

“The Colonisation of Australia prior to European Settlement”

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The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind.

The Tempest IV, i, 148.

Shakespeare:

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If I have done one small thing it is because I have sat at the feet of Colossi
- Diogenes

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ABSTRACT

This thesis presents a view of multiple human contacts with Australia, using a variety of data from the literature; linguistic, ethnographic, geographic, physical anthropology and art history. It will be shown that successive groups of people arrived in Australia before its settlement by Europeans. These people made their presence felt in various ways, which have been considered.

Some in ancient and later times may have arrived from Africa, perhaps being blown off course and carried by the currents and winds of the Indian Ocean. Later migrations came from Asia, and finally technologically advanced peoples of Indonesia and China came to Australia. Some of these people left artefacts, practices and language that became part of some Aboriginal languages and some religious beliefs and practice, along with some physical biological traces.

The peoples named "Aborigines" by European settlers were a diverse set of groups with a diverse set of physical and cultural influences. In particular the Batak people of Sumatra over a period of time contributed a large component of these diverse influences.

INTRODUCTION

A hypothesis considered here is that Australia has been settled many times in the past. The evidence is found all over Australia and in parts of the East. In a number of instances the evidence has not been previously researched in an Australian context, raising questions which warrant further research.

A number of arguments support this hypothesis and the thesis presents an outline of the general movements of peoples: what is known of the peoples who came, settled and left, and of those who stayed. A view of the Indian Ocean rim as a united populated territory is presented. The several waves of arrivals are traced, beginning with an account of the mythical Baijini of Arnhem Land and progressing through to evidence of Sumatran settlement.

The thesis explores published evidence of a succession of peoples who may have earlier come to Australia. It draws on the work of Bonwick, Birdsell, Wood Jones and others. Stone collections, stone buildings and other artefacts indicating the presence of various peoples in Australia in the past, and various historical records, are discussed. The chapters set out, in turn, the available evidence for each arrival to the final settlement by the British, which is briefly touched on.

Because this thesis suggests alternatives to what is accepted about the first peoples inhabiting Australia, the "Out of Africa" thesis will be mentioned briefly in this introduction. This theory has been accepted for a number of years to explain migrations from Africa to other destinations including Australia. A possible survival route is suggested out of Africa to the North West Coast of Australia (Appendix 6) based on a study of relevant waterways, oceans, coastal depths, continental shelves and land-fall between possible destinations.

Beginning with the finding of Dubois' "man-like ape", *Pithecanthropus* (now *Homo erectus*) in Java the idea of Asia as a potential source for migrations to Australia has strengthened. Recently, renewed focus on Asia has been stimulated by the recent finding of a small, controversial pygmy species, *Homo floresiensis*, at Liang Bua on Flores (Morwood et al. 2005, Jacobs et al. 2006).

A focus of this study is the work of two researchers, James Bonwick (1873) and Joseph Birdsell (1993). Both claim autochthonic occupation of Australia for the pygmy peoples and considered them one and the same people, the only difference being their point of entry into Australia. Bonwick proposed that the Tasmanians and the Buandik were both earlier migrants from the extreme southern tip of Africa. He suggested the Tasmanians and Buandik were Bushman type people who had entered the extreme tip of Western Australia as a result of an ancient oceanic catastrophe which left dry paths. Although his work was done well over a century ago and has long been overlooked, Bonwick was a keen observer and is, in fact, almost our only source of information about the appearance and culture of peoples who have either ceased to exist or have changed out of all recognition, and it is time to take a new look at what he said.

Joseph Birdsell's Tri-Hybrid Theory described three major waves of ancient migration which, he claimed came from southeastern Asia. He suggested the original Australians "reached their ultimate homeland" in the late Pleistocene (1993:22). He used his massive study of physical traits (1993) to test this theory. This thesis will not deal particularly with the biological characteristics of indigenous people of Australia, but with other instances of evidence of arrival by migration.

According to Yolngu history the Baijini were the first people who settled in Australia, growing rice and building houses. Many visitors came and left – including the Macassans who left their influence on the art and culture of the Yolngu. Others too settled, among them the Sumatran Batak, in the Northern area and the Kimberleys. The story of this group leads into the final section of this thesis which deals with the Wandjina paintings of the Kimberleys. This study draws attention to possible external contacts implicated in the Wandjinas.

It could be said there is one over-arching motif running constantly through this thesis. Over time Wood Jones's "lines of formed stones" have been the subject of inquiry and myth. These stones obviously served an important purpose; transport of such massive stones needs many men. Photographs record that hundreds of men moved similar stones in Sumatra (Appendix 1). Wood Jones (1926) states that collections of formed and unformed stones are not uncommon in Australia but the meaning of these collections is by no means clear and explanations vary.

The thesis discusses these collections as evidence of settlement. Wood Jones was one of the first seriously to suggest that Australia may have had settlements of people other than the ancestors of the main present-day Aboriginal population, even beyond living memory. The thesis also reinforces the conclusion that the Australian continent was not, at settlement, *Terra Nullius*.

Wood Jones's stones may be part of a remnant of religious practices of Batak people in Australia. This theme recalls Perry (1926) in "Children of the Sun": "by the time the Archaic Age had reached Australia [the Australian Aboriginal] culture was already in decline". The Batak culture and religion was one of the numerous contributors to indigenous culture.

Gamble (1993) argues the world's pre-history is not only concerned with how the world is colonized but with the commonality of the "mosaic" of humanity, and is to be seen as a "Global Village" (paraphrased Gamble, 1993). This thesis will exemplify his view: many claims have been made of foreign visitors to Australian shores, and some are quite without foundation, but the evidence for others seems more substantial – humanity is indeed a Global Village.

CHAPTER 1

The Pygmy people of Australia

This chapter deals with the work of two researchers, one 19th century, the other much more recent. One is James Bonwick F.R.G.S., an oceanographic researcher and the little known author of a volume called "The Daily Life and Origins of the Tasmanians" (1873) and the other is Joseph Birdsell (1993). Both these researchers claim autochthonic occupation of Australia by the pygmy peoples and considered them one and the same people, the only difference being their point of entry into Australia.

In September 1803 a lone researcher reported to a Dr. Carroll, a medical practitioner of the period and the founding editor of the infant Journal of Anthropology in England, that different peoples had entered the continent over time. The informant (Appendix 2) advised that the first to enter Australia were from the locality of the Indian Ocean and were the very short Negritos, 'their bodies covered with woolly hair'. They entered by way of the Gulf of Carpentaria.

In 1873 oceanographer James Bonwick hypothesized that what he called "a complete circlet of land" may have existed in the Southern temperate regions of the Earth, and that during the Pleistocene interglacial periods, land bridges may have provided pathways for the races that surrounded the Indian Ocean.

He held that such pathways could have allowed the Bushmen and Hottentots whom Bonwick said "so closely resembled the Tasmanians" to cross from South Africa to Australia.

In putting forward his thesis he drew on his study of world ocean floor charts to arrive at the conclusion that there had been in an ancient period a large Southern Continent, now sunken.

Professor Martin Williams (personal communication) of the University of Adelaide suggested that if Bonwick's "complete circlet of land" had ever existed in the southern temperate regions of the Earth it would have long predated modern man. If his specific geological scenario no longer holds, Bonwick's hypothesis that Australia was inhabited by Pygmies has been revived more than once, in most detail by Birdsell who referred to a putative early Pygmy population as Barrineans and proposed that they had been displaced from most of the continent to the south (Tasmania) and the northeast (the Atherton Tablelands).

Although of much more limited scope than envisaged by Bonwick, there were indeed dry paths in the Indian Ocean at different periods, certainly at a later date, closer to the date posited by Bonwick's hypothesis. The existence of dry paths was first supported by the work of Medlicott and Blanford in their Manual of the Geology of India, chiefly compiled from their geological survey observations of 1879. This is an extensive survey of the coast of India and along the coast of East Africa. Medlicott and Blanford found that a dry path had existed in ancient times along the entire east coast of Africa ending at Klasies River mouth: when sea levels were low (at the time of the Ice Ages in the northern hemisphere) large

areas of continental shelf were exposed. People could still not have travelled dry-shod all the way to Australia, but there were certainly fewer water gaps.

Bonwick outlined his idea in a paper before the Royal Geographic Society of Tasmania in 1870: *On the Origin of the Tasmanians Geographically Considered*. He proposed this idea again in *The Daily Life and Origin of the Tasmanians* (1873:155f).

Bonwick's thesis was that the Tasmanians and a people called the Buandik were Bushmen type people who had entered the tip of Western Australia earlier, from the extreme southern tip of Africa. Information on the Buandik is sparse: Reverend G. Taplin, missionary and ethnographer to the Ngarrenjeri, who were neighbours to the Buandik on their Western border, was to remark that "particulars on the Buandik have not been recorded" (1879). According to Smith (1880) the Buandik territory initially spread over a large area from Rivoli Bay along the southern coast to the western border of Portland, Victoria, and beyond, and she referred to them as that "once numerous and powerful race". Tindale (1926), who spelt the name Bunganditj, mapped their territory in some detail. Foster, in an unpublished dissertation (1983), referred to them as the Bunganditit. Howitt (1904:6-8) stated they were part of the Southern Gournditch Clan but did not mix: they were a fierce and warlike people, and they closely resembled the Tasmanians both culturally and particularly physically. They became extinct not long before the Tasmanians became extinct as a "pure race".

Taplin (1874) noted the "strange" physical fact that a small percentage of his Ngarrindjeri people had luxuriant curls, were very dark skinned and had dark eyes "against the mostly fairer Narrinyeri" (1874:133). Taplin attributed this to mixing with "original" people. This dark minority was said to be common over most of the Southern littoral.

Angas, on arriving in Buandik territory on his exploration with Governor Grey, wrote that

these natives... were totally different from those of the Coorong... in their physical appearance figures slight and attenuated and the abdomen of a disproportionate size (1847, Vol.1:154).

Angas related other evidence which he considered reflected the similarity of Buandik physical features to the Tasmanians, particularly "their elongated skulls, their unsightly distended stomachs, red eyes with little space between, the ochre and grease encrusted long black curls of the men, the copper skin and extensive body hair" (1847:58).

He thought the prominent brows, flat broad noses and large teeth gave them a 'savage and ugly appearance similar to the Tasmanians'. This supposed savage appearance was noted by other authors; Howitt (1904), Smith (1880), Carthew (1974) and Taplin (1879) among others. Wood in *The Narrinyeri* (see Taplin; 1879) reported of the Buandik that "another curious point of reference [other than the supposedly Neanderthal skull] between Palaeolithic man and the Buandik is

again the fibula or outer leg below the knee”, which in each case it is remarkably flattened and fluted (Taplin, 1879:401).

Angas (1847) and Curr (1886) remarked on the “spindly” legs, and “legs without calves” of the Buandik and Tasmanian peoples.

Taplin commented thus on the teeth of the Buandik:

The Buandik teeth [are] different from European teeth. At about age 40 the surfaces of the incisors were altered in appearance. They are not unlike the nippers of a horse, and as wear continues the teeth measured more from the back than side to side. (1879:401)

Taplin thought it might have been brought about by the chewing of reeds, a widespread habit of both Buandik and Tasmanians with a resultant similarity. Wood (ibid.) saw a similarity of Buandik skulls to the Neanderthal (Appendix 4).

Sollas (1924) said that the skull of the Tasmanian is oval or more or less pentagonal, having its greatest breadth behind the midline. The crown rises into a low keel with a groove-like depression on each side. The sides of the skull are wall-like but swell out into large parietal bossae. It is long and dolichocephalic and the cephalic index is 74% (nearly mesocephalic), determined from eighty-six samples (1924:122). Its height is about 5 mm less than its breadth. The cranial capacity, he stated, is the lowest yet observed in recent peoples: on the average 1199 c.c. In men the average rises to 1306 c.c. In women it falls to 1093 c.c.

The jaws [of the Tasmanian skull] project but not so much nor so extremely as the Negro: not even as much as some Australian jaws. The lower jaw is disproportionably small, when compared with the teeth which are comparatively large (Sollas, 1924:122).

Cranial data are not available for the Buandik.

Strzelecki (1845) provided a photograph of a Tasmanian (Jenny) who appears dissimilar to other Tasmanians in head shape and physique (Appendix 5). This may of course be simply an extreme variant; or it could indicate that two different groups lived together in that region; or indeed there could have been deliberate cranial deformation in the early years, as at Kow Swamp (Brown, 1981). The important point of this account is the drawing of physical similarities between the Buandik and the Tasmanians, recalling Bonwick's thesis that the pygmies were the first people to arrive in Australia.

In 1952 Birdsell and Tindale began to study the northern Pygmies in order to find their origin. Birdsell, and before him the Reverend John Mathew, were influenced by an ancient myth suggesting two peoples entering Northern Australia: one lighter and the other dark: one pursued by the other to extinction in the south. Mathew's book *Eaglehawk and Crow* (1899), describing this myth and its meaning, gave the crow to be the black people and the eagle to be the fairer people.

In 1993 Birdsell published his “Tri-Hybrid Theory”, a model of how three different peoples had entered North Australia from the east. He claimed that at the time of entry of the migrants New Guinea and Tasmania were still both part of Australia. It was initially well received but is now questioned as new information has imposed something like Kuhn’s “Critique of Doubt” on the facts. Birdsell finally published a massive study (1993) that examined all facets: physical, biological and diffusional traits. His physical study is not a focus of this thesis. The first of Birdsell’s three migrant people, he held, were diminutive people: the males barely 160 centimetres in height and the females less, so that they resembled pygmies. Birdsell considered these the first people: they were dark skinned, with very frizzy hair, and he called them Negritos, a term applied to three pygmy peoples in Southeast Asia, the Andaman Islanders, the Semang of the Malay Peninsula, and the Aeta of the Philippines.

A second wave Birdsell called Murrayans, of light skin, wavy hair, stocky body and much body hair. These robust people drove the Negritos to the rain forest to what Birdsell called “refuge areas” (*refugia*) then to the forest proper, and finally to Tasmania. His third wave were the Carpentarians, a tall dark people who today predominate in the tropical north and the west, restricting the Murrayans to the southeast. For him, the three components of the Aboriginal population have mixed in different proportions in different regions.

Birdsell supported, in principle but not in detail, Bonwick’s notion of an early available route to what he called “Greater Australia”:

Since Australia and New Guinea were both settled before the end of the Pleistocene it should be noted they were joined broadly by the then sunken Sahul Shelf...(1993:22)

At the time the sea level was as much as 100 metres below its present level, so that Greater Australia included all of Australia and New Guinea in the same land mass (1993:22). The sea between Southeast Asia and Greater Australia had still to be crossed, but the connection to New Guinea is well established.

Birdsell suggested therefore that the original Australians were migrants out of South East Asia, “and reached their ultimate homeland” in the late Pleistocene (1993:22). Birdsell’s language investigations suggested that the languages of the Kimberley were in sharp contrast to other Aboriginal languages. These Kimberley languages, Nyulnyulan, Worora, Bubabunaban and Djera, use prefixes in addition to normal suffixes found in the rest of the continent (1993:444) (Appendix 3).

There is difficulty in reconstructing the history of the settling of Australia from physical characteristics of present day Aboriginal Australians because over time these characteristics have been modified by micro-evolutionary processes. There has equally been a serious decline in Aboriginal population size, due to displacement and miscegenation since European colonisation during the last two centuries.

This one project had occupied Birdsell for more than half a century and he thanked Norman Tindale for his collaboration. The population density of Aboriginal people was related to the mean annual rainfall, and also to the rate of increase of the effect of preferential infanticide. This was the background against which he proceeded to examine the way micro-evolutionary forces had operated among this continental population. An investigation of the serology, dental traits, and morphological features followed, with the aim of making connections between origins of population groups.

Birdsell remarked in his preface that in what seemed a “fortunate” time for his study, the economics of the period “had pushed many of the hybrid Australians back onto government stations for support” and this for his project was better than if the Aboriginal groups had remained in country towns, because the people were then much more accessible. He said that to try to evaluate the micro-evolutionary processes operating is difficult because by then “most of the continental tribal people had either gone, or were going into extinction”. In 1993 he stated that, in the few years since his study, the remaining peoples had become so ethnically conscious that survey work of the kind he had undertaken would have been extremely difficult or perhaps impossible.

The studies outlined here are not the only theses for the reconstruction of the settling of Australia. Of those offered over the last century the most recent is the work of Levathes (1994).

CHAPTER 2

The Chinese Link

Louise Levathes writing in 1994 (23:24) claimed that the early Chinese were connected with the Baijini, presumed pre-Macassan visitors to northern Australia (Chapter 3).

Levathes' hypothesis was that the Yǐ, a people with a demonstrated genetic link to the Han Chinese (Mountain et al. 1992), migrated some fifty thousand years ago to the Sunda Shelf, an exposed shelf of land connecting the islands of western Indonesia to the mainland of Southeast Asia, and that early civilization began there. At the height of the Ice Age the Continental Asian Shelf (p. 23) was exposed, joining mainland China with what is now Taiwan, the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Borneo and Java in the Indonesian Archipelago, and she proposed that at this time the forebears of Chinese Neolithic people called the Yǐ migrated down from the highlands of Central China to the broad shelf of land then exposed. From here, she proposed, some crossed a narrow waterway from Java to Sulawesi moving on into New Guinea and eventually Australia. From here they first settled on the site of a putative large inland lake in Central Australia.

Levathes based her thesis on a study of nuclear DNA polymorphism studies by Mountain et al., who claimed that the skeletal remains from this inland sea

bore a striking resemblance to Neolithic skulls of about 5000 years ago and people in China's Yangzi River Valley thousands of miles North. Both [skulls] were thin and delicate... (1992:159-167)

Thus Levathes suspected a link between the Chinese Yǐ peoples and the Baijini (Levathes, 1994:34).

Thorne (1974) had put forward a similar hypothesis to that of Levathes of a Chinese link. Thorne's "Two Wave Theory" spoke of a delicately built gracile type, probably from the late Pleistocene, and an earlier more robust type from Java.

Although this model has been contested on the grounds that the difference is sexual dimorphism and merely a case of male and female (Groves, 1990; Pardoe, 1991), Levathes thinks that the difference in shape and type of skulls would need to be taken into account since, in her view, it is supported by a more reliable study involving DNA.

Levathes pursued the question of her proposed Chinese link in her book *When China Ruled the Seas* in "Epilogue: A people called Baijini", citing the golden coloured skin they are remembered by, and portions of the Berndt Song Cycles (1994:195-203), and she stated that the Baijini were remembered also for the Chinese based art of ceramic making and weaving of patterned silk fabric.

Lebar (1972) writes of a strong Chinese influence in the area, quoting Chinese history sources as early as 500 A.C.E. containing references to Chinese kingdoms within their present boundaries.

Although Chinese merchants have been in Indonesia for centuries, wholesale immigration of Chinese [people] only commenced in the latter half of the 19th century as part of the Dutch colonisation policy of recruiting Chinese labour for the plantations and mines (1972:14)

On the huge exposed Sunda Shelf there was a plentiful marine diet, pebble stones for building stone houses and slow shallow streams at the back of the ledge for the rudiments of early agriculture. That there was a long occupation of this huge shelf seems to be supported. It was gone by 10,000 B.C.E. well before there was agriculture or stone building. It does certainly, however, have relevance to stone tool-working and to earlier population movements, because its existence (and the simultaneous existence of the Sahul Shelf, between Australia and New Guinea) narrowed the sea gaps between Asia and Australia very considerably.

Solheim (1972) noted that the exposed shelf tended to slope out, so that identifiable artefacts from the ledge would be under the ocean and could not be retrieved, except by under-ocean core sampling such as that now being done for the Sunshine Gas/Oil Project.

Levathes (1994) drew attention to the ancient Chinese records that claim the Chinese were aware of what was called the Great South Land (Australia) and that there were people there. The Chinese believed that people in the southern land were naked and slept most of the time, and that they were near a frozen patch of land as the sun did not shine for long periods. She linked these claims to the stories of the Baijini, who it is said were initially afraid of the severe thunder in Arnhem Land which they had worshipped and feared in the Yì mythology they had left behind. She also mentions that the people in the southern country were adept at throwing the boomerang. There were "dark animals" that had "two heads": Levathes suggests these were female kangaroos with joeys in pouch. There were reports of birds that could speak with humans: Levathes suggests these were Australian parrots (1994:197).

Meacham (1983), in one of the articles on which Levathes based her 1994 hypothesis, proposed that these people moving from mainland Asia on to Java, Borneo and New Guinea finally arrived in North Australia carrying a Chinese component in their makeup. It was in this area, in the early Neolithic period, Meacham suggested, that pottery, polished stone tools, and incipient plant agriculture in the back streams and waterways may well have developed (Meacham 1983); and he suggested, as had Solheim (1972), that the first movements towards civilization may have begun on the shelf. But, as he admitted, this area is now under up to one hundred metres of sea and any cultural deposits not destroyed by the transgression are probably well overlaid by silt and may never see the light of day - but this should not result in the neglect of research of the early Neolithic (1983:151).

