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Dilemmas in interpretation: contemporary perspectives on Berndt's Goulburn Island song documentation

Linda Barwick (University of Sydney)

with Isabel O'Keeffe and Ruth Singer (University of Melbourne)

More than fifty years after the first recording session and twenty-six years after the original publication of Ronald Berndt's article 'Other creatures in human guise' (Berndt, 1987),¹ this paper presents some contemporary perspectives on his documentation of Marrwakara and Kaddikkaddik songs in Warruwi (Goulburn Island) in 1961 and 1964. For various reasons we will set out below, several puzzling features emerge from close attention to the documentation, some of which may now never be fully resolved.

The authors (in particular O'Keeffe and Singer) undertook further documentation of these and many other archival songs in the period 2006-2012 as part of a larger research project on Western Arnhem Land song led by Barwick and funded by the Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Project.² Below we situate the Berndt song documentation in the broader context of the public ceremonial dance-song genre (known as *manyarti* in Mawng, or *kun-borrk* in Kunwinjku) that was the main focus of our project's efforts, reflect on the significance of Berndt's work, and provide re-transcriptions of the song texts, transliterating as relevant into contemporary Mawng orthography, and showing organisation of the text words into lines of verse, usually regularly repeated to form the sung version.

Western Arnhem Land song

There is a rich ongoing tradition of public ceremonial dance-song in contemporary western Arnhem Land. Accompanied by clapsticks (*nganangka* in Mawng, the main language of Goulburn Island) and didjeridu (*arawirr*), and for ceremonial occasions also by spectacular dance involving large numbers of those present, the songs are commonly performed for funerals, for the ritual diplomacy ceremony known as *mamurrng* and for other public ceremonial occasions such as house-openings, booklaunches, commemorative events and music festivals, as well as being performed (without dancing) informally for general entertainment.³ As outlined by Berndt (p. 171), these public repertoires are quite distinct from the extensive repertoires of traditional religious song.

Individual singers (all men; though both men and women dance) typically receive songs in dream, often from country-spirits such as mermaids that inhabit the seas and waterways, or from the long thin *mimih* spirits that lurk in the rock crevices of the Arnhem Land

plateau. Songs received in this way become the personal property of the composer (or composers, for sometimes more than one person can dream a song at the same time, in which case the song becomes joint property). Sometimes the songs are passed on to relatives, or traded with other songmen holding their own repertoires. Frequently the song repertoires are named after the song-giving being, or after the topic of the main songs in the set. We prefer the term ‘songset’ (rather than Berndt’s term ‘song-cycle’) to describe these named repertoires, to reflect the lack of inherent ordering in their performance.

Alongside these dreamed songs, there also exists a significant number of songs, nearly always in everyday language, that are acknowledged to have been made up directly by the singer without supernatural intervention. These too are personal property.

Songs may be associated with narratives in various ways (some traditional narratives include songs within them, or the places or beings encountered in the composers’ dream may be associated in some way with traditional stories). Even though the songs may be linked in this way with narratives, they do not usually have to be performed in a particular chronological sequence (unlike the songlines of Central Australia and elsewhere), although sometimes one song is regarded as the ‘mother’ or main song (this is commonly performed to close a performance).

Song language

Some repertoires are entirely in spirit language, others entirely in everyday language. Many repertoires, like Marrwakara and Kaddikkaddik—the two main repertoires presented by Berndt—include songs that are in a mixture of everyday language (e.g., Mawng, the most commonly spoken language at Warruwi today) and the untranslatable language of the song-giving spirits (‘dream words’ or *wurluj ta wurrgarl* ‘message or news from dream’), reflecting the reception of songs from what Berndt terms ‘spirit-familiars’ (Berndt, 1987, p. 171). Across the region, untranslatable songs in spirit language are generally preferred for important moments of ceremonies, while songs in everyday language are regarded as more secular. These songs, which Berndt terms ‘gossip songs’, are more often termed ‘love-songs’ in Aboriginal English today.

Mawng is the main everyday language used in the Marrwakara (Goanna) songs recorded by Berndt, for which we adopt the practical orthography developed for use in the school and other literacy materials (Berndt used a modified version of another orthography developed by Arthur Capell for the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies; the main differences regard our use of p-t-k for stops, versus the b-d-g orthography adopted by Berndt). Singer is a linguist who has completed extensive work on Mawng both in her doctoral research and in subsequent research projects. The everyday language used in Kaddikkaddik songs is Kun-barlang, the language spoken on the coast to the east of Goulburn Island and to the west of Maningrida. O’Keeffe, trained in both linguistics and musicology, has documented Kun-barlang language and worked closely with musicians throughout

northwestern Arnhem Land documenting their diverse repertoires, including Kaddikkaddik.⁴

Song 4 is remarkable for including the English words ‘happy stay’ (*abi stei*, as transcribed by Berndt), though according to Berndt the singers denied that the words were English, but rather were in spirit language. Several other songs in the Marrwakara set seem to include words that are in neighbouring languages (rather than spirit language) (these are Songs 2, 3 and 13; see discussion below).

Song performance conventions

Across the Western Arnhem Land region, *manyarti/kun-borrk* use similar musical conventions. Whether in spirit language or everyday language, the song texts are organised into regularly repeating stanzas with a fixed melody, rhythm and text. Each song item comprises two to five or more stanzas, the length of an item often determined by the requirements of the accompanying dancing (when there is no dancing, items most often consist of two or three stanzas). In performance, items are usually repeated two or three times before moving on to a new song text. The melodic structure of the stanza is organised around the tonal centre of the didjeridu, with the final note of a stanza usually falling on the octave above the didjeridu fundamental.

Singers (a main singer, often the composer, backed up by one or more others) lead the performance and strike resonant ironwood clapsticks (*nganangka*) in time with the song’s rhythm. As found throughout northern Australia, each songset uses a small number of different rhythmic modes (determined by the tempo of the clapsticks and the metre of the vocal rhythm).⁵

Background on the repertoires

There are two main songsets represented in the Berndt recordings: Marrwakara (goanna) and Kaddikkaddik (oystercatcher). Embedded within the Marrwakara songset are a number of songs concerning *mularrik* (green frog).⁶ Berndt notes that:

I understand that appropriate dancing traditionally accompanied these songs [Marrwakara and Kaddikkaddik], but I did not personally see any. I did, however, hear these songs sung on various occasions at Goulburn Island during evening recitals.

We have also been told that dancing used to accompany these songs, however as far as we know the dances are no longer performed and no video records exist of dance performances.

Marrwakara

The Marrwakara songs published here, recorded in 1961 and 1964, are associated with a traditional narrative told by John Guwadbu

(Gwuwadbu #2) that is the main focus of Berndt's article. Berndt had previously published one of the Marrwakara song recordings presented here (Song 9) in an earlier publication.⁷ At least one Marrwakara song (performed by Nungolomin [Nanguluminy]) was recorded at Goulburn Island in 1962 by Sandra Lebrun Holmes (Holmes, 1965), and more recently brief performances by Harold Warrabin have been recorded by Isabel O'Keeffe (2006) and University of Sydney postgraduate student Reuben Brown (2012).

The original composer (recorded by Berndt in 1961 and 1964) was John Guwadbu #2, who also provided the bark paintings in illustration. His backup singer was Joseph Gamulgiri, the father of the present-day inheritor of the Marrwakara songs, Harold Warrabin. Warrabin performs only two of the songs recorded by Berndt (see further discussion below), but only for non-ceremonial occasions. O'Keeffe recorded Warrabin singing these songs in 2006, and he has assisted us with interpretation of the words of other songs in the set. O'Keeffe also consulted Rita Marrabumadju, the widow of John Guwadbu, who commented on the songs and sang along with some of them in a preliminary discussion with O'Keeffe in 2006, but unfortunately passed away soon afterwards.

