Aboriginal History

Volume five 1981
## ABORIGINAL HISTORY

### SPECIAL ISSUE: ABORIGINAL-ASIAN CONTACT

**VOLUME FIVE**  
**June 1981**  
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**Book Reviews**
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Aboriginal History aims to present articles and information in the field of Australian ethnohistory, particularly in the post-contact history of the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. Historical studies based on anthropological, archaeological, linguistic and sociological research, including comparative studies of other ethnic groups such as Pacific Islanders in Australia, will be welcomed. Future issues will include recorded oral traditions and biographies, vernacular narratives with translations, previously unpublished manuscript accounts, résumés of current events, archival and bibliographical articles, and book reviews.

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Art, Aborigines and Chinese: a nineteenth century
drawing by the Kwakwatu artist Tommy McRae

Cover: Designed by R.E. Barwick from a drawing by Tommy McRae of Wahgunyah, Victoria. See Aboriginal History, 5(1), 1981:80 for a photograph of the original drawing, held by the National Museum of Victoria.
Emeritus Professor W.E.H. Stanner, C.M.G., died in Canberra on 8 October 1981, fifty years after he graduated with first class honours from the infant Anthropology Department at the University of Sydney. He was still working in the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies which he had helped to found. He was still actively concerned with the analysis of Aboriginal systems of land tenure, and the moral issue of Aboriginal land rights. He made his first journey to the Daly River in 1932, to study local organization and the consequences of Asian and European contact. His records of this and later visits were being used by descendants of the men and women he knew, and the lawyers and anthropologists assisting them to prepare a land claim, when the news of his death reached the Daly River.

W.E.H. Stanner made notable contributions to anthropological theory, and his detailed analyses of Aboriginal religion and symbolism, economic life and social organisation are of world renown. His writing on customary law and its recognition in British courts, on nutrition, health, employment conditions, economic development, and the practical politics of administration helped to transform systems of colonial rule in Africa, Australia and the Pacific. He used his anthropological knowledge in the service of his own society in wartime and afterwards helped to build new institutions and develop new kinds of
research which aimed at appraising and improving Australian life. In the postwar period his abiding concern with the complexities of continuity and change in Aboriginal societies led him to develop new approaches which emphasised the necessity of studying the historical dimension in human affairs. In his writing for a wider audience Stanner sought to explain why 'the timeless categories of thought and life' persisted in Aboriginal society, and why Australians found it so difficult to see Aborigines in a way that was 'humane, respectful and compassionate'.

In a series of memorable essays, notably those on The Dreaming, on continuity and change, on the life of his friend Durmugam, and his 1968 Boyer Lectures, Stanner challenged others to explore Aboriginal history and ideology, to learn from the lives of individuals and the oral history of their communities, to think anew about Australia's past and the rights of Aborigines. He strongly supported the launching of *Aboriginal History* and generously offered two major papers to the new journal. The Editorial Board resolved to dedicate this special issue to the memory of W.E.H. Stanner, who wrote of Aborigines and the past with humanity, respect and compassion.

INTRODUCTION

James Urry

In 1979 Isabel McBryde suggested to the Editorial Board that occasionally the journal might produce issues devoted to a particular theme. Following her suggestion I proposed to the Board that a good subject for such an issue might be Aboriginal-Asian contact. This volume is the result.

Initially we hoped that not only Aboriginal views of Asians but also Asian views of Aborigines could be included. Letters were written to a number of people, both in Australia and abroad, who had studied aspects of Asian life in Australia, but little response was forthcoming. However, a number of people with knowledge of Aboriginal culture and history expressed interest in contributing papers and though not all could meet the deadline for the issue, the papers included in this volume give a good indication of the range of Asian-Aboriginal relations. Accounts of all the major Asian groups Aborigines have encountered are included: — 'Indonesian' peoples in northern Australia, Chinese and Japanese in northern Queensland, and 'Afghans' in central Australia. The papers, therefore, also deal with different areas of Australia though it is unfortunate that no detailed studies from Western Australia are included as this is an area which has rich history of Asian-Aboriginal contact.

None of the papers in this issue are intended as final statements on what is a complex and varied subject. Little, however, has been written on this theme before and it is hoped that the papers, and the points they raise, will encourage further research.
Old Lockhart River lugger-hands who had lengthy associations with Japanese boat-masters.

Photographs by Athol Chase
‘ALL KIND OF NATION’: ABORIGINALS AND ASIANS IN CAPE YORK PENINSULA*

Athol Chase

Apart from some interaction with Torres Strait Islanders, the Aborigines of Cape York Peninsula, Queensland, were free from overseas contact until European ‘discovery’ and subsequent settlement occurred in the nineteenth century. Shortly after Europeans arrived, Asians appeared in the Peninsula and its waters, attracted by news of its mineral and marine resources. Their intention, like that of ‘Macassan’ visitors to other north Australian shores in earlier days, was only to exploit the rich natural resources for as long as this was profitable. In Cape York the Asians (particularly the Japanese and Chinese) came to work the mineral fields or to supply the fast-growing lugger industries with specialised labour. Despite European anxiety at the time, these Asians were resource raiders rather than colonists intending to settle the north.

There were two main areas of Asian impact in northern Cape York: the rich coastal waters of the Great Barrier Reef where pearlshell and trepang could be found in abundance, and the hills and valleys of the eastern mountain spine where gold and other minerals awaited the fossicker's dish. As a result early contact between Asians and Aborigines was concentrated along the eastern margin of the Peninsula, in particular the coastal strip from Cape York itself to Princess Charlotte Bay. Here the crews of fishing luggers could find well-watered bases in the many bays and river mouths, well out of reach of officialdom. Here, too, transport boats could easily deliver men and supplies to the scattered mining bases which had developed by the 1890s.

The earliest commercial fishing took place among the reefs of the Torres Strait, where Frank Jardine, the first government Resident in the north, had discovered large beds of pearlshell and trepang (bêche-de-mer). By the middle of the nineteenth century pearl fishing grounds of Asia and Ceylon had become over-worked, and the rapidly expanding European market for both pearls and shell created high prices. At the same time Asian markets for trepang were reaching a peak. The first recorded commercial fisherman in Torres Strait waters was a Captain Edwards; with one ship, Blubell, he set up a trepang station on Albany Island near Cape York in 1862.1 He was followed by a Captain Banner, who began pearlshelling on Warrior Reef in Torres Strait in 1868. By 1873 Darnley Island was the centre of a growing trepang industry with a permanent station and curing works. Torres Strait Islanders and Solomon Islanders provided the labour, and ‘sandalwood English’ was well-established as the lingua franca of the boat trade.2

In 1875 the government Residency was transferred from Somerset, on the mainland, to Thursday Island to put authority closer to the expanding fishing industries. By 1884 the value of pearlshell production reached £94,000. It was Queensland’s sixth most valuable export.3

* I would like to thank John Caiger, C.A. Gerstle, Hiroko Quackenbush, David Sissons and Keiko Tamura for their assistance with the Japanese in this paper, and David Sissons for his comments.

1 Jack 1922:340.
2 Murray 1876:450.
of this bustling colonial industry, rapidly developed into a frontier port where Europeans were but one of many ethnic groups. Census figures show that by 1880 the population of Thursday Island included 214 Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, about 200 Asians, and 28 Europeans. By 1890 the European population had increased to 270, and 126 Asians, 38 Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, and 38 South Sea Islanders were enumerated. By 1901 the total population was 1,695: 700 were Europeans, 113 were Aborigines and Islanders, and there were 304 Japanese, 114 Chinese, 83 Filipinos and 55 Malays.4

For the coastal Aborigines of the eastern Cape York Peninsula, the commercial collection of pearlshell, trepang, trochus and later sandalwood resulted in intensive contact — indeed, a close association — with Asians. European colonists of the period, establishing cattle stations and mining towns farther inland, openly expressed their fear of invasion by the 'yellow hordes'; the coastal Aborigines, however, seemed to welcome the Asian visitors, having learned from experience that it was the Europeans who wished to dispossess them of their lands. The Japanese, 'Manillamen', Malays and others who came from the sea to set up temporary coastal camps and shore stations were more interested in establishing peaceful relations with local communities in order to obtain cheap labour and access to women. The Asian visitors, far from their homelands and facing a potentially explosive racist hostility simmering along the northern Queensland frontier, seemed aware of the value of local Aboriginal support. Presumably the Asian minority was conscious of the need to avoid the brutal excesses which were becoming a feature of European contact with Aborigines in the Peninsula. Asians, like Aborigines, were classed as 'coloured people' whom Europeans despised. Moreover, they suffered political and economic handicaps as foreign nationals. Although their association was not without friction, Aborigines and Asians cooperated in economic enterprises on this seaboard for more than half a century, in a climate of mutual dependence.

From the start, Europeans attempted to retain domination of the lugger industries, but the Asian visitors, in particular the Japanese brought in for the newer, deeper shellbeds, rapidly organised themselves into syndicates and ran their own boats. Despite the introduction of special legislation and the singling out of Japanese boat captains for prosecution under the **Aboriginals Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act, 1897**, the Japanese retained a domination over the pearlshell and trepang industries which was not broken until collapsing markets and the impending war removed them in the late 1930s.5 Jack’s 1922 volume on Cape York observed, with perhaps a note of contempt for the Asians whose domination was causing such an outcry from the Queensland colonists, that the foreign skilled labour employed in the fisheries — more and more in demand as deeper diving becomes necessary — has always been furnished by the justly self-respecting natives of Japan and the Malay Peninsula, who are not less expert in the making and the legal enforcement of bargains than in deep-diving, and may be trusted to safeguard their own interests . . .6

4 Evans 1972:27.
5 Sissons 1979 provides a detailed account of the Japanese involvement in the Australian pearling industry.
6 Jack 1922:370.
Northeastern Cape York Peninsula. Lugger camps were situated at many coastal locations between the 1880s and the 1920s.
By the 1880s the pearl fishing industry had developed its own work patterns. All licences were issued at Port Kennedy, Thursday Island. The standard lugger of ten tons was found to be the most useful vessel for pearling. With growing competition, and the depletion of the more accessible shallow shell beds, luggers had to work further away along the southern reefs fringing the Peninsula, or else move eastward to more remote Pacific waters. A lugger provisioned for one month at sea and took with it a number of working dinghies or cutters. A typical lugger crew consisted of the deep diver (who commanded the lugger), a tender to operate the lifelines, and four working hands to man the shifts on the airpump. Crews were a mixed bunch:

With few exceptions, the entire crews consist of coloured men of various nationalities. Mainland Aboriginals, Southsea Islanders and natives of the Torres Strait furnish the greatest number, while some of the best divers are represented by Manillamen, Chinese, Japanese and Malays.7

Trepang fishing, on the other hand, was a less capital intensive enterprise. The sea slugs were found only in shallow sandy waters where no diving apparatus was needed. The work was coastal and the technological demands lay in the treatment of the catch rather than in its procurement. Trepanging was labour intensive, needing many swimmers to collect the slugs, and more again at the shore station to cut wood, stoke the boilers, boil, gut and finally dry the catch. For all these tasks Aborigines were an ideal on-site labour force. Curing stations were set up at the Aborigines' major campsites, with little risk of intervention by officialdom. Cheap labour was bought with alcohol, trade goods, and a continuous supply of flour, sugar, tea and tobacco.

The Aboriginal communities of the Lockhart River area were affected by both the pearling and trepang industries. Luggers sought these Aborigines as crewmen because of their traditional skills with sea-going dugout canoes and their reputation as fine seamen. The Lockhart River mission station was first established in 1924 when the Anglican church began to collect Aboriginal groups which had settled around the old coastal lugger camps north of Princess Charlotte Bay. The Queensland government, which assumed charge of its administration in the 1960s, moved the settlement inland to its present site at Lloyd Bay on the east coast of the Peninsula, approximately opposite the better-known Weipa settlement. During the early 1970s the Lockhart community included some fifteen old men who had worked under Japanese lugger masters. Among them were three very old residents, Alick Naiga, George Rocky and Peter Pascoe, whose experience of the fishing industry dated back to the turn of the century and perhaps earlier.

This area was rich in trepang and pearlshell and by 1908 Lloyd Bay had become one of the major recruiting bases on Cape York.8 Japanese captains dominated the recruiting and they apparently worked hard to maintain good relations with the Kuuku ya’u, Umpila and Kaandyu people of the region. Old

7 Saville-Kent 1893:206. 8 Howard 1907-1913.
luggage men named for me nineteen Japanese skippers under whom Lockhart men had served:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Orra</th>
<th>Kunu</th>
<th>Oto</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Iwata</td>
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<td>Winu</td>
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From the Aboriginal viewpoint, Japanese luggers and shore stations provided not only the eagerly sought tradegoods and food supplies, but as well, for able-bodied men and youths, the chance to embark on great odysseys to distant places, seeing all manner of strange places and people in a world whose horizons had been considerably expanded. At a time when European authority was making its presence felt and when new sicknesses were ravaging the Aboriginal populations, the hurly-burly of lugger life and sea roving must have been as irresistible as the trade goods which flowed from signing up. For the more cautious and the old, the women and children, the shore camps of the Asians provided material plenty without the need to move from home territories, or from the ambit of relations. Particular captains (almost always Japanese) set up long-term ties with particular family groups. They had favoured status in terms of obtaining crew and labour, and they guaranteed trade supplies to their Aboriginal partners in return.

By the time I began research at Lockhart River in 1971 older Aboriginal people looked back on their early days under Japanese bosses with great nostalgia. They saw themselves as the last of the several generations who had worked closely with the Japanese and the carriers of information about an important period of history for the area and its Aboriginal people. Of all the aliens they had encountered, the Japanese ranked highest in their scale of respect. As one old man put it to me: 'All kind of nation been here before, but them Japanee too smart for the rest'.

Lockhart River people retain a large body of tales concerning their contact with the alien Japanese and Chinese, though stories about the Chinese are fewer and limited to the southern Aboriginal groups who encountered them around the Rocky River goldfields east of Coen. Some of these accounts are now taking on the status of myth in the transmission of local contact history to younger generations. 'Luggertime' or lugger is a period of history following the mythic creation and for which there are first-hand accounts from either living people or remembered ancestors. Other periods of refer to early sailing ships, the first Europeans (though 'Captain Cook' is seen as a mythic creator who left his 'story' sites on the landscape), various mission epochs, and so on.

As part of this conscious tradition of alien contact, Lockhart River people can articulate a system of classification of aliens. This incorporates the various people they have encountered in the past on the basis of perceived characteristics. Thus:

- **ku'unkulu** = 'deep eyes' = Japanese
- **yanganulnggaya** = 'long, long hair' = Chinese
makamatyika 'using hand to wipe arse' Asian Moslems, Malayans
maa'upinta 'having double skin' New Guinea people
[from ringworm]
thaathimulu 'from the islands' Torres Strait Islanders
puntu 'sweet talk' [lit. honey] Greeks, Italians
pupathi 'yankees' [pupathi is a synonym of yaangki, or a species of python]
parra 'spirit figure' Europeans

Only pama, or Aboriginal person, belonged to the Australian mainland, but together with other alien 'coloured' people they make up a human category distinct from Europeans; they are all tungkupinta ('having dark skins'). Of this category, Asians, Islanders and New Guineans are kungkaytyi ('of the north'), or, with reference to their position along with Europeans outside the world of known kin, watyanu ('not named'). Each ethnic category is stereotyped in terms of appearance, eating habits and possession of particular skills and knowledge, their cunning or stupidity. I deal here only with the Chinese and the Japanese. Of the two, Japanese play by far the most important part in the oral tradition.

While the heaviest Chinese involvement occurred on the gold and tin fields further south near Cooktown, some Chinese miners worked their way up to the Rocky River gold field, some sixty miles south of the present Lockhart River community, in the 1880s. Here they established diggings and started vegetable gardens to supply the influx of miners to the area and the nearby town of Coen. According to Idriess, the only witness to write about the Rocky River, the 'Chows' rushed the field 'against mining laws, and against all white men's laws'. Aborigines from the Rocky River area remember the Chinese who lingered on at the short-lived field at the turn of the century. Two Chinese are said to have been killed by one local Aboriginal hero, known as Monkey, who was enraged at the intruders to his territory. He killed them not by spearing, but contemptuously, by dropping stones on them as they dug in a shaft. An old Lockhart River inhabitant, Charlie Omeenyo, recalled a favourite method of getting produce from the Chinese gardeners during his youth:

One Chinaman used to carry all those peanuts, pineapple and other things over to Coen to sell them to the whitefellers. He used to carry them in baskets on the ends of a long pole over his shoulders. I was only a boy then, but we young fellers use to paint up and carry a big bundle of spears and a woomera. We knew which way that Chinaman would come on the track, and when we saw him coming we would wait for him up in the hills behind the Rocky River. When he came round the corner, we would jump out from the rocks calling out and hollering, and waving those spears about. He used to get a big fright and drop those baskets and take off! We used to pick it all up and go off and have a good feed. Those Chinamen weren't wild, they used to have a long pigtail down their backs. That's why we call them yanganuhggaya. It means long, long hair.

Lockhart River people see the Japanese in retrospect as having made an abortive attempt to gain a foothold in the Peninsula soon after European discovery and settlement. But, whereas the coming of the Japanese lies within the history

of present-day humans, the European arrival, through the actions of Captain Cook, lies further back in *antha jn’atyi*, or the ‘middle ages’ which bridge the creation time and the present-day world. The Japanese are believed to have struggled against the Europeans ever since their arrival, firstly during the lugger time by stealth and cunning, and then in the 1940s by outright warfare. The opinion of George Rocky, an old lugger hand, was that:

Might be they want to live in this place and settle down, but parra [Europeans] won’t let them, because they come first. They let those Japaneel sail about, getting *piira* (pearlshell) but they won’t let them settle down anywhere. Those Japaneel try properly then, make a war. They want to fight for this country because they know it from before. Nearly, they get it.

There are no stories of conflict with Japanese in the early days of contact. From the start they seemed to have got on well with local populations. A very old Lockhart man, Alick Naiga, provided the following account of his first meeting with the Japanese, possibly in the closing years of the nineteenth century:

I was only a good sized boy, no whiskers yet. My father and I lived with our mob in our country at *patan patan*, Lockhart River, on top, in the hills, really Kaahtyu language people, not sandbeach. I had never seen a whitefeller before or a Japanese, only blackfellers. My father took me down to Cape Sidmouth where my mother’s country is, because he heard a Japanese lugger was there. We went down and we signed up for crew. My father looked after me on the boat and that Japanese skipper taught me about boat work. The skipper made a camp at Cape Sidmouth, gave people a lot of flour, tobacco and other things. He was like friend to that mob. If another skipper came in to get a crew, he would say: “Go away! This is my mob here, I look after them”. That was a long time ago, before that first war. No whitefellers then, only Japaneel. Mr Giblet [a European sandalwooder] came after.

While the old ceremonies languished for want of members as a result of recruitment to the luggers, a new initiation into manhood took place in the hard life aboard the sailing vessels, in the dangerous reef waters, and in the various ports where yet other strangers posed a constant threat through unknown methods of sorcery and physical violence. Out of this new and exciting rite of passage grew a feeling of self-reliance which cut across the more localised dependencies upon kin and totem. From the cross-cultural camaraderie of the boat decks a special creole language emerged, and new songs and dances known today as *thaypu*, or ‘Island style’ rose in popularity to threaten with their vigour and inventiveness the old traditional forms which had hitherto provided the only structures for formal social activity. Cultural as well as geographical horizons had been enlarged.

From their long experience on Japanese boats, these Aborigines built up a perception of their skippers as cunning, resourceful, and able to outwit with ease the government patrol vessels which were constantly pressing them over illegal recruitment. Unlike European captains, the Japanese are remembered for honouring agreements to return crews to their home shores after an agreed period of service. Though they were hard in their demands
for a full day's work ('from sun up to sun down') they were fair in their
treatment of crew and scrupulously honest in payment. Pay-off time at the
beginning of the monsoons brought money, goods, food, and hard liquor as
a bonus for services rendered. Most importantly, the Japanese were not 'flash'
(that is, proud or pretentious): they ate and slept with Aborigines and respected
Aboriginal knowledge of coasts, weather and bushfoods. Europeans, on the
other hand, had a reputation for breaking agreements and cheating Aborigines
out of rightfully-earned pay. Moreover, they could be 'cheeky', or dangerous
when annoyed. Japanese skills at sailing the luggers were legendary. George
Rocky described a voyage he made under a well-known Japanese captain
known as Kusima:

We left that mainland from Lockhart and passed that main Barrier Reef.
He just kept going kaaway [east]. He just watched that sky all day and all
night. Every now and again he would tell the helmsman, "little bit port"
or "little bit starboard", or "hold him". We were right outside now in
deep water and we didn't stop, just kept going. He would alter course a
little bit this way, little bit that way. Three days and three nights we kept
going like this, never stop. The fourth day came up and that captain said:
"Right, I am going to lie down and sleep now. Bye and bye you will see
land come up. Wake me when you see it". That afternoon, land came up
in front of us, and we dropped anchor so everybody could sleep properly.
We were right over in the Solomons. That Japanee captain just had a
compass on the boat, no maps, nothing else. You can't beat the Japanee
on a boat, they were too smart for that one!

Referring to another trip, George Rocky told of a pursuit by a government
vessel, a drama which must have been enacted many times.
This one was before that war, the first one. We were sailing out from
Hinchinbrook Island. That government steamer came up and tried to
catch us, but that Japanee captain said: "Put on all the sail!" He took over
the tiller from one Aboriginal man and took the boat right inside, right
up close to the beach in the shallow water, reef everywhere. That steamer
couldn't come inside, it just stayed outside and watched us. Night time
came and we hid in one bay. Next morning, all clear, so we went outside
again, but that steamer was right there waiting for us! Right! We raced
him now, we took off and ran for that main Barrier and that steamer was
right behind us. But he couldn't catch that lugger, it was famous for
speed. By and by we came to the main Barrier, reefs everywhere there.
That Japanee started to sail right up next to the reefs and that steamer
couldn't come up. We were scared! The steamer was afraid of the reefs,
but our captain knew them. He knew all the reefs and channels, and he
watched the tide. When it started to drop he ran through a channel into a
big lagoon. The steamer couldn't follow. All it could do was sail on the
other side of the reef. We went from one lagoon into another lagoon, like
that all day, and that steamer just watched us from outside. Next day we
went into other lagoons and kept going like that. The steamer couldn't
follow. We all had a good laugh and waved it goodbye. I don't know what
that government boat was chasing us for. Must be that Japanee captain
did something wrong, but he was too smart for those whitefellers on the
steamer!
Japanese men are said to have learned the Aboriginal dialects of the Lockhart area and some of the older Lockhart men professed a knowledge of the Japanese language. By the 1970s this seemed to consist mainly of nouns or their versions of common Japanese phrases used on the boat. The words remembered by the old lugger men are listed below. Their rendering is given first, then the Japanese form and its translation.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Aboriginal</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Possible Form</th>
<th>Japanese</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tkuramu</td>
<td>we go</td>
<td>iku</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>you (as used by men to women)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>irati</td>
<td>boat runs</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>perhaps also from delicious or good in Japanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>umay</td>
<td>woman</td>
<td>omae?</td>
<td>blackman</td>
<td>blackman</td>
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<tr>
<td>churumpu</td>
<td>black man</td>
<td>kurombō</td>
<td>sakē</td>
<td>sake (Japanese fermented drink)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>churuchuru</td>
<td>child</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sagi</td>
<td>any drink</td>
<td>sakē</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>kuyima</td>
<td>come back</td>
<td>koi ima</td>
<td>come now</td>
<td>come now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tuning</td>
<td>trochus shell</td>
<td>iōnen</td>
<td>trochus</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ma nandu uki nu</td>
<td>big one</td>
<td>ma nanto ōki no</td>
<td>what a large ...(ōki — big, large)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ukuyti</td>
<td>hold course</td>
<td>yukute</td>
<td>course</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ma ami nandu ukinu</td>
<td>big rain comes</td>
<td>ma ame nanto ōkino</td>
<td>what a big rain comes</td>
<td>(ame — rain)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subu</td>
<td>small boy</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>misakuru</td>
<td>eat food</td>
<td>meshi kurau</td>
<td>eat food (meshi — rice/food)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>atama</td>
<td>head of a person</td>
<td>atama</td>
<td>head</td>
<td>head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>namaku</td>
<td>trepang</td>
<td>namako</td>
<td>trepang</td>
<td>trepang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kami</td>
<td>turtle</td>
<td>kame</td>
<td>turtle</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>namas</td>
<td>specific Japanese cuisine</td>
<td>namasu?</td>
<td>raw and vinegar — Japanese for pickling fish and vegetables in vinegar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is one Island style dance performed to Japanese words and phrases which imitates the actions of pulling in the anchor, and putting up the sail. Another Island style song, called the 'Three Languages' song, has words in the local Kuuku ya'u dialect (shown unmarked), in Japanese (shown in round brackets), and in 'Torres Strait' language (shown in square brackets):

ngana nyi'i pirra kalnkinmana ngu'uula kani kakalangganu (kura kura kura tatayana) payina (saka tanama kuwanga ruwa) [nori nori ampa wirimu sata wirimu nori nori]

The words are translated in English as 'we come from the outside reef, big mob of people sit up there, on the shore'.

Attempts at the Japanese language never failed to bring great amusement to Lockhart River audiences especially when they were accompanied by exaggerated face and arm movements, said to be a vital part of Japanese instructions. Japanese language is thought to be 'funny', and Aborigines were quick to note Japanese mispronunciation of Aboriginal and English words:

They got a funny talk those Japanee. They can't say those English words properly. Might be they want to say 'Lockhart', like that. Well, they say 'Rockhart', something like that. They can't loosen the tongue, they speak little bit deep, can't lighten him.
Apart from noting such behavioural idiosyncrasies Lockhart River people always comment on the physical appearance of Japanese. They are said to have been recognisable at a great distance by their short muscular bowed legs and thickset torsos. The absence of body hair was invariably noted. The Japanese are credited with great physical strength for their height, comparable with the famed Torres Strait Islanders. The Japanese earned their name *ku'unkulu* ('deep eyes') from the fact that their eyes did not protrude from the facial plane, unlike Aborigines and Europeans. Japanese are believed to possess insatiable sexual appetities, proof of which was to found in the past through their constant desire for young Aboriginal girls as bed companions and through the presence at Thursday Island of a Japanese brothel which accepted Aboriginal customers. Here, it is said, Japanese women performed astonishing sexual services hitherto unknown to Aboriginal men.\(^{10}\)

Clearly, from the Aboriginal perspective, all Asians, in particular the Japanese, had special knowledge and 'medicines' to attract sexual partners and to extend potency. During my visits I was constantly asked about Japanese or Chinese 'chemists' in southern towns, and whether special elixirs could be obtained from them to increase the flagging potency of male pensioners. Such preparations, said to have been encountered in luggering days, are believed to be far more effective for all kinds of ills than either local 'bush medicines' or European drugs. Even today the considerable beach litter left by passing shipping traffic is carefully examined for containers labelled in Asian scripts. Where contents remain, these are carefully examined by old lugger men who attempt to identify their possible use. Stings from poisonous stonefish and stingrays are still treated in 'Japanee style' by applying a poultice of heated dry rice grains to the affected area: Lockhart people say that this is the only effective way to reduce pain quickly and stop the victim from 'singing out'.