Again, as Meacham noted (1983:152), the Upper Palaeolithic occupation of Pleistocene South China is found in a number of upland sites (mainly caves) which yield chipped pebble tools and faunal remains. From these caves came first the Mesolithic Hoabinhian and subsequently the early Neolithic Bacsonian.

The Kartan tools of Kangaroo Island resembled Hoabinhian tools. In his recent controversial book, Menzies (2002) proposed that Chinese migrants spread south from northern Australia, bringing their Hoabinhian tools: as development progressed, these Hoabinhian people moved out of the mountain habitat “where they had thrived for millennia” into the lower river valleys and eventually “to and on the sea”. He lamented (1983:153) that the concept of a now submerged Sunda Land in South East Asian archaeology has not been elaborated with reference to the Neolithic people in China. Yet, he says, if one accepts the basic premise that the Continental shelves were exposed plates that were inhabited at the end of the last glacial maximum, then it is of “considerable theoretical” importance.

Using maps such as those of Jennings (1971:5) it is possible to trace a route from the exposed shelf to the northwest. Ocean levels of not more than 200 metres (that is, relatively shallow) did exist (1971:5), except in central Indonesia: the Moluccas (Maluku) and Sulawesi lie in very deep seas. It would have been possible for migrant peoples to move back and forth and cross the remaining straits via Borneo, eventually reaching New Guinea which may have been joined still to Australia. By this means they would eventually have reached North Australia (Appendix 6). Murray says however:

There still remained the final water crossing to Australia, which even during the low sea periods was never less than about 80 to 100 km. wide (1998:104)

The question of sea currents and levels over the ancient period of human migration is taken up in Chapter 5 of this thesis.

Ollier notes (1985:25) that, aside from the controversy surrounding Levathes’ hypothesis, the geological background, that is tectonic forces and sea level interaction demolishing natural bridges and barriers, would indeed have a profound effect on all human activity. These factors particularly during the late Pleistocene governed the resources and hazards as well as what was under the land, altering and affecting human and other migration. A possible cause for migration to the east may have been the catastrophic Toba event when at the close of the penultimate ice age in a series of ice melts the sea was raised by over 100 metres. The transgression was profound, the immense caldera formed by the eruption covering a vast area. This event caused more devastation than the later eruption of Krakatoa. Vegetation, life and livelihoods in the region were threatened for a long period, possibly causing remnant peoples to migrate to warmer equatorial regions.

By 4,000 BCE the present sea level was reached (Fairbridge, 1960:153). Presumably the tenants of the formerly exposed land were obliged to migrate, perhaps by primitive craft.

Gamble (1993) has suggested the great number of islands in the East as one of the reasons for migration as the common use of boats and the availability of landings could have assisted in migration.

Levathes's hypothesis is that there was a DNA link connecting the Baijini with the Yi peoples, and she puts the date of their arrival in Australia at around 50 000 B.C.E. The migration of peoples, its causes and feasibility is dealt with at more length in Chapter 5 of this thesis.

CHAPTER 3

The Baijini

A constant theme has been the mysterious Baijini people. There are many traditional stories and poems of a non-Aboriginal people of this name in early human occupation of Australia. This chapter will review the literature claiming Baijini existence and occupancy, and examine whether there may be any factual basis for these claims.

A people called the Baijini is mentioned in the Yolngu Song Cycles, said to be the earliest history of the Yolngu in Arnhem Land (Berndts, 1954). There are people called Bajini on the Comoro Islands and parts of Madagascar (Grottanelli, 1955), where they were known by eight clan names (Grottanelli, 1954). A people called the *Bajun/Bajuni/Bagiuni* is now found living in decline in Somalia.

The few anthropologists who have worked in this field are sceptical about the existence of the Baijini as are the present Aboriginal people themselves. Almost no research has been undertaken on the Baijini in Australia, although outside Australia the work of Grottanelli (1955), Ferrand (1908), Deschamps (1968) and others on people of this name is considerable.

The Bajini in Africa

The East African coast, from perhaps as early as 2000 years ago, was a region of trade, and archaeology has uncovered evidence of contacts from not only Arabia and Persia but even as far away as Indonesia and China (Davidson, 1961; Connah, 2004). The oldest evidence of international trade is from Ras Hafun, northern Somalia, where ceramics from the Persian Gulf and perhaps South Asia date from somewhat over 2000 years ago. From about 1000 years ago, there were certainly trade settlements along the coast; Arabs and others founded their own settlements on the offshore islands (Lamu, Mombasa, Zanzibar, Mafia and others), and the coast itself saw the rise of an indigenous Bantu people, the Swahili, who became rich on the Indian Ocean trade. Among the participants in the Indian Ocean trade were Indonesians from the Sumatran and Javan states which had begun to rise after about the second century AD.

It is in this context that we must consider the Bajini, whose name appears on Madagascar, on Grand Comore (where there was a Bajini Sultanate), and on islands off the coast of southern Somalia, still known today as the Bajini Islands. The Bajini of Somalia stand out among the people of that country: they speak Swahili, not Somali; they are a seafaring community, with Indonesian-style outrigger canoes; and they cultivate banana and coconut.

Commentators are undecided whether the Baijini, or as they were initially known, the Bajun, were the original people of Madagascar (Verin 1986), and a closer study of Madagascar and its proximity to the East is needed. The arrival of humans in Madagascar has been closely dated to around 350 BC (Burney et. al., 2004). The initial impact of the earliest human inhabitants (presumably initially from Africa) was greatly intensified after about 780 A.C.E., when livestock proliferated, and especially

after about 1000 A.C.E. when widespread destruction of the natural vegetation occurred. This acceleration of human impact coincides with the implied time of new human arrivals, this time from Indonesia: the Malagasy language separated from Maanyan, a language of southeastern Borneo, at around then (Adelaar, 1995). Hurles et al. (2005) recently confirmed a dual origin, African and Indonesian, of the Malagasy people.

The Bajun Islands off the Coast of Somalia were mentioned by Grottanelli (1955) in his historical accounts of the east African coast. Grottanelli claims that the Bajun are an ancient Madagascan people with a clan system known by several variations of the name *Bajun* (including *Bajun*, *Bajuni*, and *Baijini*), and unrelated to any other peoples. They were a large group of skilled people and Madagascar was a thriving society (Perry, 1924; Ferrand, 1908). Some Baijini from Madagascar, Grottanelli claimed, went north and settled off the coast of Somalia.

According to Grottanelli the origin of these Baijini people may have been in part Arabian, in part from the Eastern Bantu, and in part from Indonesia. Given the presence of many Arabic words in Swahili, and the presence, both in the archaeological record and today, of cultural influences from all around the Indian Ocean, this seems not at all implausible. Other writers (Levathes, Mountain) attribute the pale skin and supposed Chinese appearance, and some linguistic usages, to a wrecked Chinese ship and Chinese sailors who co-habited with the “native” (i.e. Bantu) Bajun women in Somalia in the past. Wightwick Haywood, a British Government Political Officer in Madagascar, thought the Bajun of that country were people of Persian descent because they were much “fairer in skin” than other local people, including the Arabs. He also noted that the Persians had trading stations along the eastern African Coast as well as in India during the height of the Bajun civilization (Haywood, 1935:62).

Hornell (1946) referred to Grottanelli as “an authority on the history of the Baijini”. A paraphrase of a translation from Grottanelli’s *Pescatori dell’Oceano Indiano* (1955), by Professor Maciej Henneberg (with full translation in Appendix 9), expands on the origins of the Baijini.

Beginning of paraphrase

Following the discussion of the names of the Baijini, Grottanelli addressed biological characteristics of this population and their relations and contacts with neighbours, including the physical anthropology.

Old literature on populations on this part of the African Coast is missing, and there were no descriptions of anthropological characteristics to which to refer, in particular the Baijini. The Baijini are presumably descended from the neighbouring Eastern Bantu and there is also an Arab element in their origin. Some affirmed that at the same time they came from Medina but this may have been merely a wish to “ennoble their own origins with Arabic descent”, as do many Somalis. The first travellers who expressed precise opinions on the racial characteristics of the Baijini were Guillain and von der Decken, who maintained that the local population was composed of Swahili, Arabs and Somalis; Fitzgerald in 1898 described the Baijini as lighter complexioned than the typical Swahili, but

he noted the difference from the WaSiyu of Pate Island, who claimed descent from Persians. Haywood, to the contrary, affirmed that the majority of the inhabitants of the Islands off the East African coast are evidently of Persian descent, being "far fairer in skin than any other". Ferrari (1910) used the same expression to suggest that Baijini are a mixed race of Arabs and the Galla of the Ethiopian and Kenyan mainland. According to Elliott the name Bajun referred to "people of mixed origin". Persians also settled in places like Zanzibar.

Descriptions of the Baijini are found in an anonymous report of the commissariat of the former Oltregiuba district in Somalia in 1927. An unknown author maintained that

somatic characters of the Semitic race [are] preserved in the Baijini possibly some trace of distant origin, amongst which are mixed other characters of some African races.

These opinions are the product of impressions made by functionaries of the government or travellers, not by trained anthropologists, and they do not tell a reliable story. It is, however, notable that all of them agree to define the Baijini as a group of mixed origin, even if they do not agree as to the nature of racial elements that were mixed together.

In 1935 the Baijini were finally visited by a trained anthropologist Puccioni and he conducted the only anthropometric measurements of this group. These were conducted on 33 individuals in total.

"These people", he writes, "have nothing in common with Somalis or Negroids and have a physical type which is distinct from other people who live in this region. Baijini skin is lighter so their character is different anthropologically from their neighbours. Skin is lighter in some individuals even olive coloured like the Mediterranean people, in men often the beard is fairly long, and women divide their hair in the centre of the head and then plait it in two plaits on both sides of the head. These are much longer than in Somalian women due to the nature of their hair; the spiral of their locks is larger and it permits growth of hair at notable length." He continues that it is certain that there exists also another element which could be Malaysians. All this leads to the hypothesis that Baijini are some northern propagation of the same people who in a relatively recent historic epoch occupied the Island of Madagascar. He also admitted that the ancestors of Baijini were not simply Arabs, lighter in skin and more evidently of Arabic appearance in physical characteristics than these people, but also bore traces of other populations who do not have anything of the Arab or Somalian blood. These must be from populations whose characters could be due to the influx of Indonesian or Malaysian people.

Puccioni made a very accurate study that brought in all elements of the argument, which he finally agreed contains very discordant opinions, as a result of the lack of good knowledge of the population of Baijini. The morphology of a group of Baijini can be explained satisfactorily by a general Arab influence implanted on the substrate of Indonesian affinity. From the anthropological point of view the material at our disposition is not sufficient to demonstrate the descent

of the Baijini from Indonesians, because it has less of a morphological affinity than is necessary to explain the descent. This may most plausibly be explained by the Madagascan origin of this population, and might therefore connect the origin of Baijini with the Madagascan people, presumably subsequent to the 8th-century arrival of the Indonesian component (see above).

The Baijini, said Puccioni, are a result of a mixture of populations; their anthropological structure appears to be heterogeneous. One component, Arab or Persian or both, has tall stature, long torso and mesocephalic skull: the other, Bantu, has notably short stature, short torso, dolichocephalic skull and high frequency of wavy hair, and facial features much "rougher" than those of classical Arabs. A third component is especially interesting because it may be attributed to Indonesian affinity as indicated by Puccioni. Grottanelli formed similar views based on his prolonged contact with the Baijini: he confirmed the Indonesian thesis of Puccioni reached by him from anthropometric study.

(End of paraphrase.)

Grottanelli also described the remains of what he took to be Bajun civilisation: ruined rectangular stone houses, primitive looms, stone menhirs and stones along the beaches of Madagascar, and phallic symbols of worship; evidently pre-Muslim and pre-12th century (phallic gravestones extend well south of the Bajini islands, as far south as Bagamoyo in Tanzania, according to Davidson, 1961). Remnants of Bajun habitation were also observed by Haywood. On a survey visit in 1935 made with a native headman (1935:61) he observed the ancient *Bajun* area. They came across remains of what must have been a fair-sized town (1935:62) and he commented on the deterioration of the former buildings and the fine decorative arts in the Bajun area: the present Bajun people lived in architecturally simple villages. The original delicate and finely traced ornamentation carved on lintels showed craftsmanship equal to that of the Greeks or Arabs (paraphrase, Haywood, 1935:62).

Haywood asked the headman if there were any Bajun legends of an earlier period. The headman said the Bajun had been punished for their cruelty by a catastrophic inundation of an Island (paraphrase, Haywood, 1935:62). Verin (1986) repeated this myth: that as a result of catastrophe one of the Bajun group of Islands, Mojombo, sank, leaving only remnants of the population.

The Baijini in Australia

A supposed date for the arrival of the Baijini in northern Australia has come down to us by way of Ronald and Catherine Berndt, accomplished Yolngu Matha speakers, and almost lifelong ethnographers to the natives of Arnhem Land, in "The Song Cycles of Arnhem Land" (Appendix 7), which were entrusted to them by the tribal Fathers of the present people (Berndt and Berndt, 1954). The Song Cycles, according to the tribal Fathers, were the ancient history of the Arnhem Land people. Upon their retirement the Berndts translated the Song Cycles and mapped them to areas where the Arnhem Land people were settled such as Blue Mud Bay and Calendon. The Song Cycles describe the Baijini growing rice and fishing, often with remora, as they fished in Madagascar.

The Berndts acknowledge (1954) it is not possible to say precisely when the Baijini came or left other than that it was pre-Macassan. The Song Cycles say they came “before the Dreaming”, and describe their coming in the following way. The Fertility Mother and Wurag her husband are said to have come originally from the sea around the Indonesian Islands. Other Ancestral and Spirit Beings in this region are also said to have come out of the sea from some place far away to the West. Amongst them in this period of visitation, powerful creative beings known as the Djanggawal Brother and his two sisters, “greatest of all the ancestral beings”, came in bark canoes. Before instigating the religious cult they brought with them the *Kunapippi*, (that with the coming of Christian missions fell into disuse) they produced the predecessors of the present day Aboriginal people and laid down sacred sites.

The Song Cycles, however, say that there were possibly “some people already existing in Arnhem Land”. The Song Cycles do not say who these earlier inhabitants were, but they were met by Djanggawal and another group of Spirit Beings whom the Song Cycles do not discuss. These were, according to the Ancient Fathers, the nucleus of the Aboriginal society at a time when it was being built up to a “more or less definitive pattern of laws”, (Berndts, 1954).

In these Song Cycles prohibitions were being framed and a religious view of life was evolving from these sacred Beings. The Song Cycles carried songs and stories of how they came to the mainland with their sacred objects and cult (the *Kunapippi*), about their travels and the people they met. The Berndts suggest that these travels and the people involved may have covered a series of unknown migratory epochs, but because they are submerged in the past they cannot be regarded as historical.

The Berndts claim (1954:33) it was later, at the beginning of the historical period, that the Baijini first visited the North and West Coast of Australia. They say that “some stories suggest that their original settlements were the results of shipwreck”. (1954:357). The Berndts use the term Baijini to classify the first visitors to the Northern Coast of Arnhem Land. There are certain “Sacred Sites” that mark such places that were not only where the Spirit Beings came but were also “Sacred Places” to the Baijini. Berndt claims that personal names of some Aborigines reveal their Baijini derivation but does not give examples.

Of the Baijini, Isaacs, a celebrated Aboriginal artist, writes:

the Baijinis came as families, men, women and children, and built houses made of stone and ironbark... they had lighter skin than the Aboriginals and wore coloured sarongs with patterns, as they went about their daily work. They planted rice... the Baijini women were spoken of in Yiritja Songs, planting rice, cooking, weaving, dying, fishing, making arm bands and necklets (1980:261)

The Song Cycle maps (Berndt 1954:36) originally covered the whole of North East Arnhem Land and reveal the possible extent of Baijini contact (Appendix 8).

What is the probability of early voyages between Indonesia and Australia? It is possible that travellers along an ancient Madagascar–Chinese trade route were blown off course and wrecked on the Kimberley Coast of Australia. From Hornell (1946, 1950), an authority on the efficiency of ancient hand-sewn mtepe skin boats and on the Indian Ocean, it is clear that any such migrants would have problems in sailing to Australia. *Mtepe* were Swahili trading boats, whose planks were sewn with coir fibre, not nailed, had a square matting sail made of date palm fibre, and could be up to 30 metres long. They are mentioned in the *Periplus*, a trading guide to East Africa written in Alexandria in the 1st century AD. Mtepe were made by the Baijini among others (Hornell, 1946 and Grottanelli, 1955 among others).

Grottanelli's account, describing as it does the Baijini as a real, not mythical people, has been questioned by many contemporary Australian researchers of prehistory, Macknight (1976) among others. Macknight had written on the Song Cycles earlier:

It must be emphasised that the interpretation of the Baijini stories is a personal view only [of the Berndts]. The subject needs much further study and analysis ... It is a most remarkable instance of the need to distinguish between the account of the past ... in a society and the actual events of the past: (1976: note 48: Ch. 6:161).

In *Voyage to Maregé* (1976) Macknight questioned the reported skill of the Baijini in ceramic making and silk weaving, reported by Monclaro in 1549 (Menzies, 2001:321) and Levathes (ibid). Macknight, like Warner, regarded the Song Cycles as mythical.

The lack of a time frame might be considered to call the existence of the Baijini of Arnhem Land into question. The Baijini were closely incorporated into the Aboriginal cosmology but this does not indicate a time frame. The Song Cycles say that the Baijini came "before the Dreaming" that is, the Aboriginal cosmology, and Isaacs, amongst others, claimed to see evidence to support this (1980). But the Song Cycles have certainly not been accepted by all researchers. Recent authors Mulvaney and Kamminga (1999) have commented

The anthropologists Ronald and Catherine Berndt believed that their interpretation of Aboriginal mythology in Arnhem Land requires a pre-Macassan contact phase [...]. On the other hand MacKnight believes that these myths largely owe their origin to historical experience in Macassar where they [the Yolngu] later went and returned on the praus, and we agree (1999:421)

Some Aborigines did travel to and from Indonesia in contemporary times and this is documented in Lloyd Warner's *A Black Civilization* (1937). He included the Baijini in his mythical corpus of the Yolgnu (whom he called the Murngin) but he commented on them only as a mythical people.

Despite Warner and Macknight's questioning of their existence, there is evidence – other than the Song Cycles - of the existence of the Baijini in northern Australia.

While the Berndt translation of the Song Cycles was and is the main evidence of the Baijini, an Aboriginal poem translated by the Berndts and published by Swain (2001) and reproduced in full later in this chapter describes the Baijini. Within the Song Cycles was chronological inference in verses such as “the Baijini came before us” (Berndt and Berndt, 1947). Maps that locate the Baijini are also available (Berndt and Berndt, 1954) (Appendix 8). Ronald Berndt writes with reference to these

Here a Baiini [sic] woman gave birth to a baby. The Baiini and later the Macassans made a garden here, planting rice, *ngarial*, which now grows wild (1964:287)

The history in song was published in “Arnhem Land: Its History and Its People” (1954) by the Berndts and was initially well received by the present Aboriginal people, but not by the rank and file of the then research workers, who condemned the history as myth. In it the Berndts support the existence of the Baijini, and of native tradition:

The existence of the pre-Macassan Baijini is without archeological or documentary support; they are known purely from native tradition. ... Who they were is uncertain (1954:357)

Later however, Isaacs, in her splendid book on the art of the area, supported the existence of the Baijini. Under the heading “The Visitors” she wrote:

The people who appear to have come before us are the Baijini (Arnhem Land) and came by sailing ship. They came a very long time ago... some believe they were here in the Creation as both Djankawa and Liajunga [sacred beings of the Creation Dreaming] as they came across [the Baijini] on their travels. [In The Creation Period] they exchanged feathered strings – [highly sacred objects and what they call “secret sacred” Rangka] of the Cosmology (1980:261)

Isaacs writes that later Baijini shared some ritual performances with the ancestral Yolngu, and both shared the social structure of two moieties. The Arnhem Landers consider the division into the Dhua and the Yiritja moieties has always been accepted and it remains so today. It could be also that the moieties were shared because of the existence of two “Culture Heroes”. At the very least the sharing of moieties verifies the length of association with the Baijini, as Aboriginal culture heroes are primary to Creation.

Levathes also writes of the visits of the Baijini:

[They arrived] in sailing ships with the North West monsoons in October and November and depart[ed] for home [Indonesia?] on the South wind six months later. They came to fish for trepang. (1994:195)

Grottanelli (1955) said that the Baijini were phallus worshippers, and the phallic gravestones along the East African coast and islands have been mentioned. Along the beaches in Madagascar, too, were phallic emblems of which he had taken photographs. Basedow had large phallus collections from the Kimberleys.

