Songs that Pull: Composition/Performance through Musical Analysis *

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Explaining the origin of *junba* songs and dances, indigenous to the north and northcentral Kimberley region of Australia, the Ngarinyin/Miwa composer Scotty Martin has noted 'Whatever song you compose comes out of the life of the Wanjina.'[1] *Wanjina* are ancestral creative beings to which people in this region attribute the creation of the world at the beginning of time as well as creativity in the world in the present. *Wanjina* formed and named the landscape and, along with *Wunggurr* (another ancestral being), installed in it the baby-spirits that ensure the birth of children from the progenitorial essence embedded in them.[2] As Martin's statement suggests, the creativeness of *Wanjina* and *Wunggurr* also extends to the conception and composition of *junba*, and to the way that people articulate and create relationships with country when they compose and perform *junba*.

Creation in the ancestral past is inseparable from creativity in the present, not only in the sense that ancestral actions guide creative and social activity today, but also in the sense that contemporary activity creates meaning around ancestral acts. Any separation of ancestral and contemporary creative activity potentially fails to recognise the agency with which individuals interpret, experience and create meaning in relation to country. Redmond, for example, explains that the

> theoretical paradigm that has construed Aborigines' experience of the landscape as set
> in stone by ancestral action … denies the extent of bodily imagery in expressions about

[1] Anthony Redmond, 'Nyalgodi (Scotty) Martin,' *The Oxford Companion to Aboriginal Art and Culture*, ed. Sylvia Kleinert and Margo Neale (Melbourne: OUP, 1999) 639–40 at 640.

[2] Alan Rumsey, 'Traces, and Links to Land,' *Emplaced Myth: Space, Narrative, and Knowledge in Aboriginal Australia and Papua New Guinea*, ed. Alan Rumsey and James Weiner (Honolulu: U of Hawaii Press, 2001) 19–42 at 26.

country and has the effect of obscuring the sense of agency that the human subject brings to the interpretation of the lifeworld.[3]

While Redmond is addressing anthropological interpretations of the way indigenous Australians relate to country, his argument also speaks to the broader context in which *junba* repertories, and other indigenous performance genres, are conceived, composed, performed and researched—specifically, any failure to recognise the validity of mobility and change in indigenous experience of country, such as that signaled by Warren Mundine in recent commentary on the recognition of Noongar land rights in southwestern Australia. Mundine suggests that the Noongar have been judged as if they 'the only race of people in the world whose culture doesn't change,' as if—to use Redmond's words—their way of relating to country is 'set in stone.'[4]

Redmond presents his argument through a detailed analysis of the complex social and ancestral world surrounding current performances of a repertory of *junba* dance-songs (also known as *balga*) composed in the 1960s, illustrating 'places that move.' This article is concerned with the intersection of Redmond's idea that places *move* with the processes that guide the musical structure of *junba* songs—specifically, songs that *pull*. In the final part of the article, I will turn to a problem faced by many researchers of indigenous music, who draw on the raw experience of performance and collaboration with indigenous experts in the field but at the same time employ tools of transcription and analysis. Flawed though they may be in ways that potentially draw music research closer to the interpretive processes identified by Redmond and Mundine,[5] these tools, used sensitively and in combination with engagement with performers' explanations, can play a part in indigenous music research.

Places that Move—Songs that *Pull*

Redmond describes how through the performance of a particular *junba* song, about a particular place and complex of ancestral events, places *move*, as the distinction between body and landscape is dissolved in 'the kinetic embodiment of place.'[6] Redmond explains the mythological history of a site called Winjagin. He explains that, in the creation time, the local people tried to move the mountain to another place, Mejurrin, by pulling it with hair ropes. However, before daybreak (these efforts occurred at night), the mountain became unstable, the hair belts snapped, and the attempt was abandoned. The hair belts, along with the python associated with the site, were then wrapped around Winjagin to stabilise it.[7] Redmond explains that a relatively recent song, composed in the 1960s, describes the movement of the python associated with Winjagin down to Mejurrin. The python is split in two and wraps around each

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[3] Anthony Redmond, 'Places that Move,' *Emplaced Myth: Space, Narrative, and Knowledge in Aboriginal Australia and Papua New Guinea*, ed. Alan Rumsey and James Weiner (Honolulu: U of Hawaii Press, 2001) 120–38 at 120.

[4] Mundine protested that, contrary to this view, indigenous groups such as the Noongar have a culture that 'changes' and 'moves forward,' and that this should be recognised. See Jenny Brockie et al., 2006. 'Up For Grabs.' Transcript, *Insight*, SBS Television, 31 October 2006 <http://news.sbs.com.au/insight/archive.php>, accessed 9 November 2006.

[5] Ellingson describes colonial and acquisitive practices in the history of transcription. See Ellingson 'Transcription,' *Ethnomusicology: An Introduction*, ed. Helen Myers (New York: Macmillan, 1992) 110–13.

[6] Redmond, 'Places that Move' 134.