Kaddikkaddik

Kaddikkaddik is a songset named for the oystercatcher bird (*Haematopus* sp.), said by all contemporary consultants to have been composed by the late Frank Kaddikkaddik Namarnangmarnang, though Berndt credits Micky Ngolaman (Ngalorlman), the singer of Songs 19-21, as having been the composer. The majority of song texts in the *Kaddikkaddik* songset are entirely in everyday Kun-barlang language, but some are partly or entirely in an untranslatable spirit language. Frank Kaddikkaddik Namarnangmarnang was recorded at Maningrida by Les Hiatt in 1958-1960,⁸ and again by Peter Cooke in 1979 at the official opening of the Djomi Museum in Maningrida. Isabel O'Keeffe also recorded elicited performances of Kaddikkaddik songs variously remembered by Margaret Marrangu, Frank Ambidjambidj and Paul Naragoidj in Minjilang (Croker Island) and Darwin in 2006-2009. We have recently learned that Kaddikkaddik songs may still be performed in Maningrida, but in Warruwi and Minjilang they have fallen out of use.

According to Berndt (Berndt, 1987), the main singer for Songs 19-21 was Micky Ngolaman [Ngalorlman], while the main singer for Songs 22-26 was Mangulugulu [Mankulukulu], with Andrew Nadumalu assisting with singing and Makundili as didjeridu accompanist.⁹

The recordings

Discussing the performance context of the songs, Berndt (1987:73) states that the songs:

were recorded while I was working with a group of men, ranging in number from a dozen to 20 to 25, but usually fewer; and we always recorded at some little distance from the noise and bustle of the main camp. This provided a more subdued atmosphere in which I could to some extent 'control' the situation and thus ensure reasonable recordings and maximise discussion, which would not have been possible if the songs had been sung and recorded in the camp. (Berndt, 1987, p. 173)

According to Berndt he wrote down song texts as he heard them during performance¹⁰ and then used them as a basis for elicitation with the singer.

As can be seen from our re-transcription of the song texts presented below, by and large Berndt's transcriptions were remarkably accurate, but in many cases omitted one or more words from the song texts, and did not attempt to convey the metrical organisation of the words into the lines of song text. In several instances, especially for untranslatable spirit language songs (e.g. songs 15-18) he apparently transcribed explanations of the songs or the associated narrative rather than what was actually sung. Perhaps Berndt did not realise that these explanations were offered by the singers because they could not translate the song texts.

Another dilemma in interpretation is presented by the ordering of the songs on the recording. The songs come from several different recording sessions (numbered R1-R5 in Table 1). For the article Berndt rearranged the song items and gave them descriptive titles in order to illustrate the various stages of the Marrwakara story (note that these titles, which are announced on the recording, in most cases are not implicit in the song texts themselves). In Table 1 we identify the songs using the songtext identification codes developed during the Western Arnhem Land Song Project.

From this table we can see that Berndt took the third performance, R3 (recorded on 24 February 1964, original notebook numbers 34-43) as 'the main Maung song-cycle' (p. 183) and inserted within it two additional Mularrik songs from R2 (recorded 1 March 1961, original notebook numbers 40-41). For the second part (songs 13-18, labelled by Berndt 'what happened afterward'), he presents another song from R2 (Song 13, which the notebook numbering suggests was actually recorded before Songs 7 and 8), and then follows with a sequence of five songs from R1 (presented in chronological order but omitting the songs numbered 5-10 in his notebook) to complete the Marrwakara songs.

Berndt then moves to the Kaddikkaddik songset, linked by him to the Marrwakara songset (1987, p. 185: 'after letting the Marrwakara know about the birth of Manimunag's baby [Song 9], Gadigadi carried on with her own affairs'). Contemporary consultants insist that the Kaddikkaddik songset has no connection with the Marrwakara story or songset.¹¹ It is not known why Songs 19-21 are not presented in sequence. The notebook numbering provided by Berndt in the article suggests that Song 21 (notebook number 19) was performed long before Songs 19 and 20 (which are actually repeats of the same song). Presumably Berndt brought them together because they include the same placename Inyakorle (*inyawoli*). Songs 22-26 (notebook numbers 92 and 94-97) occur in chronological sequence, though again we can note a gap in the sequence, perhaps caused by recording problems.

| <i>Berndt 1987</i> Song # | <i>Notebook</i> # | <i>WALSP ID</i> | <i>Rec #</i> | <i>Actual</i> <i>chronology</i> | <i>Songset</i> |
|------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|--------------|------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1 | 34 | MK03 | R3 | 9 | MK |
| 2 | 35 | MK04 | R3 | 10 | MK |
| 3 | 36 | MK05 | R3 | 11 | MK |
| 4 | 37 | MK06 | R3 | 12 | MK |
| 5 | 38 | MK07 | R3 | 13 | MK |
| 6 | 39 | MK02 | R3 | 14 | MK/Mul |
| 7 | 40 | MK08 | R2 | 7 | MK/Mul |
| 8 | 41 | MK09 | R2 | 8 | MK/Mul |
| 9 | 40 | MK10 | R3 | 15 | MK |
| 10 | 41 | MK11 | R3 | 16 | MK |
| 11 | 42 | MK12 | R3 | 17 | MK |
| 12 | 43 | MK01 | R3 | 18 | MK |
| 13 | 24 | MK13 | R2 | 6 | MK |
| 14 | 3 | MK01 | R1 | 1 | MK |
| 15 | 4 | MK01 | R1 | 2 | MK |
| 16 | 11 | MK14 | R1 | 3 | MK |
| 17 | 12 | MK14 | R1 | 4 | MK |
| 18 | 13 | MK14 | R1 | 5 | MK |
| 19 | 89 | KK13 | R4 | 20 | KK |
| 20 | 90 | KK13 | R4 | 21 | KK |
| 21 | 19 | KK14 | R4 | 19 | KK |
| 22 | 92 | KK15 | R5 | 22 | KK |
| 23 | 94 | KK16 | R5 | 23 | KK |
| 24 | 95 | KK10 | R5 | 24 | KK |
| 25 | 96 | KK17 | R5 | 25 | KK |
| 26 | 97 | KK10 | R5 | 26 | KK |

Table 1: Ordering and identification of songs within the published recording, showing songtext identification codes (developed by the Western Arnhem Land Song Project) and ordering within the five recording sessions. Key: R1 27 February 1961; R2 1 March 1961; R3 22 February 1964; R4 25 February 1964; R5 27 February 1964. Songsets: MK = Marrwakara, MK/Mul = Mularrik, KK = Kaddikkaddik.

Conclusion

There are numerous differences of interpretation by present-day consultants. Firstly, they deny that the Marrwakara and Kaddikkaddik songsets are linked. Secondly, they dispute Berndt's attribution of authorship of the Kaddikkaddik songs to Micky Ngalorlman rather than to Frank Kaddikkaddik. Thirdly, the close linking of the songs to the narrative by Berndt seems to have been forgotten. Indeed, strict chronological ordering of songs in this way is very rare in Western Arnhem Land song practice.

Perhaps Berndt's keen interest in the Marrwakara narrative led his collaborator John Guwadbu to provide him with the songs in order, and even—as suggested by some unusual text structuring—to create new songs to illustrate the narrative, for the same purpose as the small barks were painted at around the same time. We have presented evidence that Berndt himself further strengthened the narrative framing

by providing explanatory titles (in some cases quite unrelated to the actual songtexts), adding explanatory texts, and re-ordering the songs. Although material within the Berndt collection (such

as his original notebooks, to which we do not have access) might shed further light on these matters, it is likely that dilemmas of interpretation will always remain.

Song texts

Song 1. (WALSP MK03 'Ilimarr')

L1 (x2)

WALSP mantakamalinya mantakamalinya

Berndt mada gamalinya -

gloss SW SW


rhythm 

L2

WALSP anamalinya kayame mantakamalinya mantakamalinya

Berndt anamalinya garayama - -

gloss SW SW SW SW


rhythm 

L3

WALSP kale kale (kale) ka Naniyalga Naniyalga Ilimarr

Berndt - - - - banayalga - ilimar

gloss SW SW (SW) SW placename placename placename

rhythm 

Most of this song is in spirit language (hence no free translation is provided). Contemporary consultants agree that the only proper word in the text is the placename 'Ilimarr'. The other placename 'Naniyalga' (transcribed by Berndt as 'Banayalga') was not recognised or mentioned by our contemporary consultants.