Basedow (1925:preface page x) relates that on a trip to the Kimberley area with others he reached a place where there was a stone phallus, indicating phallus worship. It was covered with fresh blood, indicating a recent circumcision as circumcision was practiced in the Kimberley area, though not further south at that time (pre-20th century) according to Basedow (1925) and Mathew (1899).

The Baijini were said to be ancestor worshippers. Weiner and Schneider (1999) told of the “annual cleaning of bones and returning them to earth”, a part of the Baijini Ancestor Cult in Madagascar. Tindale (1926) was aware of a group of Aborigines close to the coast of Arnhem Land who cleaned bones. The practice was not as widespread or elaborate as the annual celebration and worship of the ancestors’ bones in Madagascar described by Weiner and Schneider: it was done rather as a mark of respect.

In the Song Cycles the Berndts translated the name *Darabu* as ‘silk cloth’. The word *Darabu* is a Kiswahili word referring to a shuttle (Berndt, 1954:36). A plausible explanation of how a Kiswahili word came to be in the Song Cycles is that during the 2nd millennium AD, maybe earlier, there were trading relations between Madagascar and the East African coast. The word for ‘silk cloth’ went along with the cloth itself.

Levathes pointed out that the Berndts described the *Darabu* patterned cloth as made up of coloured triangles. These later became the basis of certain Aboriginal clan designs and the triangular motif (Appendix 10) remains in the now widely acclaimed tradition of Yolgnu and other Aboriginal art. Woven artefacts had been found by Warner (1937) in his Yolgnu field work and these were donated to the Kroeber Museum, at the University of California at Berkeley (Appendix 24). Many items carry geometric designs, and some are woven items, though Berndt clearly states (1954) that the Yolgnu were not weavers. Weaving was a Baijini craft from early times.

Levathes says while conducting research on the Lamu Peninsula in Madagascar she found the same word *Darabu* in the vocabulary of one of the Bajun Island (Washinga) people (1994) who claimed their forebears were Chinese sailors wrecked off the Bajun Islands. Menzies (2002) noted that *Woshangga* is itself a name composed of three syllables of Putonghua (Mandarin) and other Chinese languages. Levathes points out that the Chinese word for cloth (2002:202) is *Ba* (1994:202) and the Mandarin word for robe is *pao*. She claims this as the common root of these two related words.

Menzies suggested that the name Baijini may itself be of Chinese origin, as *Bjun* is Chinese patois for “long robed”. Menzies suggested that on the east coast of Africa, long silken robes would have been “striking and unusual enough for the name to be bestowed upon settlers [wearing them]” (2002:322). Levathes says, with reference to Baijini links with the Chinese:

While archaeological evidence is currently lacking, folklore tradition in both regions suggests there was sporadic Asian contact and that Chinese may have settled both the Australian and African Coasts. (1994:202)

John Crawford, a scholarly advisor to the Sultan of the Java Court, wrote in his *History of the Indonesian Archipelago* (1820) of a picture given to him by a traveller of two “mystery people”, one of whom he refers to as “a man of Bali” (Appendix 11) and the other “a Negrito”. In this early period Australia was undergoing discovery and explorers and travellers identified people and areas by different names.

The “Man of Bali” exhibits a distinctly Chinese cast of features and lemon coloured skin. Although Balinese people may also have light skin, this man recalls the appearance of the Baijini fisher folk photographed in Grottanelli’s work in the mid 1950s. Berndt also mentions the skin colour of the Baijini:

They were paler than the Macassans, of a golden brown colour (1954:357)

Crawford had dismissed the material he had received as being from the beginning discredited. This was because his informant at the very outset of his account had claimed that some Aboriginal peoples in North Australia had red hair. For Crawford, an erudite scholar, the mention of black people with red hair showed the information to be unreliable. Birdsell was later to do a complete and extensive study of the “red hair” phenomenon in the North and elsewhere in Australia in the 1940s. But Crawford claimed that other details should be considered, mentioning the golden skin and physical attributes of what he calls the “man of Bali” and that this strange situation where one race was closely in touch with another “could only be seen in Southern Africa and nowhere else in the world”. Crawford concluded a long account:

These people hardly appear less mysterious than the indigenous plants and animals of the country they inhabit [North Australia?]. Having now rendered an account of the personal appearance of these Indian Islanders [Australians] I will now examine their health... (1820:Vol. 1 of 3)

Menzies, a controversial source, noted (2002:321) that the Italian anthropologist Puccioni had made an expedition to the Juba River in Somalia in 1935 and had concluded that the Bajun at Pate were of:

a physical type absolutely different from every other people in the region. The skin is rather light, in some slightly olive, and in the men you can see flowing beards, the women part their hair in the middle and then braid it into two side braids (2002:322).

Menzies (2002:190-191) included meticulously referenced accounts of mystery people in the North. In discussing the details of a possible visit by the Chinese Fleet to North Arnhem Land in search of minerals, he mentioned that they were recorded to have gone inland (2002:190). Menzies had hoped that he could find a place he had read of where Captain Grey (later a Governor of South Australia)

had written of cave art (1841:190) featuring a large Chinese figure seen during an expedition which he had conducted to Arnhem Land.

Menzies claimed that some twenty miles upstream from the Glenelg River to Colliers Bay his party came upon a group of paintings in a cave of a figure of a man some three metres high as mentioned by Grey. Menzies said that Grey's account also accords with an Aboriginal story that long before the Europeans came, a honey coloured people had settled there (in north-eastern Arnhem Land). They grew rice and lived in stone houses, unlike the Aborigines whose dwellings were wood and leaves.

The men wore long robes and the women wore pantaloons. Heine-Geldern (Loeb, 1935:314) saw similar depictions of men in striped pants on the roof of a cave in Sumatra (Appendix 23).

Menzies continued:

Adze anchors with the curved fluke (the piece that holds the anchor in the mud) set at right angles to the stock of the anchor – (a [particularly] Chinese design) have been discovered on the coastline of North East Arnhem Land, and substantial quantities of broken Chinese ceramics dating from the Han Dynasty (202 BC-AD 220) of the early Ming (1368:1644) at Port Bradshaw on the Eastern shore of the Gulf of Carpentaria and nearby mainland. (2002:227)

Macknight (1976) considered these relics to be late Macassan.

Menzies said the currents and the reef make it likely that wrecks would be found (2002:190). Menzies has been criticized for failing to give accurate references but in his report of giant cave paintings at Berowra Waters on the Hawkesbury River in New South Wales, now open to public viewing, he was accurate.

Later, Menzies, investigating areas in the Indian Ocean visited by the Treasure Fleet (2002:321), went to the Bajun Islands off the coast of Somalia mentioned by Grottanelli and visited the capital Pate where he observed the honey coloured people producing rich silk cloths unique to Pate. He also noted the Bajun inhabitants also made lacquer work and baskets using a technique used in southern China.

Authors including Levathes referred to stone houses in Arnhem Land and also on the Islands of Bajun, now fallen into ruin in both places. The living descendants of the early Aborigines of Arnhem Land say that the stone houses were there in very early times, although they have now deteriorated.

Breccia is a coarse-grained sedimentary rock, made up of broken fragments (clasts) of pre-existing rocks held together in a fine-grained matrix (*Hutchinson's Encyclopaedia*). This stone-like building material is found on the coastal areas of Blue Mud and Caledon Bays, among other areas of the coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria where the Baijini were said to be settled (Appendix 12). A peculiarity of this stone is its fast setting. The breccia of the beaches of Arnhem Land in the area in which the Song Cycles locate the Baijini is composed of the same sand

used to build stone houses in Madagascar. The presence of rapid setting and familiar building materials may have encouraged settlement. The practice of building in stone was common in Madagascar (Haywood, 1935) and surrounding islands where the Bajun/ Baijini lived.

The mythical corpus contains some references, collected by the Berndts and reiterated by Warner in *A Black Civilization* (1937), to the Baijini leaving. In a poem translated by the Berndts there is an indication of disagreement in their departure: this poem was quoted by Swain in *A place for strangers* (2001). It announces clearly the Australian Aborigines' preoccupation with the principles underlying rights to land.

What is that, waridj Djanggawul?
Yes, something is blocking us, waridj Bralbral.
What can it be?
Listen, is that the sound of the Baijini talking?
Are those their words that drift from the roofs of
their huts, from the young Baijini playing?
We hear the noise, waridj, of their talking together.
Yes! That is the shine of their light skin! They are
standing about, and working the trepang.
Yes, because they belong to the Djanala clan.
What can we do, how can we make them move?
We, wandj, shall quietly chase them away, they
can't stop there!
Why can't they make their place at the other side,
by themselves, waridj Djanggawul? They
can make a big camp there.
But here, they make the place pale as they stand
about together, at Bauwijara, at janimbilnga
(among their huts and their trepang camps).
We ourselves shall go there, when they have left,
walking along with the mauwulan.
We ourselves shall go there, waridj Bralbral, go by
ourselves, putting our footprints all along
the beach.
We ourselves are making the country, putting a
sandhill there, putting our footprints.
We hear the roar of the sea, and the spray wets us.
Waridj Djanggawul, we are putting our
footprints here.
...
This is for us, waridj, this trepang ladle left by the
Baijini We hide it, within the mouth of the
ngainmara.
...
Yes, waridj Djanggawul, and we ourselves are
sacred! We shall hide it, putting it in with
the sacred rangga, waridj.

(Composer unknown: from *A place for Strangers* 2001; Swain T 1993)

These songs are about the problem of co-residence: "They can't stay here! Why can't they make a place at the other side?"

The Berndts, in the Song Cycles, ending a long description of the Baijini people and their place, say that the initial Baijini settlement was *enforced*. Some versions of the Song Cycles say after their “boats were sunk” the Baijini set up camps at Matsulbi in Arnhem Land where their tracks can be seen today, (Berndts, 1954), witness to their sojourn. Other versions say that when they left Australia they settled in Macassar, thus suggesting a later connection with the Macassan traders (1954:357).

The Baijini/Bajuni people of Somalia have latterly suffered persecution and have gone into decline. A United Nations report says of them:

Although minorities represent one third of Somalia’s seven million people their existence has been down-played. Bantu, Bravanese, Rehamar, Bajuni... have faced prior and after the war discrimination and exclusion... These minority groups... continue to live in conditions of great poverty and suffer numerous forms of discrimination and exclusion. (2002:1)

The similarity of the Bajini of Arnhem Land to the Bajun of Madagascar is too strong to ignore. It is possible that there really was a long voyage from Madagascar, although a common origin somewhere in between seems likely. That they preceded the Aboriginal inhabitants of Arnhem Land seems unlikely, although it is not impossible that, so far as the Yolgnu are concerned, the Baijini may well have preceded them in some areas, such as Blue Mud Bay. The 350 BC date for the earliest human inhabitants of Madagascar gives a maximum human timescale.

The Song Cycles describe the Baijini in south-east Asian activities: rice-planting, weaving, stone-building. Early inhabitants of Madagascar were of South-East Asian origin, as shown by the Austronesian affinities of the Malagasy language, itself of South-East Asian origin. (The Malagasy people vary from very South-East Asian to very African in appearance but all speak the Austronesian language.)

The East African coast, especially its off-shore islands, has a very broad population mix: Arab, Persian, Sudanese. They may have come even further south. It is very interesting that the mainland is overwhelmingly indigenous African (even the Swahili, with their Islamic culture, were hardly reached by intermarriage), whereas islands such as the Comoros, Mafia, Zanzibar (Unguja), Pemba, Mombasa and Lamu have populations with Malays on the Comoros. So the idea of South-East Asians on the Somali coastal islands is very plausible.

The Baijini of Madagascar may have been native to Madagascar, or they may have migrated from the Comoros. That they were a strong trading people and fishermen may explain how they got to Australia.

CHAPTER 4

The waves of Macassan arrivals

After the Baijini, said Levathes, came the Macassans, that is Malay-type people. There were probably two waves of arrival: the first in the 14th Century, a date Macknight (1976) claimed as authentic based on some of his research; apart from this there is no definite date for the first arrival of the Macassan people. The second wave occurred, according to the Berndts, in the 17th century. This chapter concerns the second wave.

The Macassans arrived annually. They employed the Yolngu, or the Murngin, as Warner (1937) had called them, to assist with the trepang operations. They also had an amicable arrangement with the Yolngu for the use of womenfolk.

The Yolngu were paid in rice wine, saris, knives and other gifts. The rice wine sometimes resulted in fighting, but overall it was a very friendly arrangement. The Macassans worked only on the shore: they lived on their boats and brought their rice and wine with them, and so did not disturb the status quo.

As a result of the sexual use of the Aboriginal women over time, the regional Aboriginal people have absorbed a distinct cast of Macassan/Malayan biological, physical and cultural traits. At least one Prau master married an Aboriginal woman who bore children to him (Berndt, 1954). A number of marriages took place over time with resultant kinship relationships that have been honoured, both peoples visiting each others' kin to the present day.

The friendly relationships resulted from the Macassans being self supporting and honouring the different payment arrangements. As well they did not interfere with the land ownership or the cosmology (Aboriginal Dreaming) of the Yolngu, which must also have been conducive to the amicable arrangement. Although Worsnop (1988) reported otherwise, most researchers confirm that the relationship was amicable.

The Muslim Macassans did enter into the corpus of Aboriginal myth. Some Macassan cultural practices and artefacts entered into Aboriginal use such as the "Carrying of the mast" and the "Goodbye" service when the Macassans left for home (Appendix 13). The Aborigines developed the long-stemmed pipe and tobacco use from the Macassans.

The Macassan language has over the years prevailed in Arnhem Land with names for places and objects, up to the present. Groves (personal communication) was struck by the number of Indonesian words used by a group of Arnhem Landers who visited Canberra in 1980, such as these:

- Ropiah – money (Indonesian *rupiah*)
- Balanda – European (Indonesian *belanda*)

In Indonesian languages, the stress goes on the penultimate syllable (*rupi'ah*, *belan'da*): in Australian languages, it goes at the beginning: the Yolngu said *ro'piah*, *ba'lunda*. And indeed, the rupiah was in use in Arnhem Land up until 1947.

Another small legacy which has over the centuries marked these Macassan visits is the presence of the beautiful tamarind trees which mark the camping and eating spots of the Macassans. It is said the Macassans brought these seeds to flavour their rice.

Despite the friendly relations these people initially experienced, the Macassans were expelled in 1906 by the Commonwealth Federation of Australia.

CHAPTER 5

The Migration of Peoples

An examination follows of what is known or can be conjectured about the migration of early peoples into Australia. Migration seems to be a pattern among the peoples of much of the Old World.

A brief study of the migrations and occupancy of peoples in virgin areas leads one to wonder why people migrate. It is not known what brought about these migrations: even whether they were voluntary. The question remains of motive for the wholesale movement of peoples from the Old to the New World.

A cause could be ill-treatment in the homeland. In other cases migration was unplanned and people had no choice but to migrate. Migration may be accidental as Matthew discusses in his essay *Climate and Evolution* (1939). A story of a young woman and her mother on holiday in a Philippines resort supports accidental migration. On the first day she took a small boat out. She was lightly dressed and took only a bottle of water and swimming flippers with her, as she was a strong swimmer. A fierce wind came up and she was blown out to the China Sea with no protection from the sun, thirst and circling sharks (Hamilton, 1992). After four days this accidental migrant was saved by the crew of an Eastern fishing vessel.

It is probable that forced migration occurred among peoples especially in Indonesia because of the proximity of the explosion of Krakatoa which resulted in the entire island sinking (Simkin et al., 1983); similarly the Toba Event in the heartland of the Batak people the catastrophe may have brought on a polar winter, where people had no choice but to migrate South to warmer equatorial areas.

Over time many different people came to Australia: some left and some stayed. The peopling of the Americas had some parallels with the peopling of Australia. The Clovis people are credited with being the first Americans who crossed not by a waterway but by the dry land of the Bering Strait from Siberia in approximately 12,000 B.P. during the last of the Ice Age. The Clovis people migrated as did the Australian Aborigines; it is not known precisely from where in either case. The Clovis were claimed to be the autochthonous people or first people of America. Debate rages over this claim in America, paralleled in Australia.

A migration that belongs to almost our own time is the extensive settlement of the Afghans and Indians to Australia, from as early as the late 18th century, or even earlier. Cleland, in *Muslims in Australia: A Brief History* (1999) mentioned Alexander Dalrymple, an English seafarer who wrote in the 1770s:

The Bugguese describe New Holland [Australia] to yield gold, and the natives, who are Mahometan, to be well inclined to commerce...

In his introduction Cleland claimed that the supposed isolation of Australia was by no means as complete as had been assumed. He wrote of "the known history

of Muslim contact” in the waters to our North and the seas of the North (1999:27) and that the growing demand for land from the east coast of Australia in the middle of the 19th century meant an increased need for camels and their despised cameleers, resulting in more and more Muslims migrating to Australia.

Verin wrote (1986:11) that allowing for periods of seasonal bad weather the presence of river mouths and the existence of Islands encouraged trade in the Indian Ocean environment. Local understandings of regular patterns of (at times catastrophic) winds and currents in the Indian Ocean allowed trading vessels to come and go between Madagascar, India, Africa and the Archipelago, in a regular system of coastal shipping and fishing.

There seems no doubt that trade in the North and in the Archipelago particularly through the existing straits resulted in a great deal of traffic late in the 18th-19th century (Blainey, 1976:2).

Cleland said of the origin of these visitors:

No one knows exactly when the [Afghans, Indians, Chinese and other races] arrived. Arabs and other Muslims had begun to dominate the South East Asian trade routes (1999:17-18)

He wrote that this had been happening since the end of the 12th century when there were indications that explorations of the northern coast of Australia took place: maps of the Sea of Java at the time show Cape York and a curved Arnhem Land. As far back as the 10th century C.E. Islamic priests travelled the Archipelago keeping in touch with their constituents in the myriad Islands there. This they did by carrying their palm leaf records and ink as important early works were recorded in this way (Creese, 1996).

Trade brought about a magnificent opening up of the Australian near-north. Cleland continues that in June 1910 there were “already Muslims in nearly every corner of the nation” (1999:16).

Although the immigration “White Australia Policy” was in place in the late 19th century, there was already a considerable number of Asian residents in the general population. In Broome for example there were pearl divers despite the immigration restrictions: of some 2700 divers 2200 were Asian. “At the time of Federation Australia was leading the world in production.... The pearlers, originally Malays ... were then increased by numbers of Phillipinos and Japanese.” (Cleland, 1999:46). Cleland added that this population was law abiding and this seemed to be general of what he called “Asiatic” people. Immigrants were mainly Afghans although Indians with their families and camels settled in Australia in great numbers in the later years of the 19th century, when a census listed 98,000 non-European, non-Aboriginal people, of a number of different races particularly Afghan and Eastern Asian. Many left eventually, as a result of what proved to be the persecution of the “White Australia Policy”, their camels falling out of use.

Numbers of people had entered Australia, had settled and were increasing. There were later convicts and others who were sent out to form settlements, for example on Norfolk Island, to cut tall Norfolk Island pines for tall masted ships.

As to the original inhabitants: in determining whether a hunter and gatherer people could negotiate a journey of great length with the primitive facilities available, several questions arise.

For how long could the travellers do without fresh water? How far could humans travel without sustenance, and of what would that consist in a hunting and gathering society?

What primitive water craft might have been available to hunters and gatherers at this time, that is late Pleistocene/early Holocene?

Would it be possible to plot a route taking into account possible landfalls along the route?

Could one estimate how far the distance might be to landfalls from the east coast of Africa to the Archipelago, 6000 km?

Would migrants be familiar with prevailing winds, ocean currents and other vital knowledge of the Indian Ocean?

These questions are dealt with in turn, beginning with water and food.

Most medical opinion (verbal communication) considers human beings could not survive longer than 72 hours without water and that landfalls reliant on what is now shallow coastal depths of not more than 170 and 150 metres would be necessary to beach the primitive craft that would have been used by hunter-gatherers of the late Pleistocene or early Holocene. As to food, fish can be eaten raw, and hunters and gatherers have always hunted eland, springbok, hartebeeste and small animals (the size of rabbits) that could be dried. Meacham (1960) said that early humans must have found an abundance of marine foods, and he quoted Sauer (1948) who argued that subsistence from the sea must have been both plentiful and supportive of a very much larger population than inland areas (1960:153). Edible nuts such as the long lasting Baobab are indigenous to East Africa. According to Lichtenstein (1807/1973) edible tubers and corms were widely used in South Africa:

A bosjesmen [=Bushman] will live for months together upon a few little bulbs, which at certain times of the year are to be found in the low parts of the country... (vol. 2:653)

Lichtenstein reports that small spears were used to spear fish. He reported the discovery of small slivers of bone from 2 to 6 centimetres, ground to a point at both ends. These spear-like tools have also been found in great numbers at both Elands Cave and Nelson Bay Cave in Africa (Mokhtar, 1981:648-9).

