

Pitt Rivers Museum ms collections  
Spencer papers Box 3 Lang [NB rearranged in what appears to the transcriber to be date order]

**Lang 9**

Nov 5  
1 Marloes Road  
W

Dear Macmillan

Many thanks for Spencer's proof, [illegible] up to p. 544; may I have the remainder I have just come across something odd. The churingas, or tribal talismans (pp 146-149) are paralleled by many similar objects just found in a crannog on the Clyde, wherein is neither metal work nor pottery. These stones are puzzling the antiquaries, who never heard of Churinga, and I am inclined to think that Australia solves the Scotch problem as to what their objects mean. I wonder if a note could be added at the end, with a sample of a Clyde Churinga? Lord Lorne who happened to look in just now, told me of the Clyde find, and sketched one. Very neat theory, anyway

Yours very truly  
A Lang

**Lang 10**

Alleyne House  
Gibrin Place  
St Andrews  
Nov. 16.

Dear Macmillan

The Crannog was found by a Mr Donnelly, a painter. The stones like Churingas I have not seen, but, at the museum here, are others of the sort, found at Drumbuie, [sic] in Dumbartonshire, near the Crannog. There, of some standing men [?] lie under suspicion, first [illegible, looks like in or is] unique and unparalleled next because some of the markings seem fresh, and have "perpendicular sides" ([Drawing] not [Drawing]) while in the other Drumbuie examples [arrow] the markings have every sign of antiquity. [Drawing annotated 'hole for suspension' 'slate stone grey' 'hole for ~~suspension~~ suspension'] Others were in this sandstone and have not only cup marks, but ~~in~~ incised lines on [2 drawings]

The slate stone, suspension hole and all, is just a Churinga. These are from the "fort" at Drumbuie, I am trying to get rubbings of the churingas in the crannog from Mr Donnelly I have told him, generally, that a book with parallel savage objects is being prepared.

It is not in nature that casual forgers should fake churingas and deposit them in undeniably archaic sites. So I think the thing looks promising, so far, and I send the note as Mr Spencer may be interested. Of course he ought, if possible, to see the actual object. The official antiquaries will scout it, because they did not find it out, as the scouted Ogami &c

Yours very truly  
A Lang

**Lang 11**

Alleyne House  
St Andrews  
Scotland  
Dec 2.

Dear Macmillan

Very many thanks it is in the chapter of decorative art, however, that the question turns. I hope Mr Spencer will try to see these Crannog and ~~Drum~~ Drumbuie things: he will be the best judge as to whether Scots of some unknown antiquity were in all things like his Arunta bucks. If so, another old antiquarian mystery is cleared up. If he can't come north, they should send him photographs, but ocular inspection is far better ~~to~~ I wish I could get an illustrated mag to let me write on them, but it is not popular.

~~If you can't get The Highlands in 1750, I have a copy here, but a book not a year old, and certainly not out of print, ought to be obtainable. Old Bain had a dirty copy knocking about. Don't buy it.~~

Yours very truly  
A Lang

**Lang 12**

Alleyne House  
St Andrews  
Scotland  
Dec 16.

My dear Sir

Messrs Macmillan kindly let me read the proofs of your most valuable book, and I wrote to Mr George Macmillan on stone churinga lately found in Scotland. The markings correspond to the markings (cup and circles) on rocks, which have long puzzled antiquaries, and I have little doubt that the Australian and British pasts are in a concatenation unluckily nothing formal is published on the most recent Scotch finds, still in course of excavation, but in Proceedings of Scottish Society of Antiquaries 1888-1889 (p.p. 140-142) are marked rocks, and marked portable stones with holes for suspension, in vol. 1895 p. 291.

The latter I have seen [insert] in published thesis [end insert] and some of them are practically identical with churinga.

It would much oblige me if you could tell me whether Tawanyirika, the spirit whose voice is represented by the Bull Roarer, has any of the attributes assigned by Mr Howitt and others to Baiame. Daramulun, Mungan gnaar, and other beings who preside over initiatory rites in Southern Australia: and whether tribal morals and taboos are under his sanction.

Believe me

Faithfully yours

Andrew Lang

**[Spencer papers Box 5 Frazer 28 [NB letter to Andrew Lang referred to above in Frazer 27]**  
[Paquebot, le Ville de la Ciotat.

nr Suez

Jan 5/98 [sic].

