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When The Echoes Are Gone:
A Yolngu Musical Anthropology

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A thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
of
The Australian National University
This dissertation is based on field research totalling 15 months in the Yolngu community of Gapuwiyak (Lake Evella) in northeast Arnhem Land, Northern Territory, primarily between September 1995 and July 1996, and between October 1996 and February 1997. My original goals were to examine Yolngu music in its social, ritual, and cosmological contexts, and to use musical materials to answer anthropological questions, but beyond that I had no fixed ideas about how to go about my study. I knew from the start that much would depend on who I became associated with in Gapuwiyak, who would consent to having their music recorded, and who would tolerate barrage after barrage of inane questions, and in that regard I was very lucky indeed.

This dissertation is nominally about "Yolngu music", but a number of qualifications are immediately necessary. Although I had the great pleasure of working with a wide range of groups, including Marrangu, Munyuku, Gälpu, Ma'darrpa, Guyula Djambarrpuynugu, and Ritharrngu, the bulk of my research concerned the Dhalwangu. Dhalwangu, however, is in many ways too broad a term, because in Gapuwiyak the Dhalwangu population is limited to the Wunungmurra family, otherwise known as Gurrumuru Dhalwangu or Miyarrkapuyngu; and even then I worked most closely with members of two out of four lineages. As for the term "music", it is also far too broad: I concentrated my efforts on a single type, a public genre known as manikay. Because manikay is a genre performed only by men, it necessarily excludes music performed by women. So, rather than being a dissertation about "Yolngu music", it would be more accurate to say that it is about "public music of the manikay genre performed in Gapuwiyak by men of the Wunungmurra family". These qualifications will become clear in the chapters to follow.

I employed a wide range of methodologies in this research. During my fieldwork, this consisted primarily of "participant observation", where I attempted to participate in Yolngu life to the greatest extent possible. I spent a great deal of my time simply hanging around with the people I knew, at the local shop, council office, school, or at their homes. I was most active during times of public rituals, which were reasonably frequent—I attended, in whole or in part, at least a half-dozen circumcision initiations and roughly the same number of funerals, each of which lasted for up to a week. During these rituals, I sat with the group of musicians listening to music for the majority of the time, participated in dancing on numerous occasions, and helped out in ways which
were appropriate for my social position as a young man adopted into the Dhuwa-moiety Gâlpu group: driving people around, obtaining materials such as ironwood leaves for smoking purification rituals, and, on one occasion, helping to dig a grave. The majority of my field recordings were made in ritual contexts, once people were familiar and comfortable with my research objectives. I recorded song sessions in their entirety, in part because I did not want to predetermine what counted as performance and what did not, and in part because I invariably missed the beginning of a song on the few occasions when I did use my “pause” button. I also made a number of recordings of non-ritual performances: people often performed for their own enjoyment, and often asked me to record the sessions for them. Once I had made a number of recordings, I spent a great deal of time conducting formal and informal interviews, both with individuals and groups. I used my recordings as the basis for free-flowing discussions about the ritual context, musical structure, cosmological background, and specific musical and textual features. My greatest teacher, Bangana Wunungmurra, helped me to transcribe and translate the song texts for four complete song series, totalling over 500 individual songs. I supplemented my in-depth discussions about music with taking genealogies, mapping country, learning language (not very well, unfortunately), and investigating community history.

On my return from the field, I made complete transcriptions of over 50 songs before I began to question the epistemology of transcription in ethnomusicology. I am grateful to Stephen Wild for his suggestion that transcription and analysis are tools in ethnomusicology, not ends in themselves. Subsequently, my notation and analysis of music became much more focused on helping me to answer anthropological questions: the detailed analysis of melody, for instance, was necessary to establish its relationship to Yolngu sociality, whereas the detailed analysis of didjeridu patterns, while interesting, did not contribute to my anthropological goals (although I am certain that such a contribution may be made). I also did a great deal of notation and analysis of musical structure and rhythmic patterns, which I believe has helped to illuminate Yolngu ideas about music and performance, and their relations to sociality and to ritual. In the end, I notated and analyzed the musical structure and rhythmic accompaniment of just over 900 individual song items, and notated and analyzed the melodic structure of just over 600 individual song items. The analysis of this material relied heavily on recorded interviews with Yolngu musicians about their music, and on my own fieldnotes.
Very early on in my field research, Bangana Wunungmurra told me that learning about Yolngu culture is not a matter of starting at the bottom and working one's way up, but rather of starting at the top and working one's way down, to the roots. To extend his botanical metaphor, I feel that I'm still struggling in the upper foliage somewhere—perhaps my foot is caught in a branch. As I struggle, however, I sometimes get a glimpse of the trunk. It is my great hope that a continuing association with the people of Gapuwiyak will help me to get my feet on the ground.

My first and greatest debt is to the Yolngu people of Gapuwiyak, who made me feel welcome in their home and supported my research. There are so many people to thank that the list would be very long, and I would be sure to forget someone. Suffice it to say that my heartfelt appreciation goes to everyone who allowed me to record and discuss their music, attend and participate in their ceremonies, and simply be a part of community life. Four individuals stand out for special thanks: Bangana Wunungmurra, Bobby Wunungmurra, Micky Wunungmurra, and Yangipuy Wanambi. They and their families helped me in all aspects of my research, and I feel privileged to call them my friends. I am also grateful to Colin and Robin Tidswell, Roger Doel and Sue Brown, Toni Carter, Penny Short, and Pat and Margaret Noonan, who extended their hospitality to me at various times. Jennifer Deger and Louise Hamby, pursuing their own anthropological research in Gapuwiyak, were supportive and stimulating colleagues.

In Canberra, I must thank my supervisory panel of Ian Keen, Stephen Wild, and Nicolas Peterson, who helped me to mould the results of my research into a dissertation. I received academic advice and support from Howard Morphy, Don Gardner, James Weiner, Francesca Merlan, Patrick Guinness, Alan Rumsey, Grace Koch, Alan Mason, Steven Feld, Nancy Munn, Paul Friedrich, Kathy Callen, David MacGregor, Sue Fraser, Halim Gadji, and Marian Robson. I also thank my friends and family for their help and companionship.

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Prelude

My wife, Peta Fussell, has been more instrumental in the completion of this work than she can possibly imagine, providing me with unconditional and unselfish support, assistance, encouragement, and love through the most challenging, difficult, and rewarding years of my life. This dissertation is dedicated to her.

P. G. Toner
Canberra, Australia
Music is ubiquitous in the social life of the Yolngu people of northeast Arnhem Land in northern Australia. Not only does it accompany virtually every phase of ritual, including dance, painting, and the production of sacred objects, but it is frequently performed in non-ritual contexts as well, purely for the enjoyment of performers and listeners alike. As such, an understanding of music provides a unique and privileged point of entry into the study of Yolngu culture as a whole.

The ethnomusicologist Anthony Seeger has written that an anthropology of music examines the ways in which music is an integral part of culture, while in contrast a musical anthropology examines the ways in which culture is musical and aspects of culture are created and re-created through musical performance. This dissertation is a work of musical anthropology. I provide a detailed examination of the form, content, and meaning of the songs of one particular group of Yolngu, the DhaJwangu people of the community of Gapuwiyak, N.T. I then employ this understanding of DhaJwangu songs to examine three aspects of Yolngu culture which have been subject to intense scrutiny in the Arnhem Land ethnographic literature: sociality, connections to country, and social change. I will demonstrate that musical structures and musical performances contribute significantly to the production and reproduction of these and other aspects of DhaJwangu culture. Yolngu culture is indeed musical, and a Yolngu musical anthropology enables a greater understanding of Yolngu culture in all its beauty, variety, and complexity.
Orthography and Pronunciation

The orthography for Yolngu words used in this dissertation is based on that used by Keen (1994:xiv-xv). There are six vowel sounds: short vowels are \( i, u, \) and \( a \), while long vowels are \( e, o, \) and \( ã \). The lamino-dental \( th, dh, \) and \( nh \) are pronounced with the tongue between the front teeth. The retroflex letters \( t, d, \) and \( n \) are pronounced as if with the letter ‘r’ in front of them. The velar nasal \( ng \) is pronounced as in the word ‘sing’, while separate ‘n’ and ‘g’ sounds together are indicated by \( n.g \). A single \( r \) is pronounced as in ‘round’, while \( rr \) is rolled. The group \( ny \) is pronounced like the ‘ni’ in ‘onion’. A glottal stop is indicated by an apostrophe.
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List of Tracks on Accompanying Compact Disc

Most musical notations in this dissertation are accompanied by a track on the accompanying compact disc, found on the inside of the back cover; the title of the notations indicate the CD track number for the relevant example.

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Track 2  gapu - yindi
Track 3  gapu - baŋtja
Track 4  gapu - baŋtja #2
Track 5  gapu gadin
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Chapter One - Introduction: Musical Anthropology

An anthropology of music looks at the way music is a part of culture and social life. By way of contrast a musical anthropology looks at the way musical performances create many aspects of culture and social life. Rather than studying music in culture, ...a musical anthropology studies social life as a performance. Rather than assuming that there is a pre-existing and logically prior social and cultural matrix within which music is performed, it examines the way music is part of the very construction and interpretation of social and conceptual relationships and processes....If the anthropology of music and Alan Merriam's book by that title...firmly establish music as part of social life, this foray into musical anthropology is meant to establish aspects of social life as musical and as created and re-created through performance.

-Anthony Seeger (1987:xiii-xiv)

The study of music in anthropology has had a varied history, notable for some valuable insights and some unfulfilled expectations. The field has always been divided among anthropologists interested in music and musicologists interested in non-Western music, and the resulting discipline of ethnomusicology has reflected these overlapping orientations. For a long time these orientations were rather distinct—one was either "musicological" or "anthropological"—although an increasing number of works have sought to develop a synthesis of approaches which yields a more holistic account of the place of music in human life.

This dissertation is a work of musical anthropology. It is based on 15 months of fieldwork among the Yolngu of northeast Arnhem Land in northern Australia; more specifically, it is based on my close association with the Dhaljwangu people of the Yolngu community of Gapuwiyak. The questions which I will try to answer are anthropological ones, situated within the discourse of contemporary anthropological theory and Australian Aboriginal ethnography. What is the nature of the relationship between Yolngu and their traditional country, and how do Yolngu construct their sense of place? How can we best conceptualize the intricacies of Arnhem Land social organization? How do structure and agency come together in everyday Yolngu social practice? How have Yolngu incorporated sweeping social changes into their contemporary worldview? Having situated these and other questions within an anthropological discourse, I will then draw upon music to answer them. The study of musical structure and performance is at least as relevant to
understanding the issues of Arnhem Land ethnography as some of the more conventional approaches employed by anthropologists.

In the Yolngu context, music is particularly well-suited to act as a filter through which to view other aspects of Yolngu culture. Musical performances predominate in Yolngu ritual life, accompanying all other forms of ritual expression, such as painting, dance, and the production of sacred objects, as well as standing on their own throughout public rituals from beginning to end. Music is also a frequent feature of everyday life, with people often singing for their own enjoyment. A closer examination of music reveals that, through melodic, rhythmic, textual and performative features, many aspects of Yolngu culture are articulated; furthermore, some aspects of Yolngu culture are almost exclusively formulated through musical performance. This leads to the contention that, to a degree, Yolngu culture is created and recreated through musical performance. The primary goal of this dissertation is to demonstrate that point.

I begin this chapter with a review of the relevant theoretical literature in ethnomusicology and the anthropology of music which has led to and gone beyond Seeger’s notion of “musical anthropology”, followed by a brief review of the ethnomusicological literature in Australian Aboriginal ethnography. I will then discuss the possibility of developing an approach to anthropology that draws heavily on musical structure and performance.

Toward a Musical Anthropology

The study of non-Western music has a long history with diverse roots. Anthony Seeger suggests that the duality of approaches in ethnomusicology—the musicological and the anthropological—can be traced as far back as Rousseau’s *A Complete Dictionary of Music* of 1779, which distinguished between the study of music as a sequence of sounds and the study of music as it relates to human behaviour (Seeger 1991:347-8). Bruno Nettl cites Guido Adler as an early influence in the development of the comparative and ethnographic field he called “Musikologie” (Nettl 1995), and Christensen notes the importance of such figures as Carl Stumpf and Erich von Hornbostel as the leaders of the Berlin School of Comparative Musicology (Christensen 1991); these early European schools of thought were grounded in Western music scholarship but opened the door for the study of non-Western musics. The emergence of
ethnomusicology as a distinct discipline, however, began in earnest in the United States in the 1920s and 1930s. As Nettl points out, the musicologist Charles Seeger and the musicologist and anthropologist George Herzog (a student of Boas) were particularly influential, Seeger for his dynamic and inspirational leadership in forging new approaches to the study of ethnomusicology, and Herzog for his multidisciplinary methodology (Nettl 1991). This disciplinary emergence was concretized further through the development of the Society for Ethnomusicology, beginning with initial meetings in 1952 between David McAllester, Alan Merriam, Willard Rhodes and Charles Seeger, through the publication of the Ethnomusicology Newsletter, and culminating in 1956 with the first annual meeting of the Society (Frisbie 1991:245-7).

The first substantial contributions to the literature written under the rubric of ethnomusicology began to be produced in the 1950s, and two practitioners stand out above the rest in defining distinct styles of analysis: Alan Merriam and Mantle Hood. Merriam’s landmark contribution to the field was his 1964 classic *The Anthropology of Music*. Recognizing that ethnomusicology “carries within itself the seeds of its own division” (Merriam 1964:3), Merriam argues strongly for ethnomusicology to be defined as “the study of music in culture” (ibid.:6), and proposes a theoretical model for ethnomusicology with three analytical levels: conceptualization about music (what music is or should be, how to characterize music and about performative features, and other values a group hold with regard to music); behaviour in relation to music (physical behaviour required to produce and respond to sounds, social behaviour required of musicians and non-musicians at musical events, and verbal behaviour through which ideas about music are expressed); and the music sound itself, which has a particular structure. Merriam stresses the inter-relationships between these levels and our understanding of them (ibid.:32-3), and applies his model to the examination of a comprehensive range of ethnomusicological topics, such as the role of the musician, learning music, composition, song texts, symbolic aspects of music, and others. His clearly anthropological approach to the study of music was very likely the result of his own academic training (he was a student of Herskovits, who was a student of Boas), and has been applied widely by ethnomusicologists of an anthropological persuasion.

The “musicological” approach to ethnomusicological studies is perhaps best represented by one of Merriam’s contemporaries, Mantle Hood. Although
Hood certainly recognized the importance of social context in the study of non-Western music, his own training under Jaap Kunst led him to take the music itself as the primary subject matter of ethnomusicology, and he stated that a thorough training in music was “the sine qua non of successful studies in ethnomusicology” (Hood 1971:4). He emphasizes that musicological knowledge is more important to an ethnomusicologist than anthropological knowledge (ibid.:41), and much of his book deals in great detail with issues of primarily musicological significance: organology, transcription and notation, and musical analysis. Hood’s musicological approach is no doubt influenced by his strong belief in what he termed “bi-musicality”, the need for Western ethnomusicologists to acquire performance skills in other musical traditions in order to truly understand them (Hood 1960).

It is all too easy to caricature either of these approaches, setting up anthropological and musicological straw men which can be criticized for one form of reductionism or another. However, it is not my intention to imply that these two approaches are irreconcilable; in fact, as I will show below, many recent ethnomusicologists have successfully combined the two to produce works of great depth and interpretive clarity. Nonetheless, I believe that these works are in the minority and that almost 50 years after the founding of the Society for Ethnomusicology, we are still grappling with our multidisciplinary heritage. I have not escaped this: although I hope to produce solid musicological analysis, this dissertation draws its inspiration primarily from those works which may be stereotyped as “anthropological”.

One anthropologist whose work proved to be very influential was John Blacking. In his 1973 book How Musical Is Man? he makes his position clear at the outset: “...an anthropological approach to the study of all musical systems makes more sense of them than analyses of the patterns of sound as things in themselves” (Blacking 1973:xi). Blacking was interested in the comparative study of music, but not in the sense of searching for universals of musical form; rather, he sought to understand universality of processes relevant to the production of musical sound (ibid.:17). In addition to a focus on process, Blacking also stressed that music is inextricably linked to those who produce it, and therefore in order to understand music we must look to the broader culture of which it is a part. This is the key to what Blacking refers to as “humanly organized sound”—“a relationship between patterns of human organization and the patterns of sound produced as a result of human interaction” (ibid.:26)—and is surely one of the most significant ways in which a musical
anthropology brings together anthropological and musicological approaches to the study of the world’s music: to demonstrate the creation and re-creation of social patterns through a careful study of the music which both reflects the patterns and takes a hand in their creation.

Blacking believed that the cross-cultural comparison of music was possible, not with reference to the surface forms of music, but with the functions of music in social life (ibid.:32). Others have followed his lead in developing a carefully-defined model for comparative ethnomusicology. Steven Feld, in a paper entitled “Sound Structure as Social Structure” (1984), sets out to examine the interface between musical sound, social organization and ideology in Kaluli society and to suggest a set of questions that can reasonably be asked of any classless egalitarian society. In a programmatic statement, Feld writes:

Comparative sociomusicology should take the tough questions and sort them out with the best materials available for detailed comparison: the thorough, long-term, historically and ethnographically situated case study. The meaningful comparisons are going to be the ones between the most radically contextualized case examples, and not between decontextualized trait lists (Feld 1984:385).

Feld then proposes six areas of inquiry “into music as a total social fact, into the social life of organized sounds” (ibid.:386): competence, form, performance, environment, theory, and value and equality. Each of these areas has a range of questions which investigate sounds as socially structured (ibid.:386-8). Feld’s purpose for his analytical structure is to introduce a method which enables cross-cultural comparison of musical forms while maintaining a rigorously contextualized ethnographic focus. However, Feld does not propose that the correlations between sound structure and social structure will yield a comprehensive set of answers to comparative social questions, and acknowledges that there will be considerable variation in musical styles between different egalitarian groups (just as a similar musical style may occur between different kinds of social organization).

Marina Roseman, in a complementary article, adopts a similar analytical standpoint. She, too, is interested not so much in the sounds themselves, but in what they reveal about the Temiar, who “articulate the concepts used in establishing relationships, fulfilling obligations, or coordinating labor when they organize sound and social actors in musical events” (Roseman 1984:411). She also has a comparative focus, seeking to understand the “cultural logics” which are behind the sound structures (ibid.), and adopts the same analytical
framework as Feld, examining her material in the light of questions drawn from the same six fields of inquiry. Especially significant to my own analysis is her recognition that ritual singing is both shaped by and gives shape to Temiar sociality (ibid.:428). Roseman concludes that musical performances do not merely replicate social relations, but often invert them in an act of Temiar cultural interpretation (ibid.:432). Temiar egalitarianism is maintained “through musical and ritual reminders which level distinctions while stating them” (ibid.:434).

Feld’s single greatest contribution to the anthropology of music is surely his classic ethnographic treatment of Kaluli song, *Sound and Sentiment*, an eclectic analysis of Kaluli musical genres, bird sounds, myths, aesthetics, and emotions, “an ethnographic study of sound as a cultural system” (Feld 1990:3). Feld’s thesis is that the myth of “the boy who became a muni bird” is a key trope in Kaluli society which is mirrored in weeping, poetics and song, and that the myth’s central theme of “becoming a bird” is central to an understanding of Kaluli aesthetics. The aim of his analysis “is to construct a symbolic interpretation that shows how expressive modalities are culturally constituted in performance codes that both actively communicate deeply felt sentiments and reconfirm mythic principles” (ibid.:14). Feld uses a combination of theory drawn from structuralism, the ethnography of communication, and interpretive ethnography to analyze Kaluli myth, its relation to birdsong and Kaluli ornithology, and the way this is transferred to aesthetics and musical practice for both men’s and women’s singing.

What is most useful about Feld’s work for the purposes of this dissertation is his overall interpretive framework and the way in which he uses musical materials in the construction of an ethnography. Feld describes his consistent emphasis throughout the work:

That emphasis is the desire to describe in both Kaluli terms and anthropological terms how ideas generate actions and how those actions are purposive, expressive forms that constitute an ideology of emotion in Bosavi. I have tried to convey how the patterning of expressive forms embodies and communicates the most deeply felt sentiments in Kaluli social life (ibid.:217-8).

Although the ideology reflected in and generated through Dhalwangu song will be shown to be different from that examined by Feld for the Kaluli, his theoretical and methodological orientation is instructive for my own research. I will show how Dhalwangu ideas about country, sociality, cosmology, and
change generate musical actions which find their expression in ritual performance; but these performances, too, have a reciprocal impact on ideology. Thus, DhaJwangu sounds and sentiments stand in a dynamic relationship to each other, in which each is simultaneously a reflection of and a contributor to the other.

Anthony Seeger's *Why Suya Sing* is another valuable ethnography which sets the pace for musical anthropology; in fact, as the epigraph of this chapter shows, Seeger coined the term. He adopts a broad view of music as sound, intention, emotion, instrumentation, and participation, and ultimately is more interested in process than product, and in establishing the relationship between musical, symbolic and social processes (Seeger 1987:xiv-xvi). Seeger uses a close examination of a performance of a single ceremony as an analytical framework to study a range of Suyá vocal genres from speech to song, the myths that explain the origins of songs, and the performative and creative aspects of singing. He shows that Suyá song is intimately involved with the re-creation of space and time (ibid.:69-70), and with the expression and establishment of sociality (ibid.:74-8) and individual and group identity (ibid.:81-2):

This entire book is an argument that the musical performance is as much a part of the creation of social life as any other part of life, and that the creation and re-creation of relationships through the ceremonial singing creates a social context which influences other such contexts (ibid.:83).

One of my goals in this dissertation is to demonstrate that we must go beyond Merriam's "anthropology of music", which examines music in culture, and follow Seeger's lead to look at the ways in which music is constitutive of culture. Like Suyá, DhaJwangu use musical performance as a forum for re-creating past practices, but in so doing they produce new and unique forms and structures. Taken as a process, DhaJwangu musical production is dynamic and fluid, while at the same time adhering to a set of flexibly-constituted conventions. In the chapters that follow, we will see that melody, rhythm, accompaniment, figures of speech, and performative practices are integral parts of a process in which songs express and create DhaJwangu notions of sociality, place, change, and other aspects of DhaJwangu culture.

Timothy Rice is another scholar who has reinterpreted Merriam's theories in an effort to remodel ethnomusicology. Recognizing the influence of Merriam's model, with its properties of simplicity, inclusiveness, and cogency (Rice 1987:470), Rice attempts to reinvigorate ethnomusicology with an infusion
of more contemporary social theory. Citing Geertz's definition of symbolic systems as historically constituted, socially maintained and individually applied (Geertz 1973:363-4), Rice sets out his agenda:

Simply put, I now believe that ethnomusicologists should study the “formative processes” in music, that they should ask and attempt to answer this deceptively simple question: how do people make music or, in its more elaborate form, how do people historically construct, socially maintain and individually create and experience music (ibid.:473)?

Rice sees this model as enabling interesting stories to be told about musical processes which integrate the study of music with history, society, and cognition (ibid.:474). He recognizes a *habitus*-like view of historical processes (Bourdieu 1992) which shows that people generate music but yet are subject to the power of previous musical forms (Rice 1987:474), as well as a dynamic view of the inter-relations between social and musical structure (ibid.:475) and the importance of individual uniqueness (ibid.:476). Rice then applies his model to three levels of interpretation: first, embedding each of Merriam’s three levels of sound, concept and behavior to each of the historical, social, and individual processes which Rice identified; second, to examine the inter-relations between these three processes; and third, a comparative stance with a concern for general statements about how people make music (ibid.:478-80). Rice’s model has great potential to take what is best about the Merriam model—namely, its simplicity, inclusiveness and cogency—and update it in order to deal with some of the issues with which ethnomusicology has been struggling since the publication of Merriam’s *The Anthropology of Music* in 1964. In so doing, Rice emphasizes the utility of an interpretive approach and advocates a more dynamic view of the interaction between different musical processes.

Another ethnomusicologist who has developed an approach through contemporary social theory is Thomas Turino, who turns to Bourdieu and de Certeau in considering the utility of practice theory in the project of musical ethnography. Turino recognizes that “the *habitus* operates in a dialectical relation to the external conditions because the practices that it generates are externalized in forms and behavior that once again become part of the ‘objective conditions’ and thus reciprocally become models for shaping the internalized dispositions” (Turino 1990:400). The *habitus*, then, becomes a useful concept for the examination of musical practices. In addition to Bourdieu, Turino also considers the work of Michel de Certeau who, in his own attempt to avoid an
over-emphasis on structure, introduces the notions of strategies and tactics, the
former being institutional and power-based courses of action, and the latter
"the noninstitutionalized resources of the weak" or ways of "making do"
(ibid.:402). Although neither Bourdieu nor de Certeau provides a framework for
analysis which is without flaws, they provide a means for recognizing the
dangers for musical ethnographers of postulating an overly-systematized
construction of the lived world of our informants; in fact, people's actual
practices are fluid and variable and often break "the rules" (ibid.:403). Turino's
own work with musicians in rural Peru demonstrated to him that people are
often caught up in concentric rings of contexts which include the historical
development of the nation-state, the rise of capitalism, and mass migrations of
people. Turino advocates extending the notion of context to include "lived social
relations at particular historical moments which are linked to ever broader
contexts across space and time" (ibid.:407); within this framework, we may
better understand the ad hoc decisions which people are often forced to make in
musical performances.

The works described above represent only a small sample of the works in
contemporary ethnomusicology which have rigorously developed an analytical
framework through which we can better understand the musical lifeworlds of
the people with whom we work, and I do not pretend for a moment that it is
exhaustive. These works, however, have been central to the emergence of what
Seeger has called a "musical anthropology", although not all of the authors
would describe them as such. The main point for this dissertation is that each of
these works attempts to frame questions within an anthropological discourse
and to draw upon music to provide answers, which is precisely what I hope to
do with my analysis of Dha\wannya song. This approach may not tell us
everything about music or society; however, it may furnish the means to
understand the complex inter-relations between the two.

The Arnhem Land Ethnomusicological Literature

Music research in Arnhem Land did not begin in earnest until Ronald and
Catherine Berndt visited the region in 1946-7; Ronald Berndt published two

1 For reasons of space, I only examine the literature on eastern and central Arnhem Land
music, which are closely related in a number of ways. For detailed analyses of western Arnhem
Land music, see articles by Allan Marett (Marett 1994, Marett 2000).
articles on songs in 1948 (Berndt 1948a, Berndt 1948b) in which he presents a
number of songs, beginning with a brief synopsis of their meaning, an
interlinear translation of the song text, and a general translation. The provision
of song texts with detailed translations is valuable, but Berndt does not
undertake any sort of musical analysis and his commentary on musical features
is brief and general. Theoretically, he adopts a broadly functionalist approach to
the significance of the songs, stating that one of their main functions is “the
bringing together of all or a section of the people for the purpose of expressing
and renewing tribal unity and cohesion” (Berndt 1948b:17). In his 1952
monograph, Djanggawul (Berndt 1952), Berndt provides an extensive discussion
of the relation of song texts to mythology. He discusses in great detail the
Djanggawul (Djang’kawu) myths, which are the ritual property of a variety of
groups across northeast Arnhem Land, interpreting them in terms of their
eroticized content; he also considers the associated ceremonies related to the
myths. Berndt then provides his own elaborate translations of 188 songs about
the Djang’kawu and a detailed song-by-song discussion of them, especially as
they contribute to an understanding of Yolngu sexuality and fertility beliefs.
While such a detailed consideration of song is invaluable to the Arnhem Land
ethnomusicological literature, Berndt provides almost no information on
musical features, and the original song texts are not available, promised in a
second volume (Berndt 1952:xxi) which never materialized.

Berndt’s most valuable article on Arnhem Land songs is “The
Wuradilagu Song Cycle of Northeastern Arnhem Land: Content and Style”. Again, although a few references to musical features are made, particularly
their relationship to social organization (Berndt 1966:198, 242), the article deals
for the most part with song textual matters. Berndt’s discussion focuses on the
inter-relations of the individual songs, poetic imagery, and the ways in which
the songs reflect the “plot” of the associated myth (ibid.:236-7). Berndt accords
special attention to the poetic intent of the singer and the fact that a sung
version of a myth is aesthetically evaluated in a different way than a narrative
version:

In their songs, story value is accorded low priority. The essence of a great
song cycle is the atmosphere it creates—the imagery of cross-linking
associations which weave an intricate pattern where both social and
natural environments are blended into a coherent whole. It is not the
bald statement that is significant, but the gradual building up by subtle
reference to a culminating point of major significance... (ibid.:241).
Chapter Four deals with the poetics of Dha}wangu song texts in great detail, and we will see that Berndt's analysis is correct in many respects. Although Berndt did not provide any significant information on Arnhem Land songs as musical events, he compensated by providing a careful consideration of poetic features and mythological background.

This also holds true for his unique *Love Songs of Arnhem Land* (Berndt 1976), another extensive examination of sexuality as expressed in songs and ritual. Here, Berndt provides a more systematic discussion of eroticism and sexuality than in his 1952 volume, as well as a more detailed account of relevant musical structures and of the methodology which he employed; additionally, Berndt provides the actual song texts and their interlinear translations in a set of appendices. As in his previous work, Berndt's detailed analysis of the relations between song texts, ritual action, and mythology is valuable, but he leaves questions of musical features unasked and unanswered.

Following closely on the heels of the Berndts' 1946-7 fieldwork in the region were A.P. Elkin's expeditions in 1949 and 1952, which produced some of the first recordings of Arnhem Land music. Unlike Berndt's work, Elkin examines musical and performative features in addition to song texts, largely with the help of the ethnomusicologist Trevor Jones, to produce the classic work, *Arnhem Land Music* (1956). *Arnhem Land Music* is an uneven work which presents a slightly skewed picture of what is a large and diverse musical tradition; nonetheless, it represents the first attempt at a work on the subject which can be properly called "ethnomusicological".

Elkin divides Arnhem Land music into three broad categories: secular, sacred and secret (Elkin and Jones 1956:5), and discusses the significance of each; he also discusses the role of the songman and his importance in Arnhem Land society (ibid.:12-3), musical instruments (ibid.:14-5), and musical patterns based on geographical distribution (ibid.:15-23). The bulk of his contribution to the book is made in his detailed descriptions of the recordings, a valuable undertaking which reveals a fundamental weakness in his analysis. Elkin divides his sample into a number of categories, but these do not reflect any kind of musical or ritual organization: his categories include a haphazard assemblage of the names of social groups, ancestral beings, rituals, and musical genres. In categorizing the songs in this way, Elkin implies that these are equivalent and comparable classifications, but this is not the case. This eclecticism is, in part, the result of his recording of a broad cross-section of songs from across the Arnhem Land region, but it is also due to his failure.
clearly to identify the musical and ritual features of Arnhem Land musical structure and base his discussion on those. The resulting analysis is haphazard because the only thread running through the book which connects all of the song types is simply that they are from Arnhem Land, rather than by social affiliation or mythological organization.

The second half of the book comprises Trevor Jones' ethnomusicological treatment of the materials collected by Elkin. Using the song categories proposed by Elkin, Jones provides a record-by-record commentary, musical transcriptions, and discussions of scales, melody, rhythm, and form. The record-by-record commentaries are of limited use without the accompanying recordings, but they do provide detailed information on many musical features. The transcriptions include isolated features such as the range of notes used in a particular scale (ibid.:241) and rhythms used for melodies (ibid.:243), as well as completely transcribed excerpts from the recordings with vocal, clapstick and didjeridu parts (ibid.:250-79) which are certainly the earliest published examples of their kind in the Arnhem Land ethnographic literature. The last part of Jones' contribution is an extended discussion of the musical characteristics of the songs including vocal technique (ibid.:283-6), instrumental technique (ibid.:286-90) (including a very good section on the didjeridu), performer interaction (ibid.:290-4), scales, melody and harmony (ibid.:294-303), and rhythm (ibid.:303-7). Arnhem Land Music, then, is extremely valuable as a rigorous first attempt at an Arnhem Land ethnomusicology, but suffers from an eclectic organization of musical types, which is a direct result of an eclectic assortment of recordings made on the two expeditions. This in turn may be the result of the fact that all of Elkin's recordings, even those representing northeast Arnhem Land musical genres, were recorded in the southwest corner of Arnhem Land and in Darwin; thus, there is no balanced representation of northeast Arnhem Land manikay² genres.

Ethnomusicological research was also carried out around the time of the second Elkin expedition by the American ethnomusicologist Richard Waterman in Yirrkala. Waterman adopted the functionalist theoretical framework of his day in his examination of music in the life cycle of Yolngu at Yirrkala. At each stage in a person's life, Waterman suggests, music serves an important function as an enculturative mechanism (Waterman 1955:41), in addition to a number of other functions. For example, to a young initiate about to be circumcised, music

² Manikay is the name of the genre of public songs that is examined in this dissertation. An extended discussion of the various features of manikay begins in Chapter Three.
functions as an emblem of social identity (ibid.:43); the “fun” songs of adolescent males may function to relieve emotional tension (ibid.:45); and karma (garma) songs function to strengthen group solidarity (ibid.:47). Although Waterman’s functionalist framework seems dated by today’s standards, his short article contains a number of valuable insights into the relationship between social organization and musical organization, particularly the recognition of melodic patterns particular to different lineages (ibid.:43, 45, 46); indeed Waterman was the first to actually suggest which tones are used in combination by three particular clans (ibid.:46). Although Waterman did not publish many of his materials for consideration by other ethnomusicologists, his work opened up a number of interesting avenues of investigation.

Some of the most wide-ranging ethnomusicological research amongst Aboriginal Australians was carried out by Alice Moyle over the course of her long career. Her PhD dissertation, which examines musical traditions of a large number of distinct Aboriginal peoples across the northern part of the continent, has three main themes: sound instruments and their distribution across geographical areas; song categories and their performance occasions; and the melodic and verbal aspects of the individual song item (Moyle 1974:xiii). She provides detailed descriptions of musical instrument types found throughout northern Australia, classified as idiophones, membranophones, and aerophones (ibid.:16-33), and discusses their geographical distribution across various regions (ibid.:34-46). Her classification of song types into nine categories includes men’s (cult, maraiin, magical, clan, djatpangarri and individually owned) and women’s (‘love magic’, birth, lullabies and crying, and children’s songs) (ibid.:53). Finally, the last major section of Moyle’s dissertation involves a detailed discussion of the song item as an analytical unit. The 69 recorded samples for which Moyle provides transcriptions are analyzed under twenty separate headings including such variables as duration, sound components, melodic contour, syllabic strings, tempo, and many others (ibid.:193-206). Moyle’s analysis is heavily grounded in musicological theory and the aspects of Aboriginal music which interest her are those belonging to musicological, rather than anthropological, discourse; the great value of her work comes from its comparative nature in seeking to draw conclusions for widely divergent musical styles across vast distances.

A close associate of Moyle’s in ethnomusicological research is Jill Stubington, who conducted her own doctoral research in a number of northeast Arnhem Land communities in the mid-1970s investigating the manikay genre of
musical performance. Stubington’s research is clearly informed by a musicological perspective, a fact reflected in her methodology. Stubington conducted field research in four different communities for a total of six months over a three-year period, amassing over 90 hours worth of field recordings performed by musicians from six different patrilocal groups (Stubington 1978:xii, xviii), and analyzed the materials in order to describe manikay as a musical genre. This wide cross-section of venues was deemed necessary “so that the particular and perhaps unusual circumstances which may occur at one place at one time would not distort the material collected” (ibid.:xviii), demonstrating an analytical commitment to the music itself rather than the context in which it occurs. Noting the difficulties inherent in cross-cultural communication, Stubington concluded that she would concentrate on the observation of musical events as a more reliable means of understanding Yolngu musical concepts (Stubington 1978:xix), and she did not attempt to collect song textual materials for the songs she recorded (ibid.:xx).

Stubington’s concentration of musical analysis provides some valuable comparative materials, but her approach led her to a number of conclusions significantly different than those which would result from anthropologically-informed discussions of musical concepts with Yolngu musicians and translations and discussion of song texts. For example, Stubington states that Yolngu do not attach names to particular songs, that the songs have no tangible existence apart from individual performances, and that, unlike Western music, manikay do not exist at an intellectual level which allows for their abstract discussion (ibid.:3-4). My research indicates that Yolngu musicians are able to talk in great detail about musical structure and form, including the origins of songs, memories of previous performances, and different melodic and rhythmic possibilities, and that the organization of ritual performances requires the discussion of songs of a high order indeed, both of individual song subjects and entire song series; these topics will be dealt with in more detail in Chapter Three. Stubington also draws a number of conclusions about the relationship between social structure and musical structure, which will be taken up in detail in Chapter Six. I believe that Stubington’s work provides some valuable materials and analyses for comparative work, but suffers from her analytical

3 Recent theory in anthropology and folklore, however, suggests that it is necessary to include the impact of the ethnographer on a performative event rather than hope to disappear into the background and record a “pristine”, almost pre-contact performance (Darnell 1974, Tedlock 1983:285-301, Tedlock 1995).
and methodological framework. With longer-term fieldwork with a more stable group of musicians, and with an active interest in the social and cosmological context, it is certain that Stubington’s methodical analysis would have yielded a quite different set of results which demonstrate the complex intertwining of musical, textual, and social aspects of Yolngu song.

A.P. Borsboom’s detailed research on the Maradjiri ritual complex, based on fieldwork in central Arnhem Land, includes an extended discussion of songs and dances. Maradjiri is a ritual in which one group presents a decorated pole related to their cosmology to another group which has made a request for them to do so (Borsboom 1978:xiv). Both the preparations of the pole and its formal presentation are accompanied by songs which relate to the relevant cosmology, with each ancestral being as the subject of a song with several verses (ibid.:66). Borsboom observes that the song subjects can be grouped according to the ecology of the country to which the cosmology is related: the ancestral beings celebrated in the songs either relate to dry, jungle, or swampy areas, with certain subjects acting as “intermediates” between zones. The order in which the songs are performed demonstrates a narrative transition from “dry” through “jungle” to “wet”, which Borsboom interprets as a symbolic representation of the topography of the performing group’s country (ibid.:71-4). Interestingly, Borsboom notes that the order followed in dance performances (which are also accompanied by song) follows a reverse pattern, from “wet” topics to “dry” ones, which Borsboom takes as a symbolic representation of the progress from the wet season to the dry season. This allows a single body of cosmology to be related to the environment both in terms of time (seasons) and space (topography) (ibid.:74-8). Borsboom’s research also considers the differences between song performances of the same cosmology by different group (ibid.:82-5) and provides a complete transcription of a single performance of the Maradjiri songs (ibid.:185-232). Combined with his detailed discussion of the associated Maradjiri dances (ibid.:90-129), Borsboom presents one of the most comprehensive accounts of a single ritual and its music in the Arnhem Land ethnographic literature.

Margaret Clunies Ross has also analyzed songs from central Arnhem Land (1978, 1983, 1988), and with the ethnomusicologist Stephen Wild has examined the musical articulation of particular cosmologies (1982) and the relations between song text, dance, and music (1984). Clunies Ross seeks to understand the “structural matrix of Arnhem Land song-poetry” and the way it is deployed by singers in musical performance (Clunies Ross 1978:129).
convincingly demonstrates that there is an intricate formulaic structuring of song texts which the skillful singer uses to convey aspects of cosmology, as she carefully examines the ways in which singers make use of comparable formulae to gradually build up the poetic theme of the performance, making use of a number of poetic devices including personal pronouns (ibid.:134), reduplication of verb stems (ibid.:135), and polysemous words (ibid.:138-9). Clunies Ross has also examined the differences between spoken and sung texts based on the same cosmology; she shows that sung texts display a number of syntactical differences, including a high proportion of nominal and verbal elements to the exclusion of pronouns, adjectives and adverbs, and the use of linguistic devices such as addition and transposition (Clunies Ross 1983:11). She concludes by relating the unique nature of Arnhem Land song texts to the system of restricted knowledge, arguing that the grammatical particularities of the texts operate as a constraint on the free dissemination of religious knowledge (ibid.:26).

Clunies Ross and Stephen Wild collaborated on a recording and accompanying book of the Djambidj song series from central Arnhem Land, part of a long-term project examining the musical traditions of the area (Clunies Ross and Wild 1982). The recording was made at a 1979 performance at a concert in Canberra, and the book provides song texts as well as musicological analysis. An article by Clunies Ross and Wild (1984) goes into much greater detail about this musical tradition, relating sung texts to the music and dance which accompanies them. In particular, they analyze two types of dance, elaborate and formal, and demonstrate the impact of these dances on music and song texts. Their analysis shows that there are particular features of music, such as musical structure, rhythmic accompaniment, didjeridu accompaniment and vocal melody (Clunies Ross and Wild 1984:214-6), and particular features of song texts, such as the prolongation of final syllables and the use of refrains (ibid.:216-20), which are dependent on the kind of dance which they accompany. Clunies Ross and Wild conclude that, in order to understand the nature of Arnhem Land ritual performance, it must be considered as a total entity and that inter-disciplinary boundaries must be broken down (ibid.:226-7). In this important recognition, they set the tone for subsequent Arnhem Land music research.

Another valuable contribution by Clunies Ross is another recording and accompanying book, this time co-authored by the central Arnhem Land singer Johnny Mundrugmundrug, called Goyulan: The Morning Star. The songs concern
the Morning Star and other associated ancestral beings, a body of cosmology shared widely among groups right across Arnhem Land. The book which accompanies the recording details this cosmological background, and then provides a song-by-song discussion which includes the transcribed song texts with a glossary, resulting in another careful documentation of a single performance. Unlike the book which accompanied Djambidj, there are no musicological analyses to extend the discussion. Nevertheless, Clunies Ross has made an important contribution to the study of Arnhem Land music by focusing on the documentation of particular groups, songs, and rituals in particular contexts.

Ian Keen has also provided a carefully-considered series of works on the place of song in Yolngu ritual performance. In the article “Ambiguity in Yolngu Religious Language” (Keen 1977a), Keen contrasts the songs of two Yolngu rituals: the Ngārra or Madayin, in which ambiguous words allow for both esoteric and exoteric interpretations, depending on the listener’s level of religious knowledge; and the Gunabibi, in which the song words, because they are not interpretable on the basis of any Yolngu language, are subject to a wide range of meanings not tied to levels of religious knowledge. The songs of the Madayin ritual are also the subject of a later article, in which the images expressed in the song texts are related to processes of creation, fertility, and reproduction (Keen 1990). Additionally, Keen’s doctoral dissertation considers songs not only in the context of ritual performance, but also in terms of the relations between different groups and different areas of country which are linked through songs and cosmology (Keen 1978:210-2). Although Keen’s analysis does not involve a wholesale musical and textual analysis of an entire sequence of songs, his detailed work on Yolngu ritual has consistently considered the importance of song and dance and their relation to both social and cosmological context.

A recent work clearly researched from a musicological perspective is the detailed doctoral dissertation of Greg Anderson (1992). Anderson, who worked primarily at the Malyangarnak outstation in central Arnhem Land, analyzed nine separate recordings of a single song series, Murlarra (Morning Star), in order to demonstrate the relationship between musical styles and their vocal, textual and rhythmic components. He was primarily interested in the formal characteristics of songs at four levels: the song cycle or song series, composed of

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4 A brief account of different types of Yolngu rituals is given in Chapter Three.
mythologically related song subjects; the performance of song items by singers and didjeridu players; the structure of the song item in terms of the introduction, main body, and terminating coda; and the internal structure of the main body of the song item, itself divided into sections (Anderson 1992:6-9). In his analysis, Anderson notes the reasonably stable relationship of song textual units to the clapstick pattern (ibid.:77), and that the song texts themselves have a semantic content that falls into four categories: clan and place names, everyday words, variations on everyday words, and words unrelated to everyday words (ibid.:78-9). He also notes that there are two basic styles of songs, ngarkana (no fixed relationship between voice, clapsticks and didjeridu) and djalkmi (metrical relations between these elements) (ibid.:83), and identifies a number of different clapstick patterns in different metres (ibid.:95). The bulk of Anderson’s analytical work is an extended and highly detailed comparison of song items described by performers as “the same”, i.e., the same song subject at a particular tempo, which he organizes into nine “Groups” on the basis of tempo, song structure, clapstick patterns, and other features (ibid.:104). After much analysis of hundreds of individual song items, Anderson concludes that there is a strong correlation between each of these “Groups” and certain musical and textual features (ibid.:373). Anderson’s work is certainly the most thorough investigation of a single song series ever undertaken in the Arnhem Land ethnographic literature. Although his theoretical framework is firmly grounded in musicology, he attempts to reconcile emic and etic analysis and allow his research to be guided by Aboriginal concepts.

A recent contribution from the ranks of anthropology to the study of Arnhem Land music has come from Fiona Magowan, whose doctoral dissertation examines Yolngu women’s songs and how they are structured in various contexts. With an emphasis on the processual nature of musical performance, Magowan writes:

Speech, song, body language and formal dancing do not have intrinsic, essential meanings that remain constant while everything else moves and changes. They have to be reconstituted through each context related to a body of ancestral ideology and the particularities of social interaction (Magowan 1994a:19).

Magowan examines the natural and social environment of songs, the differential roles undertaken by men and women in the context of a funeral, as well as the relations between song and ordinary language, a comparative
analysis of men’s and women’s song texts, the meaning and aesthetics of Yolngu performances, and concludes with an examination of traditional music used in Christian worship. Magowan locates ritual song knowledge in the knowledge and experience of the natural environment, where symbols of the natural world form the basis of song subjects (ibid.:36). She writes:

An analysis of the grammatical and performative structures of both speech and song will show:

a) Yolngu conceive of natural sounds in the environment as a source of musical invention.

b) The sounds have multiple levels of meanings that reflect the personal interests of the speaker or performer in relation to their status, authority and relational links within Yolngu society (ibid.:111-2).

In particular, Magowan identifies natural motifs (ibid.:133) and movement motifs (ibid.:134, 141-2) as prevalent in Yolngu song texts. She also comments on the relationship between musical structure and social structure in a way which supports the findings of this dissertation, in that it is possible to identify the melodic patterns of different social groups (ibid.:205, 210). Magowan’s research is valuable in that it combines musical insights gained from a close analysis of songs with the broader theoretical concerns of contemporary anthropological discourse, as well as in providing the first substantial study of women’s singing in the Arnhem Land ethnographic literature. Although my own analytical aims differ from Magowan’s, her research provides a useful adjunct to the concerns I address in this dissertation.

The Arnhem Land ethnomusicological literature replicates some of the patterns of ethnomusicological theory in the last fifty years, in that it tends to be split fairly evenly between those grounded in musicology and those grounded in anthropology; only a few works have seriously attempted to develop an analytical framework which incorporates both and which attempt to utilize musical materials to answer anthropological questions. Clunies Ross and Wild have made a significant move toward a broader concern in ethnomusicology and folklore with the processual and interactive nature of performance, and Magowan has gone some distance toward addressing the kinds of concerns with emotion and the natural environment raised by Steven Feld (1990). The more musicological works have contributed a rigorous framework for the close examination of music with some concern for social and cosmological variables.
As a whole, however, there is a great deal more to be done in the Arnhem Land literature to successfully bring the two streams of ethnomusicology together; the present dissertation is one small step in that direction.

Prospects for a Yolngu Musical Anthropology

As I stated at the beginning of this chapter, this dissertation is a work of musical anthropology: I wish to situate a number of questions within contemporary anthropological discourse, and draw upon musical materials to provide answers to them. This approach is based on the conviction that music is at least as useful as marriage patterns in answering questions of social organization, and at least as informative as information on residence and habitation in understanding relations to country. Looked at from either of the two poles of ethnomusicology, this dissertation may make a contribution: from the standpoint of anthropology, it will add a “musical” dimension to issues which have been studied for generations; from the standpoint of musicology, it will provide a highly contextualized analysis of a musical tradition and a rigorous theoretical framework in which to deploy it.

Due to its sheer ubiquity, musical performance in northeast Arnhem Land may be a privileged vantage point for the ethnography of the region. Music accompanies all types of ritual activity, from the painting of initiates to the burial of a coffin, in addition to being a favourite leisure-time activity. Music accompanies dance, but is also performed on its own. Bark paintings are hard to come by in Gapuwiyak, but the strains of singing, didjeridu, and clapsticks are often in the air, whether live, played on a cassette, or broadcast on the local radio station. For Yolngu, music is an expression of their worldview and their identity, but it is also constitutive of that worldview and that identity. It is the goal of this dissertation to demonstrate how that is the case, to show what kinds of musical structures, analyses and performances may answer anthropological questions concerning sociality, place, and change.

To use a series of musical metaphors, this dissertation consists of four “movements”. The Overture, “Toward a Yolngu Musical Anthropology”, consists of two chapters: the current chapter which introduces the relevant ethnomusicological theory leading up to the concept of musical anthropology; and Chapter Two, entitled “Yolngu Sociality”, which examines the Arnhem
Land ethnographic literature concerning social organization, especially those works concerned with the “clan” concept and its implications for social analysis. Drawing on theories of practice (Bourdieu 1992) and structuration (Giddens 1982, Giddens 1984), I will argue for a focus on multiple and overlapping identities rather than group membership in Yolngu social analysis. I will also provide an ethnographic portrait of the community of Gapuwiyak, paying particular attention to the Dhalwangu people whose music is the primary focus of this dissertation.

The First Movement is entitled “Dhalwangu Manikay”, and is a detailed examination of Dhalwangu public songs. Chapter Three, “Musical Features of Dhalwangu Manikay”, provides a careful musical analysis of the manikay genre of public song, including melodic lines, didjeridu and clapstick patterns, and the organizational structure of Dhalwangu songs, based on almost 90 hours of recorded music. I will combine Dhalwangu folk musicology with Western musicological analysis to provide a highly-contextualized examination of melody and rhythm, as well as material on the ritual, social, and cosmological significance of music. This chapter forms the analytical basis for all subsequent statements about musical form and content.

Chapter Four is entitled “Textual Features of Dhalwangu Manikay”, and consists of a comprehensive poetic analysis based on over 500 individual song texts transcribed and translated during fieldwork. Drawing on Paul Friedrich’s theory of “polytropy”, I examine Dhalwangu song texts on the basis of five overlapping “macrotropes”: image, modal, formal, contiguity, and analogical. This analytical framework can be shown to account for a wide variety of Dhalwangu poetic devices used in the construction of song texts. I will also discuss how these tropes contribute to the over-riding aesthetic criterion of Dhalwangu song: the skillful evocation of ancestral places. This chapter forms the analytical basis for all subsequent statements about song texts and their characteristics.

Chapter Five is entitled “Performative Features of Dhalwangu Manikay”, and examines the unique ways in which music and text are combined in actual performances. After a review of the recent literature on performance from anthropology, ethnomusicology, and folklore, I discuss five inter-related aspects of Dhalwangu musical performance: role, text, context, emergence, and the performative construction of reality. These features of Dhalwangu performance deal with the ways in which social organization is deployed in performance, the interactions between performers, the impact of a variety of
contexts on performative events, the ways in which particular songs and song series find their precise form in performance, and the ways in which performance is a process as well as a product, one which has a significant formative influence on Dha\jwangu culture. This chapter forms the basis for all subsequent statements about performative activity. Taken together, the three chapters of the First Movement constitute a comprehensive analysis of Dha\jwangu music in its various manifestations.

Having analyzed Dha\jwangu song musically, textually, and performatively to arrive at a more complete understanding of the manikay genre, the Second Movement, “The Musical Articulation of Dha\jwangu Culture”, applies that understanding to the examination of three pressing concerns in Yolngu ethnography. Chapter Six, “The Musical Articulation of Sociality”, examines the ways in which Dha\jwangu kinship and social relations are articulated through musical structure and performance. I focus my discussion on the relevant types of sociality for Dha\jwangu people, namely their Dhalwangu identity, their Yirritja identity, and their identity in groups more inclusive and less inclusive than Dhalwangu, and for each type of sociality I examine musical, textual, structural, and performative features. In this manner, I demonstrate how the various different identities which a Dha\jwangu person has may be articulated in a number of musically-different ways.

Chapter Seven, “The Musical Articulation of Place”, is an attempt to understand the relations which Dha\jwangu people have with their traditional country and which are expressed through song. I examine the ways in which Dhalwangu music is organized in terms of significant ancestral places, and that the goal of a Dhalwangu singer is to “tell the story” or “paint a picture” of those places through his song texts. I examine both direct and indirect place references and show how singers use a range of poetic devices to evoke place. I then examine the practice of house naming in Gapuwiyak in order to show how Yolngu create a sense of place for themselves there even though their own ancestral country may be far away and rarely visited.

Chapter Eight, “The Musical Articulation of Change”, highlights the ways in which Dha\jwangu people incorporate change and innovation within an ideology which tends to stress changelessness and stability. I focus my attention on two elements of Dhalwangu musical performance which are striking for their innovation: songs dealing with the period of Macassan contact from the 1700s to the early 1900s; and yuta manikay or “new” songs which are inspired by
contemporary events but which have their basis in "traditional" songs. In each of these cases, and many others besides, Dhalwangu people interpret innovation within a framework which allows it to be incorporated into an ancestral ideology.

The Finale consists of Chapter Nine, in which I set out my tentative conclusions and assess the utility of answering social questions with musical materials. The Coda of the dissertation consists of a set of appendices containing additional ethnographic materials on Dhalwangu manikay, and an accompanying CD of musical examples referred to throughout the text.
Chapter Two - Yolngu Sociality

Is there something about tribal society that demands resolution into groups? Or is the notion of "groups" a vague and inadequate description of something that could better be represented in another way?

- Roy Wagner (1974:102)

Introduction - The Problem of Yolngu "Groups"

Now in their seventh decade, anthropological debates concerning the principles of Yolngu social organization show no clear signs of abating, and opinion is still divided about what constitutes the fundamental unit of Yolngu society. And yet, our understanding of virtually every aspect of Yolngu culture depends on it. At the heart of the debate is the analytical concept of the "clan", and the degree to which it can be said to represent Yolngu social forms. While undergoing some conceptual reworking over the years, the basic principles of the "clan" have by and large remained intact from Warner's earliest writings until the present day: patrilineal, exogamous, corporate, land-owning. More recent writing by anthropologists has tended, on the one hand, to revitalize the concept by recognizing certain processual features or, on the other hand, to dismiss the concept as untenable for the analysis of Yolngu sociality.

Overlapping imperfectly with these analyses are Yolngu social groups themselves. The Yolngu terms for a group of people are malal or biipurruz, terms which, when applied to people, are modified with a proper name, such as Ritharmgu, Marrangu, Munyuku, or Gälpu. These names have been characterized by ethnographers as "clan names", labels designating a level of sociality which exhibits certain characteristics, but there is evidence to suggest that Yolngu do not necessarily interpret these names as representing equivalent social formations. I will argue that they are kinds of identity which are constituted through discourse and action, which may be contingent on the context in which they are constituted, and which are only one among many such identities which are relevant to Yolngu social life.

1 Malal is a term which means a "group" of anything; the term is often used to refer to groups of people.
2 Biipurru is a complex term which refers to a number of inter-related concepts including people, places, and ancestors; in this dissertation, it is used primarily to refer to a group of people who share an identity based on those concepts. The term can also refer to a dead body and to a funeral ritual relating to that body.
My thinking on this issue has been greatly affected, naturally enough, by the people with whom I have worked most closely during the course of my fieldwork, who identify themselves most often by the name Dhalwangu. Dhalwangu has been considered a “clan” in the ethnographic literature, or sometimes a “clan” with two “sub-groups”, but this sort of structure did not seem to me to account for some of the complex ways in which Dhalwangu sociality was constructed. For one thing, even though Dhalwangu people used that name very often in referring to their identity, all of the people with whom I worked used the surname Wunungmurra, one of the two Dhalwangu “sub-groups” (the other being Gumana). The Wunungmurras acted autonomously in every respect, performed in rituals as a distinct group, and were most closely associated with the Dhalwangu country called Gurrumuru, and yet they were unambiguous in stating that their most important country was the main Dhalwangu centre at Gangan, and that they and the Gumanas were “one people” (wanggany mala). This tension between theory and practice, between “groups in the mind” and “groups on the ground”, was underscored by my informants’ own curiosity about the exact nature and history of the relationship between the two groups.

On top of this division of Dhalwangu identity, there were numerous other divisions which had considerable impact on social and ritual life: divisions between monuk (salt water) and rapiny (fresh water) Dhalwangu (a ritual division); between different lineages traced back to their father’s father’s generation; between people with different conception sites; and between people with mothers and mother’s mothers with distinct identities. All of these ways of subdividing Dhalwangu identity were extremely important and, in some contexts, even more important than their shared status as Dhalwangu people. Bangana Wunungmurra once told me that, during arguments or disagreements with other Dhalwangu men, he might refer to himself as a Munyuku person (his mother’s mother’s people), while his classificatory brother Micky Wunungmurra might refer to himself as a Ritharrngu person (his mother’s mother’s people). And I already knew that, during the Ngarrra ceremony, salt water and fresh water identities sometimes superseded other identities in terms of ritual organization. Bangana continued:

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3 “Country” is a common expression in Australian Aboriginal English used to refer to ancestrally-significant places, a practice I will follow here.
Chapter Two
Yolngu Sociality

Bangana: It's very hard, you know? It's very difficult, because if you're going to think about DhaJ.wangu... there are other connections before you become a DhaJ.wangu. And that's a big thing in the Yolngu world, you've got to have all this understanding and knowledge of how you become who you are. There's a mārī [MM] side... Sometimes I use my mārī's wisdom and knowledge to show other people who I am...I come from Matjarrnga [his conception site, a Munyuku place] and that makes me Dhudiyalyal Munyuku...

PGT: See, that's the real challenge for me to understand, is that...you've all got a DhaJwangu identity, but you've got a Munyuku identity through your mārī, and a Djarrwak identity through your mother, a Dhudiyalyal identity through your conception...

Bangana: Who are you?!? [laughter]

This kind of information has led me to reconsider the nature of Yolngu sociality and the usefulness of analyzing that sociality in terms of bounded social groups such as the "clan". In ritual musical performance, the DhaJ.wangu people with whom I worked recognized all kinds of different identities and sometimes articulated several of them at one time; as such, "DhaJwangu" was only one identity among many which was significant to an individual's sociality, albeit a very important and consistently-articulated one.

In this chapter I will examine Yolngu sociality through a number of interrelated approaches. After a brief sketch of Yolngu society in the community of Gapuwiyak, I will provide a critical review of the literature on Yolngu social organization, particularly those works dealing with the development and elaboration of the "clan" concept from the earliest writings until the present day. I will then consider theories of practice and structuration, as they may be used to develop a more dynamic view of Yolngu sociality, one which helps us to move away from analysis in terms of bounded groups such as the "clan" toward a focus instead on multiple and overlapping identities which are constituted through practice. I will then demonstrate how a practice-oriented view of Yolngu identities helps us to make sense of particular groups such as DhaJwangu, and I will conclude with a brief examination of the Arnhem Land ethnographic literature which may be amenable to such a conception of Yolngu sociality.
"Yolngu" is a term used by the Aboriginal inhabitants of northeast Arnhem Land to refer to themselves, and to other Aboriginal peoples, as opposed to the term *balanda* which is applied to white people\(^4\). In local languages, it is also a term meaning "human being". The approximate area inhabited by Yolngu is the region east of Cape Stewart on the north coast, and north of Walker River which empties into the Gulf of Carpentaria (see figure 2.1). Although Yolngu frequently interact with the Aboriginal peoples to the west and to the south of this area through ritual and inter-marriage, Yolngu are distinctive by virtue of speaking a number of suffixing languages of the Pama-Nyungan language family, as opposed to the prefixing languages of their westerly and southerly neighbours (Keen 1994:22).

Of the five principal Yolngu communities in northeast Arnhem Land, Gapuwiyak is the most recently-established. Situated on the shores of Lake Evella, Gapuwiyak is home to approximately 1000 people, of whom several hundred may spend portions of the year living on nearby outstations\(^5\). More than a dozen patrilineal groups are represented in significant numbers, although a smaller number make up the majority of the population: Marrangu, Guyula Djambarrpuyngu, Wagilak and Djapu in the Dhuwa moiety, and Dhalwangu, Ritharrngu, Birrkili Gupapuyngu and Maqarrpa in the Yirritja moiety.

Gapuwiyak was established in the late 1960s by Methodist missionaries from Galiwin’ku, led by the Rev. Harold Shepherdson and the Yolngu leaders Wayungga, Gandalal, Rrapaya, and Gumbuku. Concern among Yolngu elders about the activities in the area of the mining company BHP led Shepherdson to suggest the establishment of a sawmill in the area to allow Yolngu to be closer to their lands (Walker 1976:115-7), and to allow the mission to exploit the nearby stands of cypress pine to provide timber for construction at Elcho Island and other missions in the area. After abandoning several airstrip sites used between 1966 and 1969 approximately 15 kilometers east of the present town (ibid.:117-8), Shepherdson and the Yolngu elders established the sawmill and

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\(^4\) Other terms applied to the people of this region have included "Murngin" (Warner 1969), "Wulamba" (Berndt 1955), and "Miwuyt" (Shapiro 1981), but most anthropologists have employed "Yolngu" since the term was endorsed by the linguist Bernhard Schebeck (Schebeck 1968:41).

\(^5\) Outstations are small settlements established since the mid-1970s which allow people to live on their traditional country away from the larger communities which are former missions. Most outstations have from two to eight houses, and some have a small school, a shop, and other amenities.
settlement on the shores of Lake Evella in late 1969. At first there were only a couple of houses, but within a few years Yolngu from other communities came to live at Gapuwiyak and locally-milled timber was used to build the town. DhaJwangu people were among the first to relocate to Gapuwiyak, many of whom came from the Rose River Mission (now called Numbulwar); in particular, the DhaJwangu who settled in Gapuwiyak are of that DhaJwangu “subgroup” who are closely associated with the country at Gurrumuru, south of Arnhem Bay, and who have adopted the surname Wunungmurra for European administrative purposes.

Figure 2.1 - Northeast Arnhem Land
By the time of my fieldwork, beginning in 1995, Gapuwiyak was a community with a population made up of people from a wide variety of Yolngu groups, plus a number of non-Aboriginal people working as teachers, nurses, or filling administrative positions. People relied on the local shop for the majority of their nutritional needs, supplemented occasionally with bush foods and game, and on some combination of wages and social welfare benefits for their income. Some Yolngu lived for part of the year on one of a number of outstations in the Gapuwiyak region, and most people visited other Yolngu communities for personal or ritual business. Although the way of life has changed considerably in many ways from “traditional” life, Yolngu have retained a great deal of autonomy, especially in the ritual sphere. Accordingly, music, dance, and artistic designs have developed in a way which is consistent with the expressive arts of previous generations.

Review of the Literature

The broadest level of social distinction in Yolngu society is the division into two moieties called Dhuwa and Yirritja, and everything, from flora and fauna to meteorological phenomena to social groups, is identified as one or the other. Moieties are exogamous, and a person’s moiety identity is the same as his or her father’s; roughly half of the named patrilateral groups in northeast Arnhem Land are identified with each of the moieties. Scholars have been relatively united in their characterization of the features of the two moieties, although there have been some inevitable differences. Warner’s discussion of moieties is primarily concerned with the separation of maternal and paternal kin and the regulation of marriage, with ceremonies functioning to reinforce those categories through the dramatization of mythology (Warner 1969:29-33), a definition basically subscribed to by Berndt (Berndt 1965:78-9). Shapiro denied the moiety any corporate nature whatsoever, stating that it is “a cultural category pure and simple” (Shapiro 1981:16), despite the important ritual organization by moiety evident in certain restricted ceremonies (Keen 1978:241, 248). More recent commentators have not disagreed significantly with a view of moieties as opposed yet inter-related cultural categories which differentiate people, plants, animals, ancestral beings and land (Keen 1994a:66-7, Morphy 1991:43-5, Williams 1986:57-8).
The identity, composition, and significance of the “clan” in Yolngu society, in contrast, has been widely discussed and debated in the recent northeast Arnhem Land literature. A term formerly used with little consideration of what it really means, it has recently been the subject of considerable anthropological debate. I would like to review the literature regarding the “clan” as a prelude to my own reconsideration of the utility of the term and the theoretical bases on which it rests.

Warner’s writings on “Murngin” (Yolngu) social organization, among the earliest on the subject, gives a position of prominence to the “clan” as a unit of sociality. He includes a number of features in his various statements about its composition and significance, including exogamy, patrilineality, the possession of land and totems in common, and common creation by the mythological ancestors (Warner 1969:16-9). Particularly important to Warner was the “clan” water hole, which is the basis of solidarity and identity (ibid.:19), although he also gives considerable attention to the solidarity of the “clan” as exhibited in warfare, because “clan” members never enter into conflict with one another but do join to face a common enemy (ibid.:17, 145-8). In true functionalist form, Warner continues to stress the solidarity of the “clan” when he turns to a discussion of the kinship system. Warner postulates that the “clan” is a social category which “gives spatial form to the kinship system” (ibid.:378), including some kin and rejecting others to give the “clan” both unity and identity (ibid.). The same system of social organization necessarily serves a second purpose as well, to unify all “clans” into an integrated system based on the same kinship relations. Warner then relates this to cosmological totemic belief, which underlies the whole system and gives it an ontological foundation (ibid.:378-9). Thus, for Warner, the cosmological basis of the “clan”, particularly the existence of sacred water holes belonging to each, is fundamental to its position as the most significant unit of social analysis in Yolngu society.

Ronald Berndt’s account of “Wulamba” social organization adds a new dimension of complexity, if not clarity, to the debate. In a 1955 article, he distinguishes three inter-related levels of social organization in the region. The first is the patri-line, or babaru (bąpurrù), which he calls “the basic unit in Wulamba society” (Berndt 1955:95); it consists of male siblings, their sons and son’s sons (ibid.), and is corporate in “its sense of common acting and belonging, its oneness as the babaru” (ibid.:96). A number of these descent groups, taken together, form the mada (matha) or linguistic group, which speaks a common dialect, shares cosmology, songs, artistic designs (ibid.:97) and is the
landholding unit (ibid.:101). Several mada make up a “clan”, or mala, which links ego’s linguistic group with that of his or her māri (MM and MMB), as the descent group of the māri forms a parallel linguistic group (ibid.:98). The mala may also be considered corporate in some sense, as “it is said that the babaru and the maribula (māribulu) are expected to act as one in all corporate enterprises, and their ‘union’ is expressed particularly on ritual occasions” (ibid.:98-9), although Berndt maintains that the descent group is the unit of political solidarity. In this analysis, it appears that the linguistic group or mada is most closely aligned with what other writers have called the “clan”, as these groups share songs, ceremonies, tracts of land, and a common dialect. The babaru appears to be a level of social organization smaller than the “clan”, such as a “clan” sub-group (Williams 1986:64), while the mala is a social grouping larger than the “clan”. The literature concerning these kinds of social organization will be considered in more detail below.

In later writings, Berndt, along with his wife Catherine Berndt, continued to develop a distinctive theory of northeast Arnhem Land social organization, with some changes to his 1955 article. Central to this theory is the “mada-mala combination”, to which everyone in northeast Arnhem Land belongs. In 1964 the Berndts wrote that mada (matha) and mala were partially overlapping categories; both matha and mala are exogamous, claim association with country and ancestral beings, and own rituals, sacred patterns and emblems. Each group lies at the intersection of a named matha and mala identity, each of which is shared with other groups (Berndt and Berndt 1992:62-4). In a later publication, Berndt states that members of any mada-mala pair speak a common dialect and hold common ritual knowledge and territorial possession (Berndt 1976:20), and goes on to write:

Belonging to a particular mada-mala pair is of paramount significance then, since it defines not only a person’s social position in the scheme of things but also his (her) particular religious perspective. Songs and rites are identified in those terms... Mada-mala pairs are land-owning and land-tending units...(ibid.:21).

As an example, Berndt chooses the Djambarbingu mada paired with the Durili mala and the Rawia mala; the Durili mala may also be paired with the Gulamala mada and the Marangu mada. Djambarbingu-Durili is linked mythically with Gulamala-Durili, although they possess different territories; and
Djambarrungu-Durili and Djambarrungu-Rawia share similar dialects but have different mythologies (ibid.:20-1).

In these later formulations, the *mada-mala* pair has replaced the 1955 *mada*, or linguistic group, as that level of social organization most closely resembling Warner's "clan", in that the *mada-mala* pair holds territory and ritual in common. The major flaw in the Berndt's work is that Yolngu themselves do not use paired *matha* and *mala* terms consistently to express their social identity. Yolngu may identify themselves by a number of terms, some of these terms relate to dialect and others to other kinds of groupings (like ritual groups), and people may even identify themselves simultaneously by a pairing of terms, but the practice of pairing such terms is not done consistently enough to represent a unified system (Keen 1995:508). Berndt's recognition of the fact that Yolngu may use a number of names to identify themselves is extremely useful, and in a limited sense is related to my own argument in favour of "identities" as a unit of Yolngu social analysis. However, Berndt then proceeds to concretize these identities into groups with boundaries and membership criteria, which in turn runs up against a number of contradictions and unresolved ambiguities.

The linguist Bernhard Schebeck provides a valuable insight into Yolngu social organization in his 1968 paper entitled "Dialect and Social Groupings in North East Arnhem Land". In Schebeck's experience, the terms *bēpurru*, *mala* and *mittji* are roughly equivalent terms for referring to groups of people, while *matha* refers to the "dialect", "language" or "language group" (Schebeck 1968:29). As for the names which can be applied to actual groups, he proposes to categorize group names as either "nicknames" (such as some warnames and bynames), "ceremonial names" (other warnames as well as religious names), "local names" (territorial or regional names) and "linguistic names". Schebeck's tentative categories, however, do not represent a well-organized system of naming social groups:

It rather looks to me as if several tendencies were constantly at work, giving this somehow confusing—because of the concurrent use of several criteria—and never fully accomplished—because not using all criteria together in a parallel way in all cases—picture...I have tried to show that...the scheme is much less clear and consistent than is often supposed (ibid.:37).

Nonetheless, later in the paper Schebeck begins to use his dialect names and the term "clan" interchangeably, as when he talks about "clans" with sub-groups, thereby alluding to a classic taxonomic hierarchy (ibid.:42-3).
As for the distinction between *mala* and *matha* stated variously in the literature, Schebeck states that there are weaknesses in the various formulations, and suggests that a more accurate way of describing Yolngu social group labelling is that a name, such as Rirratjingu, is a *mala* which also speaks the Rirratjingu *matha* (ibid.:45); in other words, the same name can be used to identify both the “clan” and its language, although this would not be the case for groups larger or smaller than the “clan” and there may be regional differences. Ultimately, Schebeck rejects Berndt’s 1955 schema of *babaru*, *mala* and *mada*, acknowledging that one could set up a different schema, with a dialect group or *matha* breaking down into two or more groups representing both “clan” (*mala*) and dialect (*matha*), each of which further breaks down into two or more smaller groups which could be called *bäpurru* (noting that *bäpurru* can also denote the “clan” level and *mala* can also denote the sub-“clan” level). Thus, even though one may propose such a schema opposing these three terms, “...one always has difficulties with at least one term” (ibid.:47).

Warren Shapiro (Shapiro 1981) prefers the term “sib” to “clan”; his understanding of the significance of the sib is very similar to Warner’s understanding of the “clan” in terms of the group’s grounding in shared cosmology and land, but departs from Warner in that a demonstrated genealogical connection between members of a sib is not necessarily important:

Sib charters are non-genealogical. All the members of some, though by no means all, sibs are demonstrable agnates, but whether or not this is so is not culturally important. Rather, the unity of a sib is expressed in terms of its association with a particular estate, and with the ritual and mythic forms connected with that estate....The sib is neither more nor less than a “sacramental corporation of a perennial order,” to borrow Stanner’s engaging idiom.... Its association with a particular estate implies the ownership of designs, dances, and other items mythically connected with the land (1981:20-1).

I believe that this is rather too strongly stated. Genealogical connections are not necessarily known by all members of a “clan”, and people may render different versions of shared family trees and family histories. Also, any knowledge of family members older than their grandparents’ generation is generally piecemeal. For these reasons it is certainly reasonable to assert that demonstrated kinship ties are not necessarily paramount in reckoning “clan” membership. It is my experience, however, that a shared genealogical heritage, fictional or real, is important to people’s construction of “clanship”, “...descent, or belief in descent, from a common ancestor” (Thomson 1949:9). At any rate,
the point which Shapiro emphasises, common association with an estate and its associated ritual, is inextricably tied to beliefs in common genealogical descent.

In her account of the principles of Yolngu land tenure, The Yolngu and their Land (1986), Nancy Williams defines Yolngu groups somewhat differently. For her, language is the central principle in Yolngu social organization, with matha indicating “the maximum potential membership of groups whose corporateness is defined by joint ownership of land” (Williams 1986:63). By way of contrast, a mala refers simply to a group of people (or things) which share some common characteristic. In the case of a manikay mala, the group referred to are those people who share rights in the songs related to a shared body of cosmology; in the case of a madayin mala, the group referred to are those who share madayin6. Bâpurru is a term that also signifies a group, contrasting with mala in that, in certain contexts, “...bâpurru refers to a group of people in terms of some shared entity of greater value and deeper meaning than that endowed by the shared affairs of everyday life, including the use of a particular matha” (ibid.:66). For example, a group of people may be considered “one bâpurru” if they are connected through mythology to a common ancestral being. It seems clear to me that it is Williams’ matha-group that corresponds most closely to the concept of “clan” espoused by Warner, or Shapiro’s sib: all of them focus on the joint ownership of land as a principle characteristic of this level of social organization. Equally, it is clear that groups such as manikay mala, madayin mala, and bâpurru are terms which are meant to refer to groups more inclusive than the “clan”, that is, a number of distinct land-owning groups joined together through the sharing of a body of myth.

Some of these recurring themes are reiterated by Howard Morphy in Ancestral Connections (1991). Morphy’s statement on the “clan” is as follows:

The groups to which I apply the term clan are named patrilineal descent groups which acknowledge common ancestry, hold in common rights over land, and have the same mardayin, that is body of sacred knowledge, or “sacred law”. Clan names are the ones most frequently given when an individual is asked what group/clan/tribe/people he or she belongs to (Morphy 1991:47).

Morphy touches on two points in this passage which I think are especially relevant in coming to a better understanding of the “clan” as a social group. First is the issue of madayin, a group’s ancestral heritage of songs, artistic

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6 Madayin is a term which refers to the ancestral heritage of a group of people, including songs, dances, painted designs, and sacred objects.
designs, dances, and sacred objects, and the fact that members of the same "clan" have the same madayin. Shared madayin goes beyond Warner's "common totems", encompassing an entire web of cosmological connections between "clans". The other point that Morphy makes above has to do with naming. Regardless of which terms anthropologists use to discuss the fundamental unit of social analysis in Yolngu society, be it "clan", "sib", or something else, Yolngu people themselves use names. Morphy states that these are often "clan" names: Dhalwangu, Munyuku, Marrangu, Gälpu. Sometimes, though, people use a different name, largely dependent on context. Surnames, for instance, are sometimes inclusive of all members of a particular identity, as is the case with the Gälpu surname, Gurruwiwi. Sometimes two or more surnames are used by different people sharing a common identity, such as the Dhalwangu surnames Wunungmurra and Gumana, each of which is more closely associated with one particular tract of Dhalwangu land (although both "families" have rights in the entire Dhalwangu estate). Sometimes the same surname is used by people with distinctive identities, such as the surname Wanambi, which applies to both Marrangu and Marrakulu people. Names can be exchanged between people with distinctive identities (Keen 1994:149), and I know of at least one well-known Dhalwangu artist who has used both Dhalwangu surnames at different times in his career. The potential for ambiguity is certainly present when it comes to the name a person uses to identify himself or herself, and this ambiguity will be explained more clearly below and throughout this dissertation. However, in the case of the people with whom I worked most closely, the name Dhalwangu was most consistently used to identify both people and the madayin that forms the basis of their common identity.

It must be noted that Morphy's development of the "clan" concept has attempted to introduce a significant measure of dynamism and assiduously avoids a static definition. Morphy has recognized that Yolngu "clan" designs have the potential to distinguish less-inclusive groups associated with more delimited sections of a "clan's" country, and that they are also implicated in networks linking a number of different "clans" that share a body of cosmology (Morphy 1988:253). The existence of distinct identities within a "clan", as in the case of lineages, provides the basis for the eventual fission of the "clan" into two separate "clans" (ibid.:266), just as weaker "clans" with certain cosmological links to stronger ones may eventually be incorporated within them (ibid.:268). Although this analysis leads Morphy to reaffirm the importance of the "clan" as an analytical concept, it also provides a valuable
corrective to the static view of the "clan" that had persisted in the literature for so long.

In *Knowledge and Secrecy in an Aboriginal Religion* (1994a), Ian Keen breaks from previous Yolngu ethnographers by emphasizing the open and variable nature of Yolngu social groups. Keen suggests that the constitution of groups is ambiguous, that people disagree about their structure, and that groups do not sort into neat taxonomies; Yolngu groups, rather than being defined by boundaries, instead extend outward from foci. For these reasons, Keen avoids the term "clan", preferring to use the term "group" in the same way that Yolngu use the term *mala* (Keen 1994a:63-4). Keen goes on to say that country and group names may provide a starting point for understanding the structure of Yolngu groups, and that we may thus be able to derive a least-inclusive usage of a group name, but to call this usage a "clan" is misleading because the structure of such groups may be different (ibid.:65).

Keen continues his critique of the concept of the "clan" in his 1995 article "Metaphor and the Metalanguage: 'Groups' in Northeast Arnhem Land". He argues that the use of anthropological terms such as "clan", drawing on "images of segmentary structure, external boundaries, and taxonomic hierarchy", are misleading representations of Yolngu concepts such as *mala* or *bîpurru* which are more closely related to "images drawn from the human body and plants, and beliefs about ancestral journeys and traces" (Keen 1995:502). Anthropological models of Yolngu groups have generated anomalies in the literature and, in relating groups to country, have failed "to allow for indeterminacies and disagreements" (ibid.:507). Most importantly, perhaps, Keen writes:

...to designate groups as “clans,” even as points in a social process, requires consistent criteria [of] similarity and difference in order to recognize attributes as markers of “clan” identity and difference. Ethnographers do not agree about these criteria (ibid.:508).

Instead, Keen turns to other models as a means of understanding Yolngu sociality. The association of groups with country, for instance, is a complex relation of "the ancestral creation of groups, the ancestral origin of a person’s being, the embodiment of ancestors in country, and the reenactment of ancestral events in ceremonies in which people identify themselves as
ancestors" (ibid.:510). *Likin* names and designs weave together the names of ancestral beings, persons and places and are associated with the bones of the ancestors, as are *rangga* sacred objects (ibid.:511). *Bupurr*, as a concept which also connects people with country and ancestors, is central to an understanding of Yolngu social organization, as a shared *bupurr* identity indicates common connections with ancestral beings, spirits, and the dead (ibid.:512). Group identity is often expressed in terms of people who "look after" a particular country (and its associated sacred objects, songs, etc.), although such groups may be restricted by more limited custodianship or extended by connection through ancestral journeys (ibid.:514-5). However, Keen offers a caution:

Even though Yolngu speak of extended group identities as "groups" (mala), it is misleading to think of them as "sets" of groups; rather, they are open and extendible "strings" of groups with a shared identity. It is always possible for people to discover further ancestral connections and thereby to extend the list of related peoples (ibid.:516).

Keen concludes that groups defined by “membership criteria or inclusion within boundaries” (ibid.:519), by association within a “taxonomic hierarchical classification” (ibid.), or by some notion of a “corporate group” (ibid.) are foreign to Yolngu concepts of sociality. Rather, he suggests an understanding based on open-ended, flexible, and contextual group identity.

Morphy provides a fresh interpretation of the debate in his 1997 paper, “Death, Exchange and the Reproduction of Yolngu Society”. He writes that the debate has polarized between structural, group-focused models and individual, praxis-oriented ones, and attempts to show how both aspects of Yolngu sociality can be integrated into a single system (Morphy 1997:124). Morphy emphasizes the dynamic relationship between structural, “clan”-level organization and individual, kindred-level features in Yolngu funerals. In ritual performance, “gifts to the body” take the form of *madayin* such as songs, dances and painted designs that are the ritual property of “clans” and are thus implicated in “clan” organization, although individuals may be particularly influential in manipulating the course of a ritual within this framework. On the other hand, “gifts from the body,” such as the possessions of the deceased, often are given to people within a kindred-based framework and may be motivations for action on an individual level (such as revenge), although certain

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7 *Likin* or “power” names are sacred names, sometimes called out at important moments in ritual performance, which link concepts of people, places, and ancestors; *likan* means “elbow”, and these names are sometimes referred to as “elbow names”.
of these gifts from the body, such as the deceased’s hair, may be incorporated into ceremonial dilly bags and thus be re-integrated into the “clan’s” madayin (ibid.:139-45). Morphy’s argument reinforces the anthropological claims of “clan”-level social organization, but tempers this position by stating that individuals may indeed be very influential in charting the course of inter-group relations and that we should not over-emphasize the corporate nature of “clans”. As he writes, “kindreds are a clan resource partly because they are always framed in terms of structures that are wider than the individual and which involve the immanent, emergent, but structuring, level of organization represented by the clan” (ibid.:148).

