Euahlayi been brought under the influence of missionaries, and of European ideas in general?'

The nearest missionary settlement was founded after we settled among the Euahlayi, and was distant about one hundred miles, at Brewarrina. None of my native informants had been at any time, to my knowledge, under the influence of missionaries. They all wore shirts, and almost all of them trousers, on occasion; and all, except the old men, my chief sources, were employed by white settlers. We conversed in a kind of LINGUA FRANCA. An informant, say Peter, would try to express himself in English, when he thought that I was not successful in following him in his own tongue. With Paddy, who had no English but a curse, I used two native women, one old, one younger, as interpreters, checking each other alternately. The younger natives themselves had lost the sense of some of the native words used by their elders, but the middle-aged interpreters were usually adequate. Occasionally there were disputes on linguistic points, when Paddy, a man already grey in 1845, would march off the scene, and need to be reconciled. They were on very good terms with me. They would exchange gifts with me: I might receive a carved weapon, and one of them some tobacco. The giving was not all

on my side, by any means.

My anthropological reading was scanty, but I was well acquainted with and believed in Mr. Herbert Spencer's 'Ghost theory' of the origin of religion in the worship of ancestral spirits. What I learned from the natives surprised me, and shook my faith in Mr. Spencer's theory, with which it seemed incompatible.

In hearing the old blacks tell their legends you notice a great difference between them as raconteurs – some tell the bare plot or feature of the legend, others give descriptive touches all through. If they are strangers to their audience, they get it over as quickly as possible in a half-contemptuous way, as if saying, 'What do you want to know such rubbish for?' But if they know you well, and know you really are interested, then they tell you the stories as they would tell them to one another, giving them a new life and adding considerably to their poetical expression.

CHAPTER II

THE ALL FATHER, BYAMEE

As throughout the chapters on the customary laws, mysteries, and legends of the Euahlayi, there occur frequent mentions of a superhuman though anthropomorphic being named Byamee (in Kamilaroi and Wir djuri 'Baiaame'), it is necessary to give a preliminary account of the beliefs entertained concerning him. The name Byamee (usually spelled Baiaame) occurs in Euahlayi, Kamilaroi, and Wir djuri; 'the Wir djuri language is spoken over a greater extent of territory than any other tongue in New South Wales.' [R. H. Mathews, J. A. I., vol. xxxiv. p. 284.] The word occurs in the Rev. Mr. Ridley's GURRE KAMILAROI, an illustrated manual of Biblical instruction for the education of the Kamilaroi: Mr. Ridley translated our 'God' by 'Baiaame.' He supposed that native term, which he found and did not introduce, to be a derivative from the verb BAIA, or BIAI, 'to make.' Literally, however, at least in Euahlayi, the word BYAMEE means 'great one.' In its sense as the name of the All Father it is not supposed to be used by women or by the uninitiated. If it is necessary to speak to them of Byamee, he is called Boyjerh, which means Father, just as in the Theddora tribe the women speak of Darramulun as PAPANG, 'Father.' [Howitt, Native Tribes of South-East Australia, p. 493.] Among the

Euahlayi both women and the uninitiated use byamee, the adjective for 'great,' in ordinary talk, though the more usual adjective answering to 'great' is BOOROOL, which occurs in Kamilaroi as well as in Euahlayi. The verb baia or biai, to make or shape, whence Mr. Ridley derived Baiame, is not known to me in Euahlayi. Wir djuri has BAI, a footmark, and Byamee left footmarks on the rocks, but that is probably a chance coincidence.

I was first told of Byamee, in whispers, by a very old native, Yudtha Dulleebah (Bald Head), said to have been already grey haired when Sir Thomas Mitchell discovered the Narran in 1846. My informant said that he was instructed as to Byamee in his first Boorah, or initiation. If he was early grey, say at thirty, in 1846, that takes his initiation back to 1830, when, as a matter of fact, we have contemporary evidence to the belief in Byamee, who is not of missionary importation, though after 1856 Christian ideas may, through Mr. Ridley's book, have been attached to his name by educated Kamilaroi. But he was a worshipful being, revealed in the mysteries, long before missionaries came, as all my informants aver.