My dear Sir,

I must apologize for having so long delayed to answer your letter with regard to the Scotch stones which seem to bear a certain resemblance to Churinga.

Whether they have really any definite connection with these so far as their meaning is concerned it is of course impossible to say.

As yet while we know of wooden 'whirlers' or 'bull roarers' from all over Australia the stone ones seem to be confined to the central area but probably further work will show that stone ones are found wherever wooden ones shaped like those of the Arunta tribe exist [2 drawings]

The second form (described by Howitt), as used in the Kurnai tribe, is different both in shape and significance. In this case the 'whirler' or 'tundun' is definitely associated with the spirit of Daramulum & a smaller one also with that of the wife of the latter and each individual of the tribe does not possess his own whirler as he (and she) does in the Arunta.

In the latter tribe while the women are told that the noise of the churinga is the voice of Twanyirika the latter is not associated with any special Churinga and the spirit is not supposed to impart any instruction at the time of initiation.

I am inclined to think that the association of particular Churinga with particular individuals, such as we now know exists among the central tribes, will be found to be widely spread over Australia – in fact possibly everywhere except along the Coastal fringe on the East & South East. This of course is mere conjecture but the resemblance in form of the Churinga of all parts of the continent except along this coastal fringe is evidence tending in that direction; but as you can understand it is very difficult to gain information on such 'sacred' matters about which the natives will only speak to me like my colleague Mr Gillen in whom they have implicit trust.

I have asked Mr Macmillan to send you a copy of our book and shall be glad to reply to any queries – that is if I can.

Also I promised Mr Frazer to write to you about a point connected with the totems but had so much to do during my short visit to England that I could not do so.

To put it briefly the main point brought out with regard to the totems is that each totemic group seems to be charged, as its main function, with the duty of increasing the numbers of the object the name of which it bears.

The Intichiuma ceremonies form the most important ~~function~~ feature of the totemic system in the central tribes and what Mr Frazer calls the religious side is strongly developed the social being almost non-existent.

The social aspect, so far as it regulates marriage etc, as found in other tribes, is something which has been tacked on at a later period to a previously existing religious aspect.

The traditions of the Arunta tribe strongly point in this direction and they are all the more interesting and important because they relate to times when the organisation of the tribe was very different from that of the present day so that they are not simply myths which have arisen to explain the organisation of the present day. For example according to these traditions in past times a man appears to have been obliged to belong to a particular totem before he could eat the totemic animal – unless he was a kangaroo he might not eat kangaroo etc. At the present day he will only eat kangaroo at a special sacramental ceremony but he will give permission to other men to eat it and will assist them in catching it.

I am inclined to think that too much stress has been laid on the oft quoted statement of Grey & that deeper search in the tribes with which he dealt would show something more in common with the Central tribes. Have you ever noticed the suggestive statement which /Grey himself makes (in his work on the dialects) that one hypothesis suggested by the members of one or two totems to account for their bearing the totemic name was that they used to feed upon the totem. [insert] WHERE?? [end insert]

If we had never chanced to come across the Intichiuma ceremonies we should have regarded the Central tribes as agreeing with and corroborating Grey's well known statement about the totem not being eaten, or only sparingly, and as a matter of fact it is true but quite misleading and requires to be amplified in view of our knowledge of the meaning of the Intichiuma ceremonies. It is significant also that we have found the latter existing amongst tribes in which the social organisation (as regulated by totems & 'classes') is exactly similar to that of Grey's tribes so that the religious aspect of the totemic system as seen in the Arunta is not a special development peculiar to this & other tribes in the centre.

After reading through our chapters on the totems and Intichiuma ceremonies I think that you will come to the conclusion that we shall have to regard the non-eating of the totem as probably a relatively late development – how it has been brought about is the crux – and that further the religious aspects of the totem is the earlier & the social the later: over a very large area in Australia there is practically no social aspect at all.

I hop I have made myself clear if not please put ambiguity & disjointedness to the account of the Mediterranean which has not been kind to us.