[7] Redmond, 'Places that Move' 126–7.

of the peaks of Mejurrin. This, Redmond suggests, 'is a case of the creativity of mythic thought in process' as multiple versions of the story are overlaid by the song.[8] Furthermore, Redmond describes the effect of performances of this song, which involve dancing with large painted boards upon which are painted the two python-wrapped peaks of Mejurrin, of invoking the continued movement of Mejurrin. He writes:

> The song-boards depicting the python-wrapped twin peaks having being transported from a neighbouring community on the back of a Toyota, were mounted on the shoulders of the dancer in much the same manner that the *Wanjina* are said to carry caves on their shoulders. As the dancer stamped across the ground, the twin peaks shook and shuddered, tilting first in one direction and then another. The body of the dancer is the medium through which the image of place becomes animated and infused into the 'stomping ground.' The clouds of dust arising from the dancer's feet obscured the actual point of contact between the dancer's body and the ground, lending the impression that the dancer is moving through a red haze, or even walking on clouds. Clusters of green leaves at the knee and elbow joints add to the flickering, kinetic image of the body. Mejurrin became present in a dance ground several hundred kilometers away from its actual physical incarnation.[9]

Thus, just as the ancestral people attempted to pull Winjagin to Mejurrin, people in the present day performances pull places such as Mejurrin—and their incumbent ancestral meaning—to other meaningful places. The theoretical paradigmatic 'gap' between ancestral and present-day acts is challenged, as is geographical space.

The hair ropes with which Winjagin was to be moved in the creative time are associated with magnetic radar-like cords known as *biyu*, which are responsible for death, as well as the composition of songs. Song-conception and transmission, from spirits to the composer to other singers, are similarly energized by acts of pulling, and related mutual acts of following. The *biyu* are used by spirits to pull composers to *Dulugun* (the island of the dead), where the composer witnesses the performance of *junba* by spirits of deceased relatives. The *niyarra* (idea) of the *junba* is *nyambalug* (stuck) to the composer's *ni* (mind) and it cannot be forgotten. This process of song-conception is referred to as *dawul*, meaning to listen and learn.[10] After this experience, should she/he choose to, the composer prepares the *junba* for performance. In doing this, she/he will find the correct tune and the correct setting of texts. This process is referred to as *biyobiyo* (related to the word *biyu*), glossed as 'following' and, in another context (see below), also 'pulling' or 'tracking.' Similarly, when other people begin to pick up the songs from the composer, they are also said to *dawul* (listen and learn) and *biyobiyo* 'follow.' This process can also be compared to that by which baby-spirits are conceived and grow into children, as they spring or are literally pulled out of *Wunggurr* water-holes, and become imprinted on potential parents, before they are born. Significantly, the term used to refer to baby-spirits—*burrunguma* (singular form, *anguma*)—is used to refer to *junba*-bearing spirits of deceased relatives.[11]

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[8] Redmond, 'Places that Move' 127.

[9] Redmond, 'Places that Move' 133–34.

[10] For a more extensive discussion of *junba* conception and transmission refer to Sally Treloyn, Songs that Pull: *jadmi junba* from the Kimberley Region of Northwest Australia, PhD thesis, University of Sydney, 2006, Chapter 2.

[11] Redmond, 'Places that Move' 123.

In performances of *junba*, the dancers, who enact the exact performance that the spirits carried out in the composer's song-receiving journeys, prepare behind a *wurawun* (bough screen), ideally positioned on the western side of the *bororru* (dance ground). The *ngalanyba-birri* (singing ensemble) sits at the opposite side, facing the *wurawun*. At the centre of this group, on the edge of the dance-space, sits the *junba jumanjuman* (composer/song-leader) and an 'offsider,' who helps the *jumanjuman* lead the performance. In performance there are three types of songs/dance-songs, referred to as *galanbangarri* (also known as *guroguro*, *woiwoinangga* and *warami*, and glossed as 'warm-up' ones), *birrina* (glossed as 'public' ones) and *enerrngarri* ('big,' 'powerful' ones). *Birrina* and *enerrngarri* both include dance, by a large group and just one or two dancers, respectively, who gradually move from behind the *wurawun* (bough screen), and towards the *ngalanyba-birri* (singers). Thus, the dancers, enacting the *burrunguma* spirits of the living singers' deceased relatives, move from the west—the direction of *Dulugun* (the island of the dead where they reside)—towards the living world of the singers.[12] This movement is associated with the 'pulling' function of the *biyu*, as one *enerrngarri* ('big, powerful') dance-song in Martin's repertory 'redmala/buyu'[13] clearly illustrates. The song text consists of the lines *redmala redmalingga* 'pulling pulling' and *buyu mana redmalingga* 'that *biyu*, keep pulling,' referring to the 'pulling' (*redmala redmalingga*[14]) associated with the *biyu* radar/cord (sung as *buyu*). In performance, a *biyu*, in the form of a fishing line, is strung between the *wurawun* (screen) and the composer, and dancer-spirits emerge from behind the screen and 'pull' themselves along it towards the composer, and then back to the screen.

Redmond additionally notes that nowadays the dancers are played by generations that are younger than the singers.[15] Thus, the movement of the spirits towards the singers is not just the *burrunguma* spirits of deceased relatives pulling towards living people, but also baby-spirits (also referred to as *burrunguma*) pulling towards their parents. Also, there is a tendency for the dancers to only begin moving forward from behind the *wurawun* bough screen, increase their pace, or change direction or gesture in some way, when the women begin a particular part of the melody, referred to yet again as 'pulling,' 'following,' or 'tracking'—*biyobiyo*[16]—the point where the women 'lift up their voices' and 'pull' the *junba* along.[17] Thus, a notion of 'pulling' that pervades the movement of dancers across the dance ground refers not only to the creation of the landscape and 'places that move,' as described

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[12] Redmond, 'Places that Move.' Note that many dances enact *agula*—the spirits responsible for the death of people and the initial *biyu* pulling of the composer towards Dulugun—that are considered to be distinct from the *burrunguma* spirits responsible for the actual giving of songs. It has been explained to me, however, that the *burrunguma* themselves enact *agula* in these dreams. While this is the case, some songs, such as some in Martin's repertory, refer to *agula* that the composer him/herself has come into contact with, not necessarily via *burrunguma*.

