XII 1b, 11

NGARDIAN OR XINGAN

Eucla District

Original in Notebook 5a, P. 3-18.
"Ngardian" or "Yingân"

17/12/13

I witnessed a curious ceremony, called Ngardian, this morning. A new contingent from Koggara arrived yesterday, but there were no fires lighted for them, nor was a "welcome" extended to them, although they have relatives in this camp. They came down in a line, stood on a slope near my wommoo, and then all the men from Kalda side gathered in a rather orderly mass, 5 deep, and came along towards the new men at a trot, their women trotting like camp followers beside them. As they advanced they now and then stopped, formed into a dense round mass and gave a curious throaty shout. All were fully armed. They advanced to within 20 paces of the others, and then turned away kaila towards their Kalda camp. They were led by Wiladhuurra and came well in running time. They made such a curious shouting noise, throaty, and all gathered into a close mass and stood still to shout. They made a half circle in their manoeuvring.

Then the new men formed into rank and made a noise like an eaglehawk as they ran round behind the first mob for a little distance, then returning to the place they started from also making a circle in their movements. This was a sort of ceremony of "armed neutrality" or temporary truce. The men then adjourned to the camp of the newcomers where exchange of goods took place amongst the mob.
Sunday afternoon

Kalala Yiri - Emu dance

Yilaru and Boongaran coming up avenue.

Bulu waves string.

Ngarralea touches them. "Mungarai yarandi na" sung.

Nyoorbinya and Goorardu, Yilaru touches them. No one waved rope.

"Mungarai yarandi na".

Gauera waves rope for next, Bijarda by himself, Balgunda touched him.

"A damper wonga, Agama a damper wonga" is sung for the next, Wiladhurst, and Gauera also waves for him, Balgunda touches him.

(One or two issue out of the bush beyond the avenue, either at a walk or run. If one, he walks. The last couples or single performer run. They run zig-zag along the avenue, stopping, at a shout from the singers, to turn round and quiver their thighs. Then as they near a little mound they kneel and bend to right and left over it, and finally they reach the mound round which singers are seated, and they kneel facing each other (if two) and rub each other's heads, quivering their bodies also at intervals.)

Mandi and Warlba (Goolgooolia), Yilaru touched them, Gauera waved.

Gauera also waves for the next two, Punch and Jimmy (Moggoomoggoom).

Sunday night, Monday morning 5 a.m., Monday afternoon and evening, Tuesday morning, 3 a.m., afternoon and evening; as soon as the evening corroboree was over, a row started and continued till 12, being resumed before daylight. Bulu and the women started it, and the men, Yilaru, took it up, and now it appears that they have spoiled the corroboree and it may not be able to be continued.
The Storehouse of the Yimma
(Jung when koondain, etc., are being brought)

I

Gubaraanndalde ngadnarda mininga
Minagu mininga gaag.

Reuben and Noggoomoggoo went shouting all round us as we trotted in single file towards the ground. Noggoomoggoo and Wiladburra shout as they pass to and fro in front of our circle. A minda and half circle has been formed and we make a circuit of this before we sit down within it while the two men shout, crossing and recrossing in front of the half circle.

II

Bulgar bamba ganba
Wilya wardi.

III

Jauurlan jauurlan yarran
Ngarrunga gadidarrangan ngad
Yegurlan gade.

Each koondain is first shown at a distance from us, one man prostrated, the other standing erect and holding it, stroking it and flicking the yimma towards the south. Then they rush away with them and shout as they cross each other in front of our circle; as each koondain is brought and placed behind us, we are touched on the breast or knee by kaili or wardon and the yimma is placed behind us. After it is held upright, it is then laid flat on the ground and the holder lies flat upon it for the moment, getting up and shouting as he goes back to his place.
This is sung as the last yimma are shown.

Yimma je dhaun dhaun
Igando jë bflabilarë
Igando jë mila milarë

When they have embraced it, they run in opposite directions, and as they come to the circle they shout and cross each other in front of it. We are touched regularly as each yimma is shown.