Matthew in *Climate and Evolution* (1939) considered the possibility of the “accidental” migration of animals. In “Natural rafts and the possibility overseas migration thereby” he wrote

Animals have been sighted on [remnants] of natural rafts and have been several times reported as being seen over a hundred miles off the mouths of the great tropical rivers such as the Ganges, Amazon, Congo, and Orinoco (1939:37)

He went on to make careful though wide mathematical assumptions covering about three centuries, and to calculate the chance of a gravid female of a species moving in this way to a new area and surviving and or evolving. He noted that some Archipelago Malays have been known to carry small animals which have escaped with similar results. He discussed the possible migration of human beings in similar vein (1939:40).

Only a simple craft may have been needed to cross large tracts of ocean. Such simple craft are described in Hornell (1946) which traces the evolution of boats. He wrote (1946:32) of traveller Morris Moreno who was “greatly astonished to see the strange craft used by the Indians”:

Their Canoas or boats are marvelous artificially make of two skinned like unto bladders are blown full at one end with quills; they have two rows of these bladders blown full, which are sewn together and made fast with the sinew of some wild beast; which when they are in the water, swell so that they are as light as can be (Hornell, 1946:32)

Hornell found numerous records of the use by Australian Aborigines of log floats: reports of the coastal natives who made long journeys between the islands and the mainland by supporting themselves when swimming by means of a short log or piece of wood placed across the chest. Stokes (1843:15:16) confirmed this.

Roth wrote:

On the Western side of York Peninsula natives cross rivers half lying on logs 5-6 feet long after the fashion of the Godavari in India; they propel them butt end forward (1910:3-4)

Hornell thought that geographical considerations would seem to indicate Central Asia as the most likely area where the coracle originated, in a very early period, within an area well watered and the home of nomad hunting [and gathering] people. This was because of the apparent need, not only for frequent crossing of rivers but for animal skins.

The coracle had to be, he thought necessarily of such kind as could be quickly and easily made by one person using the hides of animals taken in the chase with the pliant branches of willow and bamboo available.

As Hornell argued it is easy to see why coracles and in addition inflated skins (singly or in raft formation) were used later in areas of Asia such as Iraq, India,

the border of Tibet, and China. He attributed the wide use of the coracle across the above areas to the warm climate of South India which led to the growth of timber and, as the culture changed over time, this led to the dugout canoe as communities became more settled, needing transport for goods and passengers (1946:77).

One aspect that is surprising is the dangerous waters in which these frail craft were used and meteorological conditions such as existed in the Indian Ocean over thousands of years. Migrants would have been subject to these hazards in small craft. Despite the particularly bad weather and conditions which have existed in the Indian Ocean over time Hornell showed how people have to a great extent, even with primitive craft, overcome many of these dangerous situations. Stokes described a raft seen on the coast of Arnhem Land in 1846 where a raft of nine palm poles that were lashed together with vines carried several women and children propelled by two men one on each side. By means of natural human ingenuity such rafts were developed.

As for distance, a sailing speed for a raft would be perhaps 5 km. per hour, and three days sailing would be a maximum before replenishing supplies.

Indonesian artefacts of importance such as the outrigger canoes found throughout the Indian Ocean show the extent of Indonesian influence, as noted by Hornell (1954). Deschamps in *Madagascar* (1968) and Verin (1986:706) considered that the frequency of the canoe shows the route taken by the migrations of the Indonesians to Madagascar. It is a plausible hypothesis, Verin said, still under discussion, for the close links with Malagasy culture may have encouraged such loans.

Verin, an authority on the weather of the Indian Ocean, stated:

Having recognized the continuation of Indonesia to the settlement of Madagascar it remains to discuss the routes they may have taken. (1986:704)

He went on to say that many authors have pointed out the existence of the Great South Equatorial routes, which in theory might lead from Java to Madagascar. The South Equatorial current is strong between the southern coast of Java and the neighbouring region of the Amber Cape from August to September. Scholl, cited by Verin (1986:704), pointed out that the pumice stones from the Krakatoa explosion (1883) travelled along a route that brought them to the coast of Madagascar.

Although not absolutely untenable the idea of a *direct route* [my emphasis] from Insulindia [India] to Madagascar remains unlikely for reasons that Dongue [in Drury 1831] explains perfectly; although a direct route between Java and Madagascar meets with no insurmountable obstacles during the Southern winter, when tropical cyclones are absent from the region, we should note the factor that would make such a hypothesis invalid. The direct journey covers a distance of nearly 7 000 km. over a marine desert without a single landfall (paraphrase Verin, 1986:705).

As was noted in a previous chapter, using Jennings' maps (1971:5) it is possible to trace a route from the exposed shelf to the northwest. Ocean levels of less than 200 metres (that is, shallow) did exist (1971:5), with just a few deep-water channels, and it would have been possible for migrant peoples to retrace steps back north and cross via Borneo, eventually reaching New Guinea when it may have been joined still to Australia. By this means they could eventually have reached North Australia (Appendix 6).

Murray contended that the colonization of the Wallacean Islands north of Australia is old evidence of the ability of humans to cross substantial bodies of water.

The nature of sea currents and levels over the ancient period when humans could have migrated is of special interest to this thesis. Although it may be assumed that only distance counts when travelling over water one authority quotes a depth of 100 metres as a maximum depth to allow safe passage for a small, primitive watercraft. A small *mtepe* (ancient hand-sewn skin boat of the Swahili and Bajini) could not travel over deeper water. Shallow water indicates areas of dry land during those parts of the pleistocene when glaciations were at their peak. Meacham stated (Meacham and Fairbridge 1960) that for the ten millennia beginning in 16,000 B.C.E. "as the sea underwent the most rapid rise ever yet recorded in the geological record those living on the coastal areas were confined on the remaining flat land near the sea" (1960:153).

In attempting a study of an ocean as unstable as the Indian Ocean one has to take into account many variables such as winds, currents and periodic weather. The Indian Ocean has a predictable weather pattern in certain areas, for example its regular Easterlies. Erikson (2003:145) stressed that its ocean currents are very strong, like huge undersea tornados (monsoons) sometimes measuring 160 km. across and 4.8 km. deep. A study of the maps of the Royal Australian Navy charts (Australian Hydrographic Office) indicates that one route could take advantage of the Equatorial counter-current East, starting near the coast of Somalia, running through the Seychelles to the Chagos Islands (where Alexander Dalrymple in 1767 marked on his charts "The Chagos Islands are a good place to replenish supplies") and then veering towards the north coast of Australia. This would be especially so in November to March when winds are favourable, and the Southern Maldives could be used as a landfall. The charts indicate wind velocity would be from 19 km. to 48 km. per day (per wind rose). A crossing could possibly be done, no doubt with losses.

A possible route would be: from a beginning in Somaliland or Madagascar (the home of the Bajun); to the Southern Maldives, still in the equatorial current, slightly South to the Cocos group; then to Java (in the Indonesian Archipelago); then east to the Bali – Lombok area; from the Sunda Shelf and on to Flores (Timor); thence to Cape Bradshaw (now Darwin) in Australia.

A route between Madagascar and Australia could in theory be successful, based on a survival model for the carriage of water supplies and of food, the craft itself, distances and rate of travel, and landfalls (Fig 1).

Fig. 1 Possible survival mode - Categories

Carriage of water	Watercraft	Food sources	Landfalls	Distance/Rate of Travel
Animal skin bags	Rafts of bamboo or palm stems	Edible nuts (long lasting) e.g. Baobabs (2 years)	Unknown but possibly many	Primitive watercraft – 5 km/hr
Ostrich egg shells	Inflated Skins	Edible tubers	Possibly volcanic	Daily 120 Km
Animal bladders	One or more skins in tandem	Corms	Cautious progress: e.g. looking for the 'smudge' on the horizon before continuing or leaving	Maximum 3 days travel
Hollow bamboo stems (sealed at ends)	Coracles	Speared raw fish	Cays	300 Km
Lateral root pieces (to suck)	Sewn skin boats – <i>mtepe</i>	Cannibalism (in extremis)		Coastal depth under 130 m (minimal depth for sailing in small craft) for beaching between landfalls
Human urine				
Salt water				
Collected overnight condensation				

Human beings particularly if driven by necessity generally have an idea of direction, and of where they might be going. This was a time when humans could “swim miles” (Elkin, 1935) and had what seemed an innate knowledge of currents, tides, winds and instruments of navigation (stars), among other primary knowledge which was part of ancient human understanding. In that early era they would not fail to look for the “smudge on the horizon”.

Peoples migrating from South East Asian areas would possibly have taken routes through shallow coastal areas where rafts would have been viable and distance to Australia and its environs shorter. For migration “Out of Africa” however there was a vastly different set of circumstances at different periods as Heaney (1985:122) says. Migration on land was perhaps a matter of dispersal into unoccupied areas.

Macaulay (2005) claimed that it is now accepted that modern humans left Africa fairly recently, as “can be determined by measuring genetic variation in an

isolated area in South East Asia". Macaulay and his team have proposed that the "dispersal happened via a more Southerly route". However others (Henneberg, personal communication, 2006) claim that new genetics results show various levels of mixing between Africans and locals.

In the Pliocene the Mediterranean has been a dry desert. Medlicott (1879) argued that there was similarly a dry land coast reaching from the Bay of Bengal to the tip of the eastern coast of Africa. This is not confirmed by later studies, except for the exposure of the continental shelf in the Late Pleistocene, but it opens the possibility of other dry land paths quite close to Australia. For example Rottnest Island off the coast of Western Australia, both in our time and in the remote past, was settled by Aborigines who could walk to where Perth is now, although this was at times of low sea level, when in the northern hemisphere there were glaciations.

There have been tectonic upheavals in the Indian Ocean where Verin (1986) said harbours and islands have disappeared overnight - represented in the myth of Mojombo off the Island of Madagascar where all was completely destroyed by a catastrophic inundation (Mokhtar, 1981:713). Twenty four hours after the huge Island of Krakatoa (Simkin et al. 1983) disappeared with the complete loss of life of all kind, a smaller island arose in Krakatoa's place called Anak Krakatau (Child of Krakatoa), which is still rising, and is now at 400 metres. When an island explodes from an undersea volcanic ridge another will rise in its place if the ridge is less than 300 metres deep. One report describes this area as uninhabitable for two years.

Authors such as Birdsell (1993), Thorne (2003), and Jones (in Mellars and Stringer, 1989) concentrate on the crossing of Wallace's Line, between the western Indonesian Archipelago and the Sahul Shelf. There is however hardly any evidence as to how migrant people may or may not have handled the main part of the route out of Africa. Most authors remark on the number of islands and landfalls that might have been present in the late Pleistocene/early Holocene period, but very little discussion, if any, has covered the hazards or possibilities. On Page 38 Mum had written of any of the preceding problems. This has been recently discussed by Macaulay et al. (2005), arguing for a coastal route on genetic grounds.

According to Kennedy, in Flores:

Here again we have a remnant of a past migration, in this instance a survival of the time when the ancestors of the modern Melanesians – who now live in the Solomon Islands, Fiji, and other islands in the Pacific beyond New Guinea – passed through Indonesia on their way out to the great ocean. The Flores-Timor region, at the eastern end of the Lesser Sunda chain, seems to have functioned as a geographical cul-de-sac for most of the waves of migration into the archipelago, and is now a kind of living museum of all the past and present racial types of the islands: earlier and later Malay, Vedoid, Negrito, Australoid, Papuan, and Melanesian (1942:30.)

Kennedy's model is what would nowadays be deemed a rather prolix "layer-cake" interpretation, but the general point remains valid.

To summarise, ancient migration under favourable circumstances was possible. In the Indian Ocean the prevailing winds are westerly, except near the coast of Australia where the winds become variable (in "Pilot Chart of the Indian Ocean" 1966 published by the United States Oceanographic Office, Washington).

In other words, there is an optimal if variable time in the weather patterns of the Indian Ocean when danger is lessened, permitting movement along the suggested survival route described in this chapter.

CHAPTER 6

The Bugis and others in Australia

Sumatra is the western-most, and next to Borneo the largest, of the great Sunda Islands in the Malay Archipelago. It is approximately 1600 Km by 400 Km at its widest part. Along the western (Indian Ocean) side lies a chain of islands, collectively called the Mentawai Islands, and to the east is the Riau-Lingga archipelago and the large offshore island of Pulau Bangka.

I will make the case that Sumatran colonies existed in North Australia, possibly well before the 10th Century. The Berndts worked almost exclusively with the Yolngu, and it is probable that like Warner, they were given artefacts when they retired. Father Joseph Glinka, at the Airlangga University in Surabaya, indicated that he had seen Bugis (Sulawesi) artefacts recently at the University of Western Australia, the home university of the Berndts.

A reading of the work of Shebbeare (1763) among others suggests general occupation of northern Australia by Sumatrans. In Australia, Sumatra had diamond mines, gold mines, crops of useful spices and other products. Shebbeare, writing well before the British discovery of Australia, knew about Australia.

Whilst we acquire new lands in Terra Australis, we rescind the power of supplying them with our Produce; and although we possess the soil, the benefits thereof will be acquired by those Asiatic States who can serve them with the cheapest necessities...

Shebbeare made a clear distinction between Terra Australis and the Asiatic States, whom he referred to as “our enemies, from whom we wrest their colonies”. (1763:75):

The Chinese and the Indians have neither plantations in Terra Australis [yet] almost all the gold and silver which have been brought from the mines of Terra Australis, are to be found in their dominions, and carried thither by our navies...(1763:76).

In arguing that the conquest of new lands incurs a cost, to make his point Shebbeare cited the Sumatrans, who he claimed, were “discomfited in Terra Australis” and transported the King of Cambodia to a colony in Terra Australis, so they they, not Cambodia, should enjoy “the Trade of the realm, replete with diamonds, gold and precious Merchandize” (1763:296). This passage contains an early reference to “Australian” colonies (1763:298). These precious commodities still exist in North Australia: diamonds are still in production at the Argyle fields in North Australia. Shebbeare wrote that there were other peoples also in occupation, from time to time “driven from their Colonies in Terra Australis” (1763:296).

Kennedy and later Mason (2000) did not question the fact of settlements in Australia by the Sumatrans, only raising the fact that it was unwise Sumatran

overspending on tribal warfare that brought their decline. War was endemic (Appendix 16) across many politically unsettled petty kingdoms. Shebbeare described battles in Terra Australis between Sumatran and other peoples settled in Terra Australis. These battles “shed the blood of millions [of Sumatrans]” (Shebbeare, 1763:258). After much fighting the Sultan of Goa occupied the shores of the Flores Sea. Sopher (1965:154) describes what followed as “the explosion of Gowa [Goa] as a major maritime power”. Gowa was a Macassan sultanate established in the 14th century in what is now Sulawesi and was part of the Indonesian archipelago (Andaya, 1981 and Carey, 1984). Gowa was for centuries one of the powers behind the trade in trepang.

Shebbeare, a controversial source, refers to eastern Archipelago people and their use of the word “Indian” when referring to the Australian inhabitants, with whom they seem to be on very good terms (1763:296-294). As Sumatra itself had much earlier come under the control of the rulers of the Indian continent they may have referred to the Goanese in India. It remains uncertain to which people they referred but it is clear that Shebbeare distinguished between Asiatic (which he used to describe Chinese, Cambodian and Indian) colonies and Australian colonies.

There is often doubt about map nomenclature in early times. Maps were often marked with the author’s name or other names and naming was unreliable. The Dominican priest Fr Ricci, based in Manila in the 17th Century, drew a 1676 map (of which a facsimile has been published by the Library of New South Wales) and marked it with the words Terra Australis (Appendix 14). It has been suggested that the area marked Terra Australis may not have referred to Australia: that “Terra Australis” was largely an hypothetical concept. The authenticity of Ricci’s map of Terra Australis was verified by Dutch slavers and traders who were informed by captives from Terra Australis of the areas (Whitehouse, 1995:65-6).

It is of interest that the term Goa was the name of an Aboriginal language/group (also known as Koa and Gowa, amongst other names: AusAnthrop, 2005). The Koa area is shown on Tindale and Jones’ language map and surrounds the area around Winton in Queensland (see <http://www.samuseum.sa.gov.au/archives/HDMS/aa338/tindaletribes/koa.htm>)

While Gowa was expanding (Sopher, 1765) slavers and traders had been very active in the Islands south of the Flores Sea. Sopher mentions that a people called the Bajo (or Sea Nomads) had intermarried with the hill people of the interior of Flores, and in fact most of the population, Sopher suggests, (1965:155) and most of the Bajo resulted from these mixed marriages. These Bajo were not the same people as the Baijini: they were fishermen like the Baijini but lived on their boats: they did not build houses nor had they the skills particular to the Baijini. There were no boat people (Bayau/Bajo) on Sumba or Timor or Sumbawa.

So not only was there endemic war over a large part of the Archipelago but there was also a great biological mix of peoples. The royal families of south Sulawesi were thought to be divine, and hence to have white blood (Cummings, 2002:4).

Endemic war in the Archipelago between the many small kingdoms ruled over by Sultans was no doubt one of the reasons the Indies finally went into decline and were forced to withdraw from their outlying settlements (Appendix 16).

Mason (2000:4) asks why Western democracy has not succeeded in the Asian nations, and further, why Indonesian children might reasonably think that their nation has an historic right to all of New Guinea, part of the Philippines and possibly even some of Northern Australia. The reason he says, is embedded in Asian history, especially pre-colonial. A brief discussion of that history follows.

Sumatra was first peopled by the Javanese, according to Coleman, in approximately the Javanese year 1000 (or AD 1043). Coleman (1832) writing on the Hindu religion (said to have strongly influenced the Batak tribes, at that time, a dominant influence in the region) states that, according to various traditions:

[Sumatra] was first peopled from Java and it seems clear the Hindu religion was introduced into that country [Sumatra] by the first settlers or some of the earliest visitors. There can be no question of it having been conveyed from thence into Sumatra (1832:360).

During this period, by far the most eventful in the history of Java, colonies of foreigners established themselves not only in Java but in various other islands of the Archipelago. The arts, particularly those of architecture and sculpture, flourished, and the language, literature and institutions of the sub-continent of India were transfused throughout the islands of the East. It was during this time the principal temples in Java, of which only ruins now exist, were built (Coleman, 1832:361).

How these flourished on Sumatra is not so clear, according to Coleman. The magnificent and almost unrivalled monuments to high culture (Borobudur, Prambanan) in Java are not matched in Sumatra. Coleman says (1832) there is little recorded history “even among such competent scholars as Krom and Ferrand”; but Ferrand was one of the first historians to show it was Sumatra and not Java which gave an early impetus to the expansion of Hindu civilization in the area. The monumental buildings that Haywood reported, with their “past glory” (1935), are now deteriorated, and are only represented on the island of Nias, now a popular resort, to the west of Sumatra, the homeland of the Batak. They do not exist now in Java as formerly.

The ancient kingdom Srivijaya in Sumatra was colonized by perhaps, Coleman says, the first and second century AD and this empire “was in full cultural development by the 7th century” (Coleman, 1832). During this period Java may be said to have risen to the height of her civilization from where she conducted extensive intercourse over the whole Archipelago.

Srivijaya was inhabited by 1863 by Batak mountain tribes who said they came from Java (Appendix 17). Some of these people are now Muslim and practice circumcision.

The personal appearance of the Bataks struck Coleman as bearing “considerable resemblance to Hindus”, although only a description of hair and dress is given (1832:328), but he mentions here the Bugis of Sulawesi, interesting in that Dalrymple also reported:

There are Bugis there in [Arnhem Land] who are Mohammedans and are good traders... (paraphrase, Dalrymple, 1767).

Coleman continues:

The inhabitants of the Wadja [Sumatran area] were celebrated for their enterprise and intelligence... [they undertake] commercial speculation with a high character for honourable and fair dealing from the Western shores of Siam then to the Eastern Coast of New Holland (1832:344).

It is clear from these references that Coleman considered the Sumatrans were in contact with North Australia.

Time mitigates against studying the tremendous amount of literature available on the whole subject of the Batak but one thing stands out very clearly. The whole area of the Indian Ocean, the Indonesian Archipelago, Northern and perhaps Southern Australia, particularly the areas up to New Guinea, the Kimberleys and the extreme west coast of Western Australia were known to these people, and had previously been visited by them.

It seems possible that where great numbers of people were concentrated over a given area such as the Archipelago, the Islands adjacent and the East African coast in the Indian Ocean and associated Islands, and advanced people were settled in Java and the area of North Australia adjacent, there could have been contact with the Aborigines of the Kimberleys and elsewhere by people settled in the area.