[13] Songs are labelled by reference to the first word of each text-line in the songtext.

[14] The word is based on the verb *rid-* (sung as 'red-'), meaning 'to pull.'

[15] Anthony Redmond, *Rulug wayirri: Moving Kin and Country in the Northern Kimberley*, PhD thesis, University of Sydney, 2001.

[16] Alice Moyle also identifies a related term *biyowa* 'to follow' or 'to track' for this women's section of the tune. See Alice Moyle, *North Australian Music: A Taxonomic Approach to the Study of Aboriginal Song Performances*, PhD thesis, Monash University, 1974, 154.

[17] The spirit-dancers are pulled forward through the mutual acts of the composer and women-singers; see Treloyn, *Songs that Pull* 80.

by Redmond,[18] but also to the conception of children, death, the conception of songs, as well as the preparation of songs for performance, and the listening/learning of songs by the singing ensemble.

Furthermore, *junba* can be sold to other performing groups according to the system of exchange referred to as *Wurnan*. By sharing objects and ceremonies on the *Wurnan*, relationships between clans and between people and country are maintained and reinvigorated. Song transmission in this context involves the *mawurra balanggarra* (stranger mob) sitting around the outside perimeter of the singing ensemble. Like the composer in his dreams and the singing ensemble, the *mawurra balanggara* (stranger mob) *dawul* (listens and learns) the *junba*, over successive nights of performance, and gradually *biyobiyo* (begin 'following') it.[19] In this way, *junba* repertories can spread to many different groups, and be performed by multiple language groups. For example, one repertory in the *jadmi* style of *junba,* referred to as the 'Kimberley Downs *jadmi*' after the place where the Wodongarri clan Ngarinyin composer, Alec Wirrijangu, composed it in the 1940s was 'sold' in the *Wurnan* and is said to have moved as far south to La Grange/Bidjadangga in the Pilbara region. Today some of the songs from this repertory are still performed by Ngarinyin people, as part of another *jadmi* style repertory, also attributed to Wirrijangu, referred to as the *Jalarrimirri jadmi*. Songs from this repertory will be discussed throughout the remainder of this article.

As noted, there are three types of song/dance-song in *junba* repertories, two of which are accompanied by dance and one that is not. The song type that is unaccompanied by dance, the *galanbangarri* type, has a particular role in the process of transmitting the *junba* to the *mawurra balanggarra* 'stranger mob.' There are usually only one or two *galanbangarri* songs in a repertory and the texts of these songs are also often about the experience of the composer in the dreams in which she/he finds the *junba.* The text of one such song in the *junba* repertory referred to as *Dulugun*, composed by the Gumalawurru clan Ngarinyin woman Flora Walkerbier,[20] for example, has the text *Dorrgoi yindirri mana*. Glosses to this text refer to the island, *Dorrgoi*, associated with *Dulugun*, the island of the dead where composers find songs; *yindirri mana* refers to a 'banging' noise, possibly the sound of clapsticks heard by the composer as he/she approached the performance in his/her dream, or a particular noise associated with the passing of the spirit of people to the island of the dead.

Galanbangarri songs are typically performed before the performance, to draw people to the *bororru* (dance-ground), including those who will make up the *ngalanyba-birri* (singing ensemble), as well as the *mawurra balanggarra* 'strangers' who may be there to receive the *junba* according to *Wurnan* exchange. *Galanbangarri* songs are also performed before *birrina* and *enerrngarri* dance-songs, waiting for the dancers to prepare for the next dance. These songs therefore alternate with *birrina* and *enerrngarri* songs throughout the performance.[21]

Galanbangarri songs thus *pull* (via the *biyu*) the composer to spirits in the dreams to listen and learn (*dawul*) *junba*, *pull* singers and later (in *Wurnan* transactions) strangers to the *junba*

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[18] For a detailed account of the way *junba* singers pull places onto the dance ground, see Treloyn, 'Flesh with Country: Juxtaposition and Minimal Contrast in the Construction and Melodic Treatment of *jadmi* Song Texts,' *Australian Aboriginal Studies* 2007(2): 90–99.

[19] Treloyn, Songs that Pull 70–2.

[20] Note that this repertory was reportedly first given to a man who then handed it over to Walkerbier.