The Japanese influence at Lockhart River is most immediately visible in household cuisine. Rice, now a staple food in the community, is always cooked 'Japanee' way. First it is washed to remove dust and then it is covered with water to the depth, above the grains, of the middle joint of the middle finger. The rice is then boiled until all moisture is evaporated and only the cooked grains remain. Another food item said to have originated from contact with Japanese is a preparation of small hot chillies pickled in vinegar. The chillies, from bushes grown around local houses, are said to have come from seeds obtained from Torres Strait Islanders, who in turn obtained them from Japanese. This fiercely hot preparation is eaten as an accompaniment to rice and meat. The ability of older men to eat large quantities of it without visible emotion is a result of lugger experience. Most favoured of all items from the Japanese cuisine is *namas* (identified as a Japanese word) or pickled raw fish. Thin lateral slices of such predatory fishes as mackerel are placed in a dish of vinegar with slices of onion for some fifteen minutes until the flesh turns opaque. It is then eaten without further preparation. Soy sauce may be added when available.

Green ginger, garlic and soy sauce are still favourite condiments used to flavour turtle and dugong meat. All of these, as distinct from curry powder, are said to be Japanese in origin. Old lugger men retain their dexterity with the  

\(^{10}\) See Evans 1972:48-9 for details of 'Yokohama', the Japanese brothel at Thursday Island which catered for 'coloureds'. See also Sissons 1977 for a detailed account of Japanese prostitutes in Australia.
yuku tyu'ātyu ('small sticks') or chopsticks said to have been the only eating implement available on the luggers. These old men show considerable pride in demonstrating their skill, and recall that acquisition of this expertise was made harder by the fact that Japanese chopsticks, unlike those of the Chinese, were pointed. The old lugger men also remember that the Japanese relished Aboriginal foods cooked in earth ovens, and took an instant liking to the traditional preparation of cooked balls of stingray meat soaked in the liver oil, a great delicacy for coastal Aboriginal communities on Cape York Peninsula.

All of these beliefs and practices suggest that there was considerable intimacy in the association of Japanese and Europeans in this part of Cape York Peninsula. Both groups obviously found rewards in a mutual dependence while their opportunities were circumscribed by the opinions and activities of European colonists. The older people of Lockhart River have preserved a recollection of a wartime incident which seems to acknowledge the qualitative difference in their relations with Japanese and Europeans. They are unaware that European fears of Aboriginal disloyalty during the second World War were widespread, and largely hysterical. They simply recount their memories of the days in the early 1940s when Japanese invasion of Cape York seemed certain. European staff at the Lockhart River Mission departed hurriedly, abandoning their charges (presumably on military orders). But, before leaving, the superintendent collected all firearms owned by Aboriginal residents and dumped them out at sea. They were told the reason: to prevent them giving guns to Japanese soldiers who, the Europeans believed, would almost certainly be accompanied by the friendly lugger masters of the pre-war period.

From their long and varied experience of Asians in Northeastern Cape York local Aborigines obtained information on alien lifestyles which were quite different from that of Europeans. The Chinese and Japanese examples mentioned here point up the differences within the general category of Asians. Such experiences served to provide additional yardsticks by which to measure differences between Aboriginal and European existence. Kolig has observed that Aboriginal people, in the press of contact, manage to retain an identity by conceptualising differences between themselves and others. In the Kimberleys of Western Australia they:

come to orient their existence mainly in relation to Western society and they link themselves directly, though not kindly, with it. Partly by their own insight, partly by the import of ideas mainly from southern urbanised Aborigines, Aborigines begin to define themselves now mainly by comparison with Europeans.

In this part of Cape York Peninsula the variety of experience in the process of long-term alien intrusion has meant that models other than European have been available, and indeed partly adopted, in the process of adjustment. For many of the older Lockhart men their experience with the Japanese far outweighed their experience with Europeans, though the Europeans were the controlling agents of settlement. I have suggested elsewhere that the multi-ethnic experience, together with the absence of a single sudden displacement

from territories (as happened in much of the pastoral area of Australia) provided
Lockhart River Aborigines with the opportunities to make adjustments to the
pressures brought by land and sea contact.\textsuperscript{13} The riches sought by these aliens
lay in the short-term extraction of resources, and in temporary seasonal
exploitation of Aboriginal labour. The land itself was not a resource to the
Asian intruders, but only a base for the soon-gathered minerals and marine
products. Asians and Europeans, though both invaders of a sort, were in Aboriginal
eyes enemies to each other and, in the case of Japanese, fellow victims of an
authoritarian European government. Chinese, though only encountered sporadi­
cally, seem to have provided Aborigines with a target against which to measure
their superiority in a world which ranked Aborigines close to the bottom of the
status hierarchy. Like the Torres Strait Islanders who experienced a similar
range of contact, the Lockhart River people were 'worldlywise' in comparison
with other Aboriginal groups to the south at that time, where contact experiences
were narrower and more geographically contained. Certainly for old Lockhart
River men today, life in the modern settlement away from the beach, with its
stifling routine of work, drinking and gambling under European administration,
seems a good deal greyer and duller than it was in luggering days.

In conclusion, Barth's comments on ethnic distinctiveness have some
relevance. For him, ethnic \textit{boundaries} are the central elements in such distinc­
tiveness, not the 'cultural stuff' they enclose.\textsuperscript{14} It seems likely that where Aboriginal
identity is not under direct attack the multiplication of such ethnic boundaries
in the one area at the one time through multi-ethnic experience can help to
define and strengthen local Aboriginal identity to resist later attack. The
'cultural stuff' of the Lockhart River community has altered in material and
behavioural forms over a century of contact, yet their ethnic boundaries are
proudly maintained. In this area Asians have played their part in building up
Aboriginal defences against modern assaults, by Europeans, upon a distinctive
and localised identity.

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\textsuperscript{13} Chase 1980.
\textsuperscript{14} Barth 1969:15.

BOOK BARGAIN FROM THE PACIFIC HISTORY ASSOCIATION


Price: $6.50 cash and carry, Canberra. Please add $3 postage for mail orders. Make cheques payable to: P.H.A. Book A/C. Requests should be addressed to: Mr Hank Driessen, Department of Pacific & Southeast Asian History, Australian National University, P.O. Box 4, Canberra, ACT 2600.
At Maytown, 1979, Norman Mitchell (standing): Joseph Geia, Christopher Anderson, Don Brady, William Brady (left to right at front).

Photographs by Bruce Rigsby.
The reminiscences of Norman Mitchell, one of the last remaining Kuku-Yalanji with direct experience of life on the Palmer River before World War II, provide information on Aboriginal-Chinese dealings in the aftermath of the Palmer River gold rush. The period after 1900 is not well documented in the historical literature of this region of Cape York Peninsula and information concerning Aborigines is scanty. In the early part of this century people of three very different cultures, Aboriginal, Chinese and European, struggled to come to terms with each other around Maytown and the small towns south of there, where the three populations were often fairly evenly balanced in size. Relations between Aborigines and Chinese are of particular interest, as the Chinese were the only sizeable group of non-Europeans that inland Kuku-Yalanji had ever met. Apart from observing their habits and way of life, Aborigines were undoubtedly interested to see that another group of people suffered similar discrimination from Europeans.

Norman Mitchell (whose Kuku-Yalanji names are Burrimuka or Babiwawu) was born shortly after the turn of the century at Holmes Creek camp near Mt. Carbine in Cape York Peninsula. His father Ngamuyarkin was a Yalngkurrwarra man from 'Cooktown-side', while his mother Yambakalja, although born in Maytown, was a Kuku-Jangkun speaker from Mt. Mulligan. Shortly after his birth Norman accompanied his parents to Maytown, where he spent much of his early life.

Maytown had been the centre of the Palmer River gold rush from 1873 to about 1885. The region, then virtually unknown territory to Europeans, was transformed almost overnight by a series of frontier townships and prospecting camps stretching all along the Palmer River and its major creeks. Following the discovery of payable gold on the Palmer River by J.V. Mulligan in June 1873 there was a rush on a scale unequalled in Queensland to that time. By August 1874 there were over 5,000 Europeans and 2,000 Chinese working at the Palmer. Most of the Chinese had come from other colonies in southern Australia, or from the Queensland goldfields to the south such as the Cape River or Gilbert River areas. As the news (and the gold) reached China, many young men set off for Queensland, often financed by Chinese merchants who then received a large percentage of the men's earnings. The historian Bolton notes that the 'majority came from four small districts in the Kwangtung province, whose men had for some years gone out in similar circumstances to mine, at first for Malayan tin
and gold, later in Indonesia, North America, Peru and the southern colonies of Australia. By June 1875 the Chinese population of the Palmer River and Cooktown (the port of entry to Australia and to the goldfields for the Chinese) was over 12,000. Of these 75-85 per cent had come directly from overseas.

The Chinese miners worked primarily those areas of the Palmer already exploited by Europeans, but by patient and industrious labour they were often able to secure respectable quantities of gold. In the townships such as Maytown, Byerstown and Palmerville which had sprung to life along the Palmer the Chinese were 'found to provide the community with services which had been lacking or inadequate, some as market gardeners, others as cooks, a few even as doctors or herbalists'. Chinese-European relations on this goldfield were not characterised by the violence shown on the earlier Victorian fields, but discrimination and prejudice were common. European miners, often jealous of Chinese success in areas the former had abandoned, demanded and successfully persuaded the government to implement such control measures as a 'head tax' on Chinese immigrants and special duties on miner's rights for Chinese. The maximum number of Chinese on the Palmer was 17,000 in 1877, but by 1880 the Chinese population had declined to 3,000 and the majority of Europeans had also gone. During the 1880s and 1890s most of the Chinese who had not already

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3 Kirkman 1978b:244.
5 Bolton 1972:60.
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returned to China left the Palmer and moved south to small townships such as Mt. Molloy, Mt. Carbine, Mareeba, Port Douglas and Mossman, as well as to larger centres such as Atherton, Cairns and Innisfail. Only small groups of Chinese and a few Europeans stayed on the Palmer for some years after World War I. Maytown itself was finally deserted and left in ruins. Even the materials from its buildings were taken for use on pastoral stations when the last family, that of the postmistress Mrs Parsons, left in the mid-1940s.

The Chinese who moved to the small towns quickly established a near monopoly on the supply of fruit and vegetables and, on the coast, fish. Chinese who had not become naturalized citizens were forbidden to own freehold land, but many Europeans who lacked the capital to develop their holdings leased plots to the Chinese, who cleared and cultivated this land. As well as supplying produce locally, during the 1890s Chinese entrepreneurs established a major banana export business, utilising their ties with Chinese communities in Sydney and Melbourne. In 1898 almost forty million bunches were exported from Cairns. Cotton, sugar, rice and (on the Atherton Tablelands) maize were also grown by Chinese on a large scale.

The everyday life of the Chinese and their dealings with Europeans are well described by May. It would seem that the aim of most Chinese was to make money and send it home to China for their families. They usually returned to China when they were ready to marry. The Chinese communities of the late nineteenth century showed no real desire to involve themselves too closely with Europeans and their society in Australia. This, coupled with European prejudice, created 'Chinatowns' in most of the larger coastal centres of north Queensland. In fact the approximately 2,000 Chinese living in Cairns during the 1890s constituted between a quarter and a third of the entire population of the town.

There is no doubt that the Chinese were intricately involved in the north Queensland economy and contributed a great deal to the changes which occurred in this region following European settlement. Yet as May points out:

In the district as a whole, the first decade of this century was a time of flux during which significant migrations of Chinese from area to area were coupled with the beginnings of an overall decline in the Chinese population. After 1903, the Chinese community in Cairns suddenly lost its dynamism. An obvious cause was the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901 which effectively caused the Chinese population figures to stagnate. Moreover, the original immigrants in their fifties, were increasingly returning home. The 1920s saw a brief upsurge in the number of Chinese on the Atherton Tableland due to increased maize production. Vestigial Chinatowns also remained in coastal centres into the 1930s. Overall, though, the Chinese population of north Queensland after this time was small, stable and made up of Australian-born Chinese who intended to remain in Australia.

The initial response of the Kuku-Yalanji and Kuku-Mini Aborigines to the great influx of Europeans and Chinese into their lands on the Palmer was that of fierce resistance and virtual guerilla warfare. The events of this early
period have been fairly well documented, at least from a European perspective, by various historians. In the end, the superior fighting technology and the greater numbers of the aliens won out. The remaining Aborigines in the Palmer region were forced into a position of mining camp and town fringe-dwellers and itinerant labourers. With declining gold production from 1885 onwards and a rapid decrease in the European and Chinese population the Aborigines, too, were forced into towns such as Mt. Carbine, Mt. Molloy and Mareeba. Here their relationships with Europeans and Chinese remained much the same. Aborigines supplied labour in return for rations, opium and (rarely) money; some Aboriginal women lived with non-Aboriginal men, and bore their children. Many of these 'half caste' children were removed by police to government settlements or church missions under the provisions of the Aboriginals Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act, 1897 and subsequent legislation for the control of Aborigines.

The memories of Norman Mitchell and his recollections of stories told by older relatives are of importance in giving an Aboriginal perspective of the Chinese in north Queensland and information on Aboriginal-Chinese dealings in the Palmer area. After spending his childhood in Maytown he came back to Mt. Carbine and worked at pastoral stations on the Upper Mitchell, Hodgkinson and Walsh rivers, as well as mining for tin, wolfram and gold in the same area. He travelled extensively in southern Cape York, working for Europeans, for Chinese and for himself as stockman, butcher, packer, cane-cutter, and miner. He spent time on Palm Island (off Townsville), the Queensland government's Aboriginal settlement 'for those in need of sterner control'. Because of his stockman skills he was later shifted to the Woorabinda settlement, which included a large pastoral property near Rockhampton. During the early 1960s Norman returned to Mareeba, where he now lives. His range of experience — early bush life, the urban settings of Mareeba and Cairns, the government settlements — and his extensive involvement with Europeans and Chinese give him a rather unique Aboriginal perspective on culture contact in this area of north Queensland.

Fortunately Bruce Rigsby and I were able to visit Maytown with Norman Mitchell on a University of Queensland fieldtrip initiated by Mr Don Brady, a Maytown Kuku-Yalanji descendant who grew up on Palm Island and now lives in Brisbane. He was anxious to re-establish links with the land of his father and to ensure that information about it was recorded. A grant from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies enabled us to spend several weeks, late in 1979, documenting sites and recording social history in the Mareeba-Carbine-Palmer region. After the death of Mr Jack Cummings (Babibulkibulki) at Mareeba early in 1980, the urgency of recording the memories of the few Kuku-Yalanji who recalled life on the Palmer was obvious to all of us.

In September and October of 1980, Norman Mitchell was able to come to Brisbane and work as a language consultant for us in a number of courses offered in the department. In addition, I took this opportunity to expand my knowledge of 'Maytown-side' Kuku-Yalanji language, culture and social history (as most of my other fieldwork has been with coastal Kuku-Yalanyji around

11 See Brady, Anderson and Rigsby, 1980.
Bloomfield River). It was during this time that Norman and I recorded the information presented below on the Chinese of North Queensland.

The following text, and the commentary in its footnotes, provides something of an Aboriginal perspective on the Chinese in north Queensland and presents information on Aboriginal-Chinese dealings in this area. Precise dates for specific events described are difficult to establish, but the general period which Norman is describing is roughly from the end of World War I to the beginning of World War II except of course when he is referring to stories told him by his older relatives. Norman is a fully fluent speaker of Kuku-Yalanji, but his everyday speech in Mareeba today is Cape York Aboriginal English. We thus recorded his narratives primarily in the latter, although where appropriate Norman also gives the Kuku-Yalanji word or phrase. Some of the text, as may be apparent to readers, is the result of my questioning and promptings. My remarks have been omitted. Some sections of the text have been reorganised to bring together material on the same topic, and some information collected on our 1979 trip has been inserted for clarification. Norman Mitchell, who has taught himself to read and write in the last few years, checked my editing and re-organisation of the transcripts of his taped narrative and has made corrections where necessary. Names of some persons, particularly the Chinese, have been changed where an incident may embarrass any living descendants.

Finally, two things require further comment. Relations between Chinese and Aborigines in North Queensland often involved the exchange of opium. The Chinese brought it with them into north Queensland and continued to import it legally until 1906, and illegally until well into the 1930s. Their use of it was by most accounts moderate. The Chinese were in fact, as Bolton notes, probably 'too thrifty and self-respecting to become addicts'. It is clear, though, that Chinese (and many Europeans) did use opium as a means of attracting and keeping Aboriginal labour. Primarily because of the form in which it was taken by Aborigines — opium ash mixed with water and swallowed — opium did affect their health. Archibald Meston and Walter Roth, Protectors of Aborigines late last century, both commented that opium was responsible for 'thousands of deaths' and exerted 'a far more baneful influence on the aboriginal than even liquor and venereal disease'. The notion was widespread among Europeans that from the time Aborigines began to use opium they became 'saturated with the noxious drug and degraded beyond all explanation [sic]'. Although opium was indeed a factor in the generally very poor health of Aborigines in north Queensland, it is likely that Europeans too readily blamed the presence and involvement of the Chinese, who became a scapegoat in explanations of the appallingly high death rate of Aborigines. The historian Evans says that 'the rapid spread of the habit [opium addiction] throughout the colony, plus its oriental origins and bizarre effects led observers to brand it

12 Bolton 1972 compares it to modern Australians' use of spirits.
15 Quoted in Cronin 1975:309.
16 Cronin 1975:308.
overwhelmingly the main destroyer of the semi-civilized black'. Thus any European guilt about the condition of Aborigines was assuaged. Many Aborigines in North Queensland were removed by police to settlements when charged with possession of opium, but its use by Aborigines seems to have stopped altogether by World War II.

The cannibalism allegedly practised by Aborigines of the Palmer River area is another matter requiring special comment. The existence of such a custom is virtually taken for granted in much literature on the Palmer and is uncritically believed by many Europeans today. Popular belief is aided by books such as Hector Holthouse’s *River of gold*, which argues that ‘In country where an uncertain supply of wild game provided either a feast or a famine, they were all cannibals of a particularly bad type’. Holthouse then quotes an unnamed source who says: ‘[The Palmer Aborigines] killed and ate their own women and children, and occasionally their men. The older women were often killed for eating purposes like livestock’. And later: ‘To the cannibal blacks, the new chum Chinese were manna from heaven. Hundreds of them were ambushed, captured, and eaten at leisure in gloomy canyons like Hell’s Gate, at creek crossings, and in patches of scrub along the track’, and ‘Captured Chinese were taken ... by the dozen and hung on trees ... by their pigtails until they were needed for killing and eating’.

Although fairly solid ethnographic evidence exists for the eating of human flesh as part of mortuary practices in the eastern Kuku-Yalanji areas around Bloomfield River, there are no reliable reports of this or any other sort of ‘cannibalism’ on the Palmer. It is certainly nonsense to suggest that human flesh was a basic source of food. Hughes states that ‘Actual evidence of cannibalistic feasts was rare — obviously the only concrete evidence could be half cooked remains — but the widely accepted belief that the Aborigines carried off the corpses of their victims gave some credence to reports of cannibalism’. The *Cooktown Herald* reported that ‘the increasing appetite of the [Palmer] Aborigines for roasted Asiatic is one of their marked peculiarities’. Bolton remarks that ‘many old-timers assert that the special hostility of the Palmer natives towards [the Chinese] was due to a belief, quietly encouraged by some Europeans, that the vegetarian Chinese made better eating than white men’. Bolton goes on to say, however, that ‘The very few accounts of Palmer cannibalism which sound in any way authentic certainly suggest a preference for Chinese; but there is not much good evidence to go on, and as many Chinese travelled unarmed, they were in any case easier victims to hostile spearsmen’.

My own view is that the eating of human flesh probably did occur on the Palmer, but in very particular and limited situations. One of these was probably the ritual consumption of parts of a slain enemy — and after 1873 enemies

17 Evans 1975:95.
20 Holthouse 1967:93, 94. See also Meston 1936.
21 See Roth 1901a.
22 Hughes 1975:40-41.
23 *Cooktown Herald*, 30 November 1878.
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would have been numerous. Apart from the probably rare actual incidents of human flesh consumption, the strong European belief in Aboriginal cannibalism in this area arose and persists today, I would argue, as an ideological defence mechanism: it states and reinforces the belief that Aborigines were less than human or at the very least were 'uncivilized' (if they ate other humans). This then justified their removal from the land and their extermination. The spectre of indigenous cannibalism has been used all over the world to justify colonial violence.25

Nevertheless Norman Mitchell’s account of his grandfather telling him a story of how he killed and ate a Chinaman is given in good faith. Cannibalism has entered the contemporary Kuku-Yalanji belief system as fact in the same way it has with Europeans. Elderly Kuku-Yalanji people will tell you with quiet humour and pride of the fear engendered in Europeans and Chinese by such legends. And if nothing else they are proud of the cultural distinctiveness and active resistance to alien intrusion which such customs demonstrate.

Memories of the Kubara

We call Chinaman Kubara,26 or sometime mira bilin ['tight eye']. When they first come out here they had that mungka biji — 'pig tail', you know. And those that lived around Maytown, they was all like that for a long time. And even when they come to Mareeba they lived like that. Most of them had this long hair and that long moustache for a long time and then they gradually give it up. Some of them used to cut themselves baldy.

All the Kubara, they started off gettin' gold on the Palmer and when that finish they come to [Mt.] Carbine. Most of them stopped at that place Diyalmbyn27. Ooh! There was thousands of them there! (Chuckles) Nearly on top of one another! They had a big garden there, cross the creek, right up on the bank. Good vegetable garden too. Tomatoes and shallots, Chinee cabbage . . . they sell'em. They [went] up and down there from that place to Carbine and Molloy. They had plenty a rice there Carbine too. Storekeeper sent oversea to China for it28. From there to Mary Farm. Big mob was there too. Gardens there. And they gradually musta found a way . . . well, police probably was the immigrant . . . whatee call it . . . supervisor and so forth. They turned around and musta told'em where to go. And then they went to Mareeba, most of them. Some in [Mt.] Molloy. Some in Julatten. Some went down Mossman, Daintree.

26 Dr David Ip of the Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Queensland has pointed out to me the similarities between the word kubara and the anglicized spellings of a Chinese word which was often used as a name for Chinese shops. The word is GA BO (GA, the honorific, and BO meaning 'treasure'). It was thus used, as in 'The Treasure Trading Company', and anglicized spellings were 'Karboro', 'Kaboro', and so on. Usage of such a word by Aborigines in referring to Chinese relates well to the common north Queensland Aboriginal belief of great Chinese wealth and of buried treasure left by the Chinese.
27 Place on Holmes Creek north of Mt. Carbine.
28 Although there were several major attempts to grow rice in north Queensland — some utilising Chinese capital — these were largely unviable due to low-cost imports. See Bolton 1972:224-225.
Like that, see. Scattered all over the country. Ooh! there was a mob of them. Some fella went Cooktown. They start gardening there and then they made joss house there. They ended up pulling the old joss house. Was way down near the cemetery, it was. Then they took all the gear, the joss thing, into the whatee call it, museum there Cooktown. 'Nother joss house bin there Port Douglas too. Gone now. I don't know where they put all those joss things — Chinee instrument, crackers and all that sorta thing.

I was out at Carbine when they come in to Mareeba. When I come Mareeba, oh! there was hundreds of them. All around Mareeba. Right up, nearly to Carbeen. And up to Granite Creek. They had gardens of course. They went in for gardening. Most of them come to Mareeba with packhorse team. Charlie Ah Tong, he had a team of horses. Also Kwan Lee, a big Kubara. And Tam Chan . . . he had a team of horses too. Two brothers, there were Tam Chan and Gum Chan. Little short fellas. Little bloke. Charlie Ah Tong was a short, nuggetty fella. A great horseman too. Butcher up that way in Maytown. First on Nelson Creek, then right up near old Byerstown.

Charlie Ah Tong lived in Carbine a long, long time. Till Carbine broke down, then he went over [Mt.] Mulligan. Lived over there and so did Tam Chan and Gum Chan . . . they went up around Chillagoe. One brother had a garden there near Kingsborough until he went gold-scratching around there Mulligan side. Then after, I don't know where they went to . . . or what they did with their horses and pack teams they had. Old Chinee, old one-eye Ah Lee. He had a pack team. He was one of those big business fellas. He buy from others and . . . that's how he make money, then after, go over China then. Sold all his pack team and went through. Then there was another fella down at Molloy . . . old Tie. He had a garden up there at Spear Creek. He stopped up there. Bought some gold from that old [Aboriginal] fella . . . old Harry Kludo, I call him ngaji ['mother's father'] see, he belong to round Mt. Molloy too. Old Tie went down to Mossman and lived with a Bama [Aboriginal] woman there, Wayil-baja from Boggy Creek.

When Kubara first come this country, Maytown was very big place at that time. What we see now is just nothing (chuckles) to what it was in the days gone by. Kubara, Waybala [Europeans] scattered all around there. Houses everywhere. Right up the Palmer. Big Bama camp too, later on. Lotta Chinee there Byerstown too. Used to be big township there. Chinee township near Byerstown on the junction of Blackfella Creek and the Palmer. Blackfella Creek come in from this side [south] and Spear Creek from other side [north]. And they was just on the bank, on a big open flat like. Chinee storekeeper, butcher, packer-team and some fella still gettin' gold.

29 Small pastoral property near the Palmer River.
30 Creek flowing into Palmer River from the north near Maytown.
31 Creek also flowing into Palmer River.
32 Following the demise of the Palmer, many Chinese went looking for gold to the south and west of Mareeba, then eventually on into the Northern Territory.
33 May (1978b) discusses the strong intra-group and kinship basis of Chinese merchant activity.
34 Creek north of Mt. Molloy.
35 Boggy Creek was an Aboriginal Reserve on Butcher's Hill Station (now Lakeland Downs), southeast of Laura.
We used to go up there . . . don't know whether Dad used to take the opium or not . . . but we used to often go up there to Chinaman garden, you know. Give the Chinaman a hand, shiftin' grass, weed.³⁶ Had a big garden growin' there and so forth. Dad used to bring 'em great big sand goanna. He used to grab 'em by the tail and slap 'em on the ground. If they go in the water, he'd grab 'em by the tail and whack 'em on the head on the stone. Chinaman would eat that minya [meat food] then. They use that fat part, oil, too, for all kinda cookin' and so forth. And they mixed in that samsu — Chinee rum they call it. They used to have it for purpose of medicine too.

I don't know whether they brought any minya [animals] with 'em when they come from oversea. They used to eat kaya [dog] — fatten 'em up, then eat them; pussy cat too. Biki-biki [pig]. They used to get a lot of it out there Maytown. Bulki [beef or cattle], too. But the way they cook it. Had different way. Their own way. They make the taste . . . food very tasty. Sometime for cookin' they use a kurrma [stone oven in ground] after they learn from Bama. But mostly they put minya on a, whatee call it — grid thing — wire with handle on it. Fire come up from bottom. They stuff minya with mayi [vegetable food] inside. Sew it up. Rice and vegetables sometimes. They used to use the joss [chop] sticks (chuckles). Eatin' their mayi [food] very quick you know.

Hot! They like hot meal. Most of the Chinaman used to drink tea, binju [unsweetened or strong] tea. We call it marru up that way. They had their own Chinee tea. They like green tea. Taste like green [vegetable] too! Chinee tea is very strong though. Powerful. And they used to take to it and make themselves strong and things like that. They were very proud of it, you know. — how they do their cooking and things like that.

