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Sundry notes, portions of lectures,

etc.

### Portions of Lecture

Oral tradition handed down from father to son for countless generations is the only means by which the customs and laws have been transmitted, and how faithful the custodians of these traditions have been to the important matters entrusted to them, is evidenced by the similarity of detail in many of their customs now practised at opposite points of the continent.

The remarkable thing in connection with their laws is that the people who obey them so faithfully have no written history to which they may turn for sanction or verification of this or that law, no written rule of faith to which they must adhere, no "Koran", no fixed records of any kind, nor any authorized human depositories of traditional laws such as those from whom the Bible was compiled.

The same customs or the greater part of them prevail throughout the continent. Class marriages prevail, polygamy is the rule (though I have heard that there is a tribe at Eucla who are monogamists), piercing the septum of the nose, knocking out the teeth, corroboree, initiation ceremonies, circumcision and the "terrible rite". The whole tendency of these laws seems to me to keep the young and weak in willing subjection to the old and the strong. Their curious and manifold laws too, are so ingeniously devised and interwoven as to annihilate any individual effort that might be made at any time to overthrow them.

Sorcerers have always been amongst them, and so their chief motive power in the strict observance of their laws is their strong faith in witchcraft and sorcery, which is instilled into their minds from their earliest youth. So strong is the belief in the powers of these sorcerers, that taking the question of food only, in this State, many natives undergoing jadgil (or abstinence)



There is an interesting point in connection with the Northern and southern divisions of W.A. to which I can only briefly draw your attention. The difference in their class marriage system and form of descent has been alluded to. Now if female descent be the earlier form, why is it in possession of the coastal tribes, below a certain degree of latitude, and its place taken by a later form of descent amongst those northern tribes who in all other respects follow the earlier customs and hold the earlier beliefs of the race?

Australia is assumed to have been peopled from the north and north-west, the various migratory hordes passing southward and eastward, modifying or extending their curious customs as occasion arose, yet seemingly never retracing their steps northward again. Yet the later form of descent (agnatic) is adopted by the northern tribes who still practise all the other older customs, while the earlier form of matriarchial relationship obtains among the southern tribes who have considerably modified and in some cases dropped altogether many of the customs still in force in the north. Again new corroborees, new songs, changes of custom, etc. always travel from north to south. Therefore it must be inferred that all the changes which have taken place in the native customs have also come from the north, yet descent through the mother, which is presumed to have come with the Dravidian migration, together with many other customs attributed to the Dravidians, has in some inexplicable way been replaced by descent in the male line amongst those tribes who otherwise retain all the customs and beliefs of their assumed ancestors.



In the pages of this paper I have made no attempt to theorize upon the origin of either the customs or beliefs or superstitions of the natives. At the present time I am merely telling the tale as 'twas told to me. I have obtained almost all the information contained in this paper at first hand and not from one source only, but from many. Yet much remains to be done, especially in this Southern portion of this state, whose interesting inhabitants are rapidly passing away. There is but one pure-bred Murray native now living and of the thousand natives, stated by Armstrong, Symmons and others to have been resident in and near Perth in the early 40's, I believe old Fanny or Balbuk is the last remaining representative. Kelmscott, Canning, Bunbury and almost all the southern coastal districts are denuded of their aboriginal inhabitants, and in a very few years there will not be a wadarn or sea native left, and their curious customs and interesting legendary lore, from which possibly some inkling of their origin might be gained, will have vanished with them. I have been so fortunate as to obtain one dialect which becomes extinct on the death of my informant, now about 66 years old.

I must tender my hearty thanks to the esteemed President of this Society for kindly affording me this opportunity of giving you some small account of the most interesting race, and I beg to thank my audience for their kindly and patient courtesy.

I will give one Southern pedigree of the many I have obtained in illustration of the marriage rules of the Southern people. George Eliot whose native name is Baaburgurt, may be known to some of my audience. He is a native of Wannerup and is a Tondarup. His pedigree is as follows :-

Weereetch, a Tondarup,  
                  married  
Moorark, a Ballarruk, and had issue

Meangurt, f., a Ballarruk  
Woolgurt, m.           "  
Wangart, f.           "  
Beegoon, m.           "

A brother of Yeerabin a Tondarup (name not remembered)  
                  married  
Meangurt, a Ballarruk, and had issue

Djillyung, m., a Ballarruk  
Jiddungit, m.           "  
and twins who died in infancy.