Yours very sincerely  
W. Baldwin Spencer]

### Lang 1

[Alleyne House,  
St Andrews,  
Scotland]

Jan 16 [insert] /99 [end insert]

My dear Sir

I fear my letter must have been a bore: I did not know your time was so short in England. The enclosed proof (not yet published) shews you the Scotch churinga [insert] (for most) [end insert] as far as known to me. Of course I do not infer that we were totemists, and Subincisionists, (which Donald would never have stood) but, like old Pim... [illegible] I think all decorated rocks had probably some ritual significance and the existence of similarly marked perforated stones here looks like a link in the evidence. I now hear, from Rhys of [illegible] of similar things in Wales. All the Scotch churinga are not [Drawing annotated 1.] so shaped. The best Irish one wis much of that figure [insert] (2) [end insert][Drawing annotated 2.] not perforated. There is a regular ruction in Clyde, as to whether the Scotch stones are forgeries. I took the liberty of instancing your discoveries, and, when your book appears I hope there will be saxpences [sic] banged on the counter for it. I was to review it, I believe: many thanks for the copy you kindly gave me.

As to totemism: I await Frazer's article: at present my mind is a blank. If Arunta Totemism is nearest the beginning, I do not see how the Incest taboo came to be affixed, among

Australian tribes otherwise on much the same level of culture. The Attic Demei were said to get plant names, from these plants being common on the deme. The Athenians may have been Aruntesque once. No doubt Frazer will expiscate [sic] it. What we need is a good book on Mysteries. In Smith's "Map of Virginia" (in Arber's Smith) you will get a glimpse of a Virginian Buya: see Fison for Fijian Nanga, much the same thing: also Melanesian Duk Duk, and Navaho and African rites. K T A. The Ele... [illegible] I found among the Pawnees (de Smet) One thing about the natives probably will not interest you, their Crystal Gazing. In my "Making of Religions" is a chapter on this, and I gave my brother a glass ball to try blacks on, at Curowa N.S.W. But I don't think he ever did try, and I wonder if Mr Gillen would make the experiment? Mr Haddon took a ball on his last expedition and I could send one out. You may rely on the home [illegible] in my book, my own I did not give except in a veiled illusion but it convinced me. Excuse my bestowal of my tediousness, and believe me Sincerely yours

A Lang

You may note that Dr M... [illegible] (enclosed) is no logician. I drew no inference from the facts, and had no theory And a pattern view in the bronze age may have survived out of the neolithic, and indeed does survive to this day.

Lang 2

[Branxholm Park,  
Hawick, N.B.]  
1 Marloes Road  
Kensington  
W.

Ap. 8 / 99

My dear Sir

Many thanks for your letter (March 22) I enclose rude sketches of the stone in the Edinburgh Museum, Dunbuie find. On 2 I do not warrant the authenticity of the markings, [Drawing] [insert] Drawn on spot. [end insert] it certainly has a fresh look, but for the honesty of the finder I go bail. The churinga you kindly send, will be gratefully accepted by the museum, when they arrive. I now understand your view of a totem sacrament, but am not yet quite convinced. The Arunta may eat their totems outside the ceremony, and, to me the ceremony rather "gives the others the lead" over the eater's totem, than anything else. However, the headman's remarks looks the other way. In "Modern Mythology" I disclaim adequate evidence for a totem sacrifice In the ~~paper~~ [insert] passage [end insert] you cite, I may have had your writing (as Frazer had told me about it) in my mind. As Squire seemed to me intelligent, but (as he admitted) not well provided with books and training, and apt therefore to be fantastical I did not think that the playing [? illegible] [insert] or [end insert] sacrifice, of a man, at Bora, had any bearing on Totemism, even if it was a fact.

As to myths being aetiological or not, the needs to examine each myth closely than I have yet had time to do.

Exogamy of any kind is to me a mystery. I have regarded it as part of a totem taboo. What are the exogamous classes? What do their names mean? Fison, I think, used to regard them as obsolescent totem divisions.

Baiame knows, or even he does not know "The learned are a' in a swither", but as the learned number above ten or eleven, the public mind is unstirred.

As to glass balls, I heard somewhere some slight evidence to native crystal gazing my brother is not an anthropologist, and can find no white [illegible] whereas I ~~find~~ find them in cr...

[illegible] A girl of 22 here, my niece and a most veracious young woman, succeeds very curiously, also two men of business, who had never heard of it. In the Guardian I wrote a quaint speculation on the Arunta, Hartland seems to think them a back water Frazer a primitive fountain head.

[On separate sheets:

drawing of stone with markings annotated 'Dunbuie 1/2 size [[Drawing] mark rather disky.]