In the by-gone days, Chinaman had medicine that they learned 'bout over there. Whether they had sandalwood over there in that country I don't know.³⁸ The first thing they took here was the sandalwood. Used it for medicine, see. Good for veneral disease, whatee call it, 'gonnearo'. You had to boil it up. But they made it th'other way round. In the old days they would scrape all the goodness down [off the sandalwood] and then strain all the stuff out — the medicine part, the juice part. Then they made all the waste into . . . didn't waste it . . . They scraped and made it very fine. They made those joss sticks out of it then. And it was very handy, they used it for everythin’ then — like a candle; they used it as a candle light. They powdered the stuff down, like sawdust and

³⁶ Aborigines regularly worked for Chinese, mainly as manual labourers, even after the Aborigines Protection Act of 1897 made it illegal for Chinese to employ Aborigines. Roth (in Queensland Parliament. Debates, 8 Oct. 1901:1141) reported that 'Reputable Chinamen are amongst the best employers of aboriginals — they do pay them their wages'. Bolton (1972:229) also reports that 'many Chinese also supplied opium to Aborigines in return for services of one kind or another'. Attempts to prevent Aborigines from working for Chinese were related to the general belief that the Chinese 'harboured' Aborigines and 'degraded' them through vice and disease. It probably had more to do, however, with European farmers and pastoralists wanting no competition for Aboriginal labour (see Barron Valley Progress Association to Colonial Secretary, 15 July 1898, Queensland State Archives (QSA) COL/139; see also Cronin 1975:252).

³⁷ 'Sam Shu', according to Bolton (1972:229) was 'an extremely potent drink' often served by Chinese storekeepers.

³⁸ At this period the sandalwood used was probably imported from the Pacific rather than China.
they put some other stuff to make that light come on. Slow burning process. That sort of thing.

Then there was lots of other medicine too. Lemon juice. They . . . used that skin part. Either eat it or use it for people with fever or something like that. Course they must mix a bit of sandalwood too. And gallstone, goanna gallstone. Goanna oil and fat. They mixed it all up and used it for rheumatism or back ache, anything like that. That sorta medicine. They made it because they musta knew over there in their country.

Most of their religion was . . . what that animal there? Dragon. They used to get down and pray in Chinee language and that sorta thing. They had their dreamtime story too, these fellas. Used to talk about it to our people, you know. They used to talk about their country too. Lots of them believe in this, whatee call it . . . they were most of them witchcraft Chinaman, you know. And they believe murr [Aboriginal] way too. They got this one [makes sign language for sorcery] and medicine poison too. Get that tar from a tar tree. Leave it in water soakin', till it all dissolve. Then they put it in tea or a drink. Put it in opium or something like that. Bin goin' on for donkey years. One fella give it to 'nother fella and that fella get sick. They had 'mussing' too [love medicine]. But they brought it over from their own country. A weed sorta thing. Used to use that for a long time. And finally they forsook it. Worked for [getting] Bama jalbul-jalbul [women] too.

Chinee fella didn't have much time to waste. They were gonna go straight back oversea, but they were allowed to stop in the country a little bit longer to do what they wanted to do. Some of them made up their own mind and stopped here. And they made business and so forth, like that. Those fellas who left took the gold with them. They must have, because they wouldn'ta gone through without any. Because there was nuggets in those times. Sometimes, the Chinee women went oversea . . . those what come out there in Maytown, they went oversea and got away. Story I heard was they used to get a rubber thing, put that gold in it and push it up their mabu [vagina] part, you know. And then they go to get on the boats somewhere Brisbane or Sydney, Waybala couldn't find anything on them. They got the gold out and took it oversea. Old country then. Old fella Chinee laughin' then, sayin' 'Good thing we had our women folk, 'cause of them . . . they brought that thing [gold] over a lot cheaper than we'da brought it over'. In other words they sent for a lotta young girl, so of course they come out. Just come pretend to see their people, but they got away with the gold.

They used to use a jar too, there Maytown. Lot of them lyin' round before. Belong to Chinee. Big as that box [tea-chest] there. Most of them they used to put dead body in that jar and send'em away. Sometime send gold too. Lot bin there Nelson Creek. Two big jar with body still inside. Hide like a

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39 Bolton (1972:55,58) notes that in 1874 3,586 ounces of gold worth £12,959 (apparently all from the Palmer fields) reached Canton and Hong Kong. In 1876 and 1877 more than 100,000 ounces (worth about £400,000) were exported through official channels to China. In 1881, when the rush days were over, more than 10 per cent of Queensland's gold exports still went to China.

40 These large earthen clay or ceramic jars were used as containers to ship a deceased person's remains back to China. Bolton (1972:58) states that: 'It was apparently particularly common to secrete gold-dust among the remains of dead Chinese shipped home for burial among their ancestors in the hope that pious or squeamish officials would refrain from investigating'.

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leather, all dried up. Bones still there, all broken up in pieces. They fold' em up. Then when all that give way — all the body part — well you just see the bone then. Foot bone, knee, all the joints. Everything in that jar. They musta put something in to purify the . . . stinkness or something like that. They musta brought some stuff from overseas. No kabu [smell] They could leave it there for months. It'd never stink. Or a year, two or three years, five or six year. Twenty year, thirty year, forty year . . . Forty years might' a been.

When I went back and worked on Brooklyn again, I went back out that way. Found those jars still on the goldfields. My old boss, old Fred Dawkins, he took the head part outa one jar and that thing bin drive him mad. (chuckles) We bin have a fight then. (chuckles) I think birru, spirit, musta made him wild. He had a buster off the horse and nearly got killed. Well, we went away for a holiday then come back and that drovin' [trip] we had a fight. He tried to double me up. He musta had that thing . . . someone told' im about that there were . . . make him lucky or something, that Kubara head part. He carry it about for long time. Horse fell with him. Nearly broke his neck.

They're very cunnin', Chinaman, you know. Old See Poy there Innisfail. Before, he was in Palmer River too. He bin there Nelson Creek and right down the branch and over Hurricane [Creek] and all that sorta place. When the Palmer River close down, he come down then. In a olden time bullock team. And his family. He got a bit cunnin' in a way, you know. And saved enough money to buy that store in Innisfail. The son runs it. He's a big-shot now. Started his life's history in Palmer River gold rush.42

Chinaman made those joss things and crackers oversea and sold them in this country. Made lots and lots of money that way too. Very cunnin'. They live very hard and they had a lot of money put away. Tucked away. They carried money hidden in a tin or bottle something. When they're ready to go, they got money. They go through a long way. Some of them worked for such and such time and they had this . . . thinkin' they'd get rich . . . witchcraft sorta belief, and they got it too!

One old Kubara bloke, he was with Paddy Julian, stayed there Spear Creek. He wanted to book some tucker down the store. Old man Jubilee now — this old Waybala Jubilee wouldn't sell him any, wouldn't book anything. Alright. When he ready to go through, the day before that ol' Kubara said 'I wish I'd get some mayi'. Went down there to store with ooh! about four or five thousand pounds [sterling]. Right through to Cooktown. Walked from there. Went to Cooktown and he was gone. Oversea with all that money. They had that sort of gift.

One murri fella, old Jack Lawyer, he used to be a lawyer for Chinaman.43 He was a tracker too. When the Chinaman used to go to court, those who could not speak good English, Jack would come there. They'd send for him. They'd

41 Brooklyn Station north of Mareeba.
43 May (1979:163) discusses the important role European lawyers and business managers played in acting as intermediaries for the Chinese in the Cairns area. Such Europeans were used by the Chinese in dealing with most official matters especially where language was a problem. Given this pattern in the urban areas, it is easy to see how Aborigines speaking both Chinese and English would be used in the more isolated bush areas and small towns.
send for miles and miles away for him. To fight the case for one Chinaman, maybe two Chinaman. Tell how the fight went on and all this for those Chinaman who couldn't explain the word properly. So they got this ol'fella to interpret them. He'd talk to them in their kuku [language] first and then found out who was the first started it, the cause of it, so the wrong fella wouldn't get the blame or the dead Chinaman maybe get'a blame first. Then ol' Jack would tell the buliman [policeman] the story.

Louie, ol' Jack's brother, he could talk that Chinaman kuku too. And ol' fella Charlie Dawn. All that family now, they could talk pretty good. They musta learned there when they was workin' for Chinaman at Palmer River.

Chinaman used to live with a lot of women, Bama women, but never married them, you know.44 Fella called Lum-Die. Chinaman called Lum-Die. He lived with ... lotta Bama. That ol' [Aboriginal] fella who lives at Mary Farm now? Old Paddy Julian. His father was named Julian, a big up-standing Chinaman. And Uncle Rupert's mother was living with one. Peter Burn's granny ... ol' fella Billy Charcoal's wife. She had three daughters by Chinaman. I think they're over there in Yarrabah45 now. And ol' Jack Lawyer, he had stepdaughter. She's half-caste Chinee. Old Billy Tangabura from up there Boggy Creek on Laura River. His people used to hide up on Mt. Windsor to keep the half caste [Aboriginal-] Chinee kids from the buliman. If Bama woman was found with half caste Chinee baby, they both got sent to Mission. Ol' Charlie Snyder. His wife bin sent to Monamona Mission.

Bama bin get this . . . whatee call it . . . bin come from Chinaman first . . . whatee call it . . . 'lepers' [leprosy].47 Bama wouldn'ta had 'lepers' before. Our people were clean! And medicine . . . bush medicine. Everything they ate was clean. Jalbul [Aboriginal women] bin get that veneral [disease] first. Chinaman give it to jalbul, then they had children after children, breed up . . . but . . . thousands and thousands years, they never had nothing. Our greatest people [i.e., our old ancestors], they never saw such thing in their life. Later, Bama see that the spot come on them was through the Chinaman and his children. Buliman couldn't shift Chinaman unless the government said so. Although they tried to fight hard to keep them away . . . but they had that much expanding . . . up in that

44 Following the Aborigines Protection Act of 1897 marriage between Aboriginal and Chinese (as well as European) people was only allowable with approval from the Chief Protector of Aborigines. Cronin (1975:311) states that Archibald Meston, Protector at the turn of the century, had a 'personal abhorrence of miscegenation'. He felt a particular repugnance for Chinese-Aboriginal liaisons. He wrote: 'Our marriage has no meaning to a Chinaman. The Chinese have killed many hundreds of aborigines with opium, and it is asking too much that the unfortunate race thus cruelly wronged be asked to supply women for their deadliest enemies' (Meston to Home Secretary, 14 September 1901, quoted in Evans 1969:66-67).

45 Yarrabah Aboriginal Community south of Cairns.

46 Monamona Mission in Kuranda which closed down in the early 1960s.

47 Cronin (1975) make the comment that the 'Chinese were continually singled out for de­bauching and infecting Aboriginal "girls" with loathsome diseases and were regularly censured for "harbouring blacks" for "immoral purposes"'. (See B.H. Purcell, Brisbane, to Colonial Secretary 1891, QSA, COL/A717, in-letter 14199; also Inspector Police, Cooktown, to Commissioner Police, 30 June 1898, QSA, COL/143, in-letter 08420). The Chinese were seen generally (by Europeans as well as Aborigines) as bringing strange diseases to north Queensland. See Brown (1979) and Cronin (1975:302-308) for good descriptions of the fear created in the minds of Europeans over the Chinese and leprosy.
part especially. They brought the disease in and from that time it swept through like a fire, a bush fire in the grass. Chinaman always gettin’ in trouble with buliman over living with Bama woman.

Kubara was cunnin’ with Bama. They start given’ em opium. Sometime Chinee rum. That sorta thing. They lived there Maytown. They let the [Aboriginal] women live there. The [Aboriginal] men go then and work for a bit’a gold for the Chinaman. That’s where a lot of the Chinaman got the gold from. From Bama.

Chinaman got that opium sent over to them from oversea. Because they were allowed to bring it over that time. Too many of them here livin’ that way [on opium]. Waybala couldn’t stop’em. They had it up here first in Palmer River, then around Maytown. Ah Gee and his brothers were storekeepers and bakers. All that sorta thing up there. They were mostly English-speakin’ Chinaman. They musta learned over there first, before they come out. But they sold that opium in the store sometime for the purpose of a bit’a gold. They made deals with their own friends, relations.

Waybala had opium too. One fella Leroy, Kelly Leroy. He used to go out towards Mowbray on a bike. Old Leroy. He was from Carbine. Related to people called Peterson. They were in Carbine too. I think they had something to do with sly grog turn-out. Leroy was their nephew. He used to go to Mowbray. Push the bike out there. Might get a lift out there with one of them trucks. He’d take his bike then come back that way, see. And fella called Eddie, Eddie Chang. He was selling opium then, and another fella called Tommie Chang . . . no, he was Eddie too. He was up there living down Bonny Doon way. He used to work in the mill sometime or cut cane like that. But he was buying opium from overseas. They used to smuggle it there.

When they start to look into this and they wanted to clean it up . . . you know . . . the police and then . . . they gradually woke up [to] where the fella was gettin’ it . . . this opium. Policeman called Herb Hawkins. He done the same thing as old Leroy. He rode out to Mowbray or Little Mossman, I think. He had a bike, push-bike, waited there and then he caught Leroy comin’ home. Grabbed him and searched him. Found it [the opium] then. He used to carry it in a . . . those times . . . had whatee call it . . . wax match . . . well they put it in a matchbox see. Not only one box, maybe two, three box or a little round tin with a lid on it.

48 It is important to remember that the full title of Queensland’s first Aborigines Act was The Aboriginals Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act, 1897, and the Act specifically dealt with the injurious effects of opium on Aborigines.

49 The Chinese were allowed to import opium freely into Australia until 1906, when it was banned (May 1978b:230). See also Cronin (1975:310) for discussion of earlier attempts to control Chinese use of opium.

50 Cronin (1975:309) gives supporting evidence that Europeans not only used opium themselves, but sold it to Aborigines and used it as ‘wages’ for the latter when they worked as stockmen on properties. Meston, in 1901, remarked to the Legislative Council that he had seen opium sent to properties ‘in every conceivable form’, even in ‘... the barrels of a double-barrelled muzzle loading gun’ (in Queensland Parliament. Debates, 23 October, 1901:1422). Others stated that it was not just pastoralists but ‘... nearly every carrier, banker, many of the swagmen and some of the mailmen’ who were selling opium to Aborigines (E.R. Baker, Mitchell, to Colonial Secretary, 27 July 1897 QSA, COL/140). See also Bolton (1972:252) and Evans (1975:94). The incident described here happened in the late 1930s.

51 Bonny Doon Station southeast of Maytown.
Ol' [Aboriginal] fella Baldy Mossman. Bama call'im Babi-kalbuwu. Leroy the fella who got ol'Baldy into strife. Teached him 'bout that opium and wild drinkin'. Baldy used to go to Cairns to get it. Police found out Leroy was involved in it. Court found the full strength of it then said 'Aw yeah. That Baldy Mossman in it too'. So they picked him up. Jerry Coen, related to my wife, only a young fella. They took him away too. Found out that he was losin' time. Work on the farm. And they said he must be takin' opium. Gradually they put off with him. 'Nother fella, call'im Freddy Kelly. They used to call him 'Emu'. Great runner, footballer. Little short fella. He was taken in too. They pick up that whole crowd one time, only from that opium now. They want to pick me up too. Old Sergeant Renati. He was Italian fella. But he missed me. Nevertheless, they got theirs back (chuckles). When they took ol'Baldy middle of the night, they took his whole family, old Mabel and little boy, little girl. They grew up Palm Island then. All because Waybala bin sell' em opium. When they caught Leroy he turned around and dobbed him [Baldy] in.

Bama didn't stop there then . . . up the Gorge yet. Was still down the Johnson camp, call it . . . half-way up to town [Mossman]. Straight over the river there. In the middle where Waybala used to get the sand, well Bama used to camp down there. There was an old slaughter-yard down there. After, they shifted from there up to, where that hill, where water reservoir now.

Opium pretty dear for Bama those times. Five pounds and you get only enough to fill a milk tin. That didn’t last too long when you gotta share it around to big circle of people (laughs). Not even proper stuff either. The Chinaman used to use it first, see. They used to mix it up with tobacco ash, then chew it up. Then, after, they give it to Bama.

This Eddie Chang was a big businessman. Tom Chang had a car tradin'. He had a motor garage in Cairns there. He used to buy it [opium] for the sake of his brother and then his brother didn't use much of it. Smoke it sometimes. But [he] thought, well, easy money to make it by selling it. Selling it to different Chinaman. They ended up havin' big business. One fella, Ernie . . . father was Lee Poy . . . he was biggest shot around Cairns district. Had big shop and did lot of business with everyone around. Used to sell opium to that ol'fella Baldy sometime. That ol'fella go and pick it up. Come half-way near Seven Mile and get off there. But they gradually found the full strength of it then and picked him up. That’s what happened.

'Nother time. That ol'fella now . . . King . . . old man furrumbu. Big . . . big man, he was solid and used to take that opium for a long time. Too much of that stuff. They put him in hospital. But Bama musta caught him [i.e.

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52 Norman was later sent to Palm Island for hitting a station boss who was horse-whipping a tied-up young Aboriginal man.
53 The present-day Aboriginal community at Mossman Gorge.
54 May (1979:230) notes that the banning of opium 'rather than preventing importation, . . . raised the price of contraband opium'. She states (1979:235) that in 1908 the cost of one ounce of opium was 10/- to 12/6 (Cairns Post, 27 November 1908).
55 Evans (1975:94) states: 'Natives were sold, in small packets, opium dross — the ash which remained after the opium itself had been smoked'. This 'charcoal opium' was said to be stronger and have a more deleterious effect on the user.
56 'Elders' were often given brass plates by European police and were then known as 'kings'.

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sorcerized him]. When doctor cut'im open [in hospital] they found that, whatee
call it, 'Lockhart' [Leichhardt] leaf and that kurma [hot, round stones]. That's
the only way they caught him see. Not that opium. He was pretty wasted way
on that opium. When it happened this old man, Bujal now, I call'im mukay
['father's older brother'], see, from up that way Cooktown. He had it on old
jurrumbu for 'killing' his wife ['letting' his wife die]. So he and other wife's son
cought that ol'fella and put a kurma in him [sorcerized him and put hot
stone(s) in him]. When doctor operated on that ol'fella then, they find that
kurma still there, hot! That's right, birra [leaf] too. 'Lockhart' leaf. Thought:
'How did these leaf and stone get in here?' They think this fella only sick from
that opium. Really done by the devil power.

One old fella . . . but he was dimurji [had power of 'devil' spirits] this fella
. . . they found him dead from opium. White fella found him. The police saw
maggots and everythin' comin' out of him. That very same day we was workin'
up at Seven Mile, Mowbray, police come to tell us. But that night we was sittin'
down at a big fire. One old fella sing out, 'Whoa! There's that fella walkin' now'.
We saw him walkin' there all white, like that, what you call 'em . . . like that niece
mine up at Mossman . . . albino. No matter that opium kill you, Bama still gettin'
round.

To take that opium you put it in the water in a billy can or one of those
kerosene buckets. Gets like dirty water. Bama all round in a circle. I took to it
too. Just like smoky water . . . like it come off the roof. You pass it round, each
fella has a turn. Some fella pannikin, some big fella pick bucket up. That old
man now, jurrumbu. He big man, pick the bucket up to drink. Kanya Harry and
all them fella now. One fella there, Tommy somebody, Tommy Butha. He
musta went back and died up that way. He lived on it [opium] for a long time.

It's not like that kamu-kamu [alcohol], make you go silly. After when it
[opium] affects you, sorta makes you very drowsy, want to sleep all the time.
Then you just like a wet rag. You know, arms, legs all down that way. You might
get a dream sometime. I only had a go at it when I had a 'flu'. My brother-in-law
gave me. But, oh, it'll give you a good old sleep! Feel no movement and have a
good old sleep. Fresh as a daisy when you get up then. Full of go. Ooh! a lot of
people took to it for a long time. Woman too. Some of the older ones, that's why
they bin die, a lot of them. Then after awhile they stop when Chinaman shift
from there. Most of the Chinaman around Mossman, they couldn't get it anymore
and then Bama had to give up. Went to grog then. Then that's how they died,
after, you know . . . It's the pressure of it. Sort of work through the grog too see . . .
take Bex, you know. Give you all kind of disease, sores and so forth.

Ngambanyarimba. They call'im Billy Charcoal. Well I think he worked for people
called Pitt who were in Maytown in by-gone days. Ol'fella only work now and
again. He was free. Mayal wil'fella ['wild' Aboriginal], if he wanna walkabout a
lot. Still lota Chinaman then. Big fella too, big-boned bloke. Little Chinaman,
his could pick'em up. He would pick up Chinee fella and tie their hand together
and put'em up in a tree until such time, until they were almost . . . dyin' away.
And then he'd come back and then put a spear through 'em, when they were

57 Kuku-Yalanji people hold a person responsible for the health of a spouse.
startin' to get weak. Pull 'em down, and cook 'em. You got to make a medicine though. Jana dimur [those devil-spirits] watch you. They get Bama 'less they take care eatin' Kubara. Boil it down and when all the juice is washed down, drained out, put it all over themselves, those ol' people before they eat. Rub it like. That smell take the spirit [of the dead man] away.

Lots of other fellas too. I forget a number of them. Biggest part of that Kuku-Yalanji mob. Wil'time and after too! (laughs) Babi-duburrbu, old man Charlie Curraghmore's father. He wil'fella too. Old man Pegas, he wil'fella. He bin eata Chinaman too. I bin ask'im: 'Kami, yundu Kubara nugan?' ['Father's father, did you eat Chinaman'] [He answers:]

'Yuwu! Wanyurringku?' ['Yes! What's the matter?']

[ Norman asks again disbelieving:]

'Wanyu Bama nugan?' ['What did Aboriginal people eat?']

[He answers:]

'Wanyu! Kubara, jana!' ['Those Chinamen that's what!']

Can't be! (laughs) Reckons minya ngulkurr! [good meat]

[ Norman asks Old Pegas:]

'What about Waybala?'

[Pegas answers:]

'Thembala kakaji!'

Reckon'e too salty, see! Salty.

[Norman:]

'What about Kubara?'

[Pegas:]

'Ooh! Ngulkurr, yala yawa!' ['Very good, like a possum!']

Can't be! (laughs) Can't be like a possum! Flesh very beautiful.

I bin tell'im:

'No good' (laughs).

Ol'fella says.

'No good you talkin' about [it]. You don't know what it's like. But we bin here. If you bin back there, well you'da eat it too. You wouldn'ta know the difference'. (laughs).

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58 Possum is one of the most highly prized animal meats amongst Kuku-Yalanji.
KUBARA

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Top left: Mrs Mona Merrick, Port Augusta, July 1981.
Top right: Mr Johnny Reece.
Above: The tank at Alberrie Creek, July 1981.

Photographs by L.A. Hercules
AFGHAN STORIES FROM THE NORTH-EAST OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Luise A. Hercus

The speakers of Arabana held the country to the west of Lake Eyre; the closely-related Wangakururu language was spoken in the Simpson Desert and on the lower Diamantina. The few remaining speakers of these languages nowadays live mainly in Marree and Port Augusta, South Australia. They remember many stories about the 'Afghan' camel-drivers who first entered their country in the nineteenth century. The men popularly known as Afghans were Urdu and Balochi speakers who came from what is now Pakistan, and were brought to Australia largely as a result of the activities of Sir Thomas Elder and the Beltana Pastoral Company. Drivers and camels arrived in large numbers — 124 camels were unloaded at Port Augusta in January 1866 — and had an early and particularly important impact on the arid areas of north-eastern South Australia. The Afghans and their camels provided the only efficient means of transport from Beltana and Marree to Alice Springs in Central Australia before the completion of the railway line. They also continued to provide transport for the pastoral stations along the Birdsville and Strzelecki tracks until the 1920s.

The history of the Afghans and their camels has been recounted many times and need not be reiterated here. But there are few published records of Aboriginal reaction to the presence of the Afghans. At first these strangers roused fear, but soon Aborigines were able to make shrewd judgments about the different customs of these outsiders. The Afghan predilection for plump, fair-skinned women, the role of bride-price in their marriage arrangements, their burial practices, their food and butchering rituals, their jealous pride and fear of losing face, and their preoccupation with money were acutely observed and remembered by Aboriginal people, as these stories illustrate.

The Afghans, just like Europeans, were outsiders as far as Aboriginal society was concerned: Arabana people called them 'Abigana' or wudjibala mađimañi 'white fellows with hair-string' or gaďibu qara-qara 'head tied up', references to the turban that was invariably worn. The population of Marree was divided by the railway line; to the west lived the European Australians; to the east was Afghantown, with the Aborigines living on the outskirts. Yet the three groups knew a good deal about each other, and prominent individuals won respect from other townsfolk regardless of their ethnic identity. The stories recounted here reveal something of the relations between Europeans, Aborigines, Afghan camel-drivers and Syrian traders in the Marree district between the 1890s and 1930s.

The Afghans had come without women of their own and in the early days there was good reason to teach young Aboriginal girls to beware of them. Anyone noticing a few of the marriage advertisements in Indian newspapers will be familiar with the attitude that 'fair' is 'beautiful'. As typical South Asians

1. See Barker 1964, McKnight 1969.
the Afghans also held this view and so they tried to marry Europeans or very light half caste girls, or the young daughters of other Afghans: for these they often had to pay large sums of money. Because European girls were scarce and part Afghan girls were even scarcer and expensive, the Afghans tended to pursue Aboriginal girls with strictly dishonorable intentions. Abigana-ru ganilira 'the Afghans might eat you' parents warned, just to make the girls wary. This fear was increased because the Afghans were culturally conditioned to prefer girls with well-developed figures: in their northern Indian homeland thinness was regarded as a sign of poverty and low status. The first two stories, told by Mona Merrick, describe the sentiments of three Aboriginal girls in the mid-1890s who imagined that they were being eyed as tasty morsels. Both stories came from Mona's mother, a woman of Arabana descent who married Mr Warren, owner of Finniss Springs Station. Mona herself is still part-owner of the station.

The stories told by Mona Merrick and by her brother Arthur Warren are in Arabana, those told by Ben Murray and Johnny Reece are in Wangaŋuru. Both languages are very closely related, although there are differences in both grammar and vocabulary. These differences account for apparent inconsistencies: for example camel is gamulu in Arabana, but usually gamuli in Wangaŋuru; the suffix — na conveys the present tense in Wangaŋuru, but in Arabana it fulfils the function of an imperfect aspect marker. The texts are accompanied by an interlinear gloss, and an English translation follows. The translation is as close to the original as possible; when words or phrases must be inserted for clarity these are shown in brackets. The phonemes of Arabana-Wangaŋuru and the abbreviations used in the gloss are explained in appendices.
Places mentioned in 'Afghan' stories

Map drawn by Pam Millwood, Human Geography, A.N.U.
Getting a lift from Macumba

The girl in this story had come from the Simpson desert not long before and was staying on Macumba, only twenty miles from Oodnadatta. She was glad of a lift to save her walking in the hot weather. She had become familiar with the practice of laying a freshly killed bullock on a bed of leaves, ready for butchering, but she was not familiar with the European and Afghan use of beds for what was done ‘in the bush’ in traditional Aboriginal society.²

1. Abigana-bula uljułu badja -ŋa-yanu gamulu bargulu-ŋa
   Afghan -two woman travel-Sp -REL camel two -LOC
   Magamba-ru, uga-ru gad -ma-ŋa Magamba. uljuła bidla
   Macumba-ABL, he -ERG leave-Vb-PRES Macumba. woman name
   Barađa.
   Barađa.

2. gala -ŋa guša maŋa, guša gira-ŋa, guša banda
creek-LOC water new, water flow-PRES, water big
ganda-ga.
rain -PAST.

3. maga maba-ŋa, kerosene-tin banda gudni -ŋa
   fire make-PRES, big put down-PRES
   maga-ŋa.
   fire-LOC.

4. "maga mani -ŋa, maga bunda-ŋa, njinda-galba
   "wood bring-PRES, wood break-PRES, tree -leaf
   mani -ŋa guša mani-ŋa, gudliya manda!"
   bring-PRES cane-grass get -PRES, bed get Sp!"

