

Majellan Ebano

Mirgam-lay no Ō-jin-bū. malle

Kumpara had fu-tweet. Ō-imbū non.  
What is my Ō-imbū is the end of June

VIII  
[3]

Willilambi;  
The Legend of Magellan's Clouds

In the ~~throng~~ <sup>or dream</sup> times of long ago the men of Willilambi Wamun (Twilight-Love), lived in great fear & trouble. Walja, the Eaglehawk, whose "wamun" (Jui, home) was far north, was their enemy, & whenever he came near their Wamun he shouted at them, & every time he shouted a boy died, & when they broke off a branch of the badru (sandalwood tree), a boy died. So that the Willilambi men had no boys for their initiation ceremonies. They tried to spear Walja, but their spears were too slender, & would not pierce the hard skin of Walja. Also, they were in great & constant fear that Walja would break the Great Wate (tree) which grew near Willilambi, & which held up the sky, for if the great tree was broken, the sky would fall down & darken the earth, & all the men & women would die.

There were two big brothers, Baddhu-woodha, right-handed, & Koorulba, left-handed, who were "friends" (goon-min-yarra) of the Willilambi men, & they were very sorry to see the Walja killing the boys with their shouting & branch-breaking.

One day Baddhu-woodha & Koorulba came & sat down by Willilambi Water, & said to the men, "We will kill the Walja who is killing & eating your boys, when we have killed them we will give you strong wood, & show you how to make good hard spears from it - so that by & by you can spear all the Walja that come to your Wamun (Jui-home)"

The two brothers<sup>2</sup> had very strong ngal-dhara  
(species of hardwood spear) hard & smooth & with very  
sharp points, & they had warden (spearthrowers) made  
from the same wood, & by & by they made a great-  
wind come, & while the wind was coming over the  
koondan (plain) they lighted a big fire & hid in the  
branches of the great tree that kept the earth & sky  
apart.

Darkness came along with the magic north wind that  
Baadhu-woodha made, & Walja & his Yaggulu (woman) &  
their two boys came to Williaumbi in the big wind &  
sat down in a shady place under a tree. Walja said, boasting,  
"This is my Wamujin", & he & his woman & boys cooked  
their meat & ate, having no fear of the Williaumbi men,  
& when they had eaten they slept, hiding themselves  
among the branches of the baatu (Sandalwood tree).

Baadhu-woodha & Kosrubba were watching them,  
& presently Baadhu-woodha, holding his ngaldhara &  
wardan in readiness, crept & crept, quietly, quietly, out  
of the great tree that held the sky up, for if he had  
gone quickly he might have broken it. Kosrubba  
came behind with his ngal-dhara & warden, & when  
they were near Walja, right handed Baadhu-woodha  
threw his ngaldhara at M'malu (father) Walja, &  
left handed Kosrubba threw his spear at the mother  
Walja & the strong & sharp pointed ngaldhara spears  
went right through their bodies. Father & Mother Walja  
cried out, & flew away with the spears sticking out on  
each side of them. They tried & tried to pull the spears out  
but the ngaldhara was too strong, & by & by, when they  
came back for their boys, Baadhu-woodha caught  
hold of the spear sticking out of father Walja, & Kosrubba  
caught mother Walja's spear & they held them & held  
them until the Walja were dead.

The boys were very frightened & tried to hide in the thick leaves of the baaru, but Baadhu woodha brought them out. & killed them on the Karonda (Plain).

Then he said to the Willilambi men. "There is your meat" cook it & eat it, for our brothers & their boys & girls are now safe & cannot be killed any more. The name of the place where Walja & his woman & their two boys were killed was Goo-il-gamba, & their bones are now becoming (stones) & may be seen scattered & strewn about - Won'munda (4 yrs Sand Path) & Kalli-ambra.

Then Baadhu woodha made a great many strong big trees come up out of the ground & he called the trees bung-gal, & he took the wood from these & showed the Willilambi men how to make bung-gal spears & bung-gal spear throwers & said, "Now you will always have good hard Kaji (spears) & warden, that will break or bend, & you will no longer fear Walja, I give the bung-gal to Willilambi Goo-nui-yarra (males, friends.)

The Willilambi men were very glad, & the old men said: "Our wamu (fire, home, also 'totui') will be banggal wamu always, for we are brothers of the bunggal, & all men will carry the ngwan (shadow) of the bung-gal warden (spearthrower) inside them so that it will tell them when Walja are coming."

All Willilambi men then became "bung-gal-ee-Jan-garra" & bung-gal wamu (bung-gal group) & bung-gal-aumi (aumi-contraction of wamu-fu-totui) & they were always able to kill & eat Walja, & the old men make yeon-ma (long carved boards) & boorbing (Spongy "Choringa" Bull rovers - shaken boards with holes & string, & twirled during ceremonies & making what white people call "a roaring bull sound")

& the carvings on yeenma & boorbing were the heart, ribs, stomach, entrails & tail of Walja whom they had conquered, & no Walja could make spears or yeenma from the bung-gal, for it was maadiji (sacred, forbidden) to them & belonged to Bung-gal-aum only.