[21] For an account of song order refer to Treloyn, Songs that Pull, Appendix 5.

dance ground to sit around the composer to *dawul* and participate in the *junba* performance, and *pull* dancers (who are associated with the *burrunguma* spirits of deceased relatives and baby-spirits) toward the living world of the composer and other living relatives. *Galanbangarri* songs are thus important tools in the *junba* repertory that mediate, by *pulling*, between the composer and the spirit world in composition/conception, between the composer and singers in composition/performance, between the living world of the composer/singers and the spirit world in dance, and between the spirit world, performers and strangers in *Wurnan* transmission. Incorporating Redmond's exploration of the 'kinetic embodiment' of place through *junba* performance, it may also be said that these songs mediate, also by *pulling*, between ancestral beings and acts installed in the landscape and the creative acts of people in our contemporary world.[22]

The Analysis of *junba* Text Structure[23]

The present analysis of *junba* musical structure stems from a stream of research originating with T.G.H. Strehlow who first observed the independence of melody and text/rhythm in Aranda songs from Central Australia.[24] This was continued through the work of Catherine Ellis, Linda Barwick, Guy Tunstill and Antony McCardell (Prabhu Pritam).[25] Barwick and Ellis, in particular, have focused on the way that melody is mapped onto text/rhythm in performance, and have investigated the agency that this 'mapping' gives performers in enacting aesthetic social and political agendas.[26] Ray Keogh adopted this approach in his

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[22] Redmond, 'Places that Move' 134.

[23] For a comprehensive account of *junba* musical structure, see Treloyn, Songs that Pull, Chapters 4–11. In this article I have chosen to focus on the organisation of text in *junba* songs, in order to minimise the complexity of the analysis presented.

[24] T.G.H. Strehlow, 'Australian Aboriginal Songs,' *Journal of the International Folk Music Council* 7 (1955): 37–40; T.G.H. Strehlow *Songs of Central Australia* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1971).

[25] Catherine Ellis, *Aboriginal Music: Education for Living. Cross-Cultural Experiences from South Australia* (St Lucia: U of Queensland Press, 1985); Catherine Ellis, 'Connection and Disconnection of Elements of the Rhythmic Heirarchy in and Aranda Song,' *Musicology Australia* 15 (1992): 44–66; Catherine Ellis, 'Understanding the Profound Structural Knowledge of Central Australian Performers from the Perspective of T.G.H. Strehlow,' *Strehlow Research Centre Occasional Papers* 1, ed. D. Hugo (Alice Springs: Strehlow Research Centre Board) 57–78; Catherine Ellis and Linda Barwick, 'Musical Syntax and the Problem of Meaning in a Central Australian Songline,' *Musicology Australia* 10 (1987): 41–57; Linda Barwick, '"Unison and Disagreement" in a Mixed Women's and Men's Performance (Ellis Collection, Oodnadatta 1966),' *The Essence of Singing and the Substance of Song: Recent Responses to the Aboriginal Performing Arts and Other Essays in Honour of Catherine Ellis*, Oceania Monograph 46, ed. Linda Barwick, Allan Marett and Guy Tunstill (Sydney: U of Sydney Press, 1995) 95–105; Linda Barwick, 'Creative (ir)regularities: the Intermeshing of Text and Melody in Performance of Central Australian Song,' *Australian Aboriginal Studies* 1 (1989): 12–28; Linda Barwick, 'Central Australian Women's Ritual Music: Knowing through Analysis and Knowing through Performance,' *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 22 (1990): 60–79; Linda Barwick, 'Performance, Aesthetics, Experience: Thoughts on Yawulyu Mungamunga Songs,' *Aesthetics and Experience in Music Performance*, ed. Elizabeth Mackinlay, Denis Collins, and Samantha Owens (London: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2005) 1–18; Guy Tunstill, 'Melody and Rhythmic Structure in Pitjantjatjara Song,' *Songs of Aboriginal Australia*. Oceania Monograph 32, ed. Margaret Clunies Ross, Tamsin Donalson and Stephen Wild (Sydney: U of Sydney Press, 1987) 121–41; Antony McCardell, Rhythm and Melody in Australian Aboriginal Songs of the Western Desert, PhD thesis, University of Western Australia, 1976; Antony McCardell (Prabhu Pritam), 'Aspects of Musical Structure in Australian Aboriginal Songs of the South-west of the Western Desert,' *Studies in Music* 14 (1980): 9–44.

[26] Treloyn, Songs that Pull 205–8.

analysis of *nurlu* songs from the western Kimberley and I have taken it up in research of northcentral Kimberley *junba*.[27]

At the basis of analysing Central Australian, Western Desert, and Kimberley songs is the identification of text cycles and their rhythmic setting. Repertories of songs, often referred to as 'song-series,' comprise multiple songs, which typically have unique texts. These texts are relatively short and are repeated throughout the performance of the song. Songs may be performed multiple times in the course of a performance, both consecutively and alternating with other songs. Each performance of a song—referred to as a 'song item'—may differ from other performances of that song, expanding and contracting to accommodate accompanying ritual action, such as dancing, the preparing of ceremonial objects and paint, and the painting of body designs.

As noted, the text of each song is relatively short, and is repeated throughout the song item. The text set out in Figure 1 is from the Central Australian Pitjantjatjara *inma Langka* (Blue Tongue lizard and Mountain Devil lizard) song series, and was transcribed by Ellis.[28] As indicated in the figure, the song is based on the text ∣∣: *miniri panyanpa* :∣∣: *walunku ngarangu walunku ngarangu* :∣∣,[29] glossed as 'standing on the Miniri [Mountain Devil lizard] rock.'[30] This is repeated throughout the song item. It can also be seen from this transcription that the song performance does not begin from the first word of the text, which is 'miniri,' but rather on the second word 'panyanpa.' There is also no clearly defined ending or end-word in the song item—instead, it ends with what might be referred to as a 'fade-out,' as the singers gradually stop singing.[31]

These characteristics are all common features of songs from Central Australia and the Western Desert. In summary, these are:[32]

1. uninterrupted repetition of the text string throughout the song performance;
2. commencement of the song performance from a word that does not have to be the first word of the text string; and
3. a fade out.