With regard to the religion of the Batak people, the Sumatrans have strong links with the ancient world of the Malagasy. In the Batak culture ancestor worship is one of the main purposes of religious ritual. It is a religious duty to both the living and the dead. Schneider and Weiner wrote:

The philosophy [behind] the Batak sacrifice is simple. The ancestral cult furnishes the continuation of the family soul cult. One informs the departed] concerning all-important family matters...one remains a member of the great family, the living and the dead... (1999:89)

Interestingly, the Madagascan view is practically the same although conducted very differently as they are not head-hunters, and the skull has a great deal to do with the ceremony.

It was Deschamps (1968) who first wrote that Malagasy owes much to the East (Indonesia) including its influence on house forms, language, rice culture and some aspects of ancestor worship (1968:696). We now know that Malagasy is related to Maanyan, a Dayak language of the Barito River, Southern Borneo; but

there are also many Malay and Javanese-related words in Malagasy, mostly referring to the sea and sailing (Adelaar, 1995), from which we can infer that it was Malays and Javanese who were the mariners truly responsible for the settlement of Madagascar in the 8th century AD, the Maanyan being perhaps crew or passengers. The Java-Srivijaya connection brings us back to the Batak. The latter aspect of contact is very important. Between the Batak of Sumatra and the Malagasy (Schneider and Weiner, 1999) there was not a great deal of difference in some tribal practices. The Batak kept small buildings in which the ancestral idols were kept. The space was called "The Bale". The rooms consisted of four pillars, and were not enclosed; within the four pillars of one room were stored seventeen heads. Batak were head-hunters and feasts were part of ancestor worship. This was not the case with the Malagasy. Loeb said that the priests (*Datu*) used this area when they wished to communicate with the ancestors. The word *Datu* in Malay/Sumatran means *respected lord*, and the role of the *Datu* appears to parallel that of priest.

The Malagasy had a different method of honouring the ancestors. To both Batak and Malagasy (pre-Muslim) the souls of the dead were more important than the souls of the living and until recent times the ceremonies of the Malagasy were performed regularly. Weiner and Schneider stated of the Malagasy:

The process of clothing spirits to enable them to speak... resembles other ways in which [they]... communicate and exchange with royal ancestors... including annual purification services... of the bodies. In these services the [skeletons] of different forms of royalty are unwrapped, and re-wrapped, regenerated and re-buried... (Feeley-Harnik, 1989, 75)

In both cases a heightened sense of awareness is achieved by possession by a medium, or in the case of the Batak, a *Datu*. The state of possession and loss of consciousness takes place at the time of the Batak taking a head (in sacrifice to the God) or in the Malagasy who not being head-hunters used a medium or shaman (Loeb, 1923:80), usually a woman subsequently overcome by music and dancing.

Though the Malagasy vocabulary is predominately Indonesian "we should not forget there is a Bantu contribution. It is on two levels: not only of vocabulary but also of word structure" (Verin, 1986:710). The fact that Bantu words and word roots are found in the Malagasy language and civilisation indicate that African settlement was early. Verin argues that the shift from consonant finals to vowels that happened then must have been caused by a Bantu sub-stratum. Verin says (1986) this change must have taken place soon after the Indonesians settled down, and during the time the Malagasy were adapting to the new Bantu speakers.

We know little about how Madagascar fitted into the expansion of Bantu speaking people. That many were sea-going is known, as for example the Baijini (see Chapter 3). The Baijini fisher folk were at first settled in the adjacent Comoro Islands. The Bantu speaking people presumably passed though the Comoros to get to Madagascar. It is therefore likely the Bantu language spoken on the Comoros was the source of the non-Austronesian influences on Malagasy.

The discussion now moves to the question of the Batak.

Loeb (1923:127) argued that Sumatrans share a close relationship with the ancient Australians, for example with “the ancient Australian Aborigine beliefs” and the animist religious beliefs of the Batak. These religious beliefs of the Batak he divided into two main sections: cosmology and cosmogony: the world of Gods, their concept of the soul (*Tendi*) and a belief in demons and ghosts; particularly the place of ancestors (Loeb, 1923:75).

There is a belief in a middle world, which belongs to man. The lower world belongs to the dead: ghosts and demons. The “good dead” go to heaven. The Batak have a High God who has a beginning only in himself, and does not concern himself about the Earth, so is not sacrificed to (Loeb, 1923:75). The Batak perceive their High God as an anthropomorphic figure, who in place of a wife had a “fabulous blue chicken” who laid three large eggs out of which three actual worlds of Gods came. These three Gods reside one level lower than the High God and are always worshipped at sacrifice (Loeb, 1923:76).

Loeb cited Ködding (1885) who has pointed out the connections between the Batak and Hindu mythologies (Loeb, 1923:77), where in the Hindu account Krishna is killed by the curse of a woman and reincarnated with Vishnu (Creation). This Hindu relationship is revealed, Loeb argued, by the Sanskrit word *Debata*, and there is some evidence such as the golden “world egg” where such a God as Brahma “created the world” and other Gods (1923:77-8). The Brahman myth is converted into the Batak myth.

... most important are the priests or “Datu” who receive the help and blessing of these Gods “at ... magical workings” (Loeb, 1923:76)

In fact the Datu is the personification of the God. Loeb’s hierarchy outlines the place of the gods in a well defined list of “door keepers of the heavens”. In the hierarchy is a Messenger of the Gods, and a Spy of the Gods. There are different levels of importance to the end of the list. The last one is the Huntsman of the Gods. He catches souls with his two dogs, and when the souls of people die suddenly this is the reason (Loeb, 1923:76).

Loeb postulated much evidence of connection between some ancient Australians and the early Batak, raising the question of whether Malays or Batak were represented in the Wandjina paintings of the Kimberleys.

To follow are some of his and others’ points of comparison with some Aboriginal religious beliefs and practice, focusing on the respective cosmologies, ancestor worship, the Churinga, the concept of *Tendi* or Soul, borrowed motifs, the use of idols and the motif of the serpent.

In the cycle of origin myth from the Yolngu, previously called the Murngin by Warner (1936), Djanggawal and his two Sisters are said to have “come from the North”. This could, if one wished, be interpreted as the islands of Southeast Asia.

These mythical Creator Beings are credited with passing through the land, filling it with creatures and sacred sites, where ritual is to be encoded and to be special places eternally.

In Arnhem Land creation history the Creator Beings are credited also with meeting the Baijini on their journey to Arnhem Land, to have exchanged Feathered Strings (highly secret sacred Rannga) and to have laid down certain rituals and practices for the Arnhem Land people.

Early Arnhem Land religious structure did indeed resemble early Batak worship in some respects. Berndt outlined this in the origin myth (Berndt, 1916:257). Unlike the Batak, of course, not all Aboriginal tribes had the same High God structure. The High Gods of some Aborigines were mostly anthropomorphic, and came under the category of Hero. In most areas each had its myth of origin, the Great Snake, propitiation to avoid catastrophe, rituals to ensure increase and other similar means of maintaining the status quo of seed-time and harvest.

Another phenomenon is reminiscent of Batak religious practice. An Aboriginal painting of a place referred to as a Lake of Fire is situated at Nardoo Creek, Queensland, Australia. The Lake of Fire measures 22 metres across. It shows hundreds of hands reaching up out of this fire “clenched in every form of agony, condemned to stay there forever” (Mathew, 1899:127).

A death ritual of the Batak refers to the passage of the dead on their way to heaven. Loeb says (1923) that in Batak religion Hell is this Lake of Fire and the Batak souls are on their way to heaven after death. There is an impediment across the Lake of Fire that causes the bad souls to fall and the good souls to go straight to heaven.

The following is a description of death (Hull, 1846), from the area South of the Loddon River and in the neighbouring districts. There is a tradition of a being possessing some of the attributes of a Supreme Power to whom they assign the Creation or making of the first Man and Woman. Hull noted “remarkable affinity here to the Hindoo [sic] Brahmanical tradition”. He went on to say that the name of this being is *gy Pundyil* who, he says, is “recognized as an all powerful God of the Aborigines over most of Australia”. Hull says that this Being subjects the Spirits of deceased persons, good or bad, to the ordeal of fire, to try them; the good being at once liberated whilst the bad are left to suffer for an undetermined period, as in the Batak myth (1846:2).

Rituals such as circumcision were practiced widely in North Australia and the Central desert, but not in all parts of the South. Circumcision was already practiced by the Batak. Other ritual practices, for example an increase rite (like the Yolngu *Kunapippi*), were practised by both the Batak and the Aborigines.

There were also trade routes around Australia. Because of this anomaly only one outline of myth and practice used by the Aborigines of North Australia is described, across an area that covered Arnhem Land and spread right across the whole northern area, taking in the Central Desert and leading to the north western Australian coast.

Human blood sacrifice (Loeb, 1923), cannibalism (Elkin, 1944) and sun-worship rituals (Perry, 1926) were reported to have been practiced here and elsewhere, as well as legendary painting in caves all over the North and particularly in the Kimberley area. Some rituals were what were called highly "secret sacred", such as Blood Sacrifice, circumcision and finger amputation.

Like the Batak, the Australian Aborigines worshipped in caves, a practice admittedly widespread worldwide. All origin myths indicate they used a special Corroboree ground and their sacred hierarchy comprised the Elders of each discrete tribe who held a similar role to the Batak Datu in conducting specific services.

The Churinga was an important part of Aboriginal ritual such as the 'man-making' or initiation ceremonies. There were some similarities in the way the Churinga of the Australian Aborigines and the magic Staff of the Batak were used. The Batak magic Staff (Appendix 15) was a means of conveying what amounted to a curse on a victim, even causing diseases and death. To effect death wishes by the magic Staff a substance called *Si biaska* was obtained in the following way: an enemy, taken prisoner in war was killed and cut to pieces, roasted in iron pots adding several herbs. The resulting substance was kept in bottles and stone containers and great magical effect was attributed to using it. It was also used in Batak initiation rituals, and in war to cause fright and terror to the other side. Some ceremonies involved sacrificial amputation of body parts (Loeb, 1923).

The Aboriginal Churinga is used in rainmaking ceremonies and is not usually associated with death. It is concerned with painful rituals such as initiation, punishment and ritual amputation of fingers but death is unusual. Sometimes the Australian Churinga is used as a Bullroarer, and it is often used at rituals in the night. Used by an experienced operator it is an eerie and frightening performance, effective in creating a seemingly supernatural situation.

Schnitger (1939) wrote of the similarity of the Batak Staff or *Toenggal* to the Churinga, although he noted that the significance and use of the Staff as in conjuring rainfall, in circumcision, in sacrifice and its role in meetings, is wider than that of the Churinga (1939:126-9).

An extremely important ritual for both people was the practice of totemism as an increase rite. Neither religion, in embracing totemic beliefs, required the eating of their particular totemic animal but both peoples believed themselves to be descended from a certain totem, such as the giant snake. Loeb said that in the court of the Divine Ruler Singa Mangarradja in Indonesia snakes were fed and were sacred in pre-Muslim days (Loeb, 1935:48). The Batak worshipped the Great World Serpent, *Naga*, under the earth, as in many ancient belief systems, including that of the Aboriginal peoples of Arnhem Land, the usual principal evil Divinity is the Great World Serpent. It resides in the underground of the Earth. Legends describe how the formation of the world as we know it is brought about by these good and bad forces. The belief that this monstrous serpent confined to the underworld will one day break his bonds and Naga will escape destroying all

the present middle world (Loeb, 1935:77) is held by a number of peoples. A giant snake (Rainbow Serpent) was also part of the Aboriginal myth of creation.

In ancient Aboriginal culture there are certain taboos on mentioning certain names and at certain periods. The Batak practise similar rules of avoidance, for example a man may not sit beside his mother-in-law.

The most important factor in Batak religion according to Warnek is the notion of the soul: the Tendi. Loeb, a native Dutch speaker, defined the word Tendi (1923) as the spirit of the "soul of man", "his individuality". He said the Tendi is believed to originate while the person is still in the body of the mother, and determines at this time its lot in life. After birth, it exists near the body which it sometimes leaves. This leaving makes the person sick. Therefore one sacrifices to one's Tendi and tries to keep it in good humour. Where Tendi is concerned, Loeb said (1923:79), when ordinary cult services fail the Datu, or priest, has an excuse for failure and inaction: Loeb suggested all is considered pre-destined, and human effort is to no avail.

The entire religious life of the Batak is concerned with improving one's lot in life, in the here and now, to paraphrase Loeb, by increasing one's Tendi effectively by keeping it well nourished with the Tendi of other people, through cannibalism. By some means they worked out the seat of the Tendi on earth was in the individual's skull or brain: as Loeb wrote (1923:79) the Tendi enters and leaves the body via the fontanel. The Tendi as the base of the soul in Aboriginal belief has almost the same meaning as the Batak in the religious hierarchy.

The Batak used a doll to express mourning. This doll was made with strings and made to dance with the mourners in the Batak market place. This recalls similar practice of the people of Arnhem Land who arguably copied this doll from the visits of the Macassans for trepang fishing in between the 14th and 19th centuries until expelled in 1906 by the Australian government. It is a fairly modern artefact and was used by the Arnhem Land people when the Macassan trepanners left to go home. Its meaning for the Aborigines is an expression of sorrow for the Macassans leaving at the end of their visits each year. There is a great deal more ritual concerned with the Batak doll, which is able to dance and cry. As the modern period advanced this doll – an influence on the Yolgnu from the Batak by way of the Macassans - was used for more mundane purposes in Arnhem Land.

It should be noted here that Loeb said that the Batak "make no idols or representations of their Gods" other than the wooden dolls that were similar to and made by the Aborigines in the late Macassan style (Flood, 1997). These wooden dolls have the name of *debata idup* in Indonesia (Live God). They are male and female, and are worshipped by childless couples in hopes of begetting children (Loeb, 1935:76).

Another similarity is the medicine man. In some Aboriginal tribes a person approaches the medicine man because of illness. The medicine man gathers herbs, oil, and other substances for the sick person. A period of massage of the body and being oiled aids the removal of this foreign body after much ritual. A similar routine takes place with the Batak when the Datu carries out a similar

ritual (Loeb, 1935:100-101). In both cases, if the medicine is accepted by the patient a piece of bone or some other foreign body comes out of the patient in the oily hand of the operator. This, said Loeb, tests credibility!

Elkin (1944) suggested a link between the magical ability of psychic specialisation of the Aboriginal Medicine Man and similar persons from Tibet (Elkin, 1944:69). In Elkin's view, there seems little reason to doubt that this role was introduced by way of the Torres Strait Islands and diffused across Australia. There is a common thread of similarity in some Aboriginal and Batak religious observance, as outlined in Table 2.

Table 2. Similarities between Aboriginal and Batak religious observance

Link	Aboriginal	Batak
Priest	Medicine Man	Datu
Blood sacrifice	Complex	Complex
Magic 'Stick' or wand	Tjuringa/Churinga (Elkin, 1994:69)	Staff

All humans have a tendency to create religions, and all religions have common characteristics even without communicating with each other: examples are spiritual beings (gods), mysticism at death and birth rituals (for example, baptism). Similarities may well be a result of parallel development.

To understand better why it has been claimed that Sumatran Batak played a role in Australia it is helpful to list some other similarities between Australian Aborigines and Sumatran Batak.

1. Striped Clothing

A preference for striped clothing in yellow, black, red and white distinguishes some Batak and Australian art. Stripes are prominent in Batak dress; and see the photograph of individuals in striped clothing on the cave roof on Mount Borradaile (Parker and Roberts, 2003). Heine-Geldern (see Loeb, 1935:314) also discussed the images of clothing in black, white, yellow and red stripes in individual roof paintings in Sumatra.

2. Ancestor worship, widespread over the known world.

This was practiced in Sumatra and in Australia by some Aboriginal tribes (Loeb, 1923 and Elkin, 1944).

3. Cannibalism and the notion of spirit and soul

This was practised by the Batak; it was the supreme sacrifice to the gods. *The Blood Sacrifice Complex* (Loeb, 1923) refers to finger amputation and circumcision in both Australian Aborigines and the Batak. There is anecdotal evidence that it was practised in North Australia where the dead were consumed; Idriess reported "Sometimes a message-boy got speared and his kidney-fat was cut out and eaten, but mostly he got through" (1954:55), this being among the

“Charoo” (=Djaru). Pickering (1999), however, warned that such claims must be taken very cautiously:

When subjected to critical analysis, the majority of reports of Aboriginal cannibalism can be demonstrated to have their basis, and one end of the scale, in innocent misunderstanding and misinterpretations and, at the other end of the scale, in deliberate lies... many historic reporters neglected the social and cultural contexts in which their reported observations occurred (Pickering, 1999:67).

Pickering (1999) did not deny that cannibalism may have existed among some Aboriginal groups, but he found the evidence less than adequate. Grey (1841) recorded his efforts to engage native interpreters in South West Australia without success because of their belief that North West Aborigines were fierce cannibals: it may be that this is an example of the ‘social and cultural contexts’ to which Pickering referred.

Yet there are suggestions from many sources (Coleman and Dalrymple among others) that cannibalism existed over a period among the Batak (Loeb, 1935). Coleman writes that the Batak were cannibals:

The enemy is no sooner slain but it is decapitated and treated with every indignity... Some accounts go so far as to represent them as devouring the raw heart of their enemy as the Bugis did. (1832:344-5)

This reference in Coleman was termed *Lor Dara* or “The Feast of The Bloody Heart”. He said “The Bugis (a people closely related to the Macassans) are said to devour it as among the Batak” (1832:344), that is, the Batak were cannibals.

de Jonge, Schefold et al. (1990) commented that the individual’s spiritual life does not end - therefore death followed by cannibalism is not considered the end. According to sources cited by Sollas (1924:327) the Arunta (Arrente) had a belief in the soul being immortal. Taplin also told of an old Aboriginal man lying at the point of death, who points upwards and murmurs, “my Tendi (spirit) is up there” (Sollas, 1924:327). He went on to claim that the word Tendi “is both Aboriginal and Sumatran”: I cannot comment on this.

Sollas wrote on the Island of Death:

In the Far North surrounded by the sea lies the Island of the Dead... the spirits of the dead, white airy forms...feed on the animals and fruits at night. These spirits at night they dance, by day they sleep... (1924:276).

This recalls Wood Jones’ conversation with people in the area of the groups of unformed stones (1926), covered in Chapter 8.

Sollas said:

The spirit of man not only survives his death but exists before his birth... and is referred to as the inhabitation of a spirit. Much the same meaning attaches to the Batak Tendi (1924:324)

4. Biological link

Elkin suggests there were biological links between the Batak and Australian Aborigines and he believed them to be settled together in the Kimberleys. The Aborigines in the Kimberleys were more robust than their counterparts in other parts of Australia (Mathew, 1899:55f)). As will be covered in Chapter 7 Grey's sketch indicated the large Wandjina figure had blue eyes. Recent Aboriginal people told Wood Jones (1925) the spirits had blue eyes.

The following chapters will discuss two more suggestions of connection between Australian Aborigines and the Batak. One is the large red-robed figures of the Wandjina. The second is the stone collections, recurrent across Australia, and their possible meaning.

CHAPTER 7

The Wandjinas

In 1838 George Grey found a group of remarkable paintings in caves on the Glenelg River, near the north-west coast of Australia. In 1891 J. Bradshaw, a landholder in the Wandjina area of North West Australia, discovered more extraordinary paintings of human figures on the walls of caves in the area of the Kimberley between Brunswick Bay and the Regent River, some twelve kilometers north-east of Grey's findings.

These curious anthropomorphs are known to the indigenous inhabitants as Wandjina (Appendix 18) and are not confined to this area. They are found inland off the North Coast of Western Australia over a wide area in the Drysdale Mission area at Napier Broome Bay and at adjacent Parry Harbour, an area about 160 km. from North East Prince Regent River.

A number of authors have commented on them, including Stokes (1846), Warner (1937), Levathes (1994), Menzies (2001) and McIntyre (1977) but it has not been established when and by whom these paintings were originally executed, although it is known that elders do repaint them (Chaloupka, 1992). Although much Aboriginal art is old the Wandjinas seem to be more ancient than any other, some dated to 14 Ka ago. Some authors offer explanations as to whom or what they might refer to. General local opinion suggests they belong with the Aboriginal Dreaming or Cosmology. That modern Aborigines have no idea of the purpose of these paintings and stones suggests a considerable age. Some claim them to be superior to other Aboriginal art (Elkin, 1930; Mathew, 1894:42).

