

BIBBULMUN SPIRITS

In the southern corner of ^{West} Australia the great Bibbulmun race lived and flourished for many ages. Their land was fertile in foods of all kinds, honey from the mungaitch ^{bankoia} and womulyu (manna) from the marri (eucalyptus), marrain, jaggal and julal (edible roots from the ground), and edible gum from the mungart (jamwood), all good and fattening foods abundant in their season. The groups or individuals whose totems were edible, sang for the increase of their totem plant or fruit, fish, animal or bird, and performed the prescribed ceremonies. The mungaitch borungur (totems) placed a tiny ball of opossum fur rubbed with wilgi ^{red ochre} (red ochre) in the fork of the mungaitch tree, and at evenings mungaitch totem songs would be sung loudly or softly until the flowers were filled with honey. Then honey totem men sent out smoke signals or "invitations" to their friends to come to the honey feast and kening (corroborrees) and merriment reigned while the honey season lasted. The swan totem group sang and performed for the increase of swans eggs, the salmon totem men sang beside inlet or river on their kalleep (home ground).

All over the great Bibbulmun area there were certain stones, or hills or caves or rocks within which dwelt spirit babies and when a Bibbulmun girl or woman wanted a baby she went to the stone or cave or rock which was the spirit babies' kalleep, looking earnestly and quickly at it, and one of the babies came out of his kalleep and followed her to her kalleep. Kaagubin Hill, near Mt. Stirling, was full of these spirit babies whose voices could be heard playing and singing by the sorcerers of the group, but the babies never came out of their homes within Kaagubin Hill until some young mother wanted one, and the little baby who saw her waiting, stole out at night from his underground country and went inside his mother. In the spirit baby country neither death nor sickness ever entered, and there was no hunger in spirit baby land. No grown up person ever entered there, not even the sorcerers who only could hear the babies singing.

This is similar to the Berne fairy story that Bibbulmun are muskies & Berne are a creature that

There were many other spirit beings amongst the Bibbulmun. There were the janga or januk - spirits of dead who returned to their earthly kalleep instead of going to Kurannup, the home of the Bibbulmun dead beyond the western sea. These janga were evil spirits and sometimes they caught a living Bibbulmun boy or man and made cruel sport with them, putting them into the fire and pulling them out alive, and putting them in again and again for their sport. (Janga was the term applied to the first whites seen by Bibbulmun.) Then there were the kaanya or wiurn - souls or spirits of the newly dead who lingered about their earthly kalleep for a while before going to Kutannup. Sometimes the kaanya of a young mother or father would not leave the kalleep where a loved baby was left behind and mourners would hear the kaanya restless and flitting from bush to bush where the baby lay, and the mother or father would lean over the baby who stretched out its little hands to them. Soon the little baby would pine and sicken, and the kaanya would become more restless until at last the little baby kaanya found father or mother, and there was no more rustling noise at night, for mother or father had taken the baby's spirit to their kutannup home.

The ^{magic carpet} wangul could transport himself through sea and air and ground to the furthestmost boundary of the Bibbulmun country. If he were lying at the bottom of Gabbi Kairi (Esperance road, water shaped like a boomerang), and a King-gil-yilling (Albany) Bibbulmun was eating forbidden food, or cutting meat with his daap (flint knife) the wrong way, Wangul saw him, and wangulung, sickness, would be sent at once into the stomach of the law-breaker.

There was one great evil spirit-woman, called Wurrbin, who was feared by all Bibbulmun. Wurrbin walked about with Wurrbin nob, her daughter - she always carried a firestick covered with wiluk (red ochre). If she caught a man by himself she took all his meat food and then killed him with her firestick, and burned him, and he would never more be seen by his kalleep-gut (home people).