Song 2. (WALSP MK04 'Ngayi Amamin')

L1 (x2)

WALSP ngayi Amamin ngayi Amamin ngayi Amami'

Berndt ngaii amaming

gloss BK: 1s placename 1s placename 1s [placename]

rhythm 

Free translation: I am going to Amamin. 'BK' in the gloss refers to Bininj Kunwok (see further discussion below).

L2 (x2)

WALSP [i]dudududu dududu

Berndt - -

gloss didjeridu.sound didjeridu.sound

rhythm 

Free translation: [sings didjeridu vocables]

Ngayi is glossed by Berndt as 'I'. We interpret this as the first person singular pronoun in Bininj Kunwok, the lingua franca spoken across much of Western Arnhem Land (with a significant community of speakers at Goulburn Island); the Mawng equivalent is *ngapi*. The first line of text

(L1) contains the placename Amamin (a point on the mainland). Some contemporary consultants interpreted this section of the line, as did Berndt, as ‘amaming’ (which does not mean anything in Mawng), and speculated that this could be the name of the *marrwakara* goanna. Repetition with truncation of the final syllable (‘Amamin’ > ‘Amami’ or ‘Ama’’) is characteristic of the ‘love-song’ genre (e.g., Iwaidja jurtbirrk).¹² The second line of text was interpreted by one consultant as the sound of the didjeridu. Singing vocables or ‘didjeridu mouth-sounds’ is common in Western Arnhem Land didjeridu-accompanied songs such as these, though usually this occurs between stanzas during the instrumental sections rather than in the melodic section as here.

Song 3. (WALSP MK05 ‘Patapulng’)

L1 (x2)

| | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | Patapulng | [tawurtangku] |
| <i>Berndt</i> | Bada-bulng | - |
| <i>gloss</i> | personal.name | [?] |
| <i>rhythm</i> | ♪ ♪ ♪ | ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ |

Free translation: Patapulng ... (we have not been able to determine the exact form of the second word, nor translate it with consultants).

L2

| | | | | | | |
|---------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|---------|---------|----------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | ngane | ngane-re | ngane-re | ngane | ngane | ngane-re |
| <i>Berndt</i> | - | nganeri- | nganeri | - | - | - |
| <i>gloss</i> | BK: 1duEXCL | 1duEXCL-travel | 1duEXCL-travel | 1duEXCL | 1duEXCL | 1duEXCL-travel |
| <i>rhythm</i> | ♪ ♪ | ♪ ♪ ♪. | ♪ ♪ ♪. | ♪ ♪ | ♪ ♪ | ♪ ♪ ♪. |

Free translation: We two (exclusive of hearer), we two go, we two go, ...’

L1 (x2)

| | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | Patapulng | [tawurtangku] |
| <i>Berndt</i> | Bada-bulng | - |
| <i>gloss</i> | personal.name | [?] |
| <i>rhythm</i> | ♪ ♪ ♪ | ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ |

Free translation: Patapulng ...

L2 (variant)

| | | | |
|---------------|---------|----------|--------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | ngane | ngane-re | ngane-re |
| <i>Berndt</i> | - | nganeri- | nganeri |
| <i>gloss</i> | BK: | 1duEXCL- | 1duEXCL- |
| | 1duEXCL | travel | travel |
| <i>rhythm</i> | ♪ ♪ | ♪ ♪ ♪. | ♪ ♪ ♪. ♪. ♪. |

Free translation: We two [exclusive of hearer], we two go, we two go.

The recording is quite poor, so we have not been able to verify the

syllable string in the second half of L1, nor discuss it with consultants. L2 again appears to be in Bininj Kunwok, one of the languages spoken on the mainland, where this conversation takes place.

Song 4. (WALSP MK06 'Happy stay')

L1 (x2)

| | | | | |
|---------------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | happy | stay | happy | stay |
| <i>Berndt</i> | abi | stei | | |
| <i>gloss</i> | ENG: happy | ENG: stay | ENG: happy | ENG: stay |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | | | |

Free translation: Happy stay, happy stay.

L2

| | | |
|---------------|------------|-----------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | happy | stay |
| <i>Berndt</i> | abi | stei |
| <i>gloss</i> | ENG: happy | ENG: stay |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | |

Free translation: Happy stay, happy stay.

According to Berndt (p. 179), 'These words here are said not to be English but to have come from the dream (that is, *wulaidj da wurgal*, message or news / from that/ dream).' Re-transcribed in contemporary Mawng orthography this is *wurluj ta wurrgarl*. *Wurluj* has a range of meanings but is most often translated as 'message' or 'news'; it refers to some information that is being passed along. Here it refers to some information that was gained from a dream. We have not been able to discuss this song with contemporary consultants, but this seems to be one of the few examples of Western Arnhem Land traditional song we are aware of in which the text is entirely in English.

Song 5. (WALSP MK07 'Wuyarla')

L1 (slow sticks)

| | | | | | | |
|---------------|----|-----------|----|--------------|--------------|-----|
| <i>WALSP</i> | ka | Wuyarla | ka | ngana | ngana | nga |
| <i>Berndt</i> | ga | wiala | - | ngana | ngana | nga |
| <i>gloss</i> | ? | placename | ? | 1sg.F.go1.NP | 1sg.F.go1.NP | ? |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | | | | | |

Free translation: I (female) am going to Wiyarla.

L2 (fast doubled sticks) (repeated four times, the last time truncating *pirrikuku* to *pirriku*)

| | | | |
|---------------|--------------|-------------|----------------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | Ngawalija | Ngawalija | pirrikuku |
| <i>Berndt</i> | ngawalaidja- | nguwalaidja | birigugu |
| <i>gloss</i> | person.name | person.name | ?throw.short.object? |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | | |

Free translation: [It is] Ngawalaja the ceremonial leader.

Wiyarla (sung Wuyarla) is a beach on the western side of South Goulburn Island where the barge landing is still located. The female speaker is presumably Manimunak, the magpie goose wife of Marrwakara the goanna. L1 is accompanied by very slow stick-beating (43 beats per minute) perhaps conveying the rhythm of someone paddling across from the mainland to Wiyarla. In L2 Berndt glosses *pirrikuku* as 'quickly'. This is a word that Singer has previously documented as an ideophone (that is, a word that sounds like the

action it is meant to convey) associated with someone throwing a short object. Given that this line is accompanied by fast doubled stickbeating (proceeding at four times the rate of the previous line) we speculate that this word here refers to the clapsticks, an interpretation perhaps supported by Berndt's gloss ('quickly', though Berndt attributes this to people coming quickly). Clapsticks are strongly associated with ceremonial leadership, and Berndt also refers to the fact that Ngawalaja (Ngawalaidja, sung 'Ngawalija') is a ceremonial leader *jirrk* ('djirg'). Following this line of reasoning, the line may be translated as '[It is] Ngawalaja the ceremonial leader'.

Song 6. (WALSP MK02 'Mularrik (Frog) 1')

This is one of only two Marrwakara songs held today by Harold Warrabin (the other is Song 12, MK01 'Linyara'). This song text is entirely in Mawng.

L1 (x3)

| | | | | |
|---------------|----------|----------|----------|------------------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | mularrik | mularrik | mularrik | k-i[ny-a]ja-ka-ø |
| <i>Berndt</i> | mularig- | mularig | - | gidjaga |
| <i>gloss</i> | frog | frog | frog | PR-FE-call.out-KRDP-NP |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | | | |

Free translation: Frog, she keeps calling out.

L2

| | | | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | kikun | kikun | kikun | kikun | kikun | kikun | kikun |
| <i>Berndt</i> | gigun- | gigun | - | - | - | - | - |
| <i>gloss</i> | frog.call | frog.call | frog.call | frog.call | frog.call | frog.call | frog.call |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | | | | | | |

Free translation: [frog calls]

L1 was glossed by Harold Warrabin in 2012¹³ as 'Frog, she keeps calling out', while L2 represents the sound of the green frog. Berndt translates *gigun-gigun* as 'dancing'. The repetition of these syllables on the tonic is also reminiscent of didjeridu imitation often performed by singers during instrumental sections, which are normally accompanied by dancing. Harold Warrabin's contemporary version repeats L1 following the first half of L2, giving the repetition pattern AAABA.

