

the practice, but merely asserts that it appeals to women: that men who have not been subincised cannot hope to keep their wives happy and prevent them from having illicit relations with 'wrong way' sweethearts. This is a Djamindjung myth from the Fitzmaurice River area.

Flying Fox, Djinimin, was of the *djanama* subsection, and Rainbow, Djaguld, was *djangala*. Both were men, living at Gimul, not far from the Fitzmaurice River. Flying Fox had two wives, both *nangari*, and both small Rainbows. He was jealous because he suspected both wives found Rainbow more attractive than himself. One day he went out hunting kangaroo, killed one, and cut up the meat to cook on the fire. The two wives came sneaking up to see what he was doing; when they saw that he was safely occupied they hurried off to join Rainbow—although, on the basis of their subsection, they called him 'son'. But Flying Fox came calling out for them, searching, until at last he saw them high on a hill top. 'Why have you climbed up there?' he cried angrily. 'I can't go there, it's too rough!' Those two girls didn't like Flying Fox, because he had not been subincised. Every time he had intercourse with them they used to complain. 'Why don't you subincise your penis? We prefer that. Then it will make an agreeable sound when you have intercourse with us!' Rainbow was subincised; that was why they liked him.

Flying Fox stood below the hill calling to his wives; and they cried back that they would lower a rope so that he could pull himself up on it, carrying the kangaroo on his shoulders to leave both hands free for climbing. He did this, but when he had almost reached the top they cut the rope. He fell back, and was smashed to pieces. Both wives ran away with Rainbow. But Flying Fox began to put himself together. He felt around and found his eyes, his nose, his fingers—all the parts of his body—and remade himself. He was a native doctor: he sang himself well again. Then he took his stone-tipped spears and set off in pursuit. At last he came up to them. He could hear the girls chattering. As he approached, Rainbow tried to placate him, pretending to be glad to see him: 'You're alive! Everything is all right now!' He didn't see the spears. Flying Fox came closer and speared him, so that he fell backward into the water and became a Rainbow Snake. He still lives there today, and he is responsible for making all the fish. But Flying Fox subincised himself, and after that his two wives did not try to leave him again.

Almost every ritual, like almost every important action in everyday life, can be referred back to some myth, which provides a sufficient reason for it so that there is no need to look further.

#### RE-ENACTMENT OF MYTH

Contemporary ritual is not simply a re-enactment of rites and ceremonies said to have taken place in the prehuman era. It includes events other than these, but also ascribed to mythical beings who lived on earth at that time. Actions of this kind, not separated out as ritual performances in the relevant myths, are translated into ritual form by human actors who repeat them today. The best examples are to be found in Spencer and Gillen (1938), Spencer (1914, 1928), Elkin (1954), Warner (1937/1958), Strehlow (1947) and Berndt. (See Bibliography.)

Strehlow (1947: 108) mentions the *Inghura* Festival, which extends over several months: "ceremony follows upon ceremony; all the sacred *ijurunga* of the *inghura* ground must be exhibited both to the members of the resident totemic clan and to visitors from other groups. At Ilbalintja, for instance, the *gurra* (Bandicoot) ceremonies take precedence over all others. They take months to perform. Each one of the numerous local bandicoot ancestors had a separate traditional ceremony connected with his person. The more important *gurra* men usually 'possessed' a large number of *ijurunga*; they figured in several different ceremonies and often carried a number of *inatantja*-poles. Each one of these poles must be exhibited in a separate performance."

In the Dalwaba (wallaby) cult rituals of the Western Desert, men go out into the bush away from the main camp. Seven actors paint themselves in black and white bands. A *wanigi lalalara*, a web-shaped *wanigi* mounted on a pole or several spears, is stuck in the sand at one side of the dancing ground. As the singing begins the Dalwaba men move forward, hopping like wallabies. (Explanation: the Dalwaba are performing a ceremony at a certain waterhole: the actors are the ancestral Dalwaba.) A man appears, decorated with red ochre. This is Njirana. He walks toward the *lalalara* and, picking it up, sways it from side to side. The Dalwaba are afraid, and hunch together. But they continue with their ceremony and eventually leave the ground. Then Njirana appears again. He carries the *lalalara*, holding it from the back and slowly coming forward: then he dances with a shuffling step, his feet making deep grooves in the sand. Upon reaching the chanters he turns abruptly, and dancing to the back of the ground disappears into the bush. (Explanation: Njirana is looking for the leader of the Dalwaba, named Dalhalba.) He returns again, still dancing. As he reaches the centre of the ground Dalbalba appears, and hopping quickly toward Njirana springs on him. The chanting stops, and the two actors retire. (Explanation: Dalbalba surprises Njirana, who later continues in his search for women.)

#### INCREASE RITUAL

The ultimate reason for present-day behaviour, including ritual behaviour, is that various mythical beings decreed what should be done, perhaps how, and, implicitly or otherwise, why; but there may be also an immediate or practical reason, which their word serves to underwrite.

This is the case with women's love-magic rites. The specific aim of attracting a sweetheart, or renewing a husband's affection, and so on, is one aspect of a broader complex which is sponsored by such mythical characters as Chickenhawk, the fair-haired Mungamunga girls, Possum, or even the Rainbow. Relations between the sexes are seen in general terms, as vital to fertility. Some women, absorbed in their personal problems, disregard this broader framework, just as some husbands do in jealously resenting their wives' participation in the rites. But the viewpoint of others can be summed up in what one woman said about the *djarada* series which had come up to Katherine, in the Northern Territory, through Willeroo from the Victoria River country: 'When we sing about chickenhawk eggs and snake eggs, things like that, we want