There are two standards in the art of the Wandjinas: one usually represents the figure of a person in a long red gown, with halo as headwear in the outstanding examples (Worsnop, 1897). The other type comprises badly executed copies of the large Wandjina figure. There is a small number of "Bushman-type" paintings which do not belong to the standard, and although there are some clues, more research is needed to establish where they fit. The large Wandjina figure and other similar types comprise the main collection. The paintings discovered by Bradshaw were large: one was 3.76 metres tall. The people in the paintings wore a headdress, in some cases red and some cases blue, and a long red gown, and the figures were painted on the cave ceiling. The most impressive of Grey's paintings were human forms, both haloed, and one of giant proportions wearing a red robe with fitted sleeves (Mathew, 1894:44).

At least thirty eight authors have written on the Wandjinas, among them Mountford, an ethnologist at the South Australian Museum, who stated that "considerable controversy" had been aroused by the publication of both the sketches that Bradshaw (and earlier, Sir George Grey) had made of them. In 1929 Love claimed that "the mystery surrounding these paintings was solved" (1956:30). It was not solved.

NOTE: This figure is included on page 53 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Fig 3. An example of a Wandjina

(<http://australianstamp.com/Coin-web/feature/history/abdream.htm>)

An unusual interpretation of the Wandjina style was outlined by Worsnop (1897:16) who proposed that it has a fearful aspect. Worsnop had been rather surprised when he saw this “gigantic head and upper face ... staring grimly down over me”. It was a little different from the usual Wandjina. Worsnop said (1897:16) “its head was encircled by bright red rays... like the sun, inside of this there were broad stripes of very brilliant red... crossed by lines of white... the face was painted vividly white and eyes black.”

Crawford (1968) has claimed that Grey’s giant figure represented an effort to gain control over a hostile native people and was meant to intimidate them. Two modern authors on the Wandjinas in Kimberley Art (McNiven and Russell, 1997:801) suggest that the Wandjina clothing represents the

ornamentation that Aboriginal Australian men paint on their bodies during ceremonies.

Faded lines on the headgear resembled writing. Elkin (1930:274) and Love (1930:12) suggested the writing represented fruits or berries used as food and concluded, "There do not seem to be any feature that might be supposed foreign to the ideas and practices of the natives". Grey's Aboriginal guide had asserted it was zigzag lightning (Elkin, 1948:13-14).

Davidson claimed that the paintings were a product of Aboriginal religion and philosophy (McNiven and Russell, 1997:804) and that the idea, maintained by some, that Australian Aborigines are incapable of producing such remarkable paintings, must be considered nonsense. Elkin (1948) outlined Grey's findings in March 1838 of two caves containing paintings in North West Australia. Grey's large robed figure and the writing had been photographed by Coate in 1947 (Appendix 19) and Grey had himself sketched the Wandjina (reproduction after Elkin, 1948:5). The descriptions and reproductions of these paintings have been strongly criticized by some modern authors, in particular McNiven and Russell (1997). The Frobenius Expedition visited Grey's caves to make exact copies of this art and make ethnological inquiry. No results having become available by 1948, Elkin took the opportunity of asking his colleague Coate who was working with the linguist Capell on language in the area of Grey's caves, to check (1948:5). Coate's photograph shows little resemblance to Grey's sketch and has led to questions as to whether Grey's reproduction is exact.

A check with Grey (1841:214f) highlights the discrepancy between Coate's photographic reproduction and Grey's sketch. Coate's guides had been two Aborigines who had decided which were the caves attributed to Grey and it is possible the caves may not in fact have been the Grey caves. Elkin went on to say (1948:2) "neither these research workers, missionaries nor the few white settlers in this area" knew exactly where Grey's two caves were. In 1946

another opportunity came for a Mr. H. Coate... under Dr. Capell's guidance, agreed as part of his work to record myths and interpretations from natives in their language... (Elkin, 1948:2)

At Elkin's request Coate also agreed to search for Grey's caves. The highlight, Elkin says, was the finding of the original caves. Caves with Wandjina paintings are not uncommon in the Northern areas but a stone seat in Grey's cave seems to identify it to a certain extent. Other sketches in Grey's account are of small animals, plants and scenes where the party rested, and they do not depart to any extent from the original.

On the other hand after 103 years, and as Grey stated at the time:

The painting [of the Red Robed figure] was more injured by the damp and atmosphere, and had the appearance of being much more defaced and ancient than any of the others which we had seen (1841:215)

Elkin stated:

This particular Wandjina is situated on the ceiling of a low cave, which extends back often about 30 feet from the entrance... and [is] of intimidating appearance. (1910:258)

This was similar to the figure Grey sketched (Grey, 1836-1838.) There is usually one particularly large model which is the most important displayed and similar smaller models which are not so well done, which makes it look more like a collection. The model in this cave, Elkin said, measured 4 metres from the sole of the foot to the top of the head, and was depicted horizontally along the rock face. It had eyes but no nose; the face partially surrounded by a horseshoe shaped headdress (Elkin, 1948:259). This display was typical of the main Wandjina figures. They are outstanding in appearance.

Because “retouching” was usual in the Northern area, this may well have been a cause of deterioration also (Chaloupka, 1992:16). This is a tradition among the Aborigines to ensure increase rites take place and is practiced generally. Grey’s text, however, stated that feet and hands only were badly executed (Grey 1836: Vol. 1: 214).

Detailed analysis of Aboriginal mythology, as argued by McNiven and Russell, (1997:804), suggest the Wandjina cult had diffused into the region at some time in the past and probably from the direction of Timor. Mountford (1956:30) suggested “more advanced” people such as Malaysians as a likely source, while McCarthy (1940:307) proposed New Guinea.

Since then opinion has not disputed that the Wandjina paintings were of Aboriginal origin (see for example Crawford (1968), Layton (1992) and Flood (1997)): it is mostly the context that is in question.

A few other authors who have written on the meaning of the Wandjinas, however, have suggested that other than the Australian Aborigines were the authors of the Wandjinas. They have argued that the subjects of the paintings, depicted in what may be perceived as an unfinished state, are all clearly of eastern origin. This was the opinion of observers such as Mathew (1899), among others, and in modern times it has been argued by Crawford (1968), who has had a close relationship with the Aborigines of the area who regard him as an expert in this field. With the people of the Kimberleys he studied the Wandjina creation myth which includes what he calls the “Battle at Tunbai” which holds that the Wandjinas came, killed the local Aboriginal people at a place called Tunbai (1968:42), and then settled.

Crawford mentions that many puzzles arose from this legend.

Were these Wandjinas just mythical beings or were the myths a description of “an intrusive group”. (Crawford, 1968:42)

Crawford does not say why the Wandjinas may have been “an intrusive group” but his reasoning becomes clear further on.

The obvious place to find material evidence or artefacts of a battle, Crawford suggested, was the battleground at Tunbai. Although he visited the area twice, he found nothing, but there was one unusual stone arrangement running up the hill overlooking Tunbai, and he spent several hours mapping the site. Earlier, Wood Jones, who was the first person to talk about the arrangement of stones, had said that research was needed, as these collections existed all over Australia but no one was clear about their role. (1926:43). Crawford did not research the myth except in mythical terms where the “Wandjinas bring torrential rain, flood etc. if displeased” (1986:43).

The myth is a Wandjina origin myth (Crawford, 1968); therefore prior to the battle of Tunbai there would have been no Wandjinas, and therefore no ceiling paintings.

Importantly, Crawford outlines the presence at Tunbai of what appeared to have formerly been (but were now disarranged) “lines of stones” leading to a clear space above and adjacent to a cave: the usual approach to a place of worship and/or human sacrifice well known as part of the Batak religious practice (Loeb, 1923 et al.).

If we take this at face value, let us imagine that in some ancient period, for whatever reason, a group of Batak migrants arrived in Northern Australia in the Kimberley region, settled, and were the originators (practically or figuratively) of the Wandjina art.

Earlier in this study, we have mentioned the Datu: a lord, with the role of priest, or representative of the Batak gods. The Datu dressed in the full regalia of the active god. The Datu's gown (Appendix 21) is red, and he wears a cap similar to the commonly depicted halo of the Wandjinas. The gown is full-length and under it the bare feet of the Datu protrude clearly.

Loeb discussed the duties of the Datu, as laid down by the god (1923:92). The Datu claims that the god visited him in his sleep and named a person, usually someone the Datu does not like. Next morning this victim is announced and “the fatal cap and red gown is placed upon the sacrifice”. Next morning the sacrificial victim is tethered to a post where a cannibal feast will take place (1923:93).

Are the Datu's red robe and cap represented in the red robes and halo of the Wandjinas? The Wandjinas were not connected with the Bradshaw or so-called Mimi figure paintings, which are distinctly different, and in some respects reminiscent of Bushman art. These Bradshaws do not exhibit any gigantism as the Wandjinas do. This gigantism, found in other parts of the world, in giant Buddhas, and Olmec heads, for example, is also seen in the art of past Sumatra. In Nias, west of Sumatra, (see Heine-Geldern in Loeb, 1935) giant carvings still exist of Batak deities, humans and animals: in stone, but most broken.

The Bradshaws appear to be of great age, dated by some to 40,000 years, and known to go back to at least 17,500 ± 1800 B.C.E.. In some respects as Bradshaw stated in his public report (1892) they recall the painted wall of an Egyptian temple in their pictorial representational aspect (Appendix 21). Mathew argued that there is an Egyptian or foreign aspect to the Bradshaws. He remarked (1894:45) that an Egyptian motif can be seen in Burder's suggestion of picture writing prior to the use of a syllabus (Appendix 22). Burder describes Egyptian hieroglyphs thus:

The early Egyptian writings did not consist of syllables but of the figures that related to the things they were to express: for they wrote or drew the figure of a hawk, a crocodile, a serpent, the eye, hand or face of man or the like ... (1827:137)

In the Bradshaws there is a figure with a *tricilla* (crown) reminiscent of Egyptian figures, and in another, the body of a serpent, often (Mathew claimed) a symbol of divinity, reaching across the figures. An extensive field of research into Bradshaw origins awaits another researcher.

Wood Jones (1926) supported Michael Perry's thesis on the decline of the Archaic Era. Perry's *Children of the Sun* (1926) became briefly fashionable, but has long since fallen into disrepute; Perry derived all cultural innovations from an Egyptian source, even in the Pacific region.

Describing the decline of the Archaic Era Perry stated (1926) that by the time it had reached the magnificence of stone work, when the glory of Java was at its peak, the Australian Aboriginal culture was "already in decline". Elkin supported Perry's depiction of a declining culture: a few years later he was writing on the deterioration of the Wandjina paintings in the Western portion of the Rock Shelters of the North Kimberleys.

Among the objects depicted on the roof [note] of one of these caves, the Sun ... is represented by two concentric circles, the diameters of which were one and two feet of the circumference joined by red lines representing rays of the Sun. There was also a woman whose special organs were clearly depicted - her head of the usual Wandjina type ... a snake (1930:260).

Elkin remarked that some of these paintings were almost totally obliterated although not exposed to the weather. He also drew attention to further small suns which the natives with him said were "his [the sun's] children": each had "a series of sun's rays radiating from a circle" (1930:263). Elkin likewise discussed the deterioration of the large collection of stones and megaliths which he said in some instances were ancient.

The number of *oversize* Wandjina figures as against the smaller ones (which appear to have been copies) also indicates a need. The collection first seen by Bradshaw sketched and reported earlier by Captain Grey (1841) suggests other possibilities.

A reading of Grey indicated that identification of the primary figure depicted in the Wandjinas is a difficult task, attempted over decades so far without success. Although some of the Wandjinas have been dated to 14,000 Ka no one has correctly identified the figures' nationality or gender. Yet to an objective eye the figure in Grey's sketch could easily be Eastern. Some observers further identify it as a veiled Muslim woman and the articles in the halo to be jewels. One observer has suggested the shapes on the halo are a phonetic script, possibly even Arabic.

Repeated examination of Grey's sketch encourages further exploration of references to the Wandjinas, and indeed to Muslim women's dress, in order to identify the figures. At this stage it is useful to recall the following similarities between some ancient Australian cultures and those of Southeast Asia:

1. Large red sacred figures in art in both cultures (Loeb, 1923 and Heine-Geldern in Loeb, 1935:314).
2. Stripes: red, yellow, black and some white (Appendix 23) in art.
3. Painting on ceilings, as in Grey's sample and others (Loeb, 1935:314)
4. Stone phallic symbols in both cultures.
5. Ancestor worship in Batak culture, less so in the Aboriginal (Loeb, *ibid*).
6. Cannibalism was common to both
7. Formations of stones (Wood Jones, 1925) were common to Batak.
8. Language: similar words for example Tendi meaning "spirit", especially "playing and dancing spirits".
9. Sacrifice in caves (Wood Jones, 1926).
10. Use of stone sites and caves as worship centres.
11. Blood sacrifice (amputation of fingers, circumcision).

This is of course an eclectic and diverse list. Items on it do not refer to single place in Australia, nor do they link to a single source outside Australia. But the diversity of links is notable, and the Kimberley link has been raised again and again. For example, Mathew suggested (1893:42) that the sketches found by Grey were of Sumatran origin and that the word on the halo was the word *Daibai*, the name of a God of the Battas (the final 'k' in Malay/Indonesian is a glottal stop, so the word 'Batak' can be rendered as *Bata*). Sollas had previously suggested (1924:428-432) that the cave paintings resembled the Aurignacian peoples' work, and (1924) that the Wandjinas may have been the remnants of these peoples' existence.

Over the years the Aborigines seem to have achieved a reputation as copyists, and it is easy to see why: they made excellent copies of the Macassan patterns of the coloured triangular art (Appendix 10). It is possible that they copied the paintings of other visitors. The Kroeber Museum works (Appendix 24) are said to be the work of the more recent Yolngu. Their designs recall elements (geometric patterns, weaving) of the earlier Baijini inhabitants (Berndt, 1954).

Johnson (1996) describes how a "new art movement eventually known as Desert Pointillism came into being in 1971 at Papunya in the Central and Western Desert in Australia". In a preface to Johnson's book, published to

celebrate 25 years since the beginning of this modern form of Aboriginal painting, Ron Radford, director of the Art Gallery of South Australia, says that Desert Pointillism began in the 1970s. Pointillist method, traditional in Desert Art, is proving highly successful commercially. Desert Pointillism (Appendix 25) differs significantly from the Yolngu style of painting which echoes the Malay style, particularly the era of the second Macassan association of the 14th-18th centuries, before their expulsion. Radford wrote that Desert Pointillism deviates from Aboriginal ancient art in that it uses a different technique but like the earlier form it incorporates the ancient subjects of the mythical Dreaming. There are similarities between Australian indigenous pointillism and Batak art practices. Pointillism has been part of Batak art practice for centuries in Sumatra.

Aborigines use brilliant scarlet and bright yellow with black, in ritual and in mundane art. These colours are more or less the only colours available from the terrain and are often used possibly for that reason. Loeb mentions that in the Batak art in Sumatra the same colours are used (Loeb, 1935:314), and of course it could be said they are common worldwide.

Grey (1841) mentioned that the site of these paintings is in reasonable travelling distance if not actually close proximity to the west coast of Australia, an area in which texts refer occasionally to the presence of "copper skinned" people even at a late date. North of this area was a native trade route used from earliest times between the Gulf of Carpentaria and the coast of Western Australia and on through the Kimberley area. McCarthy (1940) claimed that the Baijini did use this route occasionally, and that it was widely used as a trade route all over Australia.

Grey (1841) suggested that the Giant Figure may have been a priest travelling with the later Portuguese Fleet, and that he was wearing (poorly executed) sandals as well as his Friar robes (Grey, 1841). He also described small plinths adjacent to the caves on which what appeared to him to be Moslem mausoleums (Grottanelli, 1955:33). These were composed of stone and were not complete. Nor was it clear what the structure was, and it may have deteriorated. Grey thought they were graves and Hull (1846:2) suggested they were Batak Muslim.

In 1929 Love published what he referred to as the actual significance of the Wandjina figures (1929: 6-15). He said that Grey, who had suggested that the giant figure in the cave was a woman, was wrong: Love said: "The people whom Grey thought were women were not", but Loeb, reverting to Grey's opinion, maintained that not only were they women, they were female Shamans as was common in Sumatra (Loeb, 1935).

Love's interpretation of the figures has been questioned for other reasons. Worsnop enlarged on the headdress of the large Wandjina figures:

I have to call your attention to the inscription on the headdress of the figure, [the halo,] which appears to me to be an attempt at, and to have some of the elements of, writing (1897:32).

Worsnop described other artefacts: two tablets of stone covered with marks, found by Colonel Warburton, an earlier explorer in the area (1897:32). These had been found hidden away with much care. Worsnop proposed that each of the marks had a phonetic value: “may there not be a lost language here?” and that the stones may have been witness to some religious rite or ceremony. We know, he continued, that each tribe has its distinctive and expressive mark in tattooing its members, which tells in words, as plainly as words can tell, the tribe to which he or she belongs. Worsnop wrote:

These slabs were alien, flat stones, measuring about fifteen inches by six, of an oblong shape and rounded at the ends. They were marked with unintelligible scrawls and were secreted in a hole from whence Colonel Warburton ferreted them out, in company with a spherical stone about the size of an orange. No clue could be gained as to what they meant, or why they were deposited there. Unfortunately, these interesting objects had to be thrown away before the termination of the journey (1897:128).

In the light of all this it is clear that some authors have proposed that in both significance and presence these stones may not have been of Australian origin, and even that the scrawls on the stones were Batak writing; furthermore that they may have been the secret and sacred boards on which the Batak Datu used to compute the auspicious days of the Batak sacred divination board or calendar when rituals, festivals, feasts and sacrifices should take place (Appendix 19). In this view, the Datu, representative of the God, is dressed in the Halo and the long red gown, as the God was.

To summarise: the Wandjinas may even have referred initially to a real people, not merely to mythical ‘spirits of the storm’. The six characters of cuneiform-style alphabet on the headdress of the large Wandjina figure, on what can perhaps be interpreted as the halo of a god, was a tangible creation of a person who knew how to produce that style of alphabet. The Reverend J. Mathew was, he said “much struck with the resemblance [between] the marks on the [Wandjina] headdress [and] the alphabet of the Sumatrans” (1894:45). Mathew stopped short of claiming Sumatran authorship of the Wandjinas, with its embedded Hindu influence (1894:50). The first people to produce cuneiform, of course, were the Sumerians, whose other influences in written expression, art, language and other facets of culture spread from Sumer via Indian/Brahmanic trade-routes to the east, and so on to Sumatra.

At some stage the Sumatran people were said to have settled in Australia in the vicinity of the now-called Wandjina paintings. Several motifs recur in the literature: lines of stones leading to caves adjacent to clearings, which may suggest sites of Batak/Sumatran religious ritual. The myth of the Battle of Tunbai could be held to describe the annihilation by Sumatran invaders of the Aboriginal inhabitants, and later the remnant of original people were told by so-called Wandjina to keep their paintings in good condition by re-touching (Chaloupka, 1988) under threat of visitation by storm. Maybe, after all, the authors of the Wandjina paintings were not spirits, but an actual people called

Wandjina, the Sumatran/Batak invaders who brought an ancient cuneiform heritage with them. The area is a rich field of study for future researchers.

In conclusion, we should be aware of a thesis that the Wandjinas were not spirits but living people, who invaded the north of Australia (around 1000 AD according to Coleman, 1832:314), killed the resident peoples and settled over a long period. In support of this, different authors have cited evidence that includes lines of formed and unformed stones, the flat space of their worship centres, and the similarities of dress of the priest Datu, all of which might suggest that the Batak, from Wadja/Sumatra, were the Wandjina people, and the authors of the paintings called the Wandjinas.

CHAPTER 8

Stone Collections: A recurring theme

Let us return to Wood Jones' *Collections of Formed and Unformed Stones* (1926). Wood Jones noted that collections of formed and unformed stones are not uncommon in Australia. The meaning of many of these collections is by no means clear and explanations vary. This chapter discusses these collections in the context of settlement, and their general significance as worship centres.

The large number of these collections in many areas all over Australia leads one to believe that in some way they served a need for a considerable number of people. Even to transport some of these stones of such considerable size would have needed hundreds of people, as in some cases 300 men with jungle ropes were needed to transport similar large blocks in Sumatra (Appendix 1) – of course, such transport efforts for giant stones occurred elsewhere (Easter Island, Stonehenge), but let us at least note its occurrence on Sumatra too.

The collections are very old and Perry (1926) claimed that they may reach back to the decline of the “archaic age”, that is around the 6th and 7th century in the western calendar. Many other explanations have been put forward, for example Crawford (1968), McConnel (1932), Black (1951) and Wood Jones (1925).

Mathew wrote (1899:533) that one of the Arunta (Arrente) rituals was connected with Sun Worship as follows. A large coloured circle represents the rays of the sun. The centre is occupied by a stick said to incorporate some Sun Creature known as *Knaning Arricka*. Similarly the people of Gulf of Carpentaria keep their sacred poles with carvings in huts from which the general public are excluded. The poles represent both genders.