Drawing of another stone with markings annotated 'perforation' [twice] Both instances Museum Edinburgh April 2' 'Stone from Dunbuie 1/3 real size'

Envelop marked 'Miss B.H. Grieve / Branxholm Park/ Hawick / Scotland

Envelop marked 'Andrew Lang / Loch Awl House / Loch Awl / Argyleshire]

I must have wearied you with their fancies

Sincerely yours

A Lang

Lang 3

May 7.

1 Marloes Road

London W.

My dear Sir

I have been reading in Frazer's papers and remain "open to conviction but unconvinced". In J:R Mag p 834 he says "such totem group was charged ~~with~~ with the control of some department, from which it took its name." Had this group the name: say bandicoot; before it received the "charge," or was it because it now received the charge of bandicoots, that it took the bandicoot name?

In the former case, the Origin of Totemism is still to seek – why had the groups the names? In the second case, what kind of "groups" were there already capable of cooperative co-organisation? What held ~~them~~ each [insert] group [end insert] together? what kind of names had they, or what principle of cohesion in the absence of totem name, totem name is gesture language, badge K T λ.?

I can't work it out either way.

Nor can I see how the great change in ideas which cause exophagy, came to operate on other Australian tribes, similar in conditions of ~~culture~~ culture, yet never touched the Arunta. As to the cause of myths about feeding exclusively on the totem (which cannot be true) the explanation is easy enough on Frazer's own sacramental theory. And the other myths contradict this one his theory reposes on a hypothesis contrat social, just as does the theory of blacks who have a Baiame, or a Bunjje Somebody distributed the charge of departments to groups hitherto not totemistic. To agree with the blacks as to the "charges" but drop the God or culture hero who originated and enforced them Evolution does not work in that way: the way of the Laws of Lyc... [illegible] or of Moses.

There is a rude line [?] The "great spirit" of the Arunta as I understand your book, \* is a mere practical joke, a mumbo Jumbo or Duke Duk, known as such to the initiated, like the (Daramulun of the Wirai) [illegible] who has Biame [insert] Baiame [end insert] over him. but is a mere farce himself "a bogle of the memory" Is this the origin of the Baiame, and Mungun ugauri; have their tribes duped themselves into a genuine belief in their own farce? Or has the coherent Arunta system of philosophy shelved a primitive Baiame and [illegible] like the Zulu Unkuluu... or the Huron Atahoran, to a jape?

Shares in Scotch churinga are high in a rising market I have not yet received the examples you kindly promised They should send you some of theirs.

Very sincerely yours

A Lang

Lang 4

[1, Marloes Road,

Kensington, W.]

May 9

My dear Sir

You will think me interminable But it suits Mr Frazer to make the Arunta of all known men the most "thoroughly primitive". Of course they are as far from primitive men, as we are from the Arunta. Now in your book (p. 36 note) you remark ~~of~~ in the uncertainty of degrees of primitiveness; male lineage no long counting as a test. Passe pour ça, but you assert the relative primitiveness of the Urabunna ~~to~~ over the Arunta (p. 121 lines 3 & 4 from top) Yes then prove your case for (p. 59) "Group" marriage in earlier times is div... marriage, and group marriage, modified but unmistakable, occurs among (p. 63) the Urabunna, but (p. 74) not among the "more highly developed" (p. 121) Aruntas, Ilpirra &c.

In these matters, then, you make the Urabunna more "primitive" than the Arunta. Now if a totem [insert] here [end insert] regulates marriage in the most primitive, not among the more advanced tribe. But Mr Frazer's theory rests on the belief that non-regulation of marriage by the totem is far more primitive, indeed the primitive arrangement, unless (as by Arunta tradition) inter-totem endogamy is the primitive rule) I cannot find out whether the Urabunna are exophagous as well as exogamous ie don't eat their totems. But as on your shewing they are decidedly the more archaic tribe, totem regulation of marriage ought to be more archaic

than its absence among the more advanced Arunta Mr Frazer can't argue "The Urabunna are advanced" (in adopting totem regulation) "where it suits my theory, and not where it does not". It makes no reference to the Urabunna primitiveness. I daresay all this has occurred to you. For my part, till we [illegible] make of the Urabunna I think totem-making premature. but I have not laid this objection before him. Nobody is very fond of objections.

Yours very sincerely  
A Lang

Lang 5  
1 Marloes Road  
Kensington W  
June 12 / 99  
My dear Sir

I have been reading your Totemic speculations, which is so like Mr Frazer's, that my article in the Fortnightly for June (valent quantum) ~~applies~~ applies in both cases, my objections may be rubbish, but they are such as occur to the natural man.