There has, indeed, been much dispute as to whether the Aborigines of Australia have any idea, or germ of an idea, of a God; anything more than vague beliefs about unattached spirits, mainly mischievous, who might be propitiated or scared away. Mr. Huxley maintained this view, as did Mr. Herbert Spencer. [ECCLESIASTICAL INSTITUTIONS, p. 674.] Both of these

authors, who have great influence on popular opinion, omitted to notice the contradictory statement of Waitz, published in 1872. He credited the natives, in some regions, with belief in, and dances performed in honour of, a 'Good Being,' and denied that the belief and rites were the result of European influence. [Waitz, ANTHROPOLOGIE DER NATUR – V(TM)LKER, vol. vi. pp. 796-798. Leipzig, 1872.] Mr. Tylor, admitting to some extent that the belief now exists, attributed it in part to the influence of missionaries and of white settlers. [Journal, Anthropological Institute, vol. xxi. p. 292 ET SEQ.] 'Baime,' he held, was a word of missionary manufacture, introduced about 1830-1840. This opinion was controverted by Mr. Lang, [MAGIC AND RELIGION, p. 25 SQ. MYTH, RITUAL, AND RELIGION, vol. ii. chap. xii., 1899.] and by Mr. N. W. Thomas. Mr. Thomas [MAN, 1905, No. 28.] has produced the evidence of Henderson, writing in 1829-1830, for the belief in 'Piame' or Byamee, or Baime. [OBSERVATIONS AN THE COLONIES OF NEW SOUTH WALES AND VAN DIEMAN'S LAND, p. 147.]

In 1904 Mr. Howitt gave a great mass of evidence for the belief in what he calls an 'All Father': in many dialects styled by various names meaning 'Our Father,' dwelling in or above the sky, and often receiving the souls of blacks who have been 'good.' These ideas are not derived, Mr. Howitt holds, from Europeans, or developed out of ancestor-worship, which does not exist in the tribes. The belief is concealed from women, but communicated to lads at their initiation. [Howitt, NATIVE

TRIBES OF SOUTH-EAST AUSTRALIA, pp. 488-508.] The belief, in favourable circumstances, might develop, Mr. Howitt thinks, into what he speaks of as a 'religion,' a 'recognised religion.' Without asking how 'a recognised religion' is to be defined, I shall merely tell what I have gathered as to the belief in Byamee among the Euahlayi.

It may seem strange that I should know anything about a belief carefully kept from women, but I have even been privileged to hear 'Byamee's Song,' which only the fully initiated may sing; an old black, as will later appear, did chant this old lay, now no longer understood, to myself and my husband. Moreover, the women of the Euahlayi have some knowledge of, and some means of, mystic access to Byamee, though they call him by another name.

Byamee, in the first place, is to the Euahlayi what the 'Alcheringa' or 'Dream time' is to the Arunta. Asked for the reason why of anything, the Arunta answer, 'It was so in the Alcheringa.' Our tribe have a subsidiary myth corresponding to that of the Alcheringa. There was an age, in their opinion, when only birds and beasts were on earth; but a colossal man and two women came from the remote north-east, changed birds and beasts into men and women, made other folk of clay or stone, taught them everything, and left laws for their guidance, then returned whence they came. This is a kind of 'Alcheringa' myth, but whether this colossal man was Byamee or not, our tribe give, as the final answer to any question about the origin of customs,

'Because Byamee say so.' Byamee declared his will, and that was and is enough for his children. At the Boorah, or initiatory ceremonies, he is proclaimed as 'Father of All, whose laws the tribes are now obeying.' Byamee, at least in one myth (told also by the Wir djuri), is the original source of all totems, and of the law that people of the same totem may not intermarry, 'however far apart their hunting-grounds.' I heard first in a legend, then received confirmation from all old blacks, that Byamee had a totem name for every part of his body, even to a different one for each finger and toe. And when he was passing on to fresh fields, he gave each kinship of the tribe he was leaving one of his totems. The usual version is, that to such as were metamorphosed from birds and animals he gave as totem the animal or whatever it was from which they were evolved. But no one dreams of claiming Byamee as a relation belonging to one clan; he is one apart and yet the father of all, even as Birrahgnooloo is mother of all and not related to any one clan; Cunnumbeillee, his other wife, had only one totem.