Song 7. (WALSP MK08 'Mularrik (Frog) 2')

This song and the following Song 8 were excerpted by Berndt from a previous 1961 recording, presumably to provide more Mularrik songs. Although they appear to be in standard Mawng, unfortunately the recording quality and balance is so poor for these items that it has been impossible to discuss the text with consultants. Song 7 consists of four verses, each of which has three lines beginning with the word *mularrik* 'frog'. Unusually for Western Arnhem Land songs, this song is strophic, including a sequence of slightly different song texts within the song item. Berndt provides five lines of text, whereas the sung item only has four lines (lines 1, 2, 4 and 5 of Berndt's text), each of which is repeated three times to form the verse. We have included without rhythmic notation the gloss of Berndt's line 3 (perhaps performed in a different version of the song).

Verse 1

L1 x3

| | | | |
|---------------|----------|---------------------|-------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | mularrik | k-iny-arra-ø | warak |
| <i>Berndt</i> | mularig | ginyara- | warag |
| <i>gloss</i> | frog | PR-3.FE-go.along-NP | AWAY |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | | |

Free translation: The frog is going away (Berndt 1987, p. 180: Frog hopping away).

Verse 2

L2 x3

| | | | |
|---------------|----------|------------------|------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | mularrik | k-iny-ji-ø | wurlupulup |
| <i>Berndt</i> | mularig | gindji- | wilugbulug |
| <i>gloss</i> | frog | PR-3.FE-STAND-NP | swim |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | | |

Free translation: The frog is swimming (Berndt 1987, p. 180: Frog swimming).

Berndt L3 (not included in the sung item)

| | | |
|---------------|----------|--------------------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | mularrik | k-iny-arra-ga-ø |
| <i>Berndt</i> | mularig | ginyaragar |
| <i>gloss</i> | frog | PR-3.FE-go.along-HITH-NP |

Free translation: The frog is coming (Berndt 1987, p. 180: Frog hopping).

Verse 3

L4 x3

| | | |
|---------------|----------|---------------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | mularrik | k-iny-alkpakpa-ø |
| <i>Berndt</i> | mularig | ginyalbagba |
| <i>gloss</i> | frog | PR-3.FE-lay.eggs-NP |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | |

Free translation: The frog is laying eggs (Berndt 1987, p. 180: Frog small frogs).

Verse 4

L5 x3

| | | | |
|---------------|----------|---------------|----------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | mularrik | k-iny-mi-n | marrmarr |
| <i>Berndt</i> | mularig | ginminmarmar | |
| <i>gloss</i> | frog | PR-3.FE-BE-NP | happy |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | | |


Free translation: The frog is happy (Berndt 1987, p. 180: Frog she's happy).

Song 8. (WALSP MK09 'Mularrik (Frog) 3')

This *mularrik* song item has the same melody and three-line verse structure as the previous, but here each line in the verse has a different text. The lines given by Berndt (indicated below as B1, etc), do not occur in the same order in this item as transcribed (p. 181), and Berndt also includes two lines that are apparently explanation rather than sung text.


Verse 1

L1 (B4)

WALSP jakapa k-aka-lanta-ø
Berndt djagaba gagalanda
gloss DEM.FE PR-3GEN/3ED-feed-NP
rhythm 


Free translation: She [frog] is eating.

L2 (B1)

WALSP jakapa k-iny-aruki-ki-n
Berndt djagaba ginyarugigin
gloss DEM.FE PR-3.FE-climb-RDP-NP
rhythm 

Free translation: She's climbing (Berndt gloss: hopping around).


L3 (B3)

WALSP jakapa k-iny-ampiji-n
Berndt djagaba ginyabidjin
gloss DEM.FE PR-3.FE-laugh-NP
rhythm 

Free translation: She's laughing.


Verse 2

L3 (B3)

WALSP jakapa k-iny-ampiji-n
Berndt djagaba ginyabidjin
gloss DEM.FE PR-3.FE-laugh-NP
rhythm 


Free translation: She's laughing.

L4 (B2)

WALSP jakapa kiny-arra-ø murlmurl
Berndt djagaba ginyaramulmul
gloss DEM.FE PR-3.FE-go.along-NP dive
rhythm 

Free translation: She's diving.

L3 (B3)

WALSP jakapa k-iny-ampiji-n
Berndt djagaba ginyabidjin
gloss DEM.FE PR-3.FE-laugh-NP
rhythm 

Free translation: She's laughing.

Verse 3

Because of the poor recording quality, it is impossible to distinguish the words in this verse, though it is clear it follows the same structure as previous verses, in that each line begins with *jakapa*.

The following additional lines of explanation are included by Berndt (p.181).

WALSP k-iny-jaja-wu ‘Ngawu arratanyi walij’
Berndt ginyadjawul ngawu arandanyi walidj
gloss PR-3.FE-call.out.to-3pl.OBL come! 1pl.in/3ED-consume-IRR2 food
 Free translation: She calls out to them (her children): ‘Come let’s eat!’

WALSP ‘Ngawu-pa kutpan-urnparra ngawu-pa la iny-uryili-ny’
Berndt ngawuba gudbanunbara ngawuba la inyulilin
gloss come!-EMPH1 2pl.FUT-sleep.NP come!-EMPH1 CONJ 3FE-go.into.water-PP
 Free translation: ‘Come, you need to go to sleep soon because the sun has set.’

Song 9. (WALSP MK10) ‘Manimunak (Magpie goose) 1’

Like Songs 7 and 8, Song 9 proceeds with a new line of text for each verse. Since such structures are quite rare in Western Arnhem Land song, it is possible that the composer created these songs specifically to accompany the telling of the associated story for Berndt. Two identical song items are presented on this track.

Verse 1

L1 (x3)
WALSP mani mani manimuni
Berndt mani mani manimunak
gloss REDUP REDUP magpie.goose
rhythm ♪♪ ♪♪ ♪♪♪♪

Free translation: Magpie goose.

Verse 2

L2 (x3)
WALSP ngapi ngana Awuluk
Berndt ngabi ngana awulug
gloss 1sg 1sg.FE.go1.NP placename
rhythm ♪♪ ♪♪ ♪♪♪

Free translation: I’m going to Awuluk.

Verse 3

L3 (x3)
WALSP ngapi ngana wujiwuji
Berndt ngabi ngana wudji-wudji
gloss 1sg 1sg.FE.go1.NP saltpan
rhythm ♪♪ ♪♪ ♪♪♪♪

Free translation: I’m going to the saltpan.

Verse 4

L4 (x3)
WALSP katikatik katikatik
Berndt gadi-gadi gadeg
gloss oystercatcher.bird oystercatcher.bird
rhythm ♪♪ ♪♪♪♪

Free translation: ‘oystercatcher’.

According to contemporary consultants, the cry of the *katikatik*

(‘*kaddikkaddik*’ in Kun-barlang orthography, see Songs 19-26 below) is a warning indicating that someone has died; perhaps this association is implied by the bare use of the word, which, like many bird names, is onomatopoeic (that is, the use of the bird’s name also references the bird’s call).

Song 10. (WALSP MK11 ‘Waramanu’)

L1 (x3)

| | | | | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----|----|
| <i>WALSP</i> | warra Amawunu | warra Amawunu | warra Amawunu | uu | uu |
| <i>Berndt</i> | wara amongu | - | - | - | - |
| <i>gloss</i> | PL placename | PL placename | PL placename | ? | ? |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | | | | |

Free translation: ‘People from or at Amawunu’ (p. 182).

Warra is a small particle meaning human plural. Highly unusually for *manyarti*, this song is not accompanied by didjeridu (two items are presented on the track). Amawunu is a sacred place. The final offbeat ‘uu uu’ is similar to the call heard at the end of some Inyjalarrku songs, which the Inyjalarrku composer David Manmurulu told us represented the sound of the waves breaking on the shore.