When the brothers had made the Willilambi men yaddu (good, "all right") Baadhuwoodha & Koorulba went up, up, "maadu-maadu" into the sky & when they had been sitting down ever since droogoo ("ancient" times), Baadhuwoodha at one side, & Koorulba a little distance away, & when Willilambi bung-gal-aum dies Baadhuwoodha stretches out his right hand & took them up to his wamu; & when Willilambi women & children die, Koorulba reaches down his left hand & drew them up to his wamu. When a bung-gal-aum was dying Baadhuwoodha made his wamu clear & bright - so that the dying man should not be troubled, & all the grieving bung-gal-aum who sat round their dying brother watched for the long right hand of Baadhuwoodha to come & take the hand of the dying man. & when the gilbi (old men) saw the hand stretched downward, they did not grieve so much for their dead brother.

When any of their women & children die Koorulba's left hand came stretching down from the lesser brightness of his fire (wamu) to catch hold & bring the women & children to their sky wamu.

White men call the brothers Mapellau Clouds because the men of Willilambi they were always to two big brothers, Kipithanda. Baadhuwoodha & Koorulba who saved their boys from Walja in

abragoor times. Walja came from the north, &  
 when they were killed they also went up into the  
 sky where Walja & his woman & their two boys are  
 now the Southern Cross (Walja jinnu-sapthanka fort) &  
 the Pointers (Walja's fighting club.) Walja Koonda.  
 In the days before the white man came, the  
 Kullambis were a great group. (eejanjara), having  
 so many boys & girls among them that the  
 daughters of a bung-gal-ann man were always  
 betrothed in infancy to the sons of the bung-galann men's  
 own sisters (jinn-cousins). The little boy babies always  
 came to their fathers jinn, bringing their Koonda (clubs),  
 with them, & they told their fathers to beat ~~the~~ his  
 woman with the club. & while he beat his woman  
 the baby boy went inside her. Little girl babies also  
 came to their fathers bringing their Koonda (digging  
 sticks) with them, & their fathers either beat their  
 women with the Koonda or threw water over her,  
 & while he was doing this the baby girl went  
 inside her.

Of all the members of this once great family group,  
 only two men, uncle (mother's brother) & nephew  
 (sister's son) were alive in 1930.

Another nephew Wirragain was adopted when a small  
 boy by a kindly & gentle white man, a pastor in the  
 district.

Between him & the little boy a great attachment grew  
 & strengthened with the years. Wirragain was a loving  
 little son, happy & obedient to his white protector.

Whenever the white man travelled Wirragain accompanied

learning the ways of the white people, mastering  
 the duties his white protector performed - always  
 being a helpful good humourous & honourable little  
 boy, listening to the tales of the white man's people  
 & in all ways conducting himself quietly & decently.  
 And yet, the boy dwelt on his own young boyhood at  
 Willilambi, & as his grandfather used to gather the  
 children round at Willilambi wanni, & tell them  
 the legends & stories handed down through all  
 generations - little Wirigain had absorbed these  
 old-fashioned stories & kept them in his heart,  
 more especially his dwellings, through his young years  
 with the white man, on the legends of his people &  
 how they had been given the bunggal spears by the  
 two brothers.

He had often told this story to his big white friend  
 & pointed out to him the home in the sky where his  
 people's spirit went - as soon as it had left their  
 body. "All my people are there," he said.  
 For some fifteen years Wirigain was the companion  
 of his white friend, & then one day, when friend &  
 adopted son were together in a city a thousand  
 miles away from Willilambi, Wirigain said - "I  
 must go to Willilambi." He was not ill, nor grieving,  
 nor restless, nor unhappy, but he must have told  
 his friend that the shadow (ngwan) of his bunggal  
 Eotem had moved in his breast - & that he must go  
 home to die on his own ground so that - Baadhu  
 woodha would stretch down his bright - right -

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hands & draw him up to the <sup>sky</sup> home of his <sup>own</sup> people. The young boy had shown the white man where this home was in the sky, & the man thought: "Perhaps he has seen the bright hands in his dreams." The boy now returns to his home ground. The quietest route was chosen & Wirigain journeyed over many miles - all needful preparation having been made by the kindly & sorrowing friends. The Great-Australian Train carries him quickly towards my camp near Bolger. From there he drove in a camel buggy towards the head of the Great-Australian River. Then another change that ended on the Willilambi ground. Wirigain lay down quietly & peacefully in a position where his eyes could look upon Baadhuwooha's wamun & perhaps as he looked up in quiet expectation he saw the brightness increasing in the wamun & felt his hands clasped by his Goom-min-yerra Baadhuwooha & himself, lifted to the home of the Brothers & of his own people. A grave was quietly dug & Wirigain's head placed gently in it. The young body was placed as he had placed himself upon it, his eyes & face upturned to an everlasting Willilambi wamun.

Willilambi water is orphaned water. Today here & there in caves & rocks & shelters are the Sacred Yemna & booming of the dead Bunggal amun.

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rejanjara, but these are now rotted & dry. For there are  
no jilbi (old men) to visit the sacred places & press  
the red & grey reverence to the Yeenma as they did in  
the old days. The spirit that was in the Yeenma  
& boarding went out of them when their human  
kili dies & they are now only boornas walgaju-carve  
or painted wood - already becoming dust.