Certainly woman is given a high place in their sacred lore. The chief wife of Byamee, Birrahgnooloo, is claimed as the mother of all, for she, like him, had a totem for each part of her body; no one totem can claim her, but all do.

Mother of all, though mother of none in particular, she was not to be vulgarised by ordinary domestic relations, For those purposes Cunnumbeillee was at hand, as a bearer of children and a caterer. Yet it was Birrahgnooloo whom Byamee best loved and

made his companion, giving her power and position which no other held. She too, like him, is partially crystallised in the sky-camp, where they are together; the upper parts of their bodies are as on earth; to her, those who want floods go, and when willing to grant their requests, she bids Cunnumbeillee start the flood-ball of flood rolling down the mountains. Cunnumbeillee, as has been said, had but one totem which her children derived from her.

Byamee is the originator of things less archaic and important than totemism. There is a large stone fish-trap at Brewarrina, on the Barwan River. It is said to have been made by Byamee and his gigantic sons, just as later Greece attributed the walls of Tiryns to the Cyclops, or as Glasgow Cathedral has been explained in legend as the work of the Picts. Byamee also established the rule that there should be a common camping-ground for the various tribes, where, during the fishing festival, peace should be strictly kept, all meeting to enjoy the fish, and do their share towards preserving the fisheries.

Byamee still exists. I have been told by an old native, as will be shown later, that prayers for the souls of the dead used to be addressed to Byamee at funerals; certainly not a practice derived from Protestant missionaries.

Byamee is supposed to listen to the cry of an orphan for rain. Such an one has but to run out when the clouds are overhead, and, looking at the sky, call aloud

'Gullee boorboor. Gullee boorboor.'

'Water come down. Water come down.'

Or should it be raining too much, the last possible child of a woman can stop it by burning Midjeer wood.

Bootha told me after one rain that she had sent one of her tutelary spirits to tell Boyjerh – Byamee is called by women and children Boyjerh – that the country wanted rain. In answer he had taken up a handful of crystal pebbles and thrown them from the sky down into the water in a stone basin on the top of the sacred mountain; as the pebbles fell in, the water splashed up into the clouds above, whence it descended as the desired rain.

It is told to me, that at some initiatory rites the oldest medicine man, or Wirreenun, present addresses a prayer to Byamee, asking him to give them long life, as they have kept his law.

The tribesmen do not profess to pray, or to have prayed, to Byamee on any occasions except at funerals, and at the conclusion of the Boorah.

As for Byamee's relation to ethics, it will be stated in the chapter on the tribal ceremonies, while the stories as to the rewards and punishments of the future life will be given in their place. Baiame's troubles with a kind of disobedient deputy, Darramulun, will also be narrated: the myth is current, too, among the Wir djuri tribe.

Other particulars about Byamee will occur in the course of later chapters: here I have tried to give a general summary of the native beliefs. The reader may interpret them in his own fashion, and may decide as to whether the beliefs do or do not indicate a kind of 'religion,' whether 'a recognised religion' or not. There is

necessarily, of course, an absence of temples and of priests, and I have found no trace or vestige of sacrifice. What may be said on the affirmative side as to the religious aspect of the belief, the reader can supply from the summary of facts. Other potent beings occur in native myth, as we shall show, but there appears to exist between them and mankind no relation of affection, reverence, or duty, as in the case of Byamee.

Here it seems necessary to advert to a remark of Mr. Howitt's which appears to be erroneous. He says 'that part of Australia which I have indicated as the habitat of that belief' (namely, in an All Father),' is also the area where there has been the advance from group marriage to individual marriage; from descent in the female line to that in the male line; where the primitive organisation under the class system has been more or less replaced by an organisation based on locality; in fact, where these advances have been made to which I have more than once drawn attention. '[Howitt, NATIVE TRIBES OF SOUTH-EAST AUSTRALIA, p. 500.]