5. budluga gari-ri biđa-ra, magidi mani-ra njinda
   bullock they-ERG kill-PUNC, gun take-PUNC wood
   mani-ligu mangařa, bungudu, gudliya. balu-ŋa
   take-HIST wattle, cassia bush, bed. open-LOC
   clean 'm njinda-ŋa.
   wood -LOC.

6. uljuła njinda bunda-ŋa nylonaF, Ilgiwara gala -ŋaŋa
   woman wood break-PRES wattle, Ilgiwara creek-EL
   uga naŋa -ŋa: "kerosene-tin banda, digi guša;
   she worry-IMPERF: big, tea much;
   budluga badni -ŋa, ibi badni -ŋa miŋa bula-ru
   bullock nothing-LOC, sheep nothing-LOC what two -ERG

² White 1975.


9. maldja yadla diga -lugu, maldja yada yuga-ga, not close return-HIST, not further go -PAST, gad -ma-lugu diga -nda Magamba-rugu. leave-Vb-HIST return-PRES Macumba-ALL.


Translation

1) Two Afghans and a woman had been travelling (that day) with two camels from Macumba, she was leaving Macumba. Her name was Barada.

2) There was fresh water in the creek (where they were going to camp), the water was flowing strongly, big rain had fallen.

3) They (the Afghans) made a fire, and they put a big kerosene tin (full of water) on the fire.

4) (They said to her): 'Bring some sticks and break the sticks into little pieces, bring some foliage from the trees, get some cane-grass, make a bed!' (They said to her): 'Bring some sticks and break the sticks into little pieces, bring some foliage from the trees, get some cane-grass, make a bed!'

5) (She began to think): 'When they kill a bullock they get a gun and put down sticks, wattle and cassia shrub to make a bed. Out in the open, on the bed of sticks they clean out (the carcass)'.

6) The woman went on breaking up sticks of wood, wattle and shrubs from the side of the Ilgiwara creek. She began to get worried: 'That's a big kerosene tin and a lot of tea: since they haven't got a bullock, and since they
haven't got a sheep, why are the two of them doing all this (getting a bed
ready)? It's me they are going to eat; they want to eat me!' 

7) She broke up sticks, picked them up and picked them up, further and
further she went back (in the direction where Macumba was), right in the
creek, amongst the trees — they weren't coolibah trees, but a completely
different looking tree.3

8) She heard the two men swearing and cursing as she stood behind a tree, in
the Ilgiwara creek, in the water. She (crept) further away to (stand behind)
another tree, she stood (hidden) in the water.

9) She didn't go back near them, she didn't travel on — she got away and
returned to Macumba.

10) She kept thinking: 'Those two whitefellows, those Afghans, are cursing
and swearing because they haven't got any meat now, they are hungry!' She
was a woman with brown skin (not jet black) and she had lots of fat on
her. That's what my mother said.

The train was late at Alberrie Creek

Alberrie Creek is about 60 kilometres on the Oodnadatta side of Marree. There
is a small building there, which used to house a railway gang, but there
were no other habitations anywhere in the vicinity. In the daytime during the
working week the place would have been deserted. Now of course, with the
closure of the railway, the railway cottage is permanently uninhabited. Even
before the Warrens took over Finniss Springs Station, to which this whole area
belongs, Aborigines, mainly Guyani but also some Arabana, camped by some of
the springs, some distance to the north and west, and the two girls has presumably
been there visiting relatives.

1. Alberrie Creek Railway Station ɲaɬa badnĩ. uljuɬa
   man nothing. woman
   bargulu, Arabana uljuɬa-Jimmy and Leslie's mother-bula
two Arabana woman both
   miɡa-(g)a-nda traina-gu.
   wait-TR -PREP DAT.

2. traina manda-ŋa ɡaŋi waga baɁa-ɓaɁa-ŋa bula
delay-IMPERF tank black long -LOC two
   ɡaŋa-agura Mariri-rigu ɡiɡa -ɬugu bula, bula
   sit -ANC Marree-ALL return-PURP two, two
   ɡaŋa-ŋa.
sit -IMPERF.

3. The 'different' tree, unknown in Arabana country, is Acacia cyperophylla, the Red Mulga,
which grows along creek-beds from the Oodnadatta area northwards. Wąŋgaŋuru people
from the desert side of the Dalhousie area referred to the tree by its Aranda name abmuna. It is
a slender tree with striking red bark and thin foliage.
Afghan Stories

3. Abigana-bula yuga-nda-na • damu-rugu gamulu-buru
   Afghan -DI go -Sp -IMPERF dam -ALL camel -having
   guda mani-ligu. bula yamba-a -lugu-straightaway they
   water get -PURP. two ask -TEMP-HIST
   asked! njiba naFi -ma-nda, nama gargi-gargi,
   clothes fly up-Vb-PRES, breast display,
   nama naFi-na!
   breast see -NP!

4. bula nama gargi -nda bula!
   two breast display-PRES two!

5. bula numa-nda, balgu miraga, maldja aJa waga,
   two like-PRES, flesh red, not true black,
   bula mani-puga.
   two fat -much.

6. bula gadla-ra wa -nda, "mara maldja gudni-nda,
   two fear -CAUS want-PRES, "hand not put -PRES,
   dani-ligu waya-nda! traina ungulu yuga-nda,
   eat -PURP want-PRES! train when go -PRES,
   wadjbala -bula nama gargi-la -dira!
   whitefellow-two breast show -ALT-ACT-PUNC!

7. "njiba naFi-ma-nda, dara naFi-na! show'm leg!
   "clothes fly -Vb-PRES, thigh see -NP!

8. nama gargi-na dara garg'i-argi-na, bula
   breast show -IMPERF, thigh show -show-IMPERF, both
   garg'i-arg -argi-na numa-nda. bula-guna traina
   show -show-show-IMPERF like-PRES. two -POS train
   galga-wa-l -da!
   hurry-TR-ALT-PRES!

9. bula garg'i-argi-na, bula gadla-ra wa -nda:
   two show -show-IMPERF, two fear -CAUS want-PRES:
   "bula-ru miJa-miJa yamba-ya-jira?"
   "two -ERG what-what ask -TR-POT?"

10. "maldja nama gamba -da nigi-bula, numa-nda,
    "not breast tamper with-PRES this-two, like-PRES,
    maldja mara yadla gunda, bula naFi-nda -gi!"
    not hand close put Sp, two look-PRES-EMPH!

11. miJa-gu bula-ru naFi-nda nama naFi -ma-na-na,
    what-DAT two -ERG see -PRES breast fly up-Vb-NP-LOC,
ABORIGINAL HISTORY 1981 5:1

12. balgu nani-ligu nafla-ma-ñana njiba, bula-ru flesh see -PURP fly -Vb-P IMPERF clothes, two -ERG nurga-nana nigi-ri dani-ji -baru arimba-na, know -P IMPERF this-ERG eat -PTC-PUT we INCL-ACC, traina galga-n-da yuga-n-da!" train hurry-PRES go -PRES!


14. Abigana-bula maldja waya-n-da train, they only wanted Afghan -two not like-PRES girl-friend.

Translation
1) It was at Alberrie Creek Railway station — nobody was there; only two women, Arabana women, — Jimmy’s mother and Leslie’s mother4 (they were just young girls then) — they were both waiting for the train.
2) The train was running late and so they sat down by that long black water-tank, they were sitting there waiting to return to Marree.
3) Two Afghans came past with their camels on their way to the dam (which is near the tank) to get water. They asked — they asked straight away! — ‘Undo your clothes and show us your breasts — we want to see your breasts!’
4) The two of them showed their breasts.
5) The two Afghans liked what they saw: the girls had brownish-red bodies, not absolutely black, and they were both very plump.
6) The girls were frightened: ‘they haven’t touched us with their hands, they (just) want to eat us! When is this train coming — these whitefellows are making us show our breasts!’
7) ‘Lift up your clothes so we can see your thighs — show’em leg!’

4. The reference is to two parallel cousins Jimmy and Leslie Russell; who have done much to help with work on both Arabana-Wagaquru and Diyari (Austin 1981, Hercus 1971, Donaldson 1979). Jimmy Russell Waŋamiri ‘Many Mornings’ was born near Marree about 1897 and is now permanently at the Hawker hospital suffering from the effects of a stroke; Leslie Russell Waŋabula ‘Two Mornings’ was born near Marree about 1903 and died in 1975.
8) They went on showing their breasts, they showed and showed their thighs, oh how they went on showing and showing! If only their train hurried along!

9) They both went on showing, they were frightened: 'what will these two ask us next?'

10. 'They are not patting our breasts, these two, they are not even putting their hands anywhere near — they are just looking!'

11) 'Why do they keep looking at our breasts, while we've undone (our clothes) — they are not laying a hand on us: now we know they want to eat us'.

12) 'They made us undo our clothes so they could see our flesh'. They were quite sure now 'those two want to eat both of us, you and me! If only the train hurried and came!'

13. At last the train arrived. The two girls got on it to return to Marree. The two Afghans didn't want that train (to come). They went off with their camels to Oodnadatta.

14. The two Afghans didn't want that train (to come) — they only wanted a girlfriend.

**Reflections on a television program**

In late 1980 Mona Merrick saw a television program dealing with Afghan camel-drivers and the history of the Ghan railway line. It was one of the programs shown to mark the closure of the Ghan, and it caused her to reflect as follows:

Only praising old Afghan — no praise for Aborigine!

1. traina-ŋa ɲawi-ɡa ɡani -maga -agura: Abigana-ru
   LOC hear-PAST speak-RECIP-ANC: Afghan -ERG
gari-ri ɲunda-agura, Abigana nigi wawuwa -nda-agura,
   they-ERG show -ANC, Afghan here travel about-Sp -ANC,
Birdsville way gari, yuga-ɡa Abigana-di, Abigana
   they go -PAST Afghan -EMPH, Afghan
gamulu-ŋa yuga-nda!
   camel -LOC go -PRES!

2. maldja ɲala gari-ri ɲunda-da aɡu ɲani-ɡa
   not Aborigine they-ERG show -PRES I ERG see -PAST
ɲala warga-ɡiya ɲala yuga-nda, wargayi-nda
   Aborigine work -EMPH! Aborigine go -PRES, work -PRES
diga -nda gari, money yuga gari.
   return-PRES they, much they.

3. This Hector Bossicot, his grandfather ɡandi -'guna
   mother's father-his
gagaga ɲudi -mara Willie gamulu-ŋa
   uncle elder brother-having camel -LOC
wargayi-nda, gari yuga-nda wara -rugu? Finnissi-rigu
   work -PRES, they go -PRES where-ALL? ALL
Translation

Only praising old Afghan, no praise for Aborigine.

1) I heard them talking to each other on that train (in the television program). They only showed (pictures of) Afghans: the Afghans used to travel here and there, the Afghans went on the Birdsville track, the Afghans went with their camels!

2) They didn’t show any (pictures of) Aborigines. But I've seen Aborigines working (with camels), the Aborigines used to go off working and come back and get lots of money.

3) Hector Bossicot’s maternal grandfather and his two uncles, (mother’s brothers), they worked with camels, and they went all over the place, they came back to Finniss Springs and went off to Birdsville.

4) Many Aborigines from Marree worked with camels, as did the Afghans, but they never showed these Aborigines (in the film), only the Afghans.

5) When I was a big girl a lot of Aborigines from Marree were working (with camels), they are all dead now, just like those from Oodnadatta; they used to work (with camels) and then go back to Oodnadatta: the Afghans just paid them money (but stayed in town)!

Sher Khan

Ben Murray, himself of part-Afghan descent, has a vast store of knowledge regarding the history and oral traditions of the Lake Eyre basin. He related a number of stories connected with Afghans, some of which are given here. His main languages are Wangaŋuru and Diyari. The texts which follow are in Wangaŋuru.
The Indian dowry system was never popular among Moslems: they tended to have a system of bride-price, but on a minor scale in the form of relatively small presents in money or kind given by the groom. The Afghans, however, were not lacking in business acumen and the great scarcity of eligible girls in the north of South Australia led to an escalation of price far beyond what would have been the norm in India.

1. Müsä, he bought that girl off Salim Khan for £200!

   uga-ru wiři-ga maǧabuğa-ru Sher-khanda-ru
   me -ERG buy -PAST old man -ERG -ERG
   first time £150 gadga-gadi uga-ru quni-na.
   stone-bit(money) he -ERG give-IMPERF.

2. (Salim Khan said) "ađu 'na quni-ra."
   I PNG you ACC give-PUNC.

3. Müsä yuga-nda, uga-ru quni-ra £200, "all right"!
   go -PRES, he -ERG give-PUNC,

4. nayi Sher Khan uga ganghai-ra ganaŋaŋa Broken Hill
   this he stay -CONT there
   garu-đa giga -lugu.
   there-EMPH return-HIST.

5. (Somebody told him) "That girl, old Khan's daughter, Müsä been buy'm for £200!"
   (Sher Khan said): "Oh!"

6. uga yuga-nda traina-ŋa; nari -di -li gu traina-ŋa
   he go -PRES -LOC; descend-INC-HIST -LOC
   Müsä-gi -di! bula yadja widji -li gu. Sher Khan
   -EMPH-EMPH! two close become-HIST,
   mara baŋa-nda (and shot him).
   hand hold-PRES

7. garu-đu uga giga -ŋa lrgaŋi-gadi-ŋa
   there-EMPH he go back-PRES lragiŋi-gadiña
   towards Mundowdna garu gidna-ra wadni -ŋa
   there foot -CAUS follow-PRES
   gaja -ŋa, gidna-waŋa-buFu gidna-ra.
   creek-LOC, foot -shoe -having foot -CAUS.

8. Müsä they put'm in pub, no hospital those days,
   nurgu-ma-lugu minbaru uga-ŋa nani-ligu yuga-nda:
   good -Vb-PURP doctor he -ACC see -PURP go -PRES:
   oh nara-gara nurgu awaŋa ganghai-ŋa gaduru.
   ah heart good that one alive become-IMPERF slowly.
9. yulja tracker gidna-gari-li Jacky Nalbili-ŋa policeman foot -see -HAB Nalbili-PROP
bula-ru wadni-ŋa gafa -ruŋu yuga-ŋa, ilina
two -ERG follow-PRES creek-ALL go -PRES, thus
nani-ligu Mundowarna siding yulja yani-ŋa
see -HIST policeman speak-PRES
"I'll ring from here yulja Farina-ŋama, your bloke
policeman -EL
is still going that way."

10. "uga ŋudir -rigi-l' -gi." yulja giga -ŋa
"he dead end-ALL -EMPH-EMPH policeman return-PRES
Maaŋiri-riŋu.
Maree -ALL.

11. Tracker carry on, uga gidna-gari-li. First double dam,
he foot -see -HAB
yuuwu badni, yunga-ljugu gama nguru -ruŋu. yuuwu ganaŋada,
man nothing, go -HIST dam other-ALL. man there,
bambi-li guda railway
pump -HAB water

12. (The tracker said) "Ah good day, see bloke come here?"
"Yeah." "ah! giyarugu?" "awada." Farina yulja and
"ah! where to?" "there." policeman
tracker bula garga-nura gamu-ŋa.
both stand-CONT dam -LOC.

13. "Ah, good day! Can you do something about my camels? I come
a long way, they get away!" "You come to my place, I give
you tea, boil some egg for you."

14. uga-ru gada-ru boy "Help you look for camel!" Tracker
he -ERG send-NAR
say "Ai boss you got the right one, that's him agu
I ERG
ŋurgra-ra uga-ŋa waraŋa!"
know -FUNC he -ACC there!"

15. digi -ligu. Give'm a feed first. "Take your boot off"
take back-HIST.
gidna 'guna widi-li. "I know you!" "You know me, boss?"
foot POS sore-EMPH.
"You're Sher Khan!"
AFGHAN STORIES

16. "I come back kill'm Müsā, kill'm woman too."

iliŋa uga yanda "You might get ten or twenty years!"
thus he speak Sp.

17. djayila-na gudni-nda gada-ru uga-na goal -LOC put -PRES send-NAR he -ACC

Western Australia, waríqa. uga-guna time up, malga afar. he -POS not

nurga-nda. He travel up and put a hat on, not like rag know -PRES.

they used to, giga -jugu uga Broken Hill, bagu return-HIST he empty
ganga-da, gaḍuru.
sit -PRES quiet.

18. Some say "why don't you go see that Müsā?" "No, me finished!"

Translation

1) Müsā, he bought that girl off Salim Khan for £200! But first Sher Khan bought her from the old man. He gave Salim Khan £150.

2) (Salim Khan said to him): 'I give her to you'.

3) Then Müsā came, and he gave Salim Khan £200 (and so Salim Khan said to him) 'all right (it's a deal)'.

4) Now Sher Khan was living in Broken Hill and he had gone back there.

5) (Somebody told him): 'That girl, old Khan's daughter, Müsā been buy'm for £200! Sher Khan said 'Oh!'

6) He went to by train (to Marree), but Müsā too had gone down to the train (he had heard that Sher Khan was likely to come and wanted to get away). The two came close to one another and Sher Khan moved his hand forward (and shot him).

7) He got away going along the Irgaḍi-gadina Creek towards Mundowdna (siding) there he walked along the creek-bed, although he had boots (he took them off and) he went barefoot.

8) As for Müsā they put him in the pub to fix him up (there was no hospital in those days): a doctor came to have a look at him and he said: 'his heart is good and so he will slowly recuperate'.

9) That Marree policeman and his tracker, the one who looks at footprints, Jackie Nhlibili (a Simpson desert Wangajuru) they both followed (Sher Khan) along the creek till they could see Mundowdna siding. Then the

6. This sum represented about 4 years wages for the average working man.
policeman said 'I'll make a call from here to the Farina7 policeman, your bloke is still going that way'.

10) (The tracker said): 'Yes he'll finish up there (at Farina)'. The policeman returned to Marree.

11) The tracker went on, he was watching the tracks. At the first double dam (north of Farina) there was nobody. He went to the other dam (right next to the railway line). A man was there who had the job of pumping water for the railway.

12) (The tracker said): 'Ah, good day, see bloke come here?'
   'Yeah' (said the railway man).
   'Ah, where did he go to?'
   'Just over there'.
   The Farina policeman arrived and both he and the tracker stood by the dam (in front of Sher Khan).

13) (Sher Khan said) 'Ah, good day! Can you do something about my camels? I've come a long way, they got away from me!'
   (The policeman said): 'You come to my place, I give you tea, boil some egg8 for you'.

14) (He signalled the tracker, pretending) to send him out: 'He'll help you look for the camels'.
   The tracker said (secretly): 'Ai boss, you've got the right one, that's him all right, I know that's him just there'.

15) The policeman took Sher Khan back with him (to Farina). He gave him a meal first. Then he said 'take your boots off!' His feet were all blistered. 'I know you' (said the policeman).
   'You know me boss?'
   'You're Sher Khan' (said the policeman).

16) 'I come back kill'm Müsä, kill'm woman too' — that's the sort of thing (Sher Khan) started saying.
   'You might get ten or twenty years (in gaol)' (said the policeman).

17) He put Sher Khan in gaol and he was sent far away to Western Australia. When the time was up (for him to be released) he didn't want to think any more about it (about that matter of Müsä and Salim Khan's daughter). He travelled up (from Western Australia) and he put a hat on, not a rag (turban) like the Afghans used to.9 He went back to Broken Hill, and he stayed there, without doing anything further about it, he stayed there quietly.

7. Farina 'the great granny of the north' was apparently named facetiously (Fuller 1975:82), but at the turn of the century it was still a thriving small township serving the railway, trade, and the pastoral industry. A high proportion of the population was Afghan. It is now a ghost town and even the main road has been diverted away from it. For many years Ben Murray was the only inhabitant: he was quite happy because he could always 'jump on the rattler' and visit friends and relations at the only other settlements in the area, Marree (60 km), Lyndhurst (90 km) and even Port Augusta. But now (since November 1980) the 'Ghan' no longer passes through and Ben has moved to Marree.

8. The policeman was aware of the fact that Afghans would not eat meat offered to them because the beasts would not have been traditionally slaughtered.

9. Ceasing to wear a turban was a highly symbolic act by which Sher Khan broke away from his past life as an Afghan.
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18) Some people said to him: ‘Why don’t you go to see that Mūsā?’
(But he answered) ‘No, me finished’.

‘Azim Khan, ‘Archie Kangaroo’

The events related in this story took place around 1910-1912 when Ben Murray as a young man was working a camel train for the Lutheran mission at Killalpannina. When picking up loads at Marree he often called on ‘Azim Khan, as did many other camel drivers. ‘Azim Khan was in the employ of Abdul Qadir, who was the wealthiest of the Marree Afghans. Qadir had leased land in the area, and had planted date palms; he also kept goats.

what -DAT.

2. Abigana guru from Broken Hill Wasi'm Khan uga Afghan other he yuga-nq'-inaru alaDa gamulu-ra. go -Sp -PLUP ready camel -CAUS.

3. uga-guna nannygoata yagaDa-na ganga-nura ganaNaDa he -POS yard -LOC stay -CONT there MaFiIti-qa Abdul Qadir down the bore-drain bida-ruu kill -PURP gani-ligu. eat -PURP.

4. maqabaDa yuga-na'q loada-ruFu, qadna-na'q loading old man go -PRES -having, leave-PRES ganaNaDa, where the bore-drain is, gidna-ra -du there, foot -CAUS-EMPH giga -ga to store ganaNaDa giga -lugu madI return-PAST there return-HIST string mani-ligu he was short of twine. get -PURP

5. wanna-giga -lugu, uga giga -nura nannygoata run -return-HIST, he return-CONT ganaNaDa yuga-na thirty-two uga giga-ga there go -IMPERF he return wandi-na-lugu-1 -gi! wait -Sp -PURP-EMPH-EMPH!
6. anda ɣaridji -ya-ɣu anari gamulu-ŋa, mission camel.  
I come down-tr-rel this way camel -loc  
"ah, mayi diyara uga?" nuba uga-guna yani-ŋa,  
"oh, now then, where he?" wife he -pos say -pres  
"ungulu wabayi-ŋa?"  "He must have left early, he left  
"when finish-pres?"  
a load."  

7. uga late diga -ŋa, djärđa uga-guna gubmari-ŋuga.  
he return-pres, shirt he -pos blood -much.  
"ah, what's wrong with your shirt?"  "I been killing goat  
down there, boss's place, kill'm couple of goats,"  
uga yani-ŋa.  
he say -pres.  

8-9. (Told in English.)  

pull-hist there-all side -loc put -hist, dead.  
ah diga -lugu garu." They might come with drag  
oh return-hist there."  
gigi -la -gudi-lingu.  
take back-alt-pull-purp.  

11. uga yanda: "ah yuga-ŋa nani-lingu! yambayi:  
he say sp: "oh go -pres see -purp! ask:  

12-13. (Told in English.)  

14. ilina yanda, walu widji -na diga -ŋa  
thus speak sp, jealous become-pres. I return-pres  
Mission load mani-lingu, diga -ŋa Killalpaminya,  
get -purp, return-pres  
maiغا yada nawi-lingu.  
not more hear-hist.  

Translation  

1) Archie Kangaroo, that's what he called himself — his name was really 'Azim Khan. He was a married man. One day he took a (camel) load out to the Frome (crossing)\textsuperscript{10} and waited there for his master Abdul Qadir for some reason or other.  

10. The Frome crossing on the Birdsville track is only 6 kilometres from Marree — the bed of the Frome is the only area with small timber and bushes in an otherwise totally desolate landscape. There is always water about, on account of the bore.
2) Another Afghan Wasim Khan from Broken Hill — he had gone there because he was ready to set off back home with his camels.

3) Abdul Qadir — he lived in Marree — he had goats there in a yard down by the bore-drain: they were kept there to be (ultimately) killed and eaten.

4. Wasim Khan went there (to the yard) with his load, he left his load there where the bore-drain is and went back on foot to the Marree store; he wanted to go and get some string because he was short of twine.

5) He came hurrying back to where the goats were, he almost got there on his way back, just to find a thirty-two (calibre rifle) waiting for him.

6) I came down this way (to Marree) with camels, mission camels. (I went to 'Azim Khan's place) 'Where is he right now?' I asked. '(I don't know) when he will finish work', his wife said. 'He must have finished early', I said, 'because he left his load at the Frome'.

7) He arrived late, with his shirt covered in blood. (I asked), 'Oh, what's wrong with your shirt?' 'I been killing goat there, down there, boss's place, kill'm couple of goats', he said.

8) A young bloke who had come from Broken Hill that morning he went straight there where his mate Wasim Khan had left his load. 'Afghan lying there on the other side of the road! It's him, my friend Wasim Khan'. He went back to Marree to tell the yulga (policeman). The yulga locked him up (in gaol as a suspect).

9) 'We'll get a tracker' (he said). 'We'll get Anada Johnny'. The tracker said: 'I seen'm track. I know this fellow, he's shepherd's goat for Quadir. He been here, this bush, shoot'em from here, thirty-two'.

10) 'He pulled'm from here to over there and put'm down, dead, by the side (of the road)' . 'They might come with a drag (i.e. a horse-drawn vehicle) to pull up and take back (the body)', the policeman said.

11) He (the policeman) said as he was going 'I'm going to see him ('Azim Khan'). He asked:

12) 'Where are his clothes?' 'That's where he left'm, he left and I never watched! I did know there was something wrong — look more like human blood'. That's what I said.

13) He ('Azim Khan) was jealous. (When caught he said): 'Wasim Khan reckon he was going back to my place, but he never come near me, he went to the store, he had a set on me'.

14) That's what he said, he was jealous. I went to take the mission load, I went back to Killalpannina, and I never heard anything further.

11. The word 'nannygoat' is used as a general term for 'goat' in Aboriginal English: this change of meaning was brought about by the fact that only relatively few billygoats were kept.

12. 'Azim Khan felt that his hospitality was being slighted: being of lowly social standing (as an employee of Abdul Qadir) he was very sensitive.
The aged Afghan

The events in this story took place around 1933-34 while Ben Murray was working on the vast and desolate Mumpowie station which comprises the country immediately to the north and north-east of the Flinders Ranges: the ranges fall away suddenly to a treeless plain going down to Lake Blanche. Only small hills near the aptly named Mt Hopeless rise prominently out of the plain. Many Aborigines were employed on Mumpowie including Mick McLean and Murtee Johnny. Ben Murray spent much of his time on the most remote parts of the station, checking the boundary fence. Mulligan Spring, where he came across the old Afghan, is not far from Mt Hopeless, and close to Lake Callabonna. The story is of particular interest as it shows the tenacity with which the older generation of Afghans adhered to their beliefs.

1. maga-uda ganga-liba-nya Manbi-awi-na; mayi ganda-du old man stay -ANC Pigeon-water-LOC; then things-EMPH
gari-na warba-ru gamuli-ri iki-na Gudnaa-responsive-RA they-ACC carry-NAR camel -INST drive-PRES Kanowana -PROP,
iki-na ldnimiga-ru ru gamuli-na Gudnari-na
drive-PRES Innamincka-ALL camel -LOC Cooper LOC
baFa-lda liba-nya MaFiri-ru NakaMafi -ru
travel-ANC this way Maree -ALL Nappa Merry-ALL station Yawarawarga Yandruwanga-guna wadlu-nya.
Yawarawarga Yandruwanga-POS country-LOC.

2. You know them explorers Burke and them gananada wandja-da there die -PRES

gari diga-na malju-mayi badni-nya -i -gi
they return-PAST food nothing-LOC-EMPH-EMPH
gari-na iki-li yuww-a ru mani-liba-nya, awada
they-ACC bring-HAB Aborigine-ERG get -ANC, there
gari wandja-nya yadla. maga-uda Abigana uriya.
they die close. old man Afghan ancient.