Song 11. (WALSP MK12 ‘Iwuwung iwularr (They will kill him)’)

This item is structured with three identical verses, using the same melody as Song 3 (MK05) followed by a fourth verse with a single line using different text and melody. Verses 1-3 have repetition pattern ABB(B)AAB(B), with the fourth verse having an anacrusis syllable ‘wu’ before two repeats of a new line of text (wu+CC).

Verses 1-3

L1 (x2)

| | | |
|---------------|----------------|---------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | iwu-wu-ng | iwularr |
| <i>Berndt</i> | iwuwong | iwula |
| <i>gloss</i> | 3pl/3MA-HIT-PP | kill |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | |

Free translation: They hit him dead.

L2 (x3) (truncated on third repetition)

| | | | |
|---------------|-------|---------|---------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | iwung | iwularr | iwularr |
| <i>Berndt</i> | - | - | - |
| <i>gloss</i> | ? | kill | kill |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | | |

Free translation: They hit him dead.

The third repetition is truncated to simply ‘iwung iwularr’. ‘Iwung’ is probably a two-syllable contraction of ‘iwuwung’ from L1.

L1 (x2)

| | | |
|---------------|----------------|---------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | iwu-wu-ng | iwularr |
| <i>Berndt</i> | iwuwong | iwula |
| <i>gloss</i> | 3pl/3MA-HIT-PP | kill |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | |

Free translation: They hit him dead.

L2 (x2) (truncated on second repetition)

| | | | |
|---------------|-------|---------|---------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | iwung | iwularr | iwularr |
| <i>Berndt</i> | - | - | - |
| <i>gloss</i> | ? | kill | kill |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | | |

Free translation: They hit him dead.

Verse 4 (coda)

L3 (x2) (The upbeat syllable ‘wu’ is not repeated.)

| | | | | |
|---------------|----|---------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | wu | iwung | iw-utpa-n | iw-utpa-n |
| <i>Berndt</i> | - | iwuwung | iwudpan | - |
| <i>gloss</i> | ? | ? | 3pl/3MA-put.down-PP | 3pl/3MA-put.down-PP |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | | | |

Free translation: They beat him down.

Song 12. (WALSP MK01 ‘Linyara’)

Even making allowances for the poor quality and balance of the recording, which make it difficult to distinguish the words, the spirit language text of this item appears quite variable between verses and song items (it is repeated in Songs 14 and 15). This song text is one of two still performed by Harold Warrabin, the current lead singer for Marrwakara (see notes to Song 6 above). The place name Linyara (variant name Parlalinya) is within a hunting area on the southern tip of Wayirra (North Goulburn Island).¹⁴ Note that this song text is performed also for Songs 14 and 15 below (for which Berndt provides alternative texts that presumably derive from explanations given by the singers).

L1 (x2)

| | | | | |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | Linyara | Linyara | Parlalinya | Linyara |
| <i>Berndt</i> | linyara | linyara | garayama | linyara |
| <i>gloss</i> | placename | placename | placename | placename |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | | | |

L2

| | | |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | nananakanakana | nakana |
| <i>Berndt</i> | - | - |
| <i>gloss</i> | didjeridu.sound | didjeridu.sound |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | |

In addition to the didjeridu sound imitation making up L2 of the stanza, further vocables of varying form are uttered by the singer during the instrumental breaks between stanzas.

Song 13. (WALSP MK13 ‘Manimunak (Magpie goose) 2’)

Verses 1, 3, 5

L1 (x3)

| | | | |
|---------------|-------|-------|--------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | mani | mani | manimuni |
| <i>Berndt</i> | mani | mani | manimunag |
| <i>gloss</i> | REDUP | REDUP | magpie.goose |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | | |

Free translation: Magpie goose (*manimunak*, altered in singing to *manimuni*).

The repeated syllables sometimes sound more like ‘ngani’ than ‘mani’ but it is difficult to determine the character of the nasal because it coincides with a stick beat.

Verses 2, 4

L2 (x3)

| | | |
|---------------|-----------|-------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | ngayamina | wujiwuji |
| <i>Berndt</i> | ngaiamina | wudji-wudji |
| <i>gloss</i> | ?? | saltpan |
| <i>rhythm</i> | ♪♪♪♪ | ♪♪♪♪ |

Free translation: [I’m going to] the saltpan.

The text is very similar to MK10, except that the text ‘ngapi ngana Awuluk’ (I am going to Awuluk’ is omitted, and the second verse substitutes ‘ngapi ngana’ with ‘ngayamina’ in Verse 2. While Berndt provides the gloss ‘I am going’ for *ngayamina*, the word is not recognisable in Mawng, Kun-barlang or Bininj Kunwok. Perhaps it is one of the languages spoken in Maningrida or elsewhere, since this song is about Manimunak leaving Goulburn Island.

Song 14. (WALSP MK01 ‘Linyara’)

The song item presented here is the same spirit-language text as Song 12 above. The (apparently explanatory) text presented in the article by Berndt (re-glossed by Ruth Singer below) appears to narrate the next stage of the story.

| | | |
|---------------|----------|---------------------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | walmat | k-i-wrlge-n ¹⁵ |
| <i>Berndt</i> | wamad | kiwuleiin |
| <i>gloss</i> | rain(MA) | PR-3MA-enter-NP |

Free translation: Rain [going inside something?]. (Berndt: He stays inside because of the rain.)

| | | | | | |
|---------------|--------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|---------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | k-a-pi-t | pirr | k-i-malkpa | k-atj-aya-wng | kunu |
| <i>Berndt</i> | gabid | birr | gimalba | gadjayanggunung | |
| <i>gloss</i> | PR-3ED-BE-NP | (weather)clear.up | PR-3MA-arrive.NP | PR-3MA/3ED-see-PP | sky(ED) |

Free translation: Then it cleared up. We looked up and saw clear sky [perhaps speaker is saying ‘like when we look up and see a clear sky’]. (Berndt: (When it) clears (he) comes out, looks around.)

| | | | | |
|---------------|----------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | k-i-apa | kerra juju | k-i-murnangani-ga | k-i-miraw-n |
| <i>Berndt</i> | gei’aba | garadjudju | gimnanganiala | gimiyawan |
| <i>gloss</i> | PR-3MA-? | walking.around | PR-3MA-return-HITH | PR-3MA-sing-NP |

Free translation: He kept going. He was walking around, coming back (towards something or home), singing. (Berndt: Walking about and returning singing.)

Song 15. (WALSP MK01 ‘Linyara’)

As with the previous item, the text and melody is the same as Song 12, and the small text presented in the article by Berndt (re-glossed by Ruth Singer below) appears to narrate the next stage of the Marrwakara story.

| | | | | | |
|---------------|------------|--------------|---------|-----|-------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | y-arra-n | i-yama-ngung | karlki | la | itpiyitpi |
| <i>Berndt</i> | yanan | niamangu | galgi | la | yibiyibi |
| <i>gloss</i> | 3MA-go2-SP | 3MA-work-PP | tadpole | and | grasshopper |

Free translation: He went along working, eating tadpoles and grasshoppers (Berndt: He goes looking for tadpoles and grasshoppers)

| | | | | |
|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------|----------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | ini-la-ngung | y-arra-n | i-marlmanpu-ng | y-uraka-n |
| <i>Berndt</i> | yinilangu | yan | yimalmanbung | yuragan |
| <i>gloss</i> | 3MA/3MA-eat-pp | 3MA-go2-SP | 3MA-satisfied-PP | 3MA-go.home-PP |

Free translation: He went along until he was full, then he went home. (Berndt: Eating as he goes, until he is full, (Then) he comes back.)

Song 16. (WALSP MK14 ‘Linyana’)

Songs 16-18 are three performances of a single song text, which is in spirit language, so untranslatable, apart from the placename ‘Linyana’ (according to Harold Warrabin, this is another variant of the placenames Linyara and Parlalinya already discussed for MK01 in Song 12 above).¹⁶ Instead of transcribing this text, Berndt provides three different transcription/translations/explanations that fill in the various stages of the narrative (shown below with re-transcriptions by Ruth Singer). None of these words can be heard in the song recordings, so we can only assume that they were explanations about the songs that he was given by consultants. First we present our own transcription and analysis of the song text (not provided by Berndt), then the text provided by Berndt for this track.