Mr. Howitt forgets that he himself attributes the early system of descent through women, and also the belief in an All Father (Nurelli), to the Wiimbaio tribe [IBID. p. 489] to the Wotjobaluk tribe, [NATIVE TRIBES OF SOUTH-EAST AUSTRALIA, pp. 120, 490.] to the Kamilaroi, to the Ta-Ta-thi, [IBID. p. 494] while female descent and the belief in Baiame mark the Euahlayi and Wir djuri. [JOURNAL, ANTHROPOLOGICAL INSTITUTE, XXV., p. 297.]

These tribes cover an enormous area of country, and, though they have not advanced to male kinship, they all possess the belief in an All Father. That belief does not appear to be in any way associated with advance in social organisation, for Messrs. Spencer and Gillen cannot find a trace of it in more than one of the central and northern tribes, which have male kinship, and a kind of local self-government. On the other hand, it does occur among southern tribes, like the Kurnai, which have advanced almost altogether out of totemism.

In short, we have tribes with female descent, such as the Dieri and Urabunna, to whom all knowledge of an All Father is denied. We have many large and important tribes with female descent who certainly believe in an All Father. We have tribes of the highest social advancement who are said to show no vestige of the belief, and we have tribes also socially advanced who hold the belief with great vigour. In these circumstances, authenticated by Mr. Howitt himself, it is impossible to accept the theory that belief in an All Father is only reached in the course of such advance to a higher social organisation as is made by tribes who reckon descent in the male line.

CHAPTER III

RELATIONSHIPS AND TOTEMS

Some savants question the intellectual ability of the blacks because they have not elaborate systems of numeration and notation, which in their life were quite unneeded. Such as were needed were supplied. They are often incorporate in one word-noun and qualifying numerical adjective, as for example —

Gundooee A SOLITARY EMU

Booloowah TWO EMUS

Oogle oogle FOUR EMUS

Gayyahnai FIVE OR SIX EMUS

Gonurrun FOURTEEN OR FIFTEEN EMUS.

I fancy the brains that could have elaborated their marriage rules were capable of workaday arithmetic if necessary, and few indeed of us know our family trees as the blacks know theirs.

Even the smallest black child who can talk seems full of knowledge as to all his relations, animate and inanimate, the marriage taboos, and the rest of their complicated system.

The first division among this tribe is a blood distinction (I phratries'): —

Gwaigulleeah LIGHT BLOODED

Gwaimudthen DARK BLOODED.

This distinction is not confined to the human beings of

the tribe, who must be of one or the other, but there are the Gwaigulleeah and Gwaimudthen divisions in all things. The first and chief division in our tribe, as regards customary marriage law, is the partition of all tribes-folk into these 'phratries,' or 'exogamous moieties.' While in most Australian tribes the meanings of the names of phratries are lost, where the meanings are known they are usually names of animals – Eagle, Hawk, and Crow, White Cockatoo and Black Cockatoo, and so forth. Among the great Kamilaroi tribe, akin in speech to the Euahlayi, the names of phratries, DILBI and KUPATHIN, are of unknown significance. The Euahlayi names, we have seen, are Gwaigulleeah, Light blooded, and Gwaimudthen, Dark blooded.

The origin of this division is said to be the fact that the original ancestors were, on the one side, a red race coming from the west, the Gwaigulleeah; on the other, a dark race coming from the east.

A Gwaigulleeah may under no circumstances marry a Gwaigulleeah; he or she must mate with a Gwaimudthen. This rule has no exception. A child belongs to the same phratry as its mother.