A.P. Thomas's description of 'communal' singing in the Pilbara region—the approximate region to which Wirrijangu's *jadmi junba* has travelled—suggests that songs from this region

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[27] Ray Keogh, Nurlu songs of the West Kimberleys, PhD thesis, Univeristy of Sydney, 1990; Ray Keogh, 'Process Models for the Analysis of *Nurlu* Songs from the Western Kimberleys,' *The Essence of Singing and the Substance of Song: Recent Responses to the Aboriginal Performing Arts and Other Essays in Honour of Catherine Ellis,* Oceania Monograph 46, ed. Linda Barwick, Allan Marett and Guy Tunstill (Sydney: U of Sydney Press, 1995) 39–52.

[28] Ellis, *Aboriginal Music* 212. The *inma Langka* series is discussed by Ellis, as well as Tunstill, and is variously referred to as *inma Langka, inma Ngiyari* (or *Miniri*) *Langka*. See Ellis, *Aboriginal Music,* and Tunstill, 'Melody and Rhythmic Structure.'

[29] While Ellis does not appear to clearly state how the boundaries of this text are defined, text morphology and their coincidence with major rhythmic and melodic structural boundaries, details of which are provided by Ellis in *Aboriginal Music,* support the designated boundaries.

[30] Ellis, *Aboriginal Music* 118.

[31] The term 'fade-out' refers to the gradual, staggered cessation of vocalisation by the singers, usually accompanied by a loosening of rhythm, rather than a measured continuous diminuendo.

[32] For a detailed summary of Central Australian and Desert performance and compositional practices, see Treloyn, Songs that Pull, Chapters 4–7.

Figure 1. Text of *inma Miniri/Langka* song item. Source: Margaret Clunies Ross, Tamsin Donaldson, and Stephen Wild, eds, *Songs of Aboriginal Australia*, Oceania Monograph 32 (Sydney: U of Sydney Press, 1987), book and accompanying tape, side B, track 8, item iv. Based on text transcription in Catherine Ellis, *Aboriginal Music, Education For Living: Cross-Cultural Experiences from South Australia* (St Lucia: U of Queensland Press, 1985) 212.

Text

     miniri panyanpa miniri panyanpa walanku ngarangu walanku ngarangu

Song

        panyanpa miniri panyanpa walanku ngarangu walanku ngarangu
     miniri panyanpa miniri panyanpa walanku ngarangu walanku ngarangu
     miniri panyanpa miniri panyanpa walanku ngarangu walanku ngarangu
     miniri panyanpa miniri panyanpa walanku ngarangu walanku ngarangu
               [fade out beings … [one singer only …

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also share these characteristics.[33] Keogh's study of *nurlu* songs suggests that this is also the case for genres indigenous to the western Kimberley.[34]

    Junba songs, however, from the northcentral and North Kimberley, to the north of the Desert, Pilbara, and western Kimberley regions, exhibit distinctly different characteristics, despite being also communally performed. The text of a song composed by Martin is set out in Figure 2. As indicated, this song is based on the text *gurreiga narai binjirri gurreiga narai binjirri ngadarri jagud binjirri ngadarri jagud binjirri*, which refers to the brolga (*gurreiga*) preening its feathers and to the movement of dancers' headcaps (*ngadarri*). While this is repeated throughout the performance, as in the Central Australian/Desert/Pilbara/western Kimberley style, at one point it is interrupted and recommenced (see Figure 2). In addition, whereas song items in the Central Australian/Desert/Pilbara/western Kimberley style may begin at a number of different points in the text, this song, like all *junba* song items, begins from the first word—in this case, *gurreiga* (brolga). Finally, while Central Australian style song items often end with a fade out, *junba* song items have a clearly defined ending, and the clapsticks, played by the composer/song leader (in this case Martin), stop strongly, one beat after the singing.

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[33] Note that song genres such as *tabi* from the Pilbara, which is the focus of Thomas and Brandenstein's study, are performed by a solo singer and do not share these characteristics. See A.P. Thomas and C.G. Brandenstein, *Taruru: Aboriginal Song Poetry from the Pilbara* (Adelaide: Rigby, 1974). Text transcriptions provided by Alice Moyle in her survey of music from the Kimberley, suggest that this is also the case for strophic form solo songs in the western Kimberley such as *liljin* and *ludin*. See Alice Moyle, North Australian Music.

[34] See Keogh, Nurlu Songs of the West Kimberleys. Variations to these principles identified by Keogh (the 'breaking' of text cycles between melodic cycles, for example) may be attributed to the size and nature of his sample. See Treloyn, Songs that Pull 136–7.

Figure 2. Text of performance of Scotty Martin's 'gurreiga narai / ngadarri jagud.' Source: Nyalgodi Scotty Martin and Linda Barwick, *Jadmi Junba Dance Songs from the Northern Kimberley*. Alexandria, NSW: Rouseabout Records, 2003, CD Track 1, item i.