Nancy Williams (1999) has recently responded to Keen’s article and has defended her use of the term “clan” as the basis for social analysis in northeast Arnhem Land, writing that:

The Yolngu groups that I argue can appropriately be called clans are patrilineal land-owning groups. They are corporate by virtue of the joint interests that the members have in particular lands and waters. Members may be said to be recruited through a process of serial patrifiliation, yet they hold a lineage ideology. In fact, each clan has an account (myth) of named founding ancestors, although its membership is at the same time assumed to extend further back into the past, into a real time that merges with the time of the founding travels and acts of the spirit beings. Clan members’ interests are not identical, members are ranked individually by birth order and gender, and lineages within clans comprised of more than one lineage also tend to be ranked (Williams 1999:134).

I agree with Williams that there is indeed one kind of identity (among many) in Yolngu society of which these are some defining characteristics. There are identities in which patrifiliation, interests in land and waters, foundation myths, and lineage structure are centrally important—perhaps Dhalwangu identity could be said to be one of them. Williams’ argument, however, does not seem to me to answer Keen’s (1995) criticism of the “clan” concept, in that different groups referred to as “clans” can have radically different social structures based on diverse organizational principles, and which may not match the characteristics noted above. Surely a group such as Manggalili is quite different in its organization from a group like Gupapuyngu, and yet Williams identifies them as belonging to the same class of social organization (1986:64). To insist on defining Yolngu groups in particular ways is to invite challenge by those who have worked closely with well-defined groups.
operating under different principles; and, at any rate, members of the group would surely disagree over the definition of those principles in any event.

Keen’s latest contribution to the debate (2000) is essentially a response to Williams, Morphy and others who have taken issue with his 1995 article. He maintains that “the clan model seems convincing for some purposes some of the time, but it generates anomalies” (Keen 2000:420), and that “the idea of defining a group or set in terms of membership criteria, or inclusion within boundaries, is incompatible with Yolngu discourse and practice” (ibid:422). Keen goes on to examine the constitution of complex groups like Djamarrpuyngu, which do not sort easily into named sub-groups or “clans”. Later in the article, Keen parenthetically remarks that “nowhere have I suggested that Yolngu do not recognize distinct groups” (ibid:429), which to me is the crux of the entire issue. It is certainly the case that Yolngu recognize distinct groups of people who share a common identity; they do so in every sphere of social life, from cohabitation to ritual and musical organization. Keen’s point is that these groups, which are constituted in discourse and action, do not necessarily match a fixed type of group defined in the ethnographic literature which could be called a “clan”.

My complementary point is that the search for such a group can distort our appreciation of Yolngu musical culture: in any musical setting people may organize into a large number of distinct groupings based on a diverse range of characteristics, of which their patrilineal identity may be only one among many. Although it may very well be the most prominent identity claimed in a particular ritual, “DhaJwangu” people simultaneously express a Yirritja moiety identity, identities linking DhaJwangu with other non-DhaJwangu people who share certain aspects of ma@yin, and the identities of a particular family and of a specific lineage. Indeed, if a group of men who take the surname “Wunungmurra” are sitting together in a circumcision ceremony singing “DhaJwangu” songs together with “MaJarrpa” and “Munyuku” singers, while at the same time a design is being painted on the boy’s chest which is the specific responsibility of a particular lineage, on what basis should we privilege the “clan” over the “lineage”, the “clan sub-group”, or the “clan-set”? How does a focus on “DhaJwangu” provide all of the answers to the social questions being posed in that musical setting?

These kinds of questions have led me to embrace “identity” as a concept of social analysis over “group membership”. Although, with my Yolngu informants, I recognize the existence of named groupings of people who get
together from time to time in different contexts for different reasons, I find it
more productive to understand Yolngu musical organization in terms of cross-
cutting and overlapping identities, some of which may conform with that level
of organization known in the literature as the "clan".

Theories of Practice and Structuration

A major shortcoming of many of the theories of Yolngu sociality discussed
above has been a poorly-elaborated view of the complex relations between
social structure and social action. Especially in the earlier literature, dominated
as it was by the structural-functionalistism of Radcliffe-Brown, social structure
was seen as determining social action: the social structure of "clans", for
instance, and membership therein, led individuals to behave in particular ways
and to organize their activity according to certain structures. The reciprocal
influence of social action on social structure has been recognized in a limited
way, but the theoretical implications have not been sufficiently developed. I
believe that this accounts, at least in part, for the continued dominance of the
"clan" as the most important analytical unit in the study of Yolngu sociality,
even when modified to recognize social process. My own preference for a more
flexible and open-ended concept of identity instead of a concentration on
membership in bounded groups necessitates a view of Yolngu sociality that
involves a much more dynamic and two-way relationship between social
structure and social action. Such a theoretical perspective may be developed by
a turn to Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of practice (Bourdieu 1992) and Anthony

Bourdieu’s theory of practice aims to transcend “the most fundamental,
and the most ruinous” opposition in social science, that between subjectivism
and objectivism (Bourdieu 1992:25), and develop instead a theory of practice
and practical knowledge. The problems of objectivism, which date back at least
to Saussure, extend into the field of anthropology “in the fact of introducing
into the object the intellectual relation to the object, of substituting the
observer’s relation to practice for the practical relation to practice” (ibid.:34). In

8 As Keen writes: “The bapurrnu names consistently associated with succeeding generations of
agnates, with places and totemic entities, may be those of patrificial groups of heterogeneous
and indeed changing structure. What persists is their identity, differentiation, attachment to
patrilineal succession, and in broad terms at least, relations to locality (Keen 2000:430, emphasis
added).
the study of kinship, for instance, the analyst can treat the kin of others merely
as a logical system with a purely symbolic effect rather than as a system of
practical relations which may be put to a variety of different uses; Bourdieu’s
analogy is that such analysis is like the geometrical space of a map, and practice
itself is like the network of pathways that are actually used (ibid.:35).

Bourdieu continues his critique of objectivism in the social sciences in
terms which are germane to the Yolngu literature on the “clan”:

Sometimes the anthropologist presents as the objective principle of
practice that which is obtained and constructed through the work of
objectification, projecting into reality what only exists on paper;
sometimes he interprets actions which, like rites and myths, aim to act on
the natural world and the social world, as if they were operations
designed to interpret them (ibid.:36).

The language Bourdieu uses is reminiscent of Keen’s critique of the “clan”
concept examined above:

The indeterminacy surrounding the relationship between the observer’s
viewpoint and that of the agents is reflected in the indeterminacy of the
relationship between the constructs (diagrams or discourses) that the
observer produces to account for practices, and these practices
themselves....objectivist discourse tends to constitute the model
constructed to account for practices as a power really capable of
determining them. Reifying abstractions...it treats its
constructions—‘culture’, ‘structures’, ‘social classes’ or ‘models of
production’—as realities endowed with a social efficacy (ibid.:37).

Although not identical, these are the kinds of issues which must be considered
in a re-evaluation of the “clan” concept in the Arnhem Land ethnographic
literature, particularly where the homogenous and bounded “clan” is seen to
act as a determinant of action.

Bourdieu’s critique also considers the other half of the opposition,
extreme subjectivism such as that advocated by Sartre: “refusing to recognize
anything resembling durable dispositions or probable eventualities, Sartre
makes each action a kind of antecedent-less confrontation between the subject
and the world” (ibid.:42). “Rational actor” theorists in this subjectivist mode
replace a mechanistic determinism with an intellectualist one, and make
rational decision-making the sole basis for social action (ibid.:46-7). However,
Bourdieu points out the inconsistencies of such an approach, including the fact
that individual decisions themselves depend on the previous decisions of the
actor and on the conditions in which those decisions were undertaken, and the fact that the acquisition of beliefs by actors is done in practice (ibid.:49-50).

Bourdieu, then, rejects both extreme objectivism and extreme subjectivism as analytical standpoints which can help us to understand social life:

In other words, if one fails to recognize any form of action other than rational action or mechanical reaction, it is impossible to understand the logic of all the actions that are reasonable without being the product of a reasoned design, still less of rational calculation; informed by a kind of objective finality without being consciously organized in relation to an explicitly constituted end; intelligible and coherent without springing from an intention of coherence and a deliberate decision; adjusted to the future without being the product of a project or a plan (ibid.:50-1).

Such an understanding, Bourdieu argues, can be achieved through a theory of practice.

Bourdieu’s theory of practice hinges centrally on his notion of habitus, which allows the analyst to recognize that the social world is both constructed by agents and guided by structures without encountering the pitfalls of either objectivism or subjectivism:

The conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce habitus, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. Objectively ‘regulated’ and ‘regular’ without being in any way the product of obedience to rules, they can be collectively orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action of a conductor (ibid.:53).

When we observe certain patterns and regularities in social interaction, it is not because social actors adjust their behaviour in order to achieve certain predetermined social ends; rather, actors are disposed to reproduce certain patterns because the objective conditions of their practice “generate dispositions objectively compatible with these conditions and in a sense pre-adapted to their demands” (ibid.:54), thus excluding certain practices as unthinkable. In other words, the structures of a particular set of conditions of existence produce the structures of the habitus, which then have a hand in structuring the actor’s perception of subsequent experience (ibid.). The habitus is both the principle of continuity in social life, as well as the principle of its “regulated
transformations" (ibid.). Social change is possible, even inevitable, but in a way which is limited by the conditions of production of the \textit{habitus} itself (ibid.:55). Bourdieu's notion of \textit{habitus} is well-suited to a re-evaluation of Yolngu sociality, where social action is cast in terms of certain forms of social structure, which are in turn re-cast as a result of that action. It is in the heat of this dynamic intersection of structure and action, I will argue, that Yolngu identities are forged. If the structures of Yolngu sociality can be said to be institutions, then, with Bourdieu, we can say that the \textit{habitus}

...is what makes it possible to inhabit institutions, to appropriate them practically, and so to keep them in activity, continuously pulling them from the state of dead letters, reviving the sense deposited in them, but at the same time imposing the revisions and transformations that reactivation entails (ibid.:57).

Another theory relevant to the current discussion, and similar in many ways to Bourdieu's theory of practice, is the theory of structuration of Anthony Giddens. Like Bourdieu, Giddens is also concerned to overcome the limitations of structuralist theories on the one hand, and subjectivist ones on the other. In the theory of structuration, both subject and object are constituted through recurrent practices, and neither has primacy (Giddens 1982:8). Giddens' discussion includes a number of definitions of concepts which he goes on to use in constructing his theory. These include: action, which refers to two components, capability (the possibility that an agent "could have acted otherwise") and knowledgeability (all the things members of society know about that society and the conditions of their activity within it); practical consciousness, which refers to tacit modes of knowing how to "go on" in social life; and institutions, which are "structured practices that have a broad spatial and temporal extension" (ibid.:9). Giddens then provides a definition of his theory:

In the theory of structuration, 'structure' refers to rules and resources instantiated in social systems, but having only a 'virtual existence'. The structured properties of society, the study of which is basic to explaining the long-term development of institutions, 'exist' only in their instantiation in the structuration of social systems, and in the memory-traces (reinforced or altered in the continuity of daily social life) that constitute the knowledgeability of social actors. But institutionalised practices 'happen', and are 'made to happen' through the application of resources in the continuity of daily life. Resources are structured properties of social systems, but 'exist' only in the capability of actors, in
their capacity to 'act otherwise'. This brings me to an essential element to the theory of structuration, the thesis that the organisation of social practices is fundamentally recursive. Structure is both the medium and the outcome of the practices it recursively organises (ibid.:9-10).

There are obvious parallels here with Bourdieu’s practice theory, and structuration theory is very promising in the analysis of Yolngu sociality. Giddens’ emphasis on the “virtual” existence of structures, existing only in enacted social practices and in the memory and knowledge of social actors, is well-suited to a view of Yolngu sociality that attempts to forgo bounded social groups in favour of multiple and overlapping identities that are constituted through practice.

Giddens discusses three central concepts of his theory of structuration: structure, system, and duality of structure. Giddens recognizes that social relations have both a syntagmatic dimension, “the patterning of social relations in time-space involving the reproduction of situated practices” (Giddens 1984:17), and a paradigmatic one “involving a virtual order of ‘modes of structuring’ recursively implicated in such reproduction” (ibid.). He continues:

Structure thus refers, in social analysis, to the structuring properties allowing the ‘binding’ of time-space in social systems, the properties which make it possible for discernibly similar social practices to exist across varying spans of time and space and which lend them ‘systemic’ form. To say that structure is a ‘virtual order’ of transformative relations means that social systems, as reproduced in social practices, do not have ‘structures’ but rather exhibit ‘structural properties’ and that structure exists, as time-space presence, only in its instantiations in such practices and as memory traces orienting the conduct of knowledgeable human agents....The most deeply embedded structural properties, implicated in the reproduction of societal totalities, I call structural principles. Those practices which have the greatest time-space extension within such totalities can be referred to as institutions (ibid.).

To extend this description to the analysis of Yolngu sociality, we might say that the inter-relations of different named groups represent a social system which is reproduced in a variety of social practices such as marriage or ritual performance. This social system does not have a structure, such as a division into bounded “clans”, but rather exhibits a number of structural properties, such as patrilineality, or the ownership of land and madayin. The structure of this system, a “virtual order”, only exists in instantiations of social practices, such as ritual, or in the memory of the individuals who perform that ritual. Deeply embedded structural properties, such as patrilineality or ownership of
land and *madayin* (and those properties will vary depending on the kind of identity in question), can be referred to as the structural principles of Yolngu sociality, and the practices which persist in northeast Arnhem Land in different regions and from era to era, such as those practices which reproduce particular named identities, can be referred to as institutions. This kind of extension of structuration theory is not meant to be programmatic or exhaustive, but merely to suggest a potentially fruitful reconceptualization of the tenets of Yolngu sociality. In his discussion of the duality of structure, Giddens offers the following table (ibid.:25):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure(s)</th>
<th>System(s)</th>
<th>Structuration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rules and resources, or sets of transformation relations, organized as properties of social systems</td>
<td>Reproduced relations between actors or collectivities, organized as regular social practices</td>
<td>Conditions governing the continuity or transmutation of structures, and therefore the reproduction of social systems</td>
</tr>
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</table>

By "the duality of structure", Giddens means that agents and structures are not constituted independently as a dualism, but rather represent a duality in which "the structural properties of social systems are both medium and outcome of the practices they recursively organize" (ibid.). This bears more than a passing resemblance to Bourdieu’s *habitus*, and I find both theories to be useful in the reconsideration of Yolngu sociality. In both cases, we need not interpret Yolngu society as either a rigid structure of bounded groups which determines action, or as a flux of unfettered behaviour stemming only from individual subjectivity (and it should be made clear that I do not see any of the Yolngu ethnographic literature as representing either of these two extremes). Rather, the *habitus* or the "duality of structure" allows us to see Yolngu sociality as a dynamic interaction between certain principles of social structure (which are multiple, contextual, heterogeneous, and never fully achieved) and the grounded social practices of everyday life (which may be based on an individual’s understanding of certain structural principles, but which can aim to achieve a variety of ends).

*A Theory of Yolngu Identities*

With these theoretical principles in mind, I would like to propose a theory of Yolngu sociality based on multiple and overlapping identities rather than
Yolngu social structure can be said to have a “virtual” existence, to use Giddens’ language, in the sense that it only exists conceptually. I have in mind here some of the named categories of Yolngu sociality: the Dhuwa and Yirritja moieties; “extended” būpurru such as Mandjikay and Mätjarra which consist of a number of patrilifial groups (“clans”) united under the auspices of a particular body of cosmology; “less extended” būpurru or “patrilifial groups” such as Dhalwangu, Munyuku, Gälpu, Marrangu, and many others (usually referred to as “clans” in the literature); “lineages” defined by reference to common apical ancestors (whether or not definitive genealogies may be produced); salt water (mouyk) and fresh water (raypiny) categories which cross-cut būpurru in certain ritual contexts; and groupings based on descent through the matriline, such as the sons and daughters of the women of a patrilifial group, or the daughter’s sons and daughter’s daughters of such a group. We can say that these elements of Yolngu social structure are “virtual” for a number of reasons. For one thing, the occasions when all of the people implicated in any of these social structural categories could all be together in one place at one time are rare or impossible; for the most part, these categories must be “categories of the mind” because the people who would make them up are spread across vast distances (and, if one includes deceased ancestors who are sometimes spoken of as still being a part of such categories, across vast periods of time). For another thing, as Keen (1995) has pointed out, these structural categories are not homogeneous, hierarchical, or agreed upon by everyone; each person may constitute these “categories of the mind” somewhat differently, especially in different contexts. Above all, these are idealized categories which people strive to attain but never do (and I must reiterate that not all Dhalwangu people or Yirritja people or raypiny people are striving after the same thing anyway), such as ideal marriage relations or ideal participants in a ritual. These ideals represent a timeless and unchangeable sociality that, when articulated (differently by different people) in these ideal terms, lead to the analytical conclusion that bounded groups must exist.

Each social structural category has a number of structural properties that we may call, with Giddens (1984:17), structural principles, which are involved in the reproduction of “societal totalities”; these structural principles will vary depending on the kind of social structure in question. The structure of moieties involves structural principles of patrilineality and exogamy; the structure of
“extended” btipurru involves shared (but differential) ownership of a particular body of cosmology; “less extended” btipurru involve the structural principles of patrilineality, shared ownership of magayin or ancestral heritage, shared ownership of land, and a common language; and so on. These principles, however, may be differently understood or differently applied by different individuals in a variety of contexts.

In contrast to Yolngu social structure is Yolngu social action, or practice; this is where we have individuals acting on the basis of their understanding of social structural categories. As Giddens points out, agents are knowledgeable about their society and their activity within it (1982:9), although different individuals have different levels of knowledge and, at any rate, even individuals who are deemed to be equally knowledgeable may have different conceptions of their society. The Yolngu social world does not have a rule-book written down for posterity, and therefore there is considerable scope for interpretation in some contexts. It is here that we must consider notions of power, where one person’s or group’s version of social reality is enacted in practice more than other versions, and of strategy, where individuals may act in order to bring about a certain effect or aim. It is in the realm of social action that actors must respond to the contingencies of daily life: ideal marriages are not always possible, ideal ritual partnerships may not always come about for a particular funeral or circumcision ceremony, but actors still know how to “go on” in social life because of their “practical consciousness” (Giddens 1982:9) or their “regulated improvisation” (Bourdieu 1992:57). The institutions of DhaJwangu social life, those practices with the greatest time-space extension in the reproduction of societal totalities (Giddens 1984:17), could include particular patterns of marriage practices, habitation preferences, styles of discourse, and a range of elements of musical performance. This dissertation is particularly concerned with DhaJwangu ritual musical practice as a kind of social action deeply implicated in the reproduction of DhaJwangu sociality.

The Yolngu social system is constituted in and reproduced by social practices. To follow Giddens (1984:17), this system does not have a structure (such as a “clan” structure), but rather exhibits certain structural properties as discussed above (a particular combination of which may certainly resemble the “clan” as discussed in much of the literature). The reproduced relations between actors (individual Yolngu people) and collectivities (particular named groups), organized as regular social practices (marriage, ritual, “everyday life”) make up a recognizable Yolngu social system (ibid.:25), although the
interpretation of the meaning of that system may vary considerably from actor to actor.

It is in the structuration of Yolngu sociality, (the “conditions governing the continuity or transmutation of structures, and therefore the reproduction of social systems” (Giddens 1984:25)), or in the habitus of Yolngu sociality (“an acquired system of generative schemes” (Bourdieu 1992:55)), that the multiple and overlapping Yolngu identities are created and reproduced. Yolngu identities are not the idealized categories of social structure, nor the on-the-ground enactment of social practices; identities are formed in the dynamic interactions between the two. Like the habitus, identities are the product of social history, which in turn produce individual and collective practices that themselves contribute to history (ibid.:54). Like the habitus, Yolngu identities are systems of dispositions which are “the principle of...continuity and regularity” (ibid.) and which allow us to see recognizable named groups reproduced over time, but which are also the principle of “regulated transformations” in Yolngu social life. To view Yolngu sociality in terms of identity instead of membership in bounded groups, to understand it as a process of social reproduction rather than as its product, is to reinvigorate Yolngu social analysis and to account for certain aspects of social life (particularly musical life) that have not been adequately accounted for in the existing ethnographic literature. I offer the following as a summary statement:

Yolngu sociality consists of multiple and partially overlapping identities which we may call a social system. This system does not have a structure but does exhibit certain structural properties, depending on the kind of identity in question. The system of Yolngu identities is the product of a dynamic interaction between heterogeneous, conceptual social structures with a “virtual existence”, and the social practices of Yolngu people which, while based on the conceptual structures, are not determined by them, and which may either reproduce the system or transform it in subtle ways. Ritual musical performance constitutes one prominent set of practices which are involved in this dynamic interaction.

In what follows, I will use terminology which is consistent with this view of Yolngu sociality. When I use the term “group”, I mean it in the sense of the Yolngu term mala: it is a pluralizer which, accompanied by some modifying term such as a proper name, indicates an aggregate of people defined by that name, and constituted through practice in the particular context in question. Thus, if writing about a particular ceremony, reference to the “Dhalwangu group” or the “Munyuku group” means that aggregate of people who share a Dhalwangu or a Munyuku identity and who are present in that particular context (i.e., not everyone in the world who shares that identity). This is consistent with a view of Yolngu
sociality which stresses that “groups” are constituted through practice, which may be structured according to certain conceptual (and heterogeneous) principles.

When I use the term “bápurrú”, I again try to follow Yolngu practice. Keen writes that “the bápurrú relation of person to place is through the ancestral creation of groups, the ancestral origin of a person’s being, the embodiment of ancestors in country, and the reenactment of ancestral events in ceremonies in which people identify themselves as ancestors” (1995:510). In my usage, a named bápurrú is an aggregate of people who share an identity based on these features. Unlike a “group” or mala, however, a bápurrú is a conceptual entity constituted through discourse (which is also a kind of practice); I use the term to represent those moments when Yolngu people refer to an aggregate of people in an abstract sense, such as those who share ownership of country and madayin. It is almost impossible to conceive of a situation where all of the people who constitute a bápurrú in abstract discourse would come together as a “group” or mala in concrete practice, at one place and time. And yet, it is important to recognize this aspect of Yolngu sociality because Yolngu people themselves do; as Morphy points out, “self conception is part of the process of structuration” (1997:132). Yolngu people use the conceptual structure of bápurrú as a structuring principle in their reproduction of “groups” or mala in social practice, and those practices may result in a reformulation of the conceptual bápurrú.

Following Keen (1995), though, I emphasize that people do not conceive of bápurrú in a unified, homogeneous, or hierarchical way. Bápurrú is also used by Yolngu to refer to ancestrally-created aggregates of greater extension, such as all of the people who have rights in a particular body of cosmology, and in my usage I will be careful to indicate the form of sociality to which I refer. So, when I refer to the “DhaJwangu bápurrú” or the “Munyuku bápurrú”, I mean a conceptual aggregate referred to in Yolngu discourse to speak of an abstract relation between conceptual groups.

Dhalwangu Identities

With this theoretical framework in mind, I will now examine some of the identities articulated by the people with whom I worked. The most common and most consistent of these identities was Dhalwangu. Dhalwangu is a name which has been referred to as a “clan” (Warner 1969:28-9, 40), as a “matha group” with “localised subgroups” (Williams 1986:64), or as two separate “clans” using the same name (Morphy 1991:48). Dhalwangu is not a structure, but the groups referred to by that name exhibit a number of structural properties. For instance, Morphy’s definition of a “clan” includes the following features: patrilineal descent, common ancestry, common rights over land, and
the same *madayin* or “sacred law” (ibid.:47), and people claiming a Dhalwangu identity may indeed share some of these structural properties. Dhalwangu people have that identity because their fathers did, there is a limited ideology of common descent, and all Dhalwangu people are said to hold land and *madayin* in common as their ancestral heritage. These structural properties have a hand in reproducing the social system through practices such as ritual musical performance; however, such properties are not strictly deterministic of Dhalwangu identity. As Keen has pointed out, “although it is reasonable to characterize Yolnu mala as ‘patrilial groups’” it must be noted that “commonality of bapurr identity does not require common ancestry” and that “people give different accounts of the genealogical structure of a group” (1995:513). Indeed, my Dhalwangu informants had differences of opinion concerning Dhalwangu genealogies, even though most people had some generalized idea that, if you went far enough back, you might find a common ancestor. As for country and *madayin*, Keen notes that a country’s group identity “is not unambiguous and is often contested” (ibid.:510) and that groups may be divided in terms of their custodianship of painted designs, sacred objects, and in the organization of rituals (ibid.:514). This is also the case for Dhalwangu.

All Dhalwangu people may claim rights of ownership over four distinct areas of country: Gangan, southeast of Gapuwiyak and inland to the north of Blue Mud Bay; Balambala, closely linked to Gangan cosmologically and located a short distance to its northwest; Garrapara, a coastal country on Blue Mud Bay which can also be cosmologically linked to Gangan; and Gurrumuru, a cosmologically-distinct country north of Gangan near Arnhem Bay. As we shall see, regardless of other identities that a Dhalwangu person may have, they are unambiguous about the centrality of Gangan as the most cosmologically significant country for their shared identity. All of the Dhalwangu sacred objects are believed to have their ancestral origin in the waters of Gangan, Gangan is the country sung about at the climax of ceremonies, and when discussing the differences between the two named “families” of Dhalwangu, Wunungmurra and Gumana, a person may gloss over the distinction by saying “our gapu [sacred water] is only one, which is Gangan”. The ancestral beings who were responsible for the creation of Dhalwangu culture during the *wangarr* era are Barama and Lany’tjung, who emerged from the waters of

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9 *Wangarr* is a term which refers to the ancestral creative era when the ancestral beings (also called *wangarr*) gave form to the earth and instituted Yolngu language and culture.
Gāngan and left the inhabitants with the songs, dances, artistic designs, and language which constitutes their identity as Dhaļwangu people. Much of the detail of this dissertation, in the chapters to follow, will examine ritual musical practices which are involved in the reproduction of this particular identity.

My experience with Dhaļwangu people in Gapuwiyaŋ, however, reflects a number of identities at a level of sociality less inclusive than their Dhaļwangu identity. Six overlapping identities of this kind stand out: surnames, geographical affiliation, salt water and fresh water affiliation, father’s fathers, mothers, and mother’s mothers. Each of these kinds of identity subdivides and cross-cuts an individual’s Dhaļwangu identity in important ways.

Dhaļwangu people have adopted two surnames for administrative purposes: Wunungmurra and Gumana. Each is said to be the name of an apical ancestor at the FFF level of the current generation of adults. The relationship between Wunungmurra and Gumana is not precisely known, but they are thought to have been brothers, either real or classificatory. The difference in surnames is related to different geographical affiliation: the Wunungmurras are most closely affiliated with the Dhaļwangu country at Gurrumuru, whereas the Gumanas have their closest ties with Gāngan. In practice, this means that those Dhaļwangu people with a Wunungmurra identity tend to live at Gurrumuru rather than Gāngan (if not in a third community), and that Dhaļwangu people with a Wunungmurra identity are considered to have greater responsibility for those aspects of Dhaļwangu mad.ayin (ancestral heritage) concerned with Gurrumuru. This distinction, too, can be traced to the FFF generation, as it is believed that Gumana sent Wunungmurra from Gāngan to Gurrumuru to be the custodian of that country.

There are a number of similarities and differences between these two Dhaļwangu identities which makes it a challenge to determine if they ought to be considered a single identity with two branches, or two relatively autonomous identities with some similarities. Besides having different surnames and geographical affiliations, the Wunungmurras and the Gumanas do not co-operate significantly in ritual. Wunungmurra men and Gumana men tend to marry into many of the same patrifilial groups, although genealogical information suggests that Wunungmurra people tend to have Marrangu and Dhugi-Djapu mothers (as well as many others), whereas Gumana people tend to have Marrakulu and Djapu mothers; however, counter-

10 In my experience, a Gumana person participated in a Wunungmurra-led ceremony on only one occasion, although his participation was enthusiastically received.
examples of the opposite pattern can be found. Musically speaking, it is said that Gumana singers use a “slightly different tune” than Wunungmurra singers, although I have made no recordings of Gumana singers to verify this (and, at other times, people have asserted that all Dhalwangu singers use the same tunes).

Despite these differences, there are many similarities that are also significant. In musical performance, there is no obvious preference among Wunungmurra singers for song series related to Gurrumuru over Gângan or Garrarapara; in fact, the final musical performance by Wunungmurra singers in any funeral is one of the song series at Gângan, and this is also the only song series performed using the “sacred” Dhalwangu melodic line. Surnames, while used in a fairly consistent way, are not necessarily perpetual markers of identity: the Dhalwangu artist Yanggarriny has, at different times, used both surnames (Morphy 1989:31, Morphy 1998:210). Therefore, we must interpret different Dhalwangu surnames and geographical affiliations as important markers of unique identities, but not to the extent that splits Dhalwangu identity definitively. At the end of the day, Wunungmurra people still identify themselves most often by the term “Dhalwangu”.

Salt water (monuk) and fresh water (raypiny) affiliation represents a more complex kind of identity which may overlap with identification through the paternal grandfather, but which cross-cuts surname identity. Individuals identify themselves as either monuk or raypiny, and all other individuals descended from their paternal grandfather will share their monuk or raypiny identity, but both identities are said to be found among Wunungmurras and Gumanas. These affiliations seem to be closely related to ritual practice11, where some aspects of Dhalwangu madayin are considered to be monuk and others to be raypiny; accordingly, individuals with these affiliations are said to have more responsibilities over the artistic designs and dances of their “water” identity, even though they are said to be the religious property of all Dhalwangu people. In men’s restricted ritual performances, Dhalwangu men paint themselves using different colours and designs based on monuk and raypiny identity: monuk designs are painted in yellow, while raypiny designs use a combination of red and white. It is also considered good form for individuals of one affiliation to ask permission from those of the other affiliation before using their designs in a ceremony.

11 For a related example from the restricted Ngârra ritual, see Keen 1978:248-9.
Salt water and fresh water identities overlap with identities based on the lineage of one’s paternal grandfather. Wunungmurra people recognize four distinct lineages based on their paternal grandfathers, Manganydjurra, Gulnga, Burindi, and Marawutj, who were sons of a man named Wunungmurra.12

There is some tendency for members of each lineage to reside with or near each other, and there is a great deal of cooperation between members of each lineage in ritual matters. There seems to be some division of religious property on the basis of lineage, as members of different lineages are said to have primary responsibility for certain aspects of Dhalwangu madayin, but it is difficult to say where this differentiation ends and where differentiation based on salt water and fresh water identity begins. At the very least, members of each lineage seem to share a common dilly-bag (bathi) design for use in ceremonies such as dhapi circumcisions, although the bathi of each lineage would still be recognizable as Dhalwangu.

Mother’s and mother’s mother’s groups (ngandibulu and märibulu) also provide distinct identities for Dhalwangu people. Individuals whose mothers have different bëpurru identities will have different ritual responsibilities as djunggayi (managers) for ceremonies associated with those identities. These people may also feel a strong connection to their mother’s country, and may spend much of their time living there. The majority of Dhalwangu adults living at Gapuwiyak today have matrilineal connections to Djarrwak, Djambarrpuynungu, and Marrangu people, and therefore could be said to have a Djarrwak, Djambarrpuynungu, or Marrangu identity in addition to their Dhalwangu identity. Likewise, some of the most important aspects of an individual’s identity come from their märibulu—the design chosen for painting a young initiand’s chest for circumcision, or for a coffin in a funeral, may be from the märibulu, and the strongest rights outside of one’s own bëpurru to songs and dances, as well as country, are to the madayin of the märibulu. I will detail the responsibility of different relations in ritual contexts in Chapter Five. At this point, however, it is relevant to note the intense spiritual connection which individuals have through their märi. Bangana told me that Yolngu refer to the märi as “the giver”, in both a genealogical and a spiritual sense, and often said that much of what a person is comes from their märi. It is certainly the case

12 Among Dhalwangu at Gapuwiyak, descendants of Manganydjurra and Gulnga predominate, although members of these lineages also live at Galiwin’ku, Gurrumuru and Numbulwar; some descendants of Burindi live at Gapuwiyak, although many others live elsewhere; and descendants of Marawutj live for the most part at Gurrumuru and Yirrkala.
that Dhalwangu people share a strong sense of identity with their miiri; many of Gapuwiyak's Dhalwangu population have a miiri who is Munyuku or Ritharrngu.

We can see, then, that Dhalwangu people also possess a combination of other identities which are both more and less inclusive than Dhalwangu. In different contexts, they may choose to stress one of these other identities, or may even simultaneously articulate a number of them. In musical performance, aspects of many different identities may influence melody, rhythmic accompaniment, song structure, song text, or performance style. Chapter Six will provide detailed evidence of the musical articulation of multiple identities. For the moment, it is sufficient to stress that it may be problematic to focus on only one of these identities in all contexts at the expense of the others.

*Support for “Identity”*

There are a number of places in the Australian ethnographic literature where we may seek support for an approach to the analysis of sociality such as the one I have described above. Although the individual authors may not have mentioned “identity” by name, and although they have not cast their arguments in terms of practice or structuration theory as I have done, their approach to understanding sociality has been useful to me in sketching out my approach and in refining the concept.

For the past four decades, a growing number of anthropologists have expressed dissatisfaction with rigid structural-functionalist models of social organization because of their failure to adequately represent the kinds of sociality studied by ethnographers in various parts of the world\(^\text{13}\). In Australian

\(^{13}\) Among the earliest to launch such a critique was John Barnes, who argued that Highland New Guinea societies “fit awkwardly” into African models of social organization (Barnes 1962:5), and that individuals may be multiply affiliated rather than fixed into a rigid lineage membership (ibid.:6-7). Another important work which questions the rigid imposition of anthropological models on people’s sociality is Roy Wagner’s “Are There Social Groups in the New Guinea Highlands?”. In particular, Wagner examines the rise of social anthropological theory and its particular ways of looking at sociality, arguing that “groups” were a product of the analyst’s understanding rather than the informant’s (Wagner 1974:97). Wagner poses the questions:

Is there something about tribal society that demands resolution into groups? Or is the notion of ‘groups’ a vague and inadequate description of something that could better be represented in another way?...For if we approach the matter with the outright intention of finding groups or with an unanalyzed assumption that groups of one sort or another
anthropology, two early innovators who prescribed an approach to social analysis that went beyond adherence to strictly bounded groups were M.J. Meggitt and Les Hiatt. They were reacting to the prevailing orthodox model of Aboriginal local organization espoused by Radcliffe-Brown, which claimed that patrilineal, patrilocal, and autonomous "hordes", associated only with particular areas of land, were the standard form of social organization found in Australia (Radcliffe-Brown 1930:35-7). Meggitt, writing about Warlpiri local organization, provides the following implicit critique of Radcliffe-Brown's model:

It is obviously misleading to regard these Walbiri food-gathering groups as simple patrilineal and patrilocal hordes. Their composition was too labile, too dependent on the changing seasons, the alternation of quarrels and reconciliations, the demands of non-agnatic relatives, and so on. From the point of view of the individual, the group at its greatest was the community that comprised all his countrymen and included most of his closer relatives. At its least, the group was his family of procreation or orientation. Between these extremes, the unit might perhaps be termed a horde, but it was one whose personnel were recruited on a number of different bases that varied from one occasion to the next. These might reflect consanguineal links, affinal ties, bonds of ritual friendship or obligation, the pull of temperamental compatibility—or combinations of all of them (Meggitt 1962:51).

The malleability of the local group was also supported by Hiatt's research in north-central Arnhem Land. In his landmark paper "Local Organization among the Australian Aborigines" (1962), Hiatt criticizes accounts of local group sociality based on the work of Radcliffe-Brown, which attributed characteristics to the "horde" which were supposedly universal throughout Australia. Hiatt reviews the literature from five different areas of Australia in terms of their definitions of "local group", territoriality, "totemic group", and other key terms from Radcliffe-Brown's work. He notes that Meggitt's work are essential to human life and culture, then nothing will keep us from finding groups (ibid.:102-3).

Wagner makes a strong argument that an emphasis on "groups" reflects the concerns of our own society, and challenges anthropologists to question the application of our models to other people—we should not substitute our heuristic activity of making groups for the native's activity of making society (ibid.:103-4). Wagner's concern is to examine the ways in which people "create themselves socially" (ibid.:104) and for anthropologists to come up with alternatives to "groups" in social analysis (ibid.), concluding that "sociality is a 'becoming', not a 'become' thing" (ibid.:112). Other relevant works outside the Australian Aboriginal literature examine sociality among the Ku Waru of Highland New Guinea (Merlan and Rumsey 1991) and among the Kwaio of the Solomon Islands (Keesing 1971, Keesing 1987).
Chapter Two
Yolngu Sociality

(Meggitt 1962) does not substantiate claims of strict patrilineality in the local
group or exclusive control of resources in a group's area, stressing the flexibility
and contingency of Warlpiri local group arrangements and the fact that
recruitment to local groups could be based on a variety of considerations (Hiatt
1962:272-3). Hiatt notes that Berndt's work in the Western Desert and
Piddington's in the Kimberleys are also at variance with Radcliffe-Brown's
model (ibid.:274-5), and that his own work in central Arnhem Land necessitates
a re-evaluation of the orthodox treatment of Aboriginal sociality.

Hiatt found that "the land-owning unit is a patrilineal descent group or
several amalgamated patrilineal descent groups" (ibid.:279), and that such a
multiple-ownership arrangement is known by the term "company" (ibid.);
descendants of migrant groups which came together in such a way "have
retained their group identity but show little interest in the group's former
locality" (ibid.:279-80). There is, therefore, a certain flexibility inherent in land
ownership and group constitution which militates against a group with fixed
boundaries and membership criteria. Movements of the local group ranged
across the territories of a variety of groups in the vicinity, exploiting favourable
resources and environments (ibid.:281); indeed, Hiatt notes that some land­
owning groups would have perished had they been forced to subsist only on
the resources of their own country (ibid.:282). Hiatt concludes by distinguishing
between ritual and economic relationships of people to land, and by stating that
the ethnographic evidence does not support Radcliffe-Brown's model (ibid.:284-
5). Hiatt writes:

Investigators who failed to find the horde in particular tribes were not
(as some of them thought) observing aberrant forms of local
organization. They were probably looking for something that never
existed in any tribe (ibid.:286).

Hiatt continued his critique of orthodoxy in Australian anthropological
analysis in his monograph Kinship and Conflict (1965). In addition to restating
his criticism of the Radcliffe-Brown model of local organization, Hiatt also re­
evaluated prevailing understandings of marriage patterns and conflict
resolution. In both of these cases, the established opinion held that certain
structural principles determined social action, while Hiatt's research indicated
that other factors were more important. He devotes an entire chapter to the
description of the "orthodox" bestowal of wives (1965:38-74), only to
demonstrate convincingly that such orthodox marriages constitute only a small
proportion of his data. The majority of cases deviated from the ideal in some way, for a wide variety of reasons, which often led to disputes between individuals. Hiatt’s careful consideration of a number of case studies of such conflicts (ibid.:84-100) indicates clearly that the structural relationships between land-owning units or patrilineal groups are far less significant in the management of conflicts about marriage and bestowal than are relationships between individuals based on kinship. This also holds true for conflicts resulting from other causes, where earlier notions of “clan solidarity” (Warner 1969:145-8) must be re-evaluated in the light of Hiatt’s detailed case histories. *Kinship and Conflict*, then, represented an overhaul of a number of accepted orthodoxies in the study of Aboriginal social organization at the time of its publication.

The research of Meggitt and Hiatt became a rallying-cry for Aboriginal ethnography to acknowledge the variability and flexibility of Aboriginal local organization, and to examine the various forms of sociality which exist among Aboriginal groups. Although this dissertation is not concerned with local group organization, their work is important to stimulate innovative thought concerning Yolngu sociality, especially in its musical articulation. We should not accept established models of sociality uncritically, and we should be open to the recognition of alternate models which may better reflect the results of our ethnographic investigations. I will demonstrate that, although DhaJwangu musicians frequently articulate an identity which closely resembles that of the “clan” of the Yolngu ethnographic literature, it is only one among many identities which may also find expression in the same musical performance, or even in the same song.

Hiatt maintained his position on social organization despite criticism from a number of sides\(^1\). In his re-evaluation of Aboriginal local organization, Hiatt devoted attention to an examination of the land-owning group, which lends some support to the notion of multiple identities pertaining to Aboriginal sociality. In a 1984 paper, Hiatt writes:

\[\ldots\text{I shall suggest that patrifiliation has been accorded an undue pre-eminence in the definition of land-ownership, at the expense of other cognatic links (especially matrifiliation) and of criteria such as putative conception-place, birth-place, father’s burial place, grandfather’s burial place, mythological links, long-term residence, and so on….in pre-}\]

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\(^1\) Articles by W.E.H. Stanner (Stanner 1965) and Joseph Birdsell (Birdsell 1970), which defend the Radcliffe-Brown model, were especially prominent in the debate.
European times multiple criteria for affiliation to land-owning groups may have constituted a set of credentials enabling individuals to gain access to a wider range of physical and metaphysical resources. From this perspective, the dialectic between formalism and flexibility in identifying land owners may be seen as an element in the dynamics of competition for scarce goods and social status (Hiatt 1984:11).

Hiatt goes on to highlight a number of works which have an orientation "towards the documentation and analysis of process, in contrast to the preoccupation of earlier generations with structure, form, and function" (ibid.:15). He cites John von Sturmer's 1978 doctoral dissertation, based on fieldwork on the Cape York Peninsula, and its individual emphasis on land ownership (ibid.:17). Hiatt notes von Sturmer's assessment that individuals have rights in the country of a wide range of relatives, and each of these rights may potentially be converted to a right of tenure; furthermore, the combination of these factors “militates against the growth and stability of unilineal corporations” (ibid.:18). Although such structures may be potential realities due to a patrilineal descent ideology, in practice they are unlikely because of the range of forces undermining them (ibid.).

This discussion is valuable in developing a dynamic theory of multiple identities as a means of understanding Yolngu sociality, especially in its musical expression. As von Sturmer and others have noted, individuals act according to their particular position within a social network, as the result of a particular configuration of identities based on a range of relationships. Although a single identity may be prevalent, this does not diminish the importance of alternative identities in determining social practice, and any of these identities may potentially be called into play in certain contexts. I believe that this is also the case in coming to a better understanding of Yolngu identities. There is certainly a strong emphasis in a number of contexts on an identity derived from a structural principle of patrification; these contexts have been some of the most thoroughly researched by anthropologists and the most thoroughly discussed by the wider public (such as land claims), and therefore these identities have been very prominent in the literature. In itself, however, this does not diminish the importance of the other identities in guiding individual social action in other contexts; it merely demonstrates that these other contexts may not have been subject to the same level of scrutiny and popular interest. The key to understanding Yolngu sociality, I suggest, is in understanding the influence of particular contexts on which of a range of
alternative identities an individual may choose to articulate at any given moment. In this way, we can still understand the importance attached to identities such as “Dhalwangu”, “Munyuku”, “Marrangu”, and others (normally identified as “clans” in the Yolngu ethnographic literature), while at the same time injecting a measure of flexibility and contingency into such identities as well as highlighting the potential significance of other identities articulated by the same individuals.

Another anthropologist cited by Hiatt is Fred Myers, whose fieldwork among the Pintupi of the Western Desert led him to a reconceptualization of Aboriginal sociality. Like Hiatt and von Sturmer, Myers advocates an individual-oriented approach to understanding Pintupi landownership because the existence of groups is problematic, and the bases of the relationship between people and named places are multiple (Myers 1986:128). The relationship to country must be understood in terms of social process, negotiation, and individual action:

An estate, commonly a sacred site, has a number of individuals who may identify with it and control it. They constitute a group solely in relationship to this estate.

The basis for this system lies in “identification with country,” a notion rooted in the fact that place always bears the imprint of persons. Identification refers to the whole set of relationships a person can claim or assert between himself or herself and a place. Because of this multiplicity of claims, landholding groups take essentially the form of bilateral, descending kindreds. Membership as a recognized owner is widely extended, and therefore groups are not a given (ibid.).

Myers’ position can be taken to support the notion of multiple identities which I am proposing for the understanding of Yolngu sociality. In Myers’ assessment, groups exist only in relation to social action such as the expression of relatedness to a place. This is not to say that groups do not exist, but only that their existence is not context-independent. Myers also points out that identity derived from landownership may be based on a variety of criteria, such as kinship, cosmology, and ritual action (ibid.:129-35).

Myers work represents an important step not only toward recognizing identity (as opposed to group membership), but also in recognizing the multiplicity of identities which any individual has. An important feature of this multiplicity is that it encodes a differential importance of various identities: a person may have multiple identities, but certain of those identities carries with it more rights than others in particular contexts. Myers states this fact in
examining Pintupi claims to the country at Yayayi, which is broadly recognized as being the area of other people. Nonetheless, Pintupi were able to make legitimate "claims" to that area in the political context in which they were implicated. Myers writes: "From this perspective, traditional ownership was simply a more stable and patterned transmission of identification over time, but it was always open to flexibility, manipulation, and change" (ibid.:138).

Something similar could be said for the sociality of Dhalwangu people and other Yolngu as well. "Dhalwangu" is a form of identity which is potentially more stable and patterned in its transmission over time than certain other identities in particular contexts (such as land ownership), but it is still an identity that is flexible, negotiated, contingent, contested, and contextual.

Also important in Myers' account is the processual nature of Pintupi claims to land ownership. Conflicting claims to country, Myers writes, demonstrate the processes of politics and negotiation which accompany any determination of Pintupi land tenure. Conception may be the most important basis for identification with country, but it only becomes meaningful when it is socially validated by others through a process of negotiation (ibid.:141). Myers' account of Pintupi sociality and landownership has important implications for the reconceptualization of Aboriginal sociality more broadly. He affirms the value of recognizing multiple, overlapping and open-ended relations of people to country, and emphasizes the importance of process, as opposed to structure, in our elaboration of anthropological models of sociality. Although the situation among Yolngu is certainly different to that of the Pintupi, he points to a set of broad principles which should inform our interpretations of Aboriginal social organization:

Particular groups, in the past and in the present, have represented only temporary manifestations of a society that people continually work to reproduce. Understanding Pintupi organization requires looking beyond local groups, adopting the Pintupi view of their society as a wider, totalizing, less bounded structure. It necessitates, furthermore, giving attention to the emergent structures and processes by which a regional system maintains itself. These materialize only over time (ibid.:292).

We will see that Dhalwangu sociality, too, is best understood as an entity that is continually reproduced through social action; this dissertation will focus primarily on ritual musical performance as the medium for that social reproduction.
Ian Keen, in addition to his Arnhem Land research, has also examined social organization in other parts of Aboriginal Australia, stating that the terminology of “patrilineal descent group”, “clan”, and “corporation” may be as inappropriate for Warlpiri, Warumungu, or Arrernte social analysis as it is for Yolngu (Keen 1997:67). Keen adopts the terminology of “identity” as an analytical construct for examining sociality, and argues that, in the McLaren Creek area near Tennant Creek, N.T., people may frame their identity in a multiplicity of ways, including language, filiation and kinship, subsections, patri-moieties, and ancestral beings (ibid.:73). Although some evidence points toward the identity derived from patrilineal descent as being primary in relation to country, and other kinds of identity as being secondary, other evidence suggests that such identities should be interpreted as complementary rather than ranked (ibid.:78-9). Keen goes on to write:

Although interpretations of the [Aboriginal Land Rights] Act have discerned local descent groups among the network of people with ties to and responsibilities for land, local organization at McLaren Creek is not best described as a structure of patrilineal or indeed cognatic descent groups. Claims of identity, rights and responsibilities in relation to country and ancestors are justified on a variety of grounds not all of which fall under the rubric of descent. Evidence in the McLaren Creek land claim revealed a degree of flexibility and openness in social identity and relations not incomparable with the Western Desert (ibid.:90).

It is this kind of flexibility and openness in social identity which I believe is crucial in understanding DhaJwangu sociality, especially in its musical articulation.

I have thus far examined ethnographic sources from outside of northeast Arnhem Land in order to demonstrate support for the reconceptualization of Yolngu sociality in terms of identity rather than group membership. I would now like to return to the materials of Yolngu ethnography in order to demonstrate that such a reconceptualization is not completely at odds with existing accounts of Yolngu sociality and that, regardless of one’s position on the “clan” concept, one may nonetheless find “identity” to be useful as an analytical construct.

Bernhard Schebeck’s important unpublished paper (1968) was among the first to point to the inadequacies of existing anthropological models and to suggest that Yolngu sociality may in fact be a great deal more flexible than previously thought. Recognizing the “confusing wealth of names for various
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groups" (Schebeck 1968:28), Schebeck provides a detailed analysis of the principles behind name formation (ibid.:28-38) and concludes that "several tendencies were constantly at work" (ibid.:37) in naming groups, based on a number of different criteria for group formation. Schebeck stresses the processual nature of Yolngu sociality and the fact that marriage, locality, or language may serve as the basis for a new social identity when a "clan" splits up. In his concluding statement, Schebeck states:

Moreover, I have tried to show, that apparently contradictory native statements are not necessarily so, because they are concerned with different levels of reference. Finally, I have suggested that the various frames of reference—expressed by native theory, or only implicit in the various labels given to a certain type of grouping—cross-cut each other in various ways (ibid.:63).

I suggest that the "levels of reference" or "frames of reference" of which Schebeck speaks are analogous to the conception of multiple identities which I am developing in this dissertation. The variety of different kinds of names for different kinds of Yolngu identities stems from the fact that Yolngu have many identities which they hold simultaneously and may use in different contexts. As Schebeck points out, some of the names may be contextually related to warfare, ritual, country, or language, but we should be cautious about assuming a consistent sociality which may not exist (ibid.:37). Likewise, I believe that our analytical models should be flexible and attendant to context and the multiplicity of ways in which an individual may identify himself or herself.

Nancy Williams' research on the principles of Yolngu land tenure provides information which is relevant to my views on identity. In particular, Williams includes a wealth of detail on the significance of Yolngu names and the wide variety of principles upon which a group may be named. She talks of names related to regionality in a very broad sense, names which refer to physiographic indicators ("islanders", "river people", etc.), and names based on ecology, language, and musical performance (Williams 1986:59-65). Of most interest to me here is her discussion of names for groups which are related to the concept of bāpurru. Such names are context-specific, often refer to mythological or ritual relationships and may belong to a "clan", a group smaller than the "clan", or a group larger than a "clan" (ibid.:68, 70). Williams writes:
The contextually specific meanings of biipurru...indicate its range of meaning. They also indicate that the contexts in which Yolngu use biipurru to refer to people determine the identity of those who are included in the group so indicated....To indicate a group by a biipurru name is to indicate the potential further characteristics of a focal patrilineal group. The specific further characteristics that are named indicate the basis on which others—agnatic, uterine, and affinal kin, depending on the context—are included in the group named (ibid.:69).

Williams is quite clear about the importance of context in the determination of biipurru identity in particular cases, which is important to my conception of identity as well. Although Williams stresses the patrilineal nature of the landowning group (which I would agree is central to the constitution of certain identities), she also points to the fact that a given biipurru identity can be extended widely to individuals related in other ways; this, too, is an important feature of the way in which I describe multiple identities.

As I have discussed briefly above, Howard Morphy, also a strong advocate of the clan model of Yolngu social organization, has gone to great lengths to stress the processual and dynamic features of the "clan", features which are also important to an identity model. Recognizing the differential exercise within a "clan" of rights to "clan" designs, and the usual association of distinct lineages within a "clan" to distinct countries, Morphy points to "the basis for creating separate identities which may result in the subgroups acquiring separate names" and the "potential point of fission into separate clans" (Morphy 1988:266). Likewise, Morphy notes that "clans" may also join together in certain contexts to present themselves as a single "clan" in the joint exercise of rights over country and madayin (ibid.:268-9). This important recognition of the dynamism inherent in the "clan" model, I propose, presupposes the kinds of multiple identities discussed in this chapter. The identity which Morphy calls the "clan" identity is one which is derived from "collective rights of ownership in a set of designs (songs, sacred objects, and so on) and a set of countries associated with those designs" (ibid.:266), but this identity is cross-cut by a number of other identities, some encompassing "clan" identity, and others encompassed by it. No individual is only identified by their "clan" identity, and it is the existence of these alternate and simultaneous identities that can result in "clan" fission and fusion. We can see, then, that the importance of "clan" identity is relative and context-dependent (even if those contexts may be many), and that in certain contexts individuals may prefer to give prominence to identities at other levels and based on other principles.
Morphy pursues many of the same themes of "clan" dynamism in his 1990 article entitled "Myth, Totemism and the Creation of Clans", in which he demonstrates the ways in which different kinds of myths articulate with a system of group organization which has an "inherently imminent and contextual nature" (Morphy 1990:312). These myths can be shown to exemplify the complex ways in which Yolngu "clans" are interconnected through shared cosmology, which presents an "ideological contradiction" at the heart of the clan:

It is founded by ancestral action, yet the ancestral tracks themselves divide its lands and link it with outside groups. The clan's spiritual identity can easily be merged within the wider network. This contradiction is reflected in the fact that the same word baapurru can be applied both to the set of people connected by the same ancestral track and to the membership of a clan. In the first sense, baapurru unites a group of clans along a particular wangarr track with respect to shared affiliation to a particular set of ancestral beings. In the second sense baapurru membership cuts across wangarr tracks, linking the different mardayin by virtue of the fact that a particular social group agrees to hold them in common (ibid.:321).

In a perspective which examines identity rather than "clan" membership, Morphy's observation is valuable in that it shows that the same baipurru identity can be applied in different ways to different groupings of people. An individual may use baipurru in their articulation of identity at the "clan" level, or an identity that transcends the "clan" and includes other cosmologically-linked groups. Morphy writes that:

...the different levels of organization—moiety, ritual alliance and clan—are, from a long-term perspective, best seen as principles of group formation, though in the short term they appear to correspond to different levels of groups on the ground (ibid.:322).

These "principles of group formation" may be taken to correspond to the concept of identity which I develop in this chapter. Individuals who have in common certain rights, obligations, or beliefs may use that shared identity as the basis for social practice in particular contexts. The bases of certain identities may be so persistent, and the contexts in which they are articulated so regular, that these "groups on the ground" may be taken to have some perpetual corporate existence—as a "clan", for instance. As Morphy has shown, however, such a grouping is contingent upon historical and political processes, and may
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reproduce itself differently over time, drawing on different identities in the process. As Morphy states:

Clan identity is manufactured for the moment as if it always existed, yet the clan is always on the verge of non-existence. Clan identity is important in marriage, in land ownership, and in ritual, yet its importance lies in part through the position it occupies in a network of exchange which often operates at the level of the individual. Ironically this network of exchange and alliance is both integral to the individual clan's existence but at the same time provides the context for its disappearance. The networks of exchange are themselves fluid, changing according to contingent factors and political action, and the identity of the clan is always liable to be merged in the network of tracks, and reabsorbed in other people's myths of inheritance. The Yolngu clan exists in the temporary assertion of control over part of a network of connections which are used as the ideological bases for action and existence (ibid.:325).

Morphy's adherence to the "clan" model is not a static one, but rather invigorates the model by its recognition of the dynamic, contextual, and emergent nature of the "clan", and in this way he has developed the model to make it versatile and useful. Although I agree with Keen's (1995) criticisms of the "clan" model, especially his observations that the constitution of the "clan" is not consistent from group to group, I believe that Morphy's analyses can help us toward the development of a concept of identity which may enable us to better understand the complexities of DhaJwangu musical performance. The primary difference between my interpretation and Morphy's is that he chooses to employ the concepts of "clan" and group membership, whereas I believe that a more flexible concept of multiple identities allows us to better appreciate the subtleties of Yolngu sociality. I do not doubt the importance of that mode of identity which, for Morphy and Williams, leads to the emergence of "clans" as concrete groups; I suggest that it is one identity among many, one way in which Yolngu may organize social practice, and that other identities and other ways of forming groups may be prevalent in different contexts. One need only look at the wide range of identities which Yolngu express in everyday life—Yolngu, Yirritja, DhaJwangu, monguk, Wunungmurra, grandson of Manganydjurra, or resident of "Top Camp"—to appreciate the necessity of an analytical model which does not privilege one over the others prior to the examination of the particular context (although the examination of that context may certainly lead to the recognition of the priority of one identity and the resulting social practice). The importance of such a model is even more obvious in the precise
examination of particular musical traditions, where the layering of different identities may occur within a single performance, or even a single song.

Keen’s critique of the “clan” model, already reviewed above, also provides support for an analytical model focusing on identity. Although Keen agrees that “relations to wangarr ancestors, country, and ceremony with which a person identifies most closely are through the father” (Keen 1995:512), he believes that there are problems inherent in translating the term bapurruru as either “clan” or “group” (ibid.). Keen describes his perception of the terminological confusion:

“Groups” (mala) of people share bapurru names and “elbow” names as identities. This common identity exists through connections with wangarr ancestors and other spirit beings and with the dead. It is this connection between bapurru and mala, I suggest, that explains usages that have led to the translation of bapurru as “clan” or “group”.... I use “group” to mean a group of people (mala) with a common bapurru identity (ibid.).

However, Keen points out that there may be other factors at work in determining an individual’s rights over country and madayin, and states that “there is no single criterion for a person’s identity” (ibid.:513). Keen’s critique of the “clan” model points to some important features of an analytical concept of identity. Groups are formed on the basis of shared identities which are multiple and contextual, and therefore it is problematic to conceptualize Yolngu sociality in terms of closed and inflexible corporate groups. The anomalies which Keen notes in terms of the naming of Yolngu groups and the composition of groups so named can be understood in the light of an identity model: individuals, because they have multiple identities, may stress one of these over the others in different contexts.

The Yolngu ethnographic literature, then, contains a number of interpretations of Yolngu sociality which complement an analysis based on identity as a core concept. It is not my intent to offer “identity” as a replacement for “clan”. Rather, I offer “identity” as a new way of examining Yolngu ethnographic materials which may allow some of the under-recognized subtleties of Yolngu sociality to shine through. And, as I am ultimately responsible to my own ethnographic materials, I believe that “identity” is a more productive way to conceptualize the sociality articulated through Dhalwangu song and musical performance.
Conclusions

There are a wide range of issues involved in the analysis of Yolngu sociality, and no single analytical scheme has provided all of the answers to questions raised through the study of Yolngu society. Some of the scholars who have been involved in the debate over the “clan” in Yolngu society have differed significantly on certain points, but do not seem to be all that far apart on others. Morphy, although an advocate of the “clan” model, certainly does not propose a model that is static, and has consistently tried to come to terms with fission and fusion as essential elements of “clan” structure. Keen’s critique of the “clan” stems from the recognition of a range of inconsistencies in both the Yolngu and the anthropological discourse, a recognition that I think is both timely and valid. An optimistic reading of the debate might suggest that the two sides are not all that far apart, at least on some issues.

The approach that I develop here is one that attempts to come to terms with both sides of the debate. Morphy has written, quite correctly I think, that “the shadow of the clan is cast in part by the way the Yolngu talk about their society, their affiliation as individuals, the motivations for their actions, the distribution of rights in sacred law and in the land, the proper way of organizing a ceremony and so on” (Morphy 1997:131-2). The understanding developed here, that Yolngu social structure consists of a set of conceptual schemes and a range of structuring principles (but that the social system has no “structure” as such), addresses this aspect of “self conception” (ibid.) identified by Morphy. At the same time, however, I have tried address Keen’s (1995) concerns by making it plain that these social structural concepts are heterogeneous, contextual, and non-hierarchical, and that Yolngu sociality is not one thing but different things to different people; and, like Keen, I am uncomfortable with the “clan” as an analytical concept, and believe that identities, constituted through practice, may be less problematic. The application of this analytical approach will be made most plain in Chapter Six.

The two chapters of the “Overture” have set the stage for the development of a Yolngu musical anthropology, as well as for a reformulated approach to Yolngu sociality. In the next three chapters, which constitute the “First Movement” of the dissertation, I will undertake a detailed examination of the structure and performance of Dhaljwangu songs. With that material in place,
and with my analytical approach in mind, the three chapters of the "Second Movement" of the dissertation will examine the musical constitution of Dhajwangu sociality, connections to country, and social change.
Chapter Three - Musical Features of Dhalwangu Manikay

Order, not chaos, is everywhere apparent.

-Trevor Jones (Elkin and Jones 1956:305)

Introduction

In the first section of this dissertation, the “Overture”, I set the analytical parameters for this study. The first chapter pointed to the theoretical importance of “musical anthropology” as an analytical construct which may usefully contribute to an already rich ethnographic literature on Arnhem Land music. The second chapter analyzed some of the vexed issues of Yolngu sociality, and suggested a move away from group membership and toward multiple overlapping identities as a more fruitful approach to social analysis.

After the “Overture”, this “First Movement” of the dissertation will provide a detailed analysis of Dhalwangu musical performances of the genre of ritual songs known as manikay and referred to elsewhere in the literature as “clan songs” (Stubington 1982:84, Knopoff 1992:141). I define Dhalwangu manikay as didjeridu- and clapstick-accompanied songs sung by one or more men1 in public contexts (ritual or non-ritual) and which are related to the ancestral heritage of Dhalwangu people2. The songs on which my analysis is based were performed in Gapuwiyak by Dhalwangu singers and close relatives for occasions such as funerals, initiations, and informal non-ritual contexts.

As a complex creative construct, it is both analytically and heuristically necessary to break the study of manikay into a number of inter-related component parts in order to come to an understanding of the ways in which those parts are deployed by singers in a holistic way. The present chapter is an examination of one of those parts, “musical features”, which includes melody,

1 Because manikay is a genre of song restricted to men, this dissertation is primarily concerned with male singers, and I use male 3rd-person pronouns throughout to reflect this fact. The main public genre of musical expression performed by women is known as ngāthi, which is related in a number of ways to manikay but certainly requires a separate study. The most comprehensive study of ngāthi currently available is the doctoral dissertation of Fiona Magowan (Magowan 1994a), and the earliest is an article by Catherine Berndt (Berndt 1950).

2 This definition excludes “fun” song genres such as djatpangari (Elkin and Jones 1956:82-97) as well as sacred songs which are performed in restricted ritual contexts.
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rhythm, instrumentation, and organizational structure. The study of these features, taken together, allows manikay to be understood as a musical phenomenon. The next chapter examines a second important aspect of Dhalwangu manikay, “textual features”, broken down into a variety of figures of speech or tropes. The close analysis of these tropes will result in an understanding of manikay as a poetic phenomenon. Chapter Five is an examination of a third important component of manikay, “performative features”, which will help us to appreciate Dhalwangu songs as processual, generative, and the negotiated outcome of creative human action. The detailed study of each of these three somewhat arbitrarily divided parts is integral to the proper understanding of manikay as a whole.

The potential danger in this approach, of course, is that it may lead to a view of manikay as nothing more than the sum of its component parts, when in fact nothing could be further from the truth. The highly-integrated nature of music, text, and performance will become apparent in each of these three chapters, as the discussion of one set of features invariably involves some consideration of the other two. The particular characteristics of a melody chosen for a song may depend on the amount of text which the singer wishes to use; the exact words and phrases of a song text will often depend on the particular performative context; and the particularities of a phase of a performance may be molded by musical features such as the rhythm incorporated into a song—in other words, manikay as a musical genre is much more than the sum of its parts. This point will be further emphasized in the “Second Movement” of the dissertation, which will demonstrate how the various aspects of Dhalwangu songs both reflect and constitute Dhalwangu notions of sociality, connections to country, and social change.

Before beginning my analysis of the musical features of Dhalwangu manikay, I will provide a brief introduction to the ritual context of musical performance, which will be fleshed out in much more detail in Chapter Five.

The Ritual Context of Manikay

Ian Keen (1994a) has identified three categories of ceremonies performed by Yolngu in a variety of different contexts. Garma ceremonies are those which involve the singing of songs of the manikay genre, together with the
performance of associated dances and the use of other aspects of a group’s madayin or ancestral heritage, such as painted designs, sand sculptures, and ritual objects. Keen includes in this category dhapi³ circumcision initiations, the various stages of funerals from the announcement of the death through burial and post-burial purification rites, and ceremonies of exchange and diplomacy (Keen 1994a:138-40). These were the most common form of ritual performance which I witnessed during my stay in Gapuwiyak, and elements of garrna ceremonies were also used in non-ritual contexts such as the official opening of a public building or the visit of a high-profile guest, in addition to performances for entertainment.

Keen’s second category are regional ceremonies such as the Dhuwa moiety Mandayala, Gunapipi, Djungguwan, and Ngulmarrk, and the Yirritja moiety Yabudurrwa. These ceremonies are all associated with the ancestral beings of the various groups that perform them, but are used for a variety of different ritual purposes: Mandayala and Djungguwan for circumcision initiations; Djungguwan in remembrance of the dead; and Gunapipi, Djungguwan, and Ngulmarrk as revelatory ceremonies in which young men are introduced to increasingly restricted aspects of their ancestral heritage (ibid.:141). These ceremonies could include songs of the manikay genre, but more commonly employed distinctive musical forms. Gunapipi and Djungguwan ceremonies were each performed in the Gapuwiyak region during my fieldwork, but they were not nearly as common as garrna ceremonies such as funerals and circumcision initiations.

The final category in Keen’s schema is the Madayin or Ngärra ceremony, which is primarily involved with the revelation of rangga⁴ sacred objects and sacred dances to young men (ibid.:143). These important ceremonies were restricted to men and used musical forms which were distinct from manikay, both in content and instrumentation. Although I have never witnessed a Madayin ceremony myself, men from Gapuwiyak travelled to attend one in another community on at least one occasion, and another was being organized for the following year shortly before my departure from the field. Additionally, elements of Madayin ceremonies are occasionally incorporated into garrna ceremonies, often in funerals the night before burial.

³ Dhapi is a word which can be translated literally as “foreskin”, and is used to describe both the ritual itself and the initiand. The dhapi ritual is a boy’s initial introduction into ritual life.

⁴ Rangga are secret and sacred ritual objects, often made of wood, and decorated with sacred designs representing particular ancestral beings and the bapurrù which have rights over the cosmology.
In this dissertation, I only provide analysis of garma ceremonies, specifically dhapi circumcision initiations and funerals, and their associated musical genre, manikay. I do this for a number of reasons. First, as public ceremonies, Yolngu were happy for me to observe them, participate in them, and make recordings of the songs, as well as to discuss those ceremonies and those songs with the performers and other knowledgeable people. Second, these ceremonies are by far the most commonly performed in Gapuwiyak, and therefore provided the most opportunities for study, discussion, and analysis. Finally, these ceremonies are, with very few exceptions, limited to a single musical genre, manikay, which allows at least some narrowing of what is an enormous musical repertoire. For the remainder of this dissertation, unless otherwise stated, all references to songs are to manikay only, although there may be some overlap with other genres.

I will now proceed with a detailed examination of the musical features of manikay, beginning with a brief discussion of instrumentation before moving on to musical structure and organization.

**Instrumentation**

Singers are very prominent in the Dhalwangu musical tradition. The most senior participants in any performance are almost invariably singers of renown, and singers have a large part in directing a performance, as we will see in Chapter Five. In the next chapter, it will also become apparent that the primary aesthetic criterion by which musical performances are judged has to do with the effectiveness with which a singer chooses words and phrases to create his song. Instrumentation, however, is an aspect of Dhalwangu musical performance which, while perhaps not as prominent or prestigious as singing itself, nonetheless carries a considerable musical and even semantic load. Although there are a number of different instruments used in Yolngu music, the manikay genre makes use of only two: clapsticks and didjeridu.

**Bilma**

Clapsticks, or bilma, are ideally pieces of ironwood (Erythropleum chlorostachyum) for Yirritja singers or wattle (Acacia leptocarpa) for Dhuwa
singers, cut to a length of approximately 30 cm and tapered, smoothed and occasionally decorated with painted designs. Alice Moyle cites Donald Thomson's (1949:64) reference to ironwood clapsticks, noting that “this type of wood is not only more resistent [sic] to termites than any other kind, but the sounds thus produced have a clear, almost metallic ring” (Moyle 1974:6-7). More commonly, *bilma* are fashioned from whatever pieces of wood are readily available for that purpose. As discussed below, there is a wide variety of different clapstick patterns that may be employed by DhaJwangu singers. In performance one or two senior singers set the clapstick pattern and tempo and generally direct the performance, but a large number of other singers may also participate and accompany themselves with clapsticks. *Bilma* are also a symbol of ancestral power that goes back to the *wangarr* ancestral era, and the use of *bilma* necessitates both competence and seriousness. The process of picking up a pair of *bilma* to sing involves a singer projecting himself back into the ancestral era and tapping into that ancestral power through musical performance, as contemporary performances are meant to replicate the ancestral performances which originated the *manikay* genre.

*Yidaki*

The *yidaki*, or didjeridu, is made from the trunks or branches of stringy bark trees (*Eucalyptus tetradonta*) (Moyle 1974:7, Knopoff 1997:40) or woolly butt trees (*Eucalyptus miniata*) (Moyle 1974:7). The tree or branch must be of the right width, and must have been hollowed out by termites. It is cut to the proper length (approximately 1.5 metres), stripped of its bark, and the soft remains of the interior are cleaned out. Didjeridus are often decorated with paint or ochre, or sometimes with bands of brightly-coloured adhesive tape.

Musically, the *yidaki* is played on two notes: a low drone and a blown overtone which is usually an octave to a tenth higher than the drone. The drone is produced by blowing the instrument like a brass instrument but with a loose, relaxed embouchure. The continuous drone is produced by circular breathing, which involves using the muscles in the cheeks to push air through the instrument while inhaling quickly through the nose. Depending on the song being performed, the drone can be either smooth and unadorned or highly

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5 A detailed consideration of the symbolic aspects of *bilma*, while fascinating, is beyond the scope of the current study.
patterned by both circular breathing technique and the skillful placement of overtones. The overtone itself is played with a tighter, more focused embouchure in order to achieve a higher note. Trevor Jones has identified two different overtone styles: the “hoot”, which is a sustained note, and the “spat”, which is a very brief overtone alternating with the drone (Jones 1973:270). Steven Knopoff has recently identified a number of determinants of didjeridu style, including physical determinants, performance protocols, ceremonial context, and personal and group aesthetics (Knopoff 1997:43-9).

The *yidaki* has an important role in accompanying ritual performance. As I will explore more thoroughly in Chapter Five, one of its most important functions is to provide cues to singers and dancers. If a particular song involves a change in clapstick pattern, which usually accompanies a change in dance step, the didjeridu player signals this change by blowing an overtone in the midst of his rhythmic drone; a similar signal is also used to signal the end of a song item. However, the didjeridu player himself must pay close attention to the singer leading the performance to observe when he is coming to the end of a phrase and is about to take a breath. In performances involving dancing, both the didjeridu player and the singers must pay attention to cues from the lead dancer for the placement of overtone signals and the change in clapstick pattern. Thus, although sonically it is the didjeridu that provides the most obvious signal, in practice all performers must pay careful attention to one another for a successful performance (also see Clunies Ross and Wild 1984:225).

In addition to its role as an accompanying instrument, the *yidaki* also has cosmological significance. In the song subject *mokuy milgarri* (spirits crying) of the Balambala song series, singers describe spirits from a variety of Yirritja-moiety *bapurrpu* signalling to each other on their didjeridus to announce that something is wrong and that someone has died. Each song item of this song subject begins with two long overtone hoots before the singing starts as a means of representing the spirits’ signal. *Mokuy milgarri* is one of the most prominent songs performed at Yirritja-moiety funerals. Steven Knopoff has noted symbolic aspects of didjeridu playing in Yirrkala, where the low drone may represent the drone of wild honey bees, a sustained overtone can represent the cry of an ancestral dolphin, or a “vocal shriek” can represent the cries of an ancestral bird (Knopoff 1997:46-7). In these cases, playing the *yidaki* is a means of representing and recreating ancestral power by imitating the actions and

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6This feature of didjeridu accompaniment has also been noted by Steven Knopoff (Knopoff 1997:45).
sounds of the spirits, emulating the example set by the ancestral beings during the *wangarr* (Dreamtime) creative era.

**Musical Structure**

An interesting feature of the Arnhem Land ethnomusicological literature is the lack of unified terminology for discussing musical structure. This is, no doubt, in large part due to the fact that Yolngu themselves have no unified terminology: different individuals have distinct (and occasionally overlapping) concepts of how to talk about *manikay*, there are regional differences as well, and at any rate there is no centralized rule book to which all Yolngu may refer. Add to this the fact that the various scholars who have studied Yolngu music have used a range of terms to talk about some of the same things, and one has a complex situation indeed. My own terminology is a compromise between Dhalwangu folk models of musical structure and some of the more commonly-accepted ethnomusicological concepts available.

The organizational structure of Dhalwangu *manikay* may be broken down into a number of levels: the song series, which encompasses all of the songs which make up an entire body of cosmology; the song subjects which make up the song series, each of which describes an ancestral animal, plant, or meteorological phenomenon; song versions, which are musically-distinct ways of performing each song subject; and the song item, which is a single performance of a single song subject, generally lasting between 30 seconds and one minute and offset by breaks in performance before and after. This structure is shown in figure 3.1. I will examine each of these levels in turn, beginning with the most broad and moving to the most specific.

**Song Series**

The broadest level of Dhalwangu musical structure is the song series, or *ringgitj*. The song series is a group of songs performed together because of

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7 *Ringgitj* is a highly polysemic word with a number of inter-related meanings given by different scholars (Zorc 1996:239; Keen 1994a:312; Williams 1986:79, 89). These various definitions all emphasize that *ringgitj* are ancestrally-significant sacred places, which may be associated with the cosmology of several different *bapurru*.
The Girriti song series contains 21 song subjects, of which a sample of three is represented here (I include the subject gapu gadin or "calm water" to be a version of gapu for the purposes of this discussion). Of these song subjects, gapu (water) uses five song versions, three subjects use three versions each, ten subjects use two versions, and two subjects use only a single version. There is a similar variability in the number of song items performed in each version, ranging between two and six song items each. These levels of Dhalwangu musical structure are discussed in detail in the following sections of this chapter.

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their thematic unity, that is, because of their common relation to a set of ancestral beings and their activities in a particular place or set of places. The stereotypical “song cycle” or “songline” relates the journey of a *wangarr* ancestor across a vast area, linking the countries of a number of groups, and indeed in Arnhem Land there are many song series which conform to this general pattern. In the case of Dhalwangu people, however, most of their song series relate to particular places in their country and events which took place within a relatively circumscribed geographical area. Dhalwangu people have the rights to sing a total of eighteen song series: three related to their most important country at Gàngan; nine related to their country at Gurrumuru; two concerning Garrapara; a single song series at Balambala; and three song series at Numbulwar, for which Dhalwangu people consider themselves custodians, not owners.

**Gàngan**

The most important place in Dhalwangu country is Gàngan, located roughly 60 km southeast of Gapuwiyak. Gàngan is a thriving outstation inhabited mostly by Dhalwangu people using the surname Gumana, as well as a variety of relatives.

Gàngan holds a central place in Dhalwangu cosmology. It was at Gàngan that the ancestral beings Barama, Lany’tjung and Galparrimun rose up out of the water and created the features of the landscape, the first Dhalwangu people, as well as all songs, dances, language, and sacred objects. Another very important aspect of Dhalwangu cosmology is the water, or *gapu* (known by the proper name Gularri), at Gàngan, in which all sacred objects were made. Bangana once told me:

Gàngan is one of the places, it’s important to all Dhalwangu people, you see? Even though we’ve got ringgitj at other places...the reason why Gàngan is so important is because that’s where our identity is....Because all of our sacred belonging, sacred items, in a Yolngu philosophy, is created by the *gapu*...in the *gapu*, you know? And that’s why Gàngan and its *gapu* is important to us. Because our identity lies in that *gapu*. And that *gapu* creates it. You know, so, we can be Dhalwangu, we’ve got ringgitj at other places, but our *gapu* is at Gàngan.

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9 Ian Keen’s work on the Djang’kawu cosmology and related songs provides a good example (Keen 1977a:47, Keen 1990:196-7).
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The ancestral beings Barama, Lany’tjung and Galparrimun are themselves closely related to the gapu, as it is believed that they came from the depths of the waters of Gängan, and that when they finished their creative work they returned there and are still there today.

Dhalwangu people perform three song series associated with Gängan: Girriti, which is the name of the area of Gängan which is the origin of the gapu, and which describes the water bubbling up from the earth and flowing toward Gängan, as well as the flora, fauna and meteorological phenomena associated with this area; Dhoŋa, which refers to Dhalwangu ancestors walking around the Gängan area peeling paperbark from a tree called mayku using a special stick called ganiny; and Makarryatjalngumi, the song series located right at Gängan, concerning events which occurred there in the wangarr era. Taken as a whole, these three ringgitj can be said to represent the totality of Dhalwangu madayin associated with Gängan.

Balambala

Associated with Gängan is another Dhalwangu country called Balambala, which is the subject of a single song series. Balambala is an uninhabited area approximately 50 km southeast of Gapuwiyak, and the songs of the Balambala song series centre primarily on the spirit being, or mokuy\(^{10}\), called Murayana. The songs describe Murayana running and dancing through the forests around Balambala, and the flora and fauna that the mokuy encountered. The Balambala song series is always performed near the end of funerals, and is considered one of the most important song series for those ceremonies because of its association with Murayana, other mokuy spirits, and the spirits of the dead.

Garrapara

Garrapara is south of Gängan on the coast of Blue Mud Bay, connected cosmologically to Gängan along the watercourse from Gängan to the coast, but having its own distinctive cosmology. The two song series at Garrapara are

\(^{10}\) Mokuy is a term which may refer to a corpse, a dead person’s spirit, or a category of spirit beings which are sometimes called “ghosts” or “devils”.

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primarily concerned with the specific kind of salt water in Blue Mud Bay called Mungurru, things associated with this water, and the activities of Dhalwangu ancestors at the camp on the beach. One of the song series is called Nguy Gapu (from the water) and describes objects floating from the sea toward land on the incoming tide, birds and fish moving about, and Dhalwangu ancestors paddling their canoes in from the ocean, pulling them up on the beach, and making their camp. The second song series is called Diltjingur (from the land) and describes many of the same subjects, only beginning on the land and moving out to sea.

Gurrumuru

Gurrumuru, located approximately 60 km east of Gapuwiyak on the Gurrumuru River, is a large and active outstation community with a half-dozen permanent dwellings, a store, and a school. It is another very important area in Dhalwangu cosmology, and is the subject of nine song series. The most significant ancestral figure at Gurrumuru was Birrinydji; Dhalwangu people have a range of beliefs about Birrinydji and his relations with the Macassans, Indonesian fishermen who visited the Arnhem Land coast for hundreds of years prior to the early 20th century. Many people believe that Birrinydji was the recipient of gifts from the ancestral Macassans when they first arrived, including iron tools, cloth, and tobacco, while others believe that Birrinydji and others at Gurrumuru were already in possession of these before the Macassans’ arrival. At any rate, all Dhalwangu believe that Birrinydji was a powerful ancestor of the Dreamtime who was the leader at Gurrumuru, that he created all of the songs and dances associated with Gurrumuru, and that his spirit is still at Gurrumuru today, where the sounds of his swords clashing together can still be heard at night.\(^{11}\)

The nine song series at Gurrumuru are: Wängangur (at the camp); Ritjangur (in the jungle); Minggadhun (fishing); Lupdhun (bathing in the waterhole); Mananggan (thief); Marthangay (the ship); Wayingu Nhàmanhama (hunting for birds); Wänga Djàma (building houses) and a single song series about a place at the mouth of the Gurrumuru River called Yikari. Most of them include songs concerning Macassans and the material possessions associated

\(^{11}\) The Gurrumuru cosmology will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Eight.
with Macassans, such as swords, anchors, cloth, alcohol and tobacco, although each song series also includes song subjects which are not overtly connected to Macassans. The exception is the Yikari song series, which contains songs about objects introduced from across the ocean, but does not attribute these to Macassan origin. All of the Gurrumuru song series describe events which took place in the wangarr era in the area between Gurrumuru and the mouth of the Gurrumuru River, including areas of plains and jungle and including both fresh water and salt water areas. The Marthangay series is exceptional here because, although it is connected with Gurrumuru, its songs detail the journey of a Macassan ship around the Arnhem Land coast from Numbulwar, stopping at various Yirritja-moiety places before finally dropping its anchor at Gurrumuru.

Numbulwar

Dhalwangu people also sing three song series associated with country near Numbulwar, just south of the Yolngu region of northeast Arnhem Land. They are not the owners of this country, but rather are considered to be custodians, the owners being a people called Nundhirribala. The three song series are called Ngulburr Galiwa (making boomerangs), Ngulburr Gara (making spears), and Ngulburr Nguy Gapu (the ocean at Numbulwar).

Song Subject

The term “song subject”, usually referred to by Dhalwangu singers simply as manikay, denotes the primary subject matter sung about over a sequence of songs. Each song subject concerns a plant, animal, meteorological phenomenon, or ancestral being and its activities at a particular place during the wangarr era. Although there are some rhythmic patterns which may come into play to denote a song subject (i.e. mimetically), they are much more commonly differentiated by their structural position (sung at a particular moment during a performance of a particular song series) and textual content (the words and phrases used by singers during the performance of a song subject which describe that subject). The sequence of song subjects which makes up a song
series is supposed to be fixed, although certain song subjects may be left out of a performance for various reasons\textsuperscript{12}.

The song subjects which make up a song series are necessarily linked to the cosmology which that song series describes. In Dhalwangu thought, particular places, ancestral beings and events are bound up with one another such that the evocation of a particular place through song entails a description of all the things and events associated with that place. The goal of a skilled singer is to evoke a "picture" of a place in the mind's eye of his audience in as much detail as possible (to be discussed in detail in the next chapter), and each song subject of a series is an integral part of that picture.