The next name of connection is local, based on belonging to one country or hunting-ground; this name a child takes from its mother wherever it may happen to be born. Any one who is called a Noongahburrah belongs to the Noongah-Kurrajong country; Ghurreeburrah to the orchid country; Mirriehburrah, poligonum country; Bibbilah, Bibbil country, and so on. This division, not of blood relationship, carries no independent marriage restriction,

but keeps up a feeling equivalent to Scotch, Irish, or English, and is counted by the blacks as 'relationship,' but not sufficiently so to bar marriage.

The next division is the name in common for all daughters, or all sons of one family of sisters. The daughters take the name from their maternal grandmother, the sons from their maternal great-uncle.

Of these divisions, called I Matrimonial Classes, there are four for each sex, bearing the same names as among the Kamilaroi. The names are —

Masculine Kumbo BROTHER AND SISTER

Feminine, Bootha

Masculine Murree BROTHER AND SISTER

Feminine, Matha

Masculine Hippi BROTHER AND SISTER

Feminine, Hippitha

Masculine Kubbee BROTHER AND SISTER

Feminine, Kubbootha

The children of Bootha will be

Masculine Hippi BROTHER AND SISTER

Feminine, Hippitha

The children of Matha will be

Masculine Kubbee BROTHER AND SISTER

Feminine, Kubbootha

The children of Hippitha will be

Masculine Kumbo BROTHER AND SISTER

Feminine, Bootha

The children of Kubbootha will be

Masculine Murree BROTHER AND SISTER

Feminine, Matha

Thus, you see, they take, if girls, their grandmother's and her sisters' 'class' names in common; if boys, the 'class' name of their grandmother's brothers.

Bootha can only marry Murree,

Matha can only marry Kumbo,

Hippitha can only marry Kubbee,

Kubbootha can only marry Hippie.

Both men and women are often addressed by these names when spoken to.

A PROPOS of names, a child is never called at night by the same name as in the daytime, lest the 'devils' hear it and entice him away.

Names are made for the newly born according to circumstances; a girl born under a Dheal tree, for example, was called Dheala. Any incident happening at the time of birth may gain a child a name, such as a particular lizard passing. Two of my black maids were called after lizards in that way: Barahgurree and Bogginbinnia.

Nimmaylee is a porcupine with the spines coming; such an one having been brought to the camp just as a girl was born, she became Nimmaylee.

The mothers, with native politeness, ask you to give their

children English names, but much more often use in familiar conversation either the Kumbo Bootha names, or others derived from place of birth, from some circumstance connected with it, a child's mispronunciation of a word, some peculiarity noticed in the child, or still more often they call each other by the name proclaiming the degree of relationship.

For example, a girl calls the daughters of her mother and of her aunts alike sisters.

Boahdee	SISTER
Wambaneah	FULL BROTHER
Dayadee	HALF BROTHER
Gurrooghee	UNCLE
Wulgundee	UNCLE'S WIFE
Kummean	SISTER'S SISTER
Numbardee	MOTHER
Numbardee	MOTHER'S SISTER
Beealahdee	FATHER
Beealahdee	MOTHER'S SISTERS' HUSBANDS
Gnahgnahdee	GRANDMOTHER ON FATHER'S SIDE
Bargie	GRANDMOTHER ON MOTHER'S SIDE
Dadadee	GRANDFATHER ON MOTHER'S SIDE
Gurroomi	A SON-IN-LAW, OR ONE WHO COULD BE A SON-IN-LAW
Goonoahdee	A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW, OR ONE WHO COULD BE A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW
Gooleerh	HUSBAND OR WIFE, OR ONE WHO MIGHT BE SO.

So relationships are always kept in their memories by being daily used as names. There are other general names, too, such as —

Mullayerh	A TEMPORARY MATE OR COMPANION
Moothie	A FRIEND OF CHILDHOOD IN AFTER LIFE
Doore-cothai	A LOVER
Dillahga	AN ELDERLY MAN OF THE SAME TOTEM
Tuckandee	A YOUNG MAN OF THE SAME TOTEM, RECKONED AS A SORT OF BROTHER.

Another list of names used ordinarily is —

Boothan	LAST POSSIBLE CHILD OF A WOMAN
Mahmee	OLD WOMAN
Beewun	MOTHERLESS GIRL
Gowun	FATHERLESS GIRL
Yumbui	FATHERLESS BOY
Moogul	ONLY CHILD.