Text

    gurreiga narai binjirri gurreiga narai binjirri ngadarri jagud binjirri ngadarri jagud binjirri

Song

    gurreiga narai binjirri gurreiga narai binjirri ngadarri jagud binjirri ngadarri jagud binjirri
    gurreiga narai binjirri gurreiga narai binjirri ngadarri jagud binjirri ngadarri jagud binjirri
    gurreiga narai binjirri gurreiga narai binjirri ngadarri jagud binjirri ngadarri jagud binjirri
    gurreiga narai binjirri gurreiga narai binjirri // [interruption of text cycle]
    gurreiga narai binjirri gurreiga narai binjirri ngadarri jagud binjirri ngadarri jagud binjirri
    gurreiga narai binjirri gurreiga narai binjirri ngadarri jagud binjirri ngadarri jagud binjirri
    gurreiga narai binjirri [clearly defined ending]

These characteristics are typical of *junba*. In summary, these include:

    1. interruption of the repetition of the text string;
    2. commencement from first word of the text string only; and
    3. a clearly defined ending.

In the course of my research, I have documented the texts of approximately 422 different song texts, and of these only three are performed in a manner that does not exhibit these characteristics. One of these is attributed to the Ngarinyin composer Alec Wirrijangu, referred to previously, part of whose *jadmi* repertory reportedly moved down as far as the Pilbara according to the *Wurnan*.

In Figure 3 the text of Wirrijangu's song 'lirdmindimindi / malaya' is set out. As indicated, it is based on the text *lirdmindimindi jawurrung bina malaya winyirinyiri*.[35] Unlike other *junba* songs, this song item does not begin on the first word of the text—it begins on *lirdmindimindi*, rather than *malaya*. Also, the repetition of the text is not interrupted as is usual in *junba* songs, but is uninterrupted, repeating throughout the song item. Furthermore, while the song sometimes ends with a typical strong clapstick beat, it does not usually have a clearly defined vocal ending—it ends with a 'fade-out.'

While these characteristics are strikingly unusual in *junba* songs, they are the usual characteristics of the Central Australian / Desert / Pilbara / western Kimberley style, illustrated in Figure 1. This song is also typically performed with distinct rhythmic and melodic characteristics in common with this style, which also contrast it with *junba*.[36]

What questions arise from this analysis-based finding? In order to see the significance of it, we need to refer to the context in which *junba* is performed and the cosmological beliefs

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[35] In the course of my research in 2000–2002, several glosses were given for this text, including references to a shooting star and a particular hairstyle characterised by matted ropes of hair.
[36] Sally Treloyn, Songs that Pull 139–40.

Figure 3. Text of performance of Wirrijangu's 'lirdmindimindi/malaya,' led by Jack Dann (deceased) and *** (deceased); recorded by L. Barwick and A. Marett at Maranbabidi, 1997.

> **Text**
>   lirdmindimindi jawurrung bina malaya winyirinyiri
>
>   ↓
>
> **Song**   winyirinyiri
>   lirdmindimindi jawurrung bina malaya winyirinyiri
>   lirdmindimindi jawurrung bina malaya winyirinyiri
>   lirdmindimindi jawurrung bina malaya winyirinyiri
>   lirdmindimindi jawurrung bina malaya winyirinyiri
>   lirdmindimindi jawurrung bina malaya winyirinyiri
>   lirdmindimindi jawurrung bina malaya winyirinyiri
>   lirdmindimindi jawurrung bina malaya winyirinyiri
>   lirdmindimindi jawurrung bina malaya winyirinyiri
>   lirdmindimindi jawurrung bina
>   [fade out beings…. [one singer only…

underpinning its conception, composition and performance. In Wirrijangu's combined *jadmi* repertory there are said to be two *galanbangarri* songs. As discussed, these songs *pull* between the living, spirit and ancestral worlds, as well as between the composer and other people in the living world. One of these songs is 'lirdmindimindi/malaya' which, strikingly, exhibits the central Australian style. Given that this song (as *galanbangarri*) is a song that *pulls*, and given that the repertory has been 'sold' south into the Pilbara, as discussed above, where the Central Australian style is typical, what could its Central Australian style mean?

In the absence of definitive performers' statements on the question,[37] the inclusion of a song with distinctive Central Australian characteristics in a Kimberley *junba* repertory, and its repeated contrastive alternation with Kimberley style songs in performance, can be interpreted in several ways. In discussing differences in the modal organisation of rhythm in northern Australia, Barwick has suggested that diversity in the organisational principles that underlie musical structure may be one way that different groups mark themselves in relation to one another.[38] By including a distinctly Central Australian song style in a *junba* repertory, and repeatedly alternating the Central Australian style with the typical northcentral Kimberley style, perhaps performers are communicating some aspect of the relationship between distinct cultural groups. Because *galanbangarri* songs *pull* people to the dance ground, could the presentation of this song in a Central Australian style gesture, in some way, towards the *mawurra* strangers to engage with the process of transmission? Also, given that the northcentral

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[37] During my fieldwork in 2000–2002, performers attributed the unique style of Wirrijangu's song to the fact that this is was the way that the *burrunguma* spirits gave the composer the song.

[38] Personal communication, 15 September 2005.

Kimberley and the Desert have distinct cultural practices,[39] and given that *galanbangarri* songs *pull* between the living world and spirit worlds, could this also be a way that the Ngarinyin performers of the repertory use *junba* and, specifically, musical language, to come to terms with a distinct culture within their existing cosmology? Is this broadly analogous to the situation in which people move places and their incumbent ancestors and creative acts to other places in junba performances?

