

DAISY BATES COLLECTION.

Folder III.

- [1] Manja Boming - firestick ceremony - south west. Typescript. 6p.
- [2] Three fine customs - Babbingur - Typescript. Part of p.1 + p.3-4.
- [3] Natives: information from Eucla notebook. Typescript, with ms. notes and corrections. 16p.
- [4] The noble dingo, by Robert Kaleski. Newspaper clippings of 2 articles, from the West Australian.

Babbin Onim

MANJA BOMING

From Notebook 24, P. 6

The babbin or kobong, "friend making by adoption" of the West Australians is analogous to the fosterhood system of Ireland (Irish-Breton custom) and in Serbia at the present day the custom prevails of young men pledging themselves to friendship with some one of their own sex with whom they have been in frequent company, and this "friendship by adoption" is often more sacred than the ties of kinsnip. In W.A. a young native will in many cases more readily take the part of his "babbin" in some tribal dispute, than that of his uterine brother. The babbin ceremony is a binding one and lasts during the lifetime of both parties. George Eliot alias Baapur, a Capel Tondarup, exchanged names with William, a Vasse Nagarnook, somewhere about the 50's, and the strong friendship then solemnised still exists between these two, both now very old men.

XI, 1a, P. 21.

The Swan and Murray Manja boming ceremony consisted in the exchange of firesticks between people who already are, or will become from the ceremony, habbingur. All male ngunningur (blood relations) (Manitchmat) hold lighted firesticks which they bring to female noy'yungur (relations-in-law) (Wordungmat), receiving other firesticks in exchange. As the person approaches the woman with his firestick he sings :-

Ingan mardai, ingan mardai, etc., or  
Kala mooro gen wooree (firestick one long).

While singing he passes the smouldering stick from one shoulder to the other, and when he reaches the woman with whom he intends to change it, she takes the stick from him and picking up a piece from the small fire beside her she says to him in recitative :-

Nyinna kala neeja, warrail burrong, wata gert  
You fire here no good take, quickly go,  
ngaija naagul-ai-neeja Burrong watagert  
I poor fellow here Take or carry, go quickly  
ngaija warrail neejagutting.  
I no good here staying.

The man takes the fire and listens to the woman. He then raises his spear which has a tuft of white cockatoo feathers fastened to its point, and going behind his babbin he places the spear alternately on her right and left shoulder, and passes on to the next

woman whom he may treat in the same manner. The fire may be taken from or exchanged between more than one man or woman at Manja bombing. These babbingur or kobongur can never marry each other, and there is no illicit intercourse between them.

When the Manja bombing is about to close two men stand out from either end of the group, and going between the line of men and women, throw their walga (clubs) towards each other, the walga making a whirring noise as it flies from the hand. This ceremony is called "cutting the manja in two," and Manja bombing is over. The exchange of weapons, etc. generally followed the firestick ceremony and barter was often spoken of as manja bombing.

Swan and Gingin Manja bombing

Page 50.

This fire exchange ceremony might either be conducted at a wanna wa, or some other large assemblage, but generally it formed one of the features of the wanna wa. It was performed as follows in the Gingin district :-

All the women who are to become the babbin of the men sit in a row, each with a little fire beside her. The men have but one general fire, from which they take the lighted firestick. They dance along with it towards their babbin who has her piece ready to exchange with them. As they dance they sing the following, which is sung throughout the ceremony ;:

Manja manja werree kuttijo oonan,  
Firestick, firestick, listen (or hear, understand)

Ngaija boorda ngabunginja  
I by and by friend

Manja booka neeja yookurnba ngadna.  
Firestick, cloak, here standing me.

When they have exchanged the fire with their babbin (always sister-in-law relations) they dance back to their place, and their ngoondamat or babbingur continue the manja until all have exchanged firesticks with their yogga babbin. They then take the spear, tipped with the white cockatoo's crest or feathers, and walking behind the yogga they rest it on their babbin's shoulders, singing the same song in passing from one babbin to another.

The next morning the men gather a number of big logs, one of which is placed on a fire, the others are placed at a little distance away, end to end, until there is a long line of logs. One side of these

logs is ngunning, the other side being ngoy'yung - that is, Man-itchmat are at one side and Wordungmat at the other.

All the babbin then exchange names and gifts, the gifts being thrown across the logs. Then those babbingur who have exchanged fires stand some distance away from the logs and each male babbin says to some special female babbin, "Nyinna kwel (Woolberr or Joobaiten, etc. etc.) jookal, ngangal, ngurramurring kwel nyinna 'Woolberr', etc.." (Your name is now Woolberr - or whatever name the babbin may be), sisters, mothers and all our relations will name (or call) you Woolberr.)

After this sentence has been repeated by each male babbin, each takes up his bundle of gifts (boonarruk) and the manja bombing is finished.

#### Balbuk. informant

Moonya is a term used for a ceremony conducted at Manja time between older women and men. An old woman may exchange names and gifts with another woman from another district, or with an old man. The moonya paint each other on the breast before the gifts and names are exchanged and after such exchange these moonya will specially "look out" for each other when they pay a visit to their respective districts. Another privilege the moonya women have is that they can use their influence in stopping fights and compelling the combatants to become reconciled.