At Oxford yesterday, I found in a friend's room, two objects, like this: made of wood, about the height shewn, but not so broad. [Drawing] Each had an inscription in Japanese. On the platform (B) was printed a statement in English. These objects are I HAI, and are placed on the grave of a dead Japanese. They contain his soul, (or one of his souls) After a year the wooden I Hair is removed, and one of granite is ~~substituted~~ substituted.

All this is churinga-like, rather my friend picked the things up in a curiosity shop in a village, and does not know the source of the descriptive English cutting. But you may know some Japanologist who can explain these I Hai.

Please excuse this paper, which is all that I can find.

Very sincerely yours  
A Lang

Lang 6  
[[illegible] House  
Glencoe,  
N.B.]  
July 24

Dear Mr Spencer

Many thanks for your letter. I know nothing of Mr Mathews, except that he writes freely in what I suppose are authoritative "proceedings." I am not likely to reach a new edition, but shall try to bring your corrections to the notice of the three or four people who are interested in these matters.

I quite see the point [illegible] to the backwardest tribe having the Piraura custom: it is good as far as it goes, but on the whole, I agree with Darwin about the improbability of communal marriage. The names of relationships I have writ something about in the book. Mr Howitt's and yours I expect with much interest. I wrote by accident, as it were, by occasion of my cousins essay, and followed where the loyus led me. If you write anything on the results I hope to see it, as here we have only newspaper incoherence – I don't know one person here who is likely to criticize with understanding, beyond those who are named in the preface.

Probably you agree that, as the totemic groups are the most archaic, we need a provisional hypothesis s to their origin, and relation to the phratries.

What puzzles me most is how tribes on a dead level of material culture have evolved so many grades of marriage institutions. I can't guess, though fertile in guesses

Perhaps Mr Howitt has found out some probable cause.

Why do our East Coast (Scotch) fishers reckon on the possible line? Brown (male) marries Mary Smith, and becomes Brown Smith. I can't find out yet whether the children are Browns or Smiths, but the adoption by the man of the woman's surname is odd: and certainly true: I make out a cheque for Brown, as William Brown Smith

Believe me  
Sincerely yours  
A Lang

Lang 7  
[Bank House,

Penicuick,  
Midlothian]  
Aug 3d

My dear Sir

Many thanks for the interesting churinga and bull roarer. The former is better executed than all but one Scotch analogue that I have seen, and that was only worked on one side. I quite see the force of your argument, but Urabunna marriage being certainly the least advanced, I think it notable that they have, so I understand, the usual form of Totemism, in relation to exogamy. But, not having your book here, I may be wrong. In any case I cannot see that Mr Frazer's theory of the Origin of Totemism is probable. I did not know that the magic of the totem prevailed outside the Central region, and, if not, why not? However I was open to conviction, though I see great difficulties in the way of any ~~the~~ theory. As to virgin birth, what you say is startling, but when you remark on "the insufficiency of the magic power of any individual", is the individual dead or alive? A spirit in the air, or a man, or a woman? I gathered from your book that the woman needed "preparation", in the usual way. If we could meet for ten minutes I would understand the native opinion better. It only exists in the Centre, I presume? One would like to know if so, how the change to the ordinary native notions came about. I thought Mr Keane was at sea Mr Howitt has always been my chief certainty. I am not likely to write again, soon, on these matters, but I shall introduce your views if ever I do. The distance is the difficulty. I can fancy the natives not being surprized if women after their beastly ceremony, had children without (known) intercourse, but women before it are different. And how is the offspring of beasts accounted for by these consistent philosophers? Any way, my article only states difficulties which occurred to me, obviously they may arise from my own ignorance.

Very sincerely yours

A Lang

When I said "more evidence", I meant more of your evidence, more in detail. I did not grasp the idea of magic, only of spiritual entrance into the woman; unsolicited, and without human magic ~~magic~~

Lang 8  
[The Airlour,  
Whauphill,  
Wigtownshire, N.B.  
Telegrams, Portwilliam]

Sept 7

Dear Mr Spencer,

I thought you would like the Museum to have their sacred things, which fill gaps in their series. I enclose their thanks, and remain

Very sincerely yours

A Lang

Transcribed by Alison Petch June 2-15