3. uga gada-lda, malaru diga-na ganga-lu-nya he travel-ANC, but return-PRES stay -PURP

Manbi-awi-nya ganga-da, gamuli uga-guna yuga-lug
Pigeon-water-LOC sit -PRES, camel he -POS go -HIST
ayi! madia-gi -y -anu. Seven uga-guna gamuli.
eh! bad -become-QL-REL, he -POS camel.

4. mayi anda ganangaga gaga -nanga-da anda-du, then I there travel-CONT S-PRES I -EMPH,
gana-du malga-gu wargadi-na, uga ganga-da
man -EMPH not -EMPH work -PRES, he sit -PRES
bagu -i -gi empty-EMPH-EMPH.

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5. uga diga -ga, ɰulba widji -ga uga mağabuđa
   he return-PAST, ill become-PAST he old man
   Abigana, nuyu ãanga -da uga anda yuga -ga garu -guda
   Afghan, one stay -PRES he. I go -PAST there-ALL
   Mulligan Spring Manbi -awi -na.
   Pigeon-water-LOC.

6. uga yuga -ga Manbi -rigu malju mayi mani -ligu,
   he go -PAST Pigeon-ALL, food get -PURP,
   mayi ganaŋađa diga -nda ãanga -luğu; anda yuga -ga
   then there return-PRES stay -PURP; I go -PAST
   fence -ru uga -na nani -ligu.
   -ABL he -ACC see -PURP.

7. adu nani -ga warbi -nanga-ŋura, ilinya yanda: "Oh me,
   I Erg see -PAST lie -CONT S-CONT, thus speak:
   I thought I'd die, got nothing to eat! Me sit down here."

8. ãanga -ga uga cooky wandi -nda, "cooky come, me get'm
    sit -PRES he wait -REFL,
    gun, we want'm two, brother," bargulu bida -luğu,
    two hit -PURP,
    wagni -ligu.
    cook -PURP.

9. anda yani -nda: "ah ibi gari diga -nda
    I speak-PRES: "ah sheep they return-PRES
    Gunuwanda Springa -na ibi -ibi!" "Which way you come?
    -LOC sheep
    Water in spring?" "I come from that way, guda bunda -garu!
    water drink -PLUP!

10. "Ah, me go!" anda yuga -nda, uga -inda wandi -wandi -nda
    I go -PRES, he -DAT wait -wait -REFL
    ibi bida -luğu he'd be coming with a camel, camel been
    sheep kill -PURP
    watering there, wandi -nda alađa -na bida -luğu.
    wait -REFL ready -EMPH kill -PURP.

11–12. (Told in English.)

13. anda diga -nda manager nani -ligu awađa nani -ga
    I return-PRES see -PURP there see -PAST
    "Old fellow's done, ɰulba widji -nda."
    sick become-PRES."
14. ani yuga-nda mani-na-diga -lugu, Manbi -rigu
we EXCL go -PRES get -Sp-return-PURP, Pigeon-ALL
digi -lugu uga-na.
take back-PURP he -ACC.

he -ACC ask -PRES.
"Adelaide." Adelaidi-rigu, danga-lugu gaanaada.
-ALL, sit -PURP there.

16. minbaru nangi-na, gaanaada wandja-da.
doctor see -PRES, there die -PRES.

17. ilina gari-ri gudni-nda, uga ilina warbi-nanga -da
thus they-ERG put -PRES, he thus lie -CONT S-PRES
muyu-wanga-na undu nangi-ligu muyu widni-qura,
sun -rise -LOC you ERG see -PURP sun set -CONT,
gidna gudnangari, gadabu gidnangara.
foot south, head north.

18. unba yuga-ga Farina cemetery gari-na gaanaada
you go -PAST they-ACC there
nangi-ligu ilina anari anari nangi-gura Mrs Mahomet,
see -PURP thus this way this way see -ANC
aluwa uga-guna, Musa, all north-south, at Marree too.
child she-POS

Translation
1) The old man was staying on Murnpeowie; he used to cart things driving camels to Kanowana, driving them on to Innamincka, and travelling by camel along the Cooper down this way, to Marree, and then up again to Nappa Merry station (all over) Yawarawarga and Yandruwanda country.

2) You know the explorers Burke and them, they died there (near Nappa Merry). They went back there and they didn’t have any food at all. The Aborigines were getting them some and used to bring some for them; they (Burke and the others) died very close to that place (Nappa Merry). That old man (who used to take camels up to Nappa Merry) he was really ancient.

3) He had been travelling about everywhere, but now he had come back to stay on Murnpeowie, he just sat there, and his camels just walked around, yes! He had become a sick man. He had seven camels.

4) Then I came there as I was travelling around (working on the netting fence). I was a grown man then. He wasn’t working, he was just sitting there, doing nothing.

5) He had come back and he had been taken ill, the old Afghan. He was there all alone. I came there to Mulligan Spring, on Murnpeowie.
6) He used to go to Murnpeowie Station to collect supplies of food and then come back to stay (near the Mulligan Spring). I went from the (dingo) fence to see him.

7) I saw him lying there, and he spoke like this: ‘Oh me, I thought I’d die, got nothing to eat! Me sit down here’.

8) He sat there, waiting for cockatoos to come ‘cocky come, me get’m gun, we want’m two, brother’, (he was waiting there) to kill and cook two cockatoos.

9) I spoke like this ‘There are sheep around Gunuwanda Spring, they are coming back there all the time’. ‘Which way you come? Water in spring?’ ‘I came that way, and I had a drink of water (from the spring)’.

10) ‘Ah, me go!’ I went and waited and waited for him so that we could kill a sheep, he was going to come with a camel — his camels had been drinking there (at the spring), I was waiting ready to kill a sheep.

11) ‘Me shoot’ m cut’ m throat and you carry the meat, I’ll have plenty now’, he said, ‘but no, Sayyid (a Syrian hawker) didn’t come, cut’ m throat’ — they pray when they cut’ m throat, Afghan way.

12) (So he started saying): ‘Me eat’m if you cut’ m throat you say same as me Bismalala wala akuba [i.e. Bismallāh wallahu Akbar ‘in the name of Allāh who is great’]. ‘All right, but you’d better kill for yourself after this when I’m not here’, I said.

13) I went to see the manager (at Murnpeowie station); I saw him there and said: ‘That old fellow is done for, he’s become very sick’.

14) We went to get him, to bring him back to Murnpeowie station.

15) ‘Which way do you want to go?’, the manager asked him. ‘Adelaide’, he said. He went to Adelaide to stay there.

16) He saw the doctors there, and he died there.

17) They put them into the grave like this, they lie like this, that from the sunrise side they look towards the sunset; their feet are to the south, their head to the north.14

18) You’ve been to Farina cemetery, you’ve seen them there lying this way, you’ve seen them, Mrs Mahomet and her children, and Müsä, all north-south, and at Marree too.

Comments on the customs of the Afghans

a) Mona Merrick and Arthur Warren

The following remarks were made at various stages in conversations with Mona Merrick and her brother Arthur Warren. These remarks reflect what were considered the most interesting features of the behaviour of Afghans. Frequent topics of conversation were food, money and the cruel practice of over-loading camels.

14. ‘The graves of the Muhammadans are so dug as to allow the body to lie with its face towards Mecca, consequently in India they were dug from north to south’ (Hughes 1935, s.v. ‘graves’). It is interesting to note that the Afghans simply carried on this Indian tradition in Australia and did not adapt it in the southern hemisphere so that the body should face Mecca.
1. They used to eat chapatty. Then we start eat chapatty.

They used to eat chapatty. Then we start eat chapatty.

maga bangña maba-nďa, maga-biña nuga, waya nigiga
fire big make-, fire-coal much, wire there

put -PRES light very cook -PRES. Afghan -ERG

nunda-ga
show -PAST.

2. gari curry wagni-nďa, curry waru -ñaña madlaňđi, they cook -PRES, long ago-EL bad,

fire-having mouth-pierce-HAB, tongue bite -bite -HAB.

3. Abigana maidja ďanga bagu -ru ᆃuni-lij, Salaam Afghan not things empty-ABL give-HAB

mani -gu mani mani-lju, mani -gu waldaňa.
money-DAT money get -PURP, money-DAT hungry.

4. mani namba-ďa gari-ri, waľgi-nďa-ya-gu money bury -PAST they-ERG, sick -Sp -TR-PLUP

gambabina bangña-ňa, gambabina shuta-ma-nďa, dugulu camp-oven big -LOC, camp-oven shut -Vb-PRES, hole

baganya-ďa-ľu gamba-ďa-ľu. anandara dig -Sp -HIST bury -Sp-HIST. we mother and us children

badni ᆃani-ďa wabla-nďa-ja.
nothing see -PAST hunt -Sp -NP.

5. gari-guńa ᆃuba maľďa ᆃģi gângâ-nuwa, gari mani-ńuwa they-POS wife not here stay -CONT, they take-CONT

nĩginda wâ jlongu -ñaña uljuľu uljuľu waľu uljuľu here country-EL woman, woman white woman

waga mani-ńđa.
black take-PRES.

6. bundju gari-ri wagıli biđa-ńďa, ungu djindja-da meat they-ERG own kill-PRES, throat out -PRES

Abigana-ru undu biđa-ńďa gari-ri maľďa ᆃañi-ra, Afghan -ERG you ERG kill-PRES they-ERG not eat -PUNC,
gari-ri ungu djindja-da nannyaoata, budluga, they-ERG throat out -PRES bullock

rabbiti, mulabara gudna-djildi gari-ri ungu rock pigeon, waterhen they-ERG throat

djindja-da: they didn’t worry about fish, they got their out -PRES:

throats cut anyhow! Ha!
b) Comments by Ben Murray.
Because of their itinerant lifestyle many of the Afghans took their personal responsibilities lightly and some completely ignored their part-Aboriginal children. This is brought home by Ben Murray.

1. anjanga Bejah, filla gari: never look after us my father thus they:
   when we were young, bagu ani ganga-ga.
   empty we EXCL sit -PAST.

2. uga malga MaFiri-ña, roada-ña gaga -jibana,
   he not Marree -LOC, -LOC travel-ANC,
   undu ngura-ra uga-guna story, Northern Territory,
   you ERG know -PUNC he -POS
   Mt Isa gari yuga-nda.
   they go -PRES.

3. gadlu gari yuga-nda : Jack Bejah, I call'm brother,
   empty they go -PRES
   uga yuga-nda diga -lugu, wandja-diga -lugu,
   he go -PRES return-HIST, die -return-HIST,
   dropped dead on the Marree racecourse. I was already
   working camel when he, my father, got married ...(to a
   part Afghan woman).

4. gari-ri namba-ña Farina-ña dugulu baga-ña dini,
   they-ERG bury -PAST Farina-LOC hole dig -PRES tin,
   milk-tin, coffee tin gudni-nda waña -gi -gi!
   put -PRES night-EMPH-EMPH!
   madabuda MaFiri-ña that old Khan madabuda-ru
   old man Marree-LOC old man -ERG
   namba-ña filla nayi toilet, washing clothes line,
   bury -PAST thus here
   fence-post gananja na namba-ga : "Can't keep'm in my
   there bury -PAST:
   house, everybody looking" guldji bandja
   pebble(i.e. money) big
   gold too, can't find'm now.
Translation

a) Mona Merrick and Arthur Warren:
1) They used to eat chapatties. Then we started eating chapatties. We used to make a big fire, with a lot of hot coals, and we put some wire netting on top, and cooked some really light dough. The Afghans showed us how to do it.

2) They used to cook curry. In the olden days that curry was horrible, it burnt like fire, it cut into your mouth and it bit your tongue!

3) An Afghan will never give anything away for nothing. ‘Salaam’ they say for money, they want to get hold of money, they’re hungry for that money.

4) They used to bury their money: if they got sick they’d put the money in a camp-oven, they shut the camp-oven, dug a hole and buried it. My mother and my brothers and sisters, we were always looking for it, but we never found any.

5) Because they didn’t have their own wives with them, they took women belonging to this country, white women and black women they took.

6) They always killed their own meat; they cut the animal’s throat. If you killed meat for them they wouldn’t eat it. They cut the throats of goats, bullocks, rabbits, rock pigeons and even waterhens: they didn’t worry about cutting the throat of fish, because they’ve had their throats cut anyhow, ha!

7) They usually put four bales on a camel, on its back so that the camel couldn’t even stand up (unaided), it was pressed down by that enormous load.

b) Comments by Ben Murray:
1) My father was Bejah;16 that’s how they were: they never looked after us when we16 were young, we had nothing.

2) He was never in Marree, he was always on the road, he travelled about, you know the story, they went to the Northern Territory, they went to Mt Isa.

3) But it didn’t do them any good: Jack Bejah, I called him ‘brother’17 he went off (with father) he came back, he came back to die; he dropped dead on the Marree racecourse, I was already working with camels when my father got married ... (to a part-Afghan woman).

4) The buried (their money) at Farina, they dug a hole and put (the money) in a tin, a (powdered) milk tin, or a coffee tin, and they put it in the hole at dead of night. An old man at Marree, that old Khan, he also buried (his money). They buried it there under toilets, clothes lines and under fence-posts: ‘Can’t keep it in my house, everybody looking’ (the old man said). It was big money and gold too, but nobody can find it now.

15. Bejah Dervish was a most highly esteemed and deeply religious man. When he retired from camel driving he lived at Marree. He had been a member of the Calver-Wells expedition of 1896 in Western Australia and distinguished himself by saving Wells when he got lost. A photo of Bejah and a lively description of this fine old man were published by Farwell (1950).

16. Ben Murray is referring not to himself and his brothers, but also to other children of Afghan camel drivers.

17. He was a half-brother, of part European descent, who had been acknowledged by Bejah.
AFGHAN STORIES

Travelling with an Afghan camel string

This account was given by Johnny Reece of Marree, the oldest Warjgarjuru man now living. He was born in about 1901 at Gudnugu, Koonakoo waterhole, on Alton Downs, in Njulubulu country: his parents had just left the Simpson Desert. He fled from the cruel conditions at Alton Downs and in about 1915 went to Andrewilla, where there was a large Aboriginal camp. They were mainly Warjgarjuru people who lived there, but also remnants of the Yaluyandi, Yawarawarga, Garaŋuru and Ɲamani. In 1917-1918 he came down the track to Marree. He was at first frightened of the Afghans, then worked for them. He clearly remembers how hard the Afghans — and he — had to work. He describes a journey in which they averaged 35 miles a day up the Birdsville track and beyond; this was quite normal for a camel-string.

1. magidi-buru Abigana gari, gadji-nda wdâlu-na
gun -having Afghan they, turn -PRES land -LOC
bigi-bigî bardjana magidi-ri wadni-nda, anda
pig all gun -INST hunt -PRES, I
gâdîlara aŋa njudû wadni-liira bigî-bigî will.
frightened me too hunt -POT pig like.

2. "Azim Amîra andûna mayûga; gidna-ra yuga-qa,
my master; foot -CAUS go -PAST,
yuga-nda luda yigi -ligû Kidmani-qa, gidna-ra
go -PRES load shift-PURP -DAT, foot -CAUS
yuga-nda gamulu gudi-nda, ñandarada-na-nda gamulu.
go -PRES camel pull-PRES, tired -Sp-PRES camel.

3. ani -guna nûra Clayton, Clayton-qa yuga-qa Etadianna,
we EXCL-POS camp -ABL go -PAST
muyu nûyu-nda yuga-naru Manûranjî, Manûranjî -ri
day one -LOC go -PLUP Mungeranie, Mungeranie -ABL
Garawâda gudnala-nda awanda-qi, Garawâda -ru
Kirrawadînna sleep -PRES there -EMPH, Kirrawadînna -ABL
yuga-qa Walûru -rugû
go -PAST Mt Gason -ABL.

4. gamulu gudi-nda gidna-qa Gandirîga-rugu yuga-qa
pull-PRES foot -CAUS Gandirîga -ALL go -PAST
Gandirîga-ru Njûrawili-rugu muyu nûyu-nda gudnala-nda
Gandirîga-ABL Andrewilla-ALL day one -LOC sleep -PRES
yuga-nda -gi wapa-waŋa Ñûgîra -rugu, yuga-lugu
go -PRES-EMPH early Dickeree-ALL, go -HIST
Dickûra -ri Wirari -rugu
Dickeree-ABL Birdsville-ALL.
5. muyu gudnala-nda, anda malga garabila-nda
day sleep -PRES, I not rest -PRES
Dandabidi-rigu Dandabidi-ri Duri-rigu, awanda-ru
Bluff -ALL Bluff -ABL Durie-ALL, there -ABL
Mt Leonard.

6. gála wandila-nda wadlu warida-rugu Monkira-rugu.
creek follow -PRES country distant-ALL -ALL.
gamulu-ña diga -nda nigi Mafiri-rigu ganga-ña
camel -LOC return-PRES here Marree-ALL stay -PRES
niginda.
hereabouts.

7. anda guyu, bargulu Abigana, mayuña, dirga-guna, bula
I one, two Afghan, master, oven -POS, two
yuga-nda, bula wanba-ña
go -PRES, two ride -PRES.

8. ađu wad -ma-nda gari-ña madli-ma-nda
I take off-Vb-FEES they-ACC cool -Vb-PRES
mudlu-walu, gari madli-ña nuba-ña-nda gari
back -bone, they cool -LOC lie -Sp-PRES, they
marga-nda njinda gani-ra, gabulu gudni -nda
crawl-PRES grass eat -PUNC, hobble put on-PRES
ildigilinga gudni -nda nawi-na irdja-irdja-ra
bell put on-PRES hear-NP noise-noise-CAUS
yuga-ña.
go -CONT.

9. gulbari-li gani-nda curry, gudnaña muyu widni-ña
three -ADV eat -PRES sleep sun set -CONT
waña -li wanga-ña, yuga-nda nura-li, malga
early-ADV rise -NP, go -PRES hard-ADV, not
nfañibili-ña niginda nfañibili-ña, fifty camel, loading
rest -NP hereabouts rest -NP
Kidman stores.

10. Camel get away from us too, gamulu gari gada-ña
camel they send-PRES
Waluru -ru yuga-nda ani yuga-nda all day,
Mt Gason-AEL go -PRES we EXCL go -PRES
narga -ña digi -ña, uga yani-nda: gamulu
evening-LOC take back-NP, he say -PRES:
uga yuga-nda warida-rugu malg' anda prayer
he go -PRES far -ALL not I
widi -rinaru.
become-PLUP.
AFGHAN STORIES

Translation

1) The Afghans always carried guns, they travelled around the country shooting down all the pigs, I was scared in case they shot me down too like a pig.

2) 'Azim Amir was my first boss. I went on foot, taking a load up for Kidman. I walked and walked leading the camels, but when I got tired I rode on a camel for a while.

3) Our (first) overnight camp (out from Marree) was Clayton. From Clayton we went to Etadunna in one day and then went to Mungeranie. From Mungeranie we went to Kirrawadinna waterhold. We slept there overnight and went on to Mt Gason.

4) I led the camels, travelling on foot, and we went to Gandiriγa waterhole (just 4 miles on from Clifton Hills), and from Gandiriγa waterhole we went to Andrewilla. We slept there for one night and setting off early we went to Dickeree waterhole (near Pandie Pandie). We went on from Dickeree waterhole to Birdsville.

5) We slept there for one night, I never had a chance to have a bit of a rest there. We went to the Bluff (now Rosebeth Station), from the Bluff to Mt Leonard.

6) We followed the creek, the Diamantina to that distant land, to Monkira. We then came back by camel to Marree and stayed around here.

7) I was on my own, and there were two Afghans, the boss and the 'oven-man' (the cook). They both walked and rode (at intervals).

8) I was the one who took off the loads and let those camels cool down their backs. They lay around in the cool of the evening, they moved about slowly eating grass. I put hobbles on them and I put bells on them so that we could hear the noise of them moving about.

9) The three of us then ate curry and went to sleep as the sun set, so as to rise at first dawn. We went all in one go, we were not to have a chance to rest anywhere on the way, we only had a rest when we got back here to Marree. We had fifty camels, laden with Kidman's stores.

10) A camel got away from us too. They had let the camel go at Mt Gason. We went all day looking for it and got it back at night time. He ('Azim Amir) said: 'That camel went a long way off because (that night) I hadn't said my prayers'.

Syrian Traders

Muslim and Christian traders from 'Syria', i.e. Syria and Lebanon, came to the north of South Australia much later then the Afghan camel drivers. Most of them came in the first decades of the present century, particularly before World War I, in order to escape from Turkish oppression. They were classified as 'Abigana' by Arabana people who were nevertheless well aware of

18. Sir Sydney Kidman (1857-1935) was a major owner of pastoral properties, particularly in central Australia (see Idriess 1935).

19. From various comments made it appears that the cruel Syrian and Sayyid Ali were both Muhammadans, while Mansoor was a Christian.
the difference between these new 'Abigana' and the camel drivers; it was the commercial-mindedness of these traders — greater even than the commercial-mindedness of the old-style Afghans — that above all caught the attention of Arabana people. Mona Merrick and her brother Arthur Warren recalled the days in the twenties when these traders visited Finniss Springs. The traders fulfilled a valuable function: they brought 'luxury' goods that did not form part of the usual provisions.

a) The Cruel Syrian

1. Abigana wa'dlu nu-ru-naa mugadgi guba-guba, uga yuga-ga
   Finnissi -na soap, handkerchief comb sella-ma-nda:
   "I got nice little comb for hair-style."

2. gamulu nuyu-na uga yuga-ga. anि wi-fi-ga
   handkerchief, soap, comb, one shilling.

3. gamulu-na ganjarli banga gudni-ga, railway chain.
   camel -LOC chain big put -PAST

4. wagala gamulu-gugu-na ga nga-agura mudlu-walbu-na,
   camel -back-LOC sit -ANC back -bone -LOC,
   bullock skin back-cover, crow -ERG sore eat -NF-LOC

5. diga -na Ma'iri-ga na yulja -ru "gana
   return-IMPREF Maree -EL policeman-ERG him
   mani-ga -du galba-ra -gi "gana gamulu naru -na:
   take-PAST-EMPH shut -PUNC-EMPH him camel manner-LOC:
   "Cruelty to animals!"

6. gamulu maldu-bu-fa-ga yulja -ru mani-ga.
   camel not die -PAST policeman-ERG take-PAST.

b) Mansur

1. Mansur gurgu aja, ganga mugadgi, photo mani-ga;
   good very, clothes, hat, take-PAST;
   I girl sometimes see -PAST. long ago
   mugadgi, njiba wiFa-nqa.
   hat, dress sell-PRES.

sit -PAST -LOC

shearing time yuga-ga uga mani guga mani-li,
go -PAST he money much get -HAB,

anandara njiba, mugāḍī, ganga
we(our mother and us children) dress, hat, clothes,

comb wiﬁ-nda, angūngā abidji-ri djarda wiﬁ-qa.
buy -PRES, my father-ERG shirt buy -PAST.

3. *working man* nuba mani badni angūngā abidji-ri
wife money nothing my father-ERG

njiba wiﬁ-la -lugu.
dress buy -ALT-HIST.

4. Mansūr motorcar banda, njiba oreach. big, dress nice.

c) Sayyid Ali.

1. Sayyid Ali had a van, two camels dragging it.

2. Sayyid Ali mani banda, gidna-walga njiba, mugāḍī, money big, shoe dress, hat;
ganda.
clothes.

3. abidji-ri wiﬁ-nda prints njiba mani-ri garba-na-nga.
father-ERG buy -PRES dress self-ERG make -NP-LOC

anandara wiﬁ-nda almond, peanut.
we(our mother and us children) buy -PRES

4. Abigana waďu gurgu -gana, mugāḍī guba-guba. guya
Afghan country other-EL, hat little. girl

bargulu, guya oreach. two, girl pretty.

5. (Told in English.)

Translation

a) *The Cruel Syrian*

1) An Afghan from a different country (not India), wearing a small hat (a fez), he came to Finniss Springs selling soap, handkerchiefs and combs: 'I got nice little comb for hair-style' he said.

2) He came with just one camel, and we bought handkerchiefs, soap and combs, for one shilling (everything he had cost one shilling).

3) He had put an enormous heavy chain on this camel, a railway chain. The camel was covered in sores and it dragged this big chain on its foot.
4) Crows were sitting on this camel, on its back, it had a rough bullock hide (in lieu of a saddle) and the crows were devouring the camel where its back was full of great sores from this saddle.

5) He went back to Marree and the Marree policeman took him and put him in gaol because of the camel: 'Cruelty to animals!'

6) The camel didn’t die, the policeman took it (and looked after it).

b) Mansūr

1) Mansūr was a really good man, he had clothes and hats for sale and he took photos for people. I used to see him (at Finniss) occasionally when I was a little girl. It was a long time ago; Mansūr sold hats and dresses.

2) Mansūr was a working man at Beltana, but he came at shearing time (when there was plenty of money about) and he used to get a lot of money; all of us, my mother and us children bought dresses, hats, clothes and combs, and my father bought shirts.

3) If the wife of one of our working men didn’t have any money, my father would buy a dress for her.

4) Mansūr had a big motor-car, and he sold pretty dresses.

c) Sayyid Ali

1) Sayyid Ali had a van, two camels dragging it.

2) Sayyid Ali had lots of money, he had shoes, dresses, hats and other clothes for sale.

3) Father used to buy prints from him so that we could make our own dresses. Mother and all of us used to buy almonds and peanuts.

4) He was an Afghan from a different country (not India), wearing a small hat (a fez). He had two daughters, pretty girls they were.

5) He’d had a wife, but she ran off, and in the end those two girls ran off too, they went and got married in Queensland.

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

APPENDIX 1

The Phonemes of Arabana-Wangaŋuru

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>labial</th>
<th>interdental</th>
<th>alveolar</th>
<th>retroflex</th>
<th>palatal</th>
<th>velar</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>stops</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>d j</td>
<td>d j</td>
<td>g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nasals</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n j</td>
<td>n j</td>
<td>n j</td>
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<td>laterals</td>
<td>l</td>
<td>l</td>
<td>l</td>
<td>l j</td>
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<tr>
<td>vibrants</td>
<td>r, r</td>
<td>r</td>
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<td>glides</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>y</td>
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</table>
Certain nasals and laterals in Arabana-Wangguru have pre-stopped allophones: -bm- corresponds to -m- at the beginning of the second syllable, -dn- to -n-, -dn- to -n-, -dl- to -l-, and -dl- to -l-. In order to make the spelling approximate as closely as possible to the pronunciation these pre-stopped consonants have been included in the orthography.

For simplicity the cluster -ndj- has been written -ndj-.

**APPENDIX 2**

*List of Abbreviations*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABL</td>
<td>ablative</td>
</tr>
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<td>ACC</td>
<td>accusative case</td>
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<td>ACT</td>
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<td>ADV</td>
<td>adverb</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>allative case</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANC</td>
<td>ancient, distant past</td>
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<td>CAUS</td>
<td>causative case</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONT</td>
<td>continuative participle, -νυρα</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONT S</td>
<td>continuative stem-forming suffix</td>
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<td>elative case</td>
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<td>emphatic enclitic participle</td>
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<td>ergative case</td>
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<tr>
<td>EXCL</td>
<td>exclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAB</td>
<td>habitual participle</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIST</td>
<td>historic past, used generally in an account of a series of events.</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMM</td>
<td>immediate past tense</td>
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<td>present tense</td>
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<tr>
<td>PROP</td>
<td>proper noun marking suffix -να</td>
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<tr>
<td>PUNC</td>
<td>punctiliar present (in transitive verbs only)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PURP</td>
<td>purposive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sp</td>
<td>speed form, implying action performed hastily or before departing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TR</td>
<td>transitory aspect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vb</td>
<td>verbalizing suffix</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In the translation brackets are used to enclose phrases that are not in the original, but have been added by way of explanation.
ABORIGINAL HISTORY 1981 5:1

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AFGHANS AND ABORIGINES: DIYARI TEXTS

Ben Murray and Peter Austin

Ben Murray, the oldest and most fluent speaker of Diyari, now lives at Marree, South Australia, where he was born in 1891. His mother was Arabana and his father Afghan. Diyari was formerly spoken to the east of Lake Eyre in the far north of South Australia and currently has fewer than a dozen speakers. Ben Murray's two humorous stories about encounters with Afghans were told in Diyari to Peter Austin, who transcribes and analyses them here.