Songs that *Pull* and Musical Analysis

For me, further understanding of these questions requires that I return to the performers and continue to engage with the meaning of the repertory. I therefore venture that, just as *galanbangarri* songs *pull* between a multitude of worlds, classes of being, geographical spaces, and cultural groups, through musical analysis, the *galanbangarri* song in Wirrijangu's repertory has *pulled* me into closer engagement with performers, as I endeavour to explore some of the questions raised by analysis. Analysis thus continually *pulls* me back into that engagement to further understand its significance. This brings me to an important point with regard to the discipline of musicology and the role of analysis in music research, signaled in the introduction to this article. In the introduction to *May It Fill Your Soul: Experiencing Bulgarian Music* Timothy Rice identifies a 'gap' between the descriptive, scientific, language-encoded methods used to study music and the vivid, deeply moving, often unarticulated inner experiences we have performing or listening to it.'[40] This 'gap' can manifest in the experience of the ethnomusicologist as she/he moves between research (including performance, listening and learning) in the field, and writing and reflecting 'outside' the field; between her/his academic representation of knowledge, her/his actual experience, and performers' knowledge and experience. Linda Barwick, for example, referring to the experience of writing about Central Australian music and documentation collected by other researchers, comments on the 'reconstructive' and 'constraining' nature of writing:

> Memory is always reconstructive, and the very necessity of using academic discourse inevitably constrains what we can express of our experience. For any sort of research with people, and especially any cross-cultural research, there can never be a guarantee (if indeed it is possible at all) that field experience alone will ensure that the researcher 'knows' the same things as the people with whom she or he works, let alone that such knowledge will be able to be expressed in the media and discourses of academic institutions.[41]

Allan Marett, similarly, speaking of the 'gap' faced by the ethnomusicologist between the actual musical world under examination, and the transcriptions and analyses that attempt to represent it in some way, suggests that analyses do not 'reflect the musical culture itself, but an image of our own mind … engaging in an interaction with another culture,'[42] and that

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[39] Keogh, for example, discusses the cultural distinction between western Kimberley and Desert cultures in relation to performance genres; see Keogh, Nurlu Songs of the West Kimberleys.

[40] Timothy Rice, *May it Fill your Soul: Experiencing Bulgarian Music* (Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 1994) 3.

[41] Barwick, 'Central Australian Women's Ritual Music' 61.

[42] Allan Marett, 'Wangga Songs of Northwest Australia: Reflections on the Performance of Aboriginal Music at the Symposium of the International Musicological Society '88,' *Musicology Australia* 14 (1991): 38.

'transcriptions [are] socially constructed documents that can never totally encode the sound world to which they relate.'[43]

The significance of these 'gaps' goes beyond the fact that there is a degree of slippage between the representation (transcription or writing) and the actual sound world upon which it is based. We learn from the history of transcription that it can be a 'tool of colonial acquisitiveness, a means of appropriating and exhibiting sensory experiences,' a tool to 'demonstrate preconceived universalist theories,'[44] and thus there is a danger that it may generate an abstraction or objectification of the performers' creativity akin to the problematic theoretical paradigm in anthropology, identified by Redmond.[45]

While this is the case, Marett's experience of moving between analysis, participatory performance, and collaborative research, as expressed in the introduction to his book *Songs, Dreamings, and Ghosts: The Wangga of North Australia,* has proven that 'analysis … provides our best methodological tool for isolating significant (and signifying) moments of performance.'[46] While they both invoke a 'gap' between their representations and the subjects of their research, Barwick and Marett also emphasise the interaction between themselves and the subjects of their respective research. They do not write about a musical world absolutely separated from the world of their scholarly representation, but, rather, they write about the history of their experience in relation to that world, and the history of the intersection between their musical experience and the tools used to represent it.[47] Marett for example, in the epilogue to his book, articulates his response to country surrounding Wadeye in the Daly region of north Australia, that, once unfamiliar, is made vivid by his developed cultural knowledge of songs:

> It's late October, and I am flying out of Wadeye. Passing below me is a landscape, the outlines of which I knew well enough from maps even before I first came here. But what I see now is a living entity, country that is alive and which throws into life many different phenomena … I have learned about this country through the medium of songs.[48]

Barwick, furthermore, repeatedly gestures not only to a decrease in the gap between the medium of scholarship and the musical world that it represents, but also the gap between this world and her audience of academic readers.[49] In her discussion of the way that Warumungu women have opened up *Yawulyu Mungamunga* songs to a non-Aboriginal national and international audience, through the release of a CD and its launch at the Musicological Society of Australia conference in Sydney in 2000, Barwick asks 'does the relative lack of knowledge of

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[43] Allan Marett, *Songs, Dreamings, Ghosts: The Wangga of North Australia* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan U Press, 2005) 6.

[44] See Ellingson, 'Transcription' 110–13.

[45] See Note 3.

[46] Marett, *Songs, Dreamings, Ghosts* 6.

[47] By 'history of their experience,' I am referring to the hermeneutical notion of historical consciousness discussed by Gary Tomlinson and the hermeneutical solution to the gap between performance/listening and writing offered by Rice. As the 'horizons' of the Self continually shift and expand in relation to the Other, through a process of pre-existing understanding, distanciation and appropriation, new understanding emerges. See Gary Tomlinson, *Music in Renaissance Magic: Towards a Historiography of Others* (Chicago: U of Chicago Press) and Rice, *May it Fill your Soul*, Chapter 1.

[48] Marett, *Songs, Dreamings, Ghosts* 233.

[49] Linda Barwick, 'Creative (Ir)regularities'; 'Central Australian Women's Ritual Music'; 'Unison and Disagreement.'