Woolgurt, male, a Ballarruk  
                  married  
Urinn, a Tondarup, and had issue

Baaburgurt, male, a Tondarup  
and one little girl who died in infancy.

Mannagurt, a Didarruk  
                  married  
Wangart, a Ballarruk.

No issue

Beegoon died unmarried.

Baaburgurt, a Tondarup,  
                  married  
Nambuk a Ballarruk, and had issue one child who died in infancy.

Baaburgurt's 2nd wife is Nyeerbukan, a Nagarnook, and the widow of his maternal uncle Weela, a Tondarup, a wrong marriage.



Notwithstanding that year after year witnesses the filling up of the black spaces on our map, no effort has hitherto been made in a purely ethnological direction, to secure the history of the various tribes "in their passing". In a few years there will not be a trace left of the coastal natives, and their curious customs, their most interesting legendary lore, from which possibly some inkling of their origin might be gained, will be buried with them. The southern ethnological field is - so to speak - virgin country and it is here that investigation should at once be undertaken. There is but one pure-bred Murray native now alive, and but one Kootjcum, Kelmscott, Canning, Gingin and hosts of other districts are denuded of their aboriginal inhabitants, and of the thousand natives whom Armstrong Symmons and others stated were resident in the districts immediately surrounding Perth in the 30's, there is but one now left. Dardanup has but two living representatives of a once numerous tribe and it is many years since the last Fremantle native died.

I must now come to the close of my paper, not through lack of material but rather over-abundance. I hope I have said sufficient to rouse the lively interest of some of our

tender my most hearty thanks to your valued President for so kindly inviting me to read this paper and so gratifying my desire. I also beg to thank the audience for having so patiently listened to my description of some of the customs, laws, etc. of those people who, to me, are the most interesting in the world.

Marginal note from Woolberr's information,  
Chapter VII, original, P. 29

Tommy Nettle working at Hamersley's place "mooloo" is Woolber's  
"jooneen" or brother-in-law.



Yagan was Balbuk's uncle and Jooberung's son.

Mijegooroo may have been one of Yagan's "fathers".

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Karbomunup Meero - Karbomun Point, near Peppermint Grove -  
Yalgoonga owned this part but was not "King" as Lyon states.

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Bambaru is the Lake near Gingin.

Kurndimanunu and Warnongu, both fruits, are "barru", subincised,  
according to Nandubung, a Kardad, ara.

Ngardelimuragar man  
Yun-nga - man  
Bulya malba man  
Wongalawuk at Jijilap  
Kalaiawak at Jijilap  
Yata or yooda near Jijila

Yenarba - kordwak





Ngamminwuk country is also Dralyinya and Bauangainya  
 Dwertwuk " " " Bauinya and Dralyinya  
 Jigawuk " " " Biringabin, a big hill nr. Dralyinya  
 on the Norseman Rd.  
 Gumalwak " " " nr. Uralyinya  
 Nguar (ring tailed black) Balbinya  
 Widurunya  
 Marain's boojoor Baladonia  
 Kulbera - boomer - kulberwak  
 and  
 Yalba - doe kangaroo  
 Marru is yalbawak and kulbu  
 Wiluwuk at Malamaladap this side Pt. Malcolm.  
 Jigawak, Jijelap  
 Wurdawuk at 90 mile this side Eyre Sand Patch.  
 Wogaiawak = Eucla  
 Dwertwuk at Eucla.  
 Matale, gij, was kajiwak, Eucla.  
 Merderangwuk, Eucla.  
 "Albert", Ngauilwuk, Eucla

A tradition which may be mentioned here was extant amongst very old Capel district natives concerning some families who lived in the Sussex, Williams and Kojonup districts "a long time ago" and who were called yarr-ur-a-gur from their extreme fairness. These were "tall, strong, round-limbed" people, with fair hair, and they spoke the "Doonan" and "Doona komma" dialects. The Yar'ruragur have long since died out, one of their dialects, Doona komma dying with them. A vocabulary of the Doonan dialect was compiled from a very old Capel district native, who died in 1906.