Emily and the Afghans

The first story dates from Ben Murray's childhood in the late 1890s. There were at that time a large group of Aboriginal people camped in the Frome Creek a few kilometres east of Marree and they were occasionally visited by some of the large number of Afghans who lived in Marree. The story concerns an encounter between Emily Russell (jirimirrini), a cousin of Ben Murray, and two itinerant Afghans in the Frome Creek. It demonstrates one shrewd Aboriginal girl's handling of the Afghans' requests for sexual favours.

1. ngayani pirrki-rna karidi-nhi nhaka.
   we plural excl-nom play -ptcple creek -loc there-loc

2. thana -li dika-yi nhinha Frome karidi.
   they plural-erg call-pres him-acc creek-abs

3. ngarda-nih pula ngarrpingarrpi mandu
   then -loc they dual-nom Afghan two-abs
   wakara-ya.
   come -past

1 The transcription employed here is a practical orthography and differs from that in Austin 1981. The digraphs th, nh, lh represent lamino-dental stop, nasal and lateral respectively, j, ny, ly are lamino-palatals, rt, rd, rn, rl are apico-domals (retroflex), r is a retroflex continuant, rr an apico-alveolar flap and d between vowels is an apico-alveolar trill. Each numbered line is a sentence and commas separate clauses of complex sentences. The following abbreviations are used: abs — absolutive case; acc — accusative case; add — additional information; all — allative case; antipass — antipassive; aux — auxiliary verb; dat — dative case; dist — distant; erg — ergative case; exclam — exclamation; fut — future tense; ident — identified information; imper — imperative mood; implDS — implicated (or purpose) clause whose subject is different from that of the main clause; implSS — implicated clause whose subject is the same as that of the main clause; inchoat — inchoative ('becoming'); loc — locative case; nom — nominative case; old info — old information; pass — passive; pre — present tense; prop — proprietive ('having'); ptcple — participle; redup — reduplicated; reflex — reflexive; relDS — relative clause whose subject is different from that of the main clause; relSS — relative clause whose subject is the same as that of the main clause; trvb — transitive verbalizer; vicin — vicinity. For a description of the grammar of Diyari (phonology, morphology and syntax) see Austin 1981.

2 The distant past tense auxiliary wanthiyi is left out here since the context in which the story was told unambiguously located it in the distant past.
Peter Austin and Ben Murray, at Marree, S.A.

Photograph by L.A. Hercus
4. pula wakara-yi nhanthu-yali, thana
dual-nom come -pres horse -erg dual-nom
mankada pirrki-rnanhi pakarna karakara-lda-matha.
girl-abs play -relDS also near -add-ident

5. pula kurlkunga-rna ngari -yi, nhanthu
dual-nom jump -ptcple go down-pres horse-abs
kada-rna.
tie -relSS

6. ngarda-nhi mankada parda-rna pada-yi
then -loc girl-abs catch-ptcple lie -pres

7. Come on! Come on! Give me nikiniki!

8. nganha yingki-yamayi yani -ka.
me-acc give -imper like this-token

9. wapa-mayi:
go -imper

10. wapa-mayi yini!
go -imper you

11. wata ngathu yinha nganja-yi.
not I-erg you-acc want -pres

12. yini kini wanda nhanthu-yarri,
you-nom penis-abs thick horse -like
dangki-danki -yarri.
redup -donkey-like

13. yaru -ka nhani yatha-yi.
like that-token she-nom say -pres

14. yundu wata nganha kudaka -rnanhi nganhi yulya - Nhi
you-erg not me-acc release-relDS I-nom police-loc
yatha-lha nganayi.
speak-fut aux

15. nganhi marlarlu yulya - Nhi warrapa-thadi - lha nganayi.
I-nom truly police-loc relate -antipass-fut aux

3 The origin of this word for sexual intercourse is unclear. The speech of the Afghans, as Ben Murray mimics it, shows a number of pidgin English features, e.g. [gib] for 'give'; see also lines 16 and 24 of story 2.
4 This word was accompanied by an obscene hand gesture.
5 Lines 9-16 were addressed to the Afghans in English and translated here into Diyari.
16. yini nhaka-lda wakara-rnanhi, ngathu marlarlu
   you-nom there-loc-add come -relDS I-erg truly
   yinha kanyangadi-ya nganka-lha nganayi.
   you-acc jail -all make -fut aux

17. ngarda-nhi nhani karrka-yi.
    then -loc she-nom shout -pres

18. kanku-wara -yi! nhawu -ya parla -li
    boy -plural-exclam he-nom-near sexual arousal-erg
    ngana-yi ngakangu.
    be -pres me-loc

19. yarra wapa-ni -mayi, danga-danga -rna.
    this way go -plural-imper redup-hunt away-relSS

20. ngayani parrjarna mindi-yi.
    we plural excl-nom all-abs run -pres

    then -loc they dual-erg them plural-acc leave -pres

22. nhanthu-nhi kathi-yi ngarda-nhi wapa-rna
    horse -loc climb-pres then -loc go -ptcple
    kuda -rna, thuka-thadi-rna kuda -rna.
    go away-relSS carry-pass -ptcple go away-relSS

23. yaru -ka thana murda -ya.
    like that-token they plural-nom finish-past

24. ngarda-nhi nhani yatha-yi.
    then -loc she-nom say -pres

25. yini nhaka-lda nhangki -rda wakara-rnanhi,
    you-nom there-loc-add here-vicin-loc come -relDS
    nganhi madi -ya mindi-lha nganayi, yulya
    I-nom Marree-all run -fut aux police-abs
    mani-lha.
    get -implSS

26. nganhi marlarlu ngunda-yi.
    I-nom truly think -pres

27. kanji mindi-ya nhani, nhaka-lda nhawu
    can run -past she-nom there-loc-add he-nom
    wakara-rnanhi.
    come -relDS

6. The word kanyangadi is used for 'chain' and 'jail'; its pre-contact meaning is unknown.
AFGHANS AND ABORIGINES

28. yaru -ka nhani murda -yi, yatha-rna
like that-token she-nom finish-pres speak-relSS
nhungkangu.
him-loc

29. nhawu wata marla thika -yi.
he-nom not more return-pres

Translation

1. We were playing in the creek there.
2. They call it the Frome Creek.
3. Then two Afghans came up.
4. They came on horseback, right close to where the girls were playing.
5. They jumped down, tying the horses up.
6. They (one of them) grabbed (one of) the girls.
7. ‘Come on! Come on! Give me nikimiki!
8. Give it to me like this’.
9. ‘Go away!’ (Emily said).
10. ‘You go away!’
11. I don't like you.
12. Your penis is big and thick like a horse, like a little donkey’.
13. That’s what she said.
14. ‘If you don’t let me go I’ll tell the police.
15. I'll truly tell the police all about it.
16. If you come again, I'll truly put you in jail’.
17. Then she called out.
18. ‘Boys! He’s sexually aroused over me.
19. Come over here and hunt (him) away’.
20. We all ran over.
21. Then they left them.
22. (They) climbed on their horses and went away, riding away.
23. That’s how they finished.
24. Then she said.
25. ‘If you come here again I’ll run to Marree to get the police’.
26. I truly think.
27. She could have run (the distance) if he had come back again.
28. That’s how she finished talking to him.
29. He never came back.

Dora and the Afghan

The second story is set at Etadunna on the Birdsville track when Ben Murray was a young man working on the station. It concerns Dora, a daughter of the European station manager, who used her knowledge of Diyari and of the Afghans’ religious practices to make a public spectacle of an Afghan who stopped to talk to her.
1. Dora nhani yatha-rna\(^7\) nhangkarni ngathata - nhi.  
   she-nom say -ptcple her-dat younger sibling-loc

2. yula thika -lu - mayi.  
   you dual-nom return-dual-imper

3. yurra\(^8\) wapa-ni -mayi, ngapiri ngandi-nhi  
   you plural-nom go -plural-imper father mother-loc  
   yatha-lha, nganha nhayi-rnanthu.  
   say -implSS me-acc see -implDS

4. ngathu nhinha -ya ngari-ika -yi nganthi-nganthi-ya  
   I-erg htm-acc-near go -trvb-pres redup -animal -all  
   nhingki-nhi-wa thana -nha wanda-lha nhinha  
   here -all-dist them plural-acc show -implSS htm-acc

5. marlarlu ngarda-nhi pula thika -yi.  
   truly then -loc they dual-nom return-pres

6. ayil! ngapiri! yarra wapa -lu, ngayana  
   well father this way go-dual-imper we plural incl-nom  
   nhayi-lha Dora-nha.  
   see -implSS Dora-acc

7. Dora-ndu ngari -ika -yi nganthi-nganthi-ya  
   Dora-erg go down-trvb-pres redup -animal -all  
   nhingki-nhi-wa.  
   here -all-dist

8. Dora-ndu ngari -ika -yi, mungka-mungka -rna nhinha  
   Dora-erg go down-trvb-pres redup -embrace-relSS htm-acc  
   yaru -ka, yaru -ka nguna kuda-rna  
   like that-token like that-token arm-abs put -relSS  
   nhungkangu yarrkarla-nhi.\(^9\)  
   htm-loc neck -loc

9. ngalda wapa-yi nhingki-nhi-ya.  
   we dual incl-nom go -pres here -all-near

10. ngarda-nhi pula karakara ngana-yi marlarlu.  
    then -loc they dual-nom close be -pres truly

11. [GRUNT! GRUNT!]

---

7. The distant past tense auxiliary *wanthayi* is here omitted. See note 2.
8. Line 4 is apparently an error as there were only two brothers involved (see line 5).
9. Dora put her arm around the Afghan’s neck holding his head down so that he would not see where he was being led.
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12. yaru -ka piki -piki nhawu -pada.
   like that-token redup-pig he-nom-there

13. Oh he devil, this one!

14. nhawu kathi nhungkarni-li mangathanda
   he-nom clothing him-dat -erg head-abs
   warlpa-thadi -rna, ngarda-nhi mindi-rna kuda -yi.
   cover -reflex-relSS then -loc run -ptcle go away-pres

15. mindi-rna kuda -yi, yatha-yatha-rna.
   run -ptcle go away-pres redup-say -pres

16. He devil! He devil!

17. mayi, minha-rrri -yi yini?
   well what -inchoat-pres you-nom

18. nganha nhandu pardaka-rna warrayi, kuji
   me-acc she-erg take -ptcle aux devil-abs
   wanda-lha.
   show -implSS

19. wata marla nhangkangu wapa-lha nganayi.
   not more her-loc go -fut aux

20. kuji nhandu -pada ngamalka-yi.
   devil-abs she-nom-there have -pres

21. ngathu ngunda-rna.
   I-erg think -ptcle

22. nhanhi mankada ngumu-yarri.
   she-nom girl good -like

23. ayi! kuji -nthu nhani!
   well devil-prop she-nom

24. ngayani kingka-rnanhi, No laugh! No fun!
   we plural excl-nom laugh -reIDS

25. wata kingka-ni -mayi.
   not laugh -plural-imper

26. kuji nhawu -pada.
   devil he-nom-there

27. yurra kuji nhinha -pada thayi-yi.
   you plural-nom devil-abs him-acc-there eat -pres

28. yaru -ka nhawu yatha-yi.
   like that-token he-nom say -pres

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29. yundu nganja-rna warrayi mankada.
   you-erg want -ptcple aux girl-abs

30. yaru -ka nhandu yinha wanda-lha nganayi.
   like that-token she-erg you.acc show -fut aux

31. wata marla ngathu nganja-yi, nhahna nhayi-lha.
   not more I-erg want -pres her.acc see -implSS

32. karika-ni -mayi!
   wait -plural-imper

33. ngathu nhinha ngari -ika -lha nganayi, nganthi-nganthi
   I-erg him-acc go down-trvb-fut aux redup -animal
   wanda-lha nhinha,
   show -implSS him-acc

34. wata nhandu piki dika-rna, windi yatha-rna
   not she-erg pig-abs name-ptcple only say -relSS
   nganthi-nganthi.
   redup -animal

35. marlarlu nhinha piki-ya nganka-rna nhandu
   truly him-acc pig -all snake -ptcple she-erg
   yakayita11 pangki-nhi.
   gate side -loc

36. ngarda-nhi wanda-yi nhinha.
   then -loc show -pres him-acc

37. thana -pada yingkarni kamanali-tha.
   they plural-nom-there you-dat friend -old info

38. ngarda-nhi nhulu nhayi-yi.
   then -loc he-erg see -pres

39. ngarda nhawu yaru -ka kathi -yali
   then he-nom like that-token clothing-erg
   warlpa-rdaka -thadi -yi mulha mindi-rna
   cover -ptcple-reflex-pres face-abs run -ptcple
   kuda -lha.
   go away-implSS

40. kuji nhawu -pada! kuji!
   devil he-nom-there devil

10 The DIYARI word *piki* 'pig' is borrowed from English. Dora was careful not to say *piki* when speaking DIYARI, lest the Afghan learn the purpose of her deception.

11 *yakayita* is borrowed from English 'gate', remolded to fit the pattern of DIYARI words (words must be of at least two syllables and end in a vowel).
AFGHANS AND ABORIGINES

Translation
1. She said to her brothers.
2. ‘You two go back!’
3. ‘You all go back to tell mother and father to watch me.
4. I will take him down there to the little animals, to show them to him’.
5. Then they went back.
6. ‘Hey! Father! Come here and we will all watch Dora!’
7. Dora took him down there to the animals.
8. She took him down embracing him like this with her arm around his neck.
9. ‘Let’s go just down there’, (she said).
10. Then they got really close.
11. [GRUNT! GRUNT!]
12. That was a pig (grunting) like that.
13. ‘Oh, he devil this one!’
14. He ran away, covering his head with his turban.
15. He ran away, yelling out:
16. ‘He devil! He devil!’
17. ‘Hey, what happened to you?’ (we asked him).
18. ‘She took me down to show me the devil.
19. I won’t go near her again.
20. She has devils.
21. I thought
22. She looked like a good girl.
23. No! She has devils!’
24. When we laughed (he said) ‘No laugh! No fun!’
25. ‘Don’t laugh!
26. That’s the devil.
27. You all eat those devils’.
28. That’s what he said.
29. ‘You wanted the girl.
30. And so she showed you’.
31. ‘I don’t want to ever see her again’.
32. ‘Wait (she had said)
33. I’ll take him down to show him the animals’.
34. She didn’t say ‘pig’, only saying ‘animals’.
35. Truly she took him to the pigs by the side of the gate.
36. Then she showed him.
37. ‘These are your friends’.
38. Then he saw.
39. Then he covered his face with his turban like that and ran away.
40. He’s the devil! Devil!

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Plate 1: Chinese sketch by Tommy McRae.
Courtesy of the National Museum of Victoria
ART, ABORIGINES AND CHINESE: A NINETEENTH CENTURY DRAWING BY THE KWATKWAT ARTIST TOMMY McRAE.*

Carol Cooper and James Urry

The cover illustration to this issue, showing two Chinese men in flight, has been redrawn from a pen and ink sketch (Plate 1) by the Aboriginal artist Tommy McRae or McCrae. The original illustration, now in the National Museum of Victoria, has been reproduced before¹, but little attempt has been made to place the picture in historical perspective. This note provides a brief outline of the life and art of Tommy McRae, examines the subject matter of the upper tier of the drawing and relates it to historical events in southeastern Australia, and finally attempts to date the picture.

Tommy McRae died of ‘old age’ at the Lake Moodemere Aboriginal Reserve near Wahgunyah in northeastern Victoria in 1901. Estimates of his age at the time of his death suggest he was born about 1836. Evidence from a number of sources indicates that he belonged to a group called Kwatkwat by their Pangerang neighbours. Kwatkwat territory adjoined the easternmost Pangerang clan some twenty miles east of the junction of the Murray and Goulburn rivers and stretched along the Murray to Indigo Creek, west of present-day Barnawartha.

Kwatkwat society was disrupted soon after European penetration of their territory, which began at the time McRae was probably born. From 1838 onwards, Aborigines and squatters were involved in a number of violent confrontations in which Europeans and Aborigines were killed. By 1845 the Aborigines east of the Ovens River had been dispossessed by pastoralists and by large herds of introduced animals. No more than two hundred Aborigines remained alive.² In 1852 gold was discovered in the Ovens Mining District. The miners, at first European but later including large numbers of Chinese, flooded into the area and the landscape was soon devastated by their diggings and the countryside denuded of trees and vegetation. Officials prevented Aborigines from entering the goldfields.³ The few remaining Aborigines sought refuge at pastoral stations or towns on the margins of the mining district. By 1860 the surface gold deposits were worked out and the 26,000 miners who had gathered here were rapidly dispersing.

Tommy McRae either witnessed or knew about most of the events which occurred between 1840 and 1860, but we possess no clear details as to

* We acknowledge the assistance given by the following in the preparation of this paper: Dr Diane Barwick, Ms Margaret Calder of the Mitchell Library, Mrs H. Christensen, Mrs G. Leslie, Ms Gaye Sculthorpe of the National Museum of Victoria and Frank Strahan of Melbourne University Archives. We alone are responsible for the interpretation.

¹ Barrett 1935: Plate V; Dutton 1974:137. Plate 100; Christie 1979: Plate IV.
² Andrews 1920:100.
³ Legislative Council 1858:25-85.
his movements or his experiences during this period. Later records would indicate that he remained quite close to his clan territory in the Murray River area, working on pastoral stations. One account states he was involved in droving trips to Melbourne while working for Andrew Hume, owner of Brocklesby Station 1849-59, and that he saw the opening of the Hobson's Bay railway in 1854.4

In 1858 the plight of the Aborigines forced the Victorian Parliament to appoint the first of two Select Committees whose reports resulted in the establishment of a Board for the Protection of the Aborigines in 1860. The Board provided relief for Aborigines and set up reserves but could achieve little given its paltry budget and the opposition of European vested interests. Documents in the Board's files for the 1860s and 1870s suggest that the eighty-seven survivors in northeastern Victoria moved freely between the Tangambalanga reserve and camps at Wodonga and Wangaratta. They largely supported themselves by working for pastoralists and farmers or by selling fish, opposum-skin rugs and indigenous weapons. Many of the younger folk were attracted to Coranderrk Station near Melbourne or the Maloga Mission School in New South Wales but the old, including McRae, preferred their own territories. When his name first appeared in Board records in 1881 he had recently established a camp near Wahgunyah on Lake Moodemere with his second wife, Lilly, and other Aboriginal relatives. Apparently he worked occasionally on surrounding stations and sold fish and curios to local Europeans.

In 1885 an Aboriginal friend of the McRaes reported that the community at Wahgunyah and nearby Wangaratta needed housing but the Board refused. McRae, his wife and children, his younger brother and his wife, were listed with other Aborigines. After the last resident at Wangaratta died in 1888 the Board Secretary decided to move the ration depot to Wahgunyah. After a two-year struggle against local opposition an Aboriginal reserve was gazetted at Lake Moodemere in 1891.

By the 1880s, however, changes in government policy towards Aborigines began to have a profound effect on McRae's community. New South Wales officials moved the Maloga community, with which McRae and his relatives at Wahgunyah had maintained close ties, to Cumeroogunga Aboriginal Station in 1888. The Victorian Board became increasingly paternalistic and in 1886 adopted an 'absorption' policy which forced young 'half-castes' off the stations. In 1890 new regulations allowed the Board to commit children to institutions without their parents' consent. From the time Rev. F.A. Hagenauer became secretary of the Victorian Board in 1889 the existence of the community at Wahgunyah was increasingly threatened. Tommy McRae appears in the records of the Board as a wily campaigner for his rights, appealing for travel passes and materials for buildings, utilising the assistance of sympathetic European neighbours and local members of Parliament. But McRae could not prevent the Board removing two of his children to institutions in 1891. To prevent the loss of his remaining children McRae and his wife began a series of moves to escape the jurisdiction of the Victorian Board. In 1893 they crossed to Corowa in New South Wales but when they returned

TOMMY McRAE

later the same year another child was removed by police. The McRaes remained at Corowa until 1897. When they returned to Lake Moodemere the remaining children were seized. The years 1893-1897 were therefore a troubled time in which McRae attempted to maintain his independence, his community and his family in the face of official harassment. The fact that he succeeded for so long says a great deal about his ability. By 1897 he was in ill health and received Board rations until his death in 1901.

Nowhere in the records of the Board written during McRae's lifetime are there references to his art. The drawings which have survived from what may have been a large output cannot be accurately dated nor can their collectors or donors always be identified. Dates mentioned in the 1909, 1927, 1929 and 1935 descriptions of McRae's sketchbooks must be treated with caution as they are contradictory.5

What appear to be the earliest examples of McRae's drawings pose problems of attribution. In 1877 Phillip Chauncy described two 'hastily drawn' pen and ink sketches he had acquired in 1860 and 1862 from an artist he identified as 'an untaught Aboriginal lad of the Upper Murray', known as 'Tommy Barnes'. These drawings and another not attributed to Barnes were published by Smyth in 1878. The original of this third drawing, today in the Mitchell Library, bears a label declaring it the work of 'Yakaduna — Tommy McCrae Barnes, 1864'. This drawing is bound with an undated sketchbook by 'Tommy McCrae, chief of the Wahgunyah tribe' and other information on McRae.6 Another drawing attributed to Barnes is in the La Trobe Library, as are the originals of two pictures collected and published by Chauncy.7 Finally, a drawing by an unnamed Murray River Aboriginal who had been employed on a pastoral station 'forty' years before was published by its owner W.S. Murdoch of Wangaratta in 1900. This picture appears to be similar to the Barnes and McRae works.8

There are good reasons, given our knowledge of McRae's life and stylistic similarities, for believing that these early drawings attributed to Barnes were in fact drawn by McRae. The surname 'Barnes' may well have been derived from the publican Barnes who used the original Huon homestead at Wodonga for a hotel in the early 1860s. The name McRae may have come from another publican at McCrae's Inn or Mulwala, a township west of Wahgunyah founded in 1858.9

If Barnes and McRae are one and the same then Tommy McRae had been drawing pictures from 1860. There is, however, no evidence that he maintained a continuous output or if there were periods of intense activity. It is clear, however, that the reason why McRae's pictures have survived is because local Europeans encouraged him in his drawing and purchased his pictures. A number of patrons can be identified. From reminiscences we can provide a few tentative details as to his motives and methods as an artist.

5 Greig 1909; Anonymous 1927; Williams 1927; Cox 1929; Barrett 1935.
7 La Trobe Library, Melbourne.
8 Murdoch 1900: 22, 136, 188.
One of McRae's patrons was Roderick Kiborn who had married the daughter of the first squatter in the Wahgunyah district and who was a local postmaster and Justice of the Peace. At the time of McRae's death in 1901 Kiborn noted in his diary that he had known McRae since 1858.10 The children of Kiborn confirmed their father's association with McRae in undated letters published in a brief biography of McRae in 1935. Although written long after McRae's death on the basis of their father's diaries and their own memories, these letters provide us with some details of McRae's life. Kiborn's son George recalled that McRae had first produced drawings for his father in a pocketbook in 1865, but provides no details as to where he obtained this date and he does not quote from his father's diary on this point.11 If the date is correct then Kiborn may well have encouraged McRae's art from this early period though it does appear from other sources that McRae's drawings achieved a more general popularity in this neighbourhood in the 1880s and 1890s. Both Kiborn's son and daughter recalled how their father had given a book of McRae's drawings to the Governor of Victoria, Lord Hopetoun, just prior to his departure from the colony in 1895. This action had aroused public interest in McRae's art and other Europeans supplied him with art material and paid 10/- a book for his drawings.12 In 1927 George L. Williams recalled how he had provided McRae with materials to produce two books of drawings.13

Another local collector was Dr W.H. Lang who had arrived as a medical practitioner in Corowa about 1885. Lang's brother Andrew Lang, the famous British man-of-letters, folklorist and anthropologist, used the drawings his brother collected 'some years before' to illustrate Mrs Langloh Parker's two books of Aboriginal stories published in 1896 and 1898.14 The artist was described as an Aboriginal but McRae was not mentioned by name although the pictures are clearly his. McRae's drawings collected by other Europeans living in the Wahgunyah/Corowa district, and whose locations are known today, include those which belonged to J.C. Leslie, editor of the Corowa Free Press from 1875, and to J.G. Gray, a pastoralist who owned properties near Corowa from 1876 but was reported in the district earlier.15

A note dated 1902 by Roderick Kiborn on a sketchbook of eleven undated McRae drawings provides a brief description of McRae's methods: 'His peculiarity as an artist was that in all his sketches he commenced at the feet and worked upwards. These sketches were made in his gunyah'.16 Another account published in 1929, possibly from information by another of Kiborn's sons, described how when McRae worked he 'stretched himself at full length on the ground and propped up on one elbow made his pictures entirely from memory'. This account also noted his technique of drawing his subjects from the base upwards.17

12 Anonymous 1927; Cox 1929; Barrett 1935.
13 Williams 1927.
14 Lang in Parker 1896:xvi; Parker 1898.
16 La Trobe Library Accession No. H 141226.
17 Cox 1929; see also Anonymous 1927 for similar details.
Some of McRae's surviving pictures show composite scenes often drawn in two tiers. This structure may have been used as a means to separate discrete sets or scenes. Sequences of figures are shown in such a way that they suggest they were arranged to illustrate a particular event or to relate a story. Others undoubtedly were drawn to appeal to a European concern, though many exhibit the wry humour of a cartoonist who has carefully captured place and person and conveyed a sense of people's mannerisms, both European and Aboriginal.

The majority of McRae's surviving pictures show scenes of Aboriginal life as he perceived it had once existed or how he actually could recall it in his childhood. There are scenes of hunting and fishing, family groups, fights and dances. The latter illustrations are among the most striking of McRae's sketches: decorated dancers are shown in lines, legs bent, arms out thrust, in positions which give an impressive sense of movement. The details of activities, dress, decoration and material culture are all meticulously depicted, including illustrations of some types of artefact peculiar to the Murray region. Details of subsistence activities such as hunters carrying dried opossums on sticks, and the decoration of dancers can be confirmed from early European accounts of Aborigines.

Not all of the pictures illustrate Aboriginal scenes. One of the Barnes drawings shows a group of squatters and stockmen and others clearly by McRae show similar scenes along with depictions of sailing ships. One of the most remarkable of these illustrations is one which shows Buckley's escape. This appears to be an early painting similar in style to those of Barnes. Two other pictures published in 1929 which were alleged to have come from McRae's first notebook collected by Kilborn in the 1870s have figures similar to the Buckley drawing. While these pictures are of considerable historical interest both in their content and style, they cannot be discussed in detail here. What is of interest are the pictures which include other non-Aboriginal themes, in particular pictures of Chinese.

A recent history of Victorian Aborigines in the nineteenth century reproduces the Chinese sketch with the caption 'Aborigines chasing Chinese diggers' as if the picture depicts an actual historical event. The evidence on the life and work of McRae so far presented proves this cannot be so. McRae drew his pictures from memory, often long after events and though he certainly saw Chinese miners there was never a time when Aborigines in the form he drew them attacked Chinese, even if by the time Chinese were in northeastern Victoria they had been in a position to do so.