L1

| | | | |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | Linyana | Linyana | lananye |
| <i>gloss</i> | placename | placename | SW |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | | |

L2

| | | | |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|----|
| <i>WALSP</i> | Linyana | Linyana | ne |
| <i>gloss</i> | placename | placename | SW |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | | |

L1

| | | | |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | Linyana | Linyana | lananye |
| <i>gloss</i> | placename | placename | SW |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | | |

L3

| | | | |
|---------------|----|----|----|
| <i>WALSP</i> | a | na | ne |
| <i>gloss</i> | SW | SW | SW |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | | |

L4

| | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | tijeje | tijeje | tijeje | tijeje |
| <i>gloss</i> | didjeridu.sound | didjeridu.sound | didjeridu.sound | didjeridu.sound |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | | | |

Here is a reglossing by Ruth Singer of the text provided by Berndt (presumably an explanation) for Song 16.

| | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | y-utpi-ny | i-malkpa-ny | katjayan | kalalk |
| <i>Berndt</i> | yudbin-imalgban | | gadjayalgalalg | |
| <i>gloss</i> | 3MA-lie-PP | 3MA-come.out-PP | PR-3MA/3ED-see-NP | clear.sky (ED) |

Free translation: He woke up and came out and saw that the sky had cleared. (Berndt: He comes from his hole, looks at the sky.)

| | | | |
|---------------|------------------|-------------|-------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | ngana | kerra juju | kapal |
| <i>Berndt</i> | nganaradj-djudju | | gabal |
| <i>gloss</i> | 1sg.F.go1.NP | walk.around | plain |

Free translation: ‘I’m going to have a bit of a walk to the open plain.’ (Berndt: I’ll go to the plain!)

Song 17. (WALSP MK14 'Linyana')

The song text is the same as that presented for Song 16. The brief text provided by Berndt (presumably an explanation) is presented in re-transcribed form below.

WALSP y-arra-n i-larrajpa-ny y-uke-ny
Berndt yaran ilaraidjban yugang
gloss 3MA-go2-NP 3MA-stand.upright-NP 3MA-look(for)-PP

Free translation: Then he stood upright looking around. (Berndt: Standing up, looking.)

WALSP i-mi-ny 'ngambiwi ngana? Ngambiwi ngana-mi-n parak
Berndt yimin ngambiwi- ngana ngambiwi- ngana-minbarag
gloss 3MA-say-PP where 1FE-go1 where 1FE-do-NP AWAY

Free translation: He said 'Where should I go? Where should I go to?' (Berndt: Which way will I go?)

WALSP tuka ngana tuka wurl
Berndt duga- ngana dugawur
gloss DEM.P.LL 1FE-go1 DEM.P.LL waterhole

Free translation: 'This one, I'll go over to this waterhole.' (Berndt: That way I'll go, to the waterhole.)

Song 18. (WALSP MK14 'Linyana')

The song text is the same as that presented for Song 16. The brief text (presumably an explanation) provided by Berndt is re-transcribed below.

WALSP y-arra-n parak inyi-warrartpu-ng la yamin
Berndt yaranbarag yinyiwaradbung-lai-yamin
gloss 3MA-go2-NP 3MA/3FE-meet-PP and 3MA.CONTR

Free translation: He went along and they bumped into one another. (Berndt: Going along, he meets a girl.)

WALSP 'Ngampiwi anpana?' iny-mi-ny jita warramurntuj
Berndt ngambiwi- anbana yimin gida- waramundudj
gloss where 2FE.go1 3FE-say-PP FE female

Free translation: 'Where are you going' she said, the female (goanna). (Berndt: Which way are you going? the girl asks.)

WALSP 'Arrkpana nuyi la ngapi tuka ngapi-pa ta kunak.'
Berndt argbana- nuyi- la- ngabi duga- ngabida- gunag
gloss 1pl.in.F.go 2sg CONJ 1sg DEM.P.LL 1sg-EMPH1 LL camp

Free translation: 'Let's go, you and me, to my camp.' (Berndt: You and I go to my camp? (she invites him).)

WALSP parang la i-miraw-ning parak
Berndt barang la imironing- barag
gloss finish CONJ 3MA-sing-PC AWAY

Free translation: Then after that he kept on singing (or perhaps sung while moving away from something/someone.) (Berndt: Then he leaves her, singing.)

2. Kaddikkaddik songs

For these songs we use Kun-barlang orthography. (One relevant difference is that the palatal nasal is written ‘ny’ in Mawng but ‘nj’ in Kun-barlang.)

Songs 19 and 20. (WALSP KK13 ‘Inyakorle 3’)

These songs are in untranslatable spirit language, apart from the placename ‘Inyakorle’ (Entrance Island, a sacred island near Maningrida where many oystercatchers nest).

Verses 1-2

L1 (x2)

| | | | |
|---------------|----------|----------|-----------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | linjarra | linjarra | linmarra |
| <i>Berndt</i> | - | - | linmara-linmara |
| <i>gloss</i> | SW | SW | SW |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | | |

L2

| | | |
|---------------|------|--------------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | me | kadbe [or ‘korbe’] |
| <i>Berndt</i> | yami | - |
| <i>gloss</i> | SW | SW |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | |

Verse 3

L3

| | |
|---------------|---------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | aa (x2) |
| <i>Berndt</i> | - |
| <i>gloss</i> | voc |
| <i>rhythm</i> | |

L4

| | | |
|---------------|-----------|-------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | Injakorle | (kayamakka) |
| <i>Berndt</i> | inyawoli | gayamaga |
| <i>gloss</i> | placename | SW |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | |

Berndt’s transcription of the song words in KK13 (1987, p. 185) is quite different to ours. For Song 19, the first presentation, he transcribes only two words (*ananga yalmi*) and says that they are ‘dream words’. For Song 20, the second performance, he gives more text (*linmara-linmara ... yami inyawoli gayamaga*), which he states are all dream words, apart from *Inyawoli* [‘Injakorle/Injaworle’] which he correctly glosses as a placename (Berndt, 1987, p. 186). Perhaps the syllables ‘linjarra’ in L1 reference the placename Linyara we previously encountered in the Marrwakara songs.

Song 21. (WALSP KK14 'Inyakorle 4')

L1

| | | | | | |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| WALSP | (a)nala | yamakka | kayama | kamakka | kayama |
| Berndt | analai | yambaga | - | - | - |
| gloss | SW | SW | SW | SW | SW |
| rhythm | | | | | |

L2

| | | | | | | |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|----------|-----------|
| WALSP | (a)nala | yamakka | kayama | kamakka | kayame | Injakorle |
| Berndt | analai | yambaga | - | - | gayamaga | inyawoli |
| gloss | SW | SW | SW | SW | SW | placename |
| rhythm | | | | | | |

Berndt's version of the text gives the last two words in reverse order: that is, *inyawoli gayamaga*. It is clear that the explanatory narrative Berndt provides is knowledge that is separate from knowledge of the song words. Contemporary consultants did not seem to know the narrative about the *Kaddikkaddik* birds. However, consultant Paul Naragoidj linked the song to another narrative about Injakorle:

yoh, that Injaworle song ... and also that Injaworle language ... that time he was a man before he turned into a rock ... he had a language, that song now (WALSP field recording 20090817IO03.wav 00:58:07.660 - 00:58:36.600)

Song 22. (WALSP KK15 'Ka-nganj-djirri-djirrkayinj (She moved close)')

(All verses)

L1 (x2)

| | | |
|--------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| WALSP | ka-nganj-djirridjirrkayinj | ka-korrobakdju-ng |
| Berndt | gangandjiri-djilgayir | gagurwagdjun |
| gloss | 3sg-HITH-get.moving.P | 3sg-squat.down-P |
| rhythm | | |

Free translation: S/he moved close and sat/squatted down.

L2

| | |
|--------|---------------------|
| WALSP | ka-ngan-bilkbu-m |
| Berndt | gangan-bilgbu |
| gloss | 3sg-1sg.O-scratch-P |
| rhythm | |

Free translation: S/he scratched me.