Take, for example, the Girriti song series, describing that area of Gāngan which is the source of the fresh water stream that is so pivotal to Dhalwangu identity. Here is a list of the song subjects included in a performance in January 1996 for a dhapi circumcision ceremony\textsuperscript{13}:

- wangubini (cloud)
- balgurrk (rain)
- ngerrk (sulphur-crested cockatoo)
- wokara (speargrass)
- gapu (water)
- garkman (frog)
- nyangura (long-necked tortoise)
- norrtj (algae)
- waṭarra (freshwater perch)
- walgarrambu (oxeye herring)
- baybinnga (saratoga)
- ratjuk (barramundi)
- gunbirrwirr (another fish)
- wirrilanydji (stork)
- djamatj (mist)
- djikay (robin\textsuperscript{14})

Each of these subjects is connected to some major aspect of Dhalwangu cosmology at Gāngan. Some of the subjects, such as gapu, nyangura and baybinnga are among the most important ancestral beings at Gāngan and have a central place in the formation of Dhalwangu identity.

\textsuperscript{12} Such a reason may include avoiding a song subject after which a recently-deceased person was named, or because a particular ritual object relating to a song has not yet been fabricated.

\textsuperscript{13} A full list of all song subjects making up each of the Dhalwangu song series is given as Appendix B to this dissertation. Appendix E provides a complete listing of all song subjects, versions, and items of a performance of the Girriti song series.

\textsuperscript{14} Djikay is a term used generically to mean a small bird, but was glossed as "robin" in this particular context.
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There are also relations between the different song subjects in a series, which follow a general narrative thread from one to the next: the cloud brings the rain, through which the cockatoo flies, the speargrass is said by Dhalwangu to “sing” only after the rain and is also said to be a signal of something important, in this case the water starting to flow. Then the frog, the tortoise, and a variety of fish swim in the water, and so on. In this sense, the sequence of subjects in each song series can be said to tell the story of a set of events at each place.

Although the sum total of song subjects which make up a song series is unique to that series, individual song subjects may occur in several series. For instance, the song subject girrmala (north wind) occurs in both the Gurrumuru Wängangur and the Yikari song series, and ngerrk (sulphur-crested cockatoo) appears in the Girriti, Garrapara, and Balambala song series. Other songs, however, stand as unique markers of only one song series, such as gawangalkmirr (stingray) at Yikari, or mokuy (spirit) at Balambala.

Song Version

Every song subject can be performed in a number of different ways, each of which is named according to certain principles. The most notable differences between these ways of singing were in the rhythm and tempo of the clapstick accompaniment, but there were also differences in meaning, in performative context, and in the concept underlying a singer’s choice of song textual material for each one. These names do not represent distinct and fixed categories of song, but rather a flexible and partly-overlapping system of naming which reflects certain trends of musical organization. As such, they represent something of a Dhalwangu musical theory, which may or may not reflect a strict musical practice. I call these named ways of singing as “song versions”.

In my analysis of Dhalwangu musical practice I have examined a total of six complete song series, comprising 94 song subjects, a combined total of 236 versions of those song subjects, and a total of over 900 individual song items. I have analyzed both the poetics of song texts and the melodic, rhythmic, and other musical aspects of the performances, and I have identified a total of 26

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15 The idea of a sequence of songs representing a narrative progression linking up one song subject to another is taken up in great detail by Borsboom in his study of the songs of the Maradjiri ritual (Borsboom 1978:71-81).
distinctive clapstick patterns (to be discussed in more detail later in this chapter). Some clapstick patterns are unique to their song versions and only appear once in the whole repertoire; others are used in relation to a number of song subjects in a variety of song series. As the six song series I have examined closely represent only one third of the entire Dhalwangu musical repertoire, the 26 identified patterns could potentially increase with further analysis of other song series.

Dhalwangu singers, at various times, named the following categories of songs, which overlap in various ways:

- bulnha (slow)
- yindi (big or important)
- "original", "regular" or unspecified
- gumurr wangu (lit. chest one, used to mean "number one")
- gumurr marra (lit. chest two, used to mean "number two")
- ba1tja (arms)
- yothu (small)
- yuta (new)
- other terms depending on the song textual content

These categories are not unproblematic, for the analyst or for the performer. People do not use these terms consistently, sometimes singers use different terms for the same song version on different occasions, and different singers have a range of ideas about how to define these terms and how to use these styles. And yet, when a large sample of the Dhalwangu musical repertoire is

16 I should point out that, despite the relative lack of references in the Arnhem Land ethnographic literature to different ways of singing the "same" song, this kind of analysis is not completely new. The ethnomusicologist Steven Knopoff writes that Yolngu recognize four types of clapstick pattern, "slow" (bulnha), "walking" (ngarrunga), "big" or "important" (yindi), and "arms" (barka), and that both musical and non-musical factors may play a role in their naming (Knopoff 1992:148). Greg Anderson's PhD thesis (Anderson 1992) provides an extraordinarily detailed analysis of "Groups" of song items with shared features such as clapstick patterns, tempo, and song structure. In that thesis and in a more recent paper, he compares a number of clapstick patterns according to tempo and rhythm, but only reports two indigenous terms relating to metricality: djalkmi (ordinary way), in which clapstick, didjeridu, and vocal lines conform to the same metre, and ngarkana (bone), in which they do not (Anderson 1995:14-6). I would like to go beyond a purely rhythmic classification and also consider other factors in the ways in which Dhalwangu singers named different ways of singing songs. The analysis I present here should be seen as a contribution to and an extension of this small but important area of Arnhem Land musical scholarship.

17 I am indebted to Steven Knopoff for pointing out to me what should have been obvious: within Western musical discourse there is no perfect consistency in the various uses of terms.
examined closely, along with exegesis of the meanings of the songs and performances, a general framework slowly emerges which, while not providing all of the answers, at least points the analyst toward some of the more important questions. My discussion here should be taken as a first step toward understanding the inter-relations between Dhalwangu musical theory and practice.

In what follows, I will examine these categories through examples provided by two Dhalwangu song subjects: gapu (water), from the Girriti song series associated with Gängan; and ngerrk (sulphur-crested cockatoo), taken from both the Girriti and the Balambala song series. Both of these song series were recorded early in 1996 during a dhapi circumcision ceremony.

**bulnha**

*Bulnha* is a Yolngu word meaning “slow”, and is used to describe a version of a song subject that is characterized by the following musical features:

- a slow tempo, usually between 20 and 30 clapstick beats per minute;
- an unadorned clapstick pattern; and
- a non-metrical relationship between the clapstick accompaniment, didjeridu, and vocalist.

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18 For additional clarity, Appendix E lists an entire performance of the Girriti song series which shows the relationship between song subjects, song versions, and song items.
19 An “unadorned” clapstick pattern is one which does not include any rests or “separated doubles”, but simply consists of an unbroken, steady beat for the entire song item. “Separated doubles” is a term coined by Alice Moyle (Moyle 1974:204) to describe a clapstick pattern which resembles the first two notes of a set of eighth-note triplets (see figure 3.8 for an example).
20 By “non-metrical”, I mean that there is no strict rhythmic coordination between the different musical elements. Although there is an average of two or three seconds between clapstick beats, this may fluctuate considerably during the course of a single song item as singers improvise their song texts; as well, there is only a loose coordination between the various men accompanying the singing with clapsticks. Likewise, there is no attempt to strictly coordinate the singing of a melodic line to the clapstick accompaniment, and the length of each phrase of song text may vary greatly. Greg Anderson has noted the difference between metrical (djalkmni) and non-metrical (ngarkana) songs in a central Arnhem Land song series (Anderson 1995:14), and Steven Knopoff has described the lack of rhythmic coordination between voice, clapsticks, and didjeridu in Yolngu songs of the bulnha and yindi types (Knopoff 1997:45-6).
Conceptually, the *bulnha* version of any song subject is used to introduce a new song subject to a performance, although not every song subject can be performed as a *bulnha* version. If a *bulnha* version of a particular song subject is to be sung, it is invariably the first version of that subject used in the performance. Occasionally, the song textual content may reflect the sense that the subject is being introduced into the performance of the song series: in the case of the *bulnha* version of *gapu*, for instance, song texts typically describe the sacred waters of Gangan bubbling up from the ground. Figure 3.2 is a
transcription\textsuperscript{21} of a \textit{bulnha} song item of the \textit{gapu} song subject, and provides some indication of a typical \textit{bulnha} song version: this song item comprised two melodic descents with four distinct phrases, but only used a total of six clapstick beats at approximately 20 beats per minute. This version of \textit{gapu} was performed a total of three times during this song series.

\textit{yindi}

\textit{Yindi} is a Yolngu word which means "big" or "important", and is used to describe the version of songs with these characteristics:

- a very fast tempo, often over 240 clapstick beats per minute;
- an unadorned clapstick pattern;
- a non-metrical relationship between the clapstick accompaniment, didjeridu, and vocalist; and
- a single unison "chorus"\textsuperscript{22} section immediately preceding the terminating vocal coda.

When singers perform a \textit{yindi} version of any song subject, it either follows a \textit{bulnha} version of that subject, or else it is the first version performed. The unison "chorus" section is generally made up of words and phrases which represent the sound or the movement of the song subject. Like the \textit{bulnha} song

\textsuperscript{21} Normally, when transcribing song items with a metrical relationship between musical elements, I find it most useful to notate clapstick beats as quarter-notes and to notate the melodic line accordingly, with the tempo indicating "clapstick beats per minute"; I have done this in figures 3.4-3.9. However, the non-metrical nature of the \textit{bulnha} and \textit{yindi} song versions renders this method problematic, as the clapstick pattern is irregular and not coordinated with the vocal line. My solution has been to notate the vocal part using somewhat arbitrary note lengths which allow for easier comparison with other song versions of the same song subject, even though the note lengths of the vocal part do not correspond to the tempo indicated. I have then notated the clapstick beats as they relate to the vocal line. The tempo, however, still indicates the number of clapstick beats per minute: 20 in the case of the \textit{bulnha} version, and 240 in the case of the \textit{yindi}. This style of transcription for these two song versions, although unorthodox by the standards of Western musicology, better captures the lack of exact fit between the melody and the clapstick accompaniment.

\textsuperscript{22} "Chorus" is a term used by Dhalwangu musicians, a practice I follow in this dissertation even though "refrain" might be more accurate from a Western musical perspective; Clunies Ross and Wild use the term "refrain" in their study of central Arnhem Land songs (1984:220). The "chorus" is simply a section of a song that has a fixed text and is sung in unison; this is unusual in Arnhem Land musical genres because singers often sing independently of one another, and only rarely in unison.
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Figure 3.3 - gapu - yindi (CD track 2)

![Musical notation for gapu - yindi](image)

- Tempo: 72 BPM
- Gapu - bulah - yindi
- Gu-la-rri dji - bul - yi - bul - yun

![Musical notation for ngu-nu-ku ba-wa-lu-na-ra-wa](image)

- Tempo: 120 BPM
- Oh-
- Nguru-ku ba-wa-lu-na-ra-wa

![Musical notation for dhar-ya nga man - tji wom - arr - ay - dji](image)

- Dhar-ya nga man - tji wom - arr - ay - dji

![Musical notation for gu-la-rri nga-bo war - ak - iun dji - bul - yi - bul - yun](image)

- Gu-la-rri nga-bo war - akiun dji - bul - yi - bul - yun
version, the non-metrical nature of the *yindi* gives it a free-form feeling with no strict relationship between musical elements. In fact, the articulation of song texts is almost identical between *bulnha* and *yindi* versions of the same song subject, even though the tempo of the clapstick accompaniment may be ten times faster in the *yindi* (compare figures 3.2 and 3.3).

Conceptually, the *yindi* is a version which is used to describe a particular song subject broadly, often using sacred *likan* or “power” names which reflect the importance of the subject. Not every song subject has a *yindi* version; rather, it is restricted to those subjects which are of the highest cosmological significance. Accordingly, this is the song version chosen to accompany some of the most important moments during ceremonies. For instance, the invocation of *likan* names is always accompanied musically by the *yindi* version of a song subject23. As well, when a group of singers announces a death to the community, the identity of the deceased must not be divulged until the *yindi* version of a song subject has been performed.

Figure 3.3 shows a transcription24 of a song item which begins with the *bulnha* version, but changes halfway through into the *yindi* version with its

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23 Knopoff also notes this relationship between the calling of sacred names and the use of *yindi* songs (Knopoff 1997:46).

24 As with the *bulnha* transcription, this *yindi* transcription is intended to give a general sense of the musical characteristics of this song version. Because there are relatively free-form relationships between the various musical elements, the conventions of Western-style notation should only be taken as an approximate measure of a flexible musical style.
characteristically fast tempo of the clapstick pattern and relatively slow vocal articulation. This change is also marked textually: the bulnha song texts which describe the water bubbling up from the ground switch, as the tempo of the clapsticks changes, to a description of the water now starting to flow rapidly. The distinctive unison “chorus” near the end of the song item, “lalalalala yirri”, is representative of the sound of the water as it flows. This song version was performed again twice more, but without the bulnha opening section. The yindi versions of other song subjects may incorporate a different melodic line, and certainly use a different set of song textual words and phrases; nonetheless, all yindi song versions have a similar tempo, non-metricality of musical elements, and unison “chorus” section.

**bantja**

The **bantja** is a song version which is difficult to characterize in purely musical terms, due to the large number and complexity of clapstick patterns which may be referred to by this name. Translated literally as “arm”, it is perhaps best to think of the **bantja** as a musical concept rather than as a musical type. The **bantja** is not merely a rhythmic device, but carries with it a number of inter-related meanings. First and foremost, the **bantja** is said to be a signal to other singers and to the audience that one song subject is being concluded and that another is about to begin, and it is for this reason that the **bantja** is supposed to be the final version of any song subject performed. The **bantja** is also said by Dhalwangu musicians to be a decorative beat in the sense that the use of many **bantja** versions makes a performance beautiful and powerful, and that all of the different **bantja** versions of a song subject should be performed to make a song truly “brilliant”\(^\text{25}\). So, differences in clapstick patterns are important in understanding the **bantja**, but so too is the place of this version as a concept within Dhalwangu musical philosophy.

From the perspective of musical analysis, the **bantja** can take a bewildering variety of forms, and because these forms can all be categorized by the same term, it begs the question of what they have in common. The short

\(^{25}\) Howard Morphy’s article “From Dull to Brilliant: The Aesthetics of Spiritual Power Among the Yolngu” (1989) details the ways in which the addition of detailed cross-hatching makes Yolngu bark paintings “brilliant” in the sense that they appear to glow and shimmer, which is said to be an attribute of ancestral power. For more on “brilliance” in singing, see the section of this chapter entitled “From Dull to Brilliant...”.
answer to this is that there is no short answer: just when a definite pattern seems to be emerging through musical analysis, a few exceptions come along to necessitate a reinterpretation. As a general statement, though, there seems to be a trend for the term *bantja* to be applied to any song version which uses a clapstick pattern which incorporates either “separated doubles” (like the first two notes of a set of eighth-note triplets) (Moyle 1974:204), or any combination of single beats and rests—in other words, any clapstick pattern other than a straightforward sequence of single beats with no rests. As my argument suggests, however, any reduction of the meaning of song versions to clapstick patterns alone is misleading. The *bantja*, then, is a concept in Dhalwangu musical philosophy which is elusive at the best of times.

In the performance of the Girriti song series, two different *bantja* versions of the *gapu* song subject were performed after the *yindi* version. Transcriptions of a song item for each are shown in figures 3.4 and 3.5. The first *bantja* version, performed four times, has a recurring clapstick pattern which can be identified throughout the Dhalwangu musical repertoire, and is often the clapstick pattern used immediately after a *yindi* version (although it is used elsewhere as well). It uses a combination of single beats and single-beat rests, and the tempo is moderate at approximately 100 clapstick beats per minute. The second *bantja* version, performed in two song items, is much faster—around 180 beats per minute—and also uses a combination of single beats and single-beat rests. Textually, the two versions are also distinct: the first *bantja* version describes the waters turning in small whirlpools in the valleys of Gangan, while the second evokes a scene of the waters turning and stopping. Musically, as stated above, these versions are also distinctive from the *bulnha* and the *yindi* in that there is a metrical relationship between musical elements: the tempo of the clapstick pattern is quite regular, and there is a much closer relationship between the articulation of song texts, the phrasing of the melodic line, and the matching of phrases to the clapstick pattern.

The final version of the *gapu* song subject which was performed on this occasion was called *gapu gadin*, or “calm water”. Sometimes, singers referred to this version as a third *bantja* for *gapu*, while at other times it was referred to as a separate song subject. Even in the latter case, however, singers stressed that,

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26 In figures 3.3-3.8, both the vocal part and the clapstick accompaniment are notated in strict accordance with the tempo indicated; unlike the *bulnha* version notated in figure 3.1 and the *yindi* version notated in figure 3.2, this is possible because there is a metrical relationship between these musical elements.
conceptually, *gapu gadin* was like a *bantja* in that it "finished off the *manikay*" and prepared the way for the next song subject. Textually, this is indeed the
Musically, the clapstick pattern of this version is performed at a moderate tempo of approximately 90 beats per minute, and uses a repeated pattern of single beats and rests; it was performed over a total of four song items. A transcription of one song item is shown in figure 3.6.

Each of these song versions relates to a single song subject, the water or gapu, and yet each one is very distinctive both musically and textually. As well, each version has a unique set of meanings associated with it, and some versions can
be used in very specific ritual contexts. Although rhythmic distinctiveness is the most immediately obvious feature distinguishing different versions of the same song subject, one should not overlook the importance of other factors.

"regular"/"original"/other/unspecified

Very often, a version of a song subject will simply go by the name of the song subject or will be unspecified, and in later discussion may be referred to as the "regular" or "original". Like the bantja, there are no fixed and invariable musical features for this version. However, there are two broad trends. A "regular" song version has either:

- an unadorned clapstick pattern; and
- a metrical relationship between the clapstick accompaniment, didjeridu, and vocalist;

or:
- a unique clapstick pattern which is said to be mimetic of the movement of the song subject; and
- a metrical relationship between the clapstick accompaniment, didjeridu, and vocalist.

This version is always performed after the bulnha and yindi versions of a song subject; if they are not performed, then this is the first version performed. Accordingly, a "regular" version, if performed, will always precede a bantja.

An example of a "regular" version of a Dhalwangu song subject, from the Balambala song series, is ngerrk, the sulphur-crested cockatoo. Like many "regular" versions, the clapstick pattern consists simply of single beats with no rests. The tempo is around 85 beats per minute, and the song texts describe the sound which the cockatoo makes flying around the country at Balambala. One of three song items of this version is shown in figure 3.7.

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27 In some cases, as when the song subject describes an animal or a bird, a word such as marrtjinyamirrwu, which means "walking", is used to name this version.
In this performance, the “regular” version of ngerrk was not followed by a bantja version, but the same “regular” version was followed by a bantja in a performance of the Girriti song series\textsuperscript{28}. The bantja was performed at the same

\textsuperscript{28} As these two song series are both cosmologically related to Dhalwangu country in the Gangan region, the separate performances are said to be about the “same” cockatoo. Musically, there is no difference between performances of ngerrk in the Balambala song series and those in the Girriti song series.
tempo as the “regular” version, but using a clapstick pattern consisting of a sequence of “separated doubles” and single beats. The song text is similar to the “regular” version, which describes the cockatoos flying through the air, but elaborates slightly more in describing the cockatoos surrounding the valley in which Girriti is located. A transcription is shown in figure 3.8.

The yuta manikay was first written about extensively by Steven Knopoff (1992), and is an exceptional song version in a number of ways. Conceptually, the yuta refers to contemporary events, but couches them in terms of ancestral song subjects. Usually, some extraordinary event causes a singer to draw a metaphorical connection between it and a “traditional” song subject, and subsequently the singer “invents” the yuta. Structurally, the yuta is unique in having two unison “chorus” sections, one roughly in the middle of the song item, and one at the end, just before the terminating vocal coda. Textually, the yuta refers to contemporary events only in the unison “chorus” sections, and the references are often oblique, usually containing mostly kinship terms and a few other words. Musically, in addition to the “chorus” sections, the yuta is unique in its length, which can often run over two minutes (most other versions have a length between 20 and 40 seconds), and in the wide variety of clapstick patterns which can be incorporated, although they invariably have a metrical relationship between the different musical elements. The yuta version of a song subject is often, but not always, performed as the last version of that subject. In fact, sometimes a yuta version is used instead of a ban.tja version, because it is said that the yuta can be used to “finish off the manikay” and can “act as a ban.tja”.

Dhalwangu singers perform a total of four separate yuta versions of ngerrk. One of them (CD track 8), referred to as an “old-fashioned” yuta, is

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29 I should point out that this particular combination of clapstick patterns, a “regular” version with single beats and a ban.tja version with this pattern of “separated doubles”, is a very common progression in Dhalwangu song. In song subjects which do not use a bulnha or a yindi version in their performance, 76% begin with this particular “regular” version. Of those beginning with that version 25% were followed by the ban.tja version which described in figure 3.8. There are some trends, then, which suggest that there is a relationship between particular “regular” versions and the ban.tja versions which follow them, although more analysis is required in this area.

30 Yuta manikay will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Eight.
Figure 3.9 - ngerrk-yuta (CD track 11)

Musical Features of Dhalwangu Manikay

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Musical Features of Dhalwangu Manikay

Figure 3.9 - ngerrk - yuta (continued)
performed at the same tempo as the “regular” and bANTja versions, and uses an unadorned clapstick pattern of single clapstick beats with no rests or “separated doubles”. Musically and textually, the most significant feature is the unison “chorus” section which occurs twice: in this section, all the singers sing the words “ngerrk ngerrk ngerrk”, which represent both the name of the bird and the sound it makes. Another yuta version (CD track 9) was invented by a man from Yirrkala who was working in his garden and was continually interrupted by a cockatoo making a lot of noise. The chorus “wark mirringur ngathinytja” translates as “talking while at work”, referring to the “talking” of the cockatoo. The tempo of this version is around 150 clapstick beats per minute. Another interesting musical feature is the fact that the singers hit their clapsticks on the ground in front of them for a time before hitting them together. A third yuta version of ngerrk (CD track 10) is even faster than the others, at approximately 220 beats per minute. The clapstick pattern consists of a repeated sequence of three single clapstick beats followed by a single beat rest. The chorus is again a simple “ngerrk ngerrk ngerrk”, and this is understood to be a very old yuta version of ngerrk.

For considerations of space, I will only present a transcription of a song item of the fourth yuta version of ngerrk. The tempo of this version is approximately 130 beats per minute. As with most yuta versions of songs, the song texts of the non-“chorus” sections are broadly similar to those of “regular” or bANTja versions, but have a unique song text in the unison “chorus” sections. In this case, the song texts of the “chorus” are the words “djigidiny djigidiny djigidiny”, followed by the sound “Mmmmmmm Mmmmmm”, both of which are said to represent the sounds of a flock of cockatoos flying through the air. This yuta was invented by a Dha_lwangu man named Walumarri, who was out hunting one day when an unusually large flock of cockatoos appeared and began to circle him in the air, making the sounds reproduced in the “chorus”. One song item of this version is reproduced in figure 3.9.

Yothu

Yothu is a Yolngu word meaning “small” (or “child”), and is contrasted conceptually with the yindi or “big” (“mother”) version. This name is perhaps the least consistently applied label of all of the Dhalwangu song versions, but the apparent trend is that it is an alternate name for a bANTja version of any song
subject which immediately follows a *yindi* version. None of the performances of *gapu* or *ngerrk* which I discuss here were discussed by Dhalwangu musicians using the term *yothu*, and more research is required in order to understand its meanings.

gumurr wanggany and gumurr marrma

Gumurr wanggany and gumurr marrma are Yolngu words literally meaning “chest one” and “chest two”, respectively. These versions are most often associated with performances called *bunggulmirr*, or “with dancing”. Very often in dance performances, only two versions of each song subject are performed, called “number one” and “number two”. The change from one version to the next is minimally associated with a change in rhythm. Sometimes the gumurr wanggany version involves an unadorned clapstick pattern, and the following gumurr marrma version uses the same tempo and melody, but incorporates “separated double” clapstick beats instead of singles. Other times, an unadorned wanggany will be followed by a marrma which is at the same tempo but incorporates a series of single beats and rests. On still other occasions, the wanggany will incorporate rests in its rhythm, and the marrma will follow with a different pattern of beats and rests.

By far, the most common gumurr wanggany rhythm is an unadorned clapstick pattern with no rests and no variations. The only other possible rhythm for this version of which I am aware is the one shown in figure 3.3. In many performances without dancing, known as ngaraka, this version is not explicitly classified, or is called the “original” or a “regular” version.

Any time there is an accompaniment using “separated double” clapstick beats, it is a gumurr marrma version. This version may also use a wide range of combinations of beats and rests, or even beating a clapstick on the ground. This version may also be called *bantja*.

Ultimately, even though performers use the terms gumurr wanggany and gumurr marrma to describe a variety of clapstick patterns, I believe that it is a mistake to consider these terms to represent categorical distinctions between

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31 Clunies Ross and Wild (1984:214-6) have noted the influence of dance on musical style and rhythmic accompaniment in performances of a central Arnhem Land song series called *Djambidj*.

32 *Ngaraka* is a term which also means “bones”, which is an idiom sometimes used to describe sacred objects.
patterns in the same way as the other classifications described in this chapter. Rather, they differentiate clapstick patterns based on their relative position in the performance. It is often the case that the version of a song called *gumurr wanggany* in one performance may be called the “regular” or be unspecified in another. The version called *gumurr marrma* is often the same as the *bantja*, but this is not always the case: a *bantja* version may be the first performed (and therefore called *gumurr wanggany*), followed by a *yuta* as the *gumurr marrma*. In other words, while there is a certain regularity of rhythmic progression to which these terms may be applied, they really only stand for which rhythm comes first and which one comes second, literally “number one” and “number two”, even though the terms are sometimes used as if they themselves represented categories of clapstick patterns.

The various Dhalwangu musical terms discussed in this chapter, then, represent flexible categories of ways to sing a single song subject. Each version of a song subject is musically differentiated from the other versions of the same subject, but there are other crucial differences as well: conceptual, contextual, and cosmological. Perhaps the most important thing to recognize about a sequence of versions of a single song subject is that they all contribute to the telling of a single story. Musically and textually, the sequence of versions contributes to a unified narrative thread which describes what an animal, plant, or ancestral being did in the *wangarr* creative era. This, in turn, contributes to the musical narrative of the entire song series, in which each song subject contributes to the description of a particular ancestral place or journey. In order to fully understand the rhythmic diversity and virtuosity of Yolngu music, we must combine our musicological analyses of musical practice with an ethnographic investigation of Yolngu musical theory. In proposing the term “song version”, I hope to open up our analyses of Yolngu music to account for local categories and their cosmological and contextual significance.

**Song Item**

The term “song item” refers to a single performance of any version of any song subject. Usually, a song item is of very short duration—sometimes only twenty or thirty seconds—and is preceded and followed by periods where the

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33 One of the earliest and most complete accounts of the song item as an analytical unit is provided by Alice Moyle (1974:188-350).
singers talk or joke amongst themselves, smoke a cigarette or a pipe, or drink a couple of mouthfuls of kava. Musically, each song item can be divided into three parts: a vocal introduction, the main body of the song, and a vocal coda to conclude.

The vocal introduction is performed solo, usually by a senior singer leading the performance. Using one of the distinctive Dhalwangu melodic lines (or an abbreviated portion thereof), the singer does one of three things: he may sing a phrase using song text typical of the main body of the song; he may sing a number of song words in order to “find the tune” (Dhalwangu singers use the song words “gu gu gu”); or he may “sing” a comment, some witty banter, or a set of instructions to another singer or the didjeridu player. At the same time, he sets the clapstick pattern and tempo to be followed during that song item, which the other singers will also start to play, and the didjeridu player commences his accompaniment with a series of staccato notes leading into an even drone. Occasionally, this introductory section is omitted and the singer simply begins the main body of the song item, with the accompanying musicians beginning as soon as possible.

The main body of the song item consists of words and phrases appropriate to the song subject sung using one of the four distinctive Dhalwangu melodic lines (discussed in detail below). Generally, a melodic line is repeated several times, and a number of singers may sing using different (but thematically related) song texts. Clapsticks accompany the singing using a particular rhythm appropriate to the song subject and version. The didjeridu accompaniment is either metrical and involves a patterned drone punctuated by a series of decorative overtones using a particular rhythm, or consists of an even, unbroken drone (depending on the song version); in either case, the didjeridu player signals the end of the main body of the song item by an overtone cue, to which the singers respond by concluding their clapstick accompaniment.

The terminating vocal coda is occasionally sung solo, but often involves a number of men singing over the top of one another in an apparently uncoordinated fashion. The singers may simply complete whatever melodic line they were singing when the main body of the song item finished, or they may start their coda on a new melodic line. Occasionally, the song item

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34 These structural divisions have also been noted by Clunies Ross and Wild (1984:214), Knopoff (1992:141), and Anderson (1995:13), among others.
concludes at the end of the main body with no coda, or the coda is hummed very softly.

Several song items of any version are sung one after the other before moving on to the next version of the same subject, and usually several versions are sung before moving on to the next subject in the series. There is generally some variation between different song items of the same version of the same subject. Yolngu song is a tradition of limited improvisation. A singer may choose to sing any words or phrases of song text which are appropriate for that subject, but given the very large range of possibilities the number of possible combinations is enormous. The result is that singers rarely sing the same words at the same time, and an individual singer will exhibit the same variability between performances. Of course, certain singers have favourite phrases to which they return again and again, and young singers emulate their mentors by copying their style, but for the most part each song item is a unique performance which will never be exactly reproduced.

It is evident, then, that the organizational structure of Dhalwangu manikay is a highly complex musical construct which is slightly different with each performance. The analysis presented here represents a compromise between Dhalwangu folk models of that structure and my own musicological and ethnographic analysis. I now turn to another prominent musical feature of Dhalwangu manikay, the melodic content of the songs.

Melodic Lines

One of the few burning issues in Arnhem Land ethnomusicology has concerned the existence or non-existence of a correlation between musical organization and social organization or, more specifically, whether or not there are "clan-
owned tunes” in the region. Although Yolngu frequently make the statement that “each clan has its own tunes” (the Yolngu term for melody being liya, or “head”), critics of the notion have quite correctly pointed out that little by way of rigorous musicological analysis has been done to substantiate the claim. As with the previous discussion of song versions, we are faced with the problem of mediating between folk models on the one hand, and Western musicological models on the other.

My own research and analysis has led me to conclude that there is indeed a correlation between musical and social structure, that people with distinct biipurru identities do make use of melodic materials in a distinctive and consistent way. At this point, I want simply to provide a detailed account of the melodic lines that Dhalwangu singers used during the course of my fieldwork. Although my position will be implicit in this chapter, I will reserve its explicit formulation until Chapter Six, which will detail the musical construction of Dhalwangu sociality.

I define a melodic line as a set of notes used in combination in the performance of a song item; a melody is a melodic line used in a particular rhythmic setting. In this sense, a melodic line is an abstraction which refers only to the notes used and their intervallic relationships, whereas a melody refers to the actual use of the melodic line with a particular rhythm. My analysis of Dhalwangu melodic lines identifies four that appear with remarkable consistency. Bangana Wunungmurra told me that two of them are considered to be old (wurrungu), while the other two are new (yuta), and he took to referring to them as wurrungu A, wurrungu B, yuta A, and yuta B, a practice that I will follow here. These melodic lines are used in a variety of combinations in the different song series which Dhalwangu people perform, depending on the particular song subject and the performative context.

The most important thing to recognize at once is that the absolute pitch of these melodic lines may vary considerably between performances, and even within the same performance (although sometimes it is remarkably stable). What is unchanging from performance to performance is the relative pitch of the melodic lines, that is, the intervals between the notes. The variations in relative pitch in Dhalwangu melodic lines is extremely slight, and certainly falls within what must be considered a reasonable range of variation in a musical tradition which does not rely on fixed-pitch instrumentation37. For Dhalwangu singers, 

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37 Although the didjeridu is played at a reasonably fixed pitch, going slightly sharp or flat due to circular breathing, singers do not use the pitch of the didjeridu to regulate their own sung
at least, there are four melodic lines used consistently in the performance of *manikay*, and which those singers identify as being distinctively Dhalwangu. I will examine each of these melodic lines in turn.

**wurrungu A**

The *wurrungu A* is the least common of the four Dhalwangu melodic lines, and it is reserved for only the most “sacred” song subjects. It has been identified in two performances which I recorded and for which I have detailed information. In both cases, the relative pitches were as shown in figure 3.10:

![Figure 3.10 - Dhalwangu wurrungu A melodic line (CD track 12)](image)

In terms of intervals, this melodic line consists of a descending whole tone, a descending semitone, and a descending whole tone, a range of 2 1/2 tones overall. In the 18 song items which I analyzed, these exact intervals occurred in 15 cases. In two song items, the first interval was a quarter-tone greater, the second remained at a semitone, and the third interval was a quarter-tone smaller, maintaining a total range of 2 1/2 tones. In the final case, the first interval was a quarter-tone greater, the second was a quarter-tone smaller, and the third was a semitone greater, yielding a total range of 3 tones. Although admittedly a small sample, the relative pitches of the *wurrungu A* melodic line, varying at most by a semitone, are reasonably consistent.

**wurrungu B**

The *wurrungu B* is a descending melodic line which occurs in all Dhalwangu song series which I recorded, but shows more variation in absolute pitch between performances than does the *wurrungu A*. In a January 1996 recording of the Girriti song series, I notated it as in figure 3.11:
A couple of days later during the same ceremony, the same singers performed the Yikari song series, and I notated the *wurrungu B* melodic line as in figure 3.12:

In November 1996, a recording was made by Dhalwangu singers of the Gurrumuru *Wängangur* song series as a gift for a relative from another community. During the five-hour long performance, the *wurrungu B* melodic line was sung as in figure 3.13:

Obviously, the absolute pitches in each case are different. What is crucial to observe, however, is that the relative pitch relationships are the same in each case: a three-semitone interval between the top note and the middle note, and a two-semitone interval between the middle note and the bottom note. It is this relationship between pitches that identifies this melodic line as belonging to Dhalwangu people.

A sample of 179 song items demonstrates the remarkable consistency of the *wurrungu B*. The first interval consisted of three semitones in 161 of those, or 89.9% of the time; in 8.9% of cases, the interval was a quarter-tone greater. The second interval was two semitones in 88.3% of the cases, being a quarter-
tone greater 4.5% of the time, a quarter-tone less 5.6% of the time, and a semitone less only 1.6% of the time. This analysis clearly demonstrates that the *wurrungu* B melodic line was used consistently by Dhalwangu singers during different performances over a long period of time.

*yuta* A

The descending *yuta* A melodic line is also fairly common and appears in every song series which I have analyzed. As is the case with the *wurrungu* B above, the absolute pitches vary from performance to performance, but the interval is consistently one of those shown in figure 3.14:

![Figure 3.14 - Two Dhalwangu *yuta* A melodic lines (CD tracks 16 & 17)](image)

In this case, the relative pitches only vary by a semitone: the first example shows a seven-semitone interval followed by a two-semitone interval, and the second example shows an eight-semitone interval followed by a two-semitone interval. Given that there are microtonal variations within any performance, this is certainly identifiable as a distinctive Dhalwangu melodic line.

Statistically, there is a slightly greater range of variation. In a total sample of 125 song items analyzed, the eight-semitone interval occurs 29.6% of the time, while the seven-semitone interval occurs 26.4% of the time. In 40.8% of the songs analyzed, the interval was halfway in between, or seven and one half semitones. It was eight and one half semitones only 2.4% of the time, and six and one half semitones 0.8% of the time. The second interval is two semitones 83.2% of the time, a quarter-tone less 15.2% of the time, and a semitone less 1.6% of the time. The greater variation in the first interval may be due in part to the greater overall range of this melodic line as compared to
others. In some performances, the top note of the yuta A can be as high as the A above the staff, which only certain singers can strain to achieve. For those singing the melody down an octave, the bottom notes may be as low as the B below the staff. In either case, the extremes of the melodic line may approach the vocal limits of the singers, and it is not uncommon for tuning to vary by as much as a semitone, even within a single song item. At any rate, in an oral tradition in which fixed-pitch instrumentation is not a consideration for singers to pitch their own voices, a total variation of a semitone for what is normally an eight-semitone interval is well within a reasonable range, especially when compared with the melodic lines of other Yirritja-moieties biipurru. These will be examined in detail in Chapter Six.

yuta B

The final Dhalwangu melodic line used in the manikay genre is called the yuta B, and is also very common. This melodic line consists of only two tones; although it is common to begin to sing on the higher note, singers sometimes begin on the lower one, and at any rate the melodic line is a continuing oscillation between the two, most often finishing on the lower note. As with the other Dhalwangu melodic lines, absolute pitch is variable, but a typical example of relative pitches is shown in figure 3.15:

Figure 3.15 - Dhalwangu yuta B melodic line (CD track 18)

Statistically, this two-semitone interval occurred 81% of the time in a sample of 147 song items analyzed; it was a quarter-tone less 19% of the time.

It should also be pointed out that there is a relationship between the notes used in the different melodic lines. The two notes of the yuta B melodic line are the same as the second two notes of the wurrungu B and the second two notes of the yuta A. The top note of the yuta A is the same as the top note of the wurrungu A, while the bottom note of the wurrungu A is the same as the top note of the wurrungu B. In the terminology of Western musicological analysis,
these notes together form a major scale with a diminished seventh and no fourth, notated in figure 3.16:

![Figure 3.16 - The Dhalwangu scale](image)

**Rhythmic Patterns**

The range and diversity of rhythmic patterns employed by Dhalwangu musicians serves as an excellent example of their musical virtuosity. Not only are rhythmic features central to the interaction between singers, the didjeridu player, and dancers, but clapstick patterns can be important markers of particular ritual contexts.

**Song Versions**

There is a tension in the analysis of Dhalwangu song between the discourse about what I have called “song versions” (as described above) and the practice involved in the performance of different versions. For instance, I was often told that each performance of a song subject should conclude with its *bantija* version, and that one should always include the *bantija* version, and yet occasionally a song subject would be sung without a *bantija*. There is also a terminological tension at play, in that occasionally different terms are applied to a particular clapstick pattern by different individuals, or by the same individual at different times. This should not be surprising, as a similar flexibility, contextuality and variability is present in many aspects of Yolngu social life. In undertaking a close analysis of Dhalwangu clapstick patterns, then, I hope to go some way toward a classification of those patterns based on what Dhalwangu say and what they do, without presuming that such a classification is in any sense strictly adhered to and invariable.
Dhalwangu Clapstick Patterns

For analytical convenience and heuristic clarity, I have limited my close analysis to clapstick patterns other than those called *bulnha*, *yindi* and *yuta*. The *bulnha* pattern, as described above, is always a slow, non-metrical beat which accompanies a free-form singing style and an unpatterned didjeridu part. The *yindi* pattern is also non-metrical and accompanies free-form singing and unpatterned didjeridu playing, but the tempo is very fast. These two patterns always take the same form and thus do not require extended analysis. The *yuta* patterns, in contrast, display considerable variability and can employ all manner of rhythmic devices, although there is some evidence to suggest that *yuta* song versions employ clapstick patterns that can be classified as *bantja* (see for example Knopoff 1992:149).

The remaining classifications of clapstick patterns were examined in detail in a total of six complete song series. After careful transcription and analysis, I was able to identify 26 distinct clapstick patterns used by Dhalwangu singers in both ritual and non-ritual contexts. After analyzing these patterns musically, as well as examining what musicians had to say about them, I believe that they can be classified into two main categories: the “regular” pattern (for lack of a better term) and the *bantja*. But before a detailed discussion of this conclusion, let us examine the 26 clapstick patterns.

Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #1: This is an unadorned clapstick pattern with no “separated doubles” or rests (CD track 19). The tempo ranges from 36 beats per minute to 132 beats per minute, with an average of 92.6 beats per minute. When musicians gave this pattern a name, it was overwhelmingly called either *gumurr wanggany* or it was simply called by the name of the song subject (sometimes called the “original”); only in two cases was it called *bantja* and once it was called *yothu*. Both times this pattern was called *bantja* it was immediately preceded by a version of the same subject which was classified as *bulnha*; this indicates that the term *bantja* may simply have been used to indicate that it was time to move on to another version. In song subjects without a *yindi* or *bulnha* version, clapstick pattern #1 was the first pattern used for that song subject 77.4% of the time, but only 34.8% of the time was it first after a *bulnha* or *yindi* version (or both). Thus, most song subjects begin with this pattern.

38 A table correlating clapstick patterns with the song series and song subjects in which they are used is given in Appendix C to this dissertation.
(which may explain why very often it is not explicitly classified) unless the song subject has a bulnha or yindi version. This pattern is used in a wide variety of song subjects in every song series.

**Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #2:** This pattern consists of a combination of “separated doubles” and single beats. As discussed above, the former are not straight eighth notes, but rather like the first two beats of a set of eighth-note triplets. The tempo ranges from 60 to 120 beats per minute:

![Figure 3.17 - Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #2 (CD track 20)](image)

This pattern is always classified as either gumurr marrma or bantja, and is used in a wide variety of song subjects. In 45.45% of cases in which it is used, pattern #2 follows pattern #1 in performance.

**Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #3:** This clapstick pattern, performed at a fast tempo (190 beats per minute), is always classified by singers as either gumurr marrma or bantja. It is only used in a small number of song subjects:

![Figure 3.18 - Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #3 (CD track 21)](image)

**Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #4:** This clapstick pattern is difficult to classify, as Dhalwangu singers may refer to it as bantja, yothu, gumurr wanggany, or
sometimes by no specific term (i.e. “regular”). It occurs in all song series, and has a tempo range of 100 to 130 beats per minute.

Figure 3.19 - Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #4 (CD track 22)

Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #5: This bantja pattern, with a tempo ranging from 85 to 100 beats per minute, is included in several different song series.

Figure 3.20 - Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #5 (CD track 23)

Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #6: This pattern was used by Dhalwangu singers in only one recorded performance, classified as a gumurr marrma for the song subject man’jarr (mangrove leaves). The song was sung using the Gumatj language and a distinctive Gumatj melodic line, and performed at 60 clapstick beats per minute.

Figure 3.21 - Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #6 (CD track 24)

39 In this and other transcriptions of clapstick patterns, solid note heads indicate that the clapstick is being hit on the ground in front of the singer.
Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #7: This clapstick pattern, usually classified as *bantja*, is used with five different song subjects in four different song series, and is performed at a tempo of 160 to 190 beats per minute.

![Figure 3.22 - Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #7 (CD track 25)](image)

Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #8: This pattern is also fairly common, occurring in all song series, and is performed at a tempo of between 96 and 130 beats per minute. Dhalwangu musicians classify it as *bantja*.

![Figure 3.23 - Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #8 (CD track 26)](image)

Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #9: This pattern is used for only one song subject in my recorded sample, *bitj bitj* (a bird seen on the beaches), in the Garrapara song series. Classified as a *gumurr marrma*, this version was performed at a tempo of 120 beats per minute.
Chapter Three
Musical Features of Dhalwangu Manikay

Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #10: This pattern is classified as *bantja*, and is found in a number of different song series. It is performed at a tempo of 84 to 96 beats per minute.

Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #11: This pattern occurred in only one recorded performance, in the song *dharpa* (tree) in the song series at Balambala. The Dhalwangu singers performed this song subject using the language and melodic line of the Ritharrngu people. This song version was not given an explicit classification.
Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #12: This pattern appears twice in recorded performances: once for the song subject *yukuwa* (yam) of the Balambala song series, classified as *ban.tja*; and once for the song subject *ngatha* (rice) of the Gurrumuru *Wängangur* song series, classified as *gumurr wanggany*. Both examples of this pattern are performed between 110 and 114 beats per minute\(^40\).

Figure 3.27 - Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #12 (CD track 30)

Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #13: This pattern, which was not explicitly classified, also appears in two song subjects: *mindung* (mollusc) in the Balambala song series, and *norrj* (algae) in the Girriti song series. In the case of *mindung*, I was told that the clapstick pattern was mimetic of the snail’s movement as it bends its antennae down toward the ground. This pattern is performed at a tempo of between 126 and 140 beats per minute.

Figure 3.28 - Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #13 (CD track 31)

Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #14: This pattern is also considered to be mimetic. It is used for the *ban.tja* version of the song subject *wurrpan* (emu) of the Balambala song series, and represents the emu’s walking motion: several cautious, deliberate steps, followed by three steps in quick succession. This pattern was performed at 180 beats per minute, and was sung using the Manggalili language and melodic line.

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\(^40\) It is interesting to note that *ngatha*, although translated as “rice” in the Gurrumuru song series, is also a generic term for food, and therefore *yukuwa* could also be referred to as *ngatha* (and is referred to as such in the song texts for *yukuwa*).

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Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #15: This pattern was not explicitly classified in two separate performances of the song subject balgurrk (rain), once in the Girriti song series and once in the Yikari song series. Both were performed between 132 and 140 beats per minute.

Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #16: Another mimetic clapstick pattern, this is used as the bantjja version of garkman (frog) in the Girriti series and of dharpa dhimbu (driftwood) in the Yikari series, both performed at a tempo ranging from 110 to 115 beats per minute. In garkman, the pattern, with its beats and rests, represents the frog swimming along and occasionally pausing; in dharpa dhimbu, the same rhythm represents the driftwood floating and stopping.
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Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #17: This pattern is used in only one recorded performance, for the song subject *djikay* (robin, small bird) in the Girriti song series. This version is classified as *bantja* and is performed at 100 beats per minute.

Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #18: This pattern is classified as *bantja*, and is notable because it only occurs in song series associated with Gurrumuru. In the Gurrumuru Wüngangur song series, for example, this pattern is used to follow clapstick pattern #1 (the unadorned pattern) more than 70% of the time. It is consistently performed at a tempo ranging from 114 to 120 beats per minute.
Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #19: This pattern is unique to the song subject *wurrulul* (flies) of the Gurrumuru Wängangur song series; classified as *gumurr marrma* or *bantja*, it may also be referred to as *buduwudun*, which means "flying". The tempo is moderate, at 108 beats per minute.

Figure 3.34 - Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #19 (CD track 37).

Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #20: This pattern is also unique to a single song subject, *dhamburru* (drum) of the Gurrumuru Wängangur song series, and is classified as *gumurr marrma* or *bantja*. It is performed at 114 beats per minute.

Figure 3.35 - Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #20 (CD track 38).

Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #21: This pattern is used for the song subject *djuling* (mouth organ) in the Gurrumuru Wängangur song series. *Djuling* is a song subject of its own, but is sometimes said to be a *bantja* for *dhamburru* (drum): *djuling* immediately follows *dhamburru*, both are musical instruments, and both are performed at the same tempo (114 beats per minute).

Figure 3.36 - Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #21 (CD track 39).
Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #22: This pattern is used for the song subject *dubulu* (cards), also of the Gurrumuru *Wängangur* song series. The rhythm is mimetic of the motion of dealing cards, mimesis which is paralleled in the dance for this song subject. This pattern is performed at 114 beats per minute, and is classified as *gumurr wanggany*, but it is not clear if it is “regular” or *bantja*.

![Figure 3.37 - Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #22 (CD track 40)](image)

Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #23: This pattern occurs in two more song subjects of the Gurrumuru *Wängangur* song series: *barrundhu* (fighting) and *yiki rulanggurr* (putting down the knives). Both are performed at 72 beats per minute, and both are classified as *gumurr wanggany*. *Barrundhu* is mimetic, as the rhythm represents the movements of two people sparring with each other.

![Figure 3.38 - Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #23 (CD track 41)](image)

Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #24: This pattern is similar to clapstick pattern #2; the only difference is the final two “separated doubles” and single beat. It is performed at 120 beats per minute, and is classified as *gumurr marma* for the song subject *dirrmala* (north wind) of the Gurrumuru *Wängangur* song series.

![Figure 3.39 - Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #24 (CD track 42)](image)
Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #25: This pattern is classified as yothu for the song subject dharpa dhupundi (hollow log), and as bantja for the song subject gapu (water), which occur in separate performances of the Garrapara song series. The former is performed at 160 beats per minute, the latter at 190 beats per minute.

Figure 3.40 - Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #25 (CD track 43)

Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #26: This pattern is also used in a song from the Garrapara song series, man’tjarr (mangrove leaves), and is classified as bantja. It is performed at 190 beats per minute.

Figure 3.41 - Dhalwangu clapstick pattern #26 (CD track 44)

Discussion of Clapstick Patterns

What, then, can we conclude from the foregoing notation and analysis? It is important in any discussion of Dhalwangu music to resist the urge to classify rigidly: no matter how much music is analyzed, there will always be exceptions to any rule we care to impose. Every performance of a song series, of a song subject, and even of song item is a unique rendition that will never be reproduced in exactly the same way. Also, there are inevitable differences between individuals based on age, social affiliation and ritual experience that mitigate against the existence of a singular way of understanding Dhalwangu music. This being said, there are some broad patterns that can be identified and some tentative conclusions that can be drawn.
Clapstick pattern #1, the unadorned pattern, can be classified as a "regular" or "original" pattern, although it usually goes without explicit classification. It is by far the most common pattern used to begin song subjects which do not have a bulnha or yindi version. This pattern corresponds to Knopoff's "walking (ngarrunga)" clapstick pattern (Knopoff 1992:148). The only other term used to classify this beat with any regularity is gumurr wanggany, which simply indicates its place in the sequence for that song subject.

A large number of clapstick patterns can be classified as baŋtja because they consistently come after clapstick beat #1 in a performative sequence: #2 and #18 are especially prominent in this regard. Others are classified as baŋtja and follow the bulnha or yindi versions (or both) of a song subject, such as #5 and #7. Apart from their place in the sequence of song versions for a particular song subject, clapstick patterns classified as baŋtja can be identified by purely musical characteristics. The baŋtja incorporates all patterns using "separated doubles", and most patterns using a combination of single beats and rests. It can almost be said that the baŋtja is any clapstick pattern other than clapstick pattern #1.

However, there are enough marginal cases to make such a statement inadvisable. Beats #13, 22 and 23 are the first patterns used for their respective song subjects and are nowhere classified as baŋtja, and yet none of them are an unadorned pattern like clapstick pattern #1. All of them, however, are mimetic. One could conclude, then, either that mimetic patterns may be classified as "regular", or that those song subjects do not have a "regular" pattern and those clapstick patterns listed above should be classified as baŋtja. Conclusion: uncertain.

Clapstick pattern #15 is another interesting case. Again, it is not explicitly classified, but is not an unadorned pattern like clapstick pattern #1. In both cases in which it is used, it is the first version of its song subject performed, and it precedes one of the prototypical baŋtja patterns, clapstick pattern #2. My tendency here, then, is to classify it as "regular".

Clapstick pattern #4 is perhaps the most intriguing. In many cases it looks like a baŋtja, as it comes in a sequence after a bulnha, yindi or the "regular" clapstick pattern #1. In song series associated with Gurrumuru, however, it occurs as the first version of a song subject on some occasions, and follows a bulnha or yindi on others. Once again, it is possible to draw a number of conclusions: it may be baŋtja most of the time but can be "regular" in Gurrumuru song series; or perhaps it is always baŋtja and the "regular" version...
is occasionally left out of a performance. At this stage I prefer to sit on the fence, as there is no conclusive evidence for either classification. Perhaps Dhalwangu musicians apply both classifications to this pattern.

Therefore, although absolutely fixed classifications of clapstick patterns are problematic, it is possible to group the 26 clapstick patterns employed by Dhalwangu singers according to some general tendencies. An unadorned pattern of single beats throughout a song item is always classified as “regular”. Any pattern using a “separated doubles” is always classified as *bantja*. Of the large number of patterns which incorporate a combination of single beats and rests, the majority are *bantja*, a few may be “regular”, and one or two are difficult to classify one way or the other. In any case, the large number of clapstick patterns and the variety of ways in which they are deployed is a clear demonstration of the rhythmic sophistication of Dhalwangu music and Dhalwangu musicians.

*A Dhalwangu Musicology?*

This analysis of Dhalwangu musical structure and form demonstrates clearly that it is a musical tradition which exhibits well-defined organizational principles, even if discourse about those principles may vary from individual to individual and from group to group. Dhalwangu musicians were able to discuss their *manikay* in quite abstract terms, or in great detail about particular performances. Song series were named entities, as were the song subjects which made them up and even the song versions which gave the subjects their rhythmic and textual diversity, and musicians could discuss these concepts with precision. The analysis presented here is an amalgamation of Western musicological analysis and what might be called Dhalwangu musicology.

The Arnhem Land ethnographic literature is not unanimous about the existence of such clear structural principles; the ethnomusicologist Jill Stubington researched Yolngu *manikay* and arrived at quite different conclusions. As I discussed briefly in Chapter One, in her doctoral dissertation Stubington found that “there are no names specifically tied to particular pieces” (Stubington 1978:3) and that “these songs have no tangible existence apart from individual performances which may be captured on sound recordings” (ibid.). While Western music exists on an intellectual plane which allows for abstract discussion apart from scores or particular performances, “manikay have no
individual existence at this level” (ibid.:4). She goes on to state that musical structure is solely determined in performance, with each song item responding to previous song items (ibid.:8), which implies that there are no principles of musical structure outside of performance. Stubington maintains her position on musical structure in subsequent publications (1982:89; 1994:86). In a 1984 review of Clunies Ross and Wild’s *Djambidji*, Stubington writes that the performance of *manikay* is like a jam session, with a very tenuous line between composition and performance, and that song items of the same song subject may vary in terms of length, melodic range, and rhythmic accompaniment (1984:70).

The existence of musical diversity within the same song subject, however, does not necessarily mean that underlying musical structures do not exist. My examination of song versions demonstrates that a single song subject, identified by a single name, may be performed in a wide variety of ways: some are long, some are short, and each uses a distinctive clapstick pattern. Such song versions are not performed at random, nor do they simply build on the previous song item, but rather they are predicated on musical, textual, and ritual principles. My analysis also demonstrates that melodic materials can exhibit a considerable range, but they too are underpinned by a pre-existing Dhalwangu musical theory.

As for musical structure, the Dhalwangu musicians with whom I worked were able to identify named song series and named song subjects. That is not to say that individuals did not sometimes offer different names for the “same” series or subject; indeed, a notable characteristic of Yolngu songs are the large number of names given to ancestral beings and to places (see Berndt 1976:xviii, 43-4; Williams 1986:42-3). Diversity in naming, like musical diversity, does not necessarily imply a lack of structure.

Perhaps the most compelling evidence of the existence of an underlying Dhalwangu musical structure is the fact that the same song subjects are performed with the same musical features in different performances. For instance, in a January 1996 performance of the Yikari song series, Dhalwangu musicians performed a song subject identified as *dirrmala* (north wind); they performed two versions of *dirrmala*, the first using clapstick pattern #4 at a tempo of approximately 115 beats per minute, and the second using clapstick pattern #8 at the same tempo. A performance of the Gurrumuru *Wångangur* song series (cosmologically related to Yikari) in October 1996 also included a song subject identified as *dirrmala*; the first version performed on that occasion
used clapstick pattern #4 at approximately 120 beats per minute, and the second version used clapstick pattern #8 at the same tempo. A January 1996 performance of the Garrapara song series began with a song subject identified as wangubini (cloud): the gumurr wangany version was performed using clapstick pattern #1 at 60 beats per minute, followed by the gumurr marrma version using clapstick pattern #2 at 60 beats per minute. This was followed by the song subject wata maqirriny (south wind), beginning with the gumurr wangany version using clapstick pattern #1 at approximately 100 beats per minute, followed by the gumurr marrma version using clapstick pattern #3 at 190 beats per minute. Another performance of the Garrapara song series, almost a year later, began with the same two song subjects performed in exactly the same way, with the exception that the gumurr marrma version of south wind was performed at 120 beats per minute rather than 100.

Many other examples can be given to demonstrate this kind of musical continuity from performance to performance, which supports the contention that individual song subjects do indeed have an existence on an abstract intellectual level, apart from particular performances, and that there is a well-defined and carefully-articulated Dhalwangu musical structure. That is not to say that there are not variations between performances as well, but only that such variations are circumscribed in particular ways41. It is only through the careful study of Yolngu musical structure, along with the principles of “Yolngu musicology”, that we may better understand the particular performances which we record and analyze.

Other Aspects of Dhalwangu Music

Learning Music

There are many different paths that a young man can take to become a singer, depending on his particular talents and ambitions. A boy may learn to sing by sitting with his father in ceremonies and simply paying attention to what is going on around him. Bangana told me:

Sometimes, kids want to be like their father, so they just sit down with the father and just, you know, in the ceremony, listening. That’s how I

41 Anderson (1995) makes a similar point about his central Arnhem Land materials.
became a singer. I used to sing with my father, I listened, and as I grew up I knew how to sing a lot of songs. Then I had more encouragement, people said “Hey, aren’t you going to carry on in your father’s footsteps?”, you know, as a singer. So I said “Bloody oath, I will,” ’cause I already knew, and I went on from there.

For others, learning to sing comes as a result of accompanying singers on the didjeridu. Knopoff notes that young didjeridu players are continually guided by their elders about the correct way of playing, although they may also innovate new ways of playing in competition with one another (Knopoff 1997:48). Bangana explained to me that “…playing the didjeridu in the middle of twenty other singers, I mean, you know, you’re learning everything”. Likewise, a young man who features prominently as a dancer may also be expected eventually to turn to singing.

"From Dull to Brilliant..."

Howard Morphy’s article “From Dull to Brilliant: The Aesthetics of Spiritual Power among the Yolngu” (Morphy 1989) provided the basis for an in-depth discussion with Bangana about certain features of Yolngu musical aesthetics. Essentially, Morphy argues that the process of painting involves a movement from a “dull” state to a “brilliant” one through the addition of finely-executed cross-hatching. This “brilliant” state is associated in Yolngu thought with the power of the ancestral being which is depicted, and it results in an emotional response of lightness and happiness (Morphy 1989:28-30). Morphy adds that in Yolngu song, too, “…it is possible to identify an underlying structure of content progressing from dark and dull to light and brilliant that is analogous to the transformation that arises in the process of painting (Morphy 1989:31). This statement was borne out in my discussions with Bangana.

I showed Bangana a painting of the Dhalwangu ancestral long-necked tortoise featured in Morphy’s article (ibid., plate 1), painted by Yanggarriny, explained the basic hypothesis of the article, and asked him to comment on its relation to music. He affirmed that, just as a painting “glows” with the addition of cross-hatching, so too does a song series “glow” sonically through its progression from a relatively quiet beginning with a few singers to a gradual crescendo as more and more singers join in, until by the end of the performance there may be a dozen or more men singing at the top of their voices. Although
there are purely musical ways to achieve “brilliance”, the primary way by which this is achieved is through the addition of “more story”, as each singer contributes through song text to the description of an increasingly vivid image of the place which is the subject of the song series (“telling a story” as a dominant aesthetic of Dhalwangu singing will be addressed in greater detail in the next chapter). As Bangana said, “the more I sing [the songs related to the painting in the article], the more that painting is getting brilliant from dull.”

It is worth pointing out that Bangana denied a similar progression within an individual song item. I showed him a transcription I had made of a song item performed by Dhalwangu singers at a funeral, and noted that the song item began with a single man singing softly, followed by a section with didjeridu but no clapsticks, followed by a section where the clapsticks join in along with more singers and a highly patterned didjeridu accompaniment. I put the question to him: is this an example of “dull to brilliant”? He responded that, although he could understand why I thought this from a Western musical perspective, that it was not the case from a Dhalwangu cultural perspective. He went on to say:

Let’s put it this way. This part here [indicating my transcription], we’ll [call] that “from dull to brilliant, stage one”. Then we get to the story part of it, and talk about the roots [the deeper meaning of the song], and talk more. Glow it a bit more. Call that “dull to brilliant, stage two”. [Then tapping the article, open on the table to the Dhalwangu painting we had discussed] “Stage three” would be this.

I can go and grab a didjeridu player and sing you a song, and make it so bloody beautiful and, you know, you can come up on that sheet [my notation] and say, or any other anthropologist, and say “Shit, what a song! This is the most excellent song I’ve ever heard!” And then you go and play it for the old people, he might say “This fella’s talking shit altogether”, you know? I can make you a fool just like that.

Therefore, although the “dull to brilliant” progression is pervasive in Yolngu aesthetics, we should be cautious about applying it to all of our analyses without further discussion and reflection.

Public vs. Sacred Music

The above discussion of a musical “dull to brilliant” progression, together with the discussion of learning to sing, is related to the distinction made between
two categories of songs: “public” bilma (or simply manikay) and “sacred” bilma (madak). The madak bilma are the responsibility of ritual specialists known as djirrikay or dalkarra. Bangana told me that “you cannot touch that bilma unless you’ve been given permission; where, in other words, the old people say ‘O.K., you’re good enough to play this bilma because you know the words and the meaning.” Between the two bilma, he said, “the whole concept changes, even [you] yourself have got to change when you touch that bilma. It makes you a different person altogether, it makes you more mature.” He went on to add that once you learn the madak bilma, you can go even deeper:

They [the old people] might come around and say ‘O.K., come with us to the [secret men’s] business’. Then they turn around and say ‘O.K., we want...to show you a few sacred objects that you’ve been singing about. That’s more of the story, and more explanation from the older people to what you’ve been singing about.

This process of learning more and more about one’s sacred ancestral heritage is one that “never stops”:

What I mean by that is when you have dug your own bones, when you have completed your own bones, when you’ve been there, then you’ve got to dig up your mürüi’s (MMB) bones, and you keep going.

On another occasion, Bangana stated that learning the madak bilma may not necessarily be as formal as being asked to start singing that way. He said that sometimes the old people, recognizing that a man is ready to accept that responsibility, might “force you to do something that is sacred”. He also said that, in some cases, a man must simply take that responsibility and begin to sing the madak bilma on his own initiative. This was also explained to me in diagrammatic form, shown in figure 3.41:

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Figure 3.42 - sacred and public songs

- BRILLIANT
  - dalkarra
    - madak
    - manikay
  - ceremonial bunggul
- DULL
  - public bunggul

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The dalkarra, or ritual expert, is at the apex. On one side are the madak bihma and “ceremonial” (sacred) bunggul, or dances; on the other side are public songs, manikay, and public bunggul. Bangana said that, although both forms of expression are important, the madak side is the basis for the public side: “to make you a good singer, you’ve got to be able to madak”. He then said, adding the words to his diagram, “this side [public], you could almost call it ‘DULL’, and this side [madak] would be ‘BRILLIANT’”. All sacred objects, said Bangana, are brilliant:

That’s when it gets to be, that’s brilliant. I mean, that “dull to brilliant”, you’re saying that from a spectator’s point of view. You know? From just lines, then it glows. You know? But from a Yolngu perspective, it’s what we do, and what we get, where do we end, dull to brilliant. That’s how I interpret dull to brilliant...the things that you have to go through to become brilliant.

Voice Quality

Another aspect of Dhalwangu musical aesthetics has to do with voice quality. Dhalwangu singers recognize at least three categories of voice type: ruwangga (light), marr ruwangga (a bit light) and ngorung (heavy). Although the quality of a person’s voice is unimportant compared with the quality of the words that a singer uses, certain voice types are appropriate for certain melodic lines. The Dhalwangu yuta A melodic line, for instance, is very popular among young people and often elicits an enthusiastic response when used in performance. However, because this melodic line begins on such a high note, it is usually only sung by men whose voice is ruwangga.

Ceremonial context is also an important factor in assessing voice quality, as particular vocal features are essential in certain contexts. In funerals, for instance, it is necessary to sing in a raised voice as a means of showing respect for the deceased. Also important in ritual singing is the clear articulation of song texts. A singer must enunciate the words and phrases of a song clearly and must be careful not to jumble his words together. As Bangana said, “you’ve got to tell the story loud and clear”.
Mayali

Mayali is a word used by Dhalwangu singers which may best be described as “style”. Mayali can be used in the sense of būpurru style, such as Dhalwangu mayali, or as an individual style particular to individual singers\(^{42}\). In one sense, a group’s mayali is a combination of a particular set of melodic lines, the language used for singing, and also the way the words are used. Bangana tried to explain in the following interview excerpt:

B: Let’s look at it from a rock and roll point of view. You look at Jimmy Barnes and Jimmy Cliff.
P: O.K.
B: They both sing “Many Rivers to Cross”.
P: O.K.
B: You notice the difference?
P: Yeah.
B: That’s a lot of difference, eh?
P: Uh-huh.
B: That’s like me and Galarrwuy [Yunupingu, a Gumatj man] singing [the song subject] barramundi.

The term mayali was also used to describe the different vocal parts in Western singing, soprano, alto, tenor and bass: each of these could be said to be a different mayali.

Individual mayali is very much a matter of how a person decides to perform in front of the rest of the group. A singer or dancer, when young, may emulate an older singer or dancer and imitate their style, but at some point will decide to change that style in subtle ways to make it his own. For a singer, this often involves the frequent use of particular words and phrases in particular songs, emphasizing particular aspects of a song subject, as well as the choice of one melodic line over another. As well, a singer may appreciate the mayali of another singer because of his ability to fit his own choice of words and phrases together appropriately with the words and phrases used by others in the same song item, creating a balanced performance.

\(^{42}\) Steven Knopoff addresses this concept (although he does not use the term mayali) in his discussion of “aesthetic determinants” of didjeridu style (Knopoff 1997:47).
Conclusions

This chapter has demonstrated the complexity, variability, and richness of Dhalwangu manikay, a musical tradition that is at the heart of Dhalwangu ritual practice and, indeed, of Dhalwangu identity. The ubiquity of manikay performances demands a careful and detailed consideration of their musical characteristics, an examination that is rewarded by an impressive array of rhythmic complexity and melodic beauty. Far from being a simplistic or random assemblage of musical elements, Dhalwangu manikay has shown itself to be intricately structured and grounded in the sound principles of a Dhalwangu folk musicological theory.

Indeed, part of my aim in this chapter has been to demonstrate the analytical utility of combining an ethnographic approach to the examination of folk models with a musicological approach to the examination of recorded music. Folk models of music do not tell us everything that we wish to know about a musical tradition, and there is always the question of how the folk theory of music may differ from its actual practice in ritual performance. On the other hand, musicological analysis is also incapable of providing all of the answers, especially when the underlying premise of the study is the understanding of the meaning of musical forms for the performers themselves. This point was demonstrated very well in the analysis of Dhalwangu clapstick patterns, where a musicological analysis yielded over two dozen distinctive rhythmic patterns which had to be understood in terms of less than a dozen folk categories. Only through a combination of ethnographic and musicological analysis was it possible to begin to understand the underlying principles of Dhalwangu rhythmic diversity, and I believe that this holds true for other musical features as well.

The central importance of vocalists in Dhalwangu manikay leads us to a consideration of the textual content of the songs, and the poetic principles which form the basis of that content. The next chapter will examine those principles and the ways in which they are deployed by singers during ritual musical performance.
Chapter Four - Textual Features of Dhalwangu Manikay

The essence of a great song cycle is the atmosphere it creates—the imagery of cross-linking associations which weave an intricate pattern where both social and natural environments are blended into a coherent whole. It is not the bald statement that is significant, but the gradual building up by subtle reference to a culminating point of major significance...


In Dhalwangu manikay, the single aesthetic goal which outweighs all others is the evocation of place, and of the ancestral beings that inhabited that place. The singer carefully chooses particular words and phrases for each song subject in order to create a vivid image of a place in the mind’s eye of his audience; Bangana described singing as a process of seeing a vision of a place in one’s mind and describing it through song. This chapter will undertake an analysis of Dhalwangu song texts to demonstrate the range of poetic resources available to Dhalwangu singers and the manner in which they deploy them in ritual musical performance. I will begin with a general discussion of the study of tropes before examining the poetic analysis of song texts in the anthropological literature on Australian Aboriginal people. I will then present a summary of the poetics of the anthropological linguist Paul Friedrich, in particular his theory of polytropy, which I will then apply to the analysis of Dhalwangu song texts which I collected during my fieldwork. I will demonstrate that polytropy is a comprehensive yet flexible analytical framework which allows for a detailed understanding of Dhalwangu poetics.

The Study of Tropes

Generally, when we think of tropes we think of a single trope, metaphor, which has often been characterized as a “master trope” in terms of which others may be understood. Put most basically, the orthodox definition of metaphor consists of a number of constituents: two terms from separate domains, a bundle of shared features, and the topic of the discourse in which the metaphor occurs. One of the terms is continuous with the topic of the discourse, while the other is
discontinuous, and in order to have a metaphor at all the discontinuous term
must be stated along with the topic and/or the continuous term1 (Ortony
1993:5-7). The beauty of metaphor, though, is not to play a word-game to break
up the monotony of language, but to view metaphor as interactive or, as
Samuel Johnson said, as a figure which “gives you two ideas for one” (ibid.:9).
By juxtaposing two terms, we are compelled to consider each in relation to the
other (ibid.).

There are, of course, variations and additions to this orthodox model of
metaphor. For instance, it has been recognized that really apt metaphors rely to
a great degree on the knowledge that one has of the discontinuous term and its
semantic domain, or, in other words, the system of values and ideas shared by
members of a culture who speak a common language (ibid.:10). Metaphors can
also be thought of as bi-directional, with each of two topics providing the
discontinuous term for the other: Kenneth Burke referred to this by stating that
metaphor not only asserts “the thisness of that”, but also “the thatness of this”
(ibid.:11).

Although the orthodox view gives primacy to metaphor as a “master
trope”, other tropes have been recognized and written about. Synecdoche is a
trope in which the two terms are drawn from the same domain in a hierarchical
classification, in which one term replaces another which is either more specific
or more general; “all hands on deck” is an example, where the specific “hands”
is used to represent the more general “sailor”, both being within the same
semantic domain (ibid.:12-3). Metonymy is a trope in the same general class as
synecdoche in that the terms are derived from the same semantic domain, but
the relations are different. Rather than being in a hierarchical system, the
relations are of the types cause for effect, container for contained, or instrument
for agent. An example might be ordering a pint at the pub, when in fact you
want the beer contained in the pint, or using the name Homer to refer to the
Iliad and the Odyssey (ibid.:19-21).

Within anthropology, the prevailing interest has been to go “beyond
metaphor”, to borrow the title of a key text edited by James Fernandez. It is felt
that the emphasis on metaphor above all other tropes has led to a kind of
universalization which impedes understanding and doesn’t fully recognize the

1 To give a simple example, if we are talking about a man named John, we may make the
statement “John is a lion”, where John is both the topic and the continuous term, and lion is the
discontinuous term. In this metaphorical construction, the two terms are from different
domains but share some qualities: both John and a lion are brave, noble, and powerful, and yet
we don’t expect John to have a tail (Ortony 1993:5-7).
multiple paths which the imagination may take in the poetries of different cultures. While recognizing the possibility of the universal mental operations involved with metaphor stressed by cognitive linguists such as George Lakoff, anthropologists such as Fernandez insist on the role of culture in the formation of metaphor, and on the fact that metaphor is one trope among many (Fernandez 1991:8-9).

This brief overview of the study of tropes in anthropology is helpful in order to appreciate the contribution of scholars writing about Australian Aboriginal culture. Although it followed a unique trajectory of its own, the Australian literature on song text analysis utilized many of the same themes and concepts as the study of tropes more generally.

Song Text Analysis in the Australian Anthropological Literature

The anthropologist T.G.H. Strehlow made a significant contribution to our understanding of Aboriginal poetics in his song textual analyses in *Songs of Central Australia*. In his examination of the use of parallelism and antithesis, he notes that, like the rhythmic structure of the two lines of a couplet, the words of the second line either reiterate the subject of the first line, or advance the subject by introducing a new thought. Singers may, for instance, split up an adjective and the noun it describes by putting them in adjacent lines of the couplet, or split two nouns joined by the word “and” and repeat the verb for each, or repeat a line but replace one word by its synonym in the second line (Strehlow 1971:110-1). In these ways, Central Australian singers break a single thought into two parallel lines of a couplet, but at the same time advance the theme which they are developing. Strehlow also points to systematic parallelism and repetition, the use of synonyms to provide a gradual accretion of detail, and thematic variation in order to advance a line of poetic thought (ibid.:164-7). Minor variations from line to line, gradually replacing one word with another, allow a singer to slowly relate an ancestral story through song. In some cases, though, the substitute word has a meaning that is different from the word it replaces; this is an example of metaphor in Central Australian verse, which “invites a comparison in regard to some prominent characteristic feature common to both terms” (ibid.:174).

Another poetic device recognized by Strehlow is the frequent use of *tjurunga* (sacred object) names in song texts; in fact, he reports that the name
given to a single "stanza" of a song can be translated as "tjurunga name". In Aranda ritual practice, the handling and explanation of sacred objects must be accompanied by the correct song texts and the calling of the correct names of the sacred ancestors (ibid.:119-20); other names in song texts stem from the naming activities of the ancestral beings, who gave names to themselves, to the land, and to everything in the area (ibid.:126), and therefore present-day songs must follow that precedent by including those names.

Strehlow also examines the differences between the narration of a myth and its song. While myths list all places associated with an ancestral being, the songs may contain no place names at all; myths detail the "plot" of ancestral events and their relation to other myths, whereas songs only refer to ceremonial or magical actions of the ancestors (ibid.:158-60). Strehlow states that "descriptive, narrative, or lyrical poetry, in terms of our own modern European terminology, is rarely to be found in a pure form in Central Australia", as it is "shackled to the dance and to the rhythm of the song" and "linked inseparably with magic and religion" (ibid.:161).

Another set of poetic devices which Strehlow identifies are compound words which occur in the poetic vocabulary. For instance, he identifies certain compound nouns such as words which signify "serpent lake", "edge of the mountain bluff" and "the sun's flaming face" (ibid.:187); compound adjectives meaning "a burning box gum which is enwrapped by smoke" or "sprouting blossoms on their branch tips" (ibid.:188); and compound verbs which signify "to float in the air" or "to follow up the scent, moving the head from side to side" (ibid.:191-2). These are examples of highly effective poetic devices which "...by their very terseness and compactness, accentuate the stimulating effect of their apt and clever comparisons and identifications" (ibid.:186). Strehlow also notes that these kinds of compound words may constitute the basis of a type of "stock epithet" (cf. Lord 1960) characteristic of Homeric and Serbo-Croatian epic poetry, although such a poetic tradition has not developed in Central Australia due to the fact that Aboriginal verse is tied to magic, religion, and the rhythms of dance (ibid.:189-90). Compound words also occur with some frequency in Arnhem Land songs, and certainly constitute a powerful poetic device. What is less convincing in Strehlow's analysis is his assertion that the ritual context of Central Australian songs somehow keeps it from "developing" into an epic tradition in the Homeric vein. The famous Lord-Parry definition of a formula as "a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea" (Lord 1960:4) does not
seem, on the surface, to exclude a highly metrical sung tradition such as that found in Central Australia, although a closer analysis is necessary to judge the suitability of the Lord-Parry model for this tradition. For Arnhem Land verse, however, the highly variable rhythms of sung texts would seem to be too flexible to fit Lord’s model in the terms which he set out.

Finally, Strehlow turns his analysis to syntactical and grammatical peculiarities of Central Australian verse. Noting that these songs are syntactically very simple, consisting for the most part of finite verbs, nouns as subjects, and a few adjectives and personal pronouns (ibid.:215), he goes on to show that these parts of speech have a number of grammatical features which are specific to song. These include the inconsistency between nominative cases of nouns (ibid:216), the relative paucity of personal pronouns compared to everyday speech (ibid.:219), and a minimum of tenses and inflectional terminations in verbs (ibid.:222). This description bears a striking similarity to Arnhem Land verse in which, according to Berndt, “...noun forms do not vary for class or number and verbs remain invariable for person, although in a few instances they change to indicate time perspective” (Berndt 1966:207).

Margaret Clunies Ross undertakes a similar poetic analysis of materials collected in central Arnhem Land. In her 1978 article entitled “The Structure of Arnhem Land Song-Poetry,” she examines a number of poetic devices employed by singers from central Arnhem Land in ritual musical performance. Chief among these is formulaic variation, where the singer achieves a progression of thought through a variation of semantically comparable terms, either by parallelism or antithesis (Clunies Ross 1978:132). Clunies Ross states that this process of formulaic variation contributes to the overall thematic development of the song (ibid.:133-4), and the criteria influencing the deployment of formulaic variation depend on aesthetic, contextual, and social factors (ibid.:141-3). As for metaphor, she points out that the drawing of connections between units of meaning does not occur in a straightforward way in Arnhem Land song-poetry because of the society’s closed system of knowledge: “the lack of syntactic markers serves either to keep words and their meanings separate or to bring them together, according to the listener’s depth of understanding” (ibid.:138). The large number of polysemous words in Arnhem Land song results in interpretations on various levels from the exoteric to the esoteric, and although there is occasionally a figurative or metaphorical association between referents, this is not often the case (ibid.:139).
In a second article, Clunies Ross analyzes a spoken text and a sung text which concern the same subject matter and which were both performed in the same ritual context. She concludes that the song text is notable for an absence on affixes on verbs “so that there is no indication of tense, aspect, mood or the syntactic functions such as subject-object relations” (Clunies Ross 1983:24). She notes that song texts are predominantly composed of nominal and verbal elements, and have few pronouns, adjectives and adverbs. Additionally, the semantic field of song texts is confined to categories such as alternate names of wangarr beings, place names, group names, and verbal forms denoting the wangarr being’s mode of being and acting (ibid.:25). Clunies Ross concludes:

The grammatical impoverishment of the song-texts combined with their increased nominalisation, which is marked further by comparison with everyday discourse by being lexically distinct from it, results in a particular kind of linguistic remoteness of utterance from both speaker and audience which I believe is a product of Aboriginal cultural constraints upon the free dissemination of knowledge (ibid.:26).

Both Strehlow and Clunies Ross provide highly detailed poetic analyses of the figures of speech used in Aboriginal songs, and are invaluable for comparison with Dhalwangu song texts. However, I wish to deploy a more systematic analytical framework in my analysis of Dhalwangu tropes, which encompasses each of the tropes identified by Strehlow and Clunies Ross.

**Friedrich and “Polytropy”**

Paul Friedrich is an anthropologist, linguist, and poet who has spent his career studying a variety of poetic traditions and developing a detailed theory of poetics. His theoretical concerns can perhaps best be summed up by the subtitle of his 1986 book *The Language Parallax: Linguistic Relativism and Poetic Indeterminacy*. In essence, Friedrich believes that different languages constitute different worlds, and poetic language is where we find the most interesting differences (Friedrich 1986:17). Friedrich’s poetics emphasizes the individual imagination, the poetic potential of language, and the inter-relations between the two (ibid.:16-7), and that poetry provides an ideal entry point into the study of cultural difference (ibid.:43). Friedrich’s notion of “polytropy” is a flexible yet comprehensive analytical framework that has proved useful in the analysis of Dhalwangu songs.
Friedrich defines a trope as “…anything that a poet, politician, pundit, or Everyman uses or employs—whether intentionally or unintentionally—to create poetic texture and effect, poetic meanings, and poetic integration”. (Friedrich 1991:26). He orders this rich poetic potential of language into five categories of tropes: imagistic, modal, formal, contiguity-based, and analogical. None of these macrotropes is a subtype of another; none is derivable from a more comprehensive “supertrope”; and there is no highly-organized relation between them, although each poem depends on the collaboration of all of them. These macrotropes interact closely with the socio-cultural context and the particular poetic tradition, and may be considered to be “local” tropes, whose influence is restricted to a sentence or line of poetry, or “global” tropes which may run through a whole poem or conversation (ibid.:23-5).

In Friedrich’s schema, the image trope “appears to describe and represent various kinds of perceptual images that ‘stand for themselves’” (ibid.:27). This category includes visual images as well as sound and musical images conveyed in poetry (ibid.:27-9).

The modal trope is involved with the expression of mood such as pathos, joy, or irony, and includes such well-known figures of speech as exclamation and apostrophe (an address to the absent as if present or to the dead as if alive). Although they vary in analytical accessibility, Friedrich states that tropes of mood can dominate entire poems because of their rootedness in the poet’s underlying feelings (ibid.:30-1).

Formal tropes involve particular poetic operations affecting line form such as addition, deletion, or commutation. For instance, an alteration in a line’s regular rhythm may serve to emphasize the image of that line; or image-bearing words may also rhyme. Friedrich stresses the centrality of formal tropes and their analysis in any adequate poetics as well as the fact that formal tropes are highly particular to different poetic traditions (ibid.:32-4).

The fourth class of trope, the contiguity trope, includes “…the many kinds of aesthetically effective juxtaposition, collocation, or, more simply, contiguity in time, space, and other dimensions such as social and textual context” (ibid.:34-5). He includes in this class deictics (such as demonstrative pronouns), the inventory (symbols of the same class juxtaposed in a string), anatomical relations, and synecdoche or metonymy (part-whole or whole-part relations) (ibid.: 35-6).
The final category of macrotrope is the analogical trope, or metaphor, based on an aesthetically effective and culturally appropriate resemblance between one thing and another (ibid.:37-8).

