

Melbourne

30 Aug 1909

My dear Spencer

I have to acknowledge your letters of June 20, and July 17 which have remained far too long unanswered. My delay in replying is due to the fact that I have been working against time to complete the reclassification of the source before the end of this month. I am more than thoroughly sick of the publication, and the audit office and ought get away to some congenial work. I am afraid however that I shall still be here for some time. I congratulate you on the success of your expedition over which I am glad to rejoice. He spent an evening here the other last week and we had a great talk about "blackfellas", including your discovery in the Kaituma tribe of Abnake the man in the Hg-county. I tried the experiment of reading to him my chapter on beliefs, which I have expanded as you suggested. I have added all I can find recorded of other bearings upon the question about which I write, and also as to the belief in the "tribal All father". It has improved the chapter very much. I am in good enough to report that he had no objection to

made to improve it. I do not know whether it will prove true, but at present I seem to perceive four main "provinces of beliefs" (I do not use such an expression) in Australia, including Western Australia. First there is the area of the two class system of which the Dieri is the type, extending from Lake Eyre westward into the Desert northward to where it meets the four or eight class systems of your field ground, eastward up the Barcoo far into Queensland, and southward as far at least as McArthur's. In this province there is a belief in a sky country, where the Mura-muras in part exist on the moon & stars & in part still remain on the earth inhabiting trees. But so far I have not traced the evidence of the "man in the sky", except in one legend, which however comes from the northern part of the area, north of Lake Eyre, in ~~the~~ a tribe having the two class Maleri & Tharaki but which must be close to the four or eight class tribes. In this legend "arawoty" who lives in the sky lets down a hair cord and chains up & down the actors in the legend. The locality so far as the legend reveals it seems to be far to the north of the northern end of Lake Eyre. May it not in deed refer to the Karlok belief? If that be so then the Lake Eyre tribes do not seem to have a belief in the "man in the sky". -

The second "province" seems to me to be the area in which you are working, the beliefs in

where the beliefs, as well as the organization of the tribes, seem to me to be in advance of those of the Lake Superior tribes. Yet in some respects, the Nura-muras resemble the Alchamiya ancestors. The third "province" seems to be the coastal region from the May mouth for round, at least, as far as the Arna ceremonies called within the Decidua. Possibly as far even as Caradwell. I have now the following "there lives in the sky" already called Hobin of whom the Heebel River blacks speak, to those in whom they have embodied, as their "father". He is described as a gigantic black being, who fights with all Hells those he meets. His path to the earth is <sup>Ruining</sup> ~~Kulimati~~ the Huelly way, along which the spirits of the dead go. He is angry when people eat things which are forbidden to them, or take women of the wrong name. This comes to me from a man, who had the opportunity of being present at these ceremonies but neglected it. It may be merely a coincidence, but it may be more, that the equivalent of Darannahun, at Pallophus in S.E. W. is Hobin.

The fourth "province" is northern Greenland in which no Roth works, so far I have nothing there (excepting the quolon gut-groen) to show me what the beliefs are. It seems to me that these three "provinces" show three stages of mental & social advances. In your area the movement seems to have been a to be still, from north to south, and I suspect a similar one elsewhere. ~~and has~~ <sup>and has</sup> ~~at the~~ <sup>at the</sup> ~~coastal~~ <sup>coastal</sup> ~~tribes~~ <sup>tribes</sup> ~~in S.E. Greenland~~ <sup>in S.E. Greenland</sup> who are the further <sup>any</sup> ~~have~~ <sup>made</sup> the greatest advances.

I mention all this because it may interest you here in wild districts I am making.

I am now in Frazar's suggestion going to send Frazar a copy of my 8 chapters, as a rough draft, to show him what the belief in the Nura-muras really seem to be. I am also preparing a paper in the Nura-muras for the Anthrop. Socy, giving Peabuck's legends in extenso. Finally I have a paper which May has prepared, also in some of Peabuck's legends, for the Frazar Socy, with Frazar will have some material in which to reply to Andrew Lang, but you will I fear think that I am very much to get a polite, but I think you will know what I am doing. Everything which you or my interesting to us - and we look forward to the appearance of your paper & the reproduced photos. There are creating a general and lively interest in your work. My Uncle, the Ethnopa Okwibata is much amused by the partial glam and delighted that he is able though distant to keep you in your work. Kind regards to W. filled and best wishes of your success - both yours.

Yours faithfully  
Arthur

There is some material in the Frazar Socy.

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Apr 10. 67.

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"wonder how truly it is that we have  
all about our mythical ancestors."

come this idea is since the advent of the  
white man.  
reincarnation.  
? do the natives think  
that every Koi or woman or whatever they  
call them can undergo reincarnation.

65. But let it be whole lot it is  
intensely interesting. Had you seen  
something I don't quite understand about the  
Ngai. The chances are that as an individual

is often mistaken before he falls dies he or she  
will not have any Ngai till they are well on in  
years. yet the second line seems to intimate  
an association between the Ngai & the heart  
is alluring. Jolly to them during death and  
then "causes dreams" - what about dreams before  
an individual has a Ngai!

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Apr 10 67 shortly suggestive of the spots haunted by