All yimma have been greased for the occasion. We are touched either by the hand or with kaili or wardan.

As they shout and cross and recross they clap their hands over their mouths to make the shout more savage and quivering. They run and cross each other in front of us.

Bob's yimma is about 25 feet long.
Concentric squares on many, divided by transverse lines.

VIIb

Dalgar dalgar dambura
Da winingga winingda.

Concentric squares, connected with transverse lines. They blow with the mouth as they tap these, first we tap them with branches, then with sticks. When we are to look up, a boomyining noise is made.

VII

Bunga bā ilura bungara
Yilain.

Nyoorbinyu and Kundaiji stood with wardan while Reuben and Frank heated the koondain and rubbed it along their sides, making believe to spear them with it. Hijarda and Meggeo-meggeo stand out to be speared. Punch hits them with branches while Mandy, McCarthy and Coerardoo spear them with the yirma. The boys then ran a little, hitting the air with their wardan. Several are seated round a fire, singing and beating clubs. After the men have been "speared" with yirma -

Bilga bai mai
Wilde yinnai
Bilga bai mai
Wilde wilde nyinnai
After they have sung they form in single file and trot back again and twice make the circuit of the circle. Ngailgalia, Jiduma, Goorooma, Wirrgan and I sit down. All have their spears, kailis, wardan, held in fighting position. Then I have to stand in the open while Bijarda and Kaludhurra bring the yimma and place the flat of it against my breast, then the point on both sides of my collarbone, then they lay it flat on my shoulders. All the while they are singing, "Yimma" etc. Every yimma has been separately brought out and shown as before mentioned, and as they lay it flat they run on all fours astride its length. Those who hold it up to view are not the persons who carry it to the minda. These two run shouting across one front as we yoodoo (refrain from looking). When all the yimma are behind us, we are then shown them and we tap them and sing as we look at the designs on them. Some are Mallaalea's, some Bob's, Reuben's, Ngail-gulea's, etc, etc. All have different markings on them, some symbolical, others not. "Pu, pu, pu," the men ejaculate.
and gone away, the ceremony being over.

Then all the men again take spears, hails and wadsam, and with these half aloft they go trotting down the path towards the storehouse, in single file, turning before they reach it and trotting back again. Then the jims are all taken, the longest by transforms, then haham, and so on, all in single file, kouskous, and I behind the others. We trot gently as the jims are heavy, to the storehouse, made of a large piece, broken boughs of wadsam. Further west is the cave made of sailing, bunches, etc., kouskous mon, for some distance west is marked by broken boughs of wadsam, where they will be put back later.
Two or three fires have been lighted on the way there, one through whose smoke we pass being nearly a mile away from the storehouse, another about half a mile, and another a few hundred yards only. We must all get "smoked" by these fires, the booyoo must pass through and around us, and at whatever spot the yimma are held up, there also a fire is immediately lighted and blazes for a moment only; fire and yimma go down together. We are again "smoked" on our way back, but only two or three smokes. As we near the camp, other smokes are sent up to tell the women to return to the camp. They were sent away two miles. The storehouse is about 3 miles from the native camp.

While we waited at the last fire before going on the yimma ground, Wirrgain and Moggoo-moggoo rushed down upon us, both uttering a series of shrill shouts, accentuated by placing their quivering hands across the sound. These were kept up while we trotted to the ground, Wirrgain and Moggoo-moggoo going round and round the group as we went along in single file. That peculiar shouting is the most barbarous and savage sounding thing I've heard amongst them, and is calculated to send a creepy terror through every native heart. No wonder they hold their customs and sacred emblems in awe, that shout and the singing and beating of clubs and the yimma and the sacred and secret and unknown meaning attached to them, for no native can say more than that they came down to them from Dhoogoorr time and that they hold the mystery of their life with them. Those amongst them who have made the yimma carry the wilya or ngouun (shadow) in their hearts. To lose that shadow is to die. They believe that for a yagga to look upon it means death (madness first) to her. For a boy to look at it means a dreadful death, for the yimma gets inside him and eats his vitals. That trotting to the ground from the last fire, I shall not soon forget, nor any of the ceremony. We started from the camp at 6 a.m. and did not return until
12.30 p.m. We did not go in a direct line - we made a slight half circle to the storehouse.
Corroboree continued this evening.