For Friedrich, these five categories of macrotrope form horizontal continua which are cross-cut by vertical continua within each category, in which tropes range from greater abstraction and expansion to greater concreteness and condensation; these two poles may also be referred to as “extraction of gist” and “maximization of suggestiveness”. The former, writes Friedrich, “is often cryptic or paradoxical; that is, in terms of information, redundancy has been reduced, the text has been cut, and, as one consequence, ambiguity has been piled on ambiguity” (ibid.:41). The latter trope “makes a poem open out, suggest, and yield many intimations” or draws a poem to the point “where the reader wants to complete it” (ibid.:42). This interconnected lattice of tropes can be used for a more comprehensive poetics than previous studies which examine only metaphor, and can be applied to the issues of contemporary anthropology. As Friedrich writes, “between the psyche of the unique individual, whether Poet or Everyman, and a society’s ideologies and myths there exists a continuous, dialectical interplay via the mediation, among other things, of figures such as irony, metaphor, and synecdoche” (ibid.:54).

**Polytropy in Dhalwangu Song**

To demonstrate the usefulness of polytropy as an analytical framework, I will deploy each of Friedrich’s five categories of macrotrope in the analysis of Dhalwangu songs. In doing so, I have a number of inter-related aims: to elucidate something of the beauty of Dhalwangu poetics, to provide a richer understanding of Dhalwangu tropes than has yet been achieved, and to demonstrate the effectiveness of Friedrich’s analytical scheme. Rather than being narrowly reductive, it allows for a range of flexible categories of trope which allows the richness of Dhalwangu poetics to come through.

**Image Tropes**

Dhalwangu singers use a variety of image tropes in their song texts, which are primarily visual and auditory. Visual imagery is a macrotrope underlying all
Dhalwangu song, as a singer’s main aesthetic goal is to construct a vivid image of a place in the mind’s eye of his audience. Many visual image tropes are richly evocative of the different song subjects which they describe. A good example of visual image tropes is provided by the song gapu (water) from the Girriti song series, the musical features of which were described in the previous chapter. This water, known as Gularri, is one of the most important song subjects in the entire Dhalwangu musical repertoire, as all human life at Gangan is understood to have its origin in those waters. The ancestral beings Barama and Lany’tjung emerged from the water, and used the water to create the rangga (sacred objects) which are the foundation of Dhalwangu ritual life. When they had completed their creative tasks, Barama and Lany’tjung returned to the waters whence they came, and are believed to live there still. Due to its central importance in Dhalwangu cosmology, then, an apt description of the water is pivotal in any performance of the Girriti song series. Singers develop their visual imagery of the water over the course of several versions of the song subject, each version describing a slightly different movement of the water. In the bulnha (slow) version, the song texts describe the water bubbling up from underground at the creek’s headwaters:

\[
\begin{align*}
gapu & \text{ marrtji nyirrnyirryun} \\
gapu & \text{ marrtji balanyirrnyirryun} \\
Gularri & \text{ marrtji dharrwanga} \\
buryun & \text{ marrtji walma manggangur manggalilingur}
\end{align*}
\]

water / bubbling / bubbling
water / bubbling / bubbling
Gularri / bubbling / coming
coming out / coming / coming / from the ground / from the ground

After several more bulnha song items, the singers switch to the next version, the yindi (big or important), in which the song texts describe the waters

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2 All of the song texts in this dissertation were transcribed and translated with the assistance of Bangana Wunungmurra. In some cases, a single word was translated differently on different occasions: for instance, the word marrtji, defined by Zorc as “go, come, walk” (Zorc 1996:180), was translated by Bangana as “fly”, “swim”, or some other “action” word depending on the song subject in question. As I am interested in Dhalwangu poetics and not the literal translations of words, I have retained Bangana’s translations even though some words may have more linguistically-accurate translations.
beginning to flow rapidly. To underscore the dramatic nature of the water’s bursting forth, the singers begin the song item with the bulnha clapstick pattern and using words appropriate for the bulnha version; then, mid-way through the song item, the clapstick pattern changes abruptly to the fast yindi beat along with a new set of visual images describing the water’s movement as it carries away debris in its path:

[bunlha beat] Gularri djibulyibulyun
Gularri djibulyibulyun
nguruku bawulunarawa oh
[yindi beat] nguruku bawulunarawa
dharrwanga marrtji Dharrarranydji
Gularri ngabawarrakbarrakun djibulyibulyun
lalalalalalala/ yirri
nhä ngarra marrtji gamanytja lalanginynha buwarrbuwarr dhumbuyumbuny

[bunlha beat] Gularri/ bubbling
Gularri/ bubbling
for/ flowing/ oh
[yindi beat] for/ flowing
bubbling and flowing/ bubbling and flowing/ Dharrarranydji [Gularri]
Gularri/ bubbling and flowing/ bubbling and flowing
lalalalalalala/ yirri [“chorus” representing the sound of the water]
what/ I [am]/ carrying/ carrying/ cypress pine/ cypress pine/ cypress pine

This is a remarkable example not only of vivid visual imagery, but of a compelling iconicity between visual images and sound texture, as musical features (increased tempo of the clapstick pattern) reflect the imagery of the song texts.

The singers continue to develop their description of the waters in the next two bantja (arm) versions of the gapu song. In these versions, the water is described as turning and stopping in different places in the valleys around Gàngàñ:

lalalala wirwiryun lalalala wirwiryun
Nuwanggala wirwiryun dhuburuwuy gapu
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gadinwulkurrung Mutjbuy warray

gadinwulkurrung Babalawuy Garnnggarawuy

lalalala [sound of the water]/ turning/ lalalala/ turning
Nuwanggala [Gularri]/ turning/ of the valleys/ water
stopping/ at Mutj/ warray³
stopping/ at Babala/ at Garnnggarma

This suite of songs about the waters of Gangan concludes with a related
song subject called gapu gadin (calm water). The visual imagery in this song
describes the waters having finally come to a rest at Gangan and other places
around Gangan:

gadinbuy ngurranhan gapu ngunhu Mutjbuy

gadinbuy ngurranhan gapu Ganganbuy
lalala lalala
bagadja gadinjhin Garnnggarma

calm calm water over there at Mutj
calm calm water at Gangan
lalala lalala
also calm [at] Garnnggarma

The gapu song provides a superlative example of the deployment of visual
imagery by Dhalwangu singers to poetically develop a theme. In each
musically-distinct version of this important song subject, a different style of the
water’s movement is described as it travels from the headwaters to Gangan,
creating an evocative picture of this scene for the listeners. Visual imagery is a
central component of the overarching aesthetic goal of Dhalwangu song, the
skillful evocation of place.

Sound imagery is another trope in the class of image tropes which is a
frequent feature of Dhalwangu song. In addition to providing vivid
descriptions of the appearance of a wide variety of flora, fauna and other
features of the ancestral landscape, singers must also describe their sounds. We
have already seen in the above examples that the sound of the water is

³ Warray is a song word with no specific meaning, often used by singers to complete a phrase.
represented in the “chorus” of the *yindi* version by the mimetic phrase *lalalala yirri*. This example can be expanded to include other ancestrally-significant bodies of water. Although the water at Gângan, *Gularri*, is considered the most important, Dhalwangu people also sing about three other kinds of water: *Mambuynga*, the ocean at Gurrumuru (Arnhem Bay); *Mungurru*, the ocean at Garrapara (Blue Mud Bay); and *Ngulburr*, a “bitter” water where the fresh water from Gângan meets the salt water at Blue Mud Bay. Although *Ngulburr* does not have a distinctive “chorus” in its *yindi* version, the other two do, with *yarr yarr yarr yarr* representing the sound of the *Mambuynga* and *bur djar djar djar djar bur* representing the sound of the *Mungurru*. Although these words are not conventional examples of onomatopoeia, in Dhalwangu thought they are strongly mimetic.

The various songs relating to water are not the only ones which incorporate sound image tropes. Frequently, the distinctive unison “chorus” section of the *yindi* song version consists of song words that are said to represent the sound of the song subject; therefore, they are good examples of the use of sound imagery to contribute to the musical and textual evocation of place. Take, for example, the song *ratjuk* (barramundi) from the Girriti song series. Singers typically describe the fish swimming in the waters at Gângan, snapping at things floating in the water such as pieces of bark and feathers. The *yindi* version of this song includes the “chorus” *dhawudidididi dhawu*, which is said to represent the snapping noise made by the fish. The song *dharpa gutjulu* (hollow log), of the Garapara song series, includes a *yindi* version which has the “chorus” *bad nyirr nyirr nyirr nyirr nyirr bur*, which represents the sound of sea water flowing through the middle of the hollow log. In the *yindi* version of the *gawangalkmirr* (stingray) song of the Yikari song series, the “chorus” *gawk murr murr murr murr yirr* represents the sound of the stingray moving through the water with its aggressive movements. Thus, sound imagery such as that found in the unison “chorus” section can be used to great effect by Dhalwangu singers. The mimetic words themselves compliment the rest of the song text, which also concerns each particular subject, and underscores that emphasis with a parallel musical iconicity of the sound itself. In Dhalwangu sound imagery, song text and image merge into a single unified expression which evokes the essence of the ancestral beings.
Modal Tropes

As we have seen, image tropes contribute significantly to the aesthetic goal of Dhalwangu musical performance: the evocation of ancestral places. When a performance of a song is particularly vivid, it often causes people, especially old people, to think of that place and of deceased relatives who used to live there. This rouses powerful emotions of nostalgia for the place and of sorrow for the deceased, and often leads to weeping and, for women, a style of keening known as *ngąthi* (literally, crying). In Dhalwangu musical performances, then, there is a sense in which mood is a dominant trope underlying a song series as a whole, and nostalgia and sorrow are its most common manifestations. In a more specific sense, though, modal tropes do not appear in song texts with anything like the regularity of image tropes.

The most typical kind of modal trope is one which is said to represent worrying, either about people or about things, and this worrying is most consistently expressed in the *yulta* (new) versions of different song subjects (Knopoff 1992:144). These tropes of worrying can take a variety of forms, but always occur in the unison “chorus” section of the *yulta* song. In the *yulta* version of the *garrurru* (flag) song, for instance, an analogy is drawn between the flag which flew from the mast of the ancestral Macassan ship and a young Dhalwangu man who was being taken away to Darwin to serve a jail term. Like the Macassan ship, the young man was perceived by the man who created the song as going on a long journey, and his well-being was of considerable concern. The song texts preceding the “chorus” sections describe the flag travelling to far-off cities and the singer’s yearning for it to return “home” to Gurrumuru. In the “chorus” section, the metaphor is developed to its fullest expression, as is the modal trope of worrying:

```
 ya dhayindu ngatjalang minytjinytja gathugay Burrngawuy
 ya dhayindu ngatjalang minytjinytja Guwalinggawuy dhalakalalala

 ya/ this/ for us/ that colour/ son/ of Darwin
 ya/ this/ for us/ that colour/ of Darwin/ flag dancing in the wind
```

4 For a detailed account of *ngąthi* as a musical genre, see Magowan (1994a).
5 Borsboom (1978:167) notes that sorrow and nostalgia are the dominant emotions when a group is about to present a *Maradjiri* pole to its recipients in a central Arnhem Land ritual.
In this song text, the word \textit{ya} is a word which signifies worrying; “that colour” is a term which refers both to the flag and to the young man; “of Darwin” refers to his impending journey; and the song word \textit{dhalakalala} is said to represent the flag dancing in the wind as it flies from the mast of the ancestral Macassan ship.

The flag song is also the subject of a second \textit{yuta} version which also develops the trope of worrying. The man who invented this song, Gundhu Wunungmurra, was living at Numbulwar and was trying to heal his \textit{gutharra} (sister’s daughter’s son), who was quite ill. He was very concerned for his recovery, and afterward invented this song. In the \textit{wangarr} story, discussed fully in Chapter Eight, the Macassan ship left Numbulwar and travelled around the Arnhem Land coast to its final destination at Gurrumuru, where it dropped its anchor. Gundhu used the metaphor of the flag to represent his grandson whom he wished could travel, like the flag on the ship, back to his true home at Gurrumuru. The “chorus” section uses this song text:

\begin{verbatim}
\textit{ya gutharra warwu ngarra yawugay}
\textit{ya gutharra warwu ngarra yawugay dha\_la\_la\_a\_a\_
\textit{wurranydjunangur}
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
\textit{ya/ gutharra [ZDS]/ worry/ I/ worry}
\textit{ya/ gutharra [ZDS]/ worry/ I/ worry/ flag dancing in the wind/ at the top of the mast}
\end{verbatim}

As in the previous \textit{yuta} version, in this “chorus” the word \textit{ya} is used to signify worrying, along with its derivative, \textit{yawugay}, and an alternate term, \textit{warrwu}. Again, worrying emerges as a dominant underlying trope throughout the entire song and achieves its most specific expression in the “chorus”. Other \textit{yuta} versions of other song subjects also express concern for people or things, and use similar song textual means to poetically articulate that mood.

Dhalwangu singers may also use a number of other modal tropes to convey emotion associated with a song subject. The song \textit{nhina} (sitting) of the Gurrumuru song series, describes Dhalwangu ancestors sitting in the shade of a tree at their home, expressing both a sense of comfort and a sense of nostalgia for that place:

\begin{verbatim}
\textit{warrawlil nhina yarrarrayun malinggurulil}
\textit{nhina yarrarrayun maninyinydjirr golyun nhina}
\end{verbatim}
in the shade/ sit/ comfortably/ in the shade
sit/ comfortably/ feeling at home/ stopped/ sit

In this song text, Bangana explained the term *golyun*, “stopped”, as meaning that your soul, your whole being, is stopped in that country, and equated it with the English expression of “leaving your heart” somewhere. Nostalgia is certainly an emotion which is implicit in a great deal of DhaJwangu musical performance, as all song series are about places in ancestral country and the goal of the singer is to re-create an image of these places through poetic description in song text.

In the *dhamburru* (drum) song and the closely related *djuling* (mouth organ) song, the dominant mood is one of fun, as singers describe their DhaJwangu ancestors performing on these introduced instruments with their Macassan guests:

*wayangguli miwurryun wagalwuy ngurrukuy Gañburrurrwuy*
drum/ sound/ for fun/ from/ from Gañburrurr

*djuling wakalwuy djuling djulingba djulingba*
mouth organ/ for fun/ mouth organ/ mouth organ/ mouth organ

By contrast, the *yiki* (knife) song expresses a mood of anger, as the ancestral figure Birrinydji takes up his knives and prepares to fight, brandishing them in the air over his head:

*nirrpunyda ngayi bilaram bilyun yukurr*
gurrurruyun djirrmilyun latjarra wurrminyba

head/ him/ angry/ turn/ turn
angry/ angry/ knife/ knife

In this song text, the expression “head...turn” means that inside his head Birrinydji’s attitude changes and he gets angry. This mood of anger is further underscored in other song texts, which describe him performing the stingray dance; the stingray is considered to be extremely aggressive, and the stingray dance itself can be performed in a very dangerous manner with brandished
swords and spears serving as props. We can see, then, that the performance of songs such as yiki can express anger, complementing other, more dramatic performative means such as dance.

Formal Tropes

Formal tropes, in the sense they have in the Western poetic tradition, are difficult to identify in Dhalwangu song texts. Unlike Western poetry, Dhalwangu song does not make use of figures such as metre or rhyme, which carry such a heavy poetic load in much of our verse. As Friedrich notes, however, formal tropes and their meanings are particular to each poetic tradition (Friedrich 1991: 33), so we must turn our analysis to the unique formal tropes which are so important to a complete understanding of Dhalwangu song.

Different kinds of formal tropes are frequently employed by Dhalwangu singers in their construction of song texts, collocating and juxtaposing terms in an aesthetically effective way which allows the singer to develop a theme over the course of a song item or several song items. It is possible to identify at least six categories of trope in this class:

1. repetition: This trope involves the straightforward repetition of a line of song text, which underscores the importance of the subject of the song. Not only do individual singers repeat song texts in this way, but a second singer may repeat a line of song text used by the first. Here are two examples, the first from the song wangubini (cloud), and the second from the song wata mađirriny (south wind):

   wululu gungubuntja
   wululu gungubuntja
   cloud/ that cloud
   cloud/ that cloud

   mađirriny mađirriny wata
   mađirriny mađirriny wata

   wind/ wind/ wind
   wind/ wind/ wind

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2. **synonymic repetition**: In this trope, singers use a number of different words which have the same meaning. Like repetition, this trope emphasizes the importance of the song subject, but uses a broader range of terms. The example below comes from the song subject *gapu*, which describes the ocean at Blue Mud Bay which is called *Mungurru*:

```
Mungurru yukurr diwadiwayun maniniwanga
maniniwanga gayalawanga bardhunmirrin
Mungurru/ is/ moving/ moving
moving/ moving/ moving
```

3. **synonymic parallelism**: This formal trope is similar to synonymic repetition in that it underscores a concept through repetition, but each line is similar to the next by adopting the same poetic form with a slight variation. Take, for example, a series of lines from the *wata mad.irriny* (south wind) song:

```
wululungur wata
banambarrngur wata
gungubunngur wata
nabingangur wata
from the cloud/ wind
from the cloud/ wind
from the cloud/ wind
from the cloud/ wind
```

The translation of the song text is the same from line to line, as the singer uses a number of alternate terms to express the concept “from the cloud” in a number of variations on the same form.

4. **formulaic parallelism**: In this trope, the singer uses a series of lines with parallel poetic form, but develops his theme by making a slight conceptual change in each line. In this way, the different concepts are brought together as analogues of one another through their parallel expression. The following example is taken from the song *gapu gun.bilk* (calm water), describing the calm ocean which surrounds a number of different islands in Blue Mud Bay:
In one memorable performance of the song *makani* (jewfish), Bangana developed an unusually lengthy song text which provides an excellent demonstration of both synonymic and formulaic parallelism. Line after line, each using the same melodic structure, Bangana developed his theme by listing a wide range of places along the coast of Blue Mud Bay, from Garrapara in the north past Numbulwar in the south. Each of these are beaches which were created in the *wangarr* creative era by the ancestral jewfish, and in the song the fish is described as swimming past them.

```
ngarrayngarray ngarray ngarray ngarray ngarray
wuyupurrun ngarrak Buburrungunydja
wuyupurrun ngarrak Gumbulangunydja
galitjirrmun ngunhu Aluwarrangunydja
galitjirrmun ngunhu Amadhadhitjungunydja
galitjirrmun ngunhu Nyinybiningunydja
wuyupurrun ngarrak dhawada Aluwarrangunydja
wuyupurrun ngarrak dhawada Marrurrungunydja
Gurrundul wuyupurrunandu Rulutjibirr Ruluyambarrngunydja
galitjirrmun ngunhu Wulmu Yililangunydja
galitjirrmun ngunhu Miwulungunydja
ləywə ngarra Malmarra Rambangangunydja
ləywə ngarra Nguluṅgu Wuyayingunydja
dhayindu dhawada Aluwarrangunydja
```

jewfish/ jewfish/ jewfish/ jewfish
gone/ my/ [beach] of Buburru
gone/ my/ [beach] of Gumbula
gone/ my/ [beach] of Nawurapu
getting closer/ over there/ [beach] of Aluwarra
getting closer/ over there/ [beach] of Amadhadhitj
getting closer/ over there/ [beach] of Nyinybini
gone/ my/ beach/ of Aluwarra
gone/ my/ beach/ of Marrurrru
Gurrundul/ gone/ Rulutjibirr/ [beach] of Ruluyambarr
getting closer/ over there/ Wulmu/ [beach] of Yilila
getting closer/ over there/ [beach] of Miwul
along/ 1/ Malmarra/ [beach] of Rambannaga
along/ 1/ [beach] of Ngululu/ [beach] of Wuyayi
this now/ beach/ of Aluwarra (different from the above Aluwarra)
Sometimes, the same formula is varied with different names for the same place, such as Buburru and Nawurapu, and Malmarra, Rambannga and Ngulul. In other lines, the same formula is used with the names of different places, such as Aluwarra and Amadhadhitj. In either case, Bangana skillfully used a common DhaJwangu poetic device to great effect as he described the movements of the ancestral jewfish up and down the coast.

5. repetition within a word: Another formal trope which may be used by DhaJwangu singers is a pattern of repetition of syllables within a single word. This is a feature of song texts which serves to poetically embellish that word and therefore to draw attention to it and its significance. A good example of this was mentioned in the above discussion of the flag song, garrurru. Let us examine the following song text from the gumurr marrma version of this song:

\[ dhala \ldots dhala dhala marrangmatji \]

flag dancing in the wind/ flag/ flag/ flag

As we can see, the word \( dhala \) is translated as “flag”, the subject of the song and a central symbol of Dhalwangu identity at Gurrumuru. In the above song text, the word can be extended by repeating the final syllable to produce the word \( dhala\ldots dhala \), which is also translated as “flag”, a poetic device drawing attention to that word and to its cultural importance. If the final syllable is repeated a number of times in succession (and sung with a strict rhythm terminating with a syncopated syllable), the meaning of the term changes: not only does \( dhala\ldots dhala \) represent the flag itself, but also the flag’s graceful motion as it moves in the wind at the top of the mast of the ancestral Macassan ship. This additional semantic load is the result of the formal trope of repetition.

6. the unison “chorus”: The unison “chorus” has already been discussed in its relation to both image and modal tropes; additionally, it must be understood that the “chorus” also functions as a formal trope. Yolngu song is a musical tradition based on improvised\(^6\) song texts and a performance style which allows each singer to sing with a measure of independence from others

\(^6\) By the term “improvized”, I must stress that I do not mean that a person may sing whatever comes to mind in a disorganized or chaotic way. Rather, each singer draws on his knowledge of the song subject and its cosmological context, in addition to the ritual context of the performance, in order to create a song text which is suitable for both the song subject and the occasion.
performing with him. The “chorus” section, which features in the yindi and the yuta versions of a number of song subjects, represents a departure from this improvized performance style. Unlike the majority of song texts, the “chorus” is a fixed text performed in unison by all singers, which itself is a formal trope which draws the attention of the listener to the content of the “chorus”.

Contiguity Tropes

In Friedrich’s schema, contiguity tropes represent a broad assemblage of figures of speech of a variety of types. He picks out four for careful consideration: deictics or “pointers”, including demonstrative pronouns; the inventory of juxtaposed symbols of the same class (as found so often in Whitman); tropes of anatomical relations; and metonymy and synecdoche, or part-whole and whole-part relations (Friedrich 1991:35-7). Each of these may be found in some form in Dhalwangu song texts.

Deictics in Dhalwangu song must be understood as indicative of a broad conceptual underpinning of ritual musical performance. When a singer invites his audience to see an ancestral being “over there”, he is in effect re-creating ancestral place and ancestral time: there is a sense in which people are made to feel as though they are present at the time and place of the ancestral events described and evoked through song. The idea of “going to a place” and “being part of a place” through song is one that Bangana spoke about extensively in our discussions of Dhalwangu song. The use of deictics, then, reiterates this philosophy underlying the whole idea of ritual musical performance.

In the gapu song, described above, singers describe the waters of Gangan as they flow from the headwaters and stop at a number of places in Dhalwangu country. The use of a demonstrative pronoun such as ngunhu (“over there”) invites listeners to picture these waters in their own mind’s eye:

\textit{ngunhu gulgurrun Malalmi}
\textit{Garnggarma warray Bulumuwiliya gadinwulkurrun}

over there/ stopped [at]/ Malalmi
[at] Garnggarma/ warray/ [at] Bulumuwiliya/ stopping
Chapter Four
Textual Features of Dha\lwangu Manikay

The song *matha* (talking) describes Dha\lwangu ancestors at Gurrumuru sitting and talking with one another. In the song text below, the singer invites the audience not to look at something “over there”, but rather to hear the talking around them; additionally, he uses the phrase “we talk” to further develop this concept. Although the song text does not use a demonstrative pronoun, it is nonetheless an apt deictic which serves as an effective contiguity trope:

```
wuypum ngali wanga liyawinydjan Gobaniny
marrtjila ngaku Bambanglil
```

talking/ we/ talk/ at/ Gobaniny [alternate name for Gurrumuru]
talk/ hear/ at Bambang [alternate name for Gurrumuru]

Another example from the song *yiki* (knife) has the singer using his song text to ask a rhetorical question about their activities:

```
nhathin dhay'yi gulgurrunanytja gurrngany ngalimurrung mayawada
why/ this/ cut/ shade/ our/ mayawada [name of the shade]
```

The meaning of this text was explained as “Why should we cut down our shade? In order to make our camp”; the use of the demonstrative pronoun “this” along with the possessive pronoun “our” is a form of deictic which expresses an affinity in place and time between the performers and their ancestors.

The second form of contiguity trope described by Friedrich, the inventory, is widespread in Dha\lwangu song, particularly in the juxtaposition of a string of place names associated with the place sung about in a song series. The use of many different place names for the same place, in combination with a number of place names of other cosmologically-related places, is a recurrent feature of song texts; the existence of names is an important aspect of Yolngu land tenure and identity, and the contiguity trope of the inventory is a prominent poetic means to articulate it. Sometimes Dha\lwangu singers mention only Dha\lwangu places in this way:

```
maripuy ngalimurrung ngalyun marrtji barrngbarrng Birrinydiwa yakumirr
Barrthanaka Malula Yananbilngawuy
```

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of the war/ for us/ raising/ raising/ torn one/ for Birrinydji/ with the name/ Barrthanaka/ Majula/ of Yananbilnga

This excerpt, from the *garrurru* (flag) song of the Gurrumuru song series, describes the torn flag which Birrinydji carries into war being raised up the mast of the Macassan ship; Barrthanaka, Majula and Yananbilnga are all alternate names for Gurrumuru. In other cases, a Dhalwangu singer may juxtapose the names of Dhalwangu places along with the names of the places belonging to other people who share a body of cosmology. Take, for example, these song texts from the *garrurru* song, each line sung by a different singer but put together one after the other in the performance of a single song item:

\[nhakurr ngarra gilungdja\]

where [do]/ I/ sail

\[bayun ngarra dhanytja Burrgun Yaliyal\]

leaving/ I/ this/ Burrgun/ Yaliya [names of Manggalili country]

\[djalay ngarra Galupa djalay ngarra dharring marngarr miwatigum ngarra gunda Rraywa Bagitju Warnggarbarra gilung ngarra\]

sail/ I/ Galupa [Gumatj country]/ sail/ I/ [to] places where the flag has been/ sailing [by]/ I/ rock/ Rraywa/ Bagitju/ Warnggarbarra [names of a rock at Galupa]/ sail/ I

\[buwabum ngarra wurruku Ngulburrngur bayun ngarra wurruku Marranbalany marrdutjurrurandu ngarraku garrurru maripuydhan gabalayangal Barrthanaka Malula Yananbilnga\]

sail/ I/ will/ from Ngulbur [Nundhirribala country]/ leaving/ I/ will/ people of Ngulbur/ returned/ my/ flag/ of the war/ that represented/ Barrthanaka/ Malula/ Yananbilnga/ [alternate names for Gurrumuru]
This sequence of song texts is truly remarkable for a number of reasons, not the least of which is the high level of creative interaction between several different singers developing a common theme. What concerns us here, however, is the prolonged inventory of places named in the song texts, each of which is associated with the journey of the Macassan ship from Numbulwar to Gurrumuru. In fact, this single song item names country belonging to almost all of the Yirritja moiety bûpurru who have rights in the Birrinydjii cosmology. By juxtaposing these names, the singers are implicitly articulating a contiguous relationship between those places: each of them served an important role as a stopping-place for the Macassan ship (although, in Dhalwangu thought, Gurrumuru is first among equals by virtue of the fact that the ship dropped its anchor there). It has been long recognized in the Arnhem Land ethnographic literature that ancestral narratives connect a number of places along an ancestral track; what has not been recognized is the central place of the contiguity trope of inventory in the poetic articulation of this connection.

The third variant on the contiguity trope discussed by Friedrich, anatomical relations, is also pervasive in Yolngu thought. A number of anthropologists working in Arnhem Land have commented on the use of body-part imagery by Yolngu in discussing various aspects of the social and natural environment. Yolngu also use anatomical terms in their discussions of music and musical performance: the melodic line is referred to by the word liya (head); certain song versions are known as bantja (arm) and gumurr wanggany and marrma (chest one and two); important names used in song texts and more broadly in ritual are known as likan (elbow); and Bangana once described

7 John Rudder’s doctoral dissertation provides an excellent discussion of this topic (Rudder 1993:185-6).
singing as involving *mel* (eye), *mulkurr* (head) and *dhurrdhurr* (heart) in the sense that a singer must visualize a scene, think about it, and then sing from the heart. Knopoff reports the use of anatomical tropes in relation to musical discourse amongst musicians in Yirrkala: *yutunggurr* (thigh) for a single song verse; and *ngurruwanga* (nose-speech) for the short vocal introduction and terminating vocal coda to a song item (Knopoff 1992:141). This affinity for using anatomical images is also carried over into the realm of song texts.

The head tends to be the part of the body used most as an anatomical image in Dhalwangu song texts. For instance, figures of speech including the head often occur when singing about substances that affect the body, such as tobacco and alcohol:

*warray warray oh nirrbunytja warray*

*tobacco/ tobacco/ oh/ head/ warray*

*nirrbu ngarrany wudhun wurruku wulawuku dhiyangga nganitjiri*

*head/ me/ hit/ will/ mind/ with this/ alcohol*

The first of these excerpts refers to the head-rush a person gets when they first smoke tobacco, and the second is an image which describes the effect of alcohol as actually hitting the mind. In the song *manydjarrka* (cloth), which describes the activities of two “cloth experts” who make pillows and quilts out of cloth, the head is again used in an image, this time describing sleep:

*munygungal ngarrany yakurru yuntjurrungu warray*

*covered/ me/ with sleep/ my mind/ warray*

Once again, the focus of sensation is described as existing in the mind of the Dhalwangu ancestors at Gurrumuru. A final example of the head as an image involved with sensation occurs in the song *yiki* (knife), already discussed above as a modal trope:

*latjarra latjarra mimbungala nirrbunytja bilyun bilaram gurrurravyun*

*knife/ knife/ knife/ head/ turn/ angry/ angry*

In this anatomical trope, the image of the head “turning” is understood to mean that Birrinydji’s attitude changes as he prepares to fight.
The head also serves as an anatomical trope for images which do not involve human sensation. A good example occurs in the song *garrurru* (flag), in which the flag is described by singers as flying from the top of the mast of the Macassan ship as it sails around the Arnhem Land coast to Gurrumuru:

\[\text{ngalyunbu marrtji nirrpulil banganalil wu} \text{]\umlil madtjuwi maripuy ngalimurrung garrurru}\]

raising/ raising/ to the top of the mast/ to the top of the mast/ to the top of the mast/ top of the mast/ of the war/ our/ flag

The term *nirru* (head) is used as an anatomical metaphor to describe the top part of the mast, along with a number of alternate terms. The frequency of these tropes in Dhalwangu song texts reflects the more general pervasiveness of anatomical tropes in Yolngu culture.

The fourth variant of the contiguity trope is synecdoche or metonymy, defined by Lakoff and Turner as “an evocation of an entire schema via the mention of a part of that schema” (Lakoff and Turner 1989:100). They give a number of examples of metonymy, including “author for works”, “effect for cause”, and “part for whole” (ibid.:102-3). Although not widespread, it is possible to identify several uses of metonymy in Dhalwangu song texts, especially in the Gurrumuru song series. One kind of metonymic trope used is for the singer to refer to a place, such as Gurrumuru, by reference to some aspect of its cosmological significance. In the example below, from the song *nhina* (sitting), the singer refers to Gurrumuru as a whole by referring to “the anchor”, an important symbol in Dhalwangu cosmology:

\[\text{marrngur ngali dhanytja nhina balangubatji gaygayngur}\]

on/ we/ this/ sit/ anchor/ on the anchor

Another example of this type of metonymy is also from the song *nhina*; this time, singers refer to Gurrumuru as “the octopus”, another important ancestral being associated with that place. This example, however, reveals a metonymy within a metonymy: the singer here specifically refers to the arm of the octopus as representative of the whole:
Not only is one aspect of Gurrumuru's ancestral heritage (the octopus) made to represent the whole place, but one part of the octopus is made to represent the whole ancestral being. In fact, this metonymy is sometimes extended to reflect the present-day residential patterns of Dhalwangu people, in that those Dhalwangu people who live away from Gurrumuru in Gapuwiyak are sometimes referred to as "the arms of the octopus". These examples demonstrate that the contiguity trope of metonymy is among the poetic devices creatively employed by Dhalwangu singers during musical performance.

**Analogical Tropes**

Friedrich's final class of trope is the analogical trope or metaphor, which includes all aesthetically effective and culturally appropriate similarities between things. As discussed above, although many theorists have focused primarily or exclusively on metaphor in their tropic analyses, Friedrich's schema specifically classes metaphor as one figure among many, as only a fraction of the poetic (Friedrich 1991:44). I have noted above that Margaret Clunies Ross has observed that metaphor is not a widely-used trope in the otherwise poetically-rich song language of central Arnhem Land, due to the polysemy of Arnhem Land song texts and the restricted nature of religious knowledge (Clunies Ross 1978:138-9). While I agree that polysemy and the hierarchical nature of Arnhem Land religious organization presents a challenge in the interpretation of analogical tropes, I believe this is, to some extent, true of all the world's poetic traditions. With some background knowledge, Dhalwangu song texts reveal a number of fascinating examples of metaphor.

The *yuta* (new) song version is perhaps one of the best examples of metaphor under a conventional understanding of the term. In the *yuta*, there is a perceived similarity between the subject of a song and some event which has occurred in contemporary life, and the two are brought together into a single conceptual realm through musical performance. In the exegesis of song texts, singers clearly point out the resemblance between the song subject and its inspirational analogue, stating that the contemporary subject is like the ancestral one. Some examples have already been discussed: in one *yuta* version...
of the garrurru (flag) song, the flag is representative of the son of one of the singers who, like the flag, was taken away from his true home; in the other, the flag is likened to a sick child. These examples demonstrate that many yuṭa songs are extended metaphors, comparing ancestral and contemporary events, and will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Eight.

Another form of analogical trope in Dhalwangu song is personification, where the singer draws a metaphorical comparison between himself and the ancestral being about which he is singing through the use of the first person singular pronoun “I” or the possessive pronoun “my”. Here are some examples, the first from the gapu (water) song from the Girriti song series which describes the water flowing downstream, carrying with it pieces of wood:

\[
\text{nhā ngarra marrtji gamanytja lalanginynha buwarrbuwarr dhumbuyumbuny} \\
\text{what/ I [am]/ carrying/ carrying/ cypress pine tree/ cypress pine tree/} \\
\text{cypress pine tree}
\]

The next examples, also from the Girriti song series, are from the song subject nyangura (long-necked tortoise) and describe the tortoise swimming in the water searching for her babies:

\[
\text{waydhun Girritingur ngarra galamanytja yoṭhuwa ngarra larrumanydja} \\
\text{litjarrwa gunbiyarrwa} \\
\text{swam/ from Girriti/ I/ swam/ baby/ I/ look for/ baby/ baby}
\]

\[
\text{nhaka ngarrak litjarrya djirriwurrya nhaka ngarrak litjarrya djirriwurrya} \\
\text{where [is]/ my/ baby/ baby/ where [is]/ my/ baby/ baby}
\]

All of these examples demonstrate that Dhalwangu singers may express their sense of identity with an ancestral being through the use of the analogical trope of personification in their song texts. This is a facet of a more general trope of personification used in everyday conversation to talk about identity, in which a Dhalwangu person may refer to his or her bāpurru as the “stingray people” or the “knife people”. Through the use of metaphor, an individual can construct an identity which draws a close connection between himself or herself and his or her bāpurru on the one hand, and any of a range of ancestral beings on the other.
Finally, there are a number of analogical tropes used in song texts which are examples of metaphoric relations of a more conventional nature, comparing one thing with another through some shared feature. In the yiki (knife) song of the Gurrumuru song series, discussed above, the ancestral being Birrinydjii is described as getting angry and preparing to fight as he brandishes a knife in each hand. As he "styles up" (a gloss which describes him preparing to fight) he performs the stingray dance, which is doubly metaphorical: first, the yiki dance is similar to the stingray dance in that both involve sticking knives into the ground in a stylized motion; and second, because both Birrinydjii and the stingray are considered to be very dangerous and aggressive:

\[\text{ngamathirr ngunhu marrtji dalijinya djiniwalangur marimomukngur}^8\]

styling up/ that/ styling up/ from the stingray/ from the stingray/ stingray

This is a clear example of a metaphor which compares two ancestral beings, Birrinydjii and the stingray, on the basis of their shared characteristics of aggression and danger.

**Conclusions - Assessing Dhaļwangu Poly tropy**

In order to assess the effectiveness of Dhaļwangu tropes as they are used in ritual performance, we must return to the dominant criterion of aesthetic evaluation in Dhaļwangu musical and poetic discourse: the skillful evocation of place. How do the tropes discussed above contribute to a mental and emotional image of the place sung about in a way that is unique to song texts, but is at the same time complementary to other expressive media such as art, dance and oral narrative? We can come closer to a meaningful understanding if we consider the two expressions most often used by singers when they explain what they are trying to do when they sing about a place: "painting a picture" and "telling the story" of that place.

The image tropes discussed above contribute strongly to this poetic goal. Each of them describes an ancestral being, a feature of the landscape, an action, a sound, or some other aspect of the place in question. In singing about a place,

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8 This word for stingray is derived from *mari* (fight or trouble) + *murt* (salt water) + *ngur* (at).
a singer may employ a variety of image tropes to create a vivid picture of that place and its ancestral beings in the mind’s eye of his audience. Different singers may use different image tropes in one performance, or in subsequent performances of the same song subject. Bangana explained:

There could be two singers just talking about the bûru [saltwater crocodile], right? Just talking about it, talking about...where it’s heading, what it’s doing, you know? And then, maybe the next time they might sing, and just talk about...the head of the bûru ...or the other fella might talk about the back of the bûru ...and somebody might sing about the arms of the bûru...and then somebody might talk about where that crocodile really comes from.

A complex, multilayered description of a place using a variety of image tropes is likely to produce an emotional reaction as listeners form a mental image of the place and think about their deceased loved ones associated with that place. This combination of grief for the deceased and nostalgia for distant places may be underscored even more by the use of modal tropes, which give a poetic expression to these and other sentiments, including anger and “worrying” for a person or thing.

Formal tropes, as we have seen, can heighten the effectiveness of a sung description of place by drawing the listener’s attention to their song texts. This is done in a number of ways: through repetition in whole or in part from line to line of a song item, gradually adding detail to form a complex image; through repetition of sounds within a word to emphasize the importance of the image conveyed by it; through a variety of forms of parallelism of expression which implicitly draw a comparison between different objects, bûpurru, or places which are described in a similar form within a song item; and through the occasional use of song texts sung in unison, which focus the diverse textual strategies of different singers into a single unified poetic expression. These formal tropes, in addition to acting as tropes in their own right, also reinforce the effectiveness of other tropes through their stylized form, and thereby help contribute to the “story of a place”. Likewise, contiguity tropes, such as deictics or “pointers”, may also strengthen a poetic image by inviting the listener to imagine himself or herself as actually being at the place being sung about, within sight and hearing of the various song subjects being described. The inventory as a contiguity trope offers the listener a range of different names for certain places or objects which are central to the story of a place; as the name of a place is a central feature of its identity in Dhalwangu thought, the listing of a
range of different names for a place contributes to a more complex understanding of the sacredness of that place.

Other contiguity tropes, such as anatomical relations and metonymy, together with the fifth class of trope, the analogical trope, combine to contribute a range of nuances in a poetic description of place. They may, for instance, draw together two different aspects of a place (such as two different ancestral beings both associated with the place) through the use of a skillful metonymy, comparing them within a single frame of reference (the place itself). Or, these kinds of tropes may assert the “sameness” of places belonging to different bāpurru which are connected through a particular ancestral narrative or song series. Alternately, an analogical trope may forge a strong connection between an ancestral being associated with a place and a contemporary Dhalwangu person, either through personification in the use of a first-person singular pronoun, or by the extended metaphorical comparison involved with the yuta manikay, which poetically combines ancestral and contemporary events.

Certainly, there are many other ways in which these tropes can be interpreted, and many other aesthetic and poetic ends to which they are deployed. A theory of polytropy does not imply a rigid hierarchy of figures of speech, each isolated from the others; rather, it is a theory which is open-ended, flexible, and allows for considerable overlap between tropes and classes of tropes. Many of the tropes described above could easily be classed in more than one category. What the foregoing discussion highlights is that Dhalwangu singers make use of a multitude of different tropes, combine them in a multitude of different ways, and concentrate their creative poetic efforts on a multitude of different themes. The most consistently articulated of these themes, and the most rigorously evaluated, is the skillful evocation of place.
Chapter Five - Performative Features of Dhalwangu Manikay

‘Performance’ deals with actions more than text: with habits of the body more than structures of symbols, with illocutionary rather than propositional force, with the social construction of reality rather than its representation.


The previous two chapters of this dissertation have dealt with aspects of Dhalwangu manikay which may be called “textual”: the poetic analysis of song texts, the musical analysis of melody and rhythm, and the textual representation of both. The present chapter seeks to round out the analysis of Dhalwangu manikay by focusing on elements which may be called “performative”: the negotiation of ritual performance, interaction between individuals and between groups, and the context of performance. These features prove to be of immense importance in understanding Dhalwangu song not as a fixed and static “tradition” which has remained unchanged for millennia, but rather as an emergent and dialogical phenomenon.

I wish to examine five inter-related perspectives on performance derived from the scholarly literature from anthropology, ethnomusicology, linguistics and folklore: role; text; context; emergence; and the performative construction of reality. I must emphasize that these perspectives are not hermetically sealed off from one another, and some of what can be said for one may equally well be said for another. I will then analyze Dhalwangu musical performances in light of these perspectives in order to demonstrate the ways in which Dhalwangu social and ritual life is maintained, changed, commented on and developed through performative means; or, to cite Anthony Seeger, “to establish aspects of social life as musical and as created and re-created through performance” (Seeger 1987:xiv).

Perspectives on Performance

For more than twenty years, there has been an increasing emphasis on the central role of performance in the analyses of anthropologists, linguists, folklorists and ethnomusicologists. Following from Austin’s concept of the
“total speech act”, scholars began to take the view that oral narrative cannot be fully understood as texts, but must be examined in terms of social action (Bauman and Briggs 1990:62). This section examines a number of inter-related perspectives which adopt a performative view of oral narrative.

“Role” may be understood to refer to individuals or positions occupied by individuals in performative situations, a concept used variously by different writers. In folklorist Richard Bauman’s view, performance is a way of speaking in which the performer is accountable to an audience to speak in socially appropriate ways—performance is thus intensified behaviour on the part of both performer and audience (Bauman 1977:11). Bauman highlights the fact that there are a set of expectations for each person involved in a performance, such that any person capable of displaying communicative competence can fill the role of performer, and anyone capable of providing an aesthetic evaluation of that performance can fill the role of audience member. Bauman goes on to flesh out the role of the performer:

Performance roles constitute a major dimension of the patterning of performance within communities. As with events, certain roles will incorporate performance as a definitive attribute. Performance is necessary to establish oneself in the role, such that one cannot be considered an incumbent of the role without being a performer of verbal art... (ibid.:29).

Exactly how this is accomplished, Bauman makes clear, varies from culture to culture: performative roles in some cultures require special talents, or intensive training, or a particular social position, while in other cultures anyone may potentially adopt the role (ibid.:30). Bauman makes it clear that, in performance, individuals take on a particular social and aesthetic position in relation to others for which they are culturally accountable.

Anthony Seeger’s work on Suyá song provides, among other things, a careful examination of the roles of those involved in performance, answering the questions who? and to whom? Examining the musical genre called akia, Seeger delineates which categories of people may fulfil the role of performers of these songs. Akia singers must be men, although the specific performance differs according to age-grade, beginning with young boys and progressing through to old men. Seeger also identifies an additional role in akia performance: that of the composer-teacher, an individual who has the ability to understand the speech of natural species which is the basis for the songs. The audience for these performances are women who the singers call sister (Seeger
Thus, the role of both performers and audience in akia performance is largely dictated by age and gender. In his book *Why Suyá Sing*, Seeger provides a rigorous analysis of musical performance which includes many variables, including what I have called role. In the Suyá Mouse Ceremony, the performances of men and women across a number of musical genres can be understood as the interaction between individuals in a number of different roles: the young boy or "name receiver" who is the focus of the ceremony; the boy's mother, who will provide food for the entire village at particular points during the ceremony; and the boy's mother's brother, who is the important "name giver" (Seeger 1987:1-9). In addition to these individuals, the village as a whole participates according to roles defined by their place in Suyá social organization, as in the case of two pairs of moieties or of different name sets (ibid.:108-9). The Mouse Ceremony represents a series of inter-related performances which involve the participation of individuals acting in a number of overlapping, socially-defined roles.

Edward Schieffelin's writing on Kaluli séance performance also contributes a valuable perspective on performative roles, specifically that of the spirit medium. The medium, whose own spirit leaves the body while other spirits enter it and talk to the audience, uses song, narrative, and conversation to create and sustain a convincing and entertaining performance. Importantly, the medium draws his audience into the creation of the performative space through the skillful deployment and management of songs, focusing their attention and maintaining the proper mood by eliciting their participation in chorusing the songs (Schieffelin 1985:713-4). Schieffelin emphasizes the dialogical and emergent features of the Kaluli séance which presents a very complex picture of the roles involved. Both medium and audience are active participants who mutually construct the performance and, in so doing, construct a cosmology and a social reality. The medium himself, in addition to his role as an individual and his own spirit's role, presents a wide range of other roles in the form of different spirit characters (ibid.:715-6). The emergent nature of performance will be considered in more detail below, but for the moment it is clear that Schieffelin's work presents a dynamic account of roles in Kaluli performance.

The second important perspective in analyzing performance is the text itself. Jeff Todd Titon, in a review of the term in the *Journal of American Folklore*, states that, prior to the 1960s, folklorists regarded the focus of their endeavours as written texts and paid little attention to features which were a result of their
oral nature. While some continue in this tradition today, most other scholars belong to one of two camps: those who treat folklore as performance, and those who have redefined text to include not only words but actions, events and objects as well—in effect, any humanly constructed sign system (Titon 1995:433-4). Titon stresses that the folkloric text, however defined, is inherently unstable due to intertextuality (there is no single authoritative text) and its processual and emergent nature (ibid.:439).

Bauman and Briggs posit an interpretive move from text to what they call entextualization:

In simple terms, though it is far from simple, it is the process of rendering discourse extractable, of making a stretch of linguistic production into a unit—a text—that can be lifted out of its interactional setting. A text, then, from this vantage point, is discourse rendered decontextualizable. Entextualization may well incorporate aspects of context, such that the resultant text carries elements of its history of use within it (1990:73).

In this more dynamic view, performance itself is an act which, because it is set apart in a distinct frame and is subject to assessment by an audience, results in the potential for a text to be lifted out of its context: performers, through their performance, in effect set a text apart for scrutiny. Bauman and Briggs state that a number of discursive resources are available to performers to accomplish this task, including formal poetic devices and other media such as dance and music. Once decontextualized, a text may subsequently be recontextualized into a new social context, and many of the same strategies (formal, functional, framing) may be put into play (ibid.:73-6). Bauman and Briggs conclude by pointing to the socio-political nature of these dynamic processes of textualization:

To decontextualize and recontextualize a text is thus an act of control, and in regard to the differential exercise of such control the issue of social power arises. More specifically, we may recognize differential access to texts, differential legitimacy in claims to and use of texts, differential competence in the use of texts, and differential values attaching to various types of texts (ibid.:76).

It will be seen that this dynamic view of texts, as well as their power-laden nature, will be very useful in arriving at a more complete understanding of Dhalwangu songs in their various performances: texts are neither fixed nor neutral objects, but rather dynamic and strategic processes.
A wide variety of scholars have contributed to and improved our understanding of oral narrative and its related forms through an intensive (but not exclusive) study of the texts themselves. One of the most famous is Albert Lord, whose work on Serbo-Croatian oral epic song, *The Singer of Tales*, was a landmark in folkloric and classical studies. In Lord’s understanding, the key for the singer of tales was not the memorization of a great stock of formulae to shuffle around during performance; rather, it was the recognition and understanding of rhythmic patterns which would allow him to create patterns by analogy (Lord 1960:37, 43). It is in this way that a singer may produce a performance of many thousands of lines from beginning to end. Although there has been much comment on Lord’s work and its applicability in other contexts, there can be no doubt that he set the study of oral narrative texts and performance on a new road that examined the text in performance rather than in isolation.

Others followed in focusing rigorously on the text, even if they also considered many other variables including context and emergence. Bauman’s discussion of the framing of performance included a number of performative “keys”, some of which may be construed as textual: figurative language, parallelism, and special formulae (Bauman 1977:17-21). Dell Hymes has stressed the fact that Chinookan narratives can be seen to be organized in terms of “...lines, verses, stanzas, scenes, and what one may call acts” (Hymes 1977:431). However, this should not be taken to imply that Hymes privileges the text over other narrative elements: in another work, he points out that the propositional content of a narrative is only one ingredient, and it is the way the speaker deploys the ingredients which shapes the resulting meaning (Hymes 1985). Dennis Tedlock argues for the primacy of the audible text, as in a tape recording of a narrative, over any transcription of that text onto paper, and suggests a number of ways to indicate dynamics, pitch, and speed in written transcription. Tedlock writes, in his unique style of transcription:

We must question whether HUNDREDS of REELS of oral history TAPE
ought to be converted into THOUSANDS of PAGES of PROSE typescript
after which the tapes are all too often ERASED.
To use a VISUAL analogy, such a procedure is as absurd as preferring to
make pencil sketches from photographs of historical events
and then destroy the photographs (Tedlock 1983:114).
So, although our analytical goal is to achieve an understanding of performance that goes beyond the text in a number of ways, the solution is not to abandon the text altogether; rather, we must arrive at a notion of text that recognizes its dynamic, paralinguistic, and emergent nature.

Context is another aspect of performance on which many scholars have focused in their efforts to provide more complete analyses of narrative and musical events. The five perspectives on performance which I have identified could in a limited sense be taken together to represent context, although I have chosen to treat them separately. It is in this sense that Seeger (1980:11) and McLeod and Herndon (McLeod and Herndon 1980:180) use the term, answering the who, what, where, why, when and how questions. Others have taken a more complex and processual approach to the concept. Like their distinction between text and entextualization, Bauman and Briggs seek to processualize the notion of context by contrasting it with contextualization. Context, they argue, is a term which may be criticized on two fronts: first, most definitions of context are overly-inclusive, "...there being no way to know when an adequate range of contextual factors has been encompassed" (Bauman and Briggs 1990:68); and second, previous definitions have suffered from false objectivity, as it is the analyst who decides what constitutes context and this is generally conceived as being external to the discourse itself (ibid.). They continue:

The shift we identify here represents a major step towards achieving an agent-centered view of performance. Contextualization involves an active process of negotiation in which participants reflexively examine the discourse as it is emerging, embedding assessments of its structure and significance in the speech itself. Performers extend such assessments to include predictions about how the communicative competence, personal histories, and social identities of their interlocutors will shape the reception of what is said (ibid.:69).

Bauman and Briggs identify a number of devices which allow us to focus on the dynamic process of contextualization, including meta-narrative devices, reported speech, and audience interaction (ibid.:69-70); each of these are devices used in the process of negotiating shared meanings in performance. Contextualization is dialogic and negotiated, which are important features of Dhalwangu manikay performance.
The concept of contextualization leads us fairly directly to another feature of performance, which I have called emergence. Many of the writers already cited have, in their various ways, emphasized the emergent nature of performances and their dynamic rather than static characteristics. In their focus on contextualization, Bauman and Briggs point to the fact that we must see performances as emerging in negotiations between participants (ibid.:68). Schieffelin is unambiguous in his adoption of this position:

I will support the claim that symbols are effective less because they communicate meaning (though this is also important) than because, through performance, meanings are formulated in a social rather than cognitive space, and the participants are engaged with the symbols in the interactional creation of a performance reality, rather than merely being informed by them as knowers (1985:707).

In this way, the work of the Kaluli séance gets done through the interaction of the performer and his audience, all participants in creating a ritual event; therefore, our understanding of this event must go beyond the text and its symbolic meanings to encompass the process involved (ibid.:722).

Bauman’s short book entitled *Verbal Art in Performance* has an entire chapter devoted to “The Emergent Quality of Performance”. In it, he recognizes that emergence is an important concept to understand “the uniqueness of particular performances within the context of performance as a generalized cultural system in a community” (Bauman 1977:37), and he defines emergence as follows:

The emergent quality of performance resides in the interplay between communicative resources, individual competence, and the goals of the participants, within the context of a particular situation (ibid.:38).

Bauman discusses the fact that a notion of emergence frees the text from apparent fixity, underscores the negotiated nature of performance, and even suggests that social structure itself may emerge through performance (ibid.:40-2). Emergence is revealed through these writings as a pivotal concept in our interpretations of oral narrative and, equally, musical performances. Singers, storytellers and poets do not only recite texts fixed in their memories; rather, they interact with an audience, negotiate a set of meanings, and produce a performance that is informed by structure but is unique. This point will be highlighted in the discussion of DhaJ.wangu manikay performance below.
Finally, it is important to recognize one final perspective on performance which is linked to all of the others, especially emergence: the performative construction of reality. I have in mind here the idea that social organization, land tenure, cosmology and other aspects of culture do not have an independent reality outside of human agency, but are negotiated, maintained, and created and re-created through social interaction; musical and narrative performances are important ways in which this is accomplished. Musical performance does not "represent" or "express" an underlying reality, but is constitutive of that reality. As Johannes Fabian writes:

A performance does not "express" something in need of being brought to the surface, or to the outside; nor does it simply enact a preexisting text. Performance is the text in the moment of its actualization...That performances can be staged, that they can be good or bad, that they can be genuine or faked, or simply go wrong, that some people are better performers than others—all this points to dialectical, processual relationships between texts and performances (Fabian 1990:9).

In this way, society can be understood to be crafted through interaction and performance. Seeger also adopts this view as fundamental to his work on Suyá song—he understands aspects of social life to be "musical" and "created and re-created through performance" (Seeger 1987:xiv), to the extent that he states "the Suyá village can be likened to a concert hall, its annual round equated with a concert series, and its population equated with an orchestra" (ibid.:65).

Schieffelin also adopts a strong position on this point. In a recent article entitled "Problematizing Performance", he undertakes a careful examination of performative practice as a means of understanding society. I quote him at some length:

It is not only for the sake of ethnographic accuracy that it is important to problematize the relationship between performers and participants. More importantly for anthropology, these relationships need careful investigation - both in formal performances and in everyday life - because it is within these relationships that the fundamental epistemological and ontological relations of any society are likely to be implicated and worked out: because this is the creative edge where reality is socially constructed...

The fundamental assertion underlying this chapter is that any ethnography of performance is inherently addressing the issue of the social construction of reality, and that, in fact, performativity is not only endemic to human being-in-the-world but fundamental to the process of constructing a human reality...
Chapter Five
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The central issue of performativity, whether in ritual performance, theatrical entertainment or the social articulation of ordinary human situations, is the imaginative creation of a human world. The creation of human realities entails ontological issues, and these need to be explored ethnographically rather than a priori assumed (1998:204-5, emphasis added).

I take this statement as a rallying cry in the examination of Dhalwangu performativity. There is a great deal at stake in the analysis of Dhalwangu manikay because it must be understood that singers are involved not with the reproduction of ancestral texts in particular sanctioned ways, but with the active construction of an imaginative and social world. As I argued in Chapter Two, Yolngu have certain conceptual structures about sociality which affect social action, but that social action feeds back onto people’s conceptions about sociality and may subtly alter it. Musical performances are one such type of social action: different groups of people with distinct identities cooperate in a funeral or an initiation for a range of reasons, based on their kinship with the person at the centre of the ritual and their cosmologically-defined relationships with each other. These ritual performances, however, do not exist in a conceptual and social vacuum, but have a definitive impact on the structuring of subsequent ritual events and therefore may alter a person’s understanding of their own sociality. When two Yolngu groups sing together in a ceremony, they are not only following past precedent, but are engaged in a re-creation of Yolngu sociality. On some occasions they may forge new links that were previously under-recognized; other times they may engage musically with close constellations in their social universe. In either case, Yolngu musicians are not passive receptacles of pre-existing sociality, but active agents in a developing social world.

Ritual performances are also important in the reproduction of the Yolngu “imaginary”, in the sense that much of Yolngu life is related to beliefs about ancestors, madayin, and country. Performances of manikay, concerned as they are with the evocation of country and ancestral action, are key events in reproducing the beliefs that underpin that ancestral world. However, as with the reproduction of sociality, the reproduction of the Yolngu “imaginary” may be subtly altered in a number of ways: an influential group may dominate the negotiation of ritual performance and impose their own interpretation of cosmology on others, or a young singer may emulate the view of the ancestral

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1 I am grateful to Ian Keen for helping me to formulate my ideas on this aspect of Yolngu performativity (pers. comm. 18/01/2001).
world of an older singer whom he admires. Therefore, Yolngu beliefs about the ancestral realm are themselves dynamic and constituted through the performance of manikay, bunggul, and the painting of ancestral designs. This can be related to Geertz’s definition of religion:

...a system of symbols which acts to...establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by...formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and...clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that...the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic (Geertz 1973:90).

The symbols of Yolngu ritual performance, which include melodies, rhythms, song texts, dances, and other aspects of madayin, formulate ideas about the nature of the world; but because those symbols are subject to a range of interpretations based on a multitude of contextual factors, changes in their meanings over time result in consequent changes in worldview.

Perspectives on Dhalwangu Performance

The features of performance discussed above provide a useful framework with which to examine the performance of Dhalwangu manikay. Each of the features must be understood to overlap with others, and it is not my aim to isolate any one of them from its performative cognates; but taken together, these features help us to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of Dhalwangu musical performance.

Role

Individuals participating in Dhalwangu rituals such as funerals and dhapi initiations may adopt one of a number of roles based on their social identity and kinship ties to the person at the centre of the ritual, the initiand or the deceased. When someone dies or is to be initiated, that person’s social identity places them in the middle of a network of social connections organized for ritual purposes. People sharing that person’s bâpurru identity, as well as people with other identities, have a number of rights and responsibilities toward the
person which shape their roles in performance, which I will now briefly examine.

The most important people in public rituals are the māribulu, those sharing the bāpurru identity of ego’s māri (mother’s mother). The māribulu have a great deal of influence over the location of the ritual and the exact sequence of events, in addition to singing and dancing; I was always told that the “number one” people in a funeral are the māribulu, and that they should “look after the body”. Morphy comments on the importance of ego’s māri, the fact that the māri is felt to be a spiritual progenitor, and that the songs and dances of the māribulu may predominate early on in a funeral (Morphy 1984:106). Important elements of a funeral or a dhapi initiation may be the ritual property of the māribulu, and their use by ego is felt to be an important representation of the close spiritual and social bond between them; examples of this may include the painting executed on the chest of a young initiand or a sand sculpture produced during a funeral. The māribulu also contribute prominently to sung and danced performances throughout a funeral, including many important ritual episodes. The importance of the maŋayin of a person’s māribulu is reflected in the fact that a man has the right to learn about and perform the manikay of his māribulu.

The people sharing ego’s own bāpurru identity are important participants in any public ritual event, although they may take a secondary role to the māribulu in some decision-making processes. The songs of a person’s own bāpurru are the first ones that they have the right to learn and perform, and are even more important to a person’s identity than the songs of their māribulu. Although they do not participate in every ritual episode, people sharing ego’s bāpurru identity can be seen to make a contribution to many performances throughout a funeral or a dhapi. In November of 1996, a senior Dhalwangu man passed away in Gapuwyiyak and a large funeral was held which lasted for eight days. Dhalwangu people performed bunggulmirr and ngaraka manikay (with and without dancing accompaniment, respectively) almost every day, sometimes several times in a single day. A group of Dhalwangu singers announced the death to the women of the community, sang using their “sacred” melody to accompany the wrapping of the body in

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2 For the purposes of discussion, I will refer to the person at the centre of the ritual as “ego” unless referring to a specific example.

3 Women in Yolngu society, who do not perform manikay, have the right to learn and perform the ngāthi songs of their māribulu (Berndt 1950:308). Keen notes that, in the Ngārra ritual, people join with their māribulu even if their own bāpurru does not own the cosmology in question (Keen 1978:250).
cloth, sang to receive many other groups of people who arrived to view the body, sang and danced for a ritual episode which involved placing the body in a body-bag, and helped to construct a sand sculpture of the anchor which represented many of the Yirritja bāpurru present, in addition to many other sung and danced performances—in short, Dhalwangu people were closely involved with most aspects of the ceremony. They were noticeably absent, however, from a few performances and decisions: the deceased man’s māribulu, Wan.gurri, made the final decision on the location of the funeral⁴, they were responsible for moving the body into the burial shade and to the grave, and they also made the final decision on when the funeral was to end (in fact, at one point many Dhalwangu people had no clear idea when the funeral would end). So, although the māribulu make most of the decisions in ceremonial performance, ego’s own group may play a very active, albeit subordinate, role.

Another centrally important group in any public ritual are the wakubulu or djunggayi, that group of men and women whose mothers share ego’s bāpurru identity. Although individuals with a number of different bāpurru identities may assume a role in ritual performance based on their capacity as djunggayi, there is usually one “top” group who take overall responsibility for this role (the actual children of a woman, or the sister’s children of a man); the senior children of the most senior woman of ego’s bāpurru may be especially prominent. As “managers” for their mother’s madayin, these men and women have the right to learn about the songs, dances, and artistic designs, and there should be one or several djunggayi present at any performance of their mother’s songs and dances; in fact, djunggayi will often play the yidaki for manikay performances, and a number of djunggayi often perform and even lead dances⁵. People fulfilling the role of djunggayi also act as workers for a ritual, providing food, drink and cigarettes for the singers and dancers, digging graves, driving around to round up people for dancing, and gathering ironwood leaves and branches for smoking ceremonies. Most important, though, is the fact that individuals whose mothers share ego’s bāpurru identity

⁴ They had wanted to move the ritual to their own country at Dhalinybuy, but decided after a meeting to keep it in Gapuwiyak.
⁵ Men do not sing the manikay of their mother’s bāpurru because they are the sacred heritage of the opposite moiety, but Catherine Berndt reports that a woman may perform the ngāthi songs of her mother (Berndt 1950:308). Keen notes the important role played by the wakubulu or djunggayi in the Dhuwa Ngārra ritual (Keen 1978:256, 277), and also the fact that the sister’s sons of a group are included as novices (ibid.:261). In a later publication, Keen also discusses the prominent participation of senior waku in a dhapi circumcision ritual (Keen 1994a:184).
have a considerable role to play in the decisions surrounding a funeral or a
*dhapi*: they must be consulted at all stages and on all issues, and have a right of
veto over any aspect of performance. I was told that these people are second
only to the *māribulu* in running a funeral.

Also of the opposite moiety are ego’s own mother and the people
sharing her *bāpurru* identity, known as the *ngandibulu*. In a funeral, people who
are *ngandi* (M or MZ) or *ngapipi* (MB) to the deceased are known by the term
*dhulmuwak*. These people are not supposed to take any decision-making role in
a funeral, and are under some restrictions with regard to the deceased’s spirit
which are relieved through smoking and other purification rites. The
*ngandibulu*, however, may contribute to a funeral through their *madayin* by
performing their songs and dances; this does not happen at every funeral, and
if it does it usually consists of a small number of performances. In the
Dhalwangu man’s funeral discussed above, the *ngandibulu* were Marrangu
people. After several days of singing, they contributed to the sand sculpture in
front of the funeral shade by putting up a long feathered string stretched
between two poles above the sand sculpture; it was called *malka* and was related
to ancestral stories about the Marrangu outstation at Raymangirr. In a previous
funeral held in Gapuwiyak for a young Munyuku man, the *ngandibulu* sang
and danced on two occasions: once in performing Dhuwa-moiety “men’s
business”, and a second performance just before the burial. Thus, for the most
part the *ngandibulu* are not active participants in funerals, although they may
on occasion participate by performing their own songs and dances.

The fifth and final group to consider in this discussion are those people
of the same moiety as ego who are known as *yapabulu*; these are people with
important spiritual connections to ego’s *bāpurru* through shared *madayin*, and
as such these groups of people constitute an “extended” *bāpurru*. Men have
limited rights to learn and perform the *manikay* of these cosmologically-linked
groups, especially if they are knowledgeable elders who are “custodians” for
that cosmology. In the Dhalwangu man’s funeral, one of the more prominent
groups in this role were Gumatj people from Majama; they performed
*manikay* and *bunggul* almost as often as Dhalwangu people, and also performed
an early stage of a *dhapi* initiation at the same time, which they were to finish
after the funeral.

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6 Derived from *dhulmu* “stomach”, *dhulmuwak* is a woman who has lost her child.
Roles in ritual musical performance may also be understood in terms of ritual practice rather than sociocentric relation to ego. Any manikay performance involves a minimum of two people: a singer and a yidaki (didjeridu) player. The singer is often a senior man, although there are a number of relatively young Dhalwangu men who are prominent singers in Gapuwiyak. Ultimately, knowledge and ability are more important than age in itself: any man who knows the songs and can successfully direct a performance can assume the role of a singer, although as a man gets older his skill and knowledge improve. In my experience it is rare for only one singer to be involved in a performance; it is more often the case that from two to six men sing together, with one or two men directing the performance. In such a large group, older or more experienced singers carry much of the burden, with younger or less experienced singers contributing more sporadically. Other men may accompany the songs with clapsticks (or alternatives such as utensils, shoes, or hand-clapping) but not sing. Singers must be of the same moiety as the songs themselves, and singers should have some rights and responsibilities over the songs in question as discussed above.

The yidaki (didjeridu) player may be of either moiety and of any age past initiation; most often, younger men assume this role as a matter of course, although older men may occasionally fill in for brief periods. The yidaki player must also have knowledge of the songs being performed in order to play the correct rhythm and cues, although this information may be provided by singers before a song item and corrected occasionally during the performance. Accompanying singers on the yidaki is considered to be a good way for a young man to develop his singing skills, in so much as he must know the content of the songs, listen carefully, and be an active part of the performance; men who play the yidaki almost exclusively in large “important” ceremonies may take a larger singing role in other, less prominent performances.

Dancing is a prominent part of manikay performances in ritual contexts. During ngaraka performance, which does not involve men’s dancing, women may dance informally around the group of singing men, a couple of women dancing during any single song item and alternating with others. It is during bunggulmirr (literally, “with dance”) performance, however, that dancing is the focus of people’s attention. In these performances, both men and women dance in separate groups to each song item. Individual dancers may be of any age; young children are especially encouraged to participate in many more relaxed contexts, and elders are highly valued for their participation. A dancer may
perform for a few song items and then take a break while others come and go as they please, with the entire performance building to a crescendo which involves most people present. Although men’s and women’s dance forms and actions are different (although related) and the two groups generally dance in different spaces (which may overlap), in some contexts women may perform the same dance actions in the same space as men. This is most often the case for the most senior women and is valued very highly.

Perhaps the single most important role in ritual musical performance is the ritual expert, known as djirrikay (Dhuwa) or dalkarra (Yirritja). This person is always a senior man with extensive knowledge of ritual singing and dancing as well as rangga (sacred objects) and rom (sacred law). The dalkarra is an expert on both public and sacred aspects of music and dance, and takes an important role in organizing entire ceremonies and individual ritual episodes. He is also a teacher, instructing younger men on the correct way to perform dances in both public and restricted ritual contexts. The dalkarra or djirrikay is a pivotal role in any Dhalwangu ritual musical performance.

Text

The question of the poetics of song texts has been dealt with in detail in Chapter Four, and does not need to be revisited here. In this section I wish to examine more closely the selection of songs in ritual performance which leads to the dynamic construction of a “text” of that performance.

At one level of performance, specific song subjects must be chosen by singers for use in individual ritual episodes of a funeral or a dhapi circumcision ceremony. These episodes occur at key points in rituals and are the focus of attention for all participants. In a funeral, there are a number of these episodes. The first of these is the announcement of the identity of the deceased, first to a gathering of the men of the community, and then to the women and children. Known as bëpurru ngāma, which can be glossed as “death hear”, this episode takes very different forms in the performances for the men and for the women. When a sufficient number of men have gathered, the announcement is made in two parts. The first part is the song; the decision as to which song subject to sing is left to the senior men, and can in fact be any appropriate song subject belonging to any of a number of bëpurru related to the deceased. In the case of the funeral of a young Munyuku man in 1996, Bangana told me that
they used "...all different songs...mainly Dhalwangu, Gupapuyngu, Ritharrngu" because they were the biipurru identities of some of the principal people present at the announcement. Regardless of which biipurru the song belongs to, the version of song performed to announce a death is invariably the yindi, characterized by a rapid beating of the clapsticks and a relatively slow, free-form articulation of the song text, and ending with the unison "chorus" section. The second part of the announcement is the revelation of who has died, which can be done by the man who has just sung, but it is often said by another senior man sitting nearby. Whoever is making the announcement does so using roundabout terms, as Yolngu people avoid using a deceased person’s name for some time after a death, for years in the case of senior men and women. The most common way is to describe the deceased in terms of their kinship relations to others: "Fred’s wife" or "Margaret’s son". This two-part procedure is carried out every time someone is told of a death, whether in a large group of men or individually. I once came in halfway through a conversation where some men were discussing a recent stabbing death of a woman in a neighbouring community. When I asked who it was that had died, one of the men asked another to tap on the desk in front of him and sing a yindi song before he told me who it was.

The announcement of a death to the women of a community is also known as biipurru ngäma. The men generally paint up somewhere a short distance from where the women have gathered, and an appropriate song subject is chosen to sing. In the case of the Munyuku man’s funeral, the men chose djalkiri (anchor) because it expressed an affiliation between Munyuku people and the people that would take a large role in the funeral, Dhalwangu. Both Dhalwangu and Munyuku have rights over the madayin relating to the ancestral Macassans, so the use of a song which is an important symbol for both groups was deemed appropriate. The men chose to sing the Dhalwangu “anchor”, which shares similar song texts with Munyuku, but which is sung in Dhalwangu language and using a distinctively Dhalwangu melodic line. As was the case when announcing the death to the men, the song was performed using its yindi version. Yolngu said that the yindi had to be sung to the women before they could know the identity of the deceased. In the case of another biipurru ngäma which I attended, the deceased was a Ritharrngu woman who had been ill for quite some time. The men decided that if Ritharrngu men were to announce the death, or if a Ritharrngu song was used, then the women would be able to guess who had died before the yindi had been sung. Instead, they
decided to announce the death with the Dhalwangu *yindi* version of *marthangay* (ship), so that the *yindi* could be completed properly before the women learned the deceased’s identity. We can see, therefore, that the use of a *yindi* version of an appropriate song is an integral part of announcing a death.

Other ritual episodes are similar in that a single song subject is chosen to perform which is deemed to be appropriate in two ways: it is a song subject shared by the deceased’s own group and the performing group and thus symbolizes the connection between them; and it is appropriate for the ritual episode itself. For instance, the *marthangay* (ship) song was chosen to perform during the ritual episode in which the Munyuku man’s coffin was moved from the health clinic to the site of the funeral because both the coffin and the ship are vehicles for transporting people. Other named ritual episodes in funerals include: *bāpurruru djirribum*, glossed by Bangana as “showing your sadness for a death” and describing the procession formed by people to view a body; *dadayun*, the smoking ceremony in which smouldering ironwood leaves are used to ritually cleanse buildings which the deceased visited in life; *djirrikaymirr bunggul*, a combination of song and dance which includes the calling of sacred *likan* names; and *bukulup* or *way’i jurr*, the washing ceremony performed at the end of a funeral to ritually cleanse participants. In a sense, these key ritual episodes act as important way points linking the various “texts” of other parts of the performance such as the singing of complete song series.

The selection of song series for an entire ritual is also an important consideration which may be considered “textual”, and is related to the selection of songs for ritual episodes. A Dhalwangu ritual may be considered as a series of performances strung together one after another, complementing the performances of other groups also participating. The specific ritual episodes described above often occur as a highlighted performance in a larger song series. For instance, the “ship” song performed as the coffin was moved occurred in the midst of a larger performance of an entire song series of which the “ship” song was a part; this song subject was preceded and followed by others in the series. Because these song subjects are embedded within larger performances, it is important to understand the rationale behind the ordering and selection of all of the song series of an entire ritual.

Howard Morphy, in *Journey to the Crocodile’s Nest*, provides the most complete account of a single Yolngu ritual in the Arnhem Land ethnographic literature. In his description of the funeral for a *Maḍarrpa* child who died at Gurka’wuy, Morphy considers a number of themes guiding the form and
structure of the ceremony. One of the major themes is “the journey of the birrimbirr soul”, in which the spirit of the deceased is symbolically transported from the place of death to his or her own ancestral country through the performance of songs and dances associated with a sequence of places along the journey (Morphy 1984:61). When I asked Bangana about this interpretation, he agreed that this was one way of understanding what goes on in a funeral, although he stated that there were also other ways to interpret the selection of manikay. The theme of a ritual as a symbolic journey has also been noted by Ian Keen in his discussion of a dhapi initiation ritual, in which a sequence of musical performances and their accompanying dances “moved” from the country of one initiand to that of another (Keen 1994a:179-80).

Morphy also identifies other themes of the Yolngu funeral; one of these is “the expression of goodwill and kinship towards the dead child”, which concerns public expressions of connections between groups participating in the ceremony (Morphy 1984:63). He goes on to state that “the fact that several groups play a major role in the ceremony performing ‘their’ rituals on a person’s behalf, reflects the fact that a person’s Wangarr Ancestral inheritance is wider than that associated with his own clan’s sacred madayin law” (ibid.:108). This statement is much closer to interpretations of the funeral which were related to me by people in Gapuwiyak than the “journey of the spirit” theme. I was told by a number of people on different occasions that each group’s participation in a funeral reflected the importance which that group’s madayin had to the deceased in life: his own group perform their own songs and dances because they were the deceased’s madayin as well; the deceased’s mirribulu play a centrally important role because of the importance of their madayin to the deceased; the ngandibulu may even perform because their own songs were the deceased’s mother’s songs, which he or she looked after in life. Thus, a funeral may be interpreted as an opportunity for all of the deceased’s relatives to perform all of his or her songs (through a variety of social connections) as a way of commemorating and showing respect to that person. Thus, even if the coordinating theme of a funeral may be understood to be a journey passing through a Dhalwangu country, in many cases Dhalwangu singers will nonetheless sing about their other countries as well.

The “text” of a Dhalwangu funeral, then, accommodates many different viewpoints in its construction. There is no doubt that, as Morphy points out, there are symbolic interpretations involving the connections between various groups participating in a ceremony and their country, and the deceased and his
or her own country. The selection of manikay is a way of articulating these connections, especially when a part of the ritual involves two groups of people with distinct bápurruru identities performing together. However, there is also an overlapping sense in which the “text” of a ritual performance is dictated in a pre-determined way, based on the web of social connections in which an individual was placed before death. In practice, as we will see in the section on “emergence” below, the final “text” is the result of a number of inter-related principles, and may subsequently be interpreted in a number of different ways by different people.

Context

In considering the contextual dimensions of Dhalwangu ritual musical performance, it is possible to identify a number of factors which may help to shape our understanding of its meaning. In this section I will consider three aspects of context which I consider to be particularly important: the physical setting of ritual performances; the timing of ritual performances; and the larger socio-political context in which these performances are located.

The first consideration of the physical setting of a performance is where in northeast Arnhem Land a ritual is to take place. As Howard Morphy has noted, Yolngu rituals are political events, with political actions achieving (or trying to achieve) political ends (Morphy 1997:130), and the location of a ceremony is an important part of this. There are a number of different groups with distinct bápurruru identities who may make competing claims to choose the location: the märibulu, for instance, have a strong claim based on the widely accepted fact that this group has close spiritual ties to the deceased in a funeral or to the initiant in a dhapi; ego’s own group may also make a strong claim to host a ritual, especially if a large number of these people are present immediately after a death. Large and ritually active groups who are likely to participate may also have much input into this decision, as may the djunggayi of ego’s group.

It is often the case that people feel the appropriate location of a ritual is in the traditional country of the person involved, which was so important to his or her bápurruru identity in life. In many funerals, the deceased’s body is transported to his or her traditional country, and all participants in the ritual travel there to take part; this is especially true in the case of individuals who
have spent a significant portion of their lives living in and looking after that country. The majority of Yolngu, however, do not live on their traditional country but rather in one of the five major communities in northeast Arnhem Land. If someone dies who has spent a lifetime involved with community activities, there may be a good argument to be made for having the funeral “in town”, and every community has a cemetery which contains the graves of deceased community members. In practice, however, many rituals take place in more than one location. In a funeral, singing and dancing may begin in the community where a person died before moving to his or her traditional country for the funeral’s final stages; additionally, post-burial stages of the funeral, which may continue sporadically for years after death, may take place in other locations as well. In the case of a dhapi initiation ritual, singing and dancing may also begin in one community and finish in another: sometimes a young boy's own group may begin the ceremony in one community before taking the boy to his mūri’s community for the conclusion of the ritual.

The same political and relation-based factors come into play within Gapuwiyak when it is decided to hold a ritual performance there. In this more narrowly delimited geographical sphere, the question becomes one of which house becomes the location of the majority of ritual activity. The locations of ceremonies are highly politicized in the day-to-day running of a funeral or dhapi. Gapuwiyak is roughly divided into neighbourhoods which tend to be associated with particular groups and individuals. If a ritual is to be held in Gapuwiyak, it will generally be hosted at a house in one of these neighbourhoods associated with the principal participants. In the case of relatively marginalized groups within Gapuwiyak who live in only one area, the decision is relatively straightforward as there may be only one or two houses associated with those groups; for some larger groups whose members are more spread out in various areas within Gapuwiyak, however, the decision can be more complex and more contentious. Amongst Dhalwangu people, competition seems often to centre on tension between relatively junior and senior lineages and between relatively junior and senior individuals within a lineage. The funeral for the Dhalwangu man held in November 1996, described above, is a case in point. This man had lived in a small and run-down house next door to the house occupied by a number of senior Dhalwangu men descended from a man called Manganydjurra, their father’s father. The deceased, however, was himself descended from Manganydjurra’s younger brother Gulnga. The “Manganydjurra mob” felt that the funeral should be held
in the area between the deceased’s house and their own house; members of the “Gulnga mob” argued that the funeral should be moved to a house in another part of town because that was where their own father, the deceased’s older brother, had lived when he was alive. Although this latter group had a good case for moving the ceremony, the funeral remained where it had begun. Therefore, it can be seen that the location of a ceremony within Gapuwiyak may be an emotionally charged decision which may bring a number of groups into potential conflict.

The timing of a ritual performance is another contextual factor which warrants some close attention. Much of the timing may be dictated by the “textual” aspects of the performance as described above, such as the selection of song series and the order in which they are performed by various groups, and the selection of manikay for individual ritual episodes. Other aspects of timing involve more pragmatic considerations. For any public ritual, consideration must be given to when representatives of various participating groups may be able to arrive if they live in another community. In the 1996 funeral of the young Munyuku man discussed above, senior Dhalwangu people had to take a much larger role early on in the ceremony than would normally have been expected of them because people of other key biipurru were not present in Gapuwiyak when the death occurred. Marrangu people, the djunggayi for the funeral, arrived in the late afternoon on the day of the death, and Gurrumba Gurrumba people, the müribulu, had to travel from Ramingining and arrived over the next couple of days. In the meantime, Dhalwangu singers and dancers took charge of the announcement of the death, the smoking of the buildings, the moving of the coffin, and other initial preparations. Howard Morphy provides another good example of this kind of timing in Journey to the Crocodile’s Nest. Before the arrival of the deceased’s müribulu, Gurrumuru Dhalwangu, Narritjin (himself a classificatory māri) sang both freshwater and saltwater songs during the preparations of the body; this was because he wanted to leave the final decision of the course of the funeral open until the main participants arrived (Morphy 1984:66-7).

There are other considerations of timing as well. One is that the various groups participating in a ritual may wish to ensure that their own madayin is sufficiently well-represented before the ritual concludes. Sometimes public rituals may be prolonged for several days in order for each group to perform.

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7 As mentioned above, the deceased’s müribulu wanted to have the ceremony moved to their outstation at Dhalinybuy, but in the end decided not to press their claim.
their *manikay* and *bunggul*. Another factor affecting timing has to do with the order of performance of different song series: for Dhalwangu, each song series should be performed over the course of the ritual. Bangana told me once that the proper relation of songs performed as *ngaraka* (songs performed with no dancing) to songs performed as *bunggulmirr* (songs performed with dancing) is to sing a song series first to “establish” it, either the night before or the morning before a second danced performance. Also, in the case of a funeral, the Balambala song series should occur near the end of the ritual (because of the importance of the *mokuy* (spirit) dance which is its main feature), and the final “sacred” song series at Gangan (the so-called “men’s business”) should be performed on the last night before the burial. Another consideration in a funeral has to do with the body itself. Larger communities have refrigerated units designed to contain and preserve the body, for weeks if necessary, until the various groups have agreed that the funeral can conclude. In smaller communities such as Gapuwiyak, however, and on remote outstations, such units do not exist, and therefore the pace of a funeral must be aligned to the condition of the body and its rate of decomposition.