When the hour of sunset arrives they are brought out and stuck in the ground in the light of the sinking sun: as it touches the horizon the worshippers kneel with their faces towards the sun, lifting their hands they bend their bodies to the ground (Spencer & Gillen, 1927). These worship centres, Wood Jones suggested, have now fallen into ruin and the Aborigines do not have any idea when or how the various stone fields originated or what their meanings are. Miller (2003) referred to the Aboriginal stone collections as the “Old Peoples’ Playground”. The author, who lived with Aborigines from the age of 17, refers in a novel to the stones of the Bulgonunna; in a conversation with his friend he says:

“Stone labyrinths at the head of Verbena Creek [north of Townsville, Queensland] that you told me about.”

“The playgrounds of the old people: you want to preserve them don’t you?” (2003:176).

This is a commonly held explanation of the stones among the Aborigines, somewhat conflicting with Wood Jones' suggestions of worship sites. Another author suggested these areas of stones were where corroborees and perhaps ritual acts like circumcision took place. As mentioned, Basedow witnessed a circumcision where he and a small group

came upon a recently performed circumcision where there was a large amount of fresh blood (1925, Preface:x)

In the Kimberleys is a large area of stone cultic objects including phallic megaliths which McConnel, who researched in 1930 the collections found in Arnhem Land in the Wik area and in the South, where Wood Jones found them in the Gungra clay pits near McDonald's peak, considered to be totem increase sites. Wood Jones did not agree: but why could they not both have been right? McConnel (1932) says that there are massive collections of stones all over Australia which she considers to be old-time increase sites of the Aborigines (Appendix 19); but her experience was confined to the Kanyu tribe on the Archer River, among the foothills of the Great Dividing Range.

The government had in 1932 allowed the Kanyu tribal lands to be taken over by the cattle stations and tribal culture had deteriorated. Because of this the government set aside an area for the remaining Kanyu people. Of these, only two old men in their dotage were able to interpret the meaning of the stones, remembering what their fathers had told them before the arrival of the white men.

McConnel detailed the many arrangements of stones: stones up to one metre in height and set in straight lines, stones said to be kangaroos. The Aboriginal people told a story (like that told to Wood Jones) that the stones were placed in these increase sites by blue-eyed people who now live in the creek alongside, and only come out at night, among the stones. The story has been handed down and the meaning of the stones is no longer clear. That their meaning is connected to the Red Gown and White Halo is a possibility, but it has to be borne in mind that the Wandjinas are in the Kimberleys – rather far from the Archer River.

A further development was the discovery in 1942 of a group of stones now known as cyclons. For over forty years Mr. Lindsay Black of Leeton in New South Wales had been collecting weapons, implements and artefacts of the Darling River tribes, for as manager of a large pastoral property he had access to first hand field work, although he was not a practicing academic. Mr. Black lodged his collection with the National Museum in Melbourne. They are as a result now part of a collection of ten thousand specimens of Aboriginal artefacts and weapons from Western New South Wales. Black called the stones "mystery" stones, due to their shape and general form:

measuring from 10 cm. to 85 cm. in length, from 5 cm. to 12.5 cm. in diameter all are circular or oval in cross section, tapering to the distal end: some are incised... (Black, 1942:49).

Because of the shape of the mystery stones he named them cyclons as a contraction of the cyclindro-conical shape used earlier to describe them. Some early settlers knew of the presence of these cyclons but a serious study did not begin until later. Black considered it “unlikely” that Aboriginals living at that time knew anything of them; he said later that they either did not know their meaning or were unwilling to impart any information as to their purpose (1942:51). Some experts share Black’s view that these artefacts may have originated in earlier times. The author reported:

Whether [cyclons] were used at initiations, burials, or “boras” will never be known (1942:24)

It was not apparent to Wood Jones that his words “at night the Little Spirit People come out to play and dance”, would be spoken again much later with sinister associations.

This discussion moves now to stone types. Wood Jones reported:

On a little basalt inlet in Lake Morgan about 5 miles [11.2 km]. north-east from Streatham, I observed an ancient Aboriginal work consisting of large stones, forming *passages up and down* like a maze at the foot of a little hill. (1925:123)

These were, he thought, possibly executed for some mystic rites or “only for the amusement of running between the rows of stones up the hill and down again”. They could equally have been the foundation of a rectangular house which had deteriorated. Mr A.C. Allan, Inspector of Surveys, had informed him that during a recent visit to Tatiara country near the South Australian border he had seen a number of stone walls 0.6-1.0 metre high radiating from a little cave in the ground and forming irregular passages. Wood Jones thought they had been constructed by indigenous peoples for use as sites for incantations:

recently he had information about *a very similar construction* in another part of the country, on a station about 350 miles [563 km.] north-east and 400 miles [644 km] north of Broken Hill, [which] is a very remarkable arrangement of stones laid down as pathways...(1925:124)

Such spots were held in awe by contemporary Aborigines of the Kakata tribe questioned by Wood Jones. Wood Jones said he had seen photographs of the site which had been taken by the owner of the station and he was able to examine the stone work carefully (1925:124). The low stone walls of the Tatiara cave were greasy or shiny as though rubbed against something. It is known that Aborigines greased their bodies and Grey (1837) mentioned similar greasiness in a Wandjina cave, albeit distant from the Kimberleys.

Judging by the photographs the paths were about knee high. The Aborigines there told Wood Jones there is a tradition that the paths were used by people who lived in the area before the time of their old people, and that those early people had blue eyes and lived in the cave by day emerging in the evening. They held the place in dread and special esteem. Wood Jones had not been

able to visit this interesting place but he expressed the hope that it will be visited by an Australian researcher one day (1925:124). Wood Jones noted that the same basal type of stone arrangements was mentioned by A.W. Howitt:

in many cases... I have seen circles and circular figures formed with stones of various sizes... explained by the Aborigines as being play (Brough Smyth, 1878:125).

He added that they “need more explanation”. Perry (1926) questioned that these stone circles were archaic. Wood Jones recorded that in 1921-22 he visited the giant claypans south and west of Lake Eyre known as Bamboo Swamp and the Devil’s Playground. They were strewn with stones ranging up to large masses as big as a suitcase which “the natives” said were used in play by a former race. He said if they had been arranged in order at any time they must since have been disturbed because when he viewed them they were “mainly scattered”. The question must be asked, however: were they naturally or artificially arranged?

He remarked that clay pans fill with water during rains and that large ones hold water for months. In that area the breaking of the drought would not uncommonly disturb or displace possible arrangements of stones, even of a large size. After these droughts great volumes of water come down from the large rivers and it is possible “ordered arrangements” as Wood Jones called them could have been disturbed.

Wood Jones mentioned an area roughly north-west of the explored McDoualls Peak on the track to Lake Phillipson, 860 km. from Adelaide. Wood Jones found the “astonishing” thing about this area - “Gungra” - is that of the millions of stones that strew its surface “the great majority have obviously been placed in position by human hands”. Some collections of stones are several hundred metres in length with the stones carefully selected and placed in position to make nearly perfectly straight tracks.

This seems strange since these stones would have also been subjected to the vagaries of flood and fire. Wood Jones gave an account of a “series of cairns here where some of the lines were marked at the junction by crescents by little heaps of stones which have now fallen down” (Wood Jones, 1925). Originally, he thought, the centre of the maze-like area had been marked by a series of cairns about 1.5 metres high but only about four were still standing. He travelled back to the area in order to photograph it and question the resident Aborigines again on the origin of the site. One Aborigine told him the same story. He only knew the traditional story the old people handed on: that it was made by people who lived there before the Aborigines, whose name was *Meeta* and of whom he knew nothing at all. The mother of the man giving this information confirmed her son’s story, and that the purpose of the track was to mark the track of a large animal they had seen. Wood Jones concluded that:

the Aborigines resident there maintained a story of an earlier race that had inhabited the country before them ... they also held to a story that a very large animal – so large and unusual “that a very considerable outlay of work on marking its tracks was undertaken” (1925:127).

Wood Jones concluded both these deductions were almost certainly false. He again visited the area in 1923 on a journey to the Stuart Ranges and found a white man camped with the Aborigines who told the following story. A great many years ago bad seasons had reduced the tribe to starvation so in order that fewer children would be born the old men of the tribe decided that some subincision should be done and stones were set out to mark the corroboree area where the subincision would take place.

Wood Jones did not question this but it raises problems. It is not certain whether ritual sub-incision is carried out in that area and also if the old men would have thought that subincision would in fact reduce the birth rate. From readings subincision was not carried out in that area, and the old men would not have known that it would reduce the birth rate, unless they had learned it as a result of the experience of other tribes. How such a fact would be known to them is questionable as tribes did not mix. Also, subincision was not practiced by all Southern tribes. This calls for supporting research for Wood Jones' paper. Ashley-Montagu (1937) says subincision certainly had no effect on fertility. Any effect is more likely to have been in the area of religious belief. Rituals did spread, and a ritual not native to a particular area was practiced there, taken over from a neighbouring tribe, on special occasions.

Three points in Wood Jones's paper which have relevance for this paper are: Australia may have had settlements of people other than the current Australian Aborigines and beyond living memory; the Australian continent was not originally *Terra Nullius*; and perhaps these very large animal tracks could be a dating mechanism (if they were Diprotodon or similar).

Beyond these points most significant is the point that the stones are proof of religious worship. As in a biblical text they are used in the sealing of contracts as part of religious ritual:

So Jacob took a stone: and set it up there as a monument ... he said bring stones here ... let these stones bear record of our covenant today ... that is how [the stones] came to be called the witness heap (Genesis 31: 45-47)

The stones, the ground, and the cave at Tunbai, and the fact that the myth is ancient all point to the reality of religious performance; do they take us back to the Batak?

CHAPTER 9

The Colonization of Australia by the British 1787

Prior to colonization by the British in Sydney 1787 there were explorations by others including the Frenchman DeGonneville who was said to have examined Grey's paintings and commented on them as far back as 1503 (McIntyre, 1977). The first British explorer to take possession was Lt James Cook. Secret orders (Appendix 26) show that although Australia was inhabited, that is, it was not *Terra Nullius*, contrary to his King's instructions Cook took possession of the land, for Britain, "as first discoverers and possessors".

The British were recognized as the first long-term European settlers. Early settlement by the British was fraught with problems, especially in land dealings with the Aborigines, who were widespread and numerous. The history of this era has been researched in detail by many and does not make good reading. It would be difficult to describe harsher treatment than that which the Aborigines received, due to the efforts of a government which was often too far away to see what really happened.

This applied also to the mission effort which resulted in the remnants of the Aboriginal peoples being confined on mission stations, government areas and reserves. All tended to contribute to a severe decline amongst Aboriginal people. There were those who tried to help and others who condoned the cruelties perpetrated on a defenceless people so far from the official eye. Amongst them, "stolen children" was not an outcome any parent would want but for many of the children it was perhaps an only chance.

In early colonization before irrigation schemes, dams and other devices helped to ensure a constant supply of water, Australian weather patterns were not conducive to agricultural settlement, especially as the first people who migrated to Australia were from grain or rice growing areas. A recent example of the dissonance between old and new farming practices is Kangaroo Island (south of South Australia) where a trace element (cobalt) now known as necessary for sheep rearing was missing from the soil – an absence not missed by the grain farmers who came to settle this land. The missing element was acknowledged after the land failed to yield. The settlements on Kangaroo Island failed for years until the trace element was applied to the soil.

In the south of Australia some farming and sheep raising was successful but coal and other necessities supplied to the Empire overcame most early problems of supply. In other cases settlers just left.

From settlement on, Australia became a major supplier of produce to the British nation. With the supply of meat, coal, wool, Australia became the lifeline of the "Mother Country". In Australia these same supplies brought to the developing nation the first "currency lads and lasses", who were the

children of immigrants like this writer's forebears, pioneers of German and Irish parentage. Parallels with immigrants of an earlier time are evident.

Conclusion

Australia has been repeatedly settled by numerous groups of people arriving from various places: Indonesia, Africa, the Indies, China, and possibly other areas of the world. Much more, of course, has been claimed than can be supported, but all claims deserve to be brought to the light of day and given a thorough hearing, even if they have not been aired for fifty or a hundred years.

Some of their landings were successful, resulting in a spread of large numbers of people over most of the continent. Others resulted in a limited local settlement that lasted for only a short period of time, as the Portuguese and Muslim Arab. Others were temporary visits, the Bugis/Macassans being prominent among these.

All of them however left their traces in the form of artefacts, art influences on Aboriginal culture, and even perhaps biological characteristics, among some pre-colonial inhabitants of various parts of the continent.

Two of these potential visitors stand out. First are the Bajini, whose real existence was espoused by the Berndts, but has been denied by most other commentators. Yet, if we look beyond the immediate vicinity, a people called Bajini do exist: they are a real people, who survive today, and have a history of trading and seafaring that is known to have taken them far from their homeland. This study reopens the question of whether they might indeed have preceded the Macassans on northern Australian shores.

Second are the people of Sumatra, especially the Batak; a much more tenuous proposition than the Bajini, yet the idea that they are connected somehow to the Wandjinas of the Kimberley has been raised again and again and should still be considered.

Australia has a most interesting past, far richer and more complex than might be expected from the present Aboriginal/European dichotomy.

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APPENDIX 1

Showing 300 men moving large stones in Nias, Sumatra
From Schnitger FM (1939) *Forgotten Kingdoms in Sumatra*.

NOTE: This figure is included in the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

APPENDIX 2

Text of letter to Journal of Anthropology

In September 1896 a lone researcher reported to a Dr. Carroll, a medical practitioner of the period and the founding editor of the infant Journal of Anthropology in England, that different peoples had entered the continent over time. The researcher advised that that the first to enter Australia were from the locality of the Indian Ocean and were the very short Negritos, 'their bodies covered with woolly hair'. They entered by way of the Gulf of Carpentaria.

From the Australasian Anthropological Journal (Sep 12, 1896:15-16) Ed. Dr Carroll, author unknown.

NOTE: This appendix is included in the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

APPENDIX 3

Languages of the Kimberleys

The Kimberley languages Nyulnyulan, Worora, Bubabunaban and Djera use prefixes in addition to normal suffixes found in the rest of the continent.
(Birdsell 1994:444)

NOTE: This appendix is included in the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

APPENDIX 4

Wood saw a similarity of Buandik skulls to the Neanderthal.

This photo of *H. neanderthalensis* from southwestern France: La Chapelle-aux-Saints was discovered in the early years of the 20th century.



APPENDIX 5

A Tasmanian: head and shoulders

Strzelecki (1845) provided a photograph of a Tasmanian (Jenny) who is unusual among Tasmanians in head shape and physique.

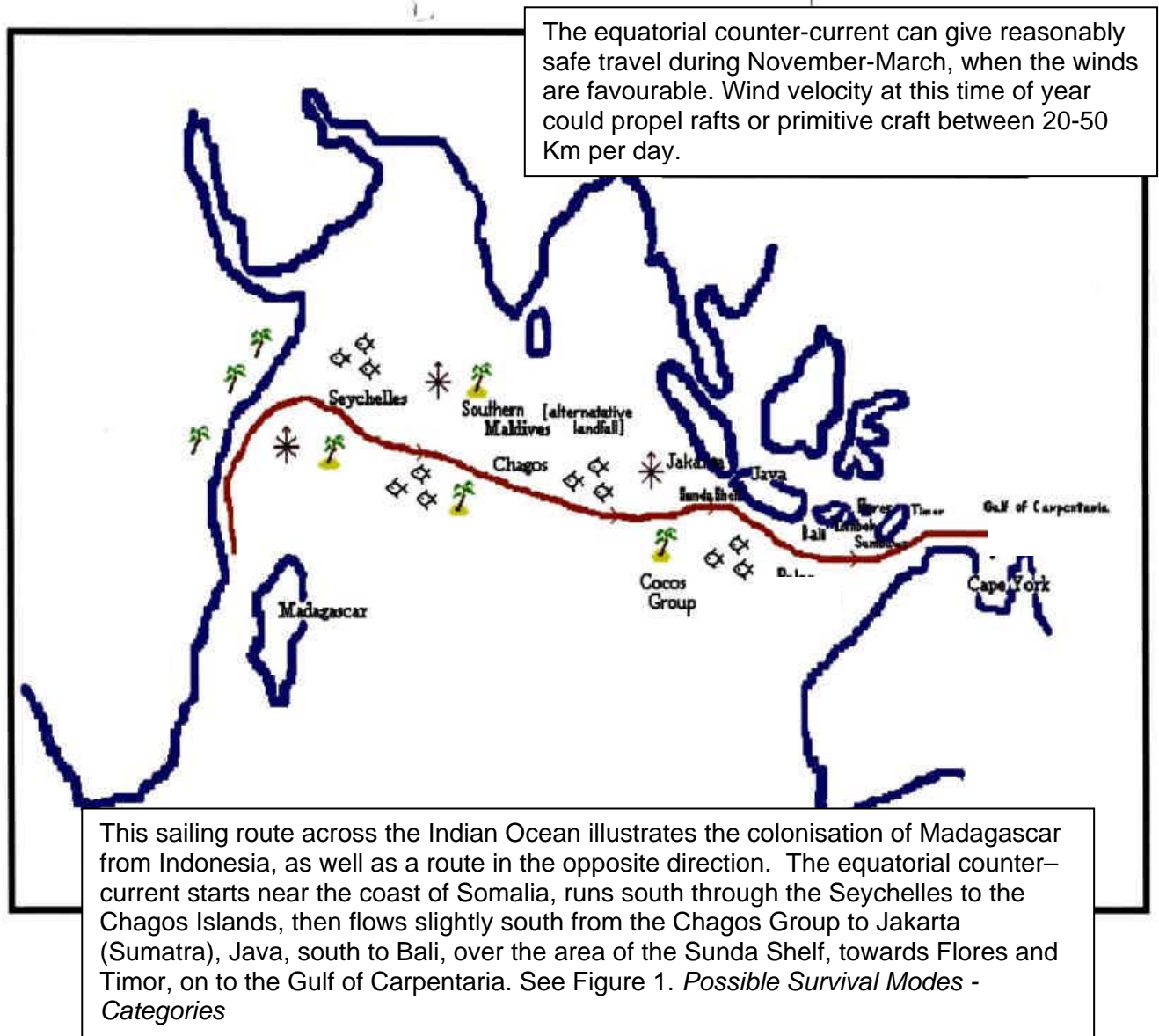


APPENDIX 6

Suggested Route across Indian Ocean

A sailing route across the Indian Ocean: the colonisation of Madagascar

This map (P. Turner, 2005) depicts how, at certain times of the year, a route could be negotiated between the eastern coast of Africa and the northern coast of Australia.



APPENDIX 7

Song Cycles

From Englaro, G (1996) Notes on the Moon-Bone Song Milan, Italy
<http://www.millenium.xnet.it/authors/englaro.html> (accessed 20/11/03: unavailable
June 2006)

NOTE: This appendix is included in the print copy of the thesis
held in the University of Adelaide Library.

APPENDIX 8

Map showing where rice was grown in North-east Arnhem Land

Walgboi: 'foetus place', or uterus or navel cord place. Here a Baiini woman gave birth to a baby. The Baiini and later the Macassans made a garden here, planting rice, *ngarial*, which now grows wild.

From Berndt, RM (1964) *The Gove Dispute: the question of Australian Aboriginal land and the preservation of sacred sites*. Anthropological Forum VI (2) pp. 258-295. Sheet F.

Berndt's reference is to location 237 in map (circled here).

NOTE: This appendix is included in the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

The World of the Arnhem Landers at the close of Macassan (Indonesian)
Contact

Berndt RM and Berndt CH (1954) *Arnhem Land: Its history and its people*.
F.W. Cheshire, Melbourne (p. 19).

NOTE: This appendix is included in the print copy of the thesis
held in the University of Adelaide Library.

APPENDIX 9

The translation of Grottanelli

Grottanelli Vinigi L. (1955) *Pescatori Dell Oceano Indiano Editto Con II Concorso Della Amministrazione Fiduria Italiana in Somalia E.Del Consiglio Nazioiale Delle Ricerche* Published Cremonese 1995 Roma

Translation by Henneberg, M (2005).

NOTE: This appendix is included in the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

APPENDIX 10

Illustrating the Triangular motif

The Australian Aborigines made excellent copies of art featuring patterns of coloured triangles and geometric shapes.

The Berndts described the *darabu* patterned cloth as made up of coloured triangles that later became the basis of certain Aboriginal clan designs.

The two figures of humans to follow, from the Berndt Museum in Western Australia, are dressed in cloth covered with the triangular design. The two objects from the same museum are also covered in the triangular design.

NOTE: This appendix is included in the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

The next image is of Toradja artwork from Central Celebes. Toradja art features strong geometric design.