Those of the same totem are reckoned as brothers and sisters, so cannot intermarry. 'Boyjerh' relations, as those on the father's side are called, are not so important as on the mother's side, but are still recognised.

Now for the great Dhe, or totem system, by some called Mah, but Dhe, is the more correct.

Dinewan, or emu, is a totem, and has amongst its multiplex totems' or 'sub-totems' —

Goodoo	OR CODFISH
Gumbarl	SILVER BREAM
Inga	CRAYFISH
Boomool	SHRIMPS
Gowargay	WATER EMU SPIRIT
Moograbah	BIG BLACK-AND-WHITE MAGPIE
Boolorl	LITTLE NIGHT OWL
Byahmul	BLACK SWAN
Eerin	A LITTLE NIGHT OWL
Beerwon	A BIRD LIKE A SWALLOW
Dulloorah	THE MANNA-BRINGING BIRDS
Bunnyal	FLIES
Dheal	SACRED FIRE
Gidya	AN ACACIA
Yaraan	AN EUCALYPTUS
Deenyi	IRONBARK
Guatha	QUANDONG
Goodooroo	RIVER BOX
Mirieh	POLYGONUM
Yarragerh	THE NORTH-EAST WIND
Guie	TREE-OWENIA ACIDULA
Niune	WILD MELON
Binnamayah	BIG SALTBUCH.

Bohrah, the kangaroo, is another totem, and is considered somewhat akin to Dinewan. For example, in a quarrel between, say, the Bohrah totem and the Beewee, the Dinewan would take the part of the former rather than the latter.

Amongst the multiplex totems of Bohrah are —

Goolahwilleel	TOPKNOT PIGEONS
Boogoodoogadah	THE RAIN-BIRD
Gilah	PINK-BREASTED PARROT
Quarrian	YELLOW AND RED BREASTED GREY PARROT
Buln Buln	GREEN PARROT
Gidgerregah	SMALL GREEN PARROT
Cocklerina	A ROSE AND YELLOW CRESTED WHILE COCKATOO
Youayah	FROGS
Guiggahboorool	BIGGEST ANT-BEDS
Dunnia	WATTLE TREE
Mulga	AN ACACIA
Gnoel	SANDALWOOD
Brigalow	AN ACACIA
Yarragerh	NORTH-EAST WIND, SAME AS DINEWAN'S.

All clouds, lightning, thunder, and rain that is not blown up by the wind of another totem, belong to Bohrah.

Beewee, brown and yellow Iguana, numerically a very powerful totem, has for multiplex totems —

Gai-gai	CATFISH
Curreequinquin	BUTCHER-BIRD
Gougourgahgah	LAUGHING-JACKASS
Deenbi	DIVERS
Birroo Birroo	SAND BUILDERS
Deegeenboyah	SOLDIER-BIRD
Weedah	BOWER-BIRD
Mooregoo Mooregoo	BLACK IBIS
Booloon	WHITE CRANE
Noodulnoodul	WHISTLING DUCKS
Goborra	STARS
Gulghureer	PINK LIZARD
Goori	PINE
Talingerh	NATIVE FUCHSIA
Guiebet	NATIVE PASSION FRUIT
Boonburr	POISON TREE
Gungooday	STOCKMAN'S WOOD
Guddeeboondoo	BITTER BARK
Boorgoolbean or Moolowerh	A SHRUB WITH CREAMY BLOSSOMS
Yarragerh	SPRING WIND
Muddernwurgerh	WEST WIND.

Those with whom the Beewee shares the winds he counts as relations. It is the Beewees of the Gwaimudthen, or dark blood, who own Yarragerh (spring wind); the light-blooded own Mudderwurgerh (west wind).

Another totem is Gouyou, or Bandicoot. The animal has disappeared from the Narran district, but the totem tribe is still strong, though not so numerous as either the Beewees or Dinewans.