In a *dhapi* circumcision there are a number of requisite stages that must be attended to before a young boy can be initiated. In order, these are: *lupthun* or *yur’yun*, the washing ceremony where the boy’s body is rubbed with water; *burwunum*, the application of red ochre to the boy’s chest, arms, legs and face (this is often done immediately after the *lupthun*); *dharrupu dikungu*, the first “raw” painting executed on the boy’s chest which is a relatively simple design; *dharrupu burumngu*, the second “cooked” painting which is more complex and intricate; *gamununggu* or *dhulang*, the final painting which is very intricate and often an important aspect of the boy’s own *madayin* (or the boy’s *märi’s* *madayin*); *liyamukthun*, all-night singing on the last night before the circumcision; *dhapi*, the circumcision itself; and *raypirri*, in which the newly-initiated man stands over a smoky fire. Ideally, each of these stages should occur, and responsibility for them may be divided among several participating groups. We can see, then, that the timing of a ritual is contingent upon a wide variety of social, symbolic, and pragmatic factors, each of which can have a significant bearing on the outcome of the performance.

Finally, we must consider the effect of the larger socio-political context on *manikay* performance, both within and outside Arnhem Land. As stated

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8 A detailed description and interpretation of a *dhapi* performed at Milingimbi in the mid-1970s is provided by Ian Keen (Keen 1994a:173-86).
above, rituals, especially funerals, are political events. Morphy states that the death of an individual causes a rupture in the structure of relations associated with that individual, and that an ensuing power gap becomes the focus of attention for others who wish to take up the deceased’s social position (1997:134). Although there are certain articulated principles which are the basis for people’s claims, the funeral becomes the site of an intense process of negotiation in which rights and responsibilities are re-allocated or re-established (ibid.:135-6). Thus, by taking a leading role in the funeral of an important man or woman, various groups and individuals may stake a claim for a greater share of power in the new structure of relations following the death. These kinds of power plays may be considerably intensified if the deceased had a position of power within society outside of Arnhem Land.

In late 1995, the former member for the electorate of Arnhem in the Northern Territory parliament passed away; he was only in middle age, but was in a position of great prestige and influence both within northeast Arnhem Land and in the Northern Territory more generally. His funeral, held in his home community of Galiwin’ku, was the largest funeral that I ever attended, with Yolngu coming from all over Arnhem Land to participate. There was much tension in the leadup to the funeral as various roles and responsibilities were sorted out. At one point the Dhalwangu living at Gapuwiyak, marrbulu for the deceased, were considering not attending as a protest against other groups who were trying to usurp their important role. In the end they did travel to Galiwin’ku and took a prominent part in the performance, even performing sacred (and normally restricted) men’s dances on two separate occasions. Other groups also made a considerable effort to perform often and to perform well. Yolngu groups, however, were not the only ones operating within a highly-charged political atmosphere; the Northern Territory government also decided to make its participation visible in a number of ways. Yolngu were allowed to conduct a smoking ceremony inside the Northern Territory parliament building in Darwin, the deceased man’s coffin was given a military escort to the site of the funeral, and a variety of politicians were in attendance in the opening and closing stages of the ceremony. We must recognize, then, that Yolngu ritual performance does not exist in a vacuum, and that there are a wide variety of contextual factors to consider in order to understand why particular groups participate, why particular songs are sung, and why a particular location is chosen.
Emergence

The above account of performative aspects of Dhalwangu music has already demonstrated in a number of ways that ritual performance does not involve the reproduction of a fixed text in a standardized way, but is contingent upon social, musical, textual, geographical and political factors. To underscore this point, I will now turn to the issue of the emergent nature of Dhalwangu musical performance: the fact that performances unfold through time as the result of negotiation and interaction between the various groups and performers. To recognize the importance of emergence is to recognize the dynamic nature of Dhalwangu musical performance.

As alluded to above, Yolngu ritual performances are the product of ongoing interactions between participating groups with distinct *bupurr* identities in which options are discussed, preferences are stated, and decisions are made with regard to the progress of the ritual and the selection of songs, dances and ritual episodes. The meaning of a ritual performance is the result of the dynamic and emergent interaction between the different groups involved. Each group has its own unique interpretation of its own *madayin*, an interpretation that must enter into a dialogue with those of other groups in order to provide a coherent thematic unity. This is not to say that each group participating in a ritual has an identical interpretation of its meaning—indeed, flexibility is a characteristic of Yolngu cosmology—but it is nonetheless clear that ritual performance is cooperative and there is a certain unity of understanding on some level.

The negotiation of ritual performance begins when the various groups involved come together to discuss the course the ritual should take and the roles which each group will assume. Although it is guided by certain principles of which group should be responsible for what, this process of negotiation may result in a number of possible outcomes. Although the *mbirbulu* should take charge of the body in a funeral, it is possible that they will give up some of their rights to other groups; alternatively, they may ask for certain other groups to yield some of their rights. It is widely agreed among Yolngu that the ideal is for each of the main groups to agree on a course of action which attempts to satisfy everyone.

However, this process of negotiation does not result in a fixed text or “programme” for the ritual to come, but merely provides some guiding
principles and an overall plan. The specifics of performance emerge in the interactions between groups once the ritual is actually underway; this is especially the case when two or more groups are performing the “same” songs together in the same place and at the same moment in the ritual. A good example of this occurred during a dhapi initiation ritual held in Gapuwiyak in 1996. The boy to be initiated was Munyuku, and his māribulu was Dhalwangu; his father, a Munyuku ritual expert, asked the Dhalwangu people living at Gapuwiyak to take charge of the ritual and perform the initiation. It would be difficult, however, to state that the dhapi was a “Dhalwangu” ritual, because the performance in fact emerged through the interaction of both groups. The ceremony began with Munyuku and Dhalwangu singers performing ngaraka manikay for the first few days, singing independently of but in consultation with each other. Most of the singing was informal, with no dance performances, and occurred mostly at night. After a few days there was a key episode in which the boy was ceremonially handed over from the Munyuku to the Dhalwangu for the remainder of the ritual. This episode encapsulated the kinds of emergent interactions that are so much a part of Yolngu musical performance.

Gambali, the boy’s father, began by singing Munyuku songs associated with their country at Yarrinya, on Blue Mud Bay. After approximately one hour of singing, a group of Dhalwangu singers began to perform their own song series at Garrapara, also on Blue Mud Bay, and for a time the two groups alternated song items. Gambali concentrated his performance on the song subject “driftwood”: he sang about the driftwood beginning its journey in the Munyuku waters in the ocean at Blue Mud Bay, gradually drifting toward the Dhalwangu waters. The driftwood being sung about was symbolically representative of Gambali’s son, whose dhapi was about to leave Munyuku hands and be turned over to the Dhalwangu for the remainder of the ritual. When the songs indicated that the driftwood had conceptually drifted into Dhalwangu waters, the boy stood in the middle of the circle of singers and was ceremonially washed with water and adorned with feathered armbands; Gambali then concluded the handover by placing his hand on his son’s forehead and reciting an incantation in “Macassan” language9. At that point, all the men stood up and the Dhalwangu singers began to sing one of the Gurrumuru song series. Again, there was a symbolic connection here because the boy was now said to represent the mast of the Macassan ship, which was

9 The use of “Macassan” language at certain points in Yirritja-moiety rituals relates to the Birrinydjil cosmoogy, discussed at length in Chapter Eight.
made of the same wood as the driftwood. The entire group moved some distance away toward Bangana’s house, and then they sat and concluded the episode with only Dhalwangu singing. We can see in this example that a single ritual episode was very much the result of two distinct groups interacting in musical performance. The dhapi became even more complex when a Gurrumba Gurrumba boy joined Gambali’s son for the remainder of the ritual, and a number of Madarrpa people joined the performance. In another ritual episode performed two days after the “handover”, Munyuku, Madarrpa and Dhalwangu singers performed in a number of different combinations all at once, alternating song items from one group to another, culminating in a bunggulmirr performance of the Rainbow Serpent song. Yolngu rituals, then, do not exist in a strictly predetermined form, but rather develop through the negotiated interactions of a number of groups; they are not exercises in being, but rather in becoming.

The emergent nature of musical performance is also determined by the interactions between the various individual performers involved in any song item or ritual episode: the singer or singers, the yidaki player, the dancers, and others in attendance. The dynamic between performers varies between ngaraka and bunggulmirr performance. In performances of ngaraka manikay there is no organized dancing, although women may occasionally dance for certain song items. The most senior singers are in charge of these performances: they decide when to change to the next version of a song subject, or to the next subject of a song series; they set the tempo and rhythm with their own clapstick accompaniment; and they take an overall role as conductors. The yidaki player also plays a role in directing the performance by playing short hooted overtones at key moments during the song item to indicate changes in clapstick rhythm and the end of the song item. However, even though these hooted overtones are the most prominent cues for the performance, the yidaki player is generally a young man and needs to pay attention to the lead singers and make sure that his cues are appropriately placed near the end of sung phrases10. There is also a great deal of interaction between singers. As the overarching aesthetic goal of manikay performance is to provide a vivid description of ancestral places, each singer may contribute a different perspective: when singing about the long-necked tortoise, for instance, one

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10 Bangana said of the yidaki player: “he’s got to be singing too. And he knows when the singer needs a breath, when he’s out of breath, he [the yidaki player] has got to know when too.”
singer may sing about where the turtle is swimming while another sings about the patterns of water marks on its shell. As discussed earlier, multiple descriptions by different singers serve to increase the “brilliance” of the manikay, and thus a singer is highly conscious of the importance of listening to others and complementing their song texts with his own. The interaction of singers is also obvious when one singer helps out another during the performance of a song item: if one man is running out of breath halfway through a phrase, a skillful singer will jump in and complete the phrase with an appropriate ending.

In bunggulmirr performance it is dancing which is the focus of attention, and interactions between performers are adjusted accordingly. Lead dancers generally take the lead in giving cues to the musicians when they are ready, because the changes in clapstick pattern coincide with changes in the dance steps. The lead dancer, performing in front of a group of other dancers, listens to the singing and indicates to the singers and the yidaki player when the cues should be placed and the rhythm changed, sometimes by gesturing, by an abrupt nod of the head, or by a verbal cue. However, the dancer does not give these cues arbitrarily: he must listen carefully to the singer’s phrasing so that, like the yidaki player in ngaraka performance, he gives the cues at an appropriate time. This is especially important in performances of yindi or yuta versions of certain song subjects, because changes in rhythm and dance form coincide with the unison “chorus” section. In these songs, the lead dancer must be sure to give his cue to the singers just before the “chorus” is to be sung. Therefore, although it is possible to set down ideal rules for performative interaction, in practice there must be a high level of concentration and cooperation between all performers to achieve a successful manikay performance.

It is also worth mentioning the interaction between the performers discussed above and the audience. In many ways it is not appropriate to speak of an audience because it implies a sharp contrast between those doing the performing and those observing from the sidelines. In Yolngu ritual performance such distinctions are blurred and it is difficult to say where the “performers” end and the “audience” begins. Among singers, many men do not sing each and every song, but rather contribute sporadically (perhaps based on their level of knowledge); these men may spend more time listening than singing. The performative space itself is porous, with performers coming

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and going as they please, to get a drink or some cigarettes, or simply if they are
tired or bored (although those singers leading the performance tend to sing
throughout without leaving). The participation of dancers may be even less
structured, as men and women may return to the larger group of non-dancing
men and women after any song item, and may not return to dance for several
song items; or, sometimes an elder who has been observing for the majority of
a performance may get up to instruct younger dancers if they are making
mistakes. There is also a great deal of give-and-take between audience and
performers in that the former may shout encouragement or criticism
throughout a performance, feedback which is certainly taken in, especially by
younger singers and dancers.

All of these examples of performer interaction demonstrate the
emergent character of manikay performance. Although there are certain words
and phrases appropriate to each song subject, and a series of subjects which
normally makes up a song series, and although there are principles guiding
performance in ritual contexts, the reality is that the actual manikay is different
each and every time it is performed. Song subjects and song versions may be
performed or bypassed at will, each singer has considerable leeway in the
words and phrases chosen, and individual performers come, go, and interact
based on the contingencies of the moment. I have recordings of what is
ostensibly the “same” song series (i.e., the songs have the same name and are
identified as being the same songs) performed on different occasions which
differ in a bewildering number of ways: some are ngaraka, some are
bunggulmirr, some took five hours to perform and others less than two, some
were performed in rituals and others for fun, and each had a different number
of performers. I should make it plain that there is a conceptual unity of these
disparate performances of the “same” songs, as they share a well-defined
musical structure and are associated with the same ancestral places. The sung
descriptions and evocations of these places may vary in the details, but they are
equally concerned with painting the same picture. And yet, in order to
understand these performances, we must recognize them as emergent
phenomena, narratives constructed on the fly but within certain parameters.

12 The politics of the interaction between performers and audience in Yolngu ritual dance
performances are discussed at length by Franca Tamisari (Tamisari 2000).

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Conclusion - The Performative Construction of Dhalwangu Reality

The performance, in effect, becomes life, no less than life is reflected in the performance, and the vehicle for constructing social reality and personal conviction appears more as drama than as rational thought.

- Edward L. Schieffelin (1985:721)

I conclude this chapter with some remarks about the ontological significance of Dhalwangu performance—the idea that performance, in addition to being a way of knowing, may also be understood to be a way of being. If Yolngu sociality is inherently dialogical and negotiated, if Yolngu create the meaning of their cosmology, social organization, and relations to country through their interaction with others, then musical performance must be seen as a key medium through which this creation is made possible. Dhalwangu people sing with confidence and authority about places they have never visited, much less inhabited; they sing about their relations with other በ צריכן whom they encounter only sporadically; they believe in and work within a cosmology which is only occasionally set out in an extended narrative form; they sing using a language that they may not use in everyday conversation; and they make extensive use of song in conceptualizing and dealing with widespread social change. In these and other ways, Dhalwangu singers contribute to the reproduction of Dhalwangu sociality and the reproduction of the Dhalwangu “imaginary”.

A great deal of the work of Yolngu sociality is done in times of ritual performance. Groups come together from far and wide, some with different languages and methods of social organization, for the purpose of cooperation in accomplishing a ritual task. In terms of cosmology, individuals and groups may hold particular opinions in isolation which must be tempered when cooperating in ritual with another group which has rights in the same cosmology. As Keen has demonstrated (Keen 1994a:61), it is the flexibility of Yolngu religious belief which allows groups to express solidarity with others in one context and social distance in another. The impact of such contact, however, must be felt in some way: either the group returns to their home more convinced than ever that they speak the truth and that the others are liars, or, as is sometimes the case, such a meeting is cause for reflection as people try to sort out the intricacies of their cosmology. I remember vividly a day when Bangana returned from a ceremony at Numbulwar with
Nundhirribala people; he was very excited about discussions he had had with Nundhirribala elders concerning their interpretation of the Birrinydjir cosmology. Their account of the story filled in some gaps in Bangana’s own knowledge, and yet sparked some perplexing contradictions as well. For any individual, cosmology must be like a jigsaw puzzle, and each encounter with others sharing the cosmology (be they from one’s own group or another group) must add a piece. Certainly, it seemed to me that Bangana could never again think about Birrinydjir without at least considering what he had learned in Numbulwar, even if he rejected it in the end.

This is closely related to the understanding of Yolngu sociality presented in Chapter Two, incorporating theories of habitus (Bourdieu 1992) and structuration (Giddens 1984). Social action is shaped in terms of structures, but those structures are themselves equally shaped by social action. Social action such as ritual musical performance is shaped in terms of pre-existing ideas about ancestors, country, sociality, and madayin, but each performance is a unique event which may be influential in subsequent reinterpretations of each of those aspects of Dhalwangu culture. Dhalwangu culture is not exclusively recreated through musical performance, but performance must be seen to be an important part in its ongoing creation. Of course, performance cannot account for everything: marriage and bestowal are central elements of the construction of Yolngu social organization, just as resource distribution may dictate relations to country in important ways. What this chapter has shown, however, is that musical performance is an element of the Dhalwangu construction of social reality that cannot be ignored if we seek a holistic understanding of the significance of Dhalwangu life.

This “movement” of the thesis has examined a number of features of Dhalwangu manikay which combine to generate a robust and fascinating musical tradition. The next “movement” of the thesis will apply this detailed understanding of Dhalwangu manikay to three areas pivotal to any study of Yolngu culture: sociality, connections to country, and social change. Musical structures and performances can be understood to provide representations of these areas of concern, but are at the same time constitutive of them as well. The next three chapters will attempt to fulfil the promise of a Dhalwangu musical anthropology by examining the manner in which music is integral, rather than peripheral, to the constitution of Dhalwangu culture.
Chapter Six - The Musical Articulation of Sociality

We sometimes talk about our ngandi side in our songs. We sometimes talk about our māri side in our songs....in other words, we talk about the family tree, only in songs.

- Bangana Wunungmurra

In the “Overture”, I elaborated on the concept of a musical anthropology, which does not treat music as an aspect of culture, but rather treats all culture as musical. I also outlined an approach to the analysis of Yolngu sociality, based on practice theory and the theory of structuration, which seeks to emphasize multiple and overlapping identities rather than bounded group membership. The “First Movement” provided a detailed examination of DhaJwangu musical structure and performance, including melodic, rhythmic, textual, and performative aspects of the genre of DhaJwangu songs known as manikay.

Taken together, these two sections of this dissertation have set the stage for the three chapters of its “Second Movement”, in which I demonstrate the musical articulation of DhaJwangu culture. In the present chapter, I will extend my analysis of Yolngu sociality to look at the particular ways in which the various overlapping identities of the DhaJwangu people of Gapuwiyak are both expressed and constituted through musical performance. Chapter Seven will analyze the musical articulation of DhaJwangu connections to their traditional country, while Chapter Eight looks at the issue of social and cultural change, and the ways in which DhaJwangu people have managed such change through musical means. The chapters of this “movement”, then, will demonstrate the applicability of the idea of a musical anthropology to the study of Yolngu culture.

In Chapter Two I developed an analytical perspective on Yolngu sociality which stressed a social system of multiple and overlapping identities, structured conceptually according to certain heterogeneous, flexible, and contextual principles, and constituted and reproduced through social practices which could either reinforce or subtly change the conceptual structure. I also suggested that ritual musical performance represents one prominent set of practices which contribute to this processual view of Yolngu sociality. In this chapter, I will demonstrate that point through a close examination of
Dhalwangu musical practices. For these people, "Dhalwangu" is a very important identity, structured according to several enduring (but not uniform or universal) principles such as patrilineality and shared ownership of land and madayin. However, these people also have other important identities, relevant to particular contexts, structured according to other principles, and reproduced through particular kinds of social action: namely, their identities as Yirritja people, as Wunungmurra people, as raypiny or morjuk people, or as descendants of others through both paternal and maternal lines. By looking at various aspects of Dhalwangu manikay, I will demonstrate how ritual musical practice weaves each of these identities into the complex tapestry of Dhalwangu sociality.

**Yirritja Moiety Identity**

The identity with the broadest level of social inclusiveness is moiety identity, Dhuwa or Yirritja, and all singers, songs, and performances can be clearly identified as one or the other. Moiety identity is the least flexible of all Yolngu identities in the sense that it is not subject to negotiation, and the distinction between the moieties is relatively unambiguous. Moieties are ideally exogamous and patrilineal, and all land belongs to one moiety or the other by virtue of the fact that it was created during the wangarr era by ancestral beings who were either Dhuwa or Yirritja, and who in their travels avoided the country of the opposite moiety by going over, under, or around it (Morphy 1991:44). By extension, madayin, or the sacred heritage (including songs) identified with different biipurru, is exclusively identified with one of the two moieties only. However, it must be recognized that, despite the exclusivity of moiety identity, there are a number of connections which demonstrate the importance of one moiety to people of the other. There are a number of different ways in which an individual can express his or her moiety identity, or their relationship to the opposite moiety, through musical performance.

As I discussed in Chapter Five, there are rare instances in rituals when a group of the opposite moiety to the main participants contributes a musical performance. The reasoning behind these performances is consistent with explanations provided for all funeral performances. People told me that one of the main goals of musical performances at funerals was that all songs should be sung in which the deceased had rights and responsibilities—in other words,
these musical performances should be directed toward the articulation of the deceased’s multiple identities. For the most part, this means the songs of their own bâpurru identity, as well as their märi’s songs, and the songs of other bâpurru of the same moiety connected through shared cosmology. It is important for all of these songs to be performed because they constitute the totality of the deceased’s madayin, his or her complete spiritual identity. This reasoning is sometimes extended to performances by people of the opposite moiety, because the deceased also had a stake in their madayin through maternal connections and responsibilities. It should be noted, however, that opposite-moiety performances do not always occur, and when they do they are short in duration.

There are relatively few references to moiety identity in DhaJwangu song texts, primarily because the people of each moiety have song subjects which are exclusive to that moiety only. Yet, there are a few instances in which references to the opposite moiety may appear. One example is the song mokuy milgarri (spirits crying), from the Balambala song series. The song texts describe spirits from the Dhalwangu country at Gângan (adjacent to Balambala) calling back and forth on their didjeridus to nearby spirits with other bâpurru identities, including related Yirritja moiety spirits of the Madarrpa, Munyuku, and Wan.gurri people. In one particular song item, though, the singer sang the following song text:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{biyaka} & \text{ juldhurr dhanbulwa} \\
\text{wudulwa nyidilwa wudulanginy gu} \\
\text{Dikirrjtja Gawul}a
\end{align*}
\]

that way / blow / Djapu spirits
Djapu spirits/ Djapu spirits/ Djapu spirits/ for
Dikirrtja/ GawuJa [both names for Djapu country]

This song item is significant because of the fact that Dikirrtja and Gauula are names for a Dhuwa-moiety place belonging to the Djapu people. Although the particular features of the cosmology involved in the Balambala song series are shared by people of certain Yirritja bâpurru identities only, Dhuwa people also have songs about mokuy spirits which are important in Dhuwa-moiety funerals. Also significant is the fact that Djapu people call Dhalwangu ngandi, or mother, and therefore people with these two identities stand in a yothu-yindi, or child-
mother relationship to one another, with significant rights and responsibilities as outlined in Chapter Five.

A fascinating example of the *yothu-yindi* relationship articulated through song is the song *baybinnga* (saratoga), part of the Girriti (Gångan) song series. On the one hand, *baybinnga* is a very important song subject associated with the Dhaḻwangu ancestral being Barama, demonstrated in the following song text:

```
marrtji rulanggun warrkmany wangarr Baramawa
swimming/ swimming slowly/ saratoga/ sacred/ for Barama
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On the other hand, I was told that, in actual fact, *baybinnga* is a Dhuwa-moiety fish belonging to Gälpü and Djarrwak people, who also stand in a *yothu-yindi* relationship to Dhaḻwangu. In *wangarr* times, this fish swam from Gälpü country at Garrimala to nearby Gångan, and is included in Dhaḻwangu cosmology because it came to live in Dhaḻwangu waters. But the inside of the fish, the bones, are Dhuwa:

