

VI
[4]

NGARGALULA

In the Yamminga times of long, long ago there were three countries in Jajjala, the area that is now called Broome. *N. V. A. Aust. Class*
 There was the sky (kalbi) country, the ground (beeroo), and the underground (jimbin) country, and it is of the jimbin country this story tells. The jimbin country was the beautiful home of the ^{SPRIT} babies, ngargalula, and all young animals, birds and plants. * By the little streams the babies sat and played with the tiny fishes and crabs and all along the banks the flowers opened and leaned down to touch the babies as they floated along on their way to the sea. The little birds sang to them and the ngargalula sat beside them on the branches or beside the thickly leaved shrubs where bird and ngargalula played games among the leaves. *

And there was no dark night in ngargalula land. Sun and moon and stars came and sat down with the babies and young reptiles and snakes fondled them. Jimbin was the loveliest of the three countries of the Jajjala people, for neither sorrow nor fighting nor evil nor death ever came to Jimbin land, and no grown up could visit jimbin except in dreams.

When the Boeroo men dreamed of jimbin, they saw the babies playing with the young land and sea creatures, going down under the sea with their friends the turtles and fishes, or sitting beside young animals and birds or the edible food plants that were round and about them. * Jimbin was filled with young ngargalula and lovely flowers and plants - the young of everything that grew in the boeroo country above them. All the little ngargalula knew about Boeroo land. When the flowers and edible foods stopped growing in Boeroo land, they all went to jimbin until it was time to go up to Boeroo again.

Every person in Boeroo land was once a little ngargalula ^{KALBU} from Jimbin land. The little ngargalula always chose its

own father and always came to him in his dream. As the man slept he dreamed he saw a little ngargalula standing close beside him, and he said, "Who is your father?" and ngargalula replied, "Kaimera, you are my Burongu father," and then the dreamer would look around the place where the ngargalula was standing and he would see some good edible food or some young emus or turtles or porpoises and he would note everything round and about the ngargalula, and when he had taken note of all these things, the ngargalula would go over to where his future earthly mother lay asleep, and going inside her was carried by her until by and by he was born in Booroo land, but he was still a ngargalula until the day came when he smiled at his parents, and then he was "no more ngargalula."

The living things, birds, fish, edible plants, flowers, that his father saw in his dream, became his ngargalula totems, and when he grew up to manhood and dreaming time, he dreamed the increase of his own totem food and no one else could dream its increase except himself, and if it were a favourite food of his booroo land people they would ask him to "Dream more, dream more," so that they should have plenty of it in the season, whatever the food might be. If the ngargalula totem were some specially liked seeds, he would dream he was in Jimbin land again sitting near his totem and he would pluck the seeds and chewing them would scatter them all about him, and if his totem were the ~~ngargalula~~ ^{Yargala} seeds, which came up in Booroo land for a short time only, all his Booroo land friends would see beautiful rays coming from the setting sun and they would laugh happily and say, "Yargla^{ee} (Yeergelee) seeds will be many."

No little ngargalula who became a Booroo land boy or girl ever hurt their ngargalula totem or the young of their animal or bird or fish totem, and so the ngargalula totem foods were always plentiful.

No man could dream of a ngargalula baby unless he had a ranjee (spirit, soul), and no man would claim a baby as his if he did not dream the ngargalula came to him. When Wallungun of Jajjala accompanied a white man to Perth in the early days of white settlement, he dreamed while in Perth that a ngargalula came to him, told him he was its father, and Wallungun saw the wanjulain - long edible bean - beside the ngargalula, and when he returned to Booroo land some years later, he knew the little baby ^{HIS WOMAN CARRIED} was his.

Ngargalula knew all the laws and avoidances and totems while they were ngargalula, and no ngargalula ever came to the wrong father. When the dreaming man was Burongu, ngargalula said, "I am Kaimera," and if the man was Kaimera ngargalula said, "I am Burongu," for Kaimera and Burongu are fathers and sons for ever.

And if the dreaming man saw the ngargalula standing by the sea beach, he looked round, and while he looked, a ^{big} turtle or porpoise would come up beside ngargalula and play with him, and the Booroo land father would say, "These are ngargalula jalnga (totems)." The baby ngargalula could see his brother and sister who had come to Boorooland, but they could not see him for he was ngargalula, and he would go inside their mother and if he had chosen a Burongu father, his mother was ^{Central} ~~Pannunga~~ ^{BARRAKA term} Pannunga. If he was Burongu, then his father was Kaimera and he must go inside a ^{Central} ~~Parrajel~~ ^{WATER} mother.