There were general similarities between the Toradja and the Macassans, for example Toradja shared a common house type with the Macassans, shaped like a ship with a sloping roof line. These houses also occur amongst the Minangkabau of central Sumatra.

Note all over geometric patterns of straight lines, diamond motifs and cross hatched borders. Toradja diamond motifs are common in Yolgnu art, whether from a common influence or common origin.

NOTE: This appendix is included in the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Retouched photocopy © T. Bodrogi 1972 Plate 59
Detail of Toradja bark coat from Toradja, Central Sulawesi /Celebes.

The following are examples of Yolngu art.

Image 1 Retouched photocopy © A.

Wells 1971

Spirit men.

Artists: Birrkidji, Garawin, Yangarin.

Image 2 Retouched photocopy © A.

Wells 1971

Fire story.

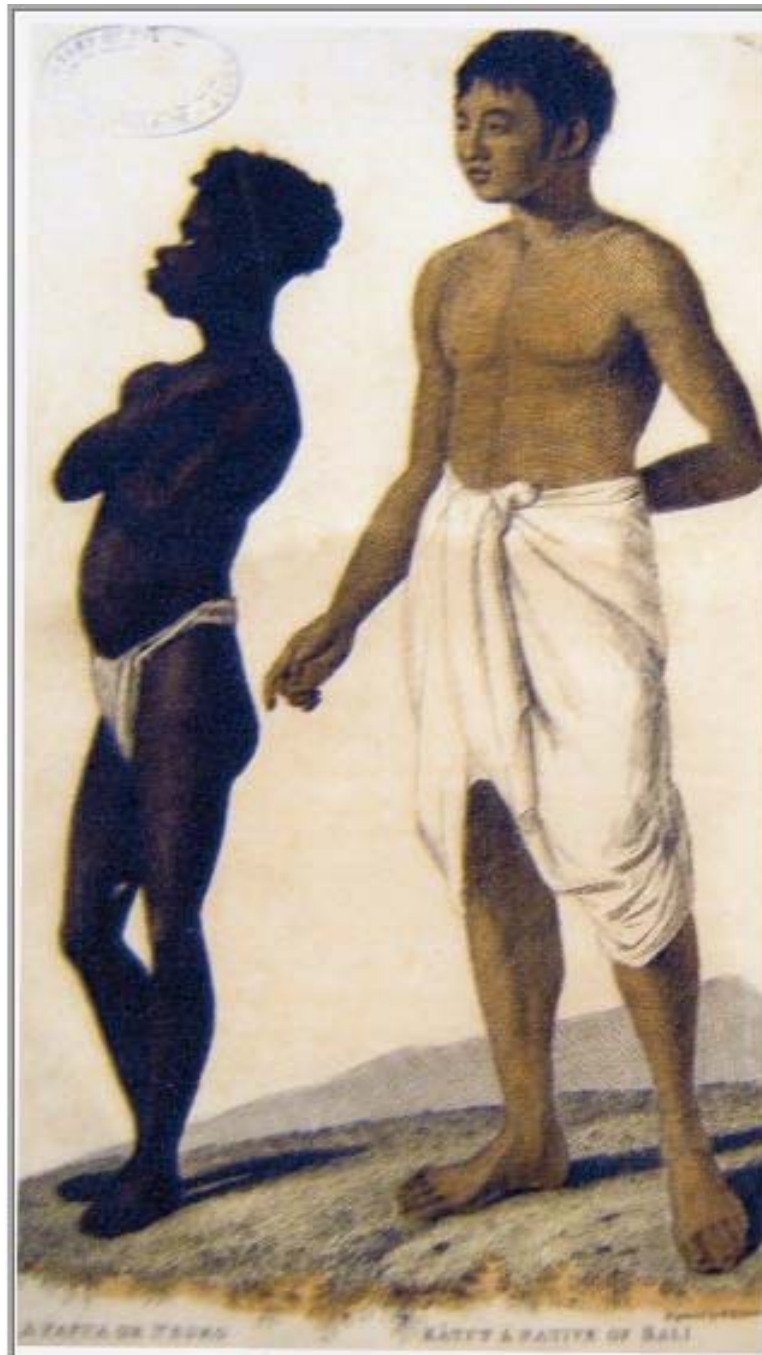
Artists: Mangarawui Jarrkujarrku,

Watjun

NOTE: These images are included in the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

APPENDIX 11*Man of Bali*

Crawfurd provided these images in his *History of the Indonesian Archipelago* (1820) of what he called two “mystery people” one of whom he refers to as “a man of Bali” and the other “a Negro”. Although captions are not here fully displayed, the left hand caption reads “A Papua [sic] or Negro / of the Indian Islands”. The right hand caption reads “Katit / A Native of Bali / one of the brown complexioned Race”.



APPENDIX 12

Breccia

Under the action of the sea water on certain areas/beaches of the world a strange type of sand is turned into what appears to be cement, called *breccia*. The people of this study are reputed to have built stone houses. King writes (Fitton, 1829:587) that in the Gulf of Carpentaria a type of concrete *breccia* is widespread on the coasts:

Dr. Buckland has described a breccia of modern formation such as that on the West Coasts of the Gulf of Carpentaria which also appears upon the shores in Madagascar and consists of a firmly compacted cream coloured stone... (1829:479)

King quotes Beaufort's description of the South Coast of Asia Minor that

the deposition of calcareous matter from the water in the sand is so copious that an old watercourse had actually in the tide crept upwards to a height of nearly three feet and the rapidity of the deposition was such that some specimens collected on the grass, where the stony crust was already formed, although the verdure [green] of the leaf was already as yet imperfectly withered... (1829:114).

This accords with an account by a previous French explorer, M. Peron of the progress from the loose and movable sands of the dunes to solid masses of rock in the area (1829:588).

A number of authors support the nature and widespread presence of this phenomenon which was common in many areas of the world. King quotes the author of "Travels in Sisely": a survey later published by the British Admiralty:

The breccia is nothing more than gravel and sand cemented by calcareous matter... in the sea water... the nearest approach to the concreted sand rock of Australia... is in the specimen presented by [a] Dr. Daubeny... to accompany his paper in the... geology of Sisely [Sicily] which prove that the arenaceous breccia of New Holland is in many ways like that which occupies the coast around the Island (1829:589)

King also mentions a small islet in Blue Mud Bay with collections of clink stone (cement) and other rocks of the trap formations in several places. King continues (1829:571) that the area north of Blue Mud Bay has also furnished specimens of ancient sandstone. It is possible that the early Baijini had prior notice of the presence of this building material. If the Baijini were accustomed to living in stone houses perhaps their decision to immigrate to Arnhem Land would have been influenced by the availability of both fishing and building materials, a slight link.

APPENDIX 13

The Macassan goodbye ceremony.

At the close of the fishing season the Macassans ceremonially carried the mast to their boats and had a prayer service on its raising, on going home. The Aboriginals absorbed that ceremony, and changed it to the carriage of a dead body to a grave, such was their sadness at the leaving of the Macassans.

NOTE: This image is included in the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

VIIIb “PRAYERS OF HOPE” (Sembahyan Hajat)

The service of prayer in the boats before the new fishing season begins, to promote good catches.

Those taking part are men with some religious learning (orang lebal): they are rewarded with a meal and a few cents each.

Page 101: Malay fishermen. In “Malay Fishermen: Their Peasant Economy.”
Raymond Firth (1946)

APPENDIX 14

Ricci Map: Terra Australis Quinta Pars Orbis

Whitehouse, E. (1995)

NOTE: This image is included in the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

The following extract is from a print publication of the Cartography Commission of the Spatial Sciences Institute of Australia (2006). The organisation's website 'Australia on the Map 1606 – 2006' AOTM is at <http://www.australiaonthemap.org.au/index.html>

NOTE: The text is included in the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

APPENDIX 15

Showing Batak magic staff

THE BATAK MAGIC STAFF AND THE AUSTRALIAN CHURINGA

NOTE: This appendix is included in the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

(paraphrase of Loeb, 1923:80).

NOTE: This image is included in the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Picture 27,
Batak magic staff,
In Leyden Museum,
Chapter I, p. 35

APPENDIX 16

Wars in the Archipelago

War was endemic (Appendix 16) across many politically unsettled petty kingdoms. Shebbeare described battles in Terra Australis between Sumatran and other peoples settled in Terra Australis. War was responsible for the downfall of the early Sumatran kingdom. The Sumatran king was supreme head; declaring war, concluding peace, with the right to send his armies to whatever part of the globe he wished. Shebbeare says in their war victories (Shebbeare, 1763:126) the Sumatrans were dreaded throughout South Asia and their friendships were sought with great solicitude by other potentates. He says they had extensive colonies in Terra Australis, as treasure was coined to supply the deficit. This was a time when the system, the Sumatran royal authority and political governing system was excellent in all fields (Shebbeare, 1763:31).

However as time went on the Sumatran troops who served in other countries were restrained as standing armies and their subsidies had fallen by degrees below a sum that would support them (Shebbeare, 1763:32). From this time Sumatran armies began to deteriorate, as did marriage, good government, and their colonies in Terra Australis from which they were driven. From here (Shebbeare, 1763:301) Sumatra was to go into decline along with most of what had been the glory that had been the East. Colonial Sumatran settlement in North Australia was recalled to till the soil during the wars because they had been tended by the sick and infirm.

Such was the state of Sumatra in the Christian year of 1060 when the Ruler Amaranth the 2nd, first of the Golconda family born to ascend the Sumatran throne died suddenly. (Shebbeare, 1763:260)

The above is a thumbnail sketch of the situation in Sumatra during the early 1600s covering what could almost be termed endemic warfare. This led to a general downfall of the Indonesian high civilization and a situation where the archaic civilization came to an end and the roots of what was to be a modern civilization were laid down.

With the downfall of Rome, Greece and other empires, metamorphosed peoples had already begun moving around the world, yet apparently in the Eastern Archipelago there had been stasis and equilibrium before what was to be a whole new world and another stage: as Sandlas said: "The Culture Cult" is upon us: a millenarian note is sounded:

we're tribalizing and when we get it altogether the vibes are so high we know we're doing something right and like – so many people are getting turned on, it's the beginning of a whole new age. (Sandals, 1972:127-29:)

War customs may be of interest here. It was customary for the Sumatran/Batak Datu (priest), to advise of war between his people and the other side, and to notify them of an attack on a certain day. War was usually declared in the form of a letter sent to the opponents. The anticipated time of battle was communicated by a knotted cord called "Billa-billa": a Lontar Palm leaf stripped of its leaves and tied in a specific number of knots, indicating how many days until hostilities would begin to take place.

The sacred blowpipe was an extremely important weapon of war earlier. It was so important to the Macassans in conducting war that in the chronicles of Gowa there is a legend referring to the "sacred blowpipe / Buqle". In these wars hundreds of Gowan warriors were killed by the sacred blowpipe and it had only been by the betrayal of a subject of the previous ruler that Gowa came to possess it. From that day according to Sopher (1965) Gowa was able to dominate the surrounding seas. (Gowa was a Macassan sultanate established in the 14th century in what is now Sulawesi and was part of the Indonesian archipelago (Andaya, 1981 and Carey, 1984)). Gowa was for centuries one of the powers behind the trade in trepang. After one period of much fighting the Sultan of Gowa occupied the shores of the Flores Sea. Sopher (1965:154) describes what followed as "the explosion of Gowa [Goa] as a major maritime power".)

War was another reason to invoke the ancestors. Summoning all the powers of the spirits including the ancestors was an important prelude to battle. This was done by smearing buffalo or other sacrificial animal blood on the flag. The ancestral spirit was then summoned to help (Andaya, 1981:73).

Rice was sacred in Sulawesi. The Rice Goddess was thought to be vindictive if soldiers destroyed rice crops, so destroying rice fields was avoided. The presence of women and children in fortifications close to the battle front was normal and was considered to give courage to the men. When Bugis seized one of the Macassar stockades "they found more than 2000 women and children huddled inside" (Andaya, 1981:221) after the battle. The women nursed their wounded, retrieving and burying their dead. Similarly says the cohorts of Macassan fighting men were cared for, fed and comforted by the women after a day or night of fighting (Andaya, 1981:74). Another reason for the presence of women and children at the battle was to prevent them falling into the hands of the enemy, which was a source of great shame for the men.

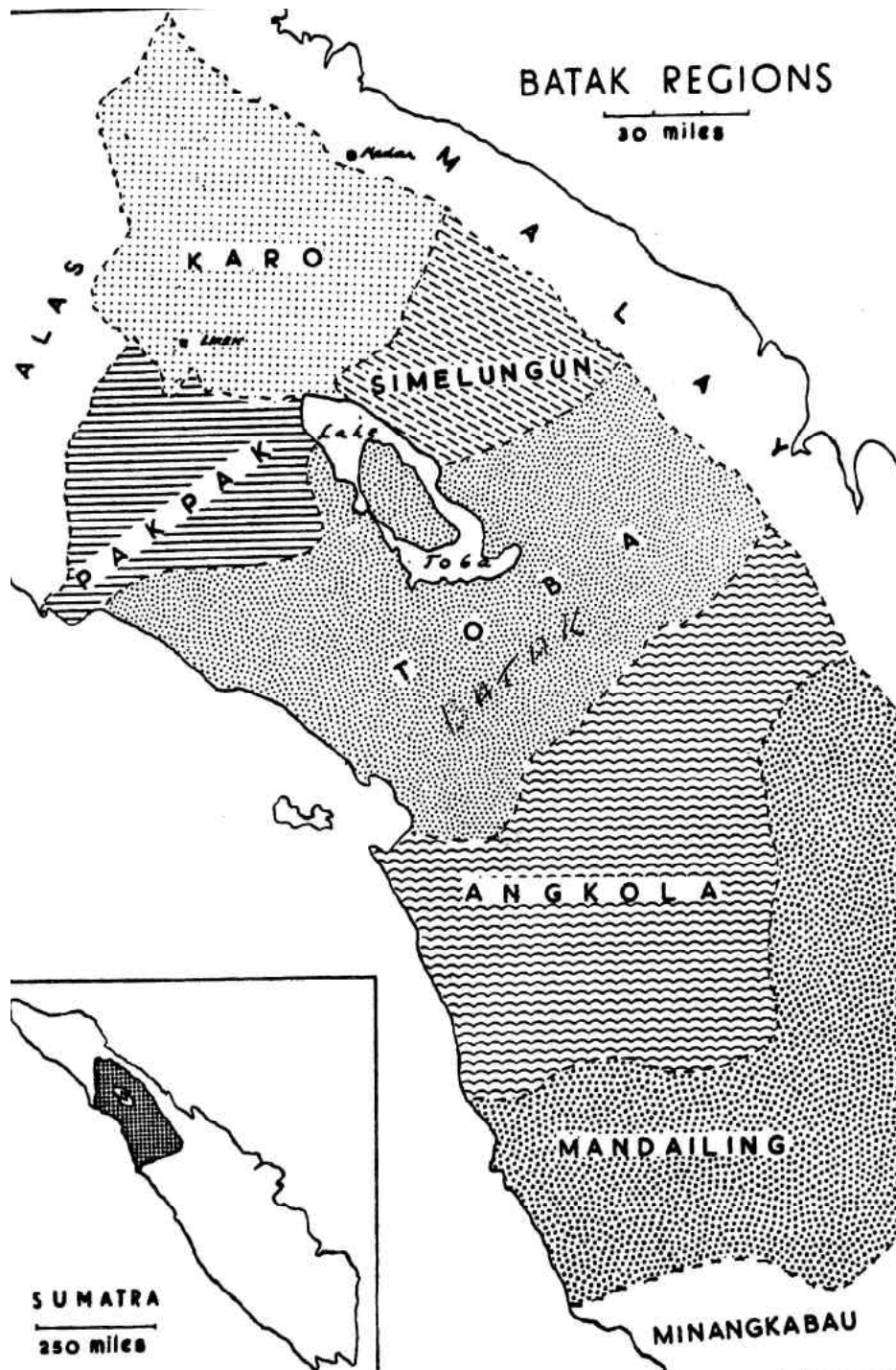
On the cessation of hostilities, one side could sue for a treaty by sending an old woman (priestess) to bargain for a treaty (Andaya, 1981:77). A prescribed pattern was used for wording and if accepted was adhered to. The words of the ancestors were part of the oath and became a moral and supernatural sanction guaranteeing a degree of stability (Andaya, 1981:77); preventing violating the wrath of the ancestors, as well as punishment from the witnessing Gods. These chronicles were written on palm leaves. Their sacred quality, says Andaya, was then transmitted to the written treaties that were preserved as part of the regalia. They represented the powerful words of ancestors, solemnized by

fearful oaths. They were on a par in authority of other objects brought down from the uppermost world to belong to the community (Andaya, 1981:78). Peace was made binding on all generations and most important, the several spiritual forces were involved.

Once made these oaths were never to be repudiated, but as Andaya records, wars were later fought to “remind” peoples of their obligations” (Andaya, 1981:53-80). Tradition is significant.

APPENDIX 17

Two Maps of Batak area – Lake Toba





APPENDIX 18*Wandjinas*

These curious anthropomorphs are known to the indigenous inhabitants as Wandjina and are not confined to this area. They are found inland off the North Coast of Western Australia over a wide area in the Drysdale Mission area at Napier Broome Bay and at adjacent Parry Harbour, an area about 160 km. from North East Prince Regent River.



Sale River rock paintings. Author's photograph collection 2004.

APPENDIX 19

Totem Stones Of The Kantyu Tribe

McConnel U (1932) Totem Stones of the Kantyu Tribe, Cape York Peninsula, North Queensland. *Oceania* 11:292-295.

NOTE: This appendix is included in the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

APPENDIX 20

The giant Wandjina figure reported and sketched by Grey

From Grey G (1841) *Journal of Two Expeditions of discovery in North-West and Western Australia during the years 1837,38 and 39*
Image facing p. 214.



APPENDIX 21

The Datu in long robe and divination board

These secret and sacred boards were used by the Batak *Datu* (priest) to compute the auspicious days of the Batak sacred calendar when rituals, festivals, feasts and sacrifices should take place.

The Datu, representative of the God, is dressed in the halo and the long red gown, as the God was.

From *The Blood Sacrifice Complex* (Loeb, 1923:80)

NOTE: This image is included in the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

APPENDIX 22

Reference to Egyptian-like figures in the Bradshaws

Mathew remarks (1894:45) that an Egyptian motif can be seen in Burder's suggestion of picture writing prior to the use of a syllabus. It reminded him of the writing seen on the walls of Egyptian temples.

Burder had earlier described hieroglyphs:

The early Egyptian writings did not consist of syllables but of the figures that related to the things they were to express: for they wrote or drew the figure of a hawk, a crocodile, a serpent, the eye, hand or face of man or the like ...
(1827:137)

NOTE: This image is included in the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Cave Paintings

Thomas, NW (1906) *Natives of Australia*. Archibald Constable & Company, London (p. 40).

APPENDIX 23

Men in striped pantaloons

Heine-Geldern saw cave roof paintings in Sumatra of figures in striped pantaloons with yellow and black stripes. (Loeb, 1935:314.)



These paintings are Bradshaw figures from Kulumburu, in the Kimberleys.

APPENDIX 24

Examples of items collected by Warner, at the Kroeber Museum, Berkeley.

Artefacts found by Warner (1937) in his Yolgnu field work were donated to the Kroeber Museum, at the University of California at Berkeley.

Some images depict woven items, though Berndt opines (1954) that the Yolgnu were not weavers.

NOTE: These images are included in the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

APPENDIX 25

Mountain Devil Dreaming

By Aboriginal artist G. Petyarre

Dreaming of the Desert: Aboriginal Dot paintings of the Western Desert.
Exhibition, Art Gallery of Adelaide, South Australia (1996).

NOTE: This image is included in the print copy of the thesis held
in the University of Adelaide Library.

Gloria Petyarre
Born c1945 Anmatyerre

Mountain Devil Dreaming
1995, Utopia, Northern Territory
Synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 86.0 x 122.0 cm
South Australian Government Grant 1996
962P7

For details see annotation for Nancy Petyarre's Mountain Devil Dreaming, [p. 105].

APPENDIX 26

The Secret Instructions of Captain Cook

NOTE: This appendix is included in the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Verses from "The Last of His Tribe", by Henry Kendall.

He crouches, and buries his face on his knees,
And hides in the dark of his hair:
For he cannot look up to the storm-smitten trees
Or think of the loneliness there –
Of the loss and the loneliness there.

The wallaroos grope through the tufts of the grass,
And turn to their coverts for fear;
But he sits in the ashes and lets them pass
Where the boomerangs sleep with the spear –
With the nullah, the sling and the spear.

Uloola, behold him! The thunder that breaks
On the tops of the rocks with the rain,
And the wind which drives up with the salt of the lakes,
Have made him a hunter again –
A hunter and fisher again.

From Selected Poems of Henry Kendall

Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1928