```
wangarr dhananytja Baramawa warrkmany ngarakanydja Murrunyina Gumbuykurru warray
sacred/ that/ Barama’s/ saratoga/ those bones/ Murrunyina/ Gumbuykurru [both *likan* names for Djarrwak people]/ warray [song word]
```

In this line of song text, *Murrunyina* and *Gumbuykurru* are both *likan* names of the Djarrwak people, some of whom were the mothers of a number of Dhaḻwangu people at Gapuwiyak, implying that the bones of the saratoga are the sacred property of Djarrwak people. Gälpü and Djarrwak people are very closely related in terms of cosmology, and are frequently referred to as “one people”; the saratoga’s bones can therefore be considered the joint property of both *bāpurru*. We can see, therefore, that although references to people of the opposite moiety are rare in Dhaḻwangu songs, when they do occur they are very suggestive of Dhaḻwangu *yothu-yindi* relations with a variety of other people of the opposite moiety.

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1 Magowan (1994b:143) also notes that occasional references to the opposite moiety may be made in songs, as does Ronald Berndt (1952:90).
For the people with whom I worked in Gapuwiyak, “Dhalwangu” is the identity which is the most consistently articulated in the greatest number of contexts, and is the identity most relevant to such things as the ownership of land and of madayin. Therefore, the performance of manikay, a form of madayin which primarily concerns ancestral events on particular areas of land, is a social practice which is strongly implicated in the reproduction of Dhalwangu identity.

One relevant feature of musical performances which contributes to the reproduction of Dhalwangu identity is the composition of the singing group; generally, this consists of men who identify themselves as Dhalwangu, although they may be joined by other Yirritja-moiety men who have rights in the same song series, and who therefore share with Dhalwangu people a more extended btipurru identity. In my field recordings, of seventeen sessions in which Dhalwangu songs were performed, in both ritual and elicited contexts, nine involved only Dhalwangu singers. A further six sessions were of all Dhalwangu performers with the exception of a single Wan.gurri man. Thus, a high proportion of performances of Dhalwangu manikay are performed by Dhalwangu people and by a few others with Dhalwangu links, although there are many contexts in which others may be involved as well.

References in Dhalwangu song texts to Dhalwangu people and places are very frequent in all performances, and they are one of the primary means available to Dhalwangu people to articulate their strong connections to their country, to their madayin, and to each other. One of the most common song textual strategies for the articulation of a distinctly Dhalwangu identity is the use of words and phrases that refer to specific named places in Dhalwangu country, as affiliation to country is among the strongest markers of btipurru identity. This topic is dealt with more completely in Chapter Seven, so a small number of examples should suffice. For instance, in song texts from the Gurrumuru Wángangur song series, which describe the events surrounding the ancestral being Birrinydjî, Gurrumuru is referred to by that name, or by one of a number of alternate names, or by some more oblique cosmological trope. The

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2 His father’s mother was initially married to a Dhalwangu man who died before she had children; after his death, she married a Wan.gurri man. The grandchildren of this marriage consider themselves closely affiliated to the Dhalwangu people due to this personal history, and always associate themselves with the Dhalwangu in ceremonies at Gapuwiyak (where there are only a few Wan.gurri people living).
song subject *matha* (talking), for example, describes Dhalwangu ancestors sitting at Gurrumuru talking with one another:

\[ wuypum \ ngali \ wanga \ liyawinydj\an \ Gobaniny \]

\[
\text{talk/ we/ talk/ at home/ Gobaniny}
\]

In this line, the singer is positioning his ancestors at Gurrumuru through the use of a common alternate name, Gobaniny. Sometimes, a singer may do this through the use of almost nothing but place names, as is the case in the following song text from the song *yiki* (knife), which describes the Dhalwangu ancestors using knives to clear the scrub and establish a camp:

\[ \text{Likarrma} \ Gunurima \ Dharrwalawal \ Bawuyarra \ Ganbururr \ lirrbumandu \]

\[
\text{Likarrma/ Gunurima/ Dharrwalawal/ Bawuyarra/ Ganbururr [all alternate names for Gurrumuru]/ clearing}
\]

Sometimes, a Dhalwangu singer may refer to Gurrumuru through more oblique means, which may require a higher degree of background knowledge to understand correctly. Take, for example, this line of song text from the song subject *ngarali* (tobacco):

\[ bataththa \ ngaynha \ liyawinydj\an \ Birrinydj\itoa \]

\[
\text{getting the tobacco ready/ that/ at home/ Birrinydji’s}
\]

In Dhalwangu cosmology, Birrinydji’s home is Gurrumuru, although other Yirritja people who have rights in this cosmology would bestow this honour upon their own country. When a Dhalwangu singer refers to Birrinydji’s home, therefore, there can be no question that he is referring to Gurrumuru.

Another means that singers have to refer to their Dhalwangu identity is by singing names associated with Dhalwangu people. For an example, let us look again at the song *matha* (talking):

\[ nyilbumwanga \ Rrayngur \ Rraypuyngu \ nyilbumwanga \ marrtjilamandhin \]

\[
\text{talking/ at Rray/ people of Rray/ talking/ talking}
\]
In this song text, Rray is an alternate name for Gurrumuru, and Rraypuuyngu is a word identifying the people of Rray. Another means of referring to Dha}wangu people is the singing one of the Dha}wangu ikan names. Williams (Williams 1986:44) discusses ikan or bundurr names as signifying important sacred sites and the sacred objects located there, and notes that “...members of the group that owns the land may identify themselves by this bundurr name”. Likewise, Keen (Keen 1994a:71) notes that ikan names were called out during ceremonies and “...signified at once a wangarr ancestor, a place, and a group”. In Dha}wangu songs, ikan names have this significance, standing for Dha}wangu people as well as sacred places within Dha}wangu country. Here is an example from the song yiki (knife):

*bunal marrtji yarrkunmaramanytja Djinytjaraywa Balawukuwa*

the soil/ clearing/ clearing/ Djinytjaraywa/ Balawukuwa [names for Gurrumuru]

In this case, the two ikan names refer both to the Dha}wangu people clearing the soil with the knives, and also to the place where the soil is being cleared, Gurrumuru.

There are many elements of musical structure which are unique to Dha}wangu identity (as opposed to any other kind of identity a Dha}wangu person may have). First and foremost is the total musical repertoire shared by all Dha}wangu people, that is, the sum total of all song series which Dha}wangu people have the right to sing. As Keen points out, although each song series may be shared with other people of the same moiety, “...each group’s total constellation of songs was unique” (1994a:147). This must be seen as one of the most significant features of a distinct Dha}wangu identity. The group of men with whom I worked most closely sing a total of eighteen separate named song series associated with five areas of land. Each of these places, and the songs associated with them, are connected through shared cosmology to other Yirritja moiety people, constituting more extended ḇipurrû identities. For example, the song series concerning Birrinydji and the Macassan visitors are also owned and performed by Warramiri, Gumatj, Wan.gurri, Munyuku, Birrkili, and Nundhirribala people. The song series about Garrapara are co-owned and co-performed by Birrkili, Ma.Q.arrpa, and Manggalili singers. But the sum total of these eighteen song series are only owned and performed by Dha}wangu people, and it is notable that members of the Wunungmurra and Gumana
families are both owners of this complete set. This makes a strong argument in favour of Dhalwangu being a distinct identity among people of the Yirritja moiety, as well as the overarching identity unifying the Wunungmurra and Gumana families.

Musically, one of the primary features for articulating a particular bāpurru identity is the existence of distinctive melodic lines. Yolngu singers repeatedly told me that every bāpurru has their own “tunes”, sometimes using that word, but more often using Yolngu words for “head” such as liya or mulkurr. In Chapter Three, I presented evidence which confirms the consistency and stability of four particular melodic lines used in the performance of Dhalwangu manikay and identified by all as Dha.lwangu “tunes” or liya. The issue of the relation between musical structure and social structure has been a contentious one in the Arnhem Land ethnographic literature, and has essentially come down to an argument over the existence or non-existence of melodic lines which can be identified with particular bāpurru. For my part, I contend that there is ample ethnographic and musicological evidence to support this correlation.

A number of anthropologists and ethnomusicologists have stated over the years that such a relation between music and society exists, with little by way of analysis to support their claims; the most prominent scholar to advance the opposing view is Jill Stubington, who worked in a number of Yolngu communities during the 1970s. In a 1982 article, she makes the statement that “no distinctive musical characteristics were found to differentiate performances by members of different groups. Using the broad definition of clan, songs performed by members of different clans do not have exclusive tunes or rhythms” (Stubington 1982:86-7). She goes on to state that some “clans” may be so small as to allow personal idiosyncrasies to represent the entire group’s style, that there may be some slippage between the articulated ideal and actual musical practice, that there was no “clan”- exclusivity with regard to song subjects, and that musical performances are political events (ibid.:87). Later in the article, Stubington re-affirms her position vis-à-vis “clan” ownership of tunes:

In the 746 items examined, 115 of which were subjected to musical notation and detailed analysis, no consistent correlation was found

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3 Scholars who have written of the existence of “clan-owned tunes” include Richard Waterman (Waterman 1955:46), Ronald Berndt (Berndt 1966:198), Steven Knopoff (Knopoff 1992:141), Ian Keen (Keen 1994a:149), and Fiona Magowan (Magowan 1994a:205).
between any aspect of musical structure and the clan of the performer. It is the particular song session itself which is the basis of musical unity in the clan song repertoire (ibid.:89).

In support of her assertion, Stubington offers a series of musical transcriptions from one performance (ibid.:93-101), although she does not state the bûpurrú identity of the singer.

I should state at the outset that I agree with a number of Stubington’s statements: I don’t think there is a relation between rhythm and identity at the bûpurrú level (though perhaps at the “extended” bûpurrú or moiety level); some samples are too small to speak for an entire btipurru; individual bûpurrú do not have exclusive ownership of song subjects; and musical performances are indeed political events. However, all musical features do not have to be bûpurrú-specific in order to demonstrate a relation between musical structure and social structure. For my part, I only claim a correlation between melodic materials and bûpurrú identity.

Stubington’s analysis of a sequence of the first ten song items of a 1974 performance notes variations from item to item in length, rhythm, tempo, didjeridu accompaniment, melodic materials, and musical structure, claiming that this pattern (or lack thereof) demonstrates that there is no underlying structure and that performances are *ad hoc* events relying on the previous song item to influence the next (ibid.:89). Many of these variations, however, can be accounted for within a coherent Yolŋu theory of music. Stubington notes the scales shown in figures 6.1-6.4, providing separate notations of the performances themselves.

Figure 6.1 - notation #1 (Stubington 1982:93)
![Figure 6.1 - notation #1](image)

Figure 6.2 - notation #2 (Stubington 1982:94)
![Figure 6.2 - notation #2](image)

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4 Stubington maintained her interpretations in an article published twelve years later (Stubington 1994:86).

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Contrary to Stubington’s conclusions, I believe that these four scales show a fair amount of consistency and more than a passing resemblance to one another: figures 6.1 and 6.4 are very likely the same “tune”, as are figures 6.2 and 6.3.

The melodic line represented by figure 6.1 begins on an A flat, and then descends through F and E, concluding on D flat and C; the intervals between these notes are (in semitones) 3, 1, 3, 1. The melodic line represented by figure 6.4 begins on A sharp, descending through G and a slightly sharp F, and the vocal coda alternates between D and C sharp, concluding on a slightly sharp A sharp one octave lower than the first note of the melodic line; the intervals between these notes are (in semitones) 3, 1.5, 3.5, 1. Therefore, the greatest variation of any interval between performances is a quarter-tone.

The melodic line represented by figure 6.2 begins by alternating between D flat and C above the staff before descending to a slightly flat A; the intervals, in semitones, are 1 and 3.5. The melodic line shown in figure 6.3 begins by alternating between a slightly sharp D flat and a slightly sharp C and descends to a slightly sharp A, intervals of 1 semitone and 3 semitones, respectively; the vocal coda, not present in the figure 6.2 melody, descends to D flat and C. The greatest intervallic variation between these two melodic lines is a quarter-tone.

It seems clear to me that the musicians performing their *manikay* in the session which Stubington recorded made use of two distinct melodic lines; this is not in itself unusual as, in my experience, most Yolngu *bpirru* own more than one characteristic melodic line. Given that singers do not fix their pitch with the aid of any fixed-tone instruments (as the didjeridu begins after the

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5 It is a common practice of Yolngu singers to conclude a song item on the same note with which they began, only an octave lower.
vocal line is established), in analyzing transcriptions we must allow some leeway in terms of pitch relationships. As well, it is difficult to assign a precise pitch to sung notes, as many quarter-tones are used in singing but are difficult to identify precisely in analysis, and a single note held out by a singer may vary by as much as a semitone from beginning to end. For these reasons, I suggest that a variation in the intervals of a melodic line of less than a semitone from performance to performance is well within an acceptable range for an oral musical tradition, especially when Yolngu musicians frequently state that “each clan has its own tunes”.

If, in analyzing Yolngu music, we search for absolute and unchanging relationships between different musical elements, we are likely to be disappointed. This is the case when examining the pitches of melodic lines. We must accept that there will be variations; the question is what amount of variation is acceptable in order to call two melodic lines “the same” while stating that a third is “different”. My analysis of DhaJwangu melodic lines in Chapter Three, I believe, demonstrated that DhaJwangu singers use a consistent set of melodic lines in their performances, which proves that such performances are not ad hoc events, but are structured according to well-understood and clearly-articulated principles of a DhaJwangu musical theory. As was the case in the analyses of Chapter Three, the most fruitful approach to the study of Yolngu melodic lines is one which combines Western musicological analysis with Yolngu theories about their own music.

The distinctiveness of DhaJwangu melodic lines can only be fully appreciated when they are compared to the melodic lines used by singers of other bûpurrı identities. My exposure to these melodic lines was, for the most part, through “borrowing” the songs of other Yirritja people to use in a particular performance, a practice known as dhakaygulkmaram (“having a taste of one another”). Any given song series is the ritual property of a number of different bûpurrı of the same moiety who each have rights in that cosmology. All of these people sing the song series with roughly the same song subjects and in roughly the same order, but singing in their own tongue or matha and using their own characteristic melodic lines. In a performance involving dhakaygulkmaram, a singer chooses to sing one song subject using the dialect and the melodic lines of one of the other owning bûpurrı, switching back to his own dialect and melodic lines for the next song subject. The reasons for this temporary switch depend on the particularities of the ritual context: for instance, during a dhapi initiation ceremony in January 1996, DhaJwangu
singers performing one of the Gängan song series sang the song subject walgarrambu (oxeye herring) using the Gumatj dialect and a Gumatj melodic line because the young boy to be initiated was Gumatj. On other occasions, a singer may choose to articulate another cosmologically-related identity simply because he feels like it, or because he wants younger singers to learn the melodic lines and dialect of other people. The skillful use and widespread recognition of distinct melodic lines belonging to each btipurru underscores the importance of melodic structure as a fundamentally important marker of unique btipurru identity. Although my recorded sample is necessarily small and influenced by the particular perspectives of DhaJwangu singers, it nonetheless gives some small indication of the range of identifiable melodic lines of different Yirritja people, and allows us to appreciate the uniqueness of Dhalwangu melodic lines.

In Chapter Three, I discussed the notes and intervals used in the four uniquely Dhalwangu melodic lines. I reproduce them here, in figures 6.5-6.8, in a typical rhythmic setting, although it should be noted that a singer may use the same melodic line with a wide variety of different rhythms, depending on the particular song subject, song version, and song text.

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6 In fact, it was just this sort of inter-identity borrowing that led me to clearly recognize the existence of the unique melodic lines of people with different btipurru identities. After spending many hours listening to the same few melodic lines of singers of one identity, in my case Dhalwangu, the temporary inclusion of different melodic material is immediately noticed. When I inquired about the change, singers told me that they were including, for example, a “Gumatj tune”.

7 As discussed in Chapter Three, I use the term “melodic line” to refer in the abstract to the set of notes used together in a song. When I wish to refer to a melodic line in a particular rhythmic setting, as in the examples here, I use the term “melody”. This is analogous to Yolngu performative practice, where a singer may hum the notes of a “melodic line” softly to himself before definitively beginning to sing the “melody”.

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Figure 6.5 - Dhalwangu wurrungu A melody (CD track 45)

![Melody figure 6.5](image)

Figure 6.6 - Dhalwangu yula A melody (CD track 46)

![Melody figure 6.6](image)
As stated in Chapter Three, the actual notes used may vary from occasion to occasion, but the intervals between them are remarkably consistent. It is the particular intervals in their typical rhythmic settings which distinguish the melodies of different bîpurru identities.

By way of contrast, figure 6.9 shows the melodies used in the singing of Ma’darrpa songs.

Dhalwangu and Ma’darrpa people consider themselves to be very close both socially and cosmologically, and sometimes refer to themselves as “one people” or as being “the same”. Despite this close relationship, however, it can be seen and heard that their melodies are quite distinctive. The first and third melodies presented here use a completely different set of intervals from the Dhalwangu melodies; the second melody uses the same interval as the Dhalwangu yuta B
melody, but holds out the top note for a much greater time before its first descent.

Munyuku people are also closely related socially and cosmologically to Dhaļwangu, and this relationship finds frequent expression through ritual performance. The four Munyuku melodies are shown in figure 6.10; the first two are classified as raypiny (fresh water) Munyuku, and the second two are classified as mopuk (salt water) Munyuku.

Figure 6.10 - Four Munyuku Melodies (CD tracks 52-55)

Once again, the intervals here are unlike those used by Dhaļwangu or Madarrpa singers, with the exception of the third melody which has the same intervals as the Dhaļwangu yuļa A melody. The main distinguishing features between these two melodies are the length of the top note (longer in the case of Dhaļwangu), the alternation of the next two notes (the Dhaļwangu melody uses these notes twice, whereas the Munyuku melody descends through them only once), and the fact that the Munyuku melody concludes on a note an octave lower than the top note (not normally done with the Dhaļwangu melody).

Gumatj people are also closely related to Dhaļwangu cosmologically, singing many of the same songs and sharing rights over other elements of madayin. Dhaļwangu singers used three melodies identified as Gumatj melodies, reproduced here in figure 6.11.
While the second of these three melodies is completely unique in terms of the intervals between notes, the first and third resemble some of the melodies already examined. The first Gumatj melody uses notes with the same intervals as the first Munyuku melody; the difference between them is that the Gumatj melody drops by four semitones to the bottom note and then rises to the middle note, whereas the Munyuku melody alternates between the top and middle notes before dropping to the bottom note. The third Gumatj melody uses the same interval as the Dhalwangu yuta B and the second Maqarrpa melody; the differences here are that the Gumatj melody typically begins on the lower of the two notes, holds the notes longer, and alternates between the notes less frequently.

Dhalwangu singers use a single melody identified as Wan.gurri, shown in figure 6.12.

The intervals between notes in this melody are the same as those used in the first Munyuku melody and the first Gumatj melody, but in this case singers use...
each note only once in two descents of two semitones each, with the last note held twice as long as each of the first two notes.

Closely related to both Wangerri and Dhalwangu people are the Warramiri, who were identified by Dhalwangu singers as having two distinctive melodies, shown in figure 6.13.

Figure 6.13 - Two Warramiri Melodies (CD tracks 60-61)

Again, the first of these melodies uses notes with the same intervals as the first Munyuku melody, the first Gumatj melody, and the Wangerri melody. What makes it distinctive from these others is that the first note is held out for the first half of the melody, and then the bottom notes alternate through a single ascent and descent (unlike the two ascents and descents of the Gumatj melody). The second Warramiri melody is similar to the Dhalwangu yuta A melody, but the interval is a semitone greater, and the top note is held much longer.

Birkili Gupapuyngu people are identified by a single melody used by Dhalwangu singers, shown in figure 6.14.

Figure 6.14 - One Birkili Melody (CD track 62)

Compared with the other Yirritja melodies, this melody uses notes with a combination of intervals which is unique in the sample I have collected.

Also unique is a single melody identified with the Daygurrgurr Gupapuyngu people, depicted here in figure 6.15.
Once again, this particular set of intervals between notes is not used in any other Yirritja melody in my sample.

Ritharrngu people have close social relations with the Dhalwangu people in Gapuwiyak, as many Dhalwangu have mother’s mothers who are Ritharrngu. This leads to a great deal of ritual cooperation between people with these identities and includes some shared cosmology (although not as much as between Dhalwangu and other bi:ipurru). Dhalwangu singers used two melodies which they identified as Ritharrngu, which are shown in figure 6.16.

The first of these is similar to the Dhalwangu yuṭa B melody, but is considered to be distinctive because “it has more bumps in it”, or in other words because it alternates between the two notes more frequently. As for the second melody, it uses notes in the same intervals as the first Munyuku melody, the first Gumatj melody, the Wan.gurri melody, and the first Warramiri melody, but is distinctive from each of these in that it holds the top note for half of the melody, and then alternates between the bottom two notes, beginning with the middle note.

Mangganili people are closely related to both Maḏarrpa and Dhalwangu, especially through the cosmology related to the region around Blue Mud Bay, where the Dhalwangu country at Garrapara is cosmologically linked to Maḏarrpa country at Bāniyala and Manggalili country at Djarrakpi. Dhalwangu
singers use a single Manggalili melody in ritual performance, reproduced as figure 6.17.

Figure 6.17 - One Manggalili Melody (CD track 66)

As with many of the melodies already discussed, this melody uses three notes, each separated by intervals of two semitones. The Manggalili melody is unique from all of the others using notes in these intervals because it begins briefly on the top note, and then alternates frequently between the two bottom notes.

The final melody used occasionally by Dhalwangu singers is identified with the Nundhirribala people, who live to the south of the Yolngu region in the town of Numbulwar. Dhalwangu people are related cosmologically with Nundhirribala, but also on a social and personal level, as many of the Dhalwangu people in Gapuwiyak used to live in Numbulwar when it was the Rose River Mission, and moved to Gapuwiyak when it was established in the late 1960s. This Nundhirribala melody is shown in figure 6.18.

Figure 6.18 - One Nundhirribala Melody (CD track 67)

This melody is different from all of the others which I have examined, consisting of five notes used for equal lengths in a series of four descents, each one consisting of two semitones except for the second interval of one semitone.

This melodic material, from people with eleven different Yirritja būpurruru identities, demonstrates two main points that I am arguing here. First of all, there is indeed a clear relationship between musical organization and social organization. Sometimes a melody is distinguished from all others by the use of notes with a unique set of intervals between them; in other cases, the notes may be the same, but they are used in different combinations and in different rhythmic settings which set them apart from one another. In either case, fine melodic distinctions clearly differentiate separate būpurruru identities. The second
point I wish to make with this material is to demonstrate that melodic structures reproduce a specifically Dhalwangu identity through the performance of melodies which are identified specifically with Dhalwangu people. The four melodies used by Dhalwangu people and identified as Dhalwangu melodies, by themselves and by people with other identities, set apart a kind of sociality common only to people with that shared *bāpurru* identity. One does not have to understand the words or the cosmological background of a song to know that it is a Dhalwangu song; one only has to recognize the use of one of the four Dhalwangu melodies. Each time singers use those melodic materials, they reproduce that particular and unique identity.

"Extended" *Bāpurru* Identities

As I have shown in Chapter Five, Yolngu ritual musical performance is a matter of negotiation and cooperation between groups of people with distinct *bāpurru* identities for a particular purpose, such as the initiation of a boy or the burial of a person who has died. The basis of this negotiation and cooperation between people of the same moiety is shared cosmology, or rights and responsibilities in the same complexes of *wangarr* ancestral beings. When people with a number of distinct *bāpurru* identities get together in ritual contexts, they do so on the basis of what I call an "extended" *bāpurru* identity.

The connections between Dhalwangu and other Yirritja-moiety people through the sharing of song series forms a dense web of these "extended" *bāpurru* identities. Dhalwangu people associate each of their song series with particular places in their traditional country while acknowledging the connection between those places and the country of the other people sharing the songs (to be discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven); the other people comprising each of these "extended" *bāpurru* identities locate the same ancestral events within their own country, and acknowledge their connection to Dhalwangu country. This is the kind of sociality referred to by Keen as a "clan-aggregate" (Keen 1978:27) and later as a "string" of groups (Keen 1994a:73-5), and by Williams in some contexts as a "*manikay mala*" (Williams 1986:65) and in others as a "*bāpurru*" (ibid.:65-70). What follows is a list of each Dhalwangu song series and the *bāpurru* associated with it.
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- **Gurrumuru Wängangur**: Warramiri, Wan.gurri, Gumatj, Gurrumba Gurrumba, Munyuku, Birrkili, DhaJwangu
- **Gurrumuru Ritjangur**: Warramiri, Munyuku, DhaJwangu
- **Gurrumuru Mingadhdun**: Warramiri, Gumatj, Munyuku, DhaJwangu
- **Gurrumuru Lupthun**: Warramiri, Gumatj, Munyuku, DhaJwangu
- **Gurrumuru Mananggan**: Gumatj, Munyuku, Warramiri, Wan.gurri, DhaJwangu
- **Gurrumuru Marthangay**: Gumatj, Munyuku, Warramiri, Gurrumba Gurrumba, Nundhirribala, DhaJwangu
- **Gurrumuru Wänga Djäma**: Warramiri, Wan.gurri, Gumatj, Gurrumba Gurrumba, Munyuku, Birrkili, DhaJwangu
- **Gurrumuru Wayin.gu Nhämanhama**: Warramiri, Gumatj, Munyuku, DhaJwangu
- **Yikari (Gurrumuru)**: Warramiri, Gumatj, Munyuku, Gurrumba Gurrumba, DhaJwangu
- **Girriti (Gangan)**: Munyuku, Wan.gurri, Gumatj, Ritharrngu, DhaJwangu
- **Gängan Barrukalaw**: Gumatj, Munyuku, Daygurrurr, DhaJwangu
- **Gängan Makarryaltjalngumi**: Mädarrpa, DhaJwangu
- **Balambala**: Munyuku, Gumatj, Daygurrurr, Ritharrngu, Mädarrpa, DhaJwangu
- **Garrapara (both series)**: Mädarrpa, Manggalili, Birrkili, DhaJwangu
- **Ngulburr Galiwali**: Nundhirribala, DhaJwangu
- **Ngulburr Gara**: Nundhirribala, DhaJwangu
- **Ngulburr Nguy Gapy**: Nundhirribala, DhaJwangu

In the ritual performance of any of these song series, individuals with the other bāpurru identities listed could join in with DhaJwangu singers because of their shared ownership of the songs; alternatively, two groups of people could cooperate in a performance of a song series, singers of each group alternating.

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8 DhaJwangu musicians told me that Gurrumba Gurrumba people have the right to sing the Marthangay song series, but their own country was not connected on the ship's journey around the coast to Gurrumuru (see Chapter Eight for more detail).
from song item to song item as they proceed through the song series. As I discussed in Chapter Five, there are a variety of occasions in which it is necessary to choose a single song subject to perform for a particular ritual episode, such as the moving of a coffin from place to place, and in these cases the song subject will be chosen from a song series which is shared between the groups involved in the performance. In the case of a funeral for a young Munyuku man in 1996, a song from the Gurrumuru Marthangay (ship) song series was chosen to perform while the coffin was moved because both Munyuku and Dhalwangu share rights and responsibilities in this song series. During the same funeral, the death was announced to the community by a group of Dhalwangu singers using the song djalkiri (anchor), taken from the same song series and performed for the same reason. Through the ancestral narrative about the journey of the Macassan ship from Numbulwar to Gurrumuru, an “extended” bāpurru identity is forged between the Gumatj, Munyuku, Warramiri, Gurrumba Gurrumba, Nundhirribala, and Dhalwangu people because the ship stopped in country belonging to each of them. These people are said to form “one bāpurru” through that cosmology.

Dhalwangu song texts also articulate the relations of Dhalwangu people to other Yirritja people who share elements of cosmology. In developing a clear picture of events which occurred in the wangarr era, singers often use poetic devices which articulate an affiliation with others in the relevant “extended” bāpurru. Even though pivotal events in Yolngu myth are described by each bāpurru as having occurred in their own country, Yolngu readily acknowledge connections to others who share in their cosmology. Dhalwangu singers may refer to other people by name, by the name of their country, or by more oblique means. The following examples, from the Gurrumuru Wāngangur song subject garrurru (flag), articulate the Dhalwangu connection to the Nundhirribala people and their country at Djilyil, near Numbulwar, where the Macassan ship began its journey in the wangarr era:

ngubarr ngarra Djilyilya Dhamanarrkmirriny Djanbinygal
sail/ I/ to Djilyil/ people of Djilyil/ people of Djilyil

Djundja ngarrak wuyuburrun Djunjwiyin
beaches of Djilyil/ for me/ are away/ beaches of Djilyil
mathamirr yurrmumirr ngal’yun marrtji bangana

with language/ with the Nhundhirribala language/ rising/ rising [to the]/ top of the mast

bayun marrtji Gurrtjila bayun marrtji Nundaya

leaving/ leaving/ Gurrtjila [likan for Nundhirribala people]/ leaving
leaving/ Nundaya [likan for Nundhirribala people]

In the first excerpt, the singer refers to the people of Djilyil, i.e. Nundhirribala people, and to Djilyil as a place, a point reiterated in the second excerpt. In the third, the singer is making a statement that Nundhirribala people, too, sing this song, but using their own distinctive language. In the final excerpt, Gurrtjila and Nundaya are likan names for Djilyil and its people. We can see, then, that Dhalwangu singers may incorporate a number of different tropes to express their affiliation with others who share in the Birrinydji cosmology and its songs, forming an “extended” Birrinydji btipurru. Connections to other people who share in a particular aspect of madayin, then, are frequently articulated in song texts, emphasizing the importance of a kind of identity more inclusive than Dhalwangu or any other single named btipurru identity.

Another marker of more “extended” btipurru identities has been discussed at length in the previous section of this chapter: the practice of dhakaygulkamaram. Although the existence of distinctive Dhalwangu, Madarrpa, Munyuku, and other melodic lines, and the widespread recognition of these, serves as a means of reproducing Dhalwangu, Madarrpa, Munyuku, and other identities, the practice of sharing the melodic lines of other people is also a strong indication of shared cosmology, and hence an “extended” btipurru identity. In the performance of a particular song series, singers may decide to dhakaygulkamaram using a melodic line identified with another btipurru, but it must be a melodic line of a btipurru which also shares rights in that song series. This relates to the shared cosmological basis for the relationship between those

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9 In one excellent example of this, discussed earlier in Chapter Four, Dhalwangu singers referred to Manggalili country, Gumatj country, Nundhirribala people and their country, Munyuku people and their country, Warramiri people and their country, as well as their own country at Gurrumuru, all in a single song item.
sharing the "extended" bâpurru identity: to dhakaygulkmaram a particular song subject in a song series using a distinctive Gumatj melodic line, for instance, Dhalwangu singers must be performing a song series which Gumatj people also perform. In the Garrapara song series, to take another example, Dhalwangu singers could, in principle, dhakaygulkmaram particular song subjects using Maďarrpa, Manggalili, and Birrkili melodic lines, because all of those people share rights and responsibilities with Dhalwangu for that cosmology, and hence form a single "extended" bâpurru with regard to it. Therefore, it can be seen that musical structure, features of performance, song texts, and musical elements may all contribute to the reproduction of "extended" bâpurru identities which link Dhalwangu to people with a variety of other identities.

Less "Extended" Identities

Dhalwangu people also use musical performance to articulate identities which are less inclusive or which cross-cut their Dhalwangu identity, allowing Dhalwangu people to differentiate themselves from one another in certain contexts and according to certain principles. One of these is the adoption of one of two surnames for administrative purposes, Wunungmurra and Gumana, to refer to those Dhalwangu people whose closest country affiliation is to Gurrumuru and Gângan, respectively. These names were derived from the personal names of the gâthu (FFF) of the current generation of Dhalwangu adults, although the relationship between Wunungmurra and Gumana is not clear. Another means by which Dhalwangu people differentiate themselves is by fresh water (raypiny) and salt water (mofùk) identities. This seems to be a kind of identity which is constructed primarily through ritual practice, as primary rights and responsibilities in the totality of the Dhalwangu ancestral heritage or madyayin is divided among people on this basis. For example, either

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10 Gunumungu, a senior Munyuku woman living at Gapuwiyak, explained the relationship between the Wunungmurras and the Gumanas in the following way. Wunungmurra and Gumana originally both lived at Garrapara, the Dhalwangu country on the coast of Blue Mud Bay. Gumana was Wunungmurra's māyir (MM), and they had distinctive but closely connected bâpurru identities: Wunungmurra and his people were called Miyarrkapuyngu, while Gumana and his people were called Burarrpuyngu. Both, however, were said to share a common identity as Dhalwangu people, and shared rights and responsibilities in madyayin. At some point these two leaders moved from Garrapara, Gumana to Gângan and Wunungmurra to Gurrumuru, where they and their descendants continued to maintain distinctive yet closely related identities ever since.
raypiny or mʊŋuk Dhalwangu people may hold primary responsibility for a particular painted design, although it “belongs” to all Dhalwangu. Another identity which seems to overlap with raypiny and mʊŋuk is lineage identity, as the descendants of four brothers in the mʊri’mu (FF) generation are said to have different ritual responsibilities. Even though all Dhalwangu consider themselves to be “one people”, there are many other identities through which people act in a variety of contexts. The relationships between the different Dhalwangu identities is shown in figure 6.19.

Figure 6.19 - Dhalwangu Identities

Musical performance may shed light on the constitution and expression of these less “extended” identities. This is largely a matter of who gets together with whom for a particular aspect of a ceremony, and what particular responsibilities they have. For instance, Bininydjirri once described for me the responsibilities of mʊŋuk and raypiny Dhalwangu:

D: Like we’re this one, look...that snake, eh? Rainbow Snake.
P: Oh O.K., right.
D: That’s why we’re salt.
P: Right, and what’s more fresh? Like, for those guys [the descendants of Gulnga]?
D: Oh, long-necked tortoise.
P: Long-necked tortoise, O.K. But you guys have...rights to sing about the whole...
D: Yeah.
P: ...madayin?
D: Yo, madayin, and we still share...
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P: So how does it happen...
D: ...we still share.
P: Is it because of your grandfather, or is it because of where you were born, or what is it?
D: It's...way back...before our grandfather...That was, the thing that...passed from generation to generation to generation, today we've still got that same system, you know?

And later, Bangana said:

B: That's...that's how people are, you know, like DhaJwangu as a whole, when it gets to the men's ceremony...
D: Yo, men's ceremony.
B: ...that's how...Wunungmurra people are separated. They’re classed as freshwater, and they’re classed as saltwater.

In performance, these two identities become apparent in a number of ways. During a large funeral in 1995 for a very prominent Yolngu man, Dhalwangu people decided to perform a number of secret dances in public. Although they danced as one group and were accompanied by one group of singers, the dancers divided into two distinct lines, one composed of mo11uk Dhalwangu and the other of raypiny Dhalwangu. The two groups were further distinguished by the painted designs on their chests: mo11uk Dhalwangu use a design done in yellow ochre, while raypiny Dhalwangu use a combination of red ochre and white clay. As Bininydjirri stated, each of these groups takes a greater share of responsibility for certain aspects of Dhalwangu cosmology.

Salt water or fresh water affiliation is closely related to the identity derived from descent from a particular grandfather; indeed, sometimes the two are spoken of almost interchangeably. The main difference between them is that while there are only two options in terms of fresh or salt water identity, members of the Wunungmurra family are descended from four different grandfathers (who were all brothers). Bininydjirri and Bangana and all other descendants of their grandfather Manganydjurra are mo11uk; they claim a closer connection to the ancestral Rainbow Snake, and take a greater role in supervising the execution of a Rainbow Snake design or the performance of a Rainbow Snake dance. In contrast, all of the descendants of Manganydjurra’s brother Gulnga are raypiny and have greater responsibility over dances and designs associated with the ancestral long-necked tortoise. Bininydjirri

11 Ian Keen has noted that “coarse” (lärr) painted designs, done in yellow and white, are one of the prominent owned elements of the Yirritja NgARRA ritual (Keen 1978:240).
provided me with an example from a dhapi initiation ritual which took place in Gapuwiyak a couple of months earlier:

D: .. .like me and Bangana, in freshwater we got dharpa [a sacred hollow log floating in brackish water near Gångan]. Dharpa, eh?
P: Right.
D: And that dharpa’s called...it’s a big word...it’s called Djimbililka.
P: Djimbililka?
D: Yo. And...that dharpa, you know that painting you saw, we painted Gambali’s son?
P: Yeah.
D: That’s dharpa, but we didn’t put two tortoises, eh? Freshwater longneck...tortoise, bayngu [nothing].
P: Right.
D: We would’ve put that, but we said yaka [no], we’ll just put dharpa now. So therefore we still...when we’re talking business we still have to listen to one another, eh?

Bininydjirri highlighted the dynamic relation between different DhaJwangu identities in ritual performance. There is not a fixed and eternal set of rules governing the ritual division of labour; rather, the individuals involved recognize the similarities and differences between various identities and creatively negotiate them on each occasion. Talking about the same initiation, Bangana and Bininydjirri said:

D: That’s why we [said], “Hey, there’s two dhapi [boys to be initiated] here”, and Bandi [a rypiny man descended from Gulnga] said “Yaka [no], I’ll have this yothu [child], eh?” “Yo, we’ll have this yothu, yo.” And “what sort of painting you got?” “Yaka, I’ll put mine...to this young fella...and you mob will put that one.” “Yo,” we said. “Yo manymak [good], but I’m short of armbands and headband,” Bandi said. “Yaka, we’ll help you, we got armbands and headband.” So we gave them, you see?
P: Oh, O.K.
D: If we’re short of anything, we got rights to ask him, and he’s got rights to give us...
B: Because from a Yolngu perspective, it is still all DhaJwangu.
D: [It’s] a bit like [the government department] ATSIC. ATSIC, if you’ve got this job, like a fieldworker, ...maybe one for Gapuwiyak, one for Galiwin’ku, one for Numbulwar, one for Yirrkala, but in a whole, they’re still through ATSIC.

Therefore, we should see ritual performance, including musical performance, as the space in which a variety of different DhaJwangu identities are brought together. Often, as described above, this is done in a spirit of solidarity and cooperation. However, it can also be a significant point of conflict, as in the case
of the funeral discussed in Chapter Five, in which members of two Wunungmurra lineages disagreed over the location of a ritual in which they both claimed rights. In either case, it is through the process of ritual action, including musical performance, that these identities are negotiated, reproduced, and sometimes altered.

Song textual references to less-inclusive identities are more difficult to discern, because all DhaJwangu singers make use of the same stock of appropriate words and phrases in any particular song. Singers who consider themselves monuk DhaJwangu or raypiny DhaJwangu do not use words and phrases that are exclusive to that identity, but rather tend to emphasize different aspects of a given song subject. For instance, Bangana and Bininydjirri explained to me that monuk DhaJwangu are more closely affiliated to a particular sacred hollow log, or dharpa, that exists in the brackish water associated with Gangan, while raypiny DhaJwangu are more closely affiliated with wurraŋ, the diver duck. They said that they could sing about wurraŋ landing on the wood and scratching it. Bangana explained that, in DhaJwangu belief, "...we're their landing point, you know, we're their platform". Therefore, the relations between different ancestral beings in DhaJwangu cosmology can be said to reflect the relations between monuk and raypiny DhaJwangu. Bangana went on to say:

But it all depends how, how we put it, how we describe it. That's the secret...that people sing and talk about. Like, if there's a bunch of DhaJwangu here, singing at Gangan, us mob, we could decide to sing about ...a particular person's totem, you know? And he'll know that we're talking about [him]...Then he might decide to talk about us. So it's a two-way thing...That's, that's how public it is, like, in...public ceremonies, you know? And that's what people like [ritual experts] are listening for.

DhaJwangu singers may also include in their song texts references to the two DhaJwangu families, Wunungmurra and Gumana. Take, for example, this excerpt from the song subject dharpa gutjulu (hollow log) from the Garrapara song series:

warrnginywarrnginyinha dhakunmarangal lükungur Wunungmurra Gumanamana dhawadhawayun ningangba

hollow log/ floated/ from the foundation/ [of] Wunungmurra/ Gumana/ foundation/ foundation
These words suggest that the hollow log, an important figure in Dhalwangu cosmology, has its origin in the spiritual foundation of Wunungmurra and Gumana people, that the source of the hollow log’s sacredness and the source of the sacredness of Wunungmurra and Gumana people is the same, the sacred waters of the Dhalwangu people which connect Garrapara to Gängan. It is an expression of the distinctiveness of the two families at the same time as their fundamental solidarity as Dhalwangu people.

**Ngandibulu and Māribulu Identities**

The final kinds of identity that I will discuss here have to do with a Dhalwangu person’s relationship to particular kin and the bāpurru identities of those kin. Two kinship relations in particular stand out for comment: the relationship a person has to his or her ngandibulu (mother’s bāpurru), and the relationship a person has to his or her māribulu (mother’s mother’s bāpurru). The reciprocal terms are wakubulu (that group of people whose mothers have a particular bāpurru identity) and gutharrabulu (that group of people whose mother’s mothers have a particular bāpurru identity).

As discussed in Chapter Two, one of the principles involved in the reproduction of bāpurru on a conceptual level has to do with marriage patterns. Although there are can be deviations, a Yolngu man should ideally marry a woman who he calls by the kinship term galay, and a woman should marry a man who she calls dhuyay. Additionally, there are ideal relationships between groups of people defined by their bāpurru identity which specify that a man with a particular bāpurru identity should marry a woman who he calls galay with another particular bāpurru identity; that is, Yolngu conceive of ideal marriages as maintaining particular relations between bāpurru. As with other aspects of Yolngu sociality, these structural principles influence the reproduction of the Yolngu social system through social action, but marriages that do not match the ideal nonetheless may feed back and gradually alter the definition of an ideal marriage.

A number of Dhalwangu people living in Gapuwiyak have Djarrwak mothers, and it is for this reason that those individuals have significant rights and responsibilities in the madayin or ancestral heritage of Djarrwak people. In any ritual performance involving Djarrwak madayin, including songs,
Dhajwangu people (or people of other biipurru whose mothers are also Djarrwak) are expected to be present as djunggayi or “managers”, helping to organize the performance and providing advice or criticism where appropriate. This requires that those Dhajwangu who are wakubulu for Djarrwak have a detailed knowledge of Djarrwak madayin, even though as Yirritja people they may not actually sing the songs. They may contribute to a performance in other ways, such as dancing or accompanying singers on the didjeridu. However, because not all Dhajwangu people have Djarrwak mothers, other Dhajwangu act as “managers” for the madayin of other biipurru such as Marrangu.

A similar kind of process is at work for the relationship with the mother’s mother’s biipurru, or māribulu. The māri-gutharra relationship is extremely important, sometimes referred to as the “backbone” of Yolngu society. An individual’s most important social and cosmological identity comes from his or her own biapurru, but the next closest biapurru of the same moiety is that of the individual’s māribulu. The ritual relationship to a person’s māribulu may be established at an early age: for instance, when a boy goes through his dhapi circumcision initiation, his māribulu may take a leading role, performing their songs and dances and contributing one of their sacred designs to be painted on the boy’s chest. From that point on, the young man begins to be taught about the madayin of his māribulu, and frequently and enthusiastically participates with his māri’s group when they perform in rituals. Throughout a person’s life, the songs, dances, and other madayin of his or her māribulu are an integral part of their social and ritual identity and, upon death, that close relationship is one of the reasons why a person’s māribulu are “in charge” of the body, directing the funeral to its proper conclusion. Another manifestation of the centrality of the māri-gutharra relationship is a man’s right to have his male māri’s daughter bestowed upon him as a future mother-in-law (and thus receive her daughter as a wife) (Williams 1986:53), as the MMBDD is considered to be a man’s ideal marriage partner. As well, when a group is nearing extinction, their gutharrabulu have the strongest claim to succession to their lands (Keen 1994a:126), and to paintings and other madayin (Morphy 1991:68). Finally, if a group has no senior men and women, that group’s gutharrabulu, because of their extensive knowledge of the group’s madayin, are supposed to “look after” that madayin and pass it along to the young men and women when they come of age. Morphy reports a case when this did in fact happen (ibid.:67), whereas

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12 Keen notes that men participate in singing their māri songs so often that they are sometimes chided for being of their māri’s biapurru instead of their own (pers. comm. 22/01/2001).
Keen notes a case where the *gutharrabulu* withheld knowledge of the *madayin* from their *märibulu* to maintain a position of power (Keen 1988:288). Therefore, an individual’s knowledge of and relationship to his or her *märibulu* and its *madayin* are very important aspects of ritual life and of social identity.

A Dhalwangu person’s *märibulu* identity is demonstrated often in ritual musical performance. A number of Dhalwangu people in Gapuwiyak have Munyuku mother’s mothers, which accounts for the high level of participation of those individuals in Munyuku musical performances and the high level of knowledge which they have of Munyuku *madayin*. Bangana, whose mother’s mother’s brothers are the ritual experts Dula and Gambali Ngurruwuthun, frequently sang their songs with them when they were in Gapuwiyak; furthermore, they instructed me to ask Bangana for detailed descriptions of their songs, as they felt that he was both knowledgeable and qualified to discuss them. Many other Dhalwangu people in Gapuwiyak have Ritharrngu mother’s mothers, and take on a similar role in the performance and discussion of Ritharrngu songs. Such acts reinforce these Munyuku or Ritharrngu identities which Dhalwangu people have, reproducing a broad web of sociality through musical performance.

These kinds of relationships which Dhalwangu people have with particular kin with other *biipurru* identities is reciprocal as well: that is, the children of Dhalwangu women are *wakubulu* for Dhalwangu, and the children of female *wakubulu* are *gutharrabulu*, and those individuals have rights and responsibilities in Dhalwangu *madayin* as outlined above. Dhalwangu people also have reciprocal rights and responsibilities in these cases, especially with their *gutharra*, where they perform their songs and paint their designs during initiations and funerals. What is significant to note is that Dhalwangu people have a variety of important identities based on their kinship relations, and that these identities often find their expression through ritual musical performance.

**Conclusions**

Consistent with the argument presented in Chapter Two, in this chapter I have shown that musical structures, musical performances, song texts, and melodic features provide the means by which Dhalwangu singers articulate their multiple and overlapping identities. “Dhalwangu” is an extremely important identity for the people with whom I worked, and it is reproduced not only
through the shared ownership of songs, but through song texts which refer to Dhalwangu people and places, through the use of melodic lines which are identified as Dhalwangu melodic lines, and through performance practices involving others who share that identity. Dhalwangu ritual musical practices are structured by a number of principles grounded in the conceptual structure of Yolngu sociality. This conceptual structure and the principles which underpin it are not homogeneous, but are flexible and variable from individual to individual, depending on experience and knowledge; those in positions of power are better able to impose their own view of Dhalwangu identity on others with less power. This manifests itself through the musical practices which help to reproduce the social system: respected singers are in a position to direct ritual performances, reproduce particular song texts, and otherwise contribute to the construction of a distinctly Dhalwangu identity. These social practices may reinforce certain received notions about the conceptual structure or may subtly alter them, as every musical performance becomes a template in the memory for subsequent performances.

The central importance of Dhalwangu identity, however, does not mean that there are not other kinds of identity which are also produced and reproduced through musical practice. A very general kind of identity for Dhalwangu singers is that of the Yirritja moiety: songs, rituals, and performances are, for the most part, exclusive to people of one moiety or the other, and references to or inclusion of the other moiety serves to maintain the distinction while at the same time emphasizing certain aspects of relatedness. Dhalwangu people also share a kind of identity with a variety of other Yirritja people through “extended” bûpurru identities, grounded in shared cosmological beliefs and articulated through cooperative musical performances, song textual references, and the practice of dhakaygulkamram, “having a taste of one another.”

The basic idea underlying this argument had an early advocate in the person of Emile Durkheim, who believed that the system of Australian totemism had its origins in society. Durkheim spoke of totems as “vague and fluctuating images” which provided the contents of the religious system, whereas the “definite form” of society itself provided the framework of the system (Durkheim 1965:172). Durkheim concluded that “the god of the clan, the totemic principle, can therefore be nothing else than the clan itself, personified and represented to the imagination under the visible form of the animal or vegetable which serves as totem” (ibid.:236). Therefore, even though Durkheim’s analysis and interpretation has been justifiably criticized on a number of grounds over the years, the general idea of a close relationship between religious forms and sociality is quite relevant to my concerns in this dissertation. However, contemporary theories of practice and structuration have proven to be much more useful in specifying the dynamic nature of this relationship between social structure and religious action, and the subtle changes each may have on the other.
or sharing each other’s melodic lines. Less “extended” or cross-cutting identities are also prevalent in Dhalwangu music, as Dhalwangu people also articulate their identity as raypiny or monuk, or as descendants of particular people through both paternal or maternal connections. Sometimes a number of these multiple identities may be articulated in a single musical performance, as Dhalwangu singers reaffirm and reproduce their status not only as Dhalwangu people, but as Wunungmurra, as raypiny or monuk people, as descendants of Manganydjurrra or of Gulnga, as the wakubulu of Djarrwak people, or as the gutharrabulu of Munyuku. The study of musical structure and performance demonstrates clearly that Dhalwangu identity is not monolithic, but exhibits exceptional diversity.

In the next chapter, I will examine the musical articulation of place, which is fundamental to the reproduction of Dhalwangu sociality. Connections to country are an extremely important aspect of Yolngu identity, as Yolngu believe that their spiritual essence is derived from the land and from the ancestral beings who created the land. Connections to country are also fundamental to Yolngu musical practice, as we have seen that manikay describe ancestral events which occurred in particular places. As music is an important ingredient in the reproduction of Dhalwangu sociality, so too is it important to the reproduction of Dhalwangu connections to country.
...our imaginations assent to the stimulus of the names, our sense of the place is enhanced, our sense of ourselves as inhabitants not just of a geographical country but a country of the mind is cemented.

- Seamus Heaney (1980:132)

In the last chapter, I discussed the importance of musical performances and musical structures in the creation and recreation of Dhalwangu sociality. The questions of who sings with whom, who sings about whom, and why, are part of a complex and multidimensional process of social reproduction in which Dhalwangu people articulate their multiple and overlapping social identities. Closely bound up with the question of social identities is that of connectedness to a variety of ancestral places associated with those identities, because both are grounded in beliefs in ancestral beings. An individual’s connection to country has an ancestral origin, a musical expression, and a widespread social significance.

The epigraph to this chapter, by the Irish poet Seamus Heaney, bears an uncanny resemblance to the sentiments associated with the musical articulation of place by Dhalwangu singers. For Dhalwangu people, the ancestral countries of Gangan, Gurrumuru, Garrapara, and Balambala are not merely geographical countries, but also “countries of the mind”, and Dhalwangu people constitute their identities in large part as inhabitants of those countries of the mind, as descendants of the ancestral beings themselves. In this chapter, I will explore some of these issues: the connections that Dhalwangu people have to their country, the ways in which those connections are articulated through musical performance, and the ways in which musical performances allow Dhalwangu people to be inhabitants of these countries of the mind. Manikay is an extremely rich medium for the expression and creative reproduction of a sense of place, and for the Dhalwangu the skillful evocation of place is the single most important aesthetic and spiritual goal for a singer. Furthermore, I will argue that, for most people, the experience of ancestral places is most commonly mediated through the ritual performance of manikay because opportunities to visit certain places are limited, and so music takes on added importance in the ways Dhalwangu people come to know place. This chapter will examine the
myriad of ways in which place features prominently in song, through a detailed discussion of the organization of musical structure and an analysis of song textual materials. I will also consider the town of Gapuwiyak, home to a large number of DhaJwangu people, as a place in which the countries of the mind are recreated and inhabited.

The Organization of DhaJwangu Manikay

DhaJwangu music can be understood to be about a great many things, but it is pre-eminently and most strikingly about places. As I detailed in Chapter Three, the entire repertoire of DhaJwangu manikay is organized into eighteen distinct song series which are concerned with five ancestral places: Gangan, Gurrumuru, Balambala, Garrapara, and Numbulwar (for which DhaJwangu people act as custodians, not owners). The song subjects which make up each song series describe the activities of ancestral beings associated with each place, as well as those of the first DhaJwangu ancestors who lived there. Each of these places has a unique assemblage of song subjects, which are divided among the various song series of those places with some overlap. For example, the song subjects which are associated with Gurrumuru are not associated with any other DhaJwangu place, but are divided among the nine song series of Gurrumuru, with some song subjects appearing in more than one song series. In the case of Gangan, Balambala, and Garrapara, because those places are connected to each other through cosmology, it is possible in performance to connect two song series because of the inter-relations between song subjects.\(^1\)

To illustrate this process, let us examine two song series that may be connected in this way: Balambala and Girriti (Gangan). In performances of the Balambala and Girriti song series on their own, the order of song subjects is as shown in figure 7.1. When the singers wish to lengthen the performance, or when they are “in a singing mood”, these series may be combined: singers begin the Balambala song series and sing until they get to biyay (goanna), and then begin to sing the Girriti song series from the song gapu (water) until the end. It was explained to me that the goanna digs in the ground until it strikes water, which then begins to flow, making that song subject an appropriate “turning point” for the switch to the Girriti song series. Certain named places in

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\(^1\) A full listing of DhaJwangu song series, with all song subjects, is found in Appendix B.
Dhalwangu country are connected cosmologically, and this connection may be expressed through the structure and performance of manikay.

Figure 7.1 - The Balambala and Girriti Song Series

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Balambala</th>
<th>Girriti</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. miini’ji (a painting)</td>
<td>1. wangubini (cloud)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. mokuy (spirit)</td>
<td>2. balgurrk (rain)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. dharpa wāri (a small tree)</td>
<td>3. ngerrk (sulphur-crested cockatoo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. bebik (black-faced cuckoo shrike)</td>
<td>4. mulmu (spear grass)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. yukuwa (yarn)</td>
<td>5. gapu (water)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. biliṭ biliṭ (red-winged parrot)</td>
<td>6. gapu gunbilk (calm water)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. miindung (mollusc)</td>
<td>7. garkman (frog)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. wuranybirr (honeyeater)</td>
<td>8. bakarra (long-necked tortoise)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. garanyirrnyrr (cicada)</td>
<td>9. norrtj (algae)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. japarr (dove, crested pigeon)</td>
<td>10. wajarra (freshwater perch)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. biyay (goanna)</td>
<td>11. walgarrambu (oxeye herring)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. walarri (whirlwind)</td>
<td>12. baybinunga (saratoga)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. garrtjambal (big red kangaroo)</td>
<td>13. ratjuk (barramundi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. ngerrk (sulphur-crested cockatoo)</td>
<td>14. gunbirrwirr (small fish)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. wurrapn (emu)</td>
<td>15. wirriyadyi (stork)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. mokuy milkarri (spirits crying)</td>
<td>16. djamatj (mist, fog, vapour)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. gulang (blood of the spirits)</td>
<td>17. wurraŋ (diver duck, darter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. gayman (fog, mist)</td>
<td>18. ñåkawa (crayfish)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19. ngatha (food)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20. djikay (small bird, robin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21. gayman (fog, mist)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When Dhalwangu people talk about the different song series, they frequently do so by referring to the places to which the songs refer. The very first time I asked Bangana to tell me about Dhalwangu songs, he told me about the places where the events of the songs took place, such as Gurrumuru, and then he talked in more detail about the individual places within Gurrumuru, each of which was the location of one of the Gurrumuru song series: the jungle area, or a freshwater pool, the mouth of the river, or the settlement at Gurrumuru itself. This is not the only way to refer to a song series. Sometimes, for example, a song series may be referred to by a significant activity performed by Dhalwangu ancestors which the songs describe, such as “fishing” or “peeling paperbark”. However, the most common idiomatic Dhalwangu expressions referring to song series are those which use a place name or a spatial metaphor. This leads to the often-heard question at the beginning of any ritual musical performance, “Where do we sing today?”
Therefore, we can see that particular ancestral places form the basis for the organization of Dhalwangu manikay. It is possible, however, to make further distinctions in this organization by the particular ways in which songs relate to place; two broad patterns which emerge can be referred to as “localized” and “regionalized” song series.

Localized Vs. Regionalized Song Series

For the most part, Dhalwangu song series utilize different organizational principles than what is commonly understood by the term “songline”. Songline is a colloquial term that refers to a sequence of songs which describe the stages of an ancestral journey across a large region, which was popularized by Bruce Chatwin’s book of the same name (Chatwin 1987). Indeed, in northeast Arnhem Land there are a number of well-known song series which relate to such a journey, such as that of the Djang’kawu Sisters, in which the songs begin in the east and proceed west across the entire Yolngu area (Keen 1994a:201-2, 206; Berndt 1952:202-5). One effect of such a musical organization is to link the country of a number of bapurru of the Dhuwa moiety through the musical narrative of the Djang’kawu’s travels. Most Dhalwangu song series, in contrast, describe the events at a particular place, and describe movement of ancestral beings on a much smaller scale as they move within the limits of that country. The Balambala song series describes the activities of the spirit Murayana as he moves and dances around, but only within the Balambala area; one of the Garrapara song series describes Dhalwangu ancestors paddling canoes in from the sea and pulling them up on the beach. These song series, and others like them, I would describe by the term localized, as opposed to the regionalized song series that take in a much broader area encompassing the lands of a number of different bapurru. To my knowledge, there is only one Dhalwangu song series which I would call regionalized: the Marthangay song series, which describes the journey of the Macassan ship from Numbulwar around the Gove Peninsula to its final destination at Gurrumuru.

This is not to say that a localized song series does not make reference to other places and the other people who are implicated in its shared cosmology; on the contrary, these references are numerous and frequent. If regionalized

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2 It should be noted that the Djang’kawu songs can be interpreted in this manner as well.
song series explicitly connect places like beads on a string, then localized song
series connect places implicitly by the knowledge that such places exist in
parallel to one another: the events which Dhalwangu people sing about in the
Gurrumuru song series find a parallel expression by Warramiri people in their
song series at Dholtji, and by a number of other Yirritja people in their
respective places. The composition of the song series and the order of the song
subjects that make them up are roughly similar for all owning bápurrů, with the
proviso that each centres the action in their own country. In a regionalized song
series, each different place is like a scene in a film; in a localized song series, the
entire plot is played out in a number of different locations at once.

For example, both Dhalwangu and Munyuku people share an
“extended” bápurrů identity through the Minggadhun (fishing) song series,
which Dhalwangu associate with Gurrumuru and Munyuku associate with
their own country at Yarrinya. The composition of the two song series is shown
in figure 7.2. The differences between them may be accounted for in a number
of ways: song subjects with names resembling the names of the recently-
deceased are often left out of a performance; sometimes a singer leading a
performance will choose to omit a song subject if certain ritual conditions are
not ideal (for instance, if a particular ritual object has not yet been fabricated);
and there are inevitable differences between Dhalwangu and Munyuku
performances by virtue of the fact that the song series are based in different
places. Nonetheless, it is obvious that the two song series are very similar and
follow parallel narrative progressions from song subject to song subject³.

This parallel existence finds its concrete expression in ritual musical
performance, as discussed in Chapter Six. I have often observed members of
two different groups sitting next to each other performing the “same” song
series. One group begins by singing a song from their song series, followed by
the second group, singing the “same” song from their own song series. The
words of the songs and the particular melodic lines used are specific to the
bápurrů identity of the group which is performing, and the actions each group is
describing musically are understood to have taken place in their own country.
Yet as the two groups alternate songs through the entire song series, back and
forth, there is a clear understanding that the song series are the “same”, that the
songs and the places which they describe have a kind of parallel existence.

³ Dhalwangu and Munyuku are joined by Warramiri and Gumatj in the joint ownership of the
Minggadhun song series, forming an “extended” bápurrů with regard to that cosmology; each of
these bápurrů has the right to perform these songs.
This parallel existence, the fact that the songs are “the same, but different” (Keen 1994a:40-61), is further underlined by other aspects of the performance. The two groups of singers may choose to employ the services of a single didjeridu player, or a single didjeridu may be passed back and forth between the players of each of the two groups. If the singing accompanies dancing, then the dancers may perform for the songs of both groups of singers, or they may perform as separate groups but have a number of key dancers from
each group joining in the performance of the other. The singers themselves may sing with both groups, if they are sufficiently well-versed in the other group’s songs, taking a lead role in their own group’s songs and a supporting role in those of the other group. At the very least, all singers will provide clapstick accompaniment for the other group as well as their own. This ritual cooperation of distinct groups who form an “extended” bapurr through ownership of song series also implies a kind of cosmological unity of the places to which the song series refer, and yet there is no question that each song series describes events at only one place, that of the performing group.

There are similar principles at work in the song texts of these performances. On the one hand, the textual materials and their exegesis make it clear that the songs of Gurrumuru describe events which took place at Gurrumuru, and the songs that Warramiri people sing describe the same events taking place in their own country at Dholtji. As I indicated in the previous chapter, many DhaIwangu place references in song texts refer to DhaIwangu places, and yet there are still a large number of explicit references to parallel places, places which belong to other people who share rights in the cosmology and which are the focal point of those people’s songs. DhaIwangu singers refer to these places and the people who live there as a means of expressing solidarity between themselves and the co-owners of the songs, and as a means of articulating the “sameness” of the places, even though each group is adamant about the primacy of their country as the most important location where the events of the ancestral era took place. These important connections between cosmology and place are integral to the ways in which both singers and their audience evaluate manikay performances.

**Aesthetics of Place, Aesthetics of Song**

Aesthetically, the single most important characteristic that a singer can possess is the ability to skillfully evoke a particular place for the audience, as I discussed in some detail in the analysis of DhaIwangu poetics in Chapter Four. Because each song series is associated with a particular place, and each

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4 Berndt’s discussion of the songs relating to the Djang’kawu cosmology indicate that Ngaymil place names predominate, but that the songs also include names of places belonging to Rirratjingu, Djamarrpuyngu, Datjwuy, Djapu, Gulp, and other Dhuwa-moiety people (Berndt 1952:205).
individual song subject describes some aspect of that place or event which occurred there, the skill with which a singer can create a vivid image of that place in the mind’s eye of his audience results in people remembering that location and deceased family members who lived there, an emotional experience which sometimes leads to tears. I once asked Bangana the question “What makes a good singer?”, to which he replied:

In Yolngu society it’s believed that in many of our ceremonial ...rom [law]... it’s all to do with mel, mulkurr, dhurrdhurr [gesturing to his eye, his head, and his heart]....It all comes back to the story....You’ve got to see what you’re talking about, with your mel [eye], and your head....You’ve got to think about the story that you’re going to tell. And from there you’ve got to see it with your own eyes, like you’re looking at a vision, and singing about it. And when you start to see and think about it, you’re going to have to tell that story that comes from your heart. And make it real, make it sound that it’s real, it’s coming from [your] soul....It’s when you can see, like, if you’re singing at Balambala, you’ve got to see the whole picture, and you’ve got to think about the story, and you’ve got to make other people believe that you’re singing, talking about something.

The artful evocation of the place which is the subject of a song series and the events which happened there is of primary importance in the aesthetic evaluation of Yolngu singing. The important connection between songs and places is unambiguous in Dhalwangu cosmology.

The central importance of place in Yolngu cosmology has long been recognized and examined in the Arnhem Land ethnographic literature. Howard Morphy, in “Landscape and the Reproduction of the Ancestral Past” (1995), develops an articulate statement of the ways in which Yolngu people conceive of, live in, and ritually reproduce the landscape in northeast Arnhem Land. Central to his argument is that the landscape must be seen not only as “...an intervening sign system that serves the purpose of passing on information about the ancestral past”, but rather that it is “...integral to the message” (Morphy 1995:186). This is certainly the case in the performance of Dhalwangu song, where the presence of the most significant ancestral beings associated with a place is often muted in favour of a more elaborated articulation of the place itself and its features. In other words, the names of ancestral beings such as Barama and Lany’tjung at Gåŋgan and Birrinydji at Gurrumuru are infrequently invoked in public musical performances and their accompanying exegesis. This may be because those beings are the ones who actually created
the songs in the form in which they are sung today, and therefore refer to the things which the ancestral beings saw and experienced rather than to the creative beings themselves. In song, then, the grand narrative structure stereotypical of Yolngu myth, in which the main characters are described in their movements and activities, is implicit, replaced instead by a highly impressionistic, poetic description of a place associated with those characters.

An example of this difference between the grand narrative structure of myth and the impressionistic content of song occurs in different accounts of ancestral activities at Gangan. In his book *Time Before Morning*, Louis Allen provides an account (pieced together from a number of different narrations) of the myth of the Dhalwangu ancestral beings Lany’ tjung, Banatja, Barama, and Galparrimun, who were responsible for the creation of all aspects of Dhalwangu culture at Gangan. The myth describes in great detail the activities of these ancestral beings, including an account of Lany’ tjung introducing to the first Dhalwangu ancestors the technology of the fishtrap (Allen 1975:59-66). In the Dhalwangu song texts about Gangan, by contrast, direct mention of these ancestral beings is very rare. References to these ancestral events are elliptical: the fish trap is mentioned in the song texts for the song *ratjuk* (barramundi), but only in subsequent exegesis of the translations of the songs is it revealed that the fishtrap was created by Barama and Lany’ tjung and that it is an extremely important object for Dhalwangu people. Instead, the songs of Gangan are concerned with evoking a clear picture of the place, including the flora and fauna there, and the waters and countryside. Song, myth, and place are bound up in a complexly interconnecting set for Dhalwangu people, and different ritual media emphasize different aspects of this set. In song, the evocation of place comes to the forefront, while other aspects of the set, such as the narrative structure of ancestral activities, remain in a figurative, implicit background.

Morphy also touches on the centrality of Yolngu conceptions of place in his argument that “place has precedence over time in Yolngu ontogeny” (1995:188). He argues that, in Yolngu ancestral belief, time is a function of space in the sense that the spatiality of ancestral beings is the primary determinant of time:

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5 Ronald Berndt notes that, in contrast to the narrative structure of myth, the “plot” of a body of cosmology expressed through song “receive[s] a minimum of attention” (Berndt 1966:199). In songs, writes Berndt, the myth is “subordinated to what is perceived as the natural order of life and man’s close relationship with his natural environment” (ibid.).
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Whatever events happened at the place, whatever sequence they occurred in, whatever intervals existed between them, all becomes subordinate to their representation in space. Sequences in time are represented only if they were spatially segregated and occurred at separate places in association with separate features, and even then synchronicity or perhaps timelessness is built into the way they are presented. What remains is the distance between places rather than the temporal distance between events (1995:188).

This has implications for the view that Yolngu song series should be understood as being localized or regionalized. Regionalized song series, conceptually representing a journey made by ancestral beings across Arnhem Land, can be recognized as sequences of events because the events occurred at different places. Localized song series, in contrast, represent events which occurred in particular individual places belonging to particular bāpurruru; compared with the parallel song series of other bāpurruru sharing rights in the songs, however, there is indeed a synchronicity of events because the same ancestral activities are believed to have taken place in the country of those bāpurruru without an explicit consideration of which country was visited by the ancestral being first. Indeed, in such cases the ancestral events in question are said to have occurred simultaneously. In either case, a concept of place is emphasized in the manner touched on by Morphy, although that is not to say that sequences in time are not also expressed through the medium of manikay.

To illustrate the importance of place in Dhalwangu cosmology, as expressed through the medium of song, I will examine one of the most important of the Gurrumuru song series, called Gurrumuru Wängangur. It will become apparent that place is a central motif of Dhalwangu songs, and one which is of the highest aesthetic value.

The Gurrumuru Wängangur Song Series

Gurrumuru, 50 km east of Gapuwiyak and just south of Arnhem Bay, is currently a thriving outstation with a half-dozen permanent dwellings, a school, and a small shop. As discussed in the previous chapter, although it is an

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6 Berndt is quite explicit that the ordering of songs within a song series follows a strict sequentiality, with the events of one song being the outcome of the events of a previous song (Berndt 1976:143-4); this, writes Berndt, “spells out interconnectedness of past and future events” (ibid.:144).
integral part of the ancestral heritage of all Dhalwangu people, it is most closely associated with those Dhalwangu who have taken the surname Wunungmurra; these people form the core of Gurrumuru’s population, along with a variety of other kin. As I will discuss in more detail in Chapter Eight, the ancestral history of Gurrumuru is centred on the ancestral being called Birrinydji, a powerful Dhalwangu ancestor who was the leader at Gurrumuru when Macassan traders from South Sulawesi arrived. There is a range of interpretation about the relationship between Birrinydji and the Macassans: some people believe that the Macassans presented Birrinydji with presents of iron tools and weapons, cloth, and other material goods, while others claim that Dhalwangu people already had these things under “Birrinydji’s law” before the Macassans arrived.

There are nine distinct song series associated with Gurrumuru, the content of which overlap with one another. These songs describe many aspects of life at Gurrumuru during the ancestral period, and many of them deal with aspects of Macassan contact. The song series known as Gurrumuru Wängangur, “at the camp”, is one of the most frequently performed. It is a localized song series; in other words, the events described in the song texts describe events which took place at Gurrumuru only. It is understood, however, that the other Yirritja people with rights in the songs sing a parallel version of the song series centred in their own country.

An analysis of the textual content of the Gurrumuru Wängangur song series reveals some interesting insights into the relations between song and place. One performance which I recorded contains almost 6000 words of song text, of which the largest proportion were verbs at about 29%. The next most common song textual reference, however, was any one of a number of place references, at almost 16%. These place references can be broken down as shown in figure 7.3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place Reference</th>
<th>Percentage (Proportion of Total)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gurrumuru or places within Gurrumuru</td>
<td>41.3% (6.61% of total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the ocean at Gurrumuru</td>
<td>6.4% (1.02% of total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-Dhalwangu places associated with Birrinydji</td>
<td>11.7% (1.87% of total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other places</td>
<td>18.3% (2.93% of total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other spatial references</td>
<td>22.3% (3.57% of total)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7.3 - Gurrumuru Wängangur Place References
The largest proportion of these place references are names and phrases which refer to Gurrumuru or places within Gurrumuru. Gurrumuru is frequently referred to by a number of alternate names, including Bambang, Ganburrurr, Gobaniny, Buruyarra, and many others; the particular names known to any individual depends on age, gender, and religious knowledge. There are also a number of named places within the Gurrumuru area which may be referred to in song, such as “the jungle” or “the plains”.

The ocean at Gurrumuru is another important place reference; although Gurrumuru is inland, it is connected to the coast by a river, and the ocean plays an important part in Gurrumuru’s cosmology because a number of important ancestral beings came from there. One of the Gurrumuru song series, Yikari, is about a place by that name which is located on the coast, at the mouth of the Gurrumuru River.

As discussed in Chapter Six, there is an “extended” biipurru centring on the Birrinydji cosmology; the particular cosmology of Gurrumuru Wängangur is shared by Dhalwangu with Warramiri, Wan.gurri, Gumatj, Gurrumba Gurrumba, Munyuku, and Birrkili people, and their places parallel Gurrumuru by virtue of the fact that Birrinydji was involved with those places as well. These other Yirritja people also sing the Gurrumuru Wängangur songs, but their cosmologies are based on their own countries. Dhalwangu people do not necessarily consider all of these places to be of equal importance in the Birrinydji cosmology, but Dhalwangu singers consider it to be very important to make mention of each of these places in their own performances of the song series.

There are a variety of other places which may also be mentioned in the song texts of Gurrumuru Wängangur. For instance, sometimes certain material objects are said to have originated in cities located far away from Gurrumuru; these cities are often referred to as “Darwin”, but may very well have once referred to the Macassan city of Ujung Pandang, which some Yolngu visited during the era of Macassan visitation (to be discussed in detail in the next

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7 Ronald Berndt has noted the prevalence of alternate place names in a Wan.gurri song series (Berndt 1948b:21), and notes at least six alternate names for a single country at Arnhem Bay (ibid.:22); he also notes the existence of alternate names in a later work (Berndt 1976:44).

8 Nundhirribala people also share the Birrinydji cosmology, but do not sing an equivalent song series to Gurrumuru Wängangur; the only song series which links Nundhirribala people to the rest of the “extended” biipurru is Marthangay, which describes the journey of the Macassan ship around the coast from Numbulwar to Gurrumuru.
References to other places may also include a number of named islands across the ocean, and also the country of other Yirritja people not connected through the Birrinydjii cosmology.

Finally, there are a range of other spatial references which are frequently used by Dhalwangu singers in talking about ancestral places. These include terms such as “home”, phrases such as “into the air”, and the words for “from”, “at”, and other spatial indicators.

Additionally, it should be noted that, of the 170 song items which made up this particular performance, 71.2% of them contained at least one reference to place, and 52.4% of the song items named Gurrumuru itself or a named location within Gurrumuru. Many of the song items without a specific place reference did contain some material from which one could infer location, such as words for “the people of Gurrumuru”.

I would now like to examine excerpts of song texts from the Gurrumuru Wiingangur song series in order to demonstrate some of the poetic devices employed by Dhalwangu singers in the musical articulation of place. For heuristic purposes, it is useful to divide these tropes into two broad categories: direct place references and indirect place references. It must be noted, however, that many song texts do not sort neatly into these categories.

**Direct Place References**

One of the most common tropes used by Dhalwangu singers to evoke a sense of place is the simple use of a place name, which I discussed in Chapter Four in the section on contiguity tropes such as the inventory. Naming is an extremely important aspect of the relation of Yolngu people to country, as Nancy Williams has suggested:

> Words, especially names, comprise a category of a land-owning group’s most important non-corporeal property, and all names, including personal names, refer in some direct or indirect way to land. The importance of names lies in their relation to land, the group’s most important real property....To indicate that something possesses a name is tantamount to asserting that it is owned (Williams 1986:42).

These sentiments hold true for Dhalwangu *manikay*, in which names and naming are of primary importance. Each and every place that is significant in Dhalwangu cosmology has a multiplicity of names that may be used in song to
create a clear picture of that place in the mind’s eye of the audience. In one performance of the Gurrumuru Wängangur song series, Gurrumuru was referred to by no fewer than twenty names, including Rray, Ganburrurr, Gobaniny, Bambang, Barrthanaka, and of course Gurrumuru itself. DhaJwangu singers believe that the use of a large number of place names is an important way of “decorating” a performance, to create a “clear picture” of a place, and the use of these names is the most obvious means of linking the songs with their ancestral location. Bangana, in discussing the importance of using names in song texts, once said:

Bangana: Wānga, land, is a very big thing....It comes with manikay, it comes with the bunggul [dances], comes with the madayin, the lot. So, the reason why giving one place a lot of names, one of the reasons is to use power names, likan yaku, bundurr yaku, for elders, so they can listen and know that you are...singing the right songs, right names. Secondly, see, other names of that place might link up another clan...

PGT: Who have the same...

Bangana: ...yo, same name.

PGT: Except for their country.

Bangana: Yo, except for that country....It is very important that you talk about names of places, because then that gives that wānga [country], in other words, you’re telling the people that this area, this yakumalany [named] area wānga is ngarraku [mine].

PGT: Because you know the names?

Bangana: Yo. Because I know the names, and I’m singing it, making it look like Garrapara, so people can see that picture, that’s Garrapara.

To illustrate the use of names in DhaJwangu song texts, I present here a number of excerpts from the Gurrumuru Wängangur song series. In the first one, from the song yiki (knife), the singer uses a number of different names for Gurrumuru as he talks about DhaJwangu ancestors using knives or swords to clear the ground at Gurrumuru in order to make a camp:

bunal marrtji yarrkunmaram Likarrma Gunurima Dharrwalawal Bawuyarra

soil/ clearing/ clearing/ Likarrma/ Gunurima/ Dharrwalawal/ Bawuyarra
Each of the next set of excerpts are from the song *garrurru* (flag), in which the singers describe the flag as a central symbol of Gurrumuru and its people, again using different names for Gurrumuru:

maripuy ngalimurrung wuramdhun marrtji barrngbarrng dhananytja yakumirr Gurrumuru Djiki Gurrumuru

of the war/ for us/ flying/ flying/ torn one/ that/ with a name/ Gurrumuru/ Djiki/ Gurrumuru

ngalyun marrtji dhunday banganalil gabalayangal ngalimurrung Barrthanaka Malula

raising/ raising/ straight/ to the top of the mast/ representing/ our/ Barrthanaka/ Malula

maripuy ngalimurrung ngalyun marrtji barrngbarrng Birrinydjiya yakumirr Barrthanaka Malula Yananbilngawuy

of the war/ for us/ raising/ raising/ torn one/ for Birrinydji/ with the name/ Barrthanaka/ Malula/ Yananbilnawuy

In these lines, *yakumirr*, "with a name", is a term used to indicate that the flag is a named and owned object which is associated with Gurrumuru. The frequent mention of Gurrumuru, either by that name or by one of its many alternate names, reinforces the Dhalwangu belief in the central location of the flag in their country.

Direct place references may also be used in referring to the country of the other Yirritja moiety people who have rights in the cosmology associated with Gurrumuru. As stated earlier, Dhalwangu, Warramiri, Wan.gurri, Birrkili, Munyuku, Gumatj, Gurrumba Gurrumba and Nundhirribala people form an "extended" *bapurru* with regard to different aspects of the Birrinydji cosmology. Bangana, Bininydjirri, and I once spoke about the connections between Dhalwangu and other Yirritja people expressed through the songs of Gurrumuru:

Bangana: We...talk about the ship, and the places where it’s been, so when we talk about Dholtji, for example, that’s a Warramiri country, so when we talk about Dholtji, then we include the people that lived on Dholtji. You know?
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PGT: O.K., right. And when they’re singing about it, do they sing about it as the ship...

Bininydjirri: They include, they include Dhalwangu.

PGT: ...having come to their places?

Bangana: Yo.

Here are some excerpts from the Gurrumuru Wängangur song series in which the Dhalwangu singers refer to places of the other Yirritja people who form the “extended” bàpurru of Birrinydji. The first example is from the song manydjarrka (cloth); the song texts refer to people making the cloth into quilts and preparing to sleep, and mention the Warramiri country of Dholtji:

ngalimurr wanggany mala Dholtjingur Budalbudal liyanhina ngalimurr wurruku murraygam

we/ one/ people/ from Dholtji/ Dholtji people/ prepare/ we/ will/ sleep

liyi Dholtjingur ngali wurruku murraygamanytja rulanggurrnganya miny’tji diyarrmula dhipala bunalil djirrwunuwunu yanytjalil

from/ from Dholtji/ we/ will/ sleep/ put it down/ colour/ mixture of colours/ here/ soil of Gurrumuru/ soil of Gurrumuru/ soil of Gurrumuru

The next song subject in this song series is yakurr (sleeping), and uses two different names for a Birrkili place:

liyi dhanytja Munmundha Mawuyulngur Yandhalangur ngalimurr wanggany mala murraygangal

here/ this/ Birrkili people/ people from Mawuyul/ people from Yandhala/ we/ one/ people/ slept

Garrurru (flag) is one of the best examples in the Gurrumuru Wängangur song series of the interconnectedness of the places of different Yirritja bàpurru through the use of place names. Places where the Macassan ship stopped on its travels are sometimes referred to by the generic terms dharring or marngarr; Bangana described these as being “like a bus stop or a railway station”. The song texts for garrurru represent an unparalleled example of Dhalwangu people referring to other people’s country as a means of connecting them with their
own country at Gurrumuru, as discussed at some length in the discussion in
Chapter Four on contiguity tropes. Here are some further examples to illustrate
the widespread use of the names of the country of the “extended” bapurru:

dharrning ngarra ngupandja marngarr guyangin Djaltjunbi Gadinngura
Mawindi

places where the flag has been/ I [the flag]/ think/ places where the flag
has been/ thought/ Djaltjunbi/ Gadinngura/ Mawindi [all names for
Gumatj country]

ngarranydja dhay’i Dhawalngulpururrmirr nhādu dhanyija marayarryu
wudjuy

I am/ this/ from Dhawalngulpururrmirr [Nundhirribala country]/ what/
this/ mast/ [made from] tree from Numbulwar

wudhun ngarrany Yamililiri wanggayngunytja dhulunggu manunggarrari
dhanyija garrurrwu Walarrnga Munanggil Djulgayalnggi Yandhalawuy

hit/ me [the flag]/ the winds from the plains of Gurrumuru/ another/
the wind from Numbulwar/ the wind from Numbulwar/ this/ flag/
Walarrnga/ Munanggil/ Djulgayalnggi/ from Yandhala [all names of a
Birrkili island in Arnhem Bay]

nguban ngarra wurruku Djundja Gamada Wuluwurrdhun bayun ngalimurr
gathuwwuru Munhalnha Marraŋbala nininyngu Dhangarrganha

sail/ I [the flag]/ will/ Djundja/ Gamada/ Wuluwurrdhun [all names
for beaches in Nundhirribala country]/ leaving/ we/ my sons/
Munhalnha/ Marraŋbala [both names for Nundhirribala people]/ the
real people/ Dhangarrganha [Nundhirribala people]

ngurukuy Mindarrwuy

from/ Mindharr [Wan.gurri country]

mulkan ngarra Dhotji Manunu yulba Yanalatjbiwa Bukulatjbiwa gilung
ngarra Munangil Yandhalawuy wuyuburrun ngarra Latjinggu

got/ I [the flag]/ Dhotji/ Manunuuyulba [both names for Warramiri
country]/ for Yanalatji/ for Bukulatji [both names for Warramiri
people]/ sailing/ I/ Munangil/ from Yandhala [both names for Birrkili
country]/ away/ I/ Latjinnggu [ikan name for Birrkili people]
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garrurru Balawarrwarrngur garrurru ngarrakunytja Mitjbaralngur
Garruburrangur ngobar ngarra Lalanga dhananytja Wilirr dhananytja ngarra
Lalangur ngunhunytja duljunmarang garrurru ngarrakunytja wuyupun
marriji dhanggala mariwuy minytjinytja Bundabunda Warrgariny

flag/ from Balawarrwarr [Warramiri country]/ flag/ for me/ from
Mitjbaral/ from Garruburra [both names for Warramiri country]/
sailed/ I/ Lalanga [Birrkili country]/ that/ Wilirr [Birrkili country]/
that/ I/ from Lala [Birrkili country]/ that/ take it back [to Gurrumuru]/
flag/ my/ away/ moving/ flag/ of the war/ colour/ Bundabunda/
Warrgariny [both names for the plains of Gurrumuru]

It is clear that, through the medium of song, in particular the garrurru song,
DhaJwangu people emphasize and reinforce important social and cosmological
connections between themselves and a number of other Yirritja people who are
connected through the ownership and performance of these songs. Through the
Birrinydjii cosmology, a number of different Yirritja biipurru are “one people”,
and their homelands are, broadly speaking, equivalent with reference to that
cosmology. The direct reference to these places by their names and alternate
names is a highly effective poetic device used by DhaJwangu singers to evoke
their own country, the country of other Yirritja people, and the cosmological
connections between them.

Indirect Place References

The evocation of place through song is also accomplished by less direct means
than the use of place names. For the most part, this is done by reference to some
aspect of the cosmology of a place, especially an ancestral being or a feature of
an ancestral being. When such a reference is made in a song text, listeners who
have the requisite knowledge of the relevant cosmology are able to perceive
that the singer is also implicitly making a reference to the country which is the
location of that cosmology. I call these kinds of tropes “indirect place
references”.

One common method for indirectly referring to place in song texts is for
the singer to mention the name of some animal, plant, or object that is closely
associated with the location of the song series. In the case of the Gurrumuru
Wängangur song series, there are a number of things which an informed
audience would immediately associate with that place, and when they are mentioned in song it forms a definite part of the evocation of that place, even though a formal place name is not used. One of the most important symbols of the Birriyndji cosmology, for instance, is the anchor of the Macassan ship, to be discussed in detail in Chapter Eight. Dhałwangu singers sometimes refer to being at Gurrumuru as “sitting on the anchor”, as the following song texts demonstrate:

\[
\text{wanga djaladungur jukuwurrngungur}
\]

\[
\text{talk/ at the anchor/ at the anchor}
\]

\[
\text{nhina bukman ngamangamayun marrilil jukuwurrngulil}
\]

\[
\text{sit/ properly/ properly/ sit on/ on jukuwurrngu [name of the anchor]}
\]

Because the dropping of the anchor at Gurrumuru was the pivotal event of the Macassans' journey around the coast of Arnhem Land, it is emblematic of the importance of Gurrumuru as a Dhałwangu place.

Another important symbol which is used to represent Gurrumuru is the octopus. According to myth, the octopus had a part in creating Gurrumuru in the \text{wangarr} era, and is still believed to live beneath Gurrumuru today. In the song \text{yiki} (knife), which describes the Dhałwangu ancestors clearing their camp, singers sometimes mention the octopus:

\[
\text{ngaraka marrtji lirrbumanytja garradhany madaynha ngarrbiyany warray}
\]

\[
\text{land/ clearing/ clearing/ octopus/ octopus/ octopus/ warray [song word]}
\]

The use of the word \text{ngaraka} (which also means “bones”) here implies a number of interconnected meanings. It refers to the land at Gurrumuru itself, which the Dhałwangu people are busy clearing; but it also refers to what lies beneath Gurrumuru, in this case the ancestral octopus, the subject of a song in the Yikari song series which concerns ancestral events at the mouth of the Gurrumuru River. Through the reference to clearing land or the “bones” of the octopus, singers “localize” their song text in a highly specific way as pertaining to the octopus’ home, which is Gurrumuru. The octopus is also used to refer to Gurrumuru in the song \text{nhina} (sitting down):
A third important symbol of the Gurrumuru song series is yiki, the knife or sword. It is the most important of all of the material objects associated with Birrinydj and, with the anchor, is frequently depicted on flags used by particular Yirritja groups to mark graves. Gurrumuru itself is sometimes referred to in song as Ditjburknnir, or “the home of the knives”, as in this excerpt from the song yakurr (sleeping):

\[ \text{dhiyala ngali wurruku marrngur Ditjburkngur murraygam} \]

here/ we/ will [sleep]/ at/ at the home of the knives/ sleep

In some cases, a place reference in song may be so indirect as to be almost hidden to an outsider without the exegesis which accompanies the translation of the text. Take, for instance, the following line of song text from the song ngarali (tobacco), in which singers talk about the Dhalwangu ancestors sitting at the camp at Gurrumuru preparing tobacco for smoking:

\[ \text{warali warali Bambangur mulwatjngur warali dhiyalabintjan Balawarrwarr Mitjbaral} \]

tobacco/ tobacco/ at Bambang /at Gurrumuru/ tobacco/ here at/ Balawarrwarr/ Mitjbaral

The word mulwatj refers to anything which is culturally important. In the case of the Gurrumuru song series, I was told that the knife is considered to be mulwatj, and therefore mulwatjngur refers to the place of the knife, which is Gurrumuru. We can see, therefore, that singers may use the most elliptical of poetic devices to accomplish the skillful evocation of place in the performance of a song series.
One of the interesting features of Dhalwangu song is that, in the vast majority of cases, the place evoked in the performance of a particular song series is different from the actual place of performance; in other words, singers evoke distant places rather than the places where they are actually singing. This should come as no great surprise for a number of reasons. First, since the beginning of the mission era in northeast Arnhem Land in the 1920s, the majority of Yolngu live in one of five main communities in the region rather than on their own traditional country or that of a closely related b탕urrŋa. It has only been since the mid-1970s that a number of Yolngu have returned to their homelands to live in much smaller communities known as outstations. However, a relatively small proportion of the total Yolngu population lives in these communities for most of the year; the large communities still dominate.

Another reason is that a number of groups from different areas generally come together for rituals such as funerals, and therefore most performers at a ritual are on someone else’s land. Even when a deceased person is brought back to their own or their mother’s mother’s land for the funeral, the majority of performers are from other groups and, hence, other places.

A third reason is that some of the places which are the subjects of song series are uninhabited and remote, and are rarely visited. Many people have not seen certain places depicted in song for many years, and some younger people may never have seen them. For these reasons, it is easy to understand why the place of performance and the place evoked through song are rarely the same; and for these reasons, we may begin to appreciate the centrality of song in the Yolngu experience of place. Occasionally, it is their only means of experiencing a particular place.

In her 1992 article entitled “Empowering Place: Multilocality and Multivocality”, Margaret Rodman suggests that “...one could argue that regional relations between lived spaces are developed through infusing experience in one place with the evocation of other events and other places” (Rodman 1992:644). This is an illuminating way to look at Dhalwangu musical performances. The community of Gapuwiyak, for the large number of Dhalwangu living there, is the lived space of their immediate experience—it is where they live and work and, often, where they sing. The outstation at Gurrumuru is also a lived space, where many Dhalwangu at Gapuwiyak have lived in the past, and where some will live in the future. It is a place which
many visit on a regular basis, and it is where many of their close relatives live. Furthermore, it is the lived space of their ancestral history, where memory and myth fuse together in many important ways. With Rodman, we can recognize the development of relations between these places through infusing the DhaJwangu experience of Gapuwiyak with the evocation Gurrumuru.

One way in which this is done has been analysed closely above. Various tropes are employed by DhaJwangu singers to evoke Gurrumuru and other DhaJwangu places in the performance of different song series. Another figurative means of evoking one place in another in ritual performance is the creation of sand sculptures. Used for the purification of particular classes of kin in one of the closing stages of funerals, sand sculptures are visual representations of myth and are frequently associated with specific places. For example, when a sand sculpture representing the anchor of the Macassan ship was constructed at a DhaJwangu funeral in Gapuwiyak in 1996, it was implicitly representative of DhaJwangu country at Gurrumuru.

This close relation between the subject of sand sculpture designs and ancestral places has been noted by other scholars of Arnhem Land religious practice. In their paper on the sand sculptures of the Gidjingali, the western neighbours of the Yolngu, Clunies Ross and Hiatt note that three of the five sand sculptures examined related directly to sites on particular patrilineal estates, while the other two were representations of ancestral beings themselves (Clunies Ross and Hiatt 1977:138-43). In a paper in the same volume, Ian Keen examined twenty-one sand sculptures created in Yolngu funerals in the region around Milingimbi. The interpretations obtained for twelve of these made direct reference to specific ancestral places in the relevant cosmology (Keen 1977b). The other nine sculptures, while not naming specific ancestral places, are clearly related to site-based cosmologies and could therefore be understood to implicitly refer to those places. This is especially true when one considers the wider ritual context, in which the creation of the sculpture is accompanied by the performance of manikay which quite explicitly refer to places visited by the ancestral beings during their journeys (Keen 1977b:169-70). It might be said, then, that both songs and sand sculptures contribute significantly to a multimedia evocation of ancestral places which is of central importance in Yolngu ritual. In most cases, the places referred to in the sand sculpture designs are distant from the communities where those designs are executed, and so the sculptures and their accompanying songs are a powerful means of recreating the ancestral essence of those places wherever they are created.
This brings me to another fascinating aspect of the infusion of the experience of Gapuwiyak with the evocation of other places: house naming. In Gapuwiyak, nearly every house is named, and many of these names refer to places in the traditional country of the occupants. This practice is a response by the majority of people in town, whose traditional country is elsewhere in northeast Arnhem Land, to heighten their connection to their own country, while at the same time developing a localized sense of place within Gapuwiyak. Like song and other elements of Yolngu ritual performance, house naming is an evocation of one place while living in another.

Bangana’s house is called Djalkiri, the anchor. At one level, this is a reference to Dhalwangu country at Gurrumuru—as discussed above, in Dhalwangu cosmology the ancestral Macassan ship is believed to have dropped its anchor at Gurrumuru, and the anchor is a powerful symbol of that place. At another level, though, this name has a very significant local reference as well, because the house was built on the site of a sand sculpture depicting the anchor which had been created for Bangana’s father’s funeral. Djalkiri, then, represents a clear evocation of Gurrumuru and provides a means of connecting its occupants to that place; yet at the same time, because of the local history of that site, the evocation of Gurrumuru also provides an emotionally charged experience of Gapuwiyak as a place.

Another example is the house next door to Bangana’s, which belongs to Gunumungu, his māri (MM). Although she is a Munyuku woman, her house bears a name which connects it with Gurrumuru: Wandad, the name of a shady area in that country. It has this name because some of her gutharra (DC), Bangana’s brothers and sisters, used to live there and thought that a large, shady mango tree in front of the house reminded them of the shady spot at Gurrumuru. Again, we have an evocation of Gurrumuru at a place in Gapuwiyak which is due both to the occupants of the house, who have personal and ancestral ties to both places, and a physical feature of both places. This kind of connection is also exemplified by the house belonging to Djinipidi Wunungmurra called Gundangur, Gundā being the name of a rock in the ocean near the Dhalwangu country of Garrapara; the house is named after this rock because it has a mortar and stone facade.

House naming in Gapuwiyak is not only about the evocation of ancestral places, although that is a prominent feature of most names. It is equally about establishing a sense of place within Gapuwiyak, a fact reflected in a number of house-naming practices. For instance, when an old house is torn down and a
new one built in its place, as was the case during a large housing project in 1995, Yolngu may insist on the new houses being built on the same sites as the old ones. Additionally, the same names are given to the new houses as had been given to their predecessors, and they are even painted the same colours. So, for example, the singer and ritual expert Mulyun Wunungmurra lives in a green house called Minimy, which is the name of a tree from the jungle at Gurrumuru which had been brought to Gapuwiya and planted in the front yard. The old house on that site, also called Minimy and owned by Mulyun’s father Walumarri, was also green. Almost all of the houses built on the sites of older houses were also given the same name and painted the same colour.

Yolngu house-naming at Gapuwiya represents a unique and fascinating means of developing and nurturing a sense of place. On the one hand, many houses are named in honour of places in the ancestral country of the people who live there as a means of evoking those places, drawing in the distant to the local and making those distant places resonate with significance in a local context. On the other hand, the names given to houses also reflect the continuing importance of those places within the lived history of Gapuwiya, forging a sense of place in their chosen home. Like the creation of sand sculptures which refer to particular ancestral places, or like the performance of manikay which are shot through with place names and other kinds of direct and indirect place references, house naming is a creative and sometimes emotionally-charged means of evoking ancestral places even when they are far away.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have explored the ways in which manikay are centrally involved in the creation of “countries of the mind” inhabited by DhaJwangu people, to use Heaney’s apt phrase. The singers with whom I worked

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9 Yolngu in Gapuwiya also develop their sense of place there when they move to a different house in town. One example of this are two houses in town, one called “Old Biyik”, and its next-door neighbour “New Biyik”. Biyik is a place at Marrangu country at Raymangirr; the owner of the new house (and previously the old one) is a man named Balaman, who is Djambarrpuynynu by birth but who was adopted by a senior Marrangu man. Balaman, who is considered to have a custodial role over Raymangirr because of his personal history, simply kept the name of the house when he moved into the new one. This is also the case for two houses, both named Mandjangur. Named after Munyuku country at Rurrangala by the Munyuku man who lived in the older house, he bestowed the same name upon his new house when he moved into it.
consistently spoke of the importance of "painting a picture" or of "telling the story" of particular ancestral places through the performance of songs, and how when this was done well listeners were made to feel that they were a part of those places. Country is an integral link in a chain which includes wangarr ancestral beings, the first human ancestors, and contemporary Yolngu, a chain which links the past with the present and the distant with the local. There are a number of ways in which a connection to country may be articulated, but the structure and performance of manikay is especially prominent.

Countries of the mind become all the more important when geographical countries are inaccessible, and this is the case for many of the Yolngu people living at Gapuwiyak. Gapuwiyak is home to roughly 1000 Yolngu, whose dozens of traditional ancestral countries are spread throughout northeast Arnhem Land. Some of these countries are inhabited and at least provide the potential for people to visit, although most people still spend much of the year in Gapuwiyak. Other countries are currently uninhabited and inaccessible, and therefore people can only visit them with considerable effort and expense. The importance of these places, however, is not diminished as long as they can remain countries of the mind through musical performance.

The connections of the Dhalwangu people of Gapuwiyak to their countries illustrates this point well. Two of their four main countries, Gurrumuru and Gängan, are inhabited as thriving outstations. The Dhalwangu people who live there are able to experience these places as both geographical countries and countries of the mind. The other two countries, however, Garrapara and Balambala, are not inhabited and are difficult to visit because there are no roads going there. The experience of these places must necessarily be as countries of the mind, evoked through the performance of the song series which describe the activities of the ancestors there in the wangarr creative era. For most Dhalwangu people, it is through such means that these places are experienced.

This chapter also distinguished between what I called regionalized and localized song series. The former are those which describe ancestral events with a serial narrative structure, as when an ancestral being travelled from place to place across Arnhem Land, linking the country of many different people of the same moiety who form an "extended" bāpurru. Although there are some well-known examples in the Yolngu ethnographic literature of these regionalized songs, the bulk of Dhalwangu songs are localized, that is, the ancestral events described in them are believed to have taken place in a
relatively delimited geographical area. Other Yirritja people who sing the same songs and have rights in the same cosmology form an “extended” biapurru because the ancestral events happened in a parallel fashion in different places. In these cases, Dhajwangu singers mention those other people and places in the song texts, but give precedence to the events as having happened in their own country. This distinction between regionalized and localized cosmologies is useful in understanding the ways in which different kinds of madayin are owned differently and the ways such ownership is expressed through musical performance.

The importance of place in Dhajwangu manikay is underscored by other means of articulating a connection to country, such as the production of sand sculptures and the practice of house-naming. Another very important medium is the painting of ancestral designs on bark, an enormous subject which I cannot address adequately in this work (but see Morphy 1991). What all of these forms of expression demonstrate is that country is a centrally important aspect of Yolngu identity, and that, in contemporary Yolngu society, the connection of people to country is as much created and recreated through ritual practices, such as musical performance, as through patterns of habitation or resource exploitation. For Dhajwangu people living at Gapuwiyak, ancestral places are maintained as countries of the mind even when they cannot be visited as geographical countries. For a singer, to do this successfully is to provide a richly detailed evocation of those places, to paint a vivid picture in the mind’s eye of the audience.

The next chapter, the final one in this “Second Movement” on the musical articulation of Dhajwangu culture, examines the musical articulation of change. I will discuss the ways in which innovation in Dhajwangu musical practice is developed within an ideology of changelessness and continuity with the ancestral past, a subject of increasing importance to all Yolngu people as they enter a second disruptive century of Western colonization.
Chapter Eight - The Musical Articulation of Change

Traditional Aboriginal religion, though in one sense the reservoir of the autochthonous Aboriginal heritage, the symbol of unchanging continuity, has nowadays clandestinely become the vehicle of change.

-Erich Kolig (1981:1)

In the last two chapters, I used the insights gained through an extensive study of DhaJwangu manikay to examine two topics which have featured prominently in the Arnhem Land ethnographic literature: social organization and connections to country. I demonstrated not only that these topics are central to the constitution of DhaJwangu identity, but that musical structures and performances make a significant contribution to that process. In this chapter, I turn my attention to another topic with which ethnographers have been concerned for decades: social and cultural change. Yolngu have been subjected to a range of influences, some of which even pre-date European contact, and have responded in innovative ways while maintaining the basic tenets of their culture. I will focus my attention on musical innovation in order to show how, for DhaJwangu people, music has been instrumental to the manner in which change has been managed.

Yolngu have been extremely creative in dealing with many aspects of change over the last several decades. From a petition in the form of a bark painting sent to Federal Parliament to fight for land rights, to the combination of traditional and Christian beliefs since the arrival of Methodist missionaries in the 1920s, to the synthesis of traditional and popular music by the rock band Yothu Yindi, Yolngu have come to terms with a rapidly changing world and have tried to deal with change on their own terms. In this chapter, I will examine two areas of social and cultural change which DhaJwangu people address through their music: the period of contact with Indonesian fishermen between the early 18th and the early 20th centuries; and the song version called the yuta (new) manikay, which I looked at briefly in Chapter Three. This examination will demonstrate the extent to which DhaJwangu people use musical structures and performances to mediate social and cultural change in the contemporary world. DhaJwangu people are able to introduce significant innovations within their culture, while at the same time maintaining an
ideological position which stresses changelessness and continuity with the ancestral past.

**Change in Australian Aboriginal Religion**

The theme of change has been a persistent concern among anthropologists of Aboriginal Australia, and a great deal of recent writing has focused specifically on religious change. Although the impact of Western society has been widespread and penetrating, Aboriginal religions have responded in ways which are commensurable with pre-contact practices, although sometimes substantially modified. Despite such modifications, though, Aboriginal people still interpret contemporary religious practices within the framework of beliefs in creative ancestral beings who established a cosmological order which is maintained to the present day. As Charlesworth has written:

> Within the framework or “canon” provided by the foundation charter of the Dreaming there is then a good deal of innovation and change and re-interpretation and adaptation in Australian religions (Charlesworth 1984:386).

It is important for us to recognize that “tradition and cultural identity are creative, dynamic and processual phenomena” (Otto and Borsboom 1997:2) and that “appeals to tradition are used to validate the present because they convey the mandate of the past” (ibid.:3). This is certainly the case for Aboriginal religious beliefs and practices. While it is not possible to review the large ethnographic literature on change in Aboriginal religion¹, I would like to examine a few key works to provide a background to the subsequent discussion of change in Arnhem Land religion.

Erich Kolig has written perceptively about religious change in the Kimberley region of northwest Australia. In a “profound if silent revolution” (Kolig 1981:2), Aboriginal religion in the area “has been rising like a Phoenix from its own ashes” (ibid.:1), responding to European contact and its new socioeconomic order. For instance, the formation of new settlements in conjunction with the pastoral industry necessitated a consequent shift in

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¹ A small and incomplete sample would include volumes by Robert Tonkinson (Tonkinson 1974), David Turner (Turner 1974), Basil Sansom (Sansom 1980), Tony Swain and Deborah Bird Rose (Swain and Rose 1988), Erich Kolig (Kolig 1989), David Trigger (Trigger 1992), and Ian Keen (Keen 1991), as well as an article by Stephen Wild (Wild 1987).
religious ties from many relatively isolated cosmologies to a few which were of more general relevance because they were based on mythological tracks with a wider geographical distribution (ibid.:41). Kolig writes:

While still preserving the sacrosanctness of religious beliefs and materials, a process was set in motion toward creating larger religious units, which eventually expanded into a large uniform community of believers united by one religious exercise—a congregation of religious adherents under the umbrella of one united religious organization (ibid.:49-50).

Kolig also demonstrates how religious practice in the Kimberleys was affected by a shift from a pre-contact hunting and gathering lifestyle to a relatively sedentary lifestyle working on pastoral stations. Despite restricting when rituals may be held, employment in the pastoral industry has also helped to support religious life, as larger gatherings are possible and older people are freed up to devote much more of their time to religious matters (ibid.:59-62). As well, the post-contact period has allowed pre-existing routes of communication to be greatly expanded and to allow for religious mobility over great distances (ibid.:109-30). Kolig demonstrates that, although the post-contact period has been disruptive in many ways, Aboriginal people in the Kimberleys have been able to modify their religious beliefs and practices to incorporate innovation while maintaining the basic tenets of pre-contact beliefs.

The theme of Aboriginal religious practices being extended across a greatly expanded area has been taken up by a number of anthropologists working in the Kimberley and Central Desert regions. In her study of the exchange of women’s rituals, for example, Sylvie Poirier states her interest in understanding the process whereby a mythological narrative brought in from another area is reinterpreted to fit in with pre-existing local narratives, and to explore the dialectic between “forms of permanence” in Western Desert religion, “already existing mythic and ritual forms”, and forms of “openness” or “spatiotemporal creative transformations and reinterpretations” (Poirier 1992:758). She examines the exchange of two rituals between two groups of Western Desert women: a group from Balgo were to give a Tjarada love-magic ritual to a group of Pintupi women, and in exchange would receive a ceremonial cycle called Walawalarra. The Balgo women themselves had received the Tjarada from a more northerly group 15 years previously, and had

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2 See for example studies by Nicolas Peterson (Peterson 2000) and Thomas Widlok (Widlok 1997).
reinterpreted the mythological details to fit in with their own land-based cosmology. Likewise, the Pintupi women had received the Walawalarra from a group who lived further to the south some 30 years previously, and they too had transformed the associated mythical referents to coincide with their own cosmology and their own country (ibid.:762-7). Poirier writes:

This openness within the local network of Tjukurrpa [Dreaming] itineraries further illustrates the dialectic inherent in Western Desert societies between the forms of permanence and those of spatio-temporal (re)inscription. The openness of the various Dreaming tracks to reinterpretation and innovation, in an area such as the Western Desert where people are highly mobile and corporate groups non-existent, supports the constant adjustment of social, ritual, and territorial networks. It allows the groups concerned to adapt to historical circumstances such as new alliances between neighbouring groups, the transmission of ceremonies or demographic shifts (ibid.:771).

This example demonstrates clearly that beliefs in ancestral beings are not inviolate and unchanging, but are subject to a variety of transformations and innovations against an ideological background of continuity with the ancestral past.

In a paper on the songs of Western Cape York in northern Queensland and the Katherine region of the Northern Territory, Peter Sutton discusses a lack of isomorphism between the meaning of songs, the languages in which they are sung, and the property interests of those with rights in the songs. Both the anomalies generated and the expected isomorphisms are parts of a single system characterized by a dialectic between power and autonomy which allows cultural change to be controlled (Sutton 1987:78). For instance, Sutton notes that singers may rightfully perform songs concerning country of which they are not traditional owners, that personal names derived from songs sometimes refer to country over which the person has no rights, that the language of a song may not be the same as the language of the region sung about, and that glosses of the words of songs may change even though it is commonly said that such words do not change (ibid.:82-5). Sutton writes:

I suggest that the apparently anomalous relationships between cultural forms discussed above derive part of their vitality in Aboriginal culture from their very status as anomalies. They facilitate competition, cooperation, social control, and ordered territorial change; and they do so by rubbing against simple isomorphic and easily "readable" relationships between sets of people, symbols and resources. It is the
dialectical interplay of both regularities and irregularities which constitutes the system (ibid.:87-8).

Sutton argues that anomalies are normal parts of living cultures and may be used by people in various ways. Songs which connect the country of different groups allow people to justify a move from poorer country to country which is more rich in resources along the same ancestral track (ibid.:88). Song gloss instability and obscurity may be deliberately maintained as a means of controlling not only musical change, but also its attendant political and economic change as well (ibid.:89). In other words, Sutton demonstrates that anomalies between songs, language, social organization and country are not only frequent, but are essential to the reproduction of the system in a way which allows change to be controlled and managed.

Change in Northeast Arnhem Land

This necessarily brief examination of a few key works on change in Australian Aboriginal religions raises a number of issues which have been of concern to those scholars who have examined processes of change among the Yolngu. Like their counterparts in other regions of Australia, the Yolngu have responded to widespread social and cultural change in a variety of innovative ways which demonstrate that they are actively involved in these processes, not merely responding passively to a situation beyond their control. Like other Aboriginal peoples, Yolngu have framed their innovative practices in such a way as to reinforce a belief in continuity with the ancestral past, by incorporating innovations within the ancestral world.

Ronald Berndt, in An Adjustment Movement in Arnhem Land, develops this theme of a pre-existing "traditional" culture being used as the basis for managing large-scale changes. The so-called Adjustment Movement occurred at the Elcho Island mission in the late 1950s, and consisted of Yolngu leaders revealing some of their sacred objects, or rangga, in a public "memorial". The leaders of the movement hoped to unify the various Yolngu groups for the common goal of social and economic advancement, as the revelation of the rangga was seen as a gesture to which the government would respond with a reciprocal gesture of increased autonomy. Berndt consistently emphasizes that Yolngu social mechanisms were used to absorb "alien elements" without
drastically changing local identity (Berndt 1962:28), although he points out that the resulting culture is in fact a combination of "traditional" and "European" (ibid.:31). Berndt paints a picture which depicts Yolngu people not as passive victims of massive cultural and social change, but rather as active participants in the process, drawing on (and modifying) traditional culture to achieve particular ends. It is this aspect of dynamism and active participation which came to be the focal point of much subsequent writing.

Howard Morphy, for example, has shown how Yolngu artists have used bark paintings as the basis for dealing with the changed conditions of the post-contact world. After the sudden death of a young man in Yirrkala, the people of the community were faced with the dilemma of how to transport the deceased back to his remote outstation without contaminating the airplane and the people travelling with the body. Their solution was to elevate the body above the floor of the airplane by using a platform, and to have a bark painting of a yingapungapu sand sculpture made (Morphy 1977:205-7). As discussed in the previous chapter, sand sculptures of various kinds are used by Yolngu to contain people and objects thought to be particularly polluted through contact with the dead; the man who ordered the painting to be made felt that it would serve the same function, to free him from pollution and allow him to return to everyday life (ibid.:207). Morphy writes:

The manner in which new elements have been incorporated in a traditional way to provide solutions to problems, illustrates the dynamic response by the Yolngu to the changed conditions brought about by increased contact with Europeans.... The problem of protecting those handling the body from pollution produced a solution that was both innovative and yet at the same time grounded in traditional practices: that is, the use of a commercial bark painting to symbolically create the conditions for containing pollution (ibid.:209).

We can see that post-contact conditions have produced a situation in which Yolngu have chosen to maintain their traditions, but in a modified form which nonetheless has an ancestral precedent.

Another writer who has stressed the active role of Yolngu in setting their own agenda for social change is Robert Bos, who studied the development of a unique Christian tradition among Yolngu living at Galiwin'ku on Elcho Island. Like Berndt's study of the Adjustment Movement, Bos convincingly demonstrates that traditional Yolngu beliefs and Christian beliefs have been combined to form a single symbolic system (Bos 1988:274-311). Bos critiques
two schools of thought on Aboriginal religious and social change: the “no change theory” which argues for a static and unchanging system of Aboriginal belief, as expressed by Strehlow and others (ibid.:363); and the “change by incorporation” view which allows for new elements to be incorporated within “a basically stable and fixed system” (ibid.:365). As a third option, Bos argues for a view of change which “goes to the heart of the symbolic system” (ibid.:369), in which the system of Aboriginal belief is open and flexible. As Bos states:

Aboriginal people protect and uphold the unquestioned and final authority of The Dreaming as the foundation of social existence and the basis for personal meaning structures. Even though The Dreaming is regarded as having been laid down once and for all by the supernatural beings, this in no way precludes an ability to come to grips with new experienced realities. These new aspects of the empirically experienced world may, if considered to be significant, come to be regarded as emanating from the supernatural beings in The Dreaming (ibid.:372).

This view is taken up and expanded by John Rudder, whose own research at Galiwin’ku overlapped with that of Bos. Rudder contends that the Yolngu relation to reality is concerned for the most part with geographical space and not with time (Rudder 1993:336). Significant events are accorded a place in the “inside” reality and lose their temporal reference:

In this way, historical events such as the visits of the Indonesian trepang fishermen from Makassar ... become associated with events described as being *baman’* (at the beginning, far distant) and eventually become incorporated with what white people have called “The Dreamtime”, the “inside” reality, losing all temporal reference except far distance and gaining present location in the inside reality. The presupposition of changelessness is then not in conflict with time conceptualisation (ibid.:337).

Recent writing on innovation, tradition and change in Arnhem Land, then, has emphasized the active engagement of Yolngu in determining the direction which change takes in their lives. As Bos and Rudder have shown, the notion of “change” must be seen in the light of a notion of “tradition” which does not have an inflexible and unchanging structure, but which is open-ended and allows aspects of an introduced culture to be incorporated in and to actually change the very nature of Yolngu belief. It is this active and accommodating
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notion of change which I wish to use in examining the Dhalwangu songs of Macassan contact.

Macassans in Arnhem Land Ethnography

A remarkable feature of the history of Arnhem Land has to do with an extended period of contact between Aboriginal people and fishermen from the port of Macassar, or Ujung Pandang, in south Sulawesi. These Macassans arrived each year with the northwest monsoon in search of a marine animal known as trepang, or sea-cucumber; this delicacy of Chinese cuisine was harvested and processed on the shores of Arnhem Land, brought back to Macassar, and eventually traded to China (Macknight 1976:7-8). The historian C.C. Macknight estimates that the Macassans first arrived in Arnhem Land in the last quarter of the seventeenth century (ibid.:97), and they continued their trade until the early part of the twentieth century.

Perhaps the earliest account of Macassan contact in the region comes from the explorer Matthew Flinders, who encountered six Macassan praus at anchor near Cape Wilberforce in 1803 (Flinders 1814:228-32). Although relations between Macassans and Aboriginal people were reported in traveller’s writings sporadically throughout the 19th century, the earliest ethnographic account was from Warner’s Milingimbi fieldwork in the 1920s. Warner was of the opinion that the period of Macassan contact had little impact on Yolngu culture. While recognizing that the Macassans introduced a range of new items of material culture, such as dugout canoes, cloth, tobacco, alcohol, and iron tools, Warner felt that overall there was “strong resistance...to outside influence” (Warner 1969:450). Some items, such as the dugout canoe, were considered very useful, but the use of the bark canoe persisted, especially after the dugout was no longer brought to the shores of Arnhem Land ready-made. Masts and sails, although introduced items, were easily adapted to indigenous carving and weaving practices. Likewise, the specific pipes and tobacco brought by the Macassans were new but had indigenous precedents, as did the iron tools that replaced stone ones (ibid.:451-4). Warner postulated that cultural influences

3 I follow Macknight’s definition of the term “Macassan” as not referring to any particular ethnic, cultural or linguistic group, but rather to any person who sailed with the fleet of praus from the port of Macassar to participate in the trepang industry (Macknight 1972:283, Macknight 1976:1-2).
were even less significant than material borrowings, noting the Yolngu use of Macassan words and names and the Macassan influence on ritual, but concluding that all external elements were modifications of existing ones. Warner writes:

Certain native myths have been somewhat modified to make a place for the Malay [sic] in the native cosmic ideology, just as the myths have been added in order to account for the white man and his civilization; but all these changes are purely superficial and but additional facts seeded into native cosmologies (ibid.:457-8).

Earlier in the ethnography, however, in a chapter on mortuary rites, Warner goes into more detail about the ritual influence of the Macassans. The "Mast Ceremony" concerns the wangarr ancestral Macassans, as the dead body is picked up in the same way as the Macassans picked up their masts at the end of the trepanging season, singing out:

O-o-o-o-a-ha-la!
A-ha-la!!
A-ha-la!! (ibid.:420)

Warner also describes dances which imitate pulling on ropes as if to raise a mast, a Macassan prayer and ritual cries used, and carved grave posts and masts placed by the grave which were said to be of Macassan origin (ibid.:421-4). So, even though he ultimately concludes that the period of Macassan contact was of relatively little importance, Warner's ethnography includes a number of details that may suggest otherwise. At any rate, he believed that, where there were significant influences, they were incorporated within an already-existing set of cultural principles.

Other Arnhem Land anthropologists soon followed with further information on the ways in which Yolngu had incorporated elements of Macassan culture. Donald Thomson's writings note a number of features of Yolngu culture that are derived from Macassan contact. Indonesian-style smoking pipes, for instance, supplemented existing types of pipes, but more importantly they were sometimes decorated with sacred designs to make them "yarkomirri" (yakumirri), or named, and therefore subjected to a number of ritual restrictions (Thomson 1939:87-9). Ronald and Catherine Berndt note that the existence of pottery shards, corroborated by references to earthenware vessels
in Yolngu songs about Macassans, indicates that pottery was made by Macassans in Arnhem Land with the help of Aboriginal labour, but that the practice was discontinued after the Macassan period ended (Berndt and Berndt 1947:133-4). However, the cultural significance of pottery for Yolngu was maintained through songs: the Berndts provide song textual material for two songs from the “Baijini-Macassan Song-Cycle” which refer to pottery being used to cook rice, which I recognize as the same as the song subject ngatha (food) or birratha (rice) from the Gurrumuru Wängangur song series, to be discussed further below. In their monograph Arnhem Land: Its History and Its People, the Berndts have adopted the viewpoint that Yolngu culture provided a framework for incorporating change, writing that “the Aborigines seem to have maintained a fairly well integrated pattern of culture, absorbing or discarding new ideas without seriously disturbing its basic structure” (1954:22), although they devote considerable attention to the influence of Macassan contact on traditional songs. Peter Worsley’s article on “Early Asian Contacts with Australia” stated that the Macassans were incorporated socially and economically within the existing Aboriginal society (1955:3-4), and Donald Thomson also believed that the era of Macassan contact was incorporated within the pre-existing cultural pattern:

For when two cultures meet, the dominant one does not absorb the other but rather single elements, and often those things that are unexpected or difficult to explain, are selected and dove-tailed, as it were, into the social structure, the pattern, or the “mosaic” of the adopting people (1957:29).

Perhaps the most extensive accounts of Macassan-Yolngu relations are provided by C.C. Macknight, who used historical records, archaeological evidence, and oral historical materials to develop a detailed picture of the trepang trade. Macknight writes:

Essentially, the picture is that of two cultures existing side by side, involved neither in major co-operation nor in competition. This is not to say that both sides were not affected by the contact, but that the activities of both the Macassans and the Aborigines could have been, and often were, carried on in the absence of the others with little or no difference (Macknight 1972:290).

Macknight then goes on to assess the impact of the contact on physical anthropology, language, material culture, and expressive culture, concluding that “it is evident that Macassan influence has been quite extensive in certain
aspects of Aboriginal life, but that it did not transform the fundamental bases of society” (ibid.:316). However, he is careful to qualify his conclusion by stating that “Aboriginal society cannot be characterized as conservative and unable to adapt itself to new conditions” (ibid.:317). Macknight has commented on Macassan elements of ritual and symbolism, but does not venture into any detailed interpretation of the meaning of these practices (Macknight 1976:91-2).

This aspect of the period of Macassan contact has been studied in some detail by Ian McIntosh, who has examined the cosmology of the Warramiri people of Elcho Island. McIntosh picks up on early suggestions of pre-Macassan visitations to Arnhem Land by the Baijini, a fair-skinned people who seem to have shared some aspects of Indonesian culture (Berndt 1948a, Berndt and Berndt 1949:219-21, Berndt and Berndt 1954:32-9, Elkin, Berndt, and Berndt 1950, Mountford 1956:333-8), to elaborate on beliefs about pre-Macassan “totem hunters” from Maluku in Eastern Indonesia. Warramiri oral history and cosmology suggests that there were earlier visitors to the area than the Macassans, but that they were dark-skinned people who came from the north and northeast and who shared with Yolngu religious beliefs in the ancestral whale and octopus (McIntosh 1995:53). Like other writers, though, McIntosh puts forward the view that Yolngu incorporated change according to a pre-existing cultural framework, writing that “there is clear evidence of how original myths, not involving outsiders, have become the basis of a number of variations on a basic theme” (ibid.).

McIntosh has also examined Islamic references in Yolngu myth and ritual, another legacy of the Muslim Macassans. He comments on Warner’s references to Islamic ritual, discussed above, as well as the account given by the Bernds about a Macassan “prayer man” called “Deingaru” who led Macassan religious observances and addressed his prayers to “walata’walata” (Berndt and Berndt 1954:46). McIntosh notes that Warramiri beliefs in Walitha’walitha are diverse. For some, it is a kind of personal familiar (McIntosh 1996:62-3). For others it has a more all-embracing meaning as an important ancestral being who was sent by God to restore order between Yolngu and Macassans. In the wangarr era, both Yolngu and Macassans operated under the sacred law of the Yolngu ancestral being Birrinydji, who was responsible for the creation of iron tools and other aspects of “Macassan” material culture (ibid.:56). Then came a period of instability in which both Yolngu and Macassans ignored the laws of Birrinydji and became involved in killing, theft, and other crimes; law-breakers were known by many names including Wurramu, Bawurramu, and Manänggan.
Walitha'walitha, who is equated with Allah, was said to have been sent by God to restore Birrinydji's law (ibid.:62-5). McIntosh concludes:

...[Yolngu] absorbed and creatively adapted aspects of Islam to suit their own needs. Walitha'walitha is but one body of 'law' among many in the Yolngu repertoire (ibid.:76).

We can see, then, that the events of the period of Macassan contact, and even aspects of Macassan religion, were reinterpreted in terms of the wangarr ancestral being Birrinydji, thereby subsuming substantial innovation within a framework of continuity with the ancestral past.

**Birrinydji, Macassans, and Dhalwangu Song**

The literature reviewed above is very important in assessing the Dhalwangu songs which describe ancestral events at Gurrumuru. The picture drawn in the existing literature is somewhat jumbled and contradictory, with different writers providing divergent interpretations of some of the same materials; this should not be surprising, given the period of seventy-five years between the oldest and the most recent periods of research, and the fact that Yolngu themselves do not have anything resembling a unified story about the Macassans. Like all other examples of Yolngu cosmology, beliefs concerning the Macassans are diverse, negotiated between individuals and groups on a variety of different occasions, and enacted through ritual practice, including the performance of manikay. Nevertheless, despite the contradictions in the literature, it provides some interesting clues to my own understanding of the Dhalwangu songs of Gurrumuru.

Of the nine song series which are located in the region of Gurrumuru, eight are associated with Macassan contact; the ninth does include introduced content, but has no explicit references to visitors from Indonesia. The other eight song series have distinct but overlapping subject matter which is based on the ancestral being Birrinydji and the activities of Dhalwangu ancestors at Gurrumuru. The ancestral narrative has it that a Macassan ship departed from Numbulwar and travelled north along the western coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria and then around the Gove Peninsula and into Arnhem Bay, stopping in the country of the other Yirritja bipurru with rights in the Birrinydji
cosmology, and finally travelling down the Gurrumuru River and dropping its anchor near the present settlement at Gurrumuru.

Beliefs about Birrinydji are by no means uniform: some people have suggested that Birrinydji, the leader at Gurrumuru, was the recipient of material objects when the Macassans arrived, while others claim that Dhalwangu people were already in possession of iron tools, tobacco, cloth, and the like before the Macassans ever arrived on the scene; some say that Birrinydji and the Macassans lived at Gurrumuru in the historical past, while others believe that they existed in the wangarr creative era. These differences in opinion, while interesting, do not need to be definitively resolved here; it is enough to say that, for most Dhalwangu people, Birrinydji is considered to be a wangarr ancestor, and that all introduced aspects of culture are subsumed within Birrinydji’s law.

In the songs of Gurrumuru, introduced and indigenous song subjects are mixed, although the most important symbols tend to be introduced ones. Here is a list of the song subjects performed from the Gurrumuru Wiingangur (at the camp) song series in late 1996. Those song subjects which are obviously inspired by the period of Macassan contact are marked with an asterisk:

1. matha (talking)
2. yiki (knife)*
3. ngarali (tobacco)*
4. marrtji (walking)
5. nhina (sitting down)
6. manydjarrka (cloth)*
7. yakurr (sleeping)
8. wurrulul (flies)
9. dhamburru (drum)*
10. djuling (mouth organ)*
11. dubulu (cards)*
12. ngãiritji (alcohol)*
13. bàrrundhu (fighting)*
14. yiki (knife)*
15. yiki rulangiù (putting down the knives)*
16. garruru (flag)*
17. ngatha (rice)*
18. watjbalnga (wild rooster)*
19. dirrmala (north wind)

Structurally, then, approximately two-thirds of the song subjects in this series obviously refer to introduced aspects of Macassan culture. A closer examination of these songs will reveal something of the extent of the Macassan influence.
matha (talking)

In this song subject, singers use a variety of different place names for Gurrumuru and the people of Gurrumuru in their description of Dhalwangu ancestors sitting around the camp talking:

wuypum ngali wanga liyawinydjjan Gobaniny
marrtjila ngaku Bambangil

Talk/ we/ talk/ at/ Gobaniny (alternate name for Gurrumuru)
talk/ hear/ at Bambang (alternate name for Gurrumuru)

In this song subject, singers also use the terms watharrngu and gurarrarrngu to refer to both “Macassans” and “people of Gurrumuru” (watharr means “white”), implying that both groups of people were present at Gurrumuru.

yiki (knife)

The knife song is one of the most important of the Gurrumuru song series; the knife or sword is considered to be an important symbol of Dhalwangu identity, and is related to the Macassan kris which was introduced among other iron tools4. There are in fact two knife songs, and the first one in the series describes Dhalwangu ancestors using knives to clear the camp at Gurrumuru. Singers may emphasize the sounds the knives make as they are used to clear the ground, as in the line:

rirrakay midikin wurriminyba wänga marrtji ngamanganayun

sound/ sound of the knife/ knife/ home/ go/ clearing the camp

Song texts also typically include different terms for “clearing” and “cleared” and different names for Gurrumuru. One song text also referred to clearing the land of the octopus, which is the ancestral being which is said to lie beneath Gurrumuru; this is a good example of the way in which Dhalwangu people maintain the precedence of indigenous wangarr ancestors over introduced ones.

4 The Berndts report that their Yolngu informants were able to identify a range of different Macassan knives and swords (Berndt and Berndt 1954:47).
In the associated *yiki* dance, two men stand facing each other, a knife or sword in each hand, and move in a broad circle while making criss-crossing motions with the knives in front of their bodies.

**ngarali (tobacco)**

Tobacco was a very important aspect of introduced material culture brought by the Macassans and, as discussed above, Macassan-style pipes have sometimes been decorated with sacred designs and given a status as restricted objects (Thomson 1939). In the *ngarali* song, singers describe Dhalwangu ancestors carefully preparing the tobacco and smoking it in the camp:

```
dhambaku warali dhanytja dhuwarr manymanytjun waralinynha
```

```
tobacco/ tobacco/ this/ smoke/ floating/ smoke of the tobacco
```

Singers may also use words like *bulutjuwurr* (from the beard) to describe the smoke rising through the beards\(^5\) of old men, and the words *garray* and *bunggawa* which are translated as “king” or “maker” of tobacco. Both words are derived from the Macassan language: *bunggawa* is from the Macassan *punggawa* which refers to the captain of a ship (Zorc 1996:41), and *garray* is from *kardeng*, which means “lord” or “master” (ibid.:125). As well, one Dhalwangu word for tobacco, *dhambaku*, is derived from the Macassan *tambdko* (ibid.:67). The tobacco song is sometimes used in funerals to dedicate a grave: performers are given small amounts of tinned tobacco with which they dance, rolling it between their hands, and at the end of the performance the tobacco is sprinkled into the open grave.

**marrtji (walking)**

The song texts for *marrtji* (walking) do not generally contain any references to introduced materials or concepts; they simply describe Dhalwangu ancestors walking on the tracks around Gurrumuru:

---

\(^5\) Warner notes that a particular style of “Van Dyke” beard was introduced by the Macassans (Warner 1969:450).
**wuypungal warraditjun marrbala marrtji mungdhun Burumbirrya**

walking/ walking/ track/ walking/ stepping on the track/ name of the track

**nhina (sitting down)**

This song subject describes Dhalwangu ancestors sitting down comfortably at Gurrumuru after walking. Sometimes they are said to sit in the shade, sometimes they sit “on the arm of the octopus”, a reference to the ancestral octopus lying beneath Gurrumuru. Sometimes a singer may use a song text such as:

\[ marrngur ngali dhanytja nhina balangubatji \]

on/ we/ this/ sit/ anchor

This reference to “sitting on the anchor”, like “sitting on the arm of the octopus”, is a reference to the cosmological underpinnings of Gurrumuru, as the Macassan ship is believed to have dropped its anchor at Gurrumuru. This particular term for anchor, related to the form balangu, is derived from the Macassan word balángo, which also means “anchor” (Zorc 1996:5; also see Macknight 1972:298-300).

**manydjarrka (cloth)**

*Manydjarrka*, or cloth, is one of the more important items of Macassan material culture which was introduced to Yolngu. The term itself may be related to another word for cloth, *djärritjarri*, which is derived from the Macassan word for cloth, *care* (Zorc 1996:98). One of the most interesting aspects of the cloth song are references to two “cloth experts” called *Dayngurru*, who prepare the cloth and make quilts, pillows and, in a later song, flags:

\[ dhilamana Dayngurru manda Dayngurru manydjarrka dhamanabul \]

cloth experts/ Dayngurru/ two/ Dayngurru/ cloth/ getting ready
As discussed above, this may refer to Macassan religious practice, as the Berndts (Berndt and Berndt 1954:45-6) report that an Islamic “prayer-man” called “Deingaru” presided over Macassan ceremonies at the end of each trepanging season and prayed to Allah each day. The first part of the name appears to be derived from the Macassan title Daeng, which was widely used in Macassan names (Macknight 1972:301). The Berndts also report a carved figure of a Macassan “sick man” with this name (Berndt and Berndt 1949:218, ff.20). Whatever the exact meaning of the term, for Dhalwangu singers it is an important aspect of the Birrinydji cosmology, as the flags made by the Dayngurru (see below) are among the most important symbols of Dhalwangu identity.

*yakurr* (sleeping)

The song *yakurr* (sleeping) describes Dhalwangu people sleeping at Gurrumuru with the quilts made by the Dayngurru. Many of the words simply mean “sleep” or “sleeping”, but there are some references to Macassan contact:

*gunanhe ngarrakal wurruku ditjburrdja marryalyun*

it doesn’t matter/ with me/ will/ knives/ close to me

*makarrril balalapulil warnggurrulil dhunydhunga gudha lalambarri lalanggutha*

under the houseposts/ under the house/ under the house/ house/ house/ house

The first line indicates that Dhalwangu people are comfortable sleeping with knives next to them because of their central place in the constitution of Dhalwangu identity (see below). The second line describes Dhalwangu people sleeping underneath houses constructed at Gurrumuru. *Balalapulil*, “under the house”, may be related to the word *bala*, meaning “house”, and derived from the Macassan word for house, *bála* (Zorc 1996:4). The words *lalambarri* and *lalanggutha*, although translated as “house” by Bangana, are defined by Zorc as meaning “copper, iron” (ibid.:155), which is nevertheless an item introduced by the Macassans.
wurrulul (flies)

In the Gurrumuru Wängangur song series, the sleep of the Dhalwangu ancestors is interrupted by the incessant buzzing of flies, the subject of the next song subject. In addition to describing the flies landing on the houses at Gurrumuru and on the cloth, singers may also describe the flies moving on the tracks and paths around Gurrumuru:

bunggulya ngarra dhukarrngur bunggulya ngarra marrbalangur
dancing/ me/ on the track/ dancing/ me/ on the track

dhamburru (drum)

Once awake, the Dhalwangu ancestors decide to play musical instruments, one of which is the drum. The word for drum, dhamburru, is derived from the Macassan word for drum, tamboro, which is ultimately derived from the Portuguese word tambor (Zorc 1996:68). Singers describe the sounds of the drums travelling into the jungles around Gurrumuru:

wuladjurrunandu yiwarrlil danggalkurrunandu dhamburru
guywuyurrunandu batjikali miwurryun rawubali
echo travelling/ in the air/ echo travelling/ drum/ sound travelling/ of the drum/ sound travelling/ drum

The other word for drum used here, batjikali, is derived from the Macassan bássi-kalling, “tin + can” (ibid.:20).

djuling (mouth organ)

Closely related to the drum is the song djuling or mouth organ, a word derived from the Macassan word súling for “fife” or “flute” (ibid.:108). Along with their drums, Dhalwangu people at Gurrumuru are also said to be playing “mouth organs”:
The playing of fifes and drums may be related to accounts of great celebrations held by Macassans and Yolngu at the end of the trepanging season, when the ships were prepared for the journey back to Macassar, where musical instruments were played (Berndt and Berndt 1954:46-7). Interestingly, there is also a yuŋa manikay (see below) for djuling which is said to have its origin during the Second World War. A DhaJwangu man named Gata, who was a member of the coastal patrol led by Donald Thomson, invented the song because Thomson used to have a mouth organ which he played for the old people. The “chorus” for the song is:

wohhh wāwa wandu mitha witjulwa

wohhh/ brother/ for/ Mister/ Whistle

It is possible that the change in the meaning of the word djuling from “fife” to “mouth organ” came from this wartime experience, although this is impossible to confirm.

dubulu (cards)

The DhaJwangu word for “card playing”, dubulu, is derived from the Macassan word dóbolo, the Dutch word dobbeilen, and the Portuguese word dobro, all of which mean “play dice, gamble” (Zorc 1996:62). Song texts refer to DhaJwangu people playing cards at Gurrumuru:

gungali bothurrut nyirnyirynaray gungali bothurrru gundibunaray

let us/ count/ in the sunset/ let us/ count/ in the sunset

The word bothurru, “count”, is derived from the Macassan word bótoro, meaning “play dice, gamble” (ibid.:47). A yuŋa manikay for dubulu, like the djuling song above, was inspired by Donald Thomson’s presence in Arnhem Land during the war. DhaJwangu people say that Thomson used to pull out a
pack of cards and play when he was on patrol, and Gata invented a song about it based on the *dubulu* song. The “chorus” of the song is:

\[
\text{wohhh dumdu wikurrun}
\]
\[
\text{wohhh/ Tom did it/ gambling}
\]

The associated dance movements for this song involve the motion of dealing cards (as in the “original” *dubulu* dance) and then an imitation of people marching in a military style. Different versions of the *dubulu* song, then, represent innovations upon innovations as Dhalwangu musicians creatively adapt to changing circumstances.

**ngäniitji (alcohol)**

Another important item introduced to Yolngu by the Macassans was alcohol; **ngäniitji** is derived from the Macassan word *ánisi*, meaning anisette (ibid.:221). The Berndts relate that the celebrations at the end of the trepanging season sometimes involved large amounts of alcohol and degenerated into violence (Berndt 1954:46-7; Warner 1969:449). The songs of the Gurrumuru *Wängangur* song series would seem to bear this out. In the *bulnha* or “slow” version of the song, singers describe thieves descending from the hills to steal the alcohol. This may refer to events which occurred while Yolngu people were visiting Macassar, as the Berndts report that Yolngu talked about “crook men”, “...wild natives from the hills who came down to the Macassan villages on plundering expeditions” (ibid.:61). Alternately, the “crook man” may also refer to Dutch customs officials in Macassar who collected dues from the returning Macassan fishing fleets (ibid.).

Dhalwangu singers use many words to refer to the thieves. Sometimes there are said to be two thieves, and the word *Dayngurru* is sometimes used to refer to them. Other words include *Bayini* (see the above discussion of the pre-Macassan visitors), *Balulu*, and *Bawurramu*. According to McIntosh, *Balulu* means “double-crosser, a killer, a bad person” (McIntosh 1996:66), while *Bawurramu* means “murderer” (ibid.). Additionally, there is an entire Dhalwangu song series about the thieves called Gurrumuru *Mananggan*; McIntosh defines *Mananggan* as “a robber”, and states that the word derives from the Macassan word *menangkan*, meaning “to help to win” (ibid.:67, ff.67).
The dance actions for this song version depict people moving slowly up the dancing ground, looking out from under their hands to see in the distance. The next version of the alcohol song is referred to as juka or "drinking", and describes Dhaļwangu people getting drunk on the alcohol:

\[
\text{dhiyangga wurruku nirrupu nhuna bambanggum dhiyangga ngānitjiri}
\]

with this/ will/ head/ you/ make you drunk/ with this/ with the alcohol

Dance actions for this version of the song involve dancers running around in a circular motion pretending to drink from a bottle.

\textit{barrundhu (fighting)}

As described by the Berndts, the consumption of alcohol led to fighting and violence. In the \textit{barrundhu} (fighting) song, Dhaļwangu singers describe drunk people, both Dhaļwangu and Macassans, fighting with each other:

\[
\text{barrundhurrundhu barrundhurrundu lanytja lanytja lanytja}
\]

fighting/ fighting/ drunk/ drunk/ drunk

In the associated dance, dancers pretend to move around drunkenly and take swings at each other.

\textit{yiki (knife)}

The fighting builds to a climax as the ancestral being Birrinydjī takes a sword in each hand and prepares for combat. Birrinydjī is closely associated with the sword, and is sometimes referred to by the name Liya-yiki or "head-sword". Singers describe Birrinydjī clashing the swords together over his head, becoming angry and aggressive, and performing the stingray dance as he prepares to fight. The stingray, as discussed in Chapter Four, is also felt to be very dangerous, and so therefore the stingray dance is an appropriate one for Birrinydjī to perform. There is also a homology between the knife and the
stingray’s barbed tail, which demonstrates that innovative aspects of Dhalwangu song and cosmology are incorporated within existing cosmologies. One song text for this song was:

\begin{quote}
latjarra mimbungala nirrpungur bilarangal Birrinydjwal
knife/ knife/ over the head/ sound of the knives/ over Birrinydji
\end{quote}

The *yiki* dance is performed with knives and swords in hand, swinging them vigorously above the head and stabbing them aggressively into the ground, as the dancers assume the ancestral form of Birrinydji himself. Of all of the symbols derived from the period of Macassan contact, the sword is the most central to Dhalwangu identity.

*yiki rulanggurr* (putting down the knives)

The next song subject in the series describes Birrinydji, the Dhalwangu people, and the Macassans stopping the fight and putting their knives and swords down on the ground:

\begin{quote}
rulanggurr nganya bunilil djiruwumulil rulanggurr nganya ditburknha
latjarra yiki
putting down/ it/ on the soil of Gurrumuru/ on the soil of Gurrumuru/
putting down/ it/ knife/ knife/ knife
\end{quote}

*garrurru* (flag)

If the sword is foremost in importance in the Gurrumuru cosmology, then the flag is next in importance, as it is also an important symbol of Birrinydji. The word for flag, *garrurru*, is derived from the Macassan word for sail or canvas, *karoro* (Zorc 1996:127). The flag is integrally related to another pivotal symbol of Birrinydji and the Macassans, the ship or *marthangay*. Sometimes the flag is said to be flying from a pole at Gurrumuru, but on other occasions it is said to be flying from the top of the mast of the Macassan ship. Dhalwangu people say that Birrinydji carried a torn red flag with him into battle, and sometimes they use such a flag in ritual performance; flags are also widely used in northeast
Arnhem Land to mark grave sites. Song texts for *garrurru* may describe the two cloth experts, the *Dayngurru*, working on the flag, raising it, and tying it up. Other textual references describe the flag as belonging to the people of Gurrumuru:

\[
\text{maripuy ngalimurrung wuramdhun marrtji barringbharrng dhananytja yakumirr Gurrumuru Djiki Gurrumuru}
\]

of the war/our/flying/flying/torn one/that/with a name/Gurrumuru/Djiki/Gurrumuru

The flag dance involves flagpoles with flags affixed to the top being rolled slowly back and forth on the ground while the dancers chant "oh Allah, oh Allah". Then, with a change in the music, the flags are picked up and danced with, and then firmly planted in the ground.

**ngatha** (rice)

Rice is known either by the generic name for food, *ngatha*, or the more specific *birratha*, which is derived from the Macassan word for rice, *bérasa* (ibid.:29). It was another important item of material culture introduced by the Macassans, although song texts often refer to the rice as coming from islands near New Guinea or from "Darwin", used as a generic term for faraway cities. Song texts describe the process of rice being cooked:

\[
\text{ngurukuymirr bamuniya gadu gadu gadu gadugay birrarribin birrarribina lanydjarrnga}
\]

with that/container/stir/stir/stir/stir/rice/rice/rice

This song text has some similarities with the texts reproduced by the Berndts in their discussion of the use of pottery, including the word *bamuniya*, which they translate as "cauldron" (Berndt and Berndt 1947:136). Macknight provides a

---

6 Each Yirritja *bäpurru* with rights in the Birrinydjii cosmology is said to have a unique colour and emblem upon their flag: the Dhalwangu flag was described as red with crossed swords and an anchor; the Gumatj flag is yellow with an anchor and anchor cable; the Warramiri flag is plain blue (because they are said to be ocean people); and the Nundhùribala flag is a triangular flag, either red or white, with a black stripe.

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derivation of *bamuniya* from the Macassan word for pot, *pammoneang* (Macknight 1972:310).

*watjbalnga* (wild rooster)

In the next song subject of the series, Dhalwangu singers describe the wild rooster (a term used to describe a kind of jungle fowl) walking around the houses at Gurrumuru; this may have been an animal introduced by the Macassans. Song texts also describe the rooster calling out to signal the north wind:

```
bunhna ngarra rirrakayun dhay’yi bagitju wurrwala nhathin dhanytja wayin
rirrakay dirrmala
```

slowly/ I/ signal/ this/ north wind/ north wind/ how [did]/ this/
animal/ signal/ north wind

*dirrmala* (north wind)

The final song subject of the Gurrumuru *Wångangur* song series describes the north wind, summoned by the wild rooster, blowing from over the ocean toward Gurrumuru:

```
dirrmala mayangarakangur dhanytja dirrmala dhunday ngalimurrungbal
bulumbulungur
```

north wind/ from the ocean/ this/ north wind/ straight/ for us/ from
the ocean

The Dhalwangu songs of Gurrumuru are a fascinating example of the creative ways in which Yolngu have been able not only to react to change, but to embrace it. The subject matter of the Gurrumuru *Wångangur* song series demonstrates a narrative progression that details certain aspects of the period of Macassan contact, although it can by no means be taken as anything approaching an historical account. Instead, it represents an amalgam of memories captured in song and passed on from generation to generation, and in the process the meaning has become incorporated within Dhalwangu
cosmology under the auspices of the *wangarr* ancestral being Birrinydjii. Likewise, individual song subjects include song texts which use words derived from the Macassan language and phrases which indicate the importance of iron tools, cloth, alcohol, and other items in Dhalwangu belief. These introduced features, however, are only tangentially associated with Macassans, being instead subsumed under Birrinydjii's law. This allows for the interpretation put forward by some Dhalwangu people that they had the sword, the flag, and the anchor before any visitors from Macassar arrived on the scene.

As well, certain performative features of the Gurrumuru songs show a Macassan influence, but they too are ultimately incorporated within existing cosmology; the use of the sword as a ritual item in the *yiki* dance, for instance, is understood to be derived from the pre-existing stingray dance. It is also relevant that there does not appear to be any Indonesian influence on the musical style of the Gurrumuru songs; like other aspects of cultural change, the specific subject matter may be innovative, but its ritual and musical setting was bequeathed by the ancestral beings themselves. We can see, then, that the ideology of changelessness and continuity with the ancestral past is maintained in the ways that the historical period of Macassan visitation has been incorporated within the Birrinydjii cosmology.

**Yuţa Manikay**

*Yuţa manikay*, or “new songs”, have not received a great deal of attention in the Arnhem Land ethnomusicological literature, although Yolngu claim that they have been around for a long time. In Chapter Three and Chapter Four I provided a brief discussion of certain musical and textual aspects of *yuţa manikay*; in this section, I will expand that discussion by examining how these songs, while having innovative features, are firmly based within traditional musical types.

The best existing discussion of *yuţa manikay*, and perhaps the first to recognize it as a distinct category of Yolngu music, comes from the ethnomusicologist Steven Knopoff. Knopoff describes *yuţa manikay* as a kind of song which combines innovative and ancestral song elements, when an individual, inspired by some contemporary event, creates a song about it which
is based metaphorically on an ancestral song subject (Knopoff 1992:144). Earlier references to innovation in Arnhem Land music were not to *yut.a manikay*, but rather to a style of song known as *djatpangarri*. This is a category of “fun” songs which, while making use of traditional instrumentation, has no basis in ancestral precedent, referring instead to contemporary events with no metaphorical connection to song subjects already existing in the musical repertoire. *Yu’ta manikay*, in contrast, must be based on a song subject which already exists in one of the song series.

The examples of *djatpangarri* given by Elkin in *Arnhem Land Music* are clearly not related to ancestral song subjects (Elkin and Jones 1956:87-97). Jones notes that the musical structure of *djatpangarri* consists of two melody sections followed each time by a short section with a different beat (ibid.:207), which seems superficially similar to the musical structure of *yu’ta manikay*, but the subject matter distinguishes between the two styles very clearly. Richard Waterman also notes the existence of “fun” songs at Yirrkala which have no relation to ritual music (Waterman 1955:44), which surely is a reference to *djatpangarri*. Interestingly, Waterman makes a comment, relevant to the study of *yu’ta manikay*, that “the implied idea that all possible songs exist and have only to be found is in complete harmony with Aboriginal attitudes in general toward time and innovation” (ibid.:41, ff. 1). In a later paper, however, Waterman and Waterman make a distinction between the *djatpangarri* songs invented by young men, and another class of “new ceremonial dances and songs” dreamt by older individuals and incorporated into ritual performance (Waterman and Waterman 1970:107-8). This later category of songs fits the characteristics of *yu’ta manikay*, and is perhaps the earliest reference to this song version.

As I wrote in Chapter Three in the section on “song versions”, the *yu’ta* is characterized by a number of features: a musical structure which includes two “chorus” sections (as opposed to one in a *yindi* song); song texts which alternate the “traditional” words of the song subject with the innovative references in the “chorus” section; and musical features such as unison singing, unusual length, and a wide range of clapstick rhythms. In Chapter Four, in the section on “analogical tropes”, I discussed how the innovative textual materials in the *yu’ta manikay* refer to emotional events in everyday life which can be metaphorically related to ancestral song subjects. These discussions have already suggested some of the ways in which singers introduce innovations into ritual musical performance while maintaining an ideology of changelessness. Indeed, Dha’lwangu singers are sometimes at pains to point out that *yu’ta manikay* do not
represent any breach with traditional belief, but have really always been present. Bangana once said of *yuṯa manikay*:

...that doesn't mean that it's new...I mean, the song's been there...it's been there for a long time...*[yuṯa manikay* don't] change the whole picture...whatever you make up, it still talks about that...song, that has been there for a long time, and the words are still there.

With this in mind, I will now provide a comparison of *yuṯa manikay* and the ancestral songs from which they are derived in order to demonstrate both the continuities and the differences.

One excellent example of a *yuṯa manikay* which I recorded in November 1996 is taken from a performance of the Garrapara song series, which describes ancestral events which took place in the area around Blue Mud Bay. The relevant cosmology is primarily concerned with a particular kind of salt water in the ocean at Blue Mud Bay, called *Mungurru*, the different things which exist in the water, and the activities of Dhaḏwangu ancestors in the water and on the adjacent beach at Garrapara itself. One important song subject from the Garrapara song series is called *naku*, or canoe, and it describes Dhaḏwangu ancestors paddling their canoes through the waves and toward Garrapara. A typical song text for *naku* is:

*piritj bititj nangundha guurramarrala*
*milmilgun gayung gayunggi marrala*
*milmilgun niningu naku Guḏoguda*

paddling/ paddling/ paddling/ paddling/ paddle (noun)
shining/ paddling/ paddling/ paddle (noun)
shining/ proper/ canoe/ people of Garrapara

For the most part, song texts alternate different terms for the verb “to paddle” and the noun “paddle”, as well as mentioning the canoe itself and the Dhaḏwangu country at Garrapara. These words and phrases must form the basis for any *yuṯa manikay* based on the canoe song.

Some years ago, Burumbirr Wunungmurra was driving along the old road from Gapuwiyak to the Marrangu outstation at Raymangirr with two of his sisters, when his vehicle was involved in an accident. The other vehicle was driven by Balaman Dhamarranydji, a man who Burumbirr calls by the kinship
term *dhumun.gurr* (sometimes glossed as “cousin”); Balaman was accompanied by his daughters, who Burumbirr calls by the kinship term *waku*. Although nobody was seriously injured, the event was an emotional one which left a lasting impression on Burumbirr. As a response to this accident, Burumbirr decided to invent a *yuta manikay*, which he based on the canoe song. The metaphorical connection between the contemporary event and the ancestral subject is that both a canoe and an automobile carry passengers; also, canoes were traditionally named by their owners in previous generations, just as automobiles are by contemporary Yolngu. The song texts for the *yuta* version of the canoe song are as follows; for clarity, I have underlined the distinctive “chorus” sections:

```
oh ngarra nhungu birkayun bamannguy accidentbuy yidakiwangi
nangundha gurrma nangundha gurrma gayung gayunggi
marrala milmilgun marrala nhirrar
gungubunmirr natjimmirr wuluwumirr nguy dharpungal
Mungurru Lirrinmatji Gawululnga
ya waku wurru ya yapa manda ya dhumun.gurr nhathin ngalimurrung naku
gayung gayunggi marrala milmilgun
gayung gayung gayunggi
ya waku wurru ya yapa manda ya dhumun.gurr nhathin ngalimurrung naku
```

It can be seen that the song text for the non-“chorus” sections is essentially the same as the song text for the “regular” version of the canoe song: for the most part, it consists of variations on “to paddle” and the noun “paddle”, and the references to *Lirrinmatji* and *Gawululnga* (both alternate names for *Mungurru*)
and to the clouds above the ocean may also be used in “regular” versions of the song. The innovative content which refers to the car accident occurs only in the unison “chorus” sections of the song, and even then this innovative content is elliptical, consisting mostly of kinship terms and the word “ya”, which is an expression of worry frequently employed in yuta manikay. We can see that the innovative elements of the yuta manikay are circumscribed within a textually and musically distinct portion of the song, which otherwise is the same as the “regular” version.

Another good example of a yuta manikay is the song subject baybinnga, or saratoga, which is performed in the Girriti song series of the Dhalwangu country at Gāngan. Baybinnga is one of a number of song subjects in the series which describes fish and other animals swimming in the waters of the river at Gāngan looking for food. This is very important in Dhalwangu cosmology, as the ancestral beings Barama and Lany’tjung are said to have invented a fishtrap which they gave to Dhalwangu people to use. In the “regular” version of the song, a typical song text might be:

baybinnga marrtji rulangun
nyala warrmkany nyala wirranngu rulanggun marrtji guya
gumurrngur ngarayuwa marrangur murrngindjangala dhanganbirr
waluyunangur

saratoga/ swimming/ swimming
saratoga/ saratoga/ saratoga/ swimming slowly/
swimming/ fish
at the front/ fishtrap/ amongst/ bush tucker/ bush tucker/ at the bush tucker

A yuta version of this song was invented by Waúmerri Wunungmurra, father of the contemporary Dhalwangu singer Mulyun Wunungmurra. He was living at the Dhalwangu outstation of Gāngan, and at that time people had to wash their clothing in the river because of poor plumbing in the community. One day, he went down to the river to see many saratoga floating dead on the surface, poisoned by detergents. Waúmerri felt sorry for the saratoga (a common impetus for yuta manikay as discussed in Chapter Four), and invented a yuta manikay based on the saratoga song from the Girriti song series:
warrkmany warrkmany nyala warrkmany
guya nyala rambarbarr bangulu

gudharrwu rulangurrrun guya marrangur waluyuna dhanganbirr
rawurawungur

**Chapter Eight**
The Musical Articulation of Change

**saratoga**/ **saratoga**/ **saratoga**/ **saratoga**
fish/ **saratoga**/ **saratoga**/ **saratoga**
slowly swimming/ slowly/ fish/ amongst/ bush tucker/ bush tucker/
bush tucker

**ya ya ya ya**/ **saratoga**/ **saratoga**/ **saratoga**/ swimming slowly/
swimming/ in the waters/ **Gangar**
saratoga/ saratoga/ saratoga/ saratoga
amongst/ bush tucker/ bush tucker/ heading/ for the fishtrap/
saratoga

**ya ya ya ya**/ **saratoga**/ **saratoga**/ **saratoga**/ swimming slowly/
swimming/ at the front/ at the fishtrap/ at the fishtrap

Once again, one can see that the non-“chorus” sections use song texts which are
the same as those in the “regular” version of saratoga. The reference to
contemporary events occurs only in the “chorus”, and in this case the only
thing distinguishing it as a **yuṭa manikay** is the word “ya” and the fact that it is
sung in unison.

In the song version known as **yuṭa manikay**, then, innovation is managed
in very particular ways. First and foremost, contemporary events which are to
be the inspiration for **yuṭa manikay** must be metaphorically connected to an
existing ancestral song subject. Second, the song texts for a **yuṭa manikay** must be
the same as those for the “regular” version of the song subject, with the
exception of two “chorus” sections. Third, the innovative content of the
“chorus” sections is stylistically marked by unison singing. In these ways,
Dhalwangu singers are able to incorporate change within ancestrally-defined song repertoires.

Conclusions

Yolngu people have undergone widespread and penetrating social and cultural change; this dates back at least to the early 18th century, and has been most intense since the mission era began in the 1920s. Like all Aboriginal people, Yolngu have had to make significant adaptations in order to maintain the vibrant and strong culture which is evident today. They have done this through a variety of processes which incorporate innovation within an ideology of continuity with the ancestral past.

It would be a mistake to make the assumption that cultural change is somehow a new thing. No culture exists in a vacuum, static and unchanging for long periods of time, although that is the stereotype of Aboriginal culture which is sometimes put forward. The view adopted in this dissertation is that social action, while guided by social structures, may also have the reciprocal effect of altering those structures, subtly producing incremental change. In this sense, then, Yolngu are no different from any other culture in that change is inevitable. What distinguishes one culture from another are the processes whereby change is dealt with, and in this sense Yolngu have developed some remarkable solutions.

For Dhalwangu people, and for all Yolngu, the world itself and all elements of culture were created during the wangarr ancestral era, when powerful ancestral beings gave the earth its form, and created different groups, languages, rituals, flora and fauna, and everything else in the universe. An ideology of changelessness and continuity with this ancestral past forms the foundation for the ways in which Dhalwangu people have incorporated a variety of innovations within their worldview. New things are not completely

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7 It must be emphasized that, unlike djatpangari or “fun” songs, yuta manikay are sanctioned by their inclusion in ritual performance, although it should also be noted that the most sacred song subjects do not have yuta versions. Yuta manikay are also sanctioned by reference to the ancestral past, as singers often remark that the songs have always been there, waiting to be discovered. Additionally, yuta manikay are sanctioned by reference to the more recent past, as the most common justification given for their creation is that “the old people” of previous generations invented yuta manikay, and thereby set a precedent which their descendants follow; in fact, many of these songs are still performed today, classified as “old-fashioned” yuta manikay.
new, because everything has its origins in the ancestral past; "new" things have
only recently been discovered from within the world created by the wangarr.

It is in this way that Dhalwangu people came to terms with the historical
period of Macassan contact. When the Macassans arrived in search of trepang,
they brought with them a wealth of new material culture, as well as language
and social customs. These things became very valuable to the Yolngu who were
in partnership with the Macassans, and the entire period became mythologized
under the auspices of the Yolngu ancestral being Birrinydji. In some accounts
Birrinydji was the recipient of these "gifts" from the Macassans, and in others
Birrinydji had already created them for Yolngu long before the Macassans
arrived; in either case, Yolngu followed the law of Birrinydji, which includes
the songs and dances that make up the various Gurrumuru song series that are
performed today. The precedent of ancestral creation in the wangarr era was
used to accommodate cultural change and fashion it into Yolngu culture.

The same can be said for the song version known as yuta manikay. These
songs are inspired by contemporary events, but have their true origin in the
ancestral past. Only song subjects which already exist in the Dhalwangu
musical repertoire can have a yuta version, and even then the innovative
features of the song are circumscribed in a variety of musical, textual, and
performative ways. Yuta manikay "have always been there", within the wangarr,
just waiting to be discovered. The ancestral past itself is not static, but is capable
of a variety of innovative manifestations, and it is for this reason that Yolngu
will be able to maintain their thriving culture well into the 21st century and
beyond.
Chapter Nine - Finale: Conclusions

First, I look at the people in the picture. Secondly, I might talk about the wiinga, where this event is taking place. Thirdly, I might talk about the sounds of [dhamburru, the drum], going into the jungle where Birrinydj is. And to me, I’ve sang about the people, I’ve sang about the wiinga, now to make it end, that dhamburru, I make the voice go away. By then, to me, that picture is now gone, the echoes are gone, so to me that’s the end of dhamburru.

- Bangana Wunungmurra

This dissertation is premised on the idea of a musical anthropology, that is, on the idea that musical structures and performances are an integral part of social and cultural reproduction, that social life is itself musical and that it is created and re-created through musical performance. For anthropologists concerned with expressive culture, this is an important idea, as it allows us to move beyond barren ideas of music “expressing” other aspects of social life, and toward the more fertile ground that music is constitutive of social life. In Why Suya Sing, Anthony Seeger writes:

Ceremonies are not simply strict obedience to a set of rules. Ceremonies and music are performed by conscious subjects who are creating something that is at once a re-creation and a new creation under unique circumstances....Their singing was a part of the creation of their society and their cosmos. To a certain extent singing positioned each person in relationship to those. Suya musical performance was a ‘structuration’ (a creation of the structures) of sound, place, time, person, and meaning in particular circumstances. A new song was new but shared an old structure. An old ceremony, performed by men acting according to set patterns, was also somewhat new because it was never performed exactly the same way twice (Seeger 1987:85).

The same could be said for Dhalwangu ceremonies and Dhalwangu songs. The sheer ubiquity of musical performance, accompanying every aspect of ritual life, ensures that song is a major element in the interpretation, understanding, and reproduction of cosmology. Ritual relations between individuals and groups, questions of who sings with whom, are essential to the establishment and the re-establishment of social relations. The central importance of country in Dhalwangu identity, especially in an era when many people live “in town”,

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is maintained and enhanced through the practice of singing about country. In a multiplicity of ways, Dhalwangu people create themselves through music.

In this concluding chapter, then, I will bring together the various strands of my argument in order to assess what sort of picture of Dhalwangu culture has been created. I will not only summarize the different chapters, underscore their interconnections, and demonstrate how they contribute to the existing literature on Yolngu culture, but also suggest how the approach I have adopted here may suggest new lines of enquiry for the future. I begin with a discussion of the “First Movement” of the dissertation, the study of Dhalwangu manikay.

Dhalwangu Manikay As “Un Fait Musical Total”

Although for heuristic reasons I have examined Dhalwangu manikay in three separate chapters on musical features, textual features, and performative features, in Dhalwangu ritual performance they form a complex but unified whole. Indeed, one of the great weaknesses of the early study of indigenous musics, as I pointed out in Chapter One, was an academic division of labour which left much of the textual analysis to anthropologists, nearly all of the musical analysis to ethnomusicologists, and performative analysis was somewhat split between the two, depending on the particular interests of individual scholars. Only in the last two decades have we moved significantly beyond these limitations in order to produce more holistic works, although the old disciplinary boundaries still emerge from time to time. In the study of manikay, it is essential to consider music, text, and performance as integral parts of a single musical genre, and even then there are significant gaps such as my omission of artistic designs, dance, and oral narrative. For Dhalwangu, each of these are elements of madayin, or sacred ancestral heritage, each has its origin in the wangarr creative era, and each is an important part of the Dhalwangu cosmos. I have never heard of a Yolngu person ranking any one as being more important than the others; rather, different individuals have different strengths. Some people have clear voices which carry well; others are very capable in selecting appropriate words and phrases and singing an apt description of a place; some people are widely recognized as excellent dancers; others are proficient at running a ceremony “properly”. Each of these things, though, is equally an expression of the essence of the ancestors.
Despite the importance of a holistic approach, however, it is necessary to examine individual elements of *manikay* in great detail in order to arrive at a complete understanding. In this regard, music, text, and performance are workable divisions, each of which has a number of analytical subdivisions. In the analysis of musical features taken up in Chapter Three, structure is perhaps the most fundamental thing to understand, the ways in which *manikay* are organized. The Djalwangu musical repertoire, of a total of eighteen individual song series relating to five different areas of country, is made up of dozens of song subjects reflecting the cosmologies of these different places. Each song subject can be performed in a number of different ways, which can be distinguished by song texts or performative features, but which are most clearly marked by their distinctive rhythmic settings. I refer to this under-recognized aspect of Yolngu music by the term "song version", and I believe that it represents an important advance in our understanding of *manikay* as a genre. Each individual performance of a song subject, regardless of version, is known as a song item. Although an understanding of musical structure is a necessary part of the study of Djalwangu *manikay*, we should not assume that this structure is inflexible; like so many aspects of Yolngu culture, it is inherently flexible and subject to negotiation by performers, who may have somewhat different ideas about what the structure should be.

Melodic features of Djalwangu *manikay* are also important, and not only because of the academic debate over existence of so-called "clan-owned tunes" discussed in detail in Chapter Six; in Chapter Three, I put this debate to one side and attempted simply to describe the melodic patterns of Djalwangu song. What was discovered was a remarkable consistency from performance to performance, especially given the lack of fixed-pitch instrumentation to help a singer "find the tune". Although the absolute pitches may vary considerably, even within the same performance, the intervals between pitches in the four Djalwangu melodic lines had a very small range of variation, well within what can be expected in an oral tradition. Whether or not these melodic lines could be correlated with elements of social structure, however, was not taken up until the discussion of the musical articulation of sociality in Chapter Six.

The third main area of analysis in Chapter Three was the range of recognizable clapstick patterns used by Djalwangu singers to accompany their performances, which is of course closely related to the notion of song versions. Given the fact that *bulnha* and *yindi* song versions always use the same clapstick patterns, and that the *yuta* version uses such a bewildering variety, I
concentrated my discussion on those clapstick patterns referred to by DhaJwangu singers as "regular", *bantja*, *gumurr wanggany*, *gumurr marrma*, and *yothu*. My analysis revealed a total of 26 distinctive recurring clapstick patterns which, although resisting a rigid classification, nevertheless point to some broad patterns in the ways that rhythms are used in song.

The musical analysis undertaken in Chapter Three underscores the importance of combining Western musicological techniques with an appreciation of what one might call a DhaJwangu "folk musicology", as both are necessary for a complete understanding of DhaJwangu *manikay*. Western musicological analysis alone may have revealed the 26 distinctive clapstick patterns, but may have arrived at a completely different (and possibly misleading) classificatory scheme. It was only when I combined that analysis with extensive discussions with DhaJwangu musicians about the underlying principles of their own system of naming clapstick patterns, along with a careful observation of the ritual contexts in which they were used, that a different kind of classification began to emerge. Western musicological analysis helped me to make sense of DhaJwangu categories, but it was DhaJwangu musicology which allowed my analysis to be relevant to the totality of DhaJwangu ritual performance. The same holds true for my melodic analyses, which are only useful to a musical anthropology if they can be made to answer social questions.

Song textual analysis has long been the refuge of anthropologists interested in music, but previous analyses of Australian Aboriginal songs have lacked a comprehensive analytical framework. Even the excellent work of Strehlow (1971) and Clunies Ross (1978) provided only a partial picture of the full range of tropes available to Aboriginal singers. In my own poetic analysis of DhaJwangu song texts in Chapter Four, I have availed myself of the poetics of Paul Friedrich, in particular his notion of "polytropcy". Polytropy is a comprehensive yet flexible approach to poetic analysis, providing five broad and overlapping categories through which to study the wealth of tropes in DhaJwangu song. Beyond the fact that polytropy allows us to appreciate a range of tropes which have not previously been well-recognized or well-understood, it also allows us to see that a great many tropes satisfy the criteria of more than one category, resulting in a rich poetic tradition.

Finally, the analysis of performative features in Chapter Five fleshes out the ritual context in which music and text are created. While examining a number of familiar features of performance, such as the roles of different
individuals involved in ritual performances, the “text” of a ritual in the sense of different stages and activities, and the overarching ritual, social, and political context, I have also focused on dynamic and processual features such as emergence, the fact that ritual performance unfolds through time as the result of negotiation and interaction. This is particularly important in the study of Yolngu ritual, where different groups have rights in a single body of cosmology and must mediate between their slightly differing interpretations in order to achieve a common goal. I concluded Chapter Five with comments on the ontological significance of ritual performance, to the effect that a great deal of the Dha\ljwangu understanding of their world is accomplished through performance, combining as it does fundamental ideas about cosmology, country, and sociality.

These three chapters, constituting the “First Movement” of this dissertation, are a necessary first step in the development of a Dha\ljwangu musical anthropology. Before one can fully appreciate how Dha\ljwangu society is constituted through musical structure and performance, one must first understand the genre of manikay itself, in all of its melodic, rhythmic, poetic, and performative complexity. Once an understanding of that musical tradition is gained, one can then proceed to an examination of Dha\ljwangu society itself to examine how music contributes to its reproduction.

**Dha\ljwangu Sociality Revisited**

Such an examination of Dha\ljwangu society must begin, as I did in Chapter Two, with a consideration of the vexed issues of Yolngu sociality. Essentially, the issues concern the identity of the fundamental unit of Yolngu social analysis, and the best way to conceptualize Yolngu social organization. The still-dominant view that Yolngu society is made up of patrilineal “clans”, represented by Morphy (1988, 1991, 1997) and Williams (1986, 1999) has been challenged by a view which is critical of the “clan” concept for a variety of reasons, represented by Keen (1994, 1995, 2000). The proponents of the “clan” view argue that Yolngu talk and act in terms of named groups of people with a set of characteristics, such as patrilineality, land ownership, and a unique set of *madayin*, that allow them to be classified as “clans”. Keen’s argument against the concept of the “clan” is that anthropological and indigenous models of sociality are based on different kinds of tropes, and that different named
Yolngu groups are too heterogeneous in organization and flexible in composition to represent a single analytical type.

My own view, based on practice and structuration theories, is an attempt to shift the emphasis from group membership to multiple and overlapping identities, and in the process retain some of the most important features of the two rival models. I can agree with proponents of the “clan” model that Yolngu discourse and action involves named groups, which have been identified as “clans”; I believe that such named groups, which I refer to as bipurru, are “groups in the mind”, forming a conceptual social structure which guides social action. However, I agree with Keen that such named groups are not instances of a single type and are heterogeneous in composition. Different individuals have different ideas about exactly how these named groups are constituted and how they are related to other named groups, and it is only through negotiated social action that “groups on the ground”, which I refer to by the term “group”, actually come into being. These groups are no doubt influenced by the prevailing ideas about sociality, especially as understood by Yolngu elders, but can be subtly altered over time in such a way as to change the conceptual structure itself. Yolngu sociality does not exist in the conceptual structure or in social action alone, but in the dynamic interaction between the two.

Furthermore, I believe that ritual musical performance plays an important role in this interaction. During times of ritual musical performance, Dhalwangu people must contemplate their own understanding of the conceptual structure: precisely who is “Dhalwangu”, and how do they relate to other named groups who are to participate in a given ritual? And how is this understanding of Dhalwangu sociality negotiated and enacted through the performances which follow? Music provides an excellent vantage point from which to view these issues, because not only does the ritual performance of manikay involve actual groups of people negotiating their shared and differential identities in a reasonably limited context, but it is also closely bound up with ideas about cosmology, connections to country, and the ownership of madayin including songs, dances, painted designs, and sacred objects, and involves the musical and textual articulation of these identities in a way which may either reinforce or alter existing ideas of sociality itself. As Thomas Turino has written, the concept of habitus not only demonstrates how music is socially structured, but also “how society is partially musically structured since musical activity comprises one important public domain through which the internal dispositions are externalized” (Turino 1990:401).
Dhalwangu Manikay As “Un Fait Social Total”

With this approach to Dhalwangu sociality in mind, along with a detailed understanding of Dhalwangu manikay as a musical tradition, it remained in the “Second Movement” of this dissertation to attempt an exploration of the ways in which Dhalwangu culture is not only expressed through musical structure and performance, but also constituted by it. To a certain extent, this had already begun, as the chapters of the “First Movement” provided a close study of the musical articulation of ritual and cosmology. The “Second Movement” of the dissertation advanced the project of a musical anthropology even further, looking at the musical articulation of sociality, of place, and of change.

Chapter Six, on the musical articulation of sociality, develops the view of Dhalwangu sociality advanced in Chapter Two. If it is the case that Dhalwangu people have multiple and overlapping identities, it is necessary to my argument to demonstrate how musical performance provides the forum for the enactment of those identities. I demonstrated how the “Dhalwangu” identity is indeed the predominant one in a number of ritual musical contexts. Most of the performances which I recorded involved a majority of Dhalwangu singers, many of the song textual references were to Dhalwangu people and to Dhalwangu country, and the structure of different song series is based on ancestral events at particular Dhalwangu places. Another important feature, also examined in Chapter Three, are melodies which are identified as the ritual property of Dhalwangu people as opposed to other Yirritja bapurrus. Not only do Dhalwangu singers use a set of melodies which are remarkably consistent, but they are demonstrably different from the melodies used by other Yirritja people. Most other Yirritja melodies use a set of intervals between notes which are different from the four sets of intervals used by Dhalwangu, and even in those cases where the intervals are the same, they are set to different rhythmic patterns. So, there are strong musical grounds for the existence of a well-defined Dhalwangu identity.

Additionally, however, I also explored the ways in which Dhalwangu singers used music in the expression and constitution of other identities as well. One example is a singer’s identity as a Yirritja person, which is articulated through song textual references as well as ritual action. Dhalwangu people also share rights in madayin with other Yirritja people connected through different cosmologies, forming what I have called “extended” bapurrus. Like less
“extended” biipurru, these larger groups exist as the result of an interaction between heterogeneous conceptual structures of how they are constituted and social action in which those conceptual structures are negotiated and enacted. Musical performance plays an important role in this process, as Dhalwangu singers cooperate with Munyuku, Madarrpa, Gumatj, Warramiri, Wan.gurri, Birrkili, or other Yirritja people in ritual contexts. Depending on the particular cosmology in question, Dhalwangu singers interact with these various others, sometimes alternating songs in performance, sometimes performing as a single group, and sometimes performing separately but with a single ritual goal in mind. These “extended” biipurru are also frequently the subject of song textual references, as Dhalwangu singers refer to the country of other Yirritja people connected through cosmology, and may also be articulated through the practice of dhakaygulkmaran, in which the distinctive melodies of one biipurru are “borrowed” and used in performance by others related through the relevant cosmology. Finally, Dhalwangu singers also articulate less inclusive identities through text, music, and performance, such as their identity as “salt water” or “fresh water” Dhalwangu, their identity as Wunungmurra or Gumanas, or their identities derived from descent from particular father’s fathers, mothers, or mother’s mothers. Musical structures and performances demonstrate clearly that identities are not one, but many, and that Yolngu sociality is best understood in terms of these multiple and overlapping identities rather than membership in bounded groups.

A centrally important aspect of Dhalwangu social identity, the connection to country, was examined in Chapter Seven. All of Dhalwangu cosmology is predicated upon the importance of particular places and the ancestral activities which took place there during the wangarr era. These were the places where the ancestral beings formed the landscape, created the first human groups, and bestowed upon them their languages, songs, ceremonies, and customs. These places are the source of sacred waters which were used by the ancestral beings in the creation of the rangga sacred objects which are essential to Yolngu ritual life. Yolngu believe that a person’s spirit comes from their country, and that upon death it returns there. Given the importance of country, then, the ways in which Dhalwangu people use music as a means of understanding and maintaining country is significant.

First and foremost, Dhalwangu manikay are organized most fundamentally in terms of country: each song series describes ancestral activities in particular places, and most series are referred to by place names,
such that the question “where do we sing today?” is frequently heard at the beginning of a performance. Song texts make frequent use of references to place, which can either be direct (such as the use of a place name) or indirect (such as an elliptical reference to an ancestral being known to be associated with a particular place). Singers most frequently mention their own country, but may also make references to the countries of other Yirritja people who form the “extended” bāpurru for the cosmology in question. It cannot be overstated that, for Dhalwangu singers, the single most important aesthetic criterion on which a performance is judged is how skillfully the singer “paints a picture” or “tells the story” of a place.

It is also important to reiterate the ways in which musical performances contribute to the understanding of ancestral places which are not regularly visited. Although Gāngan and Gurrumuru have permanent populations living on well-established outstations, most Dhalwangu people live in the towns of Gapuwiyak, Yirrkala, or Galiwin’ku, and may visit their country infrequently. Even less familiar to most Dhalwangu people are their countries at Balambala and Garrapara, which are currently uninhabited and inaccessible. Most Dhalwangu people have only rarely if ever seen these places, and so the understanding of them that they gain through musical performance takes on added significance. Geographical countries are certainly important, but “countries of the mind” form an integral part of Dhalwangu identity.

A third important aspect of Dhalwangu culture, examined in Chapter Eight, is the response to widespread social and cultural change. Yolngu people have been dealing with introduced culture on a significant scale for three hundred years, since traders and fishermen from Macassar began to visit the shores of Arnhem Land in search of trepang. The official end to the trepang trade in the region coincided closely with the beginning of the mission era in the 1920s, which introduced Christianity and encouraged a move off traditional country and onto mission stations. Dealings with Japanese pearlers and white policemen, the Second World War, the fight for land rights, and the onset of popular culture have all made their presence felt on Yolngu people, but in this environment of great change their culture continues to thrive. This has been the case because innovation, rather than wiping out or replacing the existing culture, has been incorporated within an ideology of changelessness and continuity with the ancestral past. In this dynamic process, music has played a significant role.
The period of Macassan contact, for instance, was incorporated within beliefs about Birrinydji, a powerful DhaJwangu ancestor, and all Macassan influences are said to come under his “law”. Most of the song series which concern the DhaJwangu country at Gurrumuru include song subjects which reflect the influence of Macassan contact: *yiki*, the knife; *manydjarrka*, the cloth; *dhamburru*, the drum; and *garrurru*, the flag. These songs contain references to the Macassans, but primarily describe how DhaJwangu ancestors used these things under the leadership of Birrinydji. This mythologization of history is part of a complex process whereby innovative things and ideas are believed to have their origins in the *wangarr* creative era, and therefore to have “always been there”, waiting to be discovered. Another example of this is the *yuta manikay*, a song version in which contemporary events are metaphorically linked to ancestral song subjects, producing a kind of song that is musically and poetically distinctive, and yet circumscribed within pre-existing musical forms. Many other examples of the ways in which Yolngu incorporate innovations within ancestral ideology could be offered: Yolngu responses to Christianity, in which beliefs in Biblical figures and ancestral beings are combined, are an obvious example, as is the particular form of musical innovation practised by the Yolngu rock band Yothu Yindi. The Birrinydji songs and the *yuta manikay* demonstrate two prominent ways in which the DhaJwangu people of Gapuwiyak have come to terms with social and cultural change using musical practice.

*Evaluating A Yolngu Musical Anthropology*

How well, then, does the analytical approach known as musical anthropology serve the purpose of studying DhaJwangu culture? What insights are gained into aspects of DhaJwangu culture, including ritual, cosmology, sociality, connections to country, and social change, through a detailed examination of musical structures and performances? What contribution is made to the long ethnographic tradition of northeast Arnhem Land studies?

I might begin to answer these questions by stating that music is important to DhaJwangu people. In Gapuwiyak, DhaJwangu musicians and dancers are prolific and virtuosic, not only performing frequently in ritual contexts, but outside of them as well. To become a respected singer is something to which all DhaJwangu men aspire, as leaders in ritual musical
performance are considered to be leaders in a wider sense as well. Significant public events are marked by singing and dance, and tape recordings of highly regarded singers are valuable commodities which are exchanged within and between communities. This was brought home to me very strongly on a return visit to Gapuwiyak in June of 1999. I was visiting Burumbirr Wunungmurra, his brothers Multhangdul and Raywula, and other members of his family, when I heard a recording of he and Bangana that I had recorded 2 1/2 years before. When I asked him if he had copied the cassette from the recordings which I had returned to Gapuwiyak some months previously, he responded that we were in fact listening to a radio broadcast from the station at Yirrkala, and that the popularity of the recording had sent copies of it far and wide. Music, then, is not simply a recreational activity or a ritual duty; it is an essential part of Dhalwangu life and Dhalwangu identity.

Another point to be made is that the study of music may be as good a way to understand certain aspects of Yolngu culture as any other approach. Yolngu social organization has been the subject of anthropological speculation for generations, and has included such luminaries as Claude Lévi-Strauss, Edmund Leach, and John Barnes; a great deal of the debate revolved around kinship terms and marriage patterns. It seems to me, however, that the question of “who sings with whom, and why?” is as fundamental to an understanding of Yolngu sociality as “who marries whom, and why?”, and is perhaps more interesting as well. Music is as appropriate as marriage because both are concerned with the articulation through social action of ideas concerning identity, relatedness, and social interaction, the understanding of which can be approached in a number of legitimate ways.

The same might be said for the study of land tenure and connections to country. This subject has a long and distinguished history in Australian Aboriginal ethnography, and from Radcliffe-Brown to Hiatt and beyond into the Native Title era, it has concentrated on patterns of land use, resource exploitation, and habitation. These objectives remain important today, but the fact remains that, for many Yolngu, resources are available from the local shop and habitation is in one of five towns of a thousand people or more. In this contemporary context, Yolngu still feel a strong connection to their ancestral country, but this connection is maintained somewhat less through travels to countries on the ground and somewhat more through travels to “countries of the mind”, a process which is closely connected to ritual musical performance in which the land is described and evoked through song. The notion of musical
anthropology, then, has a great deal to offer to the ethnography of northeast Arnhem Land.

* * *

The title of this dissertation, and the epigraph to this chapter from which it is derived, is as much about looking forward as it is about looking back. Bangana and I were discussing various poetic processes involved in the performance of a song series, specifically the ways in which a singer moves from one song subject to another. Taking the *dhamburru* (drum) song as an example, Bangana explained that singing a song subject is like telling a story, and that a necessary step before continuing on to the next song subject is drawing that story to a proper conclusion that anticipates the next song. Contemplating “when the echoes are gone” is not only a way of thinking about what has come and gone, but also about what is coming in the future. This is an apt metaphor for the ways in which Dhalwangu people are dealing with the contemporary world and an uncertain future while at the same time looking for inspiration in the ancestral past. If the vitality of the current generation of Dhalwangu singers is any guide, future changes will be handled as capably as earlier ones. As Yolngu have continued to define and redefine their place in the world throughout the 20th century, music has remained an important means of articulating their indomitable identity and of maintaining their relationships with the ancestral beings themselves. As we enter the 21st century, I have no doubt that music will continue to play a vital role in the constitution of Yolngu identity, and the study of that music will continue to contribute significantly to our understanding of Yolngu society.

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Appendix A
Glossary

balanda  white person
banjia  name given to that song version which “finishes off” a given song subject, often incorporating a clapstick pattern consisting of single beats and rests or “paired doubles”; literal meaning is “arm”
bapurrpu  a group of people united by a number of structural features such as patrilineality and shared ownership of country and madayin; often referred to in the literature as a “clan”; also a colloquial term for a funeral
Barama  a Dhalwangu ancestral being who created Dhalwangu language and culture and gave form to the country at Gangan
bilma  clapsticks; may also refer generically to clapstick patterns
Birrinydji  a Dhalwangu ancestral being who initiated aspects of Dhalwangu culture at Gurrumuru
bulnha  name given to that song version which consists of a slow clapstick pattern and a non-metrical relationship between voice and instrumentation; literal meaning is “slow”
bunggul  dance
bunggulmirr  category of public songs which include a danced accompaniment
chorus  a term used by Dhalwangu musicians to indicate a section of a song sung in unison with a fixed text; one chorus features in the yindi song version, while two choruses feature in the yuta song version
dalkarra  a Yirritja-moiety ritual expert
dhakaygulkmaram  the practice of “borrowing” the distinctive melodic line of another bapurrpu which also has rights in the song series being performed; literal meaning is dhakay (taste) - gulk (cut) - maram (will)
dhapi  a public circumcision initiation ritual; may also refer to the initiand in such a ritual; literal meaning is “foreskin”
Dhuwa  
one of the two patrilineal moieties into which everything in the universe is divided

djatpangarri  
a category of “fun” songs, inspired by contemporary events but not sanctioned by ritual performance

djirrikay  
a Dhuwa-moiety ritual expert

djunggai  
a category of “managers” who have certain rights and responsibilities toward their mother’s ma4.ayin

“extended”  
a number of bâpurru of the same moiety who share rights in a particular body of cosmology

bâpurru  
a category of public rituals which include funerals and dhapi circumcision initiations

garma  
Gularri

gumurr marrma  
name given to that song version which comes second in a musical performance with danced accompaniment; literal meaning is “chest two”

gumurr wanggany  
name given to that song version which comes first in a musical performance with danced accompaniment; literal meaning is “chest one”

gutharra  
daughter’s children (woman speaking) or sister’s daughter’s children (man speaking)

gutharrabulu  
all people who are the gutharra of a particular person or group

Lany’tjung  
a Dhalwangu ancestral being who helped to create Dhalwangu language and culture and gave form to the country at Gangan

likan  
a category of sacred names which refer both to people and to the places with which they are associated; literal meaning is “elbow”

liya  
a term used to refer to a melodic line; literal meaning is “head”

Macassan  
term referring to those people who travelled from Ujung Pandang (Macassar) in south Sulawesi to northern Australia during the trepang trade between the early 1700s and early 1900s
_madayin_ a group’s ancestral heritage, including songs, dances, artistic designs, and sacred objects

_mala_ a group of anything, including people

_manikay_ a genre of public ritual songs, accompanied by clapsticks and didjeridu; may also be used generically to refer to song subjects and song series

_mārī_ mother’s mother or mother’s mother’s brother

_māribulu_ all people who are the _mārī_ of a particular person or group

_matha_ language

_mayali_ a word referring to the style of an individual or group; can also mean “meaning”

_melodic line_ a group of notes with a consistent set of intervals between them used in musical performance

_monuk_ salt water

_Mungurru_ name of the sacred waters of Blue Mud Bay, near Garrapara

_ngandi_ mother

_ngandibulu_ all people who are the _ngandi_ of a particular person or group

_ngaraka_ term used to refer to performances of _manikay_ without danced accompaniment; also can mean “bones” and refers to the interior part of a group’s sacred objects

_rangga_ sacred objects, often made of wood or stone and decorated with sacred designs

_raypiny_ fresh water

_ringgitj_ an ancestral design, usually a representation of a place or an ancestral being, made using raised mounds of sand

_rom_ religious “law” or custom
separated doubles  a term which refers to a clapstick rhythm which resembles the first two notes of a set of eighth-note triplets

song item  an individual performance of any song version of a single song subject, generally lasting between 20 and 40 seconds

song series  a complete assemblage of songs which describe ancestral activities and events at particular places

song subject  the specific subject matter of a sequence of songs, which describes a particular ancestral animal, plant, being, or meteorological phenomenon

song version  any of a number of ways of performing the “same” song subject, which may differ according to ritual context or song text but most commonly differ according to rhythmic patterns

waku  children (woman speaking) or sister’s children (man speaking)

wakubulu  all people who are the waku of a particular person or group

wingga  country, place, or camp

wangarr  term referring to both ancestral beings themselves and the creative era during which they gave the earth its form, created the first human beings, and initiated Yolngu language and culture; colloquially known as “Dreamtime” or “Dreaming”

wurrungu  old

yaku  name

yidaki  didjeridu

yindi  name given to that song version which consists of a fast clapstick pattern and a non-metrical relationship between voice and instrumentation; also used to mean “mother”; literal meaning is “big” or “important”

Yirritja  one of the two patrilineal moieties into which everything in the universe is divided
### Appendix A

#### Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yolngu</strong></td>
<td>indigenous inhabitant of northeast Arnhem Land; also used to refer to all Aboriginal people as opposed to white people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>yothu</strong></td>
<td>name given to that song version which is a bantja immediately following a bulnha or yindi song version; also used to mean “child”; literal meaning is “small”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>yuta</strong></td>
<td>name given to that song version in which innovative contemporary material is incorporated within an ancestral song subject; literal meaning is “new”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B
Dhalwangu Song Series and their Song Subjects

Appendix B
Dhalwangu Song Series and their Song Subjects

Girriti (Gangan)

This song series describes ancestral activities at the headwaters of the freshwater creek that flows through Gangan. This water is the source of all spiritual life at Gangan, as the ancestral beings Barama and Lany’fjung used it to create the rangga sacred objects.

1. wangubini (cloud)
2. balgurrk (rain)
3. ngerrk (sulphur-crested cockatoo)
4. mulmu (spear grass)
5. gapu (water)
6. gapu gunbilk (calm water)
7. garkman (frog)
8. bakarra (long-necked tortoise)
9. nortj (algae)
10. watarra (freshwater perch)
11. walgarrambu (oxeye herring)
12. baybinnga (saratoga)
13. ratjuk (barramundi)
14. gunbirrwirr (small fish)
15. wirrilanydji (stork)
16. djamatj (mist, fog, vapour)
17. wurran (diver duck, darter)
18. dakawa (crayfish)
19. ngatha (food)
20. djikay (small bird, robin)
21. gayman (fog, mist)

Dhona (Gangan)

This song series describes Dhalwangu ancestors travelling around the Gangan area peeling paperbark. They use a special stick with a sharp end known as dhona or wapitja.

1. matha (talking)
2. dhona (stick used to peel paperbark)
3. marrtji (walking)
4. barrukala dharpum (peeling the paperbarkbark)
5. marrtji (walking)
6. barrukala (putting the paperbark next to the river)
7. gumurr (making the fishtrap)
8. gapu (water)
9. gapu gunbilk (calm water)
10. garkman (frog)
11. bakarra (long-necked tortoise)
12. nortj (algae)
13. watarra (freshwater perch)
14. walgarrambu (oxeye herring)
15. baybinnga (saratoga)
16. ratjuk (barramundi)
17. gunbirrwirr (small fish)
18. wirrilanydji (stork)
19. djamatj (mist, fog, vapour)
20. wurran (diver duck, darter)
21. dakawa (crayfish)
22. ngatha (food)
23. djikay (small bird, robin)
24. gayman (fog, mist)

**Makarryatjalngumi (Gangan)**

This song series is only used in specific ritual contexts, such as near the end of funerals or dhapi circumcision initiations.

1. malawiwi (cormorant)
2. gapu widiyarr (brackish water)
3. bëpi (Rainbow Serpent)

**Balambala**

This song series is connected cosmologically to Gangan, but is located a short distance to the northwest. It primarily concerns the spirit called Murayana or Ganbulabula and the things he saw during his travels through the forest, and usually features prominently in the later stages of funerals.

1. miny'tji (a painting)
2. mokuy (spirit)
3. dharpa wâri (a small tree)
4. bebik (black-faced cuckoo shrike)
5. yukuwa (yam)
6. bilitj bilitj (red-winged parrot)
7. miŋdung (mollusc)
8. wuranybirr (honeyeater)
9. garanyirrnyirr (cicada)
10. laparr (dove, crested pigeon)
11. biyay (goanna)
12. walarri (whirlwind)
13. garrjambal (big red kangaroo)
14. ngerrk (sulphur-crested cockatoo)
15. wurrup (emu)
16. mokuy milkarri (spirits crying)
17. gulang (blood of the spirits)
18. gayman (fog, mist)
Appendix B
Dhalwangu Song Series and their Song Subjects

Garrapara Nguy Gapu

This song series describes the activities of Dhalwangu ancestors at their country at Garrapara on the shores of Blue Mud Bay. These people paddle their canoes in from the ocean, pull them up on shore, and make a camp.

1. wangubini (cloud)
2. wata madirriny (south wind)
3. gapu (water)
4. dharpaguhunpidi/dharpa gutjulu (hollow log)
5. getkit (seagull)
6. man'tjarr (mangrove leaves)
7. ratjuk (barramundi)
8. gunbirrwirr (fish)
9. gula lay (mangrove seed)
10. naku (canoe)
11. minyga (garfish)
12. makani (jewfish)
13. gomulu (white-necked heron)
14. naku (canoe)
15. daltjiyun (walking)
16. bitj bitj (bird)
17. nhina (sitting)
18. ngerrk (sulphur-crested cockatoo)
19. mokuy milgarri (spirits crying)
20. wangubini (cloud)
21. wata ma dirriny (south wind)

Garrapara Diltjingur

This song series also describes the activities of Dhalwangu ancestors at their country at Garrapara on the shores of Blue Mud Bay. It is essentially the same as Garrapara Nguy Gapu, except that the song subjects are performed in reverse, as the ancestors start on land and move out to sea.

Note: There are three other song series at Garrapara, Mabilarri (spear fighting), Rakurakum (fishing), and Murrutjirr (spirits), which Dhalwangu singers in Gapuwiyak do not perform at the present time, but which they are eager to learn.

Ngulburr Galiwali

This song series concerns Nundhirribala country at Numbulwar, just south of the Yolngu region. Dhalwangu people consider themselves to be custodians of the area, not owners, but have the right to sing the songs. This song series describes people making boomerangs in the wangarr ancestral era.

1. matha (talking)
2. marrtji (walking)
3. nhāmanhama (having a look in the forest)  
4. gulkun (cutting the wood)  
5. nhina (sitting)  
6. rātifn (making the boomerangs)  
7. djānbigny (paint)  
8. guykun (painting the boomerangs)  
9. ganydjarr wirrkayun (testing the boomerangs)  
10. nherran (leaning the boomerangs against a tree)  
11. bāpi (Rainbow Serpent)  
12. gađany (fog)  

or:  
11. gađany (fog)  
12. bāpi (Rainbow Serpent)  

Ngulburr Gara  
This song series also concerns Nundhirribala country at Numbulwar, and describes ancestors making spears. The songs are essentially the same as in Ngulburr Galitwali, except that singers describe spears rather than boomerangs.  

Ngulburr Nguy Gapu  
This song series describes ancestral activities in Nundhirribala country at Numbulwar, and is considered to be very similar to the Dhalwangu Garrapara song series.  
1. matha (talking)  
2. marrtji (walking)  
3. nhina rangingur (sitting on the beach)  
4. liyu’yun (paddling)  
5. man’tjarr (mangrove leaves)  
6. minyga (garfish)  
7. makani (jewfish)  
8. wata mađirriny (south wind)  

Gurrumuru Wāngangur  
This song series describes ancestral activities at Gurrumuru, where Dhalwangu ancestors have established a camp. The songs describe a range of material objects which are related to the ancestral being Birrinydji and the ancestral Macassans.  
1. matha (talking)  
2. yiki (knife)  
3. ngarali (tobacco)  
4. marrtji (walking)
Appendix B
Dhalwangu Song Series and their Song Subjects

Gurrumuru Ritjangur

This song series describes ancestral activities in the jungle near Gurrumuru, which is said to be the home of the ancestral being Birrinydji.

1. ritja (jungle)
2. watjbalnga (wild rooster)
3. mokuy Murrandilnga (spirit)
4. yiki (Birrinydji’s knife)
5. mattjurr (flying fox)
6. murriyil (pigeon)
7. rrundjura (jungle bird)
8. watjbalnga (wild rooster)
9. dirrmala (north wind)

or:

8. djäpäna (clouds)

Gurrumuru Lupdhun

This song series describes Dhalwangu ancestors washing in waterholes near Gurrumuru.

1. matha (talking)
2. bamuniya (billy cans)
3. marrtji (walking)
4. gurruwitpi (bird)
5. gapu nham marrtji (having a look for waterholes)
6. lupdhun (washing)
7. ngarali (tobacco)
8. djäpäna (clouds)
Gurrumuru Minggadhun

This song series describes Dhalwangu ancestors going fishing in the Gurrumuru area.

1. matha (talking)
2. yiki (clearing ground with knives)
3. dhårra (standing up)
4. marrtji (walking)
5. gurruwitpi (bird)
6. rítjawarr (entering the jungle)
7. nhåma (having a look in the jungle)
8. gulkun (cutting the spears)
9. rrundjura (jungle bird)
10. watjbalnga (wild rooster)
11. murrriyil (pigeon)
12. marrtji (walking out of the jungle)
13. nhina (sitting down)
14. råtjun (making the spears)
15. īrramirriyam (putting on the spearhead)
16. marrtji (walking down to the river)
17. nhåma (having a look at the river)
18. dharrwu (standing at the spot)
19. minggadhun (fishing)
20. gapu mambuynga (water)
21. gapu gun. bìlk (calm water)
22. narrpiya (octopus)
23. borruń (sand flies)
24. raki yawulany (bark string)
25. marrtji (walking back)
26. gapu nhåma (looking for waterholes)
27. lupdhun (having a wash)
28. rrundjura (jungle bird)
29. watjbalnga (wild rooster)
30. ĺirrmala (north wind)

or:
28. ngarali (tobacco)
29. djäpana (clouds)

Gurrumuru Mananggan

This song series describes thieves sneaking into the camp at Gurrumuru. It can be performed in two ways. By itself, it is quite short and consists of the following song subjects:

1. mananggan (thief)
2. ngarali (tobacco)
3. djäpana (clouds)
Alternatively, it can be performed in combination with the last half of Gurrumuru Wängangur as follows:

1. mananggan (thief)
2. ngarali (tobacco)
3. dhamburru (drum)
4. djuling (mouth organ)
5. dubulu (cards)

...etc. until the end of Gurrumuru Wängangur.

Gurrumuru Wayin.gu Nhāmanhama

This song series describes Dhalwangu ancestors hunting for birds with rifles around Gurrumuru.

1. matha (talking)
2. marriyang (collecting the rifles)
3. marrtji (walking)
4. wayin nhāma (seeing the birds)
5. marndhirr (stalking the birds)
6. buman (shooting)
7. wayin buṭdhun (birds flying away)
8. nhina (sitting)
9. waṭu (dingo)
10. dirrmala (north wind)

Gurrumuru Marthangay

This song series describes the activities on board the ancestral Macassan ship as it travelled around the Arnhem Land coast from Numbulwar to its destination at Gurrumuru, where it dropped its anchor. There is a great deal of flexibility in the manner in which this song series is performed. All of the things sung about in Gurrumuru Wängangur were also on board the ship (with the exception of the song subject marrtji), and so singers may choose to sing about as many of those song subjects as they like. In between each subject, singers describe the ship sailing before moving on to the next subject.

1. marthangay buwapum (the ship about to sail)
2. marthangay burruwurryun (sailing)
3. matha (talking)
4. marthangay burruwurryun (sailing)
5. yiki (knife)
6. marthangay burruwurryun (sailing)
7. ngarali (tobacco)
8. marthangay burruwurryun (sailing)
9. nhina (sitting)
10. marthangay burruwurryun (sailing)
11. manydjarrka (cloth)
Appendix B
Dhalwangu Song Series and their Song Subjects

12. *marthangay burruwurruyn* (sailing)
13. *yakurr* (sleeping)
14. *marthangay burruwurruyn* (sailing)
15. *wurrulul* (flies)
16. *marthangay burruwurruyn* (sailing)
17. *dhamburru* (drum)
18. *marthangay burruwurruyn* (sailing)

...etc. through as many of the Gurrumuru Wāngangur song subjects as the singers wish, ending the song series with:

n-1. *djalkiri* (anchor)
n. *djāpana* (clouds)

**Gurrumuru Wānga Djāma**

This song series describes Dhalwangu ancestors at Gurrumuru building houses.

1. *matha* (talking)
2. *yiki marram* (getting the knives)
3. *dhārra* (standing)
4. *marrtji* (walking)
5. *gurrwutpi* (bird)
6. *ritja* (jungle)
7. *ritjawarr* (going into the jungle)
8. *nhāmanhama* (having a look in the jungle)
9. *dhārra* (standing around the tree)
10. *gulkun* (cutting the tree)
11. *rrundjura* (jungle bird)
12. *wayathul* (rooster)
13. *galngawarrpun* (gathering the timber)
14. *marrtji* (walking back to the camp)
15. *wikun* (putting down the timber)
16. *ngarali bunytjun* (having a smoke)
17. *buytjamandu* (building the houses)
18. *miny' tji* (painting the houses)
19. *wurrulul* (flies)
20. *djambaka* (roof)
21. *djarrami* (window glass)
22. *wata barra* (west wind) - this is a Dhuwa song subject (Djarrwak/Gālpu)

**Yikari (Gurrumuru)**

This song series describes ancestral events at a place called Yikari, at the mouth of the Gurrumuru River. Unlike the other Gurrumuru song series, this one does not refer explicitly to material culture introduced by Macassans, although it does refer to objects which came from across the seas.

1. *wangubini* (cloud)
Appendix B
Djalwangu Song Series and their Song Subjects

2. bāpi (Rainbow Serpent)
3. balgurrk (rain)
4. murriyil (pigeon)
5. dirrmala (north wind)
6. gapu (water)
7. gapu gunbilk (calm water)
8. buthulu (bottle)
9. dharpa dhimbu (driftwood)
10. gadarru (coconut)
11. bāru (saltwater crocodile)
12. gapiirri (mud)
13. gawangalkmirr (stingray)
14. dharpa yayung (log)
15. narrpiya (octopus)
16. djäpana (clouds)
17. dirrmala (north wind)
This appendix shows the relationship between song versions, song subjects, and song series in DhaJwangu performance. For each of the 26 clapstick patterns classified as “regular”, bantja, yothu, gumurr wanggany, or gumurr marrma (as discussed in the section on “Clapstick Patterns” in Chapter Three), plus the bulnha, yindi, and yuta song versions, I have listed each of the song subjects using that pattern together with the song series in which they appear. This should give some indication of the distribution of each clapstick pattern in DhaJwangu musical performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clapstick Pattern</th>
<th>Song Series</th>
<th>Song Subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bulnha</td>
<td>Garrapara</td>
<td>gapu (water), dharpa dhupundi (hollow log), man’tjarr (mangrove leaves), gomulu (white-necked heron), mokuy milgarri (spirits crying)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Balambala</td>
<td>garrtjambal (red kangaroo), mokuy milgarri (spirits crying), gayman (fog)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girriti (Gäangan)</td>
<td></td>
<td>wokara (speargrass), gapu (water), norrtj (algae), wirrilanydji (stork), dijikay (robin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurrumuru Wängungur</td>
<td></td>
<td>yiki (knife), Nagarli (tobacco), nganitji (alcohol), garrurru (flag), watjbalnga (wild rooster)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yikari (Gurrumuru)</td>
<td></td>
<td>gapu (water), narripiya (octopus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yindi</td>
<td>Garrapara</td>
<td>gapu (water), dharpa dhupundi (hollow log), man’tjarr (mangrove leaves), ratjuk (barramundi),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Balambala</td>
<td>mokuy (spirit), walarrri (whirlwind)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girriti (Gäangan)</td>
<td></td>
<td>gapu (water), ratjuk (barramundi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurrumuru Wängungur</td>
<td></td>
<td>yiki (knife)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yikari (Gurrumuru)</td>
<td></td>
<td>bãpi (Rainbow Serpent), gapu (water), bãru (saltwater crocodile), gapirri (mud), gawangalknirr (stingray)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yuta</td>
<td>Garrapara</td>
<td>dharpa dhupundi (hollow log), man’tjarr (mangrove leaves), naku (canoe), makani (jewfish), gomulu (white-necked heron), ngerrk (sulphur-crested cockatoo), mokuy milgarri (spirits crying), wata madirri (south wind)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Balambala</td>
<td>yukuwa (yam), mündung (mollusc), ngerrk (sulphur-crested cockatoo), wurrpaŋ (emu), gayman (fog)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girriti (Gäangan)</td>
<td></td>
<td>baybinnga (saratoga)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurrumuru Wäŋgur</td>
<td>Relations of Clapstick Patterns, Song Series, and Song Subjects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yikari (Gurrumuru)</strong></td>
<td>dharpa dhimbu (driftwood), gadarru (coconut), băr (saltwater crocodile), dîrmla (north wind)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>Garra para</td>
<td>wangubini (cloud), wata maqirriny (south wind), getkit (seagull), man tjarr (mangrove leaves), gunbirrwirr (fish), gulalay (mangrove seed), naku (canoe), minyga (garfish), makani (jewfish), daltjju (walking), bitj bitj (bird), nhina (sitting), ngerrk (sulphur-crested cockatoo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Balambala</td>
<td>miny tji (painting), mokuy (spirit), yukuwa (yam), bili tili (red-winged parrot), wuranyburr (honeyeater), garrtjambal (red kangaroo), ngerrk (sulphur-crested cockatoo), wurrpan (emu), gya (fog)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Girriti (Gangan)</td>
<td>ngerrk (sulphur-crested cockatoo), garkman (frog), bakarra (long-necked tortoise), norrti (algae), warra (freshwater perch), nyungala (oxeye herring), baybinnga (saratoga), ratjuk (barramundi), gunbirrwirr (fish), djamatj (mist)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gurrumuru Wäŋgur</td>
<td>ngarali (tobacco), marrtji (walking), yakurr (sleeping), wurrul (flies), dhamburru (drum), ngamiti (alcohol), yiki (knife), garruru (flag), watja (wild rooster)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yikari (Gurrumuru)</td>
<td>murrijil (pigeon), buthulu (bottle), dharpa dhimbu (driftwood), gadarru (coconut), băr (saltwater crocodile), dharpa yäyung (log), narrpiya (octopus), djäpana (clouds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>Garra para</td>
<td>wangubini (cloud), dharpa dhupundi (hollow log), getkit (seagull), gunbirrwirr (fish), gulalay (mangrove seed), naku (canoe), minyga (garfish), daltjju (walking)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Balambala</td>
<td>mokuy (spirit), bili bili (red-winged parrot), minjung (mollusc), wuranyburr (honeyeater)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Girriti (Gangan)</td>
<td>balgurrk (rain), ngerrk (sulphur-crested cockatoo), wokara (spargrass), bakarra (long-necked tortoise), warra (freshwater perch), gunbirrwirr (fish)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yikari (Gurrumuru)</td>
<td>balgurrk (rain), buthulu (bottle)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix C
Relations of Clapstick Patterns, Song Series, and Song Subjects

| 3 | Garra para | *wata ma-dirriny* (south wind) |
|   | Girriti (Gángan) | *dikay* (robin) |
| 4 | Garra para | *gapu* (water), *ŋaku* (canoe) |
|   | Balambala | *miny tji* (painting) |
|   | Girriti (Gángan) | *wangu-bini* (cloud), *gapu* (water) |
|   | Gurrumuru Wángangur | *matha* (talking), *yiki* (knife), *nhina* (sitting), *many-diarrka* (cloth), *dirr-mala* (north wind) |
|   | Yikari (Gurrumuru) | *bapi* (Rainbow Serpent), *dirr-mala* (north wind), *gapu gunbilk* (calm water), *gawangalkmirr* (stingray) |
| 5 | Garra para | *gapu* (water), *dharpa dhupundi* (hollow log), *gomulu* (white-necked heron), *mokuy mil-garri* (spirits crying), *gapu gunbilk* (calm water) |
|   | Balambala | *mokuy mil-garri* (spirits crying) |
|   | Girriti (Gángan) | *wokara* (speargrass), *gapu* (water), *wirrilanydji* (stork) |
| 6 | Garra para | *man’tjarr* (mangrove leaves) |
| 7 | Garra para | *ratjuk* (barramundi), *dharpa dhupundi* (hollow log) |
|   | Balambala | *walarri* (whirlwind) |
|   | Girriti (Gángan) | *gapu* (water) |
|   | Yikari (Gurrumuru) | *gapu* (water) |
| 8 | Garra para | *ŋaku* (canoe) |
|   | Balambala | *dharpa* (tree) |
|   | Girriti (Gángan) | *wangu-bini* (cloud), *ratjuk* (barramundi) |
|   | Gurrumuru Wángangur | *matha* (talking), *nhina* (sitting), *many-diarrka* (cloth) |
|   | Yikari (Gurrumuru) | *wangu-bini* (cloud), *bapi* (Rainbow Serpent), *dirr-mala* (north wind) |
| 9 | Garra para | *biti biti* (bird) |
| 10 | Garra para | *nhina* (sitting) |
|   | Balambala | *miny tji* (painting) |
|   | Gurrumuru Wángangur | *yiki* (knife) |
|   | Yikari (Gurrumuru) | *gapu gunbilk* (calm water) |
| 11 | Balambala | *dharpa* (tree) |
| 12 | Balambala | *yukuwa* (yam) |
|   | Gurrumuru Wángangur | *ngatha* (rice) |
| 13 | Balambala | *mündung* (mollusc) |
|   | Girriti (Gángan) | *norrti* (algae) |
| 14 | Balambala | *wurrpan* (emu) |
| 15 | Girriti (Gángan) | *balgurrk* (rain) |
|   | Gurrumuru Wángangur | *matha* (talking) |
|   | Yikari (Gurrumuru) | *balgurrk* (rain) |
## Appendix C
Relations of Clapstick Patterns, Song Series, and Song Subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Girriti (Gāngan)</th>
<th>Yikari (Gurrumuru)</th>
<th>Girriti (Gāngan)</th>
<th>Yikari (Gurrumuru)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>garkman (frog)</td>
<td>dharpa dhimbu (driftwood)</td>
<td>djikay (robin)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Gurrumuru</td>
<td>ngarali (tobacco), yakurr (sleeping), ngānitji (alcohol), yiki (knife), garrurru (flag)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wängangur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Gurrumuru</td>
<td>butulu (bottle)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wängangur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Gurrumuru</td>
<td>dhamburru (drum)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wängangur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Gurrumuru</td>
<td>djuling (mouth organ)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wängangur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Gurrumuru</td>
<td>dubulu (cards)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wängangur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Gurrumuru</td>
<td>barrundhu (fighting), yiki rulanggurr (putting down the knives)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wängangur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Gurrumuru</td>
<td>dirrmala (north wind)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wängangur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Garrapara</td>
<td>gapu (water), dharpa dhupundi (hollow log)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Garrapara</td>
<td>man’ tjarr (leaves), dharpa dhupundi (hollow log)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D
Song Texts - Garrapara Song Series

These are the transcribed and translated song texts for a complete performance of the Garrapara song series. The words of two singers are shown, one on the left and one on the right. The top section shows the words in the Dhalwangu language; the middle section shows the words translated into English; and the bottom section provides explanatory notes. All of the song texts which I collected were transcribed and translated with the assistance of Bangana Wunungmurra. Occasionally, a word has been glossed differently in different song items. As I am interested in Dhalwangu poetics and not with literal translations, I have retained the glosses which Bangana provided, in order to underscore the flexibility of meaning in Dhalwangu songs.

These songs concern the activities of Dhalwangu ancestors during the wangarr creative era in the area around Garrapara. Particularly significant is the ocean at Garrapara, whose waters are known by the name Mungurru. These songs are shared by the Birrkili, Ma'darrpa, and Manggalili people, who also have rights in waters known by that name.

1. \textit{wangubini} (cloud) - \textit{gumurr wanggany}

\begin{tabular}{|l|}
\hline
\textit{djunabitja garrgarryun} \\
\textit{djunabitja milarrngambi} \\
\textit{nguyil} \\
Muyurrurra Dharraganmatji Gawululnga \\
\text{cloud standing cloud} \\
\text{cloud cloud in the ocean} \\
Muyurrurra\textsuperscript{1} Dharraganmatji\textsuperscript{1} \\
Gawululnga\textsuperscript{1} \\
\text{1 all proper names for the ocean at} \\
Garrapara \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

2. \textit{wangubini} (cloud) - \textit{gumurr wanggany}

\begin{tabular}{|l|}
\hline
\textit{nabinga wulu} \\
\textit{nabinga gungubunja} \\
\textit{widhun garrgarryun dharraganmatji} \\
\textit{Malirray wurruku gilyundja Baniyala} \\
Nyikunyikuy \\
\text{cloud cloud} \\
\text{cloud cloud standing standing Dharraganmatji}\textsuperscript{1} \\
\text{Malirray\textsuperscript{2} will lean Baniyala} \\
Nyikunyikuy\textsuperscript{2} \\
\text{1 proper name for the ocean at Garrapara} \\
\text{2 alternate names for Baniyala} \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
### 3. *wangubini* (cloud) - *gumurr* *wanggany*

| nabinga nabinga | (humming) |
| wululu garrgarryun | | (humming) |
| bitjana gilyun wurruku Ngulburri | | (humming) |
| gurrnriwil wikurrrun namulwarri Munhalyu | | (humming) |

- cloud cloud
- cloud standing
- that way lean will to Ngulburri
- to the front threw boomerangs those people of Ngulburri

1 alternate name for Numbulwar
2 The people of Numbulwar threw boomerangs at the front of the cloud; this is a reference to a song series sung by Nundhirribala people which describes people making boomerangs and then going out into the ocean in canoes.

### 4. *wangubini* (cloud) - *gumurr* *wanggany*

| wululu wululu | (humming) |
| wululu garrgarryun nabinga | (humming) |

- cloud cloud
- cloud standing cloud

### 5. *wangubini* (cloud) - *gumurr* *marrma/bantja*

| milarrngambi garrgarryun | (humming) |
| milarrngambi djunabiti | (humming) |
| widhun garrgarryun milarrngambi | (humming) |
| bitjana wurruku gilyundja Djurrundjurrung | (humming) |
| Gali’wabangi | (humming) |

- cloud standing
- cloud standing cloud
- that way will lean Djurrundjurrung
- Gali’wabangi

1 proper names for two islands at Garrapara;
2 proper name for the ocean at Garrapara;
the clouds appear to lean toward them
the clouds appear to be standing in the water
### 6. *wangubini (cloud) - gumurr marrma/bantja*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nabinga nabinga</th>
<th>nabinga</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gungubunda garrgarryun</td>
<td>gungubun gilyun garrgarryun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nguylili gilyun Muyurrurra Dharrakanmatji</td>
<td>(humming) nguylili</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bitjana wurruku gilyundja Gali’wabangi</td>
<td>Gawululnga (humming)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>cloud cloud</th>
<th>cloud</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>that cloud standing</td>
<td>cloud lean standing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the ocean lean Muyurrurra</td>
<td>(humming) in the ocean</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dharrakanmatji</th>
<th>Gawululnga</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>that way will lean Gali’wabangi</td>
<td>Gawululnga</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. proper names for the ocean at Garrapara
2. name of an island at Garrapara
3. song word with no specific meaning
4. proper name for the ocean at Garrapara

### 7. *wangubini (cloud) - gumurr marrma/bantja*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(humming) garrgarryun</th>
<th>(humming)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>garrgarryun milarrngambi</td>
<td>(humming)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(humming) widhurrunandu</td>
<td>(humming)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bitjana wurruku gilyundja Raminydhu</td>
<td>gumurril wikurrrun namulwarri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nguldhandurryu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(humming) standing</th>
<th>(humming)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>standing cloud</td>
<td>standing cloud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(humming) stood</td>
<td>(humming) stood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that way will lean to Raminy1 to</td>
<td>to the front throw boomerangs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nguldhandurr1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. alternate names for Numbulwar

### 8. *wangubini (cloud) - gumurr marrma/bantja*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>wulu wulu gungubuntja</th>
<th>(humming)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wulu wulu gungubuntja</td>
<td>nabinga gungubuntja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>widhun garrgarryun milarrngambi</td>
<td>djunabiti milarrngambi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gulyunmarangatou Manharrngu</td>
<td>gumurril wikurrrun namulwarri Munhalyu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Dawumanharrngu Gudaguda | |
|-------------------------||

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>cloud that cloud</th>
<th>(humming)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cloud that cloud</td>
<td>cloud that cloud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>standing standing cloud</td>
<td>cloud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>made the people feel at home</td>
<td>to the front throw boomerangs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manharrngu1 Dawumanharrngu1</td>
<td>Munhalyu2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gudaguda1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. names for the people of Garrapara
2. name for the people of Numbulwar

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Appendix D

Song Texts - Garrapara Song Series

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9. *wata madirriny (wind) - gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>gu gu gu watanydja lurrkun badgay madirriny madirriny wata ma4irriny madirriny wata guwingarr wata dhawilibilyurrun Ngululngur wata Rambanngangur wata bilyurrun nguy wudhurrun Muyurrurra</th>
<th>(humming)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gu gu gu 1 the wind a few times and leave it wind2 wind wind wind wind wind cold wind blew from Ngulu3 wind from Rambannga3 wind blew ocean hit Muyurrurra4</td>
<td>(humming)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 song words often used to “find the tune”
2 proper name of the wind at Garrapara
3 name of a place at Numbulwar
4 alternate name for Mungurru

10. *wata madirriny (wind) - gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>gu gu gu Ngulu12 wind blew from Malmarra2 wind blew from Gurrundul3 wind from Marrurru3 wind from Djurrundjurrun4 wind blew from Gali’wabangi4 warray from Miburrmiburr4</th>
<th>(humming) (humming) (humming) dhunupa Gumbulangur wata bilyurrun (garbled)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gu gu gu1 from Ngulu2 wind blew from Malmarra2 wind blew from Gurrundul3 wind from Marrurru3 wind from Djurrundjurrun4 wind blew from Gali’wabangi4 warray from Miburrmiburr4</td>
<td>(humming) (humming) (humming) (garbled)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 song word used to “find the tune”
2 a place at Numbulwar
3 a place at Numbulwar
4 names for islands in Blue Mud Bay which belong to Dhalwangu, Madarra, Manggalili and Nundhirribala because they lie in the Mungurru

5 a Munyuku place near Balma
11. *wata mađirriny* (wind) - *gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>midiibiŋang yidaki warray ngamakurrya</th>
<th>mađirriny mađirriny wata</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mađirriny mađirriny wata</td>
<td>mađirriny wata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gumubunngur wata</td>
<td>(garbled)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wululungur bilyurrun</td>
<td>Rambanngangur bilyurrun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

one more yidaki warray better\(^1\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>wind wind wind</th>
<th>wind wind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wind wind wind</td>
<td>wind wind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from the cloud wind</td>
<td>from the cloud blew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from Gurrundul(^2) from Marrurru(^2)</td>
<td>from Rambannga(^3) blew</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) a phrase to please the yidaki player, meaning he is better than the singing

\(^2\) names for a place near Numbulwar

\(^3\) alternate name for Numbulwar

12. *wata mađirriny* (wind) - *gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>gu gu gu midiibiŋanggu badgay</th>
<th>wululungur wata</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>banambarrngur wata</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gumubunngur wata</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nabingangur wata</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nguy wudhurrun Muyurrarra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dharrakanmatji Gawululnga</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>gu gu gu(^1) one more and leave it</th>
<th>from the cloud wind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>from the cloud wind</td>
<td>from the cloud wind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from the cloud wind</td>
<td>from the cloud wind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ocean hit Muyurrarra(^2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dharrakanmatji(^2) Gawululnga(^2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) song word used to “find the tune”

\(^2\) alternate names for Mungurru
### 13. *wata madirriny* (wind) - *bantja/gumurr marrma*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bantjanytja lurrkundhi oh madirriny madirriny Ngululngur wata Gurrundulngur bilyurrrun Rambanngangur wata Marrurrungur bilyurrrun guwingarr wata wudhanginy</th>
<th>bantja a few oh wind wind from Ngulu(^1) wind from Gurrundul(^2) blew from Rambanngang(^1) wind from Marrurrru(^2) blew cold wind wind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 names for a place near Numbulwar 2 names for a place near Numbulwar (mouth of Walker River)</td>
<td>1 names for a place near Numbulwar 2 names for a place near Numbulwar (mouth of Walker River)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 14. *wata madirriny* (wind) - *bantja/gumurr marrma*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bananbarrngur wata wuluulungur gungubunngur bananbarrngur wata guwingarr wata bilyurrrun nguuy wudhurrun Dharrakanmatji Muyurrurra Yurrkyyurkba</th>
<th>(humming)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>from the cloud wind from the cloud from the cloud from the cloud wind cold wind blew ocean hit Dharrakanmatji(^1) Muyurrurra(^1) Yurrkyyurkba(^1)</td>
<td>(humming)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 alternate names for Mungurru</td>
<td>1 alternate names for Mungurru</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

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Song Texts - Garrapara Song Series

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### 15. *wata madirriny* (wind) - *bantja/gumurr marrma*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gigi wudhun Marruwarri Gigi wudhun Marruwarri Waŋmul a wudhun watari madirrinydhu warray guwingarr wata wudhanginy Ngululngur wata Gurrundul Marrurrungur bilyurrun</td>
<td>(humming)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gigi(^1) hit Marruwarri Gigi hit Marruwarri Waŋmul a(^1) hit with that wind with that wind warray(^2) cold wind wind from Ngulu(^3) wind Gurrundul(^4) from Marrurru(^4) blew</td>
<td>(humming)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
data\(^1\) names for a rock at Garrapara that represents Manggalili people  
data\(^2\) song word with no specific meaning  
data\(^3\) name of a place near Numbulwar  
data\(^4\) name of a place at the mouth of the Walker River

### 16. *wata madirriny* (wind) - *bantja/gumurr marrma*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wangganybyu yidak1 waku watangu yidak1 warray ngamakurrya gungubunngur wata wululungur banambahrrngur gungubunngur wata madirriny madirriny Rambannga3 wata Djunngur warray wata Gana4 from Wudhurra4 blew</td>
<td>(humming)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one more yidak1(^1) waku(^1) own(^1) yidak1 warray(^2) better from the cloud wind from the cloud from the cloud wind wind from Rambannga(^3) wind from Djun(^4) warray wind from Gana(^4) from Wudhurra(^4) blew</td>
<td>(humming)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
data\(^1\) the yidak player calls Dhalwangu people, and these songs, waku (ZC)  
data\(^2\) song word with no specific meaning  
data\(^3\) a place near Numbulwar  
data\(^4\) alternate names for Numbulwar
17. *gapu* (water) - *bulnha*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>ah Mungurru yukurr maniniwanga</em></td>
<td>(humming)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Mungurru yukurr maniniwanga gayalawanga bardhunmirrin</em></td>
<td>(humming)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ah Mungurru is moving</em></td>
<td>(humming)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Mungurru is moving moving moving moving moving moving moving moving</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 i.e., the tide is coming in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18. *gapu* (water) - *bulnha*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>ah Dhamathatha Burindirindi</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Dhamathatha Burindirindi</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Mungurru yukurr diwadiwayun</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Mungurru yukurr diwadiwayun dirrurrun ngarranu dhiyanga</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>djangbirrwangari barrminydhu buyamarryu</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ah Dhamathatha Burindirindi</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Burindirindi</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Mungurru is moving</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Mungurru is moving caused me with this djangbirrwangari</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>barrminydhu buyamarryu</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 alternate names for Mungurru</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 a Dhuwa wind (with three alternate names) caused the tide to move</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19. *gapu* (water) - *bulnha*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>dhawalyatjin Wakuyuridhuri</em></td>
<td>(humming)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>dhawalyatjin</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Wakuyuridhuri</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Mungurru yukurr maniniwanga</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>daldhirr marrtji Gujdawa Yindiwiyingu Yindidirrnyungu</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>getting dangerous</em></td>
<td>(humming)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Wakuyuridhuri</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Mungurru is moving heading heading for the rock</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Yindiwiyingu Yindidirrnyungu</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 literally “place bad”, meaning that the water is getting rough</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 alternate name for Mungurru</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 a Dhalwangu rock in the ocean at Garrapara and a sacred site</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 alternate names for the rock</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 alternate name for Garrapara</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 alternate names for Mungurru</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
20. *gapu* (water) - *bulnya/yindi*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Dhallwangu</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lukungurya gambali</td>
<td>Mungurru dhawadurr</td>
<td>1 musical style of saying this name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lukungur Wunungumurra</td>
<td>ah Mungurru dhawadurr</td>
<td>2 the foundation of Garra para</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lukungurr Gumanamana</td>
<td>lukungur nudunhina</td>
<td>3 the two surnames used by Dhalwangu people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mungurru yukurr diwadiwayun</td>
<td>daldirr marrtji gundawa Yindidirynyugu</td>
<td>4 i.e. the water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maniniwanga</td>
<td>(humming)</td>
<td>5 Manggalili names for the Mungurru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maniniwanga gayalawanga bardhunmirrin waymar ngarrany ngurungga</td>
<td>(humming)</td>
<td>6 chorus representing the sound of the water moving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milnguyawuyngu Yanygartjiwuyngu Yanygartjiwuyngu Mukarrtiwuyngu Dhaparawunbuy Mungurru diwadiwayun gayalawanga</td>
<td>ah lukungur nudunhina gambali ngalirri bur diar diar diar diar djar</td>
<td>7 alternate name for Mungurru</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Dhallwangu</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bur diar diar diar diar djar djar bur</td>
<td>Mungurru dhawadurr</td>
<td>8 a sacred Dhalwangu rock in the ocean at Garra para</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mungurru dhawadurr</td>
<td>bur diar diar diar diar djar djar bur</td>
<td>9 name of the rock</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 21. *gapi* (water) - *yindi*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>ah Mungurr</em> yukurr gayalawanga lukungur buldhirrirri Wunungmurra Gumanamana</th>
<th>Gumanamana lukungur nudunhina gambal</th>
<th>daldhirr marrtji yindidirryungu galgama Mungurru dhawadurr bur diar diar diar diar bur (garbled) nungbagawanga</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ah Mungurr is moving from the foundation foundation Wunungmurra Gumana Rarrambaltji</td>
<td>Gumana from the foundation foundation foundation</td>
<td>heading heading yindidirryungu6 galgama6 Mungurru with the wind bur diar diar diar diar bur (garbled) moving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ah Mungurr is moving from the foundation foundation Wunungmurra Gumana Rarrambaltji</td>
<td>Gumana from the foundation foundation foundation</td>
<td>heading heading yindidirryungu6 galgama6 Mungurru with the wind bur diar diar diar diar bur (garbled) moving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>caused me3 with this barminydhu4 djanbirrwangari4</td>
<td>buyamarryu4 mundulyu4</td>
<td>malurrulurruri4 Mungurru moving moving bur diar diar diar diar bur5 from the foundation foundation Wunungmurra foundation foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buyamarryu4 mundulyu4</td>
<td>malurrulurruri4 Mungurru moving moving bur diar diar diar diar diar bur5</td>
<td>from the foundation foundation Wunungmurra foundation foundation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. musical style of saying this name
2. alternate name for Garrapara
3. the “me” is the water
4. a Dhuwa wind
5. chorus representing the sound of the water moving
6. name of a rock in the ocean at Garrapara
### 22. gapu (water) - yindi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Yindwiyingu yindirirrungu lukungur Wunungmurra Gumanamana1 dhawadhawayun</th>
<th>Bur djarr djarr djarr djarr bur dhawalyat#n Wakuuridhuri (for the rock in the middle of the ocean)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dhamathatha Burindirindi Mungurru maniniwanga diwaadiwayun gayalawanga</td>
<td>Mungurru bardhunmirrin</td>
<td>Bur djarr djarr djarr djarr bur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gayalawanga bardhunmirrin nguruku ngarra marritji daldirrya gundawa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yindiwiyengu yindirirrungu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yindirirrungu lukungur Wunungmurra Gumanamana1 dhawadhawayun</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bur djarr djarr djarr djarr bur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dhawalyat#n Wakuuridhuri</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 musical style of saying this name
2 alternate names for Mungurru
3 for the rock in the middle of the ocean
4 name of the rock
5 chorus representing the sound of the water
### 23. *gapu (water) - yindi*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Yindji</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ah dhirryurrun ngarrany dhiyangga djanbirrwangari barrminyduh buyumarryu mundulyuri warray mundulyuri Mungurru Dhamathatha Burindirindi Mundurru Dhamathatha Burindirindi lukungur Wunungmurra buldhirrirri Gumanamana¹</td>
<td>ah bardhunmirrin rirrungulangal rirrungulangal nungbakawanga Mungurru dhamadurr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bur djar djar djar djar djar bur</td>
<td>bur djar djar djar djar djar bur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mungurru maniniwanga diwadiwayun bardhunmirrin</td>
<td>Mungurru dhamadurr Dhamathatha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ah caused me² with this djanbirrwangari³ barrminyduh buyumarryu³ mundulyuri³ warray⁴ mundulyuri Mungurru Dhamathatha⁵ Burindirindi⁵ Mungurru Dhamathatha Burindirindi from the foundation Wunungmurra foundation Gumana</td>
<td>ah moving moving moving moving Mungurru with the wind⁷</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bur djar djar djar djar djar bur⁶ Mungurru moving moving moving moving</td>
<td>bur djar djar djar djar djar bur Mungurru with the wind Dhamathatha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ musical style of saying this name
² the water
³ Dhuwa wind
⁴ song word with no particular meaning
⁵ alternate name for Mungurru
⁶ chorus representing the sound of the water
⁷ the water is moving with the wind
### Appendix D
Song Texts - Garrapara Song Series

#### 24. gapu (water) - bantja

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bandu bulhnagunawanydjya yakandu bulhnagumanydjya ngi Burumbirr? rurrubundha rurrubundha Mungurrarri rirrngulangal rurrubundha Mungurrarri rirrngulangal lukungurrya Wunungmurrar dhawadhawayun ningangba Gumanamana¹</th>
<th>(humming)</th>
<th>(humming) rirrngulangal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>leave the slow one not slowly eh Burumbirr?² moving moving Mungurrarri³ moving moving Mungurrarri moving from the foundation⁴ Wunungmura foundation foundation Gumana</td>
<td>(humming)</td>
<td>(humming) moving</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ musical style of saying this name
² talking to the other singer
³ alternate name for Mungurrru
⁴ i.e., the water comes from the deepest part of Garrapara, and thus has a deep cultural significance to Dhalwangu people

#### 25. gapu (water) - bantja

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ngalayun ngalayun rirrngulangal rurrubundha ngalayun nungbaga buldhirrirri ningangba yurrkyurrkba gayalawanga rurrubundha Mungurrarri</th>
<th>(humming)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>moving moving moving moving moving moving Mungurrru foundation foundation foundation foundation moving moving Mungurrarri¹</td>
<td>(humming)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ alternate name for Mungurrru
### Appendix D
Song Texts - Garrapara Song Series

#### 26. *gapu* (water) - *bantja*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>natjarrarril Mungurrarril from the foundation Wunungmurra foundation foundation moving moving Mungurrru</th>
<th>(humming)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nungbaga rurrubundha nungbaga rurrubundha Natjarrarri Mungurrrarrri lukungurya Wunungmurra dhawadhawayun yurrkyurrkba ngagaltirri maninigawa nungbagaway</td>
<td>(humming)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moving Mungurru moving moving Mungurru moving Natjarrarril Mungurrarril1 from the foundation Wunungmurra foundation foundation foundation moving moving Mungurrru</td>
<td>1 alternate name for Mungurru</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 27. *gapu* (water) - *bantja*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Natjarrarril Mungurrarril from the foundation Wunungmurra foundation foundation</th>
<th>ngalayun rirrnngulangal ngaalayun rirrnngulangal lukungurya gambiri yurrkyurrkba</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natjarrarril1 Natjarrarril Mungurrarril moving moving moving Mungurru foundation Wunungmurra foundation foundation foundation</td>
<td>moving moving moving moving (garbled)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natjarrarri1 Natjarrarri Natjarrarri moving moving moving Mungurru foundation Wunungmurra foundation foundation foundation</td>
<td>from the foundation foundation foundation2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 alternate name for Mungurru</td>
<td>2 i.e., the foundation of Garrapara</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 28. *gapu gunbilk* (calm water) - *gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nhathin ngalimurrung gulkurrrunanydja Natjarrarril rirrnngulangal nungbaga</th>
<th>gu gu (humming) ngalayun rirrnngulangal ngalayun nungbagawanga lukungur madidi ngatirri dalhIRR marrrri gunywada Yindirruryungu rirrnngulangal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gu gu (humming) moving moving moving Mungurru from the foundation foundation foundation heading heading for the rock Yindirruryungu3 moving</td>
<td>1 alternate name for Mungurru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how our calmed Natjarrarril1 moving moving Mungurru</td>
<td>2 song words used to “find the tune”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 alternate name for Mungurru</td>
<td>3 name of the rock in the ocean at Garrapara</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 29. *gapu gunbilk* (calm water) - *gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ngunhal wurrku rulanggundja Latjirra</th>
<th>Gali’wabangi</th>
<th>(humming)</th>
<th>nhathin gulkurrun ngalimurrumbal</th>
<th>Wakuyuridhuri ningangba yurrkyurrka</th>
<th>Gumanamana¹</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ngunhal wurrku rulanggundja Djurrundjurrun warray</td>
<td>Gali’wabangi</td>
<td>(humming)</td>
<td>nhathin gulkurrun ngalimurrumbal</td>
<td>Wakuyuridhuri ningangba yurrkyurrka</td>
<td>Gumanamana¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Djurrundjurrun warray</td>
<td>(humming)</td>
<td>nhathin gulkurrun ngalimurrumbal</td>
<td>Wakuyuridhuri ningangba yurrkyurrka</td>
<td>Gumanamana¹</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ngalayun rirrngulangal</th>
<th>ngalayun nungbaga</th>
<th>daldhin gundawa Yindidirryungu</th>
<th>Djuradjura Galkama</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>over there will lie² Latjirra³</td>
<td>Gali’wabangi³</td>
<td>over there will lie Djurrundjurrun³</td>
<td>warray⁴</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(humming)</td>
<td>nhathin gulkurrun ngalimurrumbal</td>
<td>(humming)</td>
<td>nhathin gulkurrun ngalimurrumbal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ngalayun rirrngulangal</th>
<th>ngalayun nungbaga</th>
<th>daldhin gundawa Yindidirryungu</th>
<th>Djuradjura Galkama</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>moving moving</td>
<td>moving moving Mungurru</td>
<td>moving moving</td>
<td>moving moving Mungurru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moving moving</td>
<td>moving moving Mungurru</td>
<td>moving moving</td>
<td>moving moving Mungurru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foundation foundation</td>
<td>foundation foundation</td>
<td>foundation foundation</td>
<td>foundation foundation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. musical style of saying this name
2. i.e. the calm water lies near those places
3. names of different islands near Garrapara
4. song word with no particular meaning
5. alternate name for Mungurru

### Notes:
- ¹: Alternate names for the rock in the ocean at Garrapara
- ²: i.e. the calm water lies near those places
- ³: Names of different islands near Garrapara
- ⁴: Song word with no particular meaning
- ⁵: Alternate name for Mungurru
- ⁶: Alternate names for the rock in the ocean at Garrapara

## 30. *gapu gunbilk* (calm water) - *gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ngalayun rirrngulangal</th>
<th>ngalayun nungbaga</th>
<th>ngalirri yurrkyurrkba</th>
<th>ngalirri rirrngulangal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>moving moving</td>
<td>moving moving Mungurru</td>
<td>foundation foundation</td>
<td>foundation moving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moving moving</td>
<td>moving moving Mungurru</td>
<td>foundation foundation</td>
<td>foundation moving</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ngalayun rirrngulangal</th>
<th>ngalayun nungbaga</th>
<th>ngalirri yurrkyurrkba</th>
<th>ngalirri rirrngulangal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>moving moving</td>
<td>moving moving Mungurru</td>
<td>foundation foundation</td>
<td>foundation moving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moving moving</td>
<td>moving moving Mungurru</td>
<td>foundation foundation</td>
<td>foundation moving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foundation foundation</td>
<td>foundation foundation</td>
<td>foundation moving</td>
<td>foundation moving</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Notes:
- Alternate names for the rock in the ocean at Garrapara
- Names of different islands near Garrapara
- Song word with no particular meaning
- Alternate name for Mungurru
### 31. *gапu гунбilk (calm water) - gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>wanggany bu yidak ngarra nhungu midikumar warray nhathin dhanytja rarrargungal Djuradjura nhathin dhanytja rarrargunga nungbagawanga ngalayun ngalayun</th>
<th>ngalayun rirrngulangal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>garanganyдja Miburrmiburr Latjirra Djurrundjurrun ngunhal ngarra wurruku rulanggundja Gali’wabangi Gali’wakuthi Gamalamburr</td>
<td>one more didjeridu I for you made a mistake1 warray2 how this showing3 Djuradjura4 how this showing moving Mungurru moving moving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>also Miburrmiburr5 Latjirra5 Djurrundjurrun5 over there 16 will lie Gali’wabangi5 Gali’wakuthi7 Gamalamburr5</td>
<td>moving moving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 telling the didjeridu player that they will sing one more song item because they made a mistake on the previous one 2 song word with no particular meaning 3 i.e. the water is calm and the rock can be seen 4 name of the rock in the ocean at Garrapara 5 names of different islands in the ocean near Garrapara 6 i.e., the water 7 alternate name for Gali’wabangi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 32. *barrakbarrak (seagull) - gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(humming) ngumirri ngumirri miyal miyal miyal miyal miyal miyal miyal ngumirri gungubunngur wuluungur</th>
<th>(garbled)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(humming) seagull seagull seagull seagull seagull seagull seagull seagull seagull seagull seagull seagull seagull seagull seagull seagull seagull from the cloud from the cloud</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 33. *barrakbarrak* (seagull) - *gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>banambarrngur dhuryun wuluulu</th>
<th>(humming)</th>
<th>barrakbarrak barrak yawu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gungubungur</td>
<td>(garbled)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>banambarrngur dhuryun nabingangur</td>
<td>(humming)</td>
<td>seagull seagull yawu³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nguy dharpungal Gawululnga</td>
<td>(garbled)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madadi Yurrkyurrkba Dharrakanmatji Ningangba</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from the clouds flying from the clouds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from the clouds flying from the clouds ocean diving Gawululnga¹</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madadi¹ Yurrkyurrkba² Dharrakanmatji¹ Ningangba¹</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¹ alternate names for Mungurru</td>
<td></td>
<td>³ song word usually signifying worrying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>² although this word was translated as &quot;foundation&quot; in the previous song subject, it is said to be an alternate name for Mungurru in this subject</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 34. *barrakbarrak* (seagull) - *gumurr wanggany*

| gapandja Gamalamburrwuy miyal miyal miyal ngumirri gungubungur wuluungur banambarrngur dhuryun | (garbled) | yandarpungal gapandja gurrum Gamalamburr Djurrundjurrun |
| colour¹ from Gamalamburr seagull seagull seagull seagull from the clouds from the clouds from the clouds flying | (garbled) | diving colour hanging² Gamalamburr³ Djurrundjurrun³ |
| ¹ of the bird; black and white | | ² i.e., the colour is hanging on the seagull; the seagull flew from these islands, and its colour came from there |
| | | ³ names of two islands in the ocean near Garrapara |

### 35. *barrakbarrak* (seagull) - *gumurr wanggany*

| ngumirri ngumirri barrakbarrak barrak ngumirri ngumirri miyal miyal nguy dharpungal Gawululnga Lukulurryunar Madadi Yurrkyurrkba | (humming) | |
| seagull seagull seagull seagull seagull seagull seagull seagull seagull seagull ocean diving Gawululnga¹ | (humming) | |
| Lukulurryunar¹ Madadi¹ Yurrkyurrkba¹ | | |
| ¹ alternate names for Mungurru | | |

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### 36. *dharpa gutjulu* (hollow log) - *bulnha*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ah dharpanydjia lurrkundi badgay wayman gutjulu dhakunmarangal marralinyarrmirriny gutjulu dhakunmarangal marralinyarrmirriny marrayanbawunngu bāynhe ngarrakal Mungurru maniniwanga dīwadiwayun ritjarrmirriyam bulunjbulunjmirriyam</th>
<th>(garbled)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ah hollow log a few times and leave it leave it hollow log floated hollow log hollow log floated hollow log hollow log doesn’t matter on me Mungurru moving¹ moving colouring² colouring²</td>
<td>(garbled)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¹ i.e., it doesn’t matter to the hollow log that the Mungurru is moving it around ² i.e., the water is leaving salt patterns on the log</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 37. *dharpa gutjulu* (hollow log) - *bulnha*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ah gutjulu yukurr marrawadbadhun ah gutjulu yukurr marrawadbadhun marralinyarrmirr dhakanjdjali waymar ngarrany ngurungga Milnguyawuyngu Yanygartji Dhaparawunbuyunguri</th>
<th>Miriterrr mirrri dhakanjdjali oh lātibukun galam bāy nhukal Mungurru bardhunmirrin gayalawanga nungbagawanga</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ah hollow log is floating hollow log is floating hollow log floated hollow log floated me¹ from Milnguyawuyngu² Yanygartji² Dhaparawunbuyunguri²</td>
<td>hollow log hollow log hollow log oh floating floating doesn’t matter on you Mungurru moving³ moving moving Mungurru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¹ i.e., the hollow log ² alternate names for Manggalili waters (i.e. Manggalili’s Mungurru) ³ i.e., it doesn’t matter to the hollow log that the Mungurru is moving it around</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
38. **dharpa gutjulu** (hollow log) - **bulnha**

| bäynhe Mungurru diwadiwayun | gutjulu dhakunmarangal  
warrnginywarrnginy  
ah gutjulu dhakunmarangal  
warrnginywarrnginy  
marrayanbawunngu dhakandjali  
bay nhukal Mungurru gayalawanga  
nunbagawanga |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| ah bäynhe Mungurru garalawanga | ah gutjulu dhakunmarangal  
warrnginywarrnginy  |
| warrnginywarrnginynha dhakunmarangal | marrayanbawunngu dhakandjali |
| lukungur Wunungmurra Gumanama1 | bay nhukal Mungurru gayalawanga |
| dhawadhawayun ningangha | nunbagawanga |
| doesn’t matter Mungurru moving2 | hollow log floated hollow log  
ah hollow log floated hollow log  
hollow log hollow log  
doesn’t matter on you Mungurru |
| doesn’t matter Mungurru moving | moving2  moving Mungurru |
| hollow log floated | hollow log |
| hollow log floated | hollow log |
| hollow log | hollow log |
| foundation Wunungmurra | doesn’t matter on you Mungurru |
| Gumana foundation foundation | moving2  moving Mungurru |

1 musical style of saying this name
2 i.e., it doesn’t matter to the hollow log that the Mungurru is moving it around
3 i.e., it doesn’t matter to the hollow log that the Mungurru is moving it around
### 39. *dharpa gutjulu* (hollow log) - *bulnha/yindi*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>** wurrrnginy wurrrnginyuhnha dhakunmarangal**</th>
<th><strong>murrirri murrirr dhakunmarangal</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ah wurrrnginy wurrrnginyuhnha dhakunmarangal</strong></td>
<td><strong>ah guyarrmilimi</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>gutjulu dhakunmarangal</strong></td>
<td>(garbled)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>lukungur nudinyina Wunungmurra</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gumanamana</strong></td>
<td><strong>bad nyurr nyurr nyurr nyurr nyurr bur</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>buldhirrirri</strong></td>
<td><strong>murrirri murrirri dhakandjali</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gumanamana buldhirrirri ningangba</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yurrrkyurrkba</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ah dhakandjali marralinyarrmirriny</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>dhakandjali marralinyarrmirriny</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>brynhe ngarrany ritjarrmirriyangal</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>dhangayal bulunbulunmirriyangal</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>bad nyurr nyurr nyurr nyurr nyurr bur</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>marralinyarrmirriny dhakunmarangal</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>mparrayanbawunngu marrawadbadhun</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- hollow log floated
- ah hollow log floated
- hollow log floated
- from the foundation Wunungmurra
- Gumana foundation
- Gumana foundation foundation
- Yurrrkyurrkba
- ah hollow log hollow log
- hollow log hollow log
- doesn’t matter me colouring
- colouring
- bad nyurr nyurr nyurr nyurr nyurr nyurr bur
- hollow log floated hollow log hollow log

1. musical style of saying this name
2. alternate name for Mungurru
3. i.e., it doesn’t matter to the hollow log that the Mungurru is colouring it with salt marks
4. unison chorus representing the sound of the water flowing through the hollow log
### 40. *dharpa gutjulu* (hollow log) - *yindi*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song Text</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>wikunwikunla malakinandu dhaykundja ah bāynhe ngarrakal Mungurru liyanhinan</em></td>
<td><em>mirrirri mirrirri dhakandjali guyarrmilimi</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>bāynhe ngarrakal Mungurru liyanhinan diwadiwayun bardhunmirrin ngarranydja gutjulu dhakunmarangal lukungur Gumanamana</em> ¹ ningangba ningangba buldhirirri Wunungmurra rarrambaltji lukungur ngalirri <em>bad nyirr nyirr nyirr nyirr nyirr bur</em> wanymar ngarrany ngurungga Milnguyay Dhaparawunbuyngu Mukarrtji Yanygartjijuwunbuynguri</td>
<td><em>bāy nhukal Mungurru bardhunmirrin</em> gutjuluny dhakunmarangal warrnginywarrnginy mirrirri mirrirri <em>bad nyirr nyirr nyirr nyirr nyirr bur</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quick quick it’s getting late time ah doesn’t matter on me Mungurru moving ² doesn’t matter on me Mungurru moving moving moving ² I am hollow log floated from the foundation Gumana foundation ² foundation foundation Wunungmurra foundation from the foundation foundation <em>bad nyirr nyirr nyirr nyirr nyirr bur</em> ³ floated me ⁴ from Milnguyay ⁵ Dhaparawunbuyngu ⁵ Mukarrtji ⁵ Yanygartjijuwunbuynguri ⁵</td>
<td>hollow log hollow log hollow log hollow log hollow log doesn’t matter on you Mungurru moving that hollow log floated hollow log hollow log hollow log hollow log</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ musical style of saying this name
² i.e., it doesn’t matter to me if the water pushes me around; I’m the hollow log, I belong here
³ unison chorus representing the sound of the water flowing through the hollow log
⁴ i.e., the hollow log
⁵ alternate names for the Manggali water
41. **dharpa gutjulu (hollow log) - yindi**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>gu gu búnhe ngarrakal Mungurru</th>
<th>mirrirri mirrirrimi dhakandjali</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dīwadīwayun maniniwanga liyanhina</td>
<td>marrwadbadhun gutjulu guyarralimi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>búnhe ngarrakal Mungurru dīwadīwayun</td>
<td>(humming)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maniniwanga liyanhina gutjulu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marralinyarrmirr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gutjulu marralinyarrmirr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>warrnginywarnginy dhakandjali dhupudji</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>warray dhakunmarangal lukungur nuðinthina</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bad nyirr nyirr nyirr nyirr nyirr bur</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ritjarrmirriyangal dhangayal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bujunbulunjmirriyangal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>gutjulu marralinyarrmirr</th>
<th>bad nyirr nyirr nyirr nyirr nyirr bur</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>warrnginywarnginy dhakandjali dhupudji</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>warray dhakunmarangal lukungur nuðinthina</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bad nyirr nyirr nyirr nyirr nyirr bur</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ritjarrmirriyangal dhangayal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bujunbulunjmirriyangal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 song words the singer uses to “find the tune”</th>
<th>5 i.e., the colour of the salt marks on the log made by the water</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 i.e., it doesn’t matter to the hollow log that the water moves it around</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 song word with no particular meaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 unison chorus representing the sound of the water moving through the hollow log</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 i.e., colouring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix D
Song Texts - Garrapara Song Series

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### 42. *dharpa gutjulu* (hollow log) - *yindi*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ah gutjulu yukurr marrawadbadhun marralinyarmirr marrayanbawunngu gutjulu yukurr marrawadbadhun guyarralimi dhakaadjali warrnginywarrnginy warrnginywarrnginy lukungur nudinhina Wunungmurra Gumanamana¹</th>
<th>guyarrlimi (humming)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ah hollow log is floating hollow log hollow log is floating hollow log hollow log hollow log from the foundation foundation Wunungmurra Gumana bad nyirr nyirr nyirr nyirr nyirr bur² bêynhe ngarakal Mungurru diwadiwayun maniniwanga buldhirri</td>
<td>hollow log (humming)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¹ musical style of saying this name ² unison chorus representing the sound of the water moving through the hollow log ³ i.e., it doesn’t matter to the hollow log that the water is moving it around</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 43. *dharpa gutjulu* (hollow log) - *bantja/gumurr marrma*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(humming) Ngalayun dhupuŋdi mirrirri</th>
<th>(humming) Ngalayun¹ hollow log hollow log</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>¹ alternate name for Mungurru; this was a mistake, as this word is only supposed to be used in the <em>gagu</em> song</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 44. *dharpa gutjulu* (hollow log) - bantja/gumurr marrma

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>warrrnginywarrnginy gutjulu</th>
<th>marralinyjarrmirr</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dhakunmarangal nudinhina Wunungmurra</td>
<td>Yurrkyurrkba (humming)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rittjarrngalyurrrun dhangayal bulunbulun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Hollow log hollow log hollow log
- Float foundation Wunungmurra
- Yurrkyurrkba<sup>1</sup>(humming)
- Coloured colour colour<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Alternate name for Mungurru
<sup>2</sup> I.e. the salt marks made on the hollow log by the water

### 45. *dharpa gutjulu* (hollow log) - bantja/gumurr marrma

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>mirrirri mirrirri</th>
<th>mirrirri mirrirri dhakandjali</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>latjbukun galam yawu</td>
<td>latjbukun galam bity nhukal Mungurru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bardhunmirrin</td>
<td>gayalawanga nungbaga</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Hollow log hollow log hollow log
- Floating floating yawu<sup>1</sup>
- Floating floating doesn’t matter on you Mungurru moving<sup>2</sup>
- Moving moving Mungurru

<sup>1</sup> Song word signifying worrying
<sup>2</sup> I.e., it doesn’t matter to the hollow log that the water moves it around
### Appendix D
#### Song Texts - Garrapara Song Series

#### 46. **dharpa gutjulu (hollow log) - bantja/gumurr marrma**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>widibiyangbu waymar ngarrany ngurunggali Milnguyawuyngu Yanygartji Mukarrtji Dhaparawunbuynguri (humming) gutjulu dhakunmarangal rifjarr ngarrakal ngal’yurrunanydja dhangayal bulunbulun bulhna ngarra dhakunmaram Yurrkyurrkba ningangba buldirrirri</td>
<td>oh mirrirri latjbukum galam dhakandjali bây nhukal Mungurru bardhunmirrin (garbled) marrayanbawunngu dhakandjali guyaralimi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one more floated me¹ from Milnguyawuyngu² Yanygartji² Mukarrtji² Dhaparawunbuynguri² (humming) hollow log floated colour³ on me⁴ on the hollow log colour colour slowly I float Yurrkyurrkba⁵ foundation foundation</td>
<td>oh hollow log floating floating hollow log doesn’t matter on you Mungurru moving⁶ (garbled) hollow log hollow log hollow log hollow log</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

¹ i.e., the hollow log  
² alternate names of Manggalili waters  
³ i.e., the salt marks made on the hollow log by the water  
⁴ i.e., the hollow log  
⁵ alternate name for Mungurru  
⁶ i.e., it doesn’t matter to the hollow log that the water moves it around
47. *dharpa gutjulu* (hollow log) - *yuta*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Version</th>
<th>Dharpa Version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ngathilingu yawu latjbukun latjbuk latjbuk gutjulu warray ya bapa ya bapa</td>
<td>mirrirri mirri mirrirri mirrirri latjbukun ya bapa ya bapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gamandu marrtji ngurunggali Dharrakanmatji Yurrkyurrkba ningangba latjbuk</td>
<td>gamandu marrtji ngurunggali Yurrkyurrkba Ngaliirri latjbuk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>latjbuk gutjulu warray dhakunmarra nyuja ningangba warray ya bapa ya bapa</td>
<td>latjbuk latjbuk dhaka ndjali latjbuk latjbuk mirrirri mirri ya bapa ya bapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gamandu marrtji ngurunggali Dharrakanmatji Gumanamana ningangba latjbukum galam</td>
<td>waymar ngarrany Mayangmagu Yanygarrtji Milnguyawuyngu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>old-fashioned(^1) yawu(^2) floating float float floating</td>
<td>hollow log hollow log hollow log hollow log floating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>float float hollow log warray(^3) ya father ya father(^4)</td>
<td>ya father ya father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carrying carrying with that Dharrakanmatji(^5) Yurrkyurrkba(^6) foundation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>float float hollow log warray floating new(^7) foundation warray ya father</td>
<td>carrying carrying with that Yurrkyurrkba(^8) Ngaliirri(^8) float</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya father ya father carrying carrying with that</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dharrakanmatji Gumanamana foundation floating floating</td>
<td>float float hollow log float float hollow log hollow log ya father ya father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>floated me Manggalili waters Manggalili waters Manggalili waters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) this *yuta* *manikay* is quite old
\(^2\) a word which signifies worrying
\(^3\) song word with no specific meaning
\(^4\) this underlined section is the unison “chorus”
\(^5\) alternate names for Mungurru
\(^6\) the spiritual foundation of Garrapara
\(^7\) the hollow log is very old, but the water makes it look new

\(^8\) alternate names for Mungurru
48. *dharpa gutjulu* (hollow log) - *yuta*

| mirrirri mirrirri mirrirri mirrirri | mirrirri mirrirri mirrirri mirrirri |
| mirrirri mirrirri mirrirri mirrirri | dhakaŋdjali yuta dhupundji |
| gutjulu dhakunmarang yuta dhupundji | ya bapa ya bapa |
| ya bapa ya bapa | gamandu marrtji nurunggali |
| gamandu marrtji ngurunggali | Gawulungga Ngalirri latjbul |
| Dharrakanmatji Yurrkyurkba ningangba | latjbul latjbul dhakaŋdjali |
| latjbul latjbul yuta dhupundji | ya bapa ya bapa |
| ya bapa ya bapa | gamandu marrtji ngurunggali |
| waymar gurruku ngurunggali | Ngalirri Muyurrurra Gambali |
| Muyurrurra Dharrakanmatji Yurrkyurkba ningangba | |

| hollow log hollow log hollow log hollow log | hollow log hollow log hollow log hollow log |
| hollow log hollow log hollow log hollow log | hollow log |
| hollow log hollow log hollow log hollow log | hollow log |
| hollow log float new\(^1\) hollow log | hollow log new hollow log |
| ya father ya father\(^2\) | ya father ya father |
| carrying carrying with that | carrying carrying with that |
| Dharrakanmatji\(^3\) Yurrkyurkba\(^3\) foundation | Gawulungga\(^5\) Ngalirri\(^5\) float |
| float float new hollow log | float float hollow log |
| ya father ya father | ya father ya father |
| float will with that | carrying carrying with that |
| Muyurrurra\(^3\) Dharrakanmatji Yurrkyurkba foundation | Ngalirri Muyurrurra\(^5\) foundation |

\(^1\) the hollow log is very old, but the water makes it look new
\(^2\) this underlined section is the unison “chorus”
\(^3\) alternate names for Mungurru
\(^4\) the spiritual foundation of Garrapara

5 alternate names for Mungurru
49. *dharpa gutjulu* (hollow log) - *yuta*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>dhaka11djali</th>
<th>dhaka11djali</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>latjbukum galam ritjarrmirriyangal</td>
<td>latjbukum galam ritjarrmirriyangal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guyarralimi</td>
<td>guyarralimi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya bapa ya bapa</td>
<td>ya bapa ya bapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gamandu marrtji ngurunggali</td>
<td>gamandu marrtji ngurunggali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muyurrurra Yurrkyurkba ningangba</td>
<td>Muyurrurra Yurrkyurkba ningangba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>latjbuk latjbuk yuta gutjulu</td>
<td>latjbuk latjbuk yuta gutjulu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya bapa ya bapa</td>
<td>ya bapa ya bapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gamandu marrtji ngurunggali</td>
<td>gamandu marrtji ngurunggali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muyurrurra Yurrkyurkba Gumanamana ningangba</td>
<td>Wunungmurra Ngalirri</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**float float float**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>hollow log hollow log new</th>
<th>hollow log floating floating coloured hollow log</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hollow log warray</td>
<td>ya father ya father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coloured coloured</td>
<td>carrying carrying with that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya father ya father</td>
<td>Muyurrurra7 Yurrkyurkba7 foundation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**1** the hollow log is very old, but the water makes it look new  
**2** song word with no specific meaning  
**3** i.e., the salt marks left on the hollow log by the water  
**4** this underlined section is the unison “chorus”  
**5** alternate names for Mungurru  
**6** the spiritual foundation of Garrapara  

**7** alternate names for Mungurru
## 50. *dharpa gutjulu* (hollow log) - *yuta*

| Gu gu widibiyangbu | Mirrirri mirrirri dhakandjali |
| latjbul latjbul latjbulum galam | marrayanbawunngu dhakandjali |
| gu gu widibiyangbu latjbul latjbul latjbulum galam | ya bapa ya bapa |
| gu gu widibiyangbu latjbul latjbul latjbulum galam gutjulu warray dhakunmarangal | gamandu marrtji ngurunggali |
| gu gu widibiyangbu latjbul latjbul latjbulum galam gutjulu warray dhakunmarangal ya bapa ya bapa | Dharrakanmatji Yurrkyurrkba Buldhirrirri |
| gu gu widibiyangbu latjbul latjbul latjbulum galam gutjulu warray dhakunmarangal ya bapa ya bapa | latjbul latjbul mirrirri mirrirri mirrirri |
| gu gu widibiyangbu latjbul latjbul latjbulum galam gutjulu warray dhakunmarangal ya bapa ya bapa | ya bapa ya bapa |
| gamandu marrtji ngurunggali Dharrakanmatji Yurrkyurrkba Buldhirrirri latjbul latjbul mirrirri mirrirri ya bapa ya bapa | gamandu marrtji ngurunggali |
| gamandu marrtji ngurunggali Dharrakanmatji Yurrkyurrkba Buldhirrirri latjbul latjbul mirrirri mirrirri ya bapa ya bapa | Muyurrurra Yurrkyurrkba Buldhirrirri |
| gamandu marrtji ngurunggali Dharrakanmatji Yurrkyurrkba Buldhirrirri latjbul latjbul mirrirri mirrirri ya bapa ya bapa | Wunungmurrari |
| gu gu1 one more float float floating floating | hollow log hollow log hollow log hollow log |
| float float floating floating hollow log warray2 floated | ya father ya father |
| ya father ya father3 carrying carrying with that | carrying carrying with that |
| Dharrakanmatji4 Yurrkyurrkba4 Buldhirrirri4 float float hollow log hollow log | Wunungmurrum Ngalirri5 float |
| Ya father ya father carrying carrying with that | hollow log hollow log hollow log hollow log |
| Muyurrurra4 Yurrkyurrkba Buldhirrirri that Wunungmurrum | ya father ya father |
| Muyurrurra4 Yurrkyurrkba Buldhirrirri that Wunungmurrum | (humming) |

1. *song words used to “find the tune”*
2. *song word with no specific meaning*
3. *this underlined section is the unison “chorus”*
4. *alternate names for Mungurru*
5. *alternate name for Mungurru*
### 51. *man’tjarr* (mangrove leaves) - *yindi*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bandu bulnhagunarawandja</th>
<th>(humming)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>guyanydjja bandu bathalanydja (garbled)</td>
<td>ah miwatj Barungganngur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ah makala marrtji gumurringamathirr</td>
<td>wukundurr (humming)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wuwulyun djunjili galarrawar</td>
<td>wutj may may may may may</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>man’tjarr marrtji dhalayun</td>
<td>wutj may may may may may (garbled)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mathamirr gunarrangmirr wupuymirr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>galawangmirr garrwu ngarra marrtji</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambutja Dhungungalyu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wutj may may may may may</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dhalayun marrtji man’tjarr miny’tji marrtji</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gamanydjja burredji burruwulu migaranha</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- leave the slow bilma
- the fish leave big fish (garbled)\(^1\)
- ah leaves floating in a line floating leaves
- leaves floating floating
- with language Numbulwar language
- Numbulwar language\(^2\)
- with language Numbulwar language
- Numbulwar language Numbulwar language going into I floating Gambutja\(^3\)
- Dhungungalyu\(^3\)
- wutj may may may may may\(^4\)
- floating floating leaves colour\(^5\)
- floating carrying Rainbow Serpent Rainbow Serpent that Rainbow Serpent

\(^1\) instructions to skip the song subject *ratjuk* (barramundi)
\(^2\) because the leaves are from Numbulwar, they have that language
\(^3\) this is a sacred place in the ocean near Garrapara where the Rainbow Serpent lives
\(^4\) this underlined section is the unison "chorus", which has no particular meaning
\(^5\) the leaves are the same colour as the Rainbow Serpent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(humming)</th>
<th>ah different(^6) Barungganngur(^7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>leaves (humming)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wutj may may may may may (^4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^6\) different coloured leaves
\(^7\) alternate name for Numbulwar
### 52. *man’tjarr* (mangrove leaves) - *yindi*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Man’tjarr (mangrove leaves)</th>
<th><em>Yindi</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ah wukundurr marrtji dhalalyun yiwanga</strong></td>
<td><strong>Miwatj man’tjarr galam marrtji ah galirruwara wumitjitji</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wukundurr marrtji dhalalyun yiwangawanga</strong></td>
<td><strong>Wukundurr marrtji dhalalyun man’tjarr yiwanga</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Makala warray</strong></td>
<td><strong>Makala warray</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Oh bárkungur Barungganngur</strong></td>
<td><strong>Oh bárkungur Barungganngur</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marungarrangur Rambanganngur Ngulu</strong></td>
<td><strong>Marungarrangur Rambanganngur Ngulu</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wulunggumbangur wukundurr marrtji dhalalyun</strong></td>
<td><strong>Wulunggumbangur wukundurr marrtji dhalalyun</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wutj may may may may may</strong></td>
<td><strong>Wutj may may may may may</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dhalal garrwu ngarra marrtji Gambutja Dhungungalyu Mengurryu</strong></td>
<td><strong>Dhalal garrwu ngarra marrtji Gambutja Dhungungalyu Mengurryu</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**

1. Song word with no specific meaning
2. Alternate name for Numbulwar
3. This underlined section is the unison “chorus”, which has no particular meaning
4. This is a sacred place in the ocean near Garrapara where the Rainbow Serpent lives
5. Alternate name for Gambutja

---

Different leaves floating floating leaves

Leaves floating floating leaves floating leaves warray

Oh from a long way Barungganngur

Marungarrangur

Marungarrangur Rambanganngur Ngulu

Wulunggumbangur leaves floating floating

Wutj may may may may may

Floating going into I floating Gambutja

Dhungungalyu Mengurryu

---

354
53. *man’ljarr* (mangrove leaves) - *yindi*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song Text</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>ah wukundurr marrtji dhalalyun yiwangawanga bunbuvada bunbuvada dhalalyun makala dhunupayangal Gambutja Dhungungalwuy Mengurryuwuy Baraltja wutj may may may may may dhalal miwatj dhananytja bingur Rambingga Malarra NgululNgur</em></td>
<td>ah leaves floating floating leaves floating leaves floating leaves straight Gambutja(^1) to Dhungungal(^2) to Mengurryu(^2) Baraltja(^2) wutj may may may may may(^3) floating different that from Rambingga(^4) Malarra(^4) from Ngulul(^4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1. this is a sacred place in the ocean near Garrapara where the Rainbow Serpent lives
2. alternate name for Gambutja
3. this underlined section is the unison “chorus”, which has no particular meaning
4. alternate name for Numbulwar
54. *man’tjarr* (mangrove leaves) - *yindi*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ah miwatj dhalalyun Burrululgur</th>
<th>(garbled)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mtiwatj dhalalyun Burrululgur</td>
<td>latbjukun galam galirrwara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rulyambarrngur Ruluijbarrngur</td>
<td>(garbled)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruluijbarrngur</td>
<td>(humming)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngaliny manda dhalalyun dhindi guwatjilil djirrmalangan gumalangan gumalangan</td>
<td><em>wutj may may may may may</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>makala marrtji wuwulyun bunbuwada</td>
<td>dhala (garbled) <em>man’tjarr</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wutj may may may may may</td>
<td>dhala (garbled) <em>man’tjarr</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dhalal wukundurr marrtji dhalalyun galirrwara</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| ah different floating from Burrulug1 different floating from Burrulug from Rulyambarr1 from Ruluijbarr us2 two2 floating bamboo bamboo bamboo leaves floating float leaves wutj may may may may may3 floating leaves floating floating leaves |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| (humming)                         | (garbled) |
| floating floating leaves          |
| (humming)                         | (garbled) |
| *wutj may may may may may*        |
| floating (garbled) leaves         |

1 alternate name for Numbulwar
2 The leaves and bamboo floating together
3 This underlined section is the unison "chorus", which has no particular meaning

55. *man’tjarr* (mangrove leaves) - *bantja/gumurr wanggany*

| bitjananduyan yakandu bulnhagumanydja midhawanggany varawurr garawurr garawurr garawurr man’tjarr man’tjarr garawurr garawurr garawurr garawurr man’tjarr man’tjarr matjula man’tjarr liyayudhurrun Ngululgur Malmarrangurrya man’tjarr dhalalyurrung wukundurr |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| this way now not slowly gumurr wanggany1 leaves leaves leaves leaves leaves leaves leaves leaves leaves leaves leaves leaves leaves leaves leaves leaves floated from Ngulu2 from Malmarr2 leaves floated leaves |
| 1 this is an alternate name for the song version known as *gumurr wanggany* |
| 2 alternate name for Numbulwar |
56. *man’tjarr* (mangrove leaves) - *bantja/gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>galirrwara galirrwara galirrwara galirrwara</th>
<th>malmalinydja man’tjarr liyayudhurrun</th>
<th>leaves leaves leaves leaves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>leaves leaves leaves</td>
<td></td>
<td>leaves leaves floated leaves</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

57. *man’tjarr* (mangrove leaves) - *bantja/gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>djunmili djunmili djunmili djunmili man’tjarr</th>
<th>djunmili djunmili wukundurrya liyayudhun</th>
<th>leaves leaves leaves leaves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>leaves leaves leaves leaves floating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

58. *man’tjarr* (mangrove leaves) - *bantja/gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>matjula matjula matjula man’tjarr</th>
<th>matjula matjula wukundurrya man’tjarr</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>leaves leaves leaves</td>
<td>leaves leaves those leaves leaves</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
59. *man’tjarr* (mangrove leaves) / *burruwulu* (Rainbow Serpent - Madarrpa) -
*yuta/gumurr marrma*

Note: This is a *yuta manilcay* alternates sections sung with a DhaJ.wangu melodic line about the mangrove leaves with sections sung with a Madarrpa melodic line about the Rainbow Serpent. The Madarrpa Rainbow Serpent song is part of their Ganbutja song series, which is the equivalent of the DhaJ.wangu song series at Gangan, where they also sing a version of the Rainbow Serpent song.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>gu ngarra nhungu Yilbarawuy barkbarkun yanhungu nganhanganharaw ya man’tjarr wukundurr Ganangur galam marrtji ah miwatji Barunggannrug wukundurr dhanhirran marrtji makala wurrurmulganharaw dhamburrdhamburrwung man’tjarr yiwanga galirrwarra wukundurr</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ya ngathil dhakunmarang Yakutjawuwyngu Dhungugal Mengurrugya ngathil dhakunmarang Yakutjawuwyngu Baraltjawuwyngu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(humming) yamalwanga mundumundu ya ya wu wu gati gati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ganangur galam marrtji miwatji Barunggannrug wumitjitji dhanhirran marrtji makala wurrurmulkahawuy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya ngathil dhakunmarang Yakutjawuwyngu Dhungugalwuyngu ya ngathil dhakunmarang Yakutjawuwyngu Baraltjawuwyngu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dhalalyun wukuyun mundumundu mundu gapuwaykarrangmirri ya ya wu wu gati gati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(humming) ya ya wu wu gati gati guykun ngarra dalalayun mathanydja ngarra dutjul Nguldhanil Dhaparawunil ngarra guykun dalalayun Djarrarrkarri Wandu Mambumambu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
gu gu
I for you of Yilbara sing just for you to listen
ya leaves
leaves from Gaŋa floating floating
ah different from Barunggan leaves
float float leaves floating floating leaves leaves leaves leaves

of the mangroves mangroves of the mangroves
of the mangroves colour Rainbow Serpent Rainbow Serpent
Rainbow Serpent Rainbow Serpent
ya first float of Yakutja Dhungungal Mengurru
ya first float of Yakutja Dhungungal

---

ya first float of Yakutja of Dhungungal
ya first float of Yakutja of Baraltja

Rainbow Serpent Rainbow Serpent
ya ya wu wu gatj gatj

from Gaŋa floating floating
different from Barunggan leaves
floating floating leaves floated

Rainbow Serpent Rainbow Serpent
ya ya wu wu gatj gatj

---

ya first float of Yakutja Dhungungal
ya first float of Yakutja of Baraltja

floating spitting out lightning
Rainbow Serpent Rainbow Serpent with
clear water
ya ya wu wu gatj gatj

(humming)

---

Malmarra I depart Gurrundul
Marrurru
Malmarra I depart Barunggan
Wugalatjgalatj
ya first float of Yakutja of Dhungungal

---

ya ya wu wu gatj gatj
spitting out lightning I floating signal
I back to to Nguldhan
to Dhaparawun I spitting out
lightning floating Djarrarrkarri
Wandu Mambumambu
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Song Texts - Garrapara Song Series</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>song words used to “find the tune”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>alternate name for a Maقارب place called Baniyala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>the singer is speaking to the man for whom this recording was being made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>alternate name for Numbulwar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>alternate names for Gambutja, a sacred place in the ocean near Garrapara where the Rainbow Serpent lives. This underlined section is also the unison “chorus” where the singers “worry” about the mangrove leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>this underlined section is the unison “chorus”; the word “ya” signifies worrying, and the word “gatj” is the sound of the Rainbow Serpent spitting lightning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>the Rainbow Serpent lives in the “clear water” called Mungurru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>the colour of the Rainbow Serpent, which is a mixture of colours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>a place near Numbulwar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>another place near Numbulwar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>alternate name for Gurrundul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>alternate name for Numbulwar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>the spitting of lightning is a signal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>a place at Numbulwar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>alternate name for Djarrarrkarri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>another place at Numbulwar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
60. *man’tjarr* (mangrove leaves) / *burruwulu* (Rainbow Serpent - Madarrpa) - *yuta/gumurr marra* 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song Texts</th>
<th>Garrapara Song Series</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ganangur Gapa Ganaymagarr</td>
<td>makala makala wurrurrmulkanhar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>man’tjarr</em> wukundurr wumitjitji galirrwara</td>
<td>djunjmili djunjmili matjula liyayudhun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dijiwirrirrwuy bandumulwuy</td>
<td>Yililangur Miwul Wulmungur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>man’tjarr</em> galirrwara dhanhirran marrtji</td>
<td>Yililangur Gurrundul Yibangarrangur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yiwiwanga wukundurr galirrwara</td>
<td>bayun Marayawirr Balwarri gabun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya ngathil dahanunmarang Yakutjawuyngu</td>
<td>bayun ngarra Dhudiyalgal Gudhunbuy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya ngathil dahanunmarang Yakutjawuyngu</td>
<td>matjula matjula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baraltjawuyngu</td>
<td>bulnha liyayudhun galangal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dhungungal Gambutja</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wukuyun dhalafyun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mundumundu mundu gapuwaykarrangmirri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya ya wu wu gati gati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ganangur galam marrtji wukundurr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>man’tjarr</em> dhanhirran marrtji wumitjitji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>galirrwara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dhalalyun mundumundu mundu</td>
<td>ya ya wu wu gati gati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gapuwaykarrangmirri dhalalyurr</td>
<td>bitjana ngarra guykundja Ngulubamdhu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya ya wu wu gati gati</td>
<td>djarr ngarra marrtji lukanydja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oh miwatj wukundurr</td>
<td>gunbijarrnha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wukundurr</td>
<td>manhalanginy bayarrbayarr djalanadyjalnha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>man’tjarr</em> yiwiwanga galirrwara</td>
<td>manaban mari bakajarr murringgininha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leaves leaves floating</td>
<td>leaves leaves floating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from Gana (^1) Gana (^1) Gapaymagarr (^1)</td>
<td>from Yilila (^6) Miwu (^7) from Wulmu (^8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leaves leaves leaves leaves</td>
<td>from Yilila Gurrundul (^9) from Yibangarra (^10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya first float of Yakutja</td>
<td>depart Marayawirr (^11) Balwarri (^11) Gabun (^11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya first float of Yakutja of Baraltja (^2)</td>
<td>depart I Dhudiyalyal (^11) Gudhunbuy (^11) leaves leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spitting lightning floating</td>
<td>slowly float float</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainbow Serpent Rainbow Serpent with clear water (^3)</td>
<td>Dhungugal Gambutja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya ya wu wu gatj gatj (^4)</td>
<td>spitting lightning Rainbow Serpent with clear water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from Gana floating floating leaves</td>
<td>Rainbow Serpent Rainbow Serpent with clear water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leaves floating floating leaves leaves</td>
<td>ya ya wu wu gatj gatj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya first float of Yakutja of Dhungal (^5)</td>
<td>floated from Manggalili waters Manggalili waters from Manggalili waters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya first float of Yakutja of Baraltja</td>
<td>floated me from Manggalili waters from Manggalili waters slowly I floating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>floating Rainbow Serpent Rainbow Serpent</td>
<td>Dhungugal Mengurryu (^12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with clear water float</td>
<td>ya ya wu wu gatj gatj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya ya wu wu gatj gatj</td>
<td>that way I spitting lightning Ngulubamdu (^13) sacred feather (^14) I eating (^15) eating that sacred feather sacred feather sacred feather that sacred feather also poison (^16) paperbark (^16) paperbark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oh different leaves leaves</td>
<td>leaves leaves leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>alternate names for Numbulwar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>this underlined section is the unison “chorus” section where the singers “worry” about the mangrove leaves; Yakutja and Baraltja are alternate names for Gambutja, a sacred place in the ocean near Garrapara where the Rainbow Serpent lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>the Rainbow Serpent lives in the “clear water” called Mungurru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>this underlined section is the unison “chorus”; the word “ya” signifies worrying, and the word “gatj” is the sound of the Rainbow Serpent spitting lightning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>alternate name for Gambutja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>a place near Numbulwar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>another place near Numbulwar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>another place near Numbulwar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>another place near Numbulwar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>alternate name for Gurrundul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>a Yirritja-moiety Nungumatjibarr place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>alternate name for Gambutja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>alternate name for Gangan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>a feather from wurran, the ancestral diving duck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>in Djalwangu belief, the Rainbow Serpent ate this feather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>the Rainbow Serpent also eats paperbark, parts of which are poisonous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>man‘tjarr (mangrove leaves) / burruwulu (Rainbow Serpent - Madarrpa) - yuta/gumurr marrna</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yanhungu nganhanganharawa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gumurrjararrk ngulami nhe ngarrany</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bandadjurr ngakunhini</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ganangur galam man‘tjarr yiwanga</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ganangur galam wukundurr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wumitjiti galirrwara man‘tjarr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barungganngur galam marrtji wukundurr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>galangal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya ngathil dhakunmarang Yakutjawuungu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhungungalwuungu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya ngathil dhakunmarang Yakutjawuungu Baraltjawuungu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya ya wu wu gati gati</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>galam marrtji Barungganngur</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>galam marrtji wukundurr wumitjiti</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya ngathil dhakunmarang Yakutjawuungu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhungungalwuungu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya ngathil dhakunmarang Yakutjawuungu Baraltjawuungu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya ya wu wu gati gati</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bayun ngarra Nguldhantja Lurrya ngarrak</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhaparawundja</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barunggan bayun ngarra man‘tjarryu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wukundurr liyayudhun galangal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya ngathil dhakunmarang Yakutjawuungu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhungungalwuungu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya ngathil dhakunmarang Yakutjawuungu Baraltjawuungu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya ya wu wu gati gati</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mundumundu mundu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gapuwaykarrangmirri</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manydjigurra wayin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya ya wu wu gati gati</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>makala dhalalyurrun wukundurr wumitjiti</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>liyayudhurrun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marrurrru bayun ngarra Rulitjbirr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruluyambarr Yibangarra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurrundul ngarra bayundja dhalalyun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dhunupayan gambutjay</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wukuyun dhalalyun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mundumundu mundu gapuwaykarrangmirri</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya ya wu wu gati gati</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bitjana ngarra guykundja Liwunga</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djajbami Malanydhula Baguda</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winbirray ngarra guykun dhalalyundja</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngarrakaw Garawirrtjawa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

364
just for you for listening poor fella so that you to me will listen
from Gana floating floating leaves
from Gana floating leaves
leaves leaves leaves
from Barunggan floating floating leaves floated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ya ya wu wu gatj gatj</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ya first float of Yakutja of Dhungungal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya first float of Yakutja of Baraltja</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rainbow Serpent Rainbow Serpent with clear water
Rainbow Serpent snake

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ya ya wu wu gatj gatj</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ya first float of Yakutja of Baraltja</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

that way I spit lightning Liwunga
Djambami Malanydhula Baguda
Winbirray I spit lightning float bones Garawirrtjawa

365
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>the singer is addressing the person for whom the recording is being made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>alternate name for Numbulwar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>a place at Numbulwar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>alternate name for Gambutja, a sacred place in the ocean near Garrapara where the Rainbow Serpent lives; this underlined section is the unison “chorus”, where the singers “worry” for the mangrove leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>this underlined section is the unison “chorus”; the word “ya” signifies worrying, and the word “gatj” is the sound of the Rainbow Serpent spitting lightning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>the Rainbow Serpent lives in the “clear water” called Mungurru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>alternate name for Numbulwar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>alternate names for a place near Numbulwar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>a place at Numbulwar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>alternate names for Yandhala, a Birrkili island in Arnhem Bay; this place is connected cosmologically to Garrapara because the same kind of water, Mungurru, surrounds it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>this refers to a class of likan names</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>likan name for Birrkili people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix D
Song Texts - Garrapara Song Series

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>62. naku (canoe) - gumurr wanggany</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>lingundhu bandu ngayi ngathilingunyndja marrtjindhu yukurr ngunhu liwyunbu ngali dhawadhunbu gurririla gayung gayung gayung</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>wiritj biritj biritj nangundha nangundha gurrrma marrala milmilgun gayung gayunggi marrala milmilgun ningi naku Guḍaguda</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>finished leave that old one(^1) going is that(^2) paddling we out just a few paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling paddle shining(^3) paddling paddling paddle shining proper canoe Garrapara people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1 instructions to leave out an “old fashioned” **yuja manikay for man’jarr**  
2 my tape recorder was rolling |
| 3 the water glistens on the wet paddle |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>63. naku (canoe) - gumurr wanggany</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>dhanytja marrtji wayubun Maymuruwa Dhawurrngurrwa Mamunydjamawa naku bingur Ngurruwulguŋur</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>nangundha wirri birri oh marrala nhirrar wułulumirr gungubun natjinmirr</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this floating moving for Maymuru(^1) for Dhawurrngurrwa(^2) for Mamunydjamawa(^2) canoe from from Ngurruwulguŋur(^3) paddling paddle paddling oh paddle putting in the water with the cloud(^4) with the cloud with the cloud</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1 the surname adopted by Manggalili people  
2 alternate name for Maymuru  
3 alternate name for Manggalili country at Djarrakpi  
4 as you watch people paddling on the horizon, it looks as though the clouds are right behind them |
64. **naku (canoe) - gumurr wanggany**

| ngarrakunydra wutju wangayngunydra larroad dhanytja bananak Munhalwa Rrayulyutwa | gayunggi gayunggi nangundha gurrma gayung gayunggi (garbled) |
| gulyurrun ngalimurrung Gujagudawa Manharrngu Dawumunharrngu Nungbulungunba | paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling (garbled) |

| for me tree¹ another tree this tree people of Numbulwar people of Numbulwar | paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling (garbled) |
| floated for us Garrapara people Garrapara people Garrapara people Garrapara people | paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling (garbled) |

¹ a tree at Numbulwar used to make boomerangs and paddles.

65. **naku (canoe) - gumurr wanggany**

| gayung gayung gayunggi marrala milmilgun gayung gayung gayunggi marrala dhanngalngal | nangundha gurrma wirri birri birri nangundha gurrma marrala milmilgun |
| paddling paddling paddling paddle shining paddling paddling paddling paddle shining | paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling paddle shining |
| paddling paddling paddling paddle shining | paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling paddle shining |
### 66. *naku* (canoe) - *gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wuybun marrji dhawal Bâniyalangunydja Wuyminyarra wuybun marrji Nyikunyiku Malirrangu</th>
<th>Biritj biritj biritj wirri birri biritj biritj biritj (garbled)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dhanytja naku ngalimurrumbal yakumirr Ribiribi Yinigambu warray</td>
<td>Paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling (garbled)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floated floated place¹ past Bâniyalala Wuyminyarra² floated floated Nyikunyiku² Malirrangu²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This canoe for us with the name Ribiribi³ Yinigambu³ warray⁴</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| ¹ the “place” is Bâniyalala  
² alternate name for Bâniyalala  
³ names of the canoe  
⁴ song word with no specific meaning |  |
### 67. naku (canoe) - yuta

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Yidakinya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>oh ngarra ngungu birrakayun bamannguy</strong></td>
<td>ya waku wurru ya yapa manda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>accidentbuy yidakinya</strong></td>
<td>ya dhumun gurr nhathin ngalimurrung naku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>nangundha gurma nangundha gurma</strong></td>
<td>ya waku wurru ya yapa manda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>gayung gayunggi marrala milmilgun</strong></td>
<td>ya dhumun gurr nhathin ngalimurrung naku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>marrala nhirrar gungubunnirr natjimirr</strong></td>
<td>ya waku wurru ya yapa manda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>wululumirr</strong></td>
<td>ya dhumun gurr wirri birri birri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>nguy dharpungal Mungurru Lirrinmatji</strong></td>
<td>ya waku wurru ya yapa manda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gawululnga</strong></td>
<td>ya dhumun gurr nhathin ngalimurrung naku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ya waku wurru ya yapa manda</strong></td>
<td>ya waku wurru ya yapa manda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ya dhumun gurr nhathin ngalimurrung naku</strong></td>
<td>ya waku wurru ya yapa manda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>gayung gayunggi</strong></td>
<td>ya waku wurru ya yapa manda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>marrala milmilgun gayung gayung gayunggi</strong></td>
<td>ya waku wurru ya yapa manda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ya waku wurru ya yapa manda</strong></td>
<td>ya waku wurru ya yapa manda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ya dhumun gurr nhathin ngalimurrung naku</strong></td>
<td>ya waku wurru ya yapa manda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>oh for you try from a long time of the accident play the yidaki</strong></td>
<td>ya nieces those ya sisters two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>paddling paddling paddling paddling paddling</strong></td>
<td>ya nieces those ya sisters two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>paddling paddling paddle shining paddle putting in the water with the</strong></td>
<td>ya nieces those ya sisters two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>cloud with the cloud with the cloud ocean putting it in</strong></td>
<td>ya nieces those ya sisters two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mungurru Lirrinmatji</strong></td>
<td>ya nieces those ya sisters two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gawululnga</strong></td>
<td>ya nieces those ya sisters two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ya nieces those ya sisters two</strong></td>
<td>ya nieces those ya sisters two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ya cousin how for us canoe</strong></td>
<td>ya nieces those ya sisters two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>paddling paddling paddle shining paddling paddling paddling</strong></td>
<td>ya nieces those ya sisters two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ya nieces those ya sisters two</strong></td>
<td>ya nieces those ya sisters two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ya cousin how for us canoe</strong></td>
<td>ya nieces those ya sisters two</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 alternate name for Mungurru
2 this underlined section is the unison “chorus”; singers “worry” for their kin who were involved in the car accident

Appendix D
Song Texts - Garrapara Song Series
68. *naku* (canoe) - *yuta*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Mungurru</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>oh paddling paddling paddling paddling shining canoe proper canoe people of Garrapara people of Garrapara paddling paddling paddling paddle putting in the water with the clouds clouds with the clouds paddling paddling paddling ocean putting it in putting it in Muyurrurra Banbani Gawumala1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ribiribi3 canoe Gunda3 with the name Yinigambu3 those Garrapara people canoe floated paddling paddling paddling ya nieces those ya sisters two ya cousin how for us canoe paddling paddling paddling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Mungurru</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ya nieces those ya sisters two ya cousin how for us canoe2 paddling paddling paddling paddle shining paddling paddling paddling paddling ya nieces those ya sisters two ya cousin how for us canoe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ribiribi3 canoe Gunda3 with the name Yinigambu3 those Garrapara people canoe floated paddling paddling paddling ya nieces those ya sisters two ya cousin how for us canoe paddling paddling paddling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1 alternate name for Mungurru
2 this underlined section is the unison "chorus"; singers "worry" for their kin who were involved in the car accident
3 name of the canoe
69. *minyga (garfish) - gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yumurrkundja gurrkundu ngayinydja murrugaya</th>
<th>Yumurrkundja gurrkundu ngayinydja murrugaya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yiwaygu wanyuminyga minyga</td>
<td>Yiwaygu wanyuminyga minyga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yiwaygu wanyudhurrba guya</td>
<td>Yiwaygu wanyudhurrba guya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djalaljurrun</td>
<td>Djalaljurrun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ganydjarrwuthin bingur Ngulungur</td>
<td>Ganydjarrwuthin bingur Ngulungur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small one after it big one&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Garfish garfish garfish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garfish garfish fish</td>
<td>Swimming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A long way from from Ngulur&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 instructions to other singers about the order of songs</td>
<td>2 alternate name for Numbulwar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

70. *minyga (garfish) - gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yiwaygu yiwaygu</th>
<th>Djalal djalal djalal wanyuminyga</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balay wudhurrun dharakanmatji</td>
<td>Yurrkyurrkba Gawulunga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garfish garfish</td>
<td>Swimming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming swimming garfish</td>
<td>Waters hit&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt; Dharrakanmatji&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yurrkyurrkba&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt; Gawulunga&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 the fish is hitting the water as it swims</td>
<td>2 alternate name for Mungurru</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

71. *minyga (garfish) - gumurr wanggany*

| Yiwaygu yiwaygu                               | Balay wudhurrun Gawulunga                  |
| Djalal djalal djalal wanyudhurba              | Ganytifarrya Gamaṭangur warry              |
| Balay wudhurrun Gawulunga                     |                                             |
| Garfish garfish                               | Swimming                                     |
| Swimming swimming swimming garfish            | Waters hit<sup>1</sup> Gawulunga<sup>2</sup> (garbled) |
| Waters hit<sup>1</sup> Gawulunga<sup>2</sup> (garbled) |                                             |
| 1 the fish is hitting the water as it swims   | 3 a place at Numbulwar                     |
| 2 alternate name for Mungurru                 | 4 song word with no specific meaning       |
### 72. *minyga* (garfish) - *gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>widibiyangbu (humming)</th>
<th>(garbled)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yiwaygu yiwaygu yiwaygu yiwaygu</td>
<td>Banbani Gawumala (garbled) Madadi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marritjikurru djalalyurrun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bingur ngarra ganytjarrya Malmarrangur</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngululngur ganytjarrya ngurrunyija mādhalunggu guya</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one more (humming)</td>
<td>(garbled)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>garfish garfish garfish garfish</td>
<td>Banbani3 Gawumala3 (garbled)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>garfish swimming</td>
<td>Madadi3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from I came from from MalmARRA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from Ngulul2 came from nose like a spear fish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 1 a place near Numbulwar | 3 alternate name for Mungurru |
| 2 alternate name for Numbulwar | |

### 73. *minyga* (garfish) - *gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>oh yawu djalal djalal djalal djalal djalal djalal djalal</th>
<th>Lirrinmatji Gawululnga Madadi Lukulurryunar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wurrunyija nimadbirri</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| oh yawu1 | Lirrinmatji2 Gawululnga2 Madadi2 Lukulurryunar2 |
| swimming swimming swimming swimming swimming swimming swimming swimming garfish | |
| swimming swimming swimming swimming garfish nose like a spear | |

| 1 a song word signifying worrying | 2 alternate name for Mungurru |
| 2 alternate name for Mungurru | |
74. *makani* (jewfish) - *gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ngayinydja muka marrtji rulanggun</th>
<th>gu gu barrkundu marrtji dunuwatjwatjun ngarrayngarray barrkundu marrtji dunuwatjwatjun runydjulum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>murrukaya mayangdja dika</td>
<td>Djundja wuyupurrun ngarrak Ganya Gananymagarr wuthurra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dhawumyangdhinandu</td>
<td>it now all right swimming swimming the big one(^1) voice starting to disappear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gu gu away swimming swimming in its style(^4) jewfish away swimming swimming in its style swimming in its style</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

that Djun\(^2\) gone for me Gana\(^2\) Gananymagarr\(^2\) jewfish\(^3\)

\(^1\) i.e., bigger than the previous fish sung about
\(^2\) alternate name for Numbulwar
\(^3\) Bangana accidentally said his deceased brother's name here, which caused him to start going hoarse and other people listening to start to cry

\(^4\) the jewfish has a particular style of swimming
### 75. *makani* (jewfish) - *gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Malagaya wuyupurrrun Nawulugulu ngarrayngarray&lt;br&gt;Malagaya wuyupurrrun Nawulugulu runydjulu</th>
<th>balarrkbalarrk balarrk ngarrayngarray ngarray&lt;br&gt;Djunwudhin guya midadu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dhalambauwngu ganydjarr mulundu runanggun marrtji oh ngarrayngarray barrkundu ngarra marrtji dunuwatjwatin Djunwudhinandu guya</td>
<td>Malagaya(^1) gone Nawulugulu(^2) jewfish&lt;br&gt;Malagaya gone Nawulugulu jewfish&lt;br&gt;from Dhalambah(^3) a long way slowly swimming swimming oh jewfish away I swimming swimming in its style Djun(^4) gone fish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

\(^1\) a place at Numbulwar<br>\(^2\) another place at Numbulwar<br>\(^3\) another place at Numbulwar<br>\(^4\) alternate name for Numbulwar
## Appendix D
### Song Texts - Garrapara Song Series

76. *makani (jewfish) - gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wulmu ngarrakunydjia wayupurrun Yililangunydjia milgarri ngarrak dika Gulguynanydjia Gana Ganawiyin</th>
<th>runydjulu ngarrayngarray ngarray runydjulu (garbled) ngunhu ngarrak ganydjarr Nawurapu Warralkangunydjia galidjirrmun gumbulangunydjia balay wudhurrun Mungurru Mungurrarri Lirrinmatji Gawulunga</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bulnha ngarra runlanggun runydjulum bingur Gurrundulngur</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wulmu¹ for me is gone Yilila² tears for me here is big³ Gulguynina⁴ Gana⁴ Ganawiyin⁴

slowly I swimming swimming in its style from from Gurrundul⁵

swimming in its style jewfish jewfish swimming in its style (garbled) over there for me a long way Nawurapu⁶ Warralka⁷ getting close to to Gumbul⁸ waters hit Mungurru Mungurru Lirrinmatji⁹ Gawulunga⁹

¹ a place at Numbulwar
² another place at Numbulwar
³ he is crying a lot because he accidentally mentioned his deceased brother’s name in the previous song item
⁴ a place at Numbulwar
⁵ a place at Numbulwar
⁶ a place at Numbulwar
⁷ another place at Numbulwar
⁸ a Nunggamaqbarr place
⁹ alternate name for Mungurru
### 77. *makani* (jewfish) – *gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>barrkundu Djundja Djunwuỳindja</th>
<th>barrkundu Wuluwurrdhundja Gama4.awuyngu</th>
<th>ngarray ngarray ngarray midadu dhawalwudhin guya balarrkbalarrk balarrk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>margurri marrtji rulanggun Malgayangur Gana4.ganydjarr</td>
<td>rulanggun marrtji rulanggun Malgayangur Gana4.ganydjarr</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gamada ngarra bayundja Wuluwurrdhun Madjadja Madjambali</td>
<td>Gamada ngarra bayundja Wuluwurrdhun Madjadja Madjambali</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>away Djun1 is Djunwuỳin1</td>
<td>away Wuluwurrdhun2 of Gama4.gana4</td>
<td>jewfish jewfish jewfish places gone4 fish jewfish jewfish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jewfish swimming swimming from Malgaya3 from Gana4</td>
<td>jewfish swimming swimming from Malgaya3 from Gana4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gamada2 I leave Wuluwurrdhun2 Madjadja2 Madjambali2</td>
<td>Gamada2 leave Wuluwurrdhun2 Madjadja2 Madjambali2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 alternate name for Numbulwar  
2 Nungumatjarr place at Numbulwar  
3 a place at Numbulwar  
4 the fish has gone from those places

---

### 78. *makani* (jewfish) – *gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>runydjulu Dhalambawuyngu ganydjarr</th>
<th>runydjulu ngarrayngarray ngarray</th>
<th>balay wudhurrunandu Rulitjibirr Ruluyambarrngunydja ngarrayngarray ngarray midadu ganydjarrya ngarra Nawurapu Buburruwuyngu rulanggun marrtji dunuwañatjawtjun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ngarrayngarray ngarray midadu</td>
<td>balay wudhurrunandu Rulitjibirr Ruluyambarrngunydja ngarrayngarray ngarray midadu ganydjarrya ngarra Nawurapu Buburruwuyngu rulanggun marrtji dunuwañatjawtjun</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jewfish of Dhalamba1 a long way</td>
<td>jewfish of Dhalamba1 a long way</td>
<td>waters hit Rulitjibir2 of Ruluyambarr2 jewfish jewfish jewfish a long way I Nawurapu3 of Buburrus3 swimming swimming swimming in its style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jewfish jewfish jewfish</td>
<td>jewfish jewfish jewfish</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jewfish swimming jewfish</td>
<td>jewfish swimming jewfish</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>waters hit Rulitjibir2 of Ruluyambarr2 Jewfish jewfish jewfish a long way I Nawurapu3 of Buburrus3 swimming swimming swimming in its style</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 a place at Numbulwar</td>
<td>1 a place at Numbulwar</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 alternate name for Numbulwar</td>
<td>2 alternate name for Numbulwar</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 a place at Numbulwar</td>
<td>3 a place at Numbulwar</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Yilila wuyupurrundu Wulmu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song Texts - Garrapara Song Series</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wuyayingungunyja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miwul wuyupurrundu ganydjarrwuy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buriritjigung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>galitjirrnum ngunhu Gurrunudul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marrurrungunyja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rulutjirr marritji wuyupundja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bawulawulangunyja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya ya ya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>māri māri māri ya ya ya gunya</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Djuną ngarrak wuyupurrun
Wuludhurrun Matjațja Matjawiyin

---

### Yilila4 gone Wulmu4 of Wuyayingu4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song Texts - Garrapara Song Series</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miwul4 gone of the speed5 jewfish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>getting closer over there Gurrunudul4 of Marrurru4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swimming passing gone of Bawulawula4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya ya ya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>māri māri māri ya ya ya gunya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that Djun5 for me gone Wuludhurrun4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matjațja4 Matjawiyin4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1 a place at Numbulwar
2 alternate name for Numbulwar
3 this underlined section is the unison “chorus”; it was invented by Bangana’s father, and concerns a trip he took along the beach to Numbulwar with his brothers and his māri (MMB), who kept getting bogged in the soft sand; “ya” is a word which signifies worrying, and “guny” is a word which indicates the quick motion of the fish
4 a place at Numbulwar
5 the speed of the fish
6 alternate name for Numbulwar

---

79. *makani* (jewfish) - *yula*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song Texts - Garrapara Song Series</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gu gu djulumbunar barkbarkun (humming) runydjulu runydjulu ngarrayngarray ngarray midadu Dhalamba wuyupurrun Nawulukulu Dhalamba wuyupurrundu (garbled) Djunwudhin Camadawuyngu ganydjarr ngarrayngarray ngarray midadu ya ya ya māri māri māri ya ya ya gunya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yilila wuyupurrundu Wulmu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wuyayingungunyja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miwul wuyupurrundu ganydjarrwuy buriritjigung galitjirrnum ngunhu Gurrunudul Marrurrungunyja rulutjirr marritji wuyupundja Bawulawulangunyja ya ya ya māri māri māri ya ya ya gunya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djuną ngarrak wuyupurrun Wuludhurrun Matjațja Matjawiyin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song Texts - Garrapara Song Series</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gu gu of the bogging sing (humming) jewfish jewfish jewfish Dhalamba1 gone Nawulukulu1 Dhalamba gone (garbled) away at Djun2 of Gamada2 a long way jewfish jewfish jewfish ya ya ya māri māri māri ya ya ya gunya3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yiilila4 gone Wulmu4 of Wuyayingu4 Miwul4 gone of the speed5 jewfish getting closer over there Gurrunudul4 of Marrurru4 swimming passing gone of Bawulawula4 ya ya ya māri māri māri ya ya ya gunya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that Djun5 for me gone Wuludhurrun4 Matjațja4 Matjawiyin4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1 a place at Numbulwar
2 alternate name for Numbulwar
3 this underlined section is the unison “chorus”; it was invented by Bangana’s father, and concerns a trip he took along the beach to Numbulwar with his brothers and his māri (MMB), who kept getting bogged in the soft sand; “ya” is a word which signifies worrying, and “guny” is a word which indicates the quick motion of the fish
4 a place at Numbulwar
5 the speed of the fish
6 alternate name for Numbulwar
80. *makani* (jewfish) - *yuta*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>runydjulu ngarrayngarray</th>
<th>ngarrayngarray ngarray ngarrayngarray ngarray ngarray_ganydjarr</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Djunwudhin Djunwudhin</td>
<td>Djunwudhin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wuyupurrun ngunhu dhawada</td>
<td>ngunhu ngarrak ganydjarr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warralkangunyndja</td>
<td>ngunhu ngarrak ganydjarr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Djuwarrangunyndja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ngunhu ngarrak ganydjarr (garbled)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yilila wuyupurrun nawulukulu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ngarrayngarray ngarray Djunwudhin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dhayindu dhawada Gumbulangunyndja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>balay wudhurrun Mungurru Lirrinmatji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gawululnga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ya ya ya ya māri māri māri ya ya ya guny</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| ngarrayngarray ngarray ngarrayngarray ngarray | ngarrayngarray ngarray ngarray ngarrayngarray ngarray |
| wuyupurrun ngarrak Buburrungunyndja            | wuyupurrun ngarrak Gumbulangunyndja                       |
| wuyupurrun ngarrak Nawurapungunyndja            | wuyupurrun ngarrak Aluwarrangunyndja                      |
| galitjirrmun ngunhu Aluwarrangunyndja            | galitjirrmun ngunhu Amadhadhitjngunyndja                   |
| galitjirrmun ngunhu Nyinybingunyndja            | wuyupurrun ngarrak dhawada                                 |
| Aluwarrangunyndja                              | wuyupurrun ngarrak dhawada                                 |
| Marrurrungunyndja                              | Marrurrungunyndja                                           |
| Gurundul wuyupurrunandu Rulitjirr               | ruluyambarrngunyndja                                        |
| galitjirrmun ngunhu Wulmu                       | galitjirrmun ngunhu Wulmu                                   |
| Yililangunyndja                                | Yililangunyndja                                             |
| galitjirrmun ngunhu Mawulungunyndja             | galitjirrmun ngunhu Mawulungunyndja                        |
| lāynu ngarra Malmarrar                          | lāynu ngarra Malmarrar                                       |
| Rambangangunyndja                              | Rambangangunyndja                                           |
| lāynu ngarra ngululungu Wuyayingunyndja         | lāynu ngarra ngululungu Wuyayingunyndja                    |
| dhayindu dhawada Aluwarrangunyndja              | dhayindu dhawada Aluwarrangunyndja                          |
| ya ya ya ya māri māri māri ya ya ya guny      | ya ya ya ya māri māri māri ya ya ya guny                  |
| balay ngarra wudhun dharrakanmatji              | balay ngarra wudhun dharrakanmatji                         |
| Gawululnga Yurrkyurrkba Ningangba               | Gawululnga Yurrkyurrkba Ningangba                           |

Appendix D
Song Texts - Garrapara Song Series

379
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>jewelfish jewelfish jewelfish jewelfish</th>
<th>jewelfish jewelfish jewelfish jewelfish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>jewelfish a long way Djun¹ away away [from] Djun</td>
<td>gone for me of Buburru⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gone over there beach of Warralka² over there for me a long way of Aluwarra²</td>
<td>gone for me of Gumbula⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over there for me a long way (garbled) Yilila³ gone Nawulukulu³ jewelfish jewelfish away [from] Djun</td>
<td>gone for me of Nawurapu⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this now beach of Gumbula² waters hit Mungurru Lirrinmatji⁴ Gawululnga⁴ ya ya ya ya</td>
<td>getting closer over there of Aluwarra⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>māri māri māri ya ya ya guny⁵</td>
<td>getting closer over there of Amadhadhitj⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>getting closer over there of Nyinybin⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gone for me beach of Aluwarra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gone for me beach of Marrurrù⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gurrundul⁶ gone Rulitjbirr⁶ of Ruluyambarr⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>getting closer over there Wulmu⁶ of Yilila⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>getting closer over there of Miwul⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>along I Malmarrā⁶ of Rambannga⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>along I Ngululngu⁶ of Wuyayi⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>this now beach of Aluwarra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ya ya ya ya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>māri māri māri ya ya ya guny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>waters I hit Dharrakanmatji⁷ Gawululnga⁷ Yurrkyurrkba⁷ Ningangba⁷</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix D
Song Texts - Garrapara Song Series

380
1 alternate name for Numbulwar
2 places near Numbulwar
3 a place at Numbulwar
4 alternate names for Mungurru
5 this underlined section is the unison “chorus”; it was invented by Bangana’s father, and concerns a trip he took along the beach to Numbulwar with his brothers and his māri (MMB), who kept getting bogged in the soft sand; “ya” is a word which signifies worrying, and “guny” is a word which indicates the quick motion of the fish.

6 all names of beaches along the coast between Numbulwar and Garrapara which were created by the ancestral jewfish during the wangarr creative era
7 alternate names for Mungurru
81. *wangubini (clouds) - gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lingundu dhay'yi dhiyala nganapurr waymandja wurruk(u) mayangbu dhawunhangdhin ngarrak gu gu milarrngambi (humming) yudadhin nabinga</th>
<th>yudadhin gungubun gumurr(i)l wikurr(u)n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>finished this here us leave it will voice disappeared for me gu gu milarrngambi(1) (humming) yudadhin(1) nabinga(1)</td>
<td>yudadhin nabinga to the front through(2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(1\) name of the clouds

82. *wangubini (clouds) - gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nabinga gulyunmarangal Manharrnguny nabinga nininydhangal(u) gudagudany Dhawumanyarry(u)</th>
<th>(humming) nguylil Mungurr(u)lil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gurumburray ngarra gilyundja Galiwabangi Burrkun(u)lil Yaliyal(i) Djarrakpi Ngurrwu(u)lkulu(y)</td>
<td>(humming) to the ocean to Mungurr(u)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cloud made them feel at home people of Garrapara cloud made them feel at home people of Garrapara to Gurumburra(1) I lean Galiwabangi(1) to Burrkun(1) Yaliyal(i) Djarrakpi Ngurrwu(u)lkulu(y)(1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) alternate names for Manggalili country at Djarrakpi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 83. *wangubini (clouds) - gumurr wanggany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Text</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>bulnha ngarra gilyun nguylil Dharrakanmatji</em></td>
<td><em>nablinga djunabij</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>bitjana ngarra gilyundja Malirray Bāniyala</em></td>
<td><em>nablinga nguylil manhalil</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>dutjun ngarra gilyundja Gayinbala Mugidi liyangur Marawayway Gurrtjilawal gilyun garrgarryun</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slowly I lean to the ocean</td>
<td>clouds clouds to the ocean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dharrakanmatji(^1)</td>
<td>clouds to the ocean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that way I lean to Malirra(^2) Bāniyala</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>back to I lean Gayinbala(^3) Mugidi(^3) over the heads Marawayway(^4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurrtjilawal(^4) lean stand</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 alternate name for Mungurru
2 alternate name for Madarra country at Bāniyala
3 alternate name for Numbulwar
4 *likan* name for Nundhirribala people
### 84. **wangubini (clouds) - gumurr wanggany**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Widibiyangbu yawu</th>
<th>Yuđadin gungubun gilyun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midiginiandu ngarra mayangbu wangubini</td>
<td>Yuđadin nguyil (garbled)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhawunbu marrtji</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gulyunbu marrtji Dharrakanmatji</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yurrkurrkba Muyurrurra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhanytja gulyunmarangatu niningdhangal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagalimurrung Gudagudany Manharrnguny</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nungbulungunha</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One more yawu</td>
<td>One more yawu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messed up I voice wangubini breaking</td>
<td>Breaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remaining remaining Dharrakanmatji</td>
<td>Remaining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yurrkurrkba Muyurrurra</td>
<td>Remaining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloud cloud lean</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloud to the ocean</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This made us feel made us feel us people of Garrapara</td>
<td>This made us feel made us feel us people of Garrapara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People of Garrapara</td>
<td>People of Garrapara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People of Garrapara</td>
<td>People of Garrapara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People of Garrapara</td>
<td>People of Garrapara</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. the clouds are breaking up
2. the broken up clouds remain over the ocean at Garrapara
3. alternate name for Mungurru
Appendix E

Complete Listing of a Performance of the Girriti Song Series

This appendix lists every song item of a performance of the Girriti (Gängan) song series, performed in Gapuwiyak on 27 January 1996 for a dhapi circumcision ritual. This listing provides some indication of the relationship between song subjects, song versions, and song items, and should be read in conjunction with the section on “Musical Structure” in Chapter Three.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song Item</th>
<th>Song Subject</th>
<th>Song Version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>001-005</td>
<td>wangubini (cloud)</td>
<td>“regular” / gumurr wanggany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>006-009</td>
<td>wangubini (cloud)</td>
<td>bantja / gumurr marrna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>010-012</td>
<td>balgurrk (rain)</td>
<td>“regular” / gumurr wanggany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>013-016</td>
<td>balgurrk (rain)</td>
<td>bantja / gumurr marrna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>017-019</td>
<td>ngerrk (sulphur-crested cockatoo)</td>
<td>“regular” / gumurr wanggany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>020-022</td>
<td>ngerrk (sulphur-crested cockatoo)</td>
<td>bantja / gumurr marrna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>023-026</td>
<td>wokara (speargrass)</td>
<td>bulnha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>027-029</td>
<td>wokara (speargrass)</td>
<td>“regular”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>030-032</td>
<td>wokara (speargrass)</td>
<td>bantja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>033-035</td>
<td>gapu (water)</td>
<td>bulnha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>036-038</td>
<td>gapu (water)</td>
<td>yindi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>039-042</td>
<td>gapu (water)</td>
<td>bantja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>043-044</td>
<td>gapu (water)</td>
<td>bantja #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>045-048</td>
<td>gapu gadin (calm water)</td>
<td>bantja #3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>049-051</td>
<td>garkman (frog)</td>
<td>“regular” / gumurr wanggany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>052-054</td>
<td>garkman (frog)</td>
<td>bantja / gumurr marrna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>055-059</td>
<td>nyangura (long-necked tortoise)</td>
<td>“regular” / gumurr wanggany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>060-061</td>
<td>nyangura (long-necked tortoise)</td>
<td>bantja / gumurr marrna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>062-065</td>
<td>norrtj (algae)</td>
<td>bulnha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>066-068</td>
<td>norrtj (algae)</td>
<td>“regular”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>069-072</td>
<td>watarra (freshwater perch)</td>
<td>“regular” / gumurr wanggany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>073-076</td>
<td>watarra (freshwater perch)</td>
<td>bantja / gumurr marrna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>077-081</td>
<td>walgarrambu (oxeye herring)</td>
<td>“regular” / gumurr wanggany (Gumatj)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>082-087</td>
<td>baybinnga (saratoga)</td>
<td>“regular” / gumurr wanggany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>088-090</td>
<td>baybinnga (saratoga)</td>
<td>yuta / gumurr marrna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>091-093</td>
<td>ratjuk (barramundi)</td>
<td>yindi (Madarrpa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>094-096</td>
<td>ratjuk (barramundi)</td>
<td>“regular” / gumurr wanggany (Madarrpa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>097-100</td>
<td>ratjuk (barramundi)</td>
<td>bantja / gumurr marrna (Madarrpa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101-103</td>
<td>rulumaku (fish)</td>
<td>“regular” / gumurr wanggany (Madarrpa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104-105</td>
<td>rulumaku (fish)</td>
<td>bantja / gumurr marrna (Madarrpa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106-110</td>
<td>wirrilanydji (stork)</td>
<td>bulnha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page</td>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111-113</td>
<td>wirrilanydji (stork)</td>
<td>“regular”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>114-117</td>
<td>djamatj (mist)</td>
<td>“regular” / gumurr wanggany (Wan.gurri)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>118-123</td>
<td>djikay (robin or small bird)</td>
<td>bulinha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>124-126</td>
<td>djikay (robin or small bird)</td>
<td>“regular”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>127-129</td>
<td>djikay (robin or small bird)</td>
<td>bantija</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>