MANJA BOMING (BAUMING)

A corroboree was held where the babbin ceremony was carried out and this consisted of purchase by the noyyungur of the hair of the young man who is babbin to be. For instance, a young man who possesses long hair, a noyyung, comes to my camp, I see him, his hair attracts my attention and I at once go over to him and put my hand on him and say, "Nyinna ngunnong kobung," you are my friend. Then I get paint and naba, wilgee, him and my people help me to make a bed for him. If his mother and sisters and brothers were there I would get their hair too. I cut my noyyung's hair and then sell it for kyleys, spears, wilgee, bookas (and I keep it for some little time and then it is sold.) When my kobung is with me he cannot carry spears or anything, only a walga or dowak and if a battle or fight take place my kobung is placed in a safe spot until it is over. He is attended to all the time he is with me, everyone is his servant, all the ngunning must look after him and he isn't allowed to do the smallest service for himself, everything is done for him, and for the time being he is looked upon as something apart, and all for the sake of his hair, for I know that all the ngunning from all parts of the country will bring goods to exchange for that hair. The noyyungur will give me spears, etc. as well as the hair, and all these I will exchange for other spears. I have to pay my kobong's mother and sisters and uncles for his hair. My mothers and brothers and sisters and uncles will have to work hard to obtain things which I must give to my kobung's mother. His father being ngunning does not take any active part.

Bardil, informant

At manja bom Bardil states that the babbin women give the man the firestick. He throws it away before he gets the next one.

The hair cutting ceremony took place in the summer time and a big corroboree gathered for the ceremony, called manja. The Babbin or kobong was made at the same time and it was he and his people (who were noyyung to the young man) who took the principal part in the cutting. The young man dreamed of the person who afterwards became his Babbin. If they were hit by anyone in their dream they made that person babbin.

Joobyten, informant

XI 2, P. 27

Manja borungur<sup>?</sup> is another dance, making friend, you can have 4 babbin, "real dream babbin."

Balbuk, informant

XI, 3a, 1

Manja Boming Song

This song is sung when making "babbin", "koobong" or "friend" at Manja boming time (manja = fire stick, boming = hitting or striking). When the native made a woman his "babbin", he first brought a firestick which he exchanged with her, taking one from her in return. He then tied a cockatoo's feather to the point of his spear and going behind his yoga babbin he rested the spear first on her right shoulder then on her left, singing. The song refers to the babbin-making and mentions the gifts prepared for the babbin.

Manja manja wer'ree kut'tijo oon'an

Manja manja wer'ree kuttijo oon'an

Ngyja boor'da ngab'buninja

Manja bookaneeja yookurnba ngatha

Manja manja werree kuttijo oonan, etc.

Baabor and Ngilgee, informants

Manja Song

When the manja (lighted firestick) is being passed from babbin to babbin (would this mean "I am making you free of my fire or home, and you are making me free of yours?") the following words are sung or recited, which do not seem to carry much meaning :-

Kala mooro gen wooree  
Fire point ? one tall.

Other Manja Songs (Vasse)

As the person holding the firestick approaches his babbin he sings the following words :-

Ingan mardal ingan mardal.

The woman whom he approaches returns the stick singing :

Wataget ngyj nagalal neeja burrong

Wataget ngyj warral neeja getting.

Translation :

Take it away, I poor creature now carry (it)

Take it away, I nasty now holding (?)

MANJA BOMINGFrom XI, 1, P. 1. (pencilled  
MSS.)

The Perth and Gingin manja boming might either be conducted at a wanna wa or some other large assemblage, but generally at the wanna wa ceremony. The method of conducting the manja boming was as follows.

Balbuk, informant

Manja bom' (bo'ming)

P. 2.

Native fair which always took place during the Babbín ceremony. Balbuk saw the last one which was held in the present park (Min'de-ra) (?) Perth, Pinjarra, Fremantle and Gingin and Wanneroo natives took part in the Babbín ceremony. The Babbín ceremony lasted about a day, but the visitors remained for a little time. If the visitors went out daaja hunting they always gave the owners part of the day's catch.

Woolberr, informant

P. 3

At the Manja time a fire stick was passed on from babbín to babbín and kept alight during the journey. Those who passed it on, or rather began the game would have dreamed about it some time previously. After the fire stick had been passed on, each man tied a cockatoo feather to the point of his spear and going behind his yoga babbín he rested the spear first on her right shoulder, then on her left, singing :

Manja manja werree kutijo conan  
Firestick firestick listen

Ngyja boorda ngabuninja  
I bye and bye friend

Manja bookaneeja yookurnba ngatha  
Firestick cloak ready standing? I

Manja  
firestick

These words are also sung to the passing of the firestick.



## Manja boming (continued)

Balbuk, informant

When the firestick is passed on, all the women sit in a row. At one end of the row there is a fire and the men sit down near the fire ready to pick up the "manja" and carry it to the "yoga babbin". They dance along with the lighted stick and hand it to their babbin who has a lighted piece ready to give back to them. Then they dance back to their places and their ngoondamat come along and give another firestick to the yoga babbin, and so on until they have all exchanged firesticks. It is always ngunning and noyyung who take part in the manja.

When the manja is finishing up the men put a cockatoo feather at the point of the spear and walking behind the yoga they rest it on their shoulders singing the same song as at the manja passing. Each man does this to each yoga, and the manja of that day is over with the carrying of a big log which the men put on the fire. The old men of the group - the biderr - says "the manja will finish tomorrow", and the next morning the men gather a number of big logs and place them end to end. One side of these logs is ngunning and the other side noyyung. All the babbin then change names and gifts, the gifts being thrown across the log. Then the babbingur who have exchanged fires stand some distance away from the logs and each babbin says "Nyinna quel (Woolber) jookai, ngangal ngurramurring quel nyinna Woolber." Your name is Woolber, sisters, mothers and all your relations name (call) you Woolber. After this is said each babbin takes up his or her boonarruk and all have a rest until next day, when a corroboree finishes the manja and the several people returned to their homes.