The waljuk who came from the East were meenungur (inland people).



Bardeet says :-

yongar borungur cannot marry yongar borungur. Manitchmat are usually yongar borungur. Wordungmat wej and goomal.

Kaiar and Darinijet's father saw a Jaanuk and he made all the children Jaanuk. The ground where he saw the Jaanuk was jaanuk boojoor. Bardeet says Woobaruk are borungur too.

Mannitch and Waaleetch are the same.

Doongonit or William

Beel kal are beel borungur. When they are coming on a visit, their friends say, "Kari borungur beel wa" = river people coming.

Waddarndee are waddarn borungur.

Gabbaitch borungur - on the S.W. coast.

Kwanja borungur, a little woman mulgar borungur given to Maatilyan of Margaret River; the borungur was given by her grandfather.

Mannak of Bunbury a Didarruk.

William sang for ngarree or melok (salmon).

Ngwarra borungur were S. of Busselton) all dead  
Dang-ngail " " S. of Capel )

Young girls must not eat bandicoot or they will become too prolific. Young boys must not eat emu or they cannot run.

Several woggal places - you cannot catch anything near these woggal places.

Mungaitch borungur were where the mungaitch areas were situated. Mandura, Perth, etc.

The personal and inherited totem could supply the name.

Dangulyan was dangail borungur.

Dower was marrgain (tailor fish) borungur. He got his name from Marrgain bakkaining - dowa dowa.

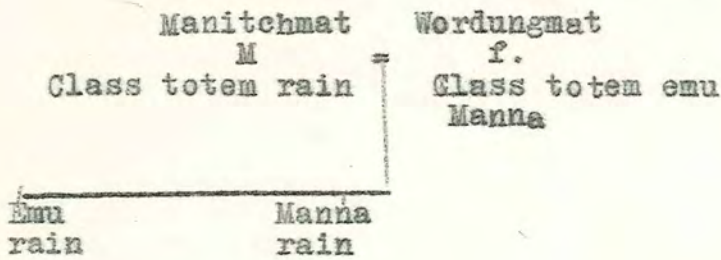
According to Perth legends, birds and beasts only once inhabited the earth, chief amongst them being the eaglehawk and crow.

Several birds, etc., must not for some reason be killed by natives of the south and north. They are not totems but in former times they were instrumental in bringing fire, killing janga dogs, etc. The wagtail, robin and jeedal must never be hurt or killed. The last named insect is one of the nicknames applied to long thin Tondarup and Didarruk people.

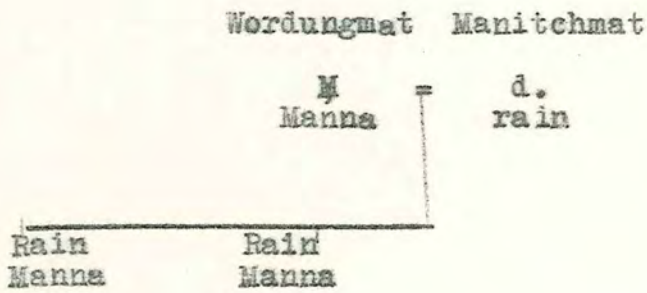
Dances are performed imitating these birds. The kallil or killal must not be killed either, but he has no dance, he is boogur. He it is who hits the babies on the heads. He has no borungur, because he wants none. The jeedal has borungur, but not Minnijet not Jitti jitti.

Woolberr = Woolbok woolbok = shivering. Nyitting cold is his woobarree. Mother's brother gave name and woobarree.

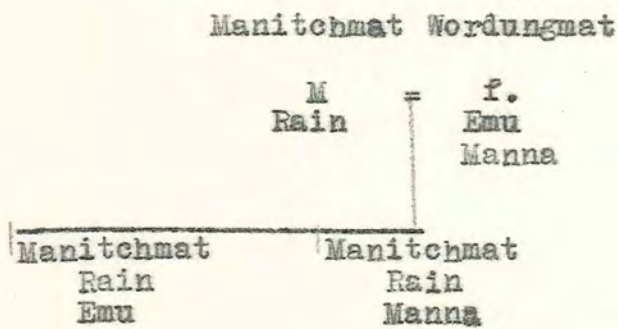
Female descent



Female descent



Male descent



Male descent