Many babies came to Booroo land, for the Jajjala men kept their marriage laws and lived good lives. Every Booroo land man knew that if he broke the strict marriage laws that had come down to his people from far off Yamminga times, he would be killed by his brothers or his fathers for breaking their great marriage law, and even if he ran away with the wrong woman and found some distant water to sit down beside, no ngargalula baby would ever come to him in his dreams, and he would be thrown away by his Booroo land people for ever.

The babies that might come to him would be picked up anywhere and had no totems unless he gave them a totem from the strange waters of the new country he had fled to.

Boorooland boys had to pass through nine trying stages before they became fully initiated men like their fathers and during all these periods they were separated from their mothers and sisters, and were always learning the laws and avoidances, totems and responsibilities of Booroo land men. Every one of these nine periods had its own special lessons to be learned, and at one period of his probation, the young learner was given a sacred board, called kalleegooroo, carved with yammainga markings and with some special totem mark that his father had seen when the little ngargalula baby came to him. The kalleegooroo must never be seen by women or children. The boy kept it with him night and day in his period of solitude, and the spirit within the board protected him always. *

A great moment came when the young man first dreamed of his own ngargalula booroo and saw the babies playing round and about him. And when he told his dream to a grandfather the old man knew their grandson had a "ranji" (spirit, soul) and was a worthy Booroo land man. By and by when all his probation periods were passed and he was Taalurgurra, a fully initiated man, the little ngargalula girl babies who had been betrothed to him would be grown up and given over formally to him and the Taalurgurra would dream of his ngargalula country and a baby would come to him and would say, "What are you. Who is your father?" and the baby would say, "I am Burongu. You are my Kaimera father,"

When the white man came to Jajjala, all the Booroo land people were very frightened and though the men still dreamed and the ngargalula came to them in their dreams, it was only a little while until the Booroo land men died and went to Loomurn, the home of the Jajjala dead beyond the great sea that beats the shores of the country that is now Broome.

The ngargalula booroo is jimbin, beneath or under the ground, and all the animal and vegetable totems given to the child are first seen in the dream on the jimbin booroo, which is the booroo os all jalnga.

The totems which the ngargalula of the jimbin booroo brings with it, or shows to its father in the dream, need not necessarily grow upon or belong to the ground above the jimbin which becomes the baby's booroo, but wherever these totems are on the baby's father's territory, the boy can sing or dream their increase; he is responsible for their plenty in due season.

Beedaboogan is Billinge's ngargalula booroo. Beneath this booroo (jimbin) are all the wallee and mai jalnga and the weapons belonging to him when he was ngargalula. Above the ground (kalboo) the mai which his father saw on the jimbin booroo does not grow, but in the immediate neighbourhood the waljoora (native bean) grows and Billinge is responsible for its increase. He does not sing the increase of the waljooroo, he only dreams that he chews it and spreads it abroad and sometimes walks along the jimbin maggoor and throws a handful all about. Many of the vegetable and animal totems are only dreamed by the persons whose totems they are; songs are sung for some totems, but every totem is not sung. For instance, Billinge had a nyeerrwa (cave), beelarra (spring), neeburda (shellfish), jooka (mudfish) and beedee (sea) as his jalnga, all given him by his father, his sea totemship was by inheritance since he was a seacoast native, but none of these totems had any songs connected with them. Everyone must, however, dream the increase of their totems, otherwise these will not be plentiful, and the persons responsible for them will be censured for their neglect to provide a sufficiency of such totemic animal or plant.

Amongst the coastal (Nor' West) natives, no totem ceremonies accompany their songs for the increase, nor is there a dream totem ceremony beyond that of chewing and scattering

the mai about the dream ground. The only exception is with the jeerungoo and beeloorn mai.

The booroo (ground) where the ngargalula came to the father, belongs to the child, the jalnga (totem) that was seen either in its hand, or in the vicinity of its booroo, is its personal totem which will be neither that of its father or mother. The child if a Boorong will have the Tchallingmer as its Class totem. The father gives it many other personal totems of certain marked features in the dream country between the ngargalula booroo and his own camp and when the father dies, the boy inherits his food totems. The mother gives the boy nothing.

Women may have personal totems which they brought with them as ngargalula or which their fathers will have dreamed and given them, and they may dream the increase of these, if they are edible totems, and they may also have a share in the dead father's totems, but in general women appear to have no status whatever amongst the Northern group, except during wallungarree time, when the mother-in-law is allowed deliberately to infringe the law of avoidance of her son-in-law. No women appear to take any prominent part in any ceremony in which wallee totemic songs are sung, though in certain ceremonies, women and children are included, and there are also mirroeroo women (women possessing the power of magic) but there are not many of these amongst the seacoast natives, and their mirroeroo qualities are not transmitted. They are more numerous amongst the pindana natives.