L3

| | | | | | | |
|--------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|------------|-----|-----|
| WALSP | nga-rlebiyi-nj | nga-rna-y | ka-rlohwa-ng | ka-mankang | dii | dii |
| Berndt | ngaleivi'i | naganei | ngaluwang | ngamanggan | - | - |
| gloss | 1sg-turn.around-P | 1sg-see-P | 3sg-jump.up/fly-P | 3sg-fall.P | SW | SW |
| rhythm | | | | | | |

Free translation: I turned around and saw him/her. S/he jumped up/flew, s/he fell over.

When Isabel O'Keeffe discussed the song text with Paul Naragoidj in 2009 he described the song as being about a woman who is 'a trouble maker' who sits down next to the songman (Frank Kaddikkaddik)

while he was singing and tickled him.

Song 23. (WALSP KK16 ‘Kamilorbunj (The headland)’)

Verses 1-3

L1 (x2)

| | | | |
|---------------|------------|---------|------------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | nga-rna-y | wiridij | ka-bun-djin |
| <i>Berndt</i> | djiddangoi | wiri’ | gabundji |
| <i>gloss</i> | 1sg-see-P | fire | 3sg-3sgO-burn.NP |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | | |

Free translation: I saw a fire burning (Berndt: Fires burning at Wandjili).

Berndt’s gloss of L1 includes the placename Wandjili: since this does not occur in the text itself, we assume the information must have come from discussions with the performers. 2009 discussions suggested the first person (‘I saw ...’) here refers to the composer Frank Kaddikkaddik.

L2

| | | |
|---------------|-------------|-------------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | kamilorbunj | kadda-nganj-warre |
| <i>Berndt</i> | gamilulbun | gadagaiwari |
| <i>gloss</i> | headland | 3pl-HITH-go.NP |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | |

Free translation: They are going to the headland (Berndt: As they move along (the beach)).

Verse 4

L3

| | | |
|---------------|-----|---------------------------------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | aa | Martpalk |
| <i>Berndt</i> | - | - |
| <i>gloss</i> | voc | placename [Sth.Goulburn.Island] |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | |

Free translation: Ah, Goulburn Island!

When O’Keeffe replayed this song to Frank Ambidjambidj, Margaret Marlingarr and their family in 2009 it prompted a detailed discussion about where the people were travelling to and from (WALSP fieldtape 20090814IO02.wav). According to this group, the song was about a time when people had travelled during the mission days from Martpalk (Goulburn Island) to Maningrida, making a fire when they were at Kumarrardadji (probably the place known in English as ‘West Point’) on the western side of the Liverpool river (and opposite Entrance Island) to signal people in Maningrida to send a boat to collect the travellers. They suggested that Frank Kaddikkaddik Namarnangmarnang himself had seen the fire and made this song about it.

Song 24. (WALSP KK10 ‘Kinj-kala-kalukdja (Sleep lightly)’)

L1 (x4 or 3)

| | | | |
|---------------|---------------------------------|------------------|-----------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | kinj-kala-kalukdja | kinj-yuwa | bi-ngaybu |
| <i>Berndt</i> | gingala-galbodja- | ginyuwa | bingaibu |
| <i>gloss</i> | 2sg.FUT- REDUP-sleep.lightly.NP | 2sg.FUT-sleep.NP | DAT-1sg |
| <i>rhythm</i> | | | |

Free translation: Sleep lightly on the alert for me.

L2

WALSP ka-nganj-warre ka-barr-barrdjiyi

Berndt gangainwari- gababardji

gloss 3sg-HITH- occur.NP3sg-REDUP-make[itself]appear.NP

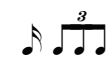
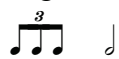
rhythm  

Free translation: (You will see) The sunrise is coming.

WALSP manilikarrng ka-nganj-rlhwanj

Berndt maniligar gangai'lowa

gloss morning.star 3sg-HITH-fly/come.up.NP

rhythm  


Free translation: The oystercatcher said/spoke/cried out.

L3 (in instrumental interlude 2 and instrumental final sections)

WALSP (a) kaddikkaddik kaddikkaddik kaddikkaddik kaddikkaddik kaddikkaddik

Berndt - Gadigadi - - - - -

gloss voc oystercatcher oystercatcher oystercatcher oystercatcher oystercatcher

rhythm     

Free translation: Oystercatcher!

Here is the musical transcription of this song item, for comparison with the similar song text below at Song 26.

$\text{♩} = 130$



kinj - ka-la-ka-luk-dja ____ kinj - yu-wa bi-ngay-bu ____ kinj - ka-la-ka-luk-dja ____

____ kinj-yu-wa bi-ngay - bu ____ kinj - ka - la - ka-luk - dja ____ kinj-yu-wa bi-ngay - bu ka-

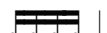
nganj-wa - rre ____ ka-barr-barr - dji ____ Ma - rni-li-kang ka-nganj-rlh - wanj

a ka-ddik - ka-ddik ka - ddik - ka - ddik ____ ka-ddik - ka-ddik

Figure 1: Melodic setting of KK10b (SAA-B-24-KK10.wav) (transcription by Isabel O’Keeffe for the Western Arnhem Land Song Project).




Song 25. (WALSP KK17 ‘Ngana-ngaj-kidanj (We came here)’)

L1 (x5)

WALSP ngana-nganj-kidanj
Berndt nganangaingiran
gloss 1du-HITH-go.P
rhythm 




Free translation: The two of us came here.

L2

| | | | |
|---------------|---|---|---|
| <i>WALSP</i> | ka-rnirdam | (ka-)ngale | ka-djardamarramadjiyi |
| <i>Berndt</i> | ganganida | ngangalin | gaidjaramaramadjii |
| <i>gloss</i> | 3sg-put/leave.NP | 3sg-go.along.NP | 3sg-fill.up.container.NP |
| <i>rhythm</i> |  |  |  |

Free translation: S/he leaves. S/he goes along. S/he fills up a container/basket [at the shop]

L3

| | | | |
|---------------|---|---|---|
| <i>WALSP</i> | nga-buluyi | nga-buluy(i) | ngng |
| <i>Berndt</i> | <i>ngabuli</i> | - | - |
| <i>gloss</i> | 1sg-thank.NP | 1sg-thank.NP | voc |
| <i>rhythm</i> |  |  |  |

Free translation: I thank him/her.

Berndt (1987, p. 187) includes extra text in Kun-barlang for L3, perhaps deriving from another version of the song, or more probably part of an explanation.

| | | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------|-----------|---------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | ka-nganj-wom | ka-ngan-wuy | nga-buluy(i) | ?warri | ngaybu |
| <i>Berndt</i> | gangainguwom | ganganai | ngabuli- | waraneibu | |
| <i>gloss</i> | 3sg-HITH-return.P | 3sg-1sg-give.P | 1sg-thank.NP | ?bad | 1sg.DAT |




Free translation: He/she came back and gave it to me ‘I thank you, poor thing’.

Consultants with whom O’Keeffe discussed the song in 2009 interpreted the song as being about people rather than *kaddikkaddik* birds, but did not know whether it was about two men or a woman and a man, and they were not able to identify who was doing which actions: i.e., who was ‘trading’ (filling up a basket) and who was waiting behind. They interpreted the verb *marramardjiyi* ‘fill up a container/basket’ as referring to shopping.¹⁷ Berndt’s gloss of this line is ‘he “sold” something’, but the explanation refers to trading fish for lily roots and yams. Our consultants speculated that this is a man sending his wife to get food while he waits in the camp.

Song 26. (WALSP KK10 ‘Kinj-kala-kalukdja (Sleep lightly)’)



A slightly different version of the text of Song 24 above is set to a different melody and rhythmic mode (see music transcription in Figure 2).

L1 (x2)

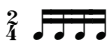

| | | | | | |
|---------------|---|---|---|--------|--------|
| <i>WALSP</i> | kinj-kala-kalukdja | kinj-yuwa | bi-ngaybu | ngadbu | ngaybu |
| <i>Berndt</i> | gingala-galbodja- | ginyuwa | bingaibu | - | - |
| <i>gloss</i> | 2sg.FUT- REDUP-sleep.lightly.NP | 2sg.FUT-sleep.NP | DAT-1sg | voc | voc |
| <i>rhythm</i> |  |  |  | | |

Free translation: Sleep lightly on the alert for me.