1. Warra wongan ye
2. Yau yau
3. Wanda wandima
   Dhandhara ngadhai
   Yarra kundai
   Dhandhara nadhai
   Yarra kundai
   Wandima
   Wanda wandima.
4. Wamardi magandur murnē
   Indiri magaandur murnē
   Wamirdiriliriri langur
5. Ngai'oni ngaioni dhaagarhai
   yannē mā
   Ngai'oni ngaioni narralai
   yannē mā
   Ngai'oni ngaioni dharrolai
   yannē mā
6. Cooya bilbilba
   A yanda nguraa
   A yanda nguraa
   Cooya bilbilba
7. Ma wanti koonarra ijarda jinna
   Ma wanti kalarra jinna jinna
   Ma wanti kunai yaljurda jinna
Inyira koggara janni
Inyira dede longara janni
Yirra dede longara janni
Inyirra koggara janni
Inyiri dede koggara janni

Wilbunga wilbunga
Kooga arra wilbunga wilbunga
Koonga arra wilbunga wilbunga
Wilbunga wilbunga

Yungari waibari yarda buljarri

Injiba mindilai
Injiba ngalarai yarralai
Injiba mindilai
Injiba ngalarai yarralai

Ngaiuna yilburna wandhanga yilburna
Gaigorga ngaiuna wandaga
Ngaiuna yilburna, ngaiuna yilburna,
Wandhunga yilburnaa
Gaigorga yerlburnaa (bis)
Wandhana ilburna (bis)

Binnmar ba durnalai
Billari ba bungalai bunga jinnai lai
Binnari ba durnalai bulgalai
Bulga jinnai lai
Binnari ba durnalai bulgalai
Bulga jinnai lai
Jabbura jabbura la (bis)
La main main dalgaani (bis)
Jabbura jabbura lai
Jabbura jabbura lai
La main main dalgaani (bis)

(Oratorio in the making)

Mira lunga ngiamur
Wonga nga lur daljenn
Biba agura , biba bguraa lurbanna
Biba nguraa lurboma
Mira longa naianmur
Wonga ngalur daljenn
Bilba aguraa loorbenna
Ngali ngalur daljenn
Mira lunga naianmur

Karrga majurma ngaiugoo
Karrga majurma na Paljarri
Karrga majurma na Paljarri
Karrga majurma ngaiogoo

Bidown bungaa ya (very slowly)
Agurnan birima ya
Yadungga yadungga

Koonga andur baiana (very quickly)
Kooga anii boogandi bainga
Aaga andur baiana
Agana kooga anii booga andur baiana

17 is again sung, and again 16, then very slowly:

Aburnē bē Birilbanyi
Nalle a budarana
Quickly
Lamairrai rungarai
Ngadai we ililė
Gudai we ililė
Languir wair langanai
Langair wair runganē

20. Wilasari inbinai
   Wilasari inbinai
   Bilbara anbernai
   Lalārna a lalē
   Lalārna a larīnē

21. Yalbarda warra warra (very slowly)
    Yunganbai lindinai murdanmai
    Yalbara mai

Women’s dance

22. Lara malba dhaba dhama
    Ngandu ngabari lara mur
    Lārā malba dha ba dha ma
    Ngandu ngabari lara mu

23. Dara malba dhabadha ma
    Yambara malur

24. Iga iga yaldarongul baindai (minor)
    Iga iga yaldarongul baindai
    Iga iga yaldarongul baindai

25. Yagere dilbila
    Dumburdur mūlarne
    Yagere dilbila dumburdur umularne
    Yagere dilbila dumburdur umularne
Men make "Errr" noise at song 27. They appear to be frightened. They sing these remarks often between the words of the song.

This song is sung while two men dance along the track, stopping in the middle 2 or 3 times to put their hands to their heads.