Multiplex totems of Gouyou —

Wayarnberh	TURTLE
Mungghee	MUSSELS
Piggiebillah	PORCUPINE
Dayahminnah	SMALL CARPET SNAKE
Mungun	LARGE CARPET SNAKE
Douyouie	ANTS
Moondoo	WASPS
Murgahmuggui	SPIDER
Bayarh	GREEN-HEAD ANTS
Mubboo	BEEFWOOD
Coolabah	EUCALYPTUS, FLOODED BOX
Bingahwingul	NEEDLEBUSH
Mayarnah	STONES
Gheeger Gheeger	COLD WEST WIND
Gibbon	YAM
Boondooc	KINGFISHER
Durnerh brown	PIGEON
Guineeboo	REDBREASTS
Munggheewurraywurraymul	SEAGULLS
Guiggah ordinary	ANT-BEDS.

Next we take Doolungaiyah, or Bilber, commonly known as Bilby, a large species of rat the size of a small rabbit, like which it burrows; almost died out now. The totem clan are very few here too, so it is difficult to learn much as to their multiplex totems, amongst which, however, are —

Oo boon	BLUE-TONGUED LIZARD
Goomblegubbon	PLAINS TURKEY OR BUSTARD
Boothagullagulla	BIRD LIKE SEAGULL
Tekel Barain	LARGE WHITE AMARYLLIS.

Douyou, black snake, totem claims —

Noongah	KURRAJONG-STERCULIA
Carbeen	AN EUCALYPTUS
Booroerh	BULRUSHES
Gargoоло	YAMS
Yhi	THE SUN (FEMININE)
Gunyahmoo	THE EAST WIND
Kurraah	CROCODILE
Wa-ah	SHELLS
Douyougurrah	EARTH-WORMS
Deereere	WILLY WAGTAIL
Burrengeen	JEEWEE
Bouyoudoorunnillee	GREY CRANES
Ouyan	CURLEW
Bouyougah	CENTIPEDES
Bubburr	BIG SNAKE
Woggoon	SCRUB TURKEY
Beeargah	CRANE
Waggestmul	KIND OF RAT
Wi	SMALL FISH
Millan	SMALL WATER-YAM-SOURTOP

Moodai, or opossum, another totem, claims —

Bibbil	POPULAR-LEAVED GUM
Bumble	CAPPARIS MITCHELLIANNI
Birah	WHITEWOOD
Beebuyer	YELLOW FLOWERING BROOM
Illay	HOP BUSH
Mirrie	WILD CURRANT BUSH
Mooregoo	SWAMP OAK-BELAH
Mungoongarlee	LARGEST IGUANA
Mouyi	WHITE COCKATOO
Beeleer	BLACK COCKATOO
Wungghee	WHITE NIGHT OWL
Mooregoo	MOPOKE
Narahdarn	BAT
Bahloo	MOON
Euloowirrie	RAINBOW
Bibbee	WOODPECKER
Billai	CRIMSON WING PARROT
Durrahgeegin	GREEN FROG.

Maira, a paddy melon, claims as multiplex totems —

Wahn	THE CROW
Mullyan	THE EAGLE-HAWK
Gooboothoo	DOVES
Goolayyalilee	FELICAN
Oonaywah	BLACK DIVER
Gunundar	WHILE DIVER
Birriebungar	SMALL DIVER
Mounin	MOSQUITO
Mouninguggahgui	MOSQUITO BIRD
Bullah Bullah	BUTTERFLIES
Tucki	A KIND OF BREAM
Beewerh	BONY BREAM
Gulbarlee	SHINGLEBACK LIZARD
Budtha	ROSEWOOD
Goodoogah	YALLI
Wayarah	WILD GRAPES
Garwah	RIVERS
Gooroongoodilbaydilbay	SOUTH WIND.

It is said a Maira will never be drowned, for the rivers are a sub-totem of theirs; but I notice they nevertheless learn to swim.

Yubbah, carpet snake, as a kin has almost disappeared, only a few members remaining to claim

Mungahran

HAWK.