Chinese miners first arrived in the Ovens Mining District in any considerable numbers only after 1855. Between 1853 and 1858 about 42,000 Chinese, mainly farmers, small traders and craftsmen from Kwangtung, migrated to work in Victoria. By 1861 many had left the colony for other areas of Australia or returned home. In 1853 A.W. Howitt and his father,

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18 Cooper 1981; Smyth 1878:1 299-302.
19 See Cooper 1981:114 for an illustration of Buckley's escape.
20 Cox 1929; Anonymous 1927 states that these paintings were done in the 1880s.
21 Christie, 1979:vi, Plate IV.
both working on the diggings, visited an Aboriginal camp near Wodonga. The elder Howitt's account presented a depressing picture of camp life with the men wearing shirts, jumpers and blankets and women in oppossum-skin rugs. Though he reported a garbled version of Aboriginal/European conflict a decade earlier, he noted that local Europeans declared the Aborigines were now 'tame enough'. In 1854 he reported on the remnants of the 'Ovens tribe' near Wangaratta in much the same manner: stockmen sported European clothes but the population was ravaged by disease. All this hardly suggests a picture of vigorous Aboriginal warriors eager to threaten Chinese miners in the district.

Details of Aboriginal/Chinese relations in northeastern Victoria are totally lacking, but it unlikely that they were hostile. The real area of conflict was elsewhere, particularly between European miners and the Chinese. The Chinese were continuously harassed by Europeans jealous of their competition in the search for gold. There were many ugly incidents culminating in a riot and the death of Chinese at the Buckland Rivers diggings in 1857 when police had to restore order. Such conflicts could not have escaped the attention of Aborigines. The number of Chinese in northeastern Victoria declined rapidly after 1861 although a few probably remained near Wahgunyah as alluvial miners and vineyard labourers. European rhetoric against Asians, however, continued and intensified in later decades though it was directed more against Chinese in the urban areas of Victoria and in other colonies. McRae would undoubtedly have been aware of European attitudes to Chinese and probably he heard of reports of Chinese being attacked by Aborigines in other colonies such as Queensland in the 1870s. He may also have seen illustrations of Chinese in newspapers and magazines, which were often cut out and used to decorate Aboriginal huts at Coranderrk and Malaga in the 1860s and 1870s.

The actual drawing of the Chinese figures, however, is clearly based upon McRae's own memories of the Chinese he had seen in Victoria. His depiction of their dress and loads neatly fits a description of a group of Chinese making their way to the Victorian goldfields in the 1850s:

They presented a curious appearance to European eyes when seen on the road; — their singular-looking garments hanging loosely upon them — slippers turned up at the toes — umbrella-like hats of basket-work — and long bamboos on their shoulders, from each end of which were suspended their goods and chattels, consisting of tent, blanket, rice bags, tin dishes, and, in some instances, a gold-washing cradle.

The picture does not depict a real event and it was probably not drawn near the period when Chinese miners were in northeastern Victoria. But when was the sketch drawn? The picture itself is undated and its collector and donor to the National Museum are not documented though it may have been

25 See Price 1974, especially Plate 2.
J.G. Gray. When Barrett first published the picture in 1935 he dated it as 1900, but no evidence is offered for this date.27

One way to establish relative dating is to consider the theme and style of the drawing against the corpus of surviving drawings. Two of Barnes' early drawings and some of McRae's which show a close affinity illustrate non-Aboriginal themes, whereas it could be argued that other apparently later drawings illustrate pristine Aboriginal culture, drawn in response perhaps to the tastes of his European patrons. But one could argue that a picture showing Chinese being attacked by Aborigines was also intended for a European audience. Three of the early Barnes drawings, and several of McRae's, show tiered constructions similar to the Chinese sketch. But such tiered constructions should not necessarily be considered as diagnostic features of style or date as other factors, such as the size of the paper, may have influenced the composition. McRae's drawing of figures, however, do show stylistic variation between pictures. Figures in the early Barnes drawings are somewhat stilted, though McRae's eye for detail, especially in his close rendition of European dress and mannerisms, is remarkable.28 In what appear to be McRae's later sketchbooks the lively silhouetted figures indicate a greater concern with internal patterning, as in the body paint decorations of dancers.29 The sketchbook figures are also imbued with a sense of movement, in spite of a tendency to follow an almost formularistic approach in the compositions.

Stylistically this Chinese sketch does not fit easily with the early Barnes drawings nor with the apparently later sketchbook style. With its caricaturing of the Chinese, attention to detail in the depiction of their dress and its sense of energy and movement, the picture contains elements of both early and late styles. It is therefore difficult to date this particular drawing with any confidence by conventions of style, as it is equally difficult to relate stylistic variations to any period of McRae's life.

What we know of McRae's life does suggest that his art may have played a crucial role in his activities during the 1890s although the evidence is circumstantial. Cox reported in 1929 that McRae had earned more as an artist and curio-maker than as a stockman, though the period this statement relates to is unclear.30 But the money from selling his drawings would have provided McRae with a welcome source of income during the troubled years of the 1890s. He was aged and ill and probably could no longer find work as drover or stock-rider. The situation was undoubtedly aggravated by the economic depression of the 1890s when all workers found difficulty obtaining employment. This was also the period when McRae was involved in his struggles with the Board and was forced to leave Lake Moodemere to seek refuge at Corowa. While in New South Wales the eight adults and seven children in McRae's camp were not eligible for the rations issued by the Victorian Board. This does appear to have been an intensive period of

27 Barrett 1935:86 describes this picture together with another in the Museum, as 'two of his latest drawings'.
28 The only other known McRae drawing of Chinese was reproduced by Greig 1909:44; the figures are less well drawn than in this Chinese sketch and lack its sense of movement.
29 See the pictures reproduced by Cooper 1981:111-113 though the dates ascribed to these paintings are possibly too early.
30 Cox 1929.
McRae's production, not only of sketchbooks but also of Aboriginal artefacts for sale to Europeans. But whether or not the Chinese sketch belongs to this later period is impossible to tell. On balance it is only possible to say that the drawing was produced sometime between 1870 and McRae's death in 1901.

This note, focussed on a single drawing, is a mere sketch of the life and artistic career of Tommy McRae, a man gifted with extraordinary talent who, in spite of a lifetime of great hardship which saw the destruction of his people and the separation of his family, maintained a sense of dignity and ironic humour which won the admiration of all who knew him, Aborigines and Europeans alike.

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Northern Australia and areas of 'Macassan' contact

Map drawn by Joan Goodrum, A.N.U.
THE LOST ‘MACASSAR LANGUAGE’ OF NORTHERN AUSTRALIA*

James Urry and Michael Walsh

... Macassan influence contributed merely an exotic colour to the cultural fabric of certain Aboriginal societies. While this colour might well have become more marked had the contact been more prolonged, the underlying pattern [of 'traditional' Aboriginal culture] was still very clear, even in the areas of strongest influence.1

It has been calculated that at the time of the first white settlement 300,000 Aborigines, speaking about two hundred separate 'languages' and up to six hundred 'dialects', existed in Australia. In many areas Aborigines were bilingual and in particular areas the general population, and especially talented individuals, were multilingual in a number of languages and/or dialects. Where Aborigines and Europeans established prolonged peaceful contact, Aborigines rapidly acquired some degree of proficiency in English and words and phrases travelled beyond the frontier to, as yet, uncontacted groups. Not only did Aborigines coming into contact with Europeans gain new linguistic information from English, but also Aboriginal groups forced together by European intrusion or official policy began to learn each other’s languages. A common figure in such situations (and perhaps belonging to traditions in existence before the coming of Europeans) was the linguistic virtuoso: a person, usually male but occasionally female, who had acquired a reasonable knowledge of a number of languages or dialects and who was always eager to learn more. Such people can still be encountered in Aboriginal communities today. Language acquisition has been long recognised by most Aborigines as a key which opens new worlds, establishing significant social, trading and exchange relationships and giving the speaker access to a rich corpus of profane and sacred/secret knowledge: songs, myths, ritual formulae and many other things.

Peoples from the islands to the north of Australia, today referred to as Indonesia, probably have visited the coasts of northern Australia for some time though the exact antiquity and nature of these visits is still uncertain. The best documented examples of these visits concern those of the so-called 'Macassans' who came primarily in search of trepang (bêche de mer). ‘Macassans’ is used throughout this paper to indicate Austronesian2 speaking groups who visited northern Australia. While most were speakers of Macassarese from Makassar (Udjung Pandang) in southern Sulawesi, other groups were also involved, particularly in the early period of trade when crews could be multilingual and multicultural. The term 'Macassar language' (or just 'language') refers to the Aboriginal pidgin or pidgins developed mainly through contact with 'Macassans'. It is generally agreed that this contact, beginning sometime in the eighteenth century and continuing until the early years of the twentieth century, influenced the Aboriginal cultures of coastal northern Australia. The importance of the impact of this contact on the long-term nature of Aboriginal languages and cultures is the subject of this paper.3

* This paper was originally presented to the International Conference on Indian Ocean Studies, Perth 1979; it has since been revised.
We would like to thank C.C. Macknight, Diane Barwick and Marie Reay for their comments on this paper.

1 Macknight 1972:318.
2 The term Austronesian is used to refer to a family of languages which today include most of those spoken in Indonesia as well as the languages of Polynesia, Micronesia, parts of New Guinea, Formosa, mainland Southeast Asia and Madagascar.
3 Macknight 1976 deals generally with 'Macassan' enterprise in northern Australia; Macknight 1972 surveys the influences on Aborigines.
Linguistic influences from Austronesian languages have long been noted in northern Australia, particularly the survival of items of vocabulary which have been incorporated into Aboriginal languages and dialects. Deeper influences on Aboriginal linguistic usage have not been fully investigated and indeed were denied by one notable linguist. Recently Macknight (following a suggestion from Peter Sutton) has proposed that a pidgin language developed in Aboriginal communities as a means of communication with 'Macassans', though this point is made only in a footnote. For the purpose of this paper, a pidgin is a linguistic code used between different linguistic communities while a creole is a code used within one linguistic community. Frequently pidgins develop out of a language contact situation where limited communication is required (e.g. for trade purposes) and given the right sociocultural conditions this limited form of communication may expand into a creole which is a language in its own right, fulfilling all the communicative requirements of a speech community.

A closer examination of early sources shows that an Aboriginal pidgin certainly existed in north Australian communities which was used not only as a means of discourse with 'Macassans' but also as a lingua franca among Aboriginal groups who did not share the same language or dialect. A lingua franca (plural lingue franca) is a speech form which acts as a means of communication among speakers of varying linguistic backgrounds. The existence of this pidgin or pidgins and its use as a lingua franca raise new questions, not only concerning the nature of Aboriginal linguistic communities in northern Australia, but also of the impact of external contact on Aboriginal society and culture in regions influenced by 'Macassan' visitors.

The historical evidence

For the sake of brevity we have collected together in an appendix a selection of references dating from the early nineteenth to the twentieth century which refer to Aboriginal proficiency in Austronesian languages of some kind. In this section we will merely consider two of the most important sources, material collected between 1838 and 1844 by George Windsor Earl and evidence from an anthropologist, W. Lloyd Warner, who carried out detailed research in eastern Arnhem Land between 1926 and 1929. Earl was appointed 'linguist and land agent' to the British settlement of Port Essington on the Cobourg Peninsula. A perceptive observer, not only of the local Aborigines but also of the visiting 'Macassan' fleets, Earl possessed a detailed knowledge of Indonesia as he had traded in the region and visited many of the eastern islands on supply boats sailing out of Port Essington. He was a competent speaker of Malay and studied a number of other Austronesian languages. In Port Essington Earl reported that he had difficulty in collecting Aboriginal vocabularies:

After having collected many words, I found that I was making a vocabulary of a horrid patois of the Macassar dialect: in fact, nearly all the words the natives use when speaking with us are Macassarese.

Earl provided further details, pointing out that a 'considerable portion of the coast natives have, from frequent intercourse with Macassar trepang fishers, acquired considerable proficiency in their language'. Earl points out that the language was used as a lingua franca by the Aborigines:

They [the Aborigines], however, contrive to make themselves well understood, not only by the Macassars, but by the people of tribes with whose peculiar dialect

...
they may not be familiar. On our first arrival, the natives, from having been long accustomed to address strangers in this language, used it when conversing with us.11

The fact that a separate Austronesian-based speech form existed and was used as a lingua franca was noted by Warner among the Yolngu, hundreds of miles from Port Essington, in eastern coastal Arnhem Land.12 Warner states that the 'pidgin Malay dialect was spoken by most of the older men among the tribes of the Arafura coast' and that the 'language stimulated intertribal communication'.13 In the life history of the Aboriginal man Mahkarolla recorded by Warner, Mahkarolla frequently mentions talking 'Macassar'.14

Few of the many references to the use of the 'Macassar language' say much about the nature of the language, what it was based upon, who used it and the degree of proficiency achieved or the effects of the use of the language in and between Aboriginal communities.

The Indonesian background

It is important that we consider the possible sources of Austronesian language influence on Aboriginal languages and dialects. The Austronesian languages of the Indonesian archipelago exhibit considerable diversity, a diversity through which has been mediated in many areas by the existence of lingue franca.15 This use of lingue franca has been particularly common in coastal areas where trading languages were used. Pidgins and creoles developed from such trading languages have probably existed in the archipelago for a long period and have been a major influence on the languages in the area. When Europeans first arrived in the archipelago in the early sixteenth century they encountered a major trading language in the form of Malay. It has been argued that Malay is a creole based upon western Austronesian languages found in the coastal regions of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula which developed as a trade language among Malay trading kingdoms established in the western archipelago from the end of the fourteenth century onwards.16

In the eastern archipelago, where the Europeans discovered Malay in use as a trade language, there are indications that in the early sixteenth century it was a recent phenomenon. Antonio Galvão, writing in the Moluccas in the 1540s, noted that '[a]t present the Malayan language has come into vogue'.17

The Portuguese, the most influential European power in the archipelago in the sixteenth century, adopted Malay in their trading relationships with Austronesian speakers but they also contributed a large amount of Portuguese vocabulary to the trading languages, particularly in eastern Indonesia. There are a number of reasons why this occurred. Portuguese maritime trade had begun in Africa and later expanded to the Americas and Asia; from their earliest contact with speakers of other languages the Portuguese used a pidginized form of Portuguese18 and they increased its use in Asia. Indeed, Portuguese was to remain the major language of all European trade in Asia until the eighteenth century and large indigenious communities speaking Portuguese existed in many parts of Asia.19 Portuguese-Malay creoles developed with the archipelago20 and in eastern Indonesia Portuguese influence on many Austronesian languages is still very noticeable.21
The Portuguese, and later the English, Spanish and Dutch, all became involved in the trading worlds of the archipelago, disrupting native commerce, seizing entrepôts and monopolising trade goods. Indonesian merchants responded by founding new trading centres, often assisted by Europeans who were in conflict with rival European powers. Malay merchants, fleeing from the Malay entrepôt Malacca after its seizure by the Portuguese in 1511, helped develop Macassan trading states in southern Sulawesi, and increased the use of Malay in the eastern archipelago. The Macassan state of Goa expanded its powers into eastern Indonesia in the seventeenth century assisted by the Portuguese who were in conflict with the Dutch. The Portuguese provided the Macassarese with technical skills in maritime enterprise: boat building, navigation techniques and even boat crews. While the Portuguese influence waned after 1660 when the Dutch seized Makassar, the Macassarese and later the Buginese (also from southern Sulawesi) continued to develop their trading networks in eastern Indonesia and throughout the archipelago. The collection of trade goods and natural products became an essential part of this trading network, and northern Australia an important source of supply of trepang, tortoise shell, pearls and other products. To obtain these the Macassarese and Buginese used various Austronesian speaking groups, including independent collectors such as the Badjau (sea nomads), and later in the nineteenth century skilled Macassarese fishermen who became the mainstay of the industry.

Those Austronesian speakers who visited northern Australia thus not only spoke their own languages (often with Malay and Portuguese loan words), but also a variety of Malay heavily endowed with Portuguese loans. But we must recognise not only the complexity of the sources of Austronesian influence on Aboriginal languages and dialects but also the context in which the languages were being used. Here we must differentiate between the languages used in the major trading ports among merchants, those used by boat crews during voyages and those used by ‘Macassans’ in exchanges with native peoples from whom goods were obtained. Two of these are of particular interest — the lingue franche used on the boats and the pidgins which became the established means of communication between the boat crews and the inhabitants of the various places visited by the ‘Macassans’.

It is apparent from early reports that the ‘Macassan’ boats in northern Australia contained multilingual crews and that various peoples along the trading routes joined the crew. The captains of the boats, though most likely native speakers of Macassarese or Buginese and perhaps knowledgeable in some of the languages of the rest of the crew, used Malay on board as an easy means of communication. Earl presents a vivid picture of the cosmopolitan nature of Port Essington one April as praus congregated:

... the population of the settlement became a very motley character, for then Australians of perhaps a dozen different tribes might be mixed up with natives of Celebes and Sumbawa, Badjus of the coast of Borneo, Timorese and Javanese, with an occasional sprinkling of New Guinea negroes. Aborigines appear to have joined the praus voluntarily but the possibility of slavery should not be overlooked. Why Aborigines sailed on the boats, even to Indonesia, and why they were permitted to do so by the ‘Macassans’ remains unclear.

The pidgins which probably developed as a means of communication between native peoples and the boat crews must have been based on a language comprehensible
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to the majority of the crew or at least contained a number of words or phrases used in this language.28 At the time it would appear that the 'Macassans' preferred to establish long-term relationships with particular groups of people,29 indeed with specific families among these people. The pidgin which developed from this intercourse therefore must owe something to the language of these Aboriginal groups.30 A number of Austronesian languages, trade languages and Portuguese as well as distinctive Aboriginal languages and dialects therefore contributed to the formation of the 'Macassar' languages. As the majority of the boat crews who maintained prolonged contact with northern Australia during most of the nineteenth century were speakers of Macassarese, it is not surprising that this language appears to have been the most influential Austronesian source.31

The nature of 'Macassar languages' in Aboriginal communities

The degree and nature of contact between Aborigines and 'Macassans' varied considerably. In the initial situation two language groups came into contact knowing perhaps nothing about each other. Contact had to be established to exchange material goods and this no doubt developed into a more extended form of communication involving access to resources of various kinds. Extended communication would have entailed not just the exchange of items of vocabulary but also an interchange of linguistic structures and semantic concepts. Over time these could have evolved to a considerable extent. Aboriginal use of the 'languages' need not have been confined to 'Macassan' seasonal visitations but might also have been spoken among members of the community and perhaps with neighbouring Aboriginal groups who themselves may or may not have possessed some knowledge of 'Macassar'.32 Aborigines, especially young unmarried men, who joined the boat crews either to visit other northern Australian coastal localities or to sail to more distant lands,33 were not just passengers but also were involved in sailing praus.34 On such journeys the Aborigines would have become more accustomed to the 'boat-language' used by the crew and thus increased their proficiency in the 'Macassar language'. The use of the 'boat-language' would have introduced them to the technical vocabulary of the sailors. This might help to account for the presence of such 'Macassan' loan words in north Australian languages as boat, directional and locational terms and, interestingly, the apparent concern with wind directions, particularly in ritual contexts.35

Those Aborigines who travelled to major population centres in Indonesia, Makassar in particular, experienced long-term contact with speakers of other languages. Some Aborigines apparently stayed for years in Makassar or elsewhere before returning home and even if they returned with the next fleet, this would have entailed waiting for the following season's sailing. While in Makassar Aborigines normally lived with the captain's family. Individuals who were interested in other languages and dialects could undoubtedly have learnt Macassarese or Buginese if it were the language of the household. While sailing on praus or visiting other language groups Aborigines, being interested in other languages, could have noticed language differences and possibly gained some knowledge

28 We must not forget that the 'Macassans' may have used a pidgin developed from their experiences in contact with native peoples elsewhere, e.g. Papua or other Aboriginal groups, when making new contacts with Aborigines, thereby incorporating aspects of these languages into the pidgins.

29 See, for example, Warner 1956[1937]:457.

30 Undoubtedly, the Aborigines acquired a knowledge of, and proficiency in, the language of the 'Macassans' at a faster rate and to a greater degree than the 'Macassans' learnt about the Aborigines — see Earl 1842:140: 'The Macassars, although nearly all the natives on the coast speak their language, know even less about the natives than we do, simply from their not taking the trouble to inquire'.

31 Walker and Zorc 1981.

32 There are indications in the literature, e.g. Searcy, that groups who had little contact with 'Macassans' as well as those in conflict with them possessed a knowledge of the 'Macassar languages', but it is unclear how this was acquired.

33 Earl 1841:116, 1846:118 [in Appendix].

34 Tobing 1961:152 notes that Buginese maritime law states that all those on board, even passengers, were considered part of the crew.

Aboriginal proficiency in Austronesian languages would thus have varied considerably from group to group and from individual to individual. Those groups who had established extensive contact with the 'Macassans', or whose members had gained linguistic expertise on board boats or in foreign parts, would have developed an extended pidgin but those Aborigines who had minimal contact with 'Macassans', or who had acquired their pidgin from neighbouring Aboriginal groups, would have possessed a restricted pidgin.

We must differentiate therefore, between Aboriginal 'Macassar languages' developed, sustained and perhaps expanded by annual contact with 'Macassans' and those developed between Aboriginal groups as a lingua franca. The extent of Aboriginal use of 'Macassar languages', their role within communities and between communities as well as the effects they had on Aboriginal groups in northern Australia must be considered separately.

A pidgin or a creole?

While the direct linguistic relationships between Aborigines and 'Macassans' are of considerable interest, the relationships between different Aboriginal language groups using the 'Macassar languages' as lingua franca are of special importance. The 'Macassar languages', created for 'Macassan'/Aboriginal communication, were developed and used for other purposes. Some of these, such as a common language between different language groups, are well documented, but other uses, for example as secret esoteric forms of discourse, can only be postulated. Whether this development of the 'Macassar languages' for purely Aboriginal functions occurred within Aboriginal communities, or where different language groups came into contact, is difficult to elucidate. It would seem reasonable to assume that Aborigines in the same language or dialect groups would have little recourse to 'Macassar language' among themselves. Neighbouring groups speaking different languages or dialects who had already established contact before the arrival of the 'Macassans', were also unlikely to adopt another medium for communication. Therefore the most common use of the 'Macassar language' was probably between communities where little or no contact had previously existed. Such new contacts through the use of a shared language helped generate new exchanges and access to new forms of knowledge and Aboriginal languages.

Aborigines taken along the north Australian coast by 'Macassans', far away from their own 'country', would have met speakers of different Aboriginal languages, though such contacts were unlikely to have been sustained. Aborigines inhabiting coastal areas, however, did have a means of communication using bark canoes and could have spread 'Macassar' languages to distant coastal and island groups not in contact with 'Macassans'. This coastal voyaging was greatly enhanced in both frequency and scale by the use of the dug-out canoes equipped with sails. Both items of technology were introduced through Aboriginal contact with the 'Macassans'. These new boats were probably first used by Aboriginal groups who had acquired the 'Macassar language', at least before the new boat technology spread to other non-contacted groups along the coasts of Arnhem Land.

'Macassan'/Aboriginal contacts along the coasts were often localised, being restricted to particular groups of Aborigines. In such situations the 'language' which developed as a means of communication between them acquired its own distinctive, local features. At the same time there were areas where 'Macassan'/Aboriginal contact was infrequent or non-existent as a consequence of the uneven distribution of suitable trepanging areas or

36 There is evidence of this language contact and Aboriginal interest. Stokes 1846a:61 reported that Earl had told him in Port Essington that he had 'overheard one of them [i.e. an Aboriginal] talking with a Ceramese man in the New Guinea dialect, being evidently mistaken by the Ceramese for a Papuan'; see also Tindale's comments on the linguistic knowledge of the old man Yambukwa whom he met on Groote Eylandt in the early 1920s (1925-6:130, see also Appendix). Macknight (1972:286) refers to a report (reproduced in Macknight 1981) concerning an Aboriginal encountered in 1875 in Caledon Bay (eastern Arnhem Land) who could speak a few words of English learnt in Singapore, which he had visited on a prau.

37 This was one of the most linguistically diverse areas in Australia with a high Aboriginal population and a large number of separate languages and language families; see Wurm 1972, Dixon 1980 on this point.

the hostility of particular Aboriginal groups to 'Macassans'; Aboriginal groups in these circumstances might have learnt little or none of the 'Macassar language'. An Aboriginal with knowledge of the 'Macassar language' who chose to voyage along the coast would therefore have encountered a variety of groups, ranging from those with no knowledge of the 'Macassar language' to groups with a highly developed, though perhaps rather different form of the 'language'. In the development of the 'Macassar language' into a *lingua franca* in specific areas the nature and intensity of contact need to be considered. Groups sharing a well developed pidgin acquired through extensive contact, though with different groups of 'Macassans', could have maintained a fairly high level of communication and also have developed and perhaps standardized their pidgins by sharing common features of their experience of the 'Macassar language'. On the other hand, groups possessing poorly developed pidgins or where the association was asymmetrical (i.e. where a developed pidgin meets poor pidgin), might have created a more impoverished form of the 'Macassar language', or at least one with considerable borrowings from the Aboriginal languages or dialects involved. At the present time we can say very little about this subject and can only recognize that the situation must have been complex and altered over time. But there do appear to have been regions of intensive 'Macassan'/Aboriginal contact and through the use of 'Macassar language' a development of intensive Aboriginal/Aboriginal contact, while in the areas separating these regions no such developments took place. The significance of this will be discussed in the next section.

The question we must consider here is whether or not the highly developed forms of *lingua franca* 'Macassar languages' reached a stage of use and complexity where they might be considered as 'creoles'. The arguments against the 'Macassar languages' becoming creolized are stronger than those in its favour; the scanty evidence we possess on the use of the 'Macassar languages' as *lingue franche* tends to support this view. It is useful, however, to consider both sides of the argument.

Arnhem Land consists today of numerous and radically different Aboriginal languages and the situation was probably equally complex upon first 'Macassan'/Aboriginal contact. This situation would have encouraged the creation of a common creole. The 'Macassar language' could also have provided a 'neutral ground' for easy and rapid contact between distant and disparate Aboriginal language groups, visited perhaps less frequently than others. The use of the 'Macassar language' as a common means of communication could have helped to preserve and to protect the native languages of the various groups which were often jealously guarded as inherited property and markers of identity for the groups possessing them.

The arguments against the formation of a creole centre particularly around Aboriginal attitudes to the importance of acquiring other Aboriginal languages. Discourse in the 'Macassar languages' was, in this sense, certainly restricted. Not all members of the visited communities could speak or comprehend the *lingua franca*; certain men for some reason may never have learnt more than a few basic words,40 and most women and children would have had little use for it. The 'Macassar language' had developed for the fulfilment of specific, restricted functions, mainly the exchange of material goods. Visitors who had to place themselves within the social categories of the host community and learn an unfamiliar etiquette of that community could only have done so through learning something of the local indigenous languages or dialect. The same is true if they wished to enter into, or obtain details of, the ritual repertoire of the host community; the 'Macassar language' was primarily a secular language, though in particular circumstances aspects of it could have taken on a sacred character.

It would seem on balance, therefore, that while the 'Macassar language' may have been extremely useful as a means for initial contact between different language groups there were forces at work which encouraged individuals and groups after contact was established to gain some insight into each other's languages. This would have discouraged the development of the 'Macassar languages' into a creole. There is one final point worth considering in this context. The widespread use of the 'Macassar language' was probably

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39 For instance see Elwell 1977.
more intensive among coastal communities than among inland groups. Most coastal communities, however, certainly had contacts with inland groups either on a permanent or a seasonal basis. The contact of coastal groups with 'Macassans' and their supply of new material goods, the adoption of the 'Macassar language' and consequent intensification of contact and exchange among coastal communities had important implications for inland Aborigines. The acquisition of languages of other coastal groups also provided coastal Aborigines with access to new inland groups. 'Macassan' influences thus might be experienced by Aborigines who had never seen or met a real 'Macassan' in coastal Arnhem Land.