L2







| | | |
|---------------|---|---|
| <i>WALSP</i> | ka-nganj-warre | ka-barr-barrdjiyi |
| <i>Berndt</i> | gangainwari- | gababardji |
| <i>gloss</i> | 3sg-HITH- occur.NP | 3sg-REDUP-make[itsself]appear.NP |
| <i>rhythm</i> |  |  |

Free translation: (You will see) The sunrise is coming.

| | | |
|---------------|---|---|
| <i>WALSP</i> | kaddikkaddik | ka-wokdja-nganj |
| <i>Berndt</i> | gadigadi | galwugdjang |
| <i>gloss</i> | oystercatcher | 3sg-speak.NP-P |
| <i>rhythm</i> |  |  |

Free translation: The oystercatcher speaks/cries out/sings.

L3 (x3)

| | | | | | | |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| <i>WALSP</i> | (a) | kaddikkaddik | kaddikkaddik | kaddikkaddik | kaddikkaddik | kaddik |
| <i>Berndt</i> | - | Gadigadi | - | - | - | - |
| <i>gloss</i> | voc | oystercatcher | oystercatcher | oystercatcher | oystercatcher | oystercatcher |
| <i>rhythm</i> |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Free translation: Oystercatcher!

♩ = 109

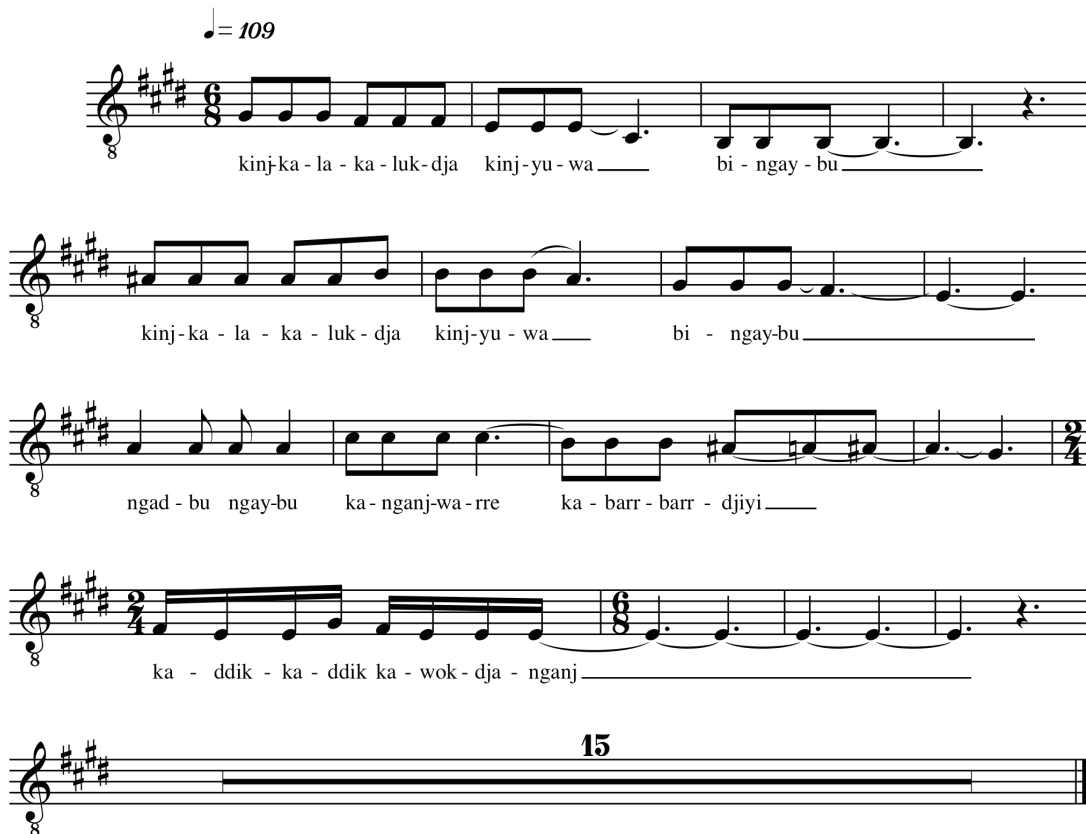


Figure 2: Melodic setting of KK10c (SAA-B-26-KK10.wav) (transcription by Isabel O’Keeffe for the Western Arnhem Land Song Project).

NOTES

¹ The matching song items were included on side B of the cassette that accompanied the volume, published in 1990 by AIATSIS. Wild, S. A. (1990). *Songs of Aboriginal Australia* [audio cassette]. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies AIAS 17.

² ‘Classical song traditions of contemporary Western Arnhem Land in their multilingual context’, conducted by Linda Barwick, Nicholas Evans, Murray Garde, Allan Marett with assistance from Isabel O’Keefe, Ruth Singer and Bruce Birch (MDP0139).

³ For more information on the language, performance conventions and social context of manyarti/kun-borrk in this area, see Barwick, L., Birch, B., & Evans, N. (2007). Iwaidja Jurtbirrk songs: bringing language and music together. *Australian Aboriginal Studies*, 2007(2), 6-34, Garde, M. (2006). The language of kun-borrk in western Arnhem Land. *Musicology Australia*, 28 (2005-2006), 59-89.

⁴ O’Keefe, I. (2010). Kaddikkaddik ka-wokdjanganj ‘Kaddikkaddik Spoke’: Language and Music of the Kun-barlang Kaddikkaddik Songs from Western Arnhem Land. *Australian Journal of Linguistics*(30), 35-51.

⁵ For information on rhythmic mode in song from other areas of northern Australia, see Barwick, L. (2003). Tempo bands, metre and rhythmic mode in Marri Ngarr 'Church Lirrga' songs. *Australasian Music Research*, 7, 67–83, Marett, A. (2005). *Songs, Dreamings and Ghosts: the Wangga of North Australia*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.

⁶ We are not aware of any recordings of *mularrik* songs performed separately from *marrwakara*.

⁷ Berndt, R. M., & Phillips, E. S. (1973). *The Australian Aboriginal Heritage: an introduction through the arts* [Two LP records to accompany book of the same title.]. Sydney: Australian Society for Education Through the Arts in association with Ure Smith.

⁸ Hiatt, L. (1966). *Songs of Arnhem Land* [12-inch 33rpm disc, with notes]. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, AIAS 6.

⁹ Most Kun-barlang, Mawng and Kunwinju consultants O’Keefe has spoken with thought that Frank Kaddikkaddik was also singing in this recording because Micky Ngalorlman, Mankulukulu and Andrew Nadumalu were not main singers but used to ‘help him out’.

¹⁰ The published article includes the numbering from his original notebooks. He used an alternative Mawng orthography to that adopted here, which adheres instead to the practical orthography used in the Warruwi school.

¹¹ As we suggest below, the cry of the *kaddikkaddik* indicates that someone has died, and this may be the reason that *kaddikkaddik* appears at the point of the Marrwakara story where Manimunak’s lover is about to be killed.

¹² Barwick, L., Birch, B., & Evans, N. (2007). Iwaidja Jurtbirrk songs: bringing language and music together. *Australian Aboriginal Studies*, 2007(2), 6-34, Barwick, L., Birch, B., & Williams, J. (2005). *Jurtbirrk love songs of northwestern Arnhem Land* [Audio compact disc of research recordings with accompanying scholarly booklet]. Batchelor, NT: Batchelor Press.

¹³ Information courtesy of Reuben Brown, University of Sydney PhD student.

¹⁴ Information from Harold Warrabin and Solomon Nangamu, provided courtesy of Reuben Brown.

¹⁵ Ruth Singer: I'm not sure what this clause means: rain going inside - but inside what? Probably referring to rainwater going into something. Or perhaps another use of the verb -urlge that I'm not familiar with.

¹⁶ Information courtesy of Reuben Brown.

¹⁷ WALSP fieldtape 20090814IO03.wav 00:01:51.910 - 00:06:51.630.

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