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WINAITCH

(Forbidden)

In various parts of the South there were certain places which were winnaitch or sacred, the abodes of kaanya or janga - spirits. These winnaitch places might be only trees or rocks, a sand bank or a hill, but whatever they were, the natives in passing them were careful to strew wushes or boughs upon them and so propitiate the spirits dwelling there. Any native going over one of these places and neglecting to make this propitiatory offering was sure to die.

In some of these winnaitch places the kaanya was a bird whose voice was always heard, but whose form no native ever saw. There was a standing stone somewhere near York that had a bird as its kaanya. At Kootungup, near Wamarup Bar, a bug Tuart tree was winnaitch or Koobar.

Winninup, near Busselton, had a winnaitch sand bank, which no native would travel over.

That part of the river in Busselton that lies between the two bridges was winnaitch and was supposed to have been inhabited by a wangal or mythical snake.

In some of these winnaitch places, loud noises like the sound of a huge fire with a strong wind blowing upon it could be heard and if a native was venturesome enough to approach the place where the sound emanated from, he only saw a smoke circling round and round the spot. This smoke they believed to be the spirits or kaanya of dead natives who were covering up the place where the noise had come from.

Some of these spirits were quiet, others were boogur or sulky. The natives did not fear to hunt in the vicinity of quiet winnaitch places, but they always carefully avoided those where the sulky spirits dwelt.

The site of the Osborne Hotel at Claremont was winnaitch and a story is related of a corroboree having been held there some years ago by the Nor'West natives who were not aware of its evil reputation, but who suffered the consequence of treading on forbidden ground, for before the corroboree was ended two of their members suddenly collapsed and were taken to the hospital where they died of some mysterious illness inflicted by the offended winnaitch kaanya. Now, the natives say the advent of the white man has driven

SWAN DISTRICT , BALBUK

On the eastern side of Gooseberry Hill, on the point of the hill there was a winnaitch place which was however only winnaitch to some members of the family group. If Balbuk's father (a Tondarup) killed a yongar, gqomal, kweenda or any daaja, neither Balbuk (a Ballarruk) nor her father (a Tondarup) could eat it, but her mother (a Ballaruk) and Joobaitch's father (a Tondarup) and Joobaitch (a Ballarruk) and other yungar could eat it. If either Balbuk or her father ate the daaja, the jenga would break their knees and make them crooked (maata nge'lin). Joobaitch's aunt (ngoogerdan) a Tondarup, father's sister, was also forbidden to eat it, but she had some in defiance of the warning and her legs were hit by the jenga and lumps formed on them and when the lumps went away, her legs were crooked.

The kalleepgur yungar (people belonging to the ground) kept the place swept and cleaned and after they did so they frequently saw a lot of grey hair flying about which they know was the jerdal (grey hair) of the jenga. Balbuk and Joobaitch could give no reason as to why restrictions were placed on some members of the family and not on all.

At Jaggoolijoo, a place up the Helena River Hills, there is another level winnaitch ground, with a stone in the middle of it and when a yungar sweeps this place, if he visits it soon after and finds pieces of meat on the stone, he knows that he must die, for the jenga are eating his flesh.

There are live Jenga at Kweeman, who watch for yungar who are travelling alone and when the yungar stoop to drink the jenga pulls all their hair out and leave them without any hair on their heads or bodies. If these jenga chase a Dandarraga district yungar he will try and cross a river for the jenga stays by the water to look at himself and admire his shadow, saying, "Yoortha wandee" (I'm a fine fellow) The jenga sings his own name as he looks at himself: Mow mara ullatha woorajee kool.

The Cape Bedford blacks believed that the first Europeans were the spirits of their deceased relatives, and Schurmann and Teichelmann state that the Adelaide natives used the word "pindi" to express European and "grave", apparently from the belief that the white men were resurrected natives. The Pennefather River natives also beleived that the first white people they saw were the spirits of their dead relatives. Dr. Roth discovered that from the natives' belief that the vital principle (spirits) of their ancestors was re-incarnated in the white man. The same word is found to duty for a European and a deceased aborigine's spirit or ghost from the Blomfield to the Tully River.

The belief that the spirits of the dead linger in the branches of trees, etc., is also held by the natives of Tully River.