Impact and reaction

The most obvious 'Macassan' influences on Aboriginal groups can be seen in their adoption of items of material culture, many of which have survived until the present, and loan words still in use in Aboriginal languages and dialects. Other influences which affected Aboriginal communities less directly or which have become well integrated into the cultures are more difficult to discern. The problem centres around what we mean by the term 'influences'; too often this is assumed to mean 'borrowings' in a direct sense rather than as a stimulation or partial adoption through a reinterpretation of existing forms. Aboriginal culture is innovative and probably was so in the past. What exists in the present is not just a survival of unchanging patterns.41 Mere tabulations of assumed cultural connections based on surviving patterns are an insult to Aboriginal creativity. The important questions to consider in assessing the impact and reaction of 'Macassans' on Aboriginal cultures are not those involving how or where influences occurred on separate aspects of Aboriginal culture but the effects of the contacts on the total pattern of existence. The issues which must be confronted are how quickly the effects and influences of these contacts became integrated into Aboriginal life and when and how they became interpreted as something indigenous. Therefore attempts to provide a comprehensive listing of particularly 'Macassan' influences from present-day Aboriginal cultures may be impossible and indeed such attempts may obfuscate the real impact on and reaction of Aborigines to external contacts.

It is difficult to recognise clearly the effects of 'Macassan' contact on present day Aboriginal languages. The use of the 'Macassar languages' as a means of general discourse rather than just as items of vocabulary mixed with established Aboriginal languages and dialects, and the fact that the 'Macassar languages' were used as lingue franche across existing linguistic 'barriers', must have important implications for any linguistic study carried out today in northern Australia. Consideration of this issue had only just begun. We would suggest that instead of considering merely lexical items attention should be focussed on the diffusion of syntactic and semantic material.42

It has long been recognised by anthropologists and linguists that the linguistic and cultural situation in north-eastern Arnhem Land is extremely complex and different from many other areas of Australia. Schebeck43 has designated the 'languages' and peoples of this area by the term 'Yolngu',44 and this has been widely adopted. The Yolngu form a Pama-Nyungan enclave which has become isolated through a 'combination of migrations...[and is now]...separated geographically from the remainder of the Pama-Nyungan groups'.45 Whatever the historical situation was in the very distant past, the

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41 This view is contrary to some established anthropological opinion (but see Stanner 1979). We have not space to examine the arguments here, but merely point out that in terms of lexicon words are not just borrowed but the semantic concepts are adapted and developed, exploiting the lexical resources of the language. This has very important sociocultural implications in itself.
42 Such an approach would be the logical extension from the rich lexical data presented by Walker and Zorc 1981.
43 Schebeck n.d.
44 Based on the word for 'human, man, Aboriginal'.
45 Heath 1978:12. Pama-Nyungan is the name of the proposed parent language of most Australian languages covering some five-sixths of the Australian continent. The name is derived from two words for 'man' found at extreme points of the proposed family: pama in Cape York and nyunga in the southwest of Western Australia. Non-Pama-Nyungan families, of which there are some twenty-seven, are found in the Kimberleys and the 'Top End' of the Northern Territory, with the exception of the enclave of the Yolngu. For further discussion see Wurm 1972 and Dixon 1980.
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Yolngu group today has little in common in structure or vocabulary with neighbouring non-Pama-Nyungan languages. Within the Yolngu group there exists a complex socio-cultural-linguistic situation, which is still not fully understood. In the Yolngu situation there are a very large number of dialect variations, differentiated often by minor linguistic features, sometimes associated with socio-cultural segmentation apparently the consequence of 'conscious' social differentiation.46

The problem is to explain how this situation came about. Current interpretations depend upon viewing the Yolngu situation without a historical dimension. The complex dialects had been interpreted as a consequence of ecological, demographic or social factors.47 We suggest that while these may be important, the situation is the result of historical processes in which contact of coastal groups with 'Macassans' and the use of the 'Macassar languages' play an important role.

We can postulate only very generally what the linguistic situation among the present day groups making up the Yolngu complex may have been before 'Macassan' contact. There probably existed a number of languages or dialects which were once quite closely related but which were in a process of continuing differentiation. The impact of 'Macassan' contact was felt initially in selected coastal areas. The development of the 'Macassar languages', which we assume was quite rapid, spread the 'languages' between coastal communities as outlined above. The spread of the 'Macassar languages' would have led first to an expansion and intensification of social and cultural exchanges and later linguistic interchange between coastal groups and those inland communities where contacts had existed before 'Macassan' contact. The 'Macassar languages' played an important role in these links, at least initially, though we can assume that where contacts became firmly established, communities acquired some degree of proficiency in each other's languages and dialects.

Contacts between coastal and inland communities were slower to develop and based less upon the use of the 'Macassar language' as a means of common discourse and more upon cognates shared by closely related language groups. The impetus for the creation and maintenance of contacts between coastal peoples and between coastal and inland groups was probably manifold. One of the most important factors was the dissemination of new items of material culture acquired by coastal communities from the 'Macassans'. Other things which may have been exchanged were indigenous customs and ritual knowledge, some of which have been stimulated by contact with 'Macassans' or developed through the intensification of social contact between Aboriginal coastal groups.

The coastal groups, possessing a monopoly in valuable trade items obtained from 'Macassans' — iron, glass, cloth, tobacco48 — much in demand by inland groups, possessed an advantage in these exchanges. Inland groups, however, also possessed items which coastal groups lacked. Thomson's accounts, recorded in the 1930s, a generation after 'Macassan' voyaging had ceased, indicate that intense ceremonial exchange cycles uniting various Yolngu groups in eastern Arnhem Land still existed.49

The consequences of the development of intense and expanded trading and ceremonial exchange cycles would have varied from area to area depending upon the intensity and nature of the exchanges and the forms of contact. In social and cultural terms this could have implied a break-down of older social forms of differentiation. In terms of the languages and dialects of the area there could have been increased linguistic diffusion and interchange through the acquisition and use of other dialects and languages and through the greater exchange of women in marriage between distant speech communities. This in turn may have led to a break-down of language and dialect differentiation. The present day Yolngu situation could well be the result of these manifold changes. The sociocultural-dialect differentiation in existence today could be

46 Morphy 1977.
47 This assumption lies behind a number of works published by linguists and anthropologists and has directed a major human biology programme in Arnhem Land, e.g. White 1978.
48 See Macknight 1972 for a listing of these items.
49 Thomson 1949; interestingly in 1841 Earl reported that the 'Macassans' in Port Essington told him that the Aborigines in the Gulf of Carpentaria were good trading partners and 'drive a brisk trade' (1841:116). These were probably Yolngu.
the result of more recent (post-'Macassan') historical processes or the development of forms of cultural and social differentiation in the more distant past as attempts by particular groups to maintain their identity in the face of the break-down of older, established patterns.

Warner, who was eager to separate what he considered 'traditional' from 'contact' culture, restricted most of his discussion of 'Macassan' influence to an isolated appendix in his book. However, early in his main account he briefly notes the influence of the 'Macassans' on Yolngu social structure:

... the Malay's advent... provides sufficient explanation for the breakdown of the earlier tribal grouping — which, if similar to that of the present-day tribes was a very weak manifestation at best — and for the formation of a larger Murngin [i.e. Yolngu] group.50

Thomson recognised the important social implications of the ceremonial exchange cycles in creating alliances and altering social groups and these he attributed to 'Macassan' stimulus:

But while the *kumur mämdab i*51 relationship exists throughout the whole of Arnhem Land, and while the ceremonial exchange cycle draws *gerr i*52 from far beyond this region, there is evidence for the belief that it was the visits of Macassar voyagers, who brought articles of great material and social value, which gave a special impetus and furnished the 'drive', not only for the circulation of *gerr i* over hundreds of miles of country, but which did much to overcome also the organised 'opposition' between clans.53

Although Thomson said nothing about the effects of this exchange on the language and dialect situation, it undoubtedly was involved and use of the 'Macassar language' may indeed have acted as a catalyst in the establishment of the exchange system.

*Other areas, other times*

Though the Yolngu area of northeastern Arnhem Land was a region of intense contact it was not the only region influenced by 'Macassan' visitors and it is of interest to consider whether effects similar to those experienced by the Yolngu occurred in other areas. Two regions can be identified: firstly the Cobourg Peninsula and nearby islands and secondly Groote Eylandt and the mainland communities southwards along the Gulf of Carpentaria including the Sir Edward Pellew group of islands.

It is difficult from the existing evidence to reconstruct the language and socio-cultural situation in the Cobourg Peninsula though it may well have resembled aspects of the Yolngu. There are dialect variations and a tradition of considerable interaction between the groups.54 The Peninsula and island situation, perhaps as a result of its restricted geography was far more localised than the Yolngu, yet contacts with inland groups do appear to have developed, particularly along the Alligator River which provided access to the interior and the large Gunwinyguan language area.55 Port Essington Aborigines in the service of Europeans in the 1850s and 1860s had few qualms about guiding Europeans into the interior of this region and had peaceful relations with most Aboriginal groups encountered, communicating easily with them.56

50 Warner 1958[1937]:38.
51 'Translated by Thomson as 'breast to breast those two' i.e. a close trade-partnership involving a strong obligation to return prestations.
52 'Translated by Thomson as "goods" or "possessions" i.e. material wealth.
53 Thomson 1949:83-84. It is interesting that Harney (1957:137) argues that the cessation of 'Macassan' contact was to have a profound effect on Yolngu society, altering the relationships between groups and leaving a sense of bitterness towards Europeans whom the Aborigines blamed for the ending of the annual visits.
54 First noted by the Italian priest Angelo Confalonieri in Earl's time (see Soravia 1975) and confirmed by more recent research.
55 Gunwinyguan is one of the Non-Pama-Nyungan families (see fn.45) spoken in Arnhem Land. It is radically different in linguistic terms from the Yolngu group of languages which are part of the Pama-Nyungan family.
56 See the early reports of the surveying and exploratory voyages of the schooner *Beatrice* in the 1860s (South Australia 1865); see also the account of Timbo in 1839 reported by Earl 1846a:245 and Macknight 1976:86.
In this area too there were extended ceremonial exchange cycles again heavily influenced by 'Macassan' contacts. Earl noticed at Port Essington that:

All the clothes, iron, axes, etc., that the natives of the coast have taken from us goes into the interior, and I cannot discover that they get anything in exchange but spears, and perhaps food.

The pattern in western Arnhem Land thus could be called a restricted Yolngu situation.

The Groote Eylandt and southern region is more complex. The area of 'Macassan' influences were restricted due to the uneven distribution of good trepanging grounds which were found mainly around Groote and the southern islands. The area of mainland in between appears to have been a poor trepanging area and 'Macassan'/Aboriginal contact was less frequent. This does not mean that inter-Aboriginal contact was non-existent but that it was less frequent and less integrated than among the Yolngu and the Aborigines around the Cobourg Peninsula. The Yolngu ceremonial exchange cycles, however, extended beyond the boundaries of the Yolngu languages area and iron spears from the north were exchanged as far south as the Roper River. The stimulus of these exchanges may have contributed to the patterns of linguistic diffusion in this 'region' recently outlined by Heath though the exact role of indirect 'Macassan' influences is difficult to discern. Perhaps it might be termed a pre-Yolngu situation.

Very little can be said concerning the influences of 'Macassan' contact in the Kimberleys as the sources are few and difficult to interpret. The 'Macassans' certainly visited the Kimberleys regularly. They called the region Kai Jawa and a particularly valuable form of trepang was obtained in the area. There were considerable difficulties in collecting trepang off the Kimberleys as compared with Arnhem Land. The weather conditions off the coast could make sailing dangerous and the rocky coastline afforded few safe anchorages. Contact between 'Macassans' and Aborigines appears to have been quite violent in many places; with so few safe and friendly places to land the 'Macassans' lacked bases to prepare the trepang and to obtain essential fresh food and water. There are signs, however, that in places forms of 'Macassar language' did develop and the Aborigines were affected by these contacts.

So far we have restricted the discussion to 'Macassan' influences; that is, to those areas which sometime between the eighteenth and early twentieth century were visited by boats mainly from Makassar. But there are indications of other, earlier visits by 'Indonesians' to northern Australia. The Berndts have published descriptions of Aboriginal accounts of two foreign groups in northern Arnhem Land, the 'Macassans' and an earlier group called Baiini. Although dismissed by Macknight this Aboriginal distinction might have some historical validity.

The other major area to consider in terms of possible earlier contacts is the region around Port Keats in the Northern Territory. Along the coast are extensive stands of tamarind (a sign of 'Macassan' sites in Arnhem Land). Some of the people physically resemble 'Malays' and the Aborigines can give accounts of people they term in Murinbata Kardu Malayyany who visited the region. Very brief archaeological surveys of the area have failed to locate any 'Macassan' sites and there are, to our knowledge, no European

57 Berndt 1951:171 note 28; Berndt's material, collected long after the end of 'Macassan' voyaging and the alteration of exchange routes through European incursions to the south and west, is based on information collected mainly in Gunwinygu territory.
58 Earl 1842:140.
59 Thomson 1949:83.
60 Heath 1978.
61 Marie Reay (pers. comm.) has pointed out to us that our hypothesis might work for the Borroloola area in the Gulf country where there is a diversity of language groups, a tradition of coastal people being dominant in trading relationships and signs of 'Macassan' activity on the islands of the Gulf.
62 Earl 1863:177.
63 Earl 1863:177.
64 The difficulty of access to good water makes the reference of Ryder 1936 [see Appendix] more intriguing.
65 Berndt and Berndt 1954:Chapter 5.
66 Macknight 1972:313, 1976:92; however, Macknight also suggests that the Baiini need further investigation (1976:161 n.48) and we hope to take up this subject elsewhere.
67 See text and discussion in Walsh (in press).
68 Mulvaney 1966.
records of 'Macassan' visits and no recorded 'Macassan' statements of exploitation of resources in the region. It would appear that the Port Keats region, and perhaps other areas of northern Australia, were visited by Austronesian speakers before the 'Macassan' trepanging fleets made annual visits to northern Australia. The confirmation of these visits and the dates when they occurred await further research, particularly archaeological investigation.

The interesting point about the Aborigines of the Port Keats region is that the language and socio-cultural situation is also extremely complex yet it differs from northeastern Arnhem Land. Here a large number of separate linguistic groups inhabit a small geographical area. The differences in languages are not at a dialect level but are differences of languages and language family. There were once ceremonial exchange cycles in the region, though by the time they were recorded by Stanner they had been considerably disrupted by European intrusion. However, Stanner notes that the system was once extremely widespread and intensive. We may be seeing here a post-Yolngu situation in which contact with outsiders had stimulated linguistic, social and cultural exchanges leading to an unusual diversity of languages and cultures. With a cessation of external influence the exchanges probably altered and the linguistic and social communities became separated, leading to greater language differentiation.

In the title to this paper the 'Macassar language' is described as 'lost'. This is because in northern Australia today, and perhaps for the last fifty years, the language has not been used as a general form of discourse. Today probably only a handful of old men can recall some of it. The reason for the 'language's' rapid decline and demise is clear. In 1906 the South Australian government, which controlled the Northern Territory, prohibited 'Macassan' visits to the northern coasts. With the end of the annual visits Aborigines were denied access to 'Macassan' goods brought in the boats and the use of 'Macassar languages' in communication with the crews.

The 'Macassar languages' were, however, already in decline by 1906. From the 1860s onwards European influence increased in the Northern Territory. Initially this occurred in coastal areas as various boats, throughout the year, plied the coasts carrying goods to settlements and exploiting the resources of the region. In the early period the European presence appears to have strengthened and perhaps extended use of 'Macassar languages'. Aborigines from the Port Essington area who possessed a knowledge of both English and 'Macassar languages' were employed by Europeans as interpreters with the various coastal groups. Eventually, however, a knowledge of English became more important than a knowledge of the 'Macassar languages' for Aborigines, particularly as inland areas were opened up, and cattle stations were founded. English, unlike the 'Macassar languages', was not just a means of communication needed to gain access to trade items; it was the language of European domination and power and Aborigines needed to master it in order to survive.

It is possible that certain features of the 'Macassar languages' can still be recovered in northern Australia. It is highly desirable that work be undertaken immediately. The major linguistic work, however, will have to be done in other fields, particularly into the influence of the 'Macassar languages' on surviving Aboriginal languages. This is a complex problem as it will involve not only an investigation of the lexicon, syntax and semantics of Aboriginal languages but also of Austronesian languages to identify common features. An examination of Macassarese is essential but other eastern Indonesian languages should not be neglected.

60 Stanner 1933.
70 Macknight 1976.
71 See Appendix for detailed references. The role of Port Essington Aborigines in the spread of the 'Macassar languages' needs further investigation.
72 Frances Morphy (pers. comm.) reports that an old man in Yirrkala claims to speak 'Macassar'; she thinks some of the words resemble Portuguese.
73 The work of Dutton (1978a, 1978b, 1980) on the trading languages of the Papuan Gulf and their recent decline has many parallels with the loss of the 'Macassar languages', and may provide useful hints for further research in Australia.
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An appreciation of the deeper influences of these foreign contacts on Aboriginal cultures in northern Australia also awaits proper study. The starting point for such a study must begin with an appreciation of the central role of language in establishing and maintaining contact with the Austronesian speakers, in diffusing influences emanating from such contacts to other Aboriginal communities, and the subsequent stimulation and development of Aboriginal languages and cultures. Most of the areas of influence have been isolated and identified in recent years; they now need to be analysed and integrated into a comprehensive picture which recognises clearly the significance of 'Macassan' contact.

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APPENDIX

Sources referring to the existence of ‘Malay’ pidgin(s) in northern Australia

The following list of references and quotations from the literature is included merely to alert the reader to the existence of the pidgin(s) and Aboriginal use of ‘Austronesian’ languages over a long period of time. They are culled from independent sources. The first date indicates the date of publication, the date in square brackets that of the recording of the data, followed by the place.

Arnhem Land and Cobourg Peninsula

1841 [late 1830s, early 1840s] Port Essington
Nearly every prahu on leaving the coast takes two or three natives to Macassar, and brings them back next season. The consequence is that many of the natives all along the coast speak the Macassar dialect of the Malayan language (Earl 1841:116).

1842 [letter dated 1840] Port Essington
You ask for vocabularies. I am in the most ridiculous perplexity about them. After having collected many words, I found that I was making a vocabulary of a horrid patois of the Macassar dialect: in fact, nearly all the words the natives use when speaking with us are Macassarese ... Now the natives of the Arasura [sic] Islands [near New Guinea], though speaking dialects ... in which scarcely a single Malay word is to be found, readily acquire a perfect knowledge of the Malay language, with a correct pronunciation, although the learner be far advanced in years, while the natives of Australia make the most shocking jargon of it: witness a specimen: Macassar is pronounced Munkajerra; Karadz, Karridja; Bras, Bareja; in fact, they can neither pronounce the letter s nor the letter l (Earl 1842:140).

1846 [early 1840s] Port Essington
A very considerable portion of the coast natives have, from frequent intercourse with the Macassar trepang fishers, acquired considerable proficiency in their language, which is a dialect of the Polynesian. They never, indeed, speak it correctly, from their inability to pronounce the letter s, which occurs rather frequently in the Macassar language. Thus berasa becomes “bereja”, trussan [turutan in Earl 1853:223] “turulan”, salat “jala”, etc. They, however, contrive to make themselves well understood, not only by the Macassars, but by the people of the
tribes with whose peculiar dialect they may not be familiar. On our first arrival, the natives, from having been long accustomed to address strangers in this language, used it when conversing with us, and the consequence was, that some vocabularies were collected which consisted almost entirely of this patois, under the supposition that it was the language of the aborigines (Earl 1846a:244; reprinted with correction indicated above in Earl 1853:223).

1846 [late 1830s, early 1840s] Port Essington
A considerable number [of the Aborigines] have paid one or more visits to Macassar, residing there for months together, which has familiarized them with the language and manners of the people of that country, and may probably lead to a closer intercourse, should the Macassars establish themselves upon the coast (Earl 1846b:118).

1846 [as above] Port Essington
Those first [items of Aboriginal vocabulary] made out at Port Essington, were found to be half Malay words, and of any meaning rather that what they were supposed to convey (Stokes 1846, Vol. 2:22-3 based partially on information provided by Earl).

1853 [1849] Port Essington [then abandoned]
The native of Northern Australia is intelligent and apt. His intelligence is manifested both in the daily concerns of life, and in the acquisition of languages. Many of the natives speak two or three dialects; and some, in addition, speak English and Malay fluently (Keppel 1853:157, see also Keppel's comments on the 'fluent' use of English by an Aboriginal 1853:158).

1865 Near Croker Island
I did not hear them [the Aborigines] make use of any English words, except in repeating them after our men, but they kept crying out several Malay expressions, apparently without knowing their meaning (South Australia, House of Assembly. Marine Survey of Northern Territory 1865:2).

1874 [1871-2] Trepang Bay
The natives trade with the Malays to a considerable extent, and many of them can speak both English and Malay (Wildey 1874:135).

1881 All natives round the coast, from the Cobourg Peninsula to the mouth of the Roper River, in the Gulf of Carpentaria, speak the Malay language, acquired by long intercourse with trepang fishers from Macassar, who visit the coast in their prahus during the rainy season, and employ the natives as divers, &c. (Foelsche 1881:2).

1886-87 [1884]
(a) Blue Mud Bay
While exploring Bluemud bay we managed, after considerable trouble, to communicate with the natives. Nearly all of them spoke the Macassar tongue, and from them we learned that they were expecting the Malays down soon on their annual visit for trepang fishing (Carrington 1886-87:65).

(b) Goyder River
[Carrington recognises an Aboriginal who was a member of a group which had earlier attempted to spear him.] He saw he was recognised, and protested in the Macassar tongue that he had nothing to do with it, as they had been induced to leave their shelter by professions of friendship (Carrington 1886-87:70).

1905 [1880s and 1890s] Arnhem Land coast
All the coast natives spoke Macassar (Searcy 1905:10).

1908 [1907] Croker Island
Steamed eastward a few miles to a low sand point on the south-east end of Croker Island . . . About 20 semi-civilised blacks were seen, and one who could speak Macassar was taken on board to act as interpreter with the blacks further east,
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where, through the visit of the Malays' proas, they have become familiar with that language. Malay canoes are used by these blacks (Brown 1908:3).

1908 [1907] Goulburn Island
Steamed on to South Goulburn Island . . . From this place another black, who understood Macassar, was shipped (Brown 1908:4).

1909 [1880s and 1890s] Arnhem Land coast
These boys [from Port Essington area] spoke good English, Macassar, and, of course, their own language. That is a good indication of their intelligence. I might mention that all the coast niggers to the eastward [of Port Darwin], from their long association with the Malays, spoke Macassar, therefore I always took Port Essington boys with me on my trips, so as to make friends with the Myalls — the wild natives (Searcy 1909:36).

1912 [1880s and 1890s] Limba Jona [Melville Bay, outside port]
In the morning we landed to have a look around, but had barely done so, when out of the jungle at the back of the beach came about twenty black men waving their arms and singing out in Macassar [The Aborigines in fact attacked the Europeans, who replied with gunshot, stunning an Aboriginal, who was made captive]. When he opened his wild eyes Boom and Rippy [Port Essington Aborigines] plied him with questions in Macassar . . . (Searcy 1912:196-7).

1918 [1907] Off Groote Eylandt
We saw several natives on shore, and two came off in a fine dug-out canoe which they propelled with powerful strokes. They were large, well-made men in splendid condition, but understood no word of English except the magic word 'Tabak'. We found from John Wesley, who includes some knowledge of Malay among his accomplishments, that the few words they used were Malay. They asked for rice in Malay, and we gave them some (White 1918:145).

1925-26 [1921-22] Groote Eylandt
Several of the old men of the Ingura [Enindhilyagwa] tribe, as youths, made voyages with the Malays, principally to Macassar, who regularly visited the North Australian coast until about twenty-five years ago, and are familiar with the language of Macassar, with sometimes a smattering of other languages, such as Bugi [Buginese] and Malay . . . One very old Bartalumbu man, Yambukwa by name, was taken away before initiation, and spent many years in various foreign places, returning as a middle-aged man . . . He told us of wooly-haired Papuans, of Timor Laut, Macassar, Ke, Aru, Banda, and many other places which I could not recognize by his names or descriptions. With the aid of one of our crew, a Macassar-Torres Strait half-caste, who conversed fluently with him, something was learned about the visits of the Malays (Tindale 1925-26:130).

1936 [early 1890s] North of Groote Eylandt, most likely Woodah Island
To our great surprise the blacks began talking Malay fluently to our men [the pearling lugger crew, out from Torres Strait, included Malays], and they accepted the position quietly when told that they were not allowed on board. They said that Malays often came in their prahus from their own country, to fish for bech-de-mer and catch hawksbill turtles, from which the ordinary tortoise-shell of commerce is procured (Ellis 1936:130).

From the life story of Mahkarolla:
There was a black man on board [the European lugger]. He belonged to the tribe of Cape Don . . . He talked Macassar. We could talk Macassar, too. We did not talk his language, and he could not talk ours. Macassar was always the language black men talked when they could not understand each other's language (Warner 1958:475).
1957 [1930s] Stone Age men are born linguists, and not only is their speech grammatically correct, but youths amuse themselves by conversing in some little-known dialect. Old Wonggu occasionally introduced a Macassar sentence into ordinary conversation so as to puzzle me, and he would enjoy his joke in using this dialect learnt fifty years previously from East Indian traders (Chaseling 1957:50).

1972 [1960s?] Groote Eylandt
I was a big boy when my father used to tell me about the Macassans, and I learned some words in their language when I heard them talking to my father (The Macassan memories of Galiawa Nalanbayayaya Wurramarrra recorded by Judith Stokes in Cole 1972:5).

Kimberleys
References to 'Macassan'/Aboriginal contacts in the Kimberleys are very rare and so it is not surprising that very little has been written about language links. The difficulty is compounded by the fact that linguistic research in the Kimberleys, particularly among northern coastal Aboriginal groups, has hardly begun.

1936 [1930s] Kings Sound particularly Mongomery Islands.
An unsubstantiated report by Ryder (1936:33) has Aborigines using Portuguese terms for water, body parts, dingo and ship structures. The Portuguese terms, if proved, may derive from Malay trade languages.

1973 [1960s] Bardi Island
Robinson (1973:299 note 11) reports that the kinship term for wife's brother jago was borrowed from 'Malays' and that a number of Bardi claimed proficiency in 'Malay'. Robinson does not indicate the source, but they could have learnt 'Malay' with the pearling fleets at Broome rather than from 'Macassans'.

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AUSTRONESEAN LOANWORDS IN YOLNGU-MATHA OF NORTHEAST ARNHEM LAND

Alan Walker and R. David Zorc

For well over a century scholars have been aware that some Aboriginal languages contained loanwords from languages spoken in the islands to the north of Australia. Although early authors spoke of 'Malay' influence or, more accurately, of 'Makassan' contacts, they conceded that the influence need not necessarily have been from a single language group. Speakers of various Austronesian languages had made trips, primarily concerned with the trepang industry, to the north coast of Australia from before 1800 until 1906.

Linguists currently use the cover term Austronesian, rather than Malayo-Polynesian, the term favoured earlier (but now applied to a subgroup of Austronesian), to classify the family of languages spoken from Formosa in the north to New Zealand (Maori) in the south, from Madagascar (Malagasy