Warumungu country and society by most *papulanji* (non-Aboriginal) audiences exclude us from aesthetic engagement with *Yawulya Mungamunga*?'[50] Drawing on Theodor Adorno's view that the 'inside' and 'outside' of an art work (its producers and audience) cannot be kept separate, because '[w]here there is internal consistency in a work there is also an accurate awareness of the external'[51] Barwick contends that non-Aboriginal audiences *can* be aesthetically engaged with the songs because

> the 'outside' of these artworks is not only Warumungu. We are all now part of 'the external' of these artworks and implicated in them. By bringing *Yawulyu Mungamunga* to the Musicological Society Conference in 2000, performers engage us and challenge us in the world that we all share.[52]

Martin's view from the beginning of this article that '[w]hatever song you compose comes out of the life of the *Wanjina*' points to the fact that the creative source laid down by *Wanjina* is fundamentally enmeshed in all others, and that the realisation of *junba* in the moment of performance springs from the same creative source as land and as people.[53] This dissolves the theoretical paradigm, identified and also challenged by Redmond, that separates ancestral creative past from the present. I contend that the approach to musicology exercised by Barwick and Marett similarly challenges a variety of paradigms that permeate the musicologist's experience, separating her/his musical/cultural experience from reflections on it and representations of it. Through an examination of songs that are said to *pull* between a variety of 'separate' worlds in Ngarinyin culture and cosmology, and recounting a series of analytical and performative events in the history of my experience of *junba*, I have attempted to advance a model for this approach to music research, in which analysis *pulls* the researcher and performer closer together, destabilising the 'gaps' between musicology and musical experience, and outsider and insider experience.[54] While tools of transcription and analysis function within the shadow of colonial history, coupled with fieldwork and collaboration these tools can draw researchers into closer interaction and closer dialogue with the people and music with which they work. Just as the notion that places *move* challenges the theoretical paradigm separating ancestral past from creative present, so too, the notion that songs *pull* challenges the boundaries that separate researcher and performer, and analysis and musical experience.

Conclusion

Movement and mobility are central to the Ngarinyin world-view, merging life and creative activity in the present with ancestral creative acts. Redmond eloquently examines this in

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[50] Barwick, 'Performance, Aesthetics, Experience' 18.

[51] Barwick, 'Performance, Aesthetics, Experience' 16.

[52] Barwick, 'Performance, Aesthetics, Experience' 16.

[53] Anthony Redmond, 'Nyalgodi (Scotty) Martin' 639–40; Alan Rumsey, 'Traces, and Links to Land' 19–42.

[54] This resonates with the view of Steven Knopoff who suggests that non-Aboriginal researchers should include three basic elements in their approach to representation of Aboriginal music: analysis, consultation with performers, and taking 'personal responsibility' for their reaction to the music. Involved in this last element is acknowledgement that musicologists, particularly in cross-cultural situations, come to terms with the music, at least in part, via analysis. See Steven Knopoff, 'What is music analysis? Problems and prospects for understanding Aboriginal songs and performance,' *Australian Aboriginal Studies* 1 (2003): 39–49 at 46–47.

terms of

> places that move, features in the landscape that travel, shake, tremble, and split. These
> places range from cave sites that were said to be transported on the shoulders of *Wanjina*
> during the *lalan* (Dreaming), to giant stones with soft centers that were carried from
> one mountain range to another by personages assimilating historically known persons
> with originary beings, to stone formations that are said to teeter, sway, move, and sing
> in a permanent state of unstable equilibrium.[55]

As discussed in this article, one manifestation of this occurs in the performance of a *junba*
dance-song that, as Redmond shows, makes one place become 'present in a dance ground
several hundred kilometers away from its actual physical incarnation.'[56] Related to this
movement is the action of *pulling*—the pulling of mountains, spirit beings, composers, baby-
spirits into life, people into death, and people into *junba*.

Movement and mobility are also central to experiencing *junba* composition/performance.
Representations of my understanding of *junba* musical language, in articles such as this, are
realisations of the interaction of my perception and reaction, with my analytical tools and
experiences, and with people who are indigenous to the *junba* tradition. Just as the realisation
of *junba* in the moment of performance is inseparable from other creative processes in the
Ngarinyin world, in my world, my analytical tools, my subjective reactions and experience,
and my understandings gained through engagement with performers, are equally inseparable.
They merge in a shifting expanding matrix from which my representations of *junba* musical
language spring. Central to the mobility of this matrix—the development of my musical
understanding, and the production of this article—are songs that pull me into a continual
cycle of engagement with the performers on the one hand, and with analysis on the other,
and then through analysis into further engagement with performers, and so on. In this way,
these songs pull me back and forth between engagements with performers' explanations and
with my own traditions of analysis.

Finally, as discussed above, Barwick encourages her readers to explore the 'common ground'
that they share with the Warumungu performers of *Yawulyu Mungamunga*.[57] I venture that it
is not only my understanding of *junba* composition/performance that is pulled through the
analysis of the songs discussed here. Through this article, through musical analysis, these songs
may also pull the reader into a deeper engagement with *junba* composition/performance,
however mediated by me and theoretically distanced by her/his different areas of speciality
and musicological preoccupation.

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[55] Redmond, 'Places that Move' 121.

[56] Redmond, 'Places that Move' 133–4.

[57] Barwick, 'Performance, Aesthetics, Experience.'