Burrahwahn, a big sandhill rat, now extinct here, claims —

Mien	DINGO
Dalleerin	A LIZARD
Gaengaen	WILD LIME
Willerhderh, or	
Douran Douran	NORTH WIND
Bralgah	NATIVE COMPANION.

Buckandee, native cat kin, claim —

Buggila
Bean
Bunbundooclocey
Dunnee Bunbun
Dooroongul

LEOPARD WOOD
MYALL
A LITTLE BROWN BIRD
A VERY LARGE GREEN PARROT
HAIRY CATERPILLAR.

Amongst other totems were once the Bralgah, Native Companion, and Dibbee, a sort of sandpiper, but their kins are quite extinct as far as our blacks are concerned; the birds themselves are still plentiful. The Bralgah birds have a Boorah ground at the back of our old horse-paddock, a smooth, well-beaten circle, where they dance the grotesque dances peculiar to them, which are really most amusing to watch, somewhat like a set of kitchen lancers into which some dignified dames have got by mistake, and a curious mixture is the dance of dignity and romping.

The totem kins numerically strongest with us were the Dinewans, Beewees, Bohrahs, and Gouyous. Further back in the country, they tell me, the crow, the eaglehawk, and the bees were original totems, not multiplex ones, as with us.

It may be as well for those interested in the marriage law puzzles to state that Dinewans, Bohrahs, Douyous, and Doolungayers are always

Kumbo
Bootha

Hippi
Hippitha.

That Moodai, Gouyou, Beewee, Maira, Yubbah are always

Our blacks may and do eat their hereditary totems, if so desirous, with no ill effects to themselves, either real or imaginary; their totem names they take from their mothers. They may, in fact, in any way use their totems, but never abuse them. A Beewee, for example, may kill, or see another kill, and eat or use a Beewee, or one of its multiplex totems, and show no sign of sorrow or anger, but should any one speak evil of the Beewee, or of any of its multiplex totems, there will be a quarrel.

There will likewise be a quarrel if any one dares to mimic a totem, either by drawing one, except at Boorahs, or imitating it in any way.

There are members of the tribes, principally wizards, or men intended to be such, who are given an individual totem called Yunbeai. This they must never eat or they will die. Any injury to his yunbeai hurts the man himself. In danger he has the power to assume the shape of his yunbeai, which of course is a great assistance to him, especially in legendary lore; but, on the other hand, a yunbeai is almost a Heel of Achilles to a wirreenun (see the chapter on Medicine and Magic).

Women are given a yunbeai too, sometimes. One girl had a yunbeai given her as a child, and she was to be brought up as a witch, but she caught rheumatic fever which left her with St.

Vitus's dance. The yunbeai during one of her bad attacks jumped out of her, and she lost her chance of witchery. One old fellow told me once that when he was going to a public-house he took a miniature form of his yunbeai, which was the Kurrea – crocodile – out of himself and put it safety in a bottle of water, in case by any chance he got drunk, and an enemy, knowing his yunbeai, coaxed it away. I wanted to see that yunbeai in a bottle, but never succeeded.

The differences between the hereditary totem or Dhe, inherited from the mother, and the individual totem or yunbeai, acquired by chance, are these: Food restrictions do not affect the totem, but marriage restrictions do; the yunbeai has no marriage restrictions; a man having an opossum for yunbeai may marry a woman having the same either as her yunbeai or hereditary totem, other things being in order, but under no circumstances must a yunbeai be eaten by its possessor.

The yunbeai is a sort of alter ego; a man's spirit is in his yunbeai, and his yunbeai's spirit in him.

A Minggah, or spirit-haunted tree of an individual, usually chosen from amongst a man's multiplex totems, is another source of danger to him, as also a help.

As Mr. Canton says: 'What singular threads of superstition bind the ends of the earth together! In an old German story a pair of lovers about to part chose each a tree, and by the tree of the absent one was the one left to know of his wellbeing or the reverse. In time his tree died, and she, hearing no news of him,

pined away, her tree withering with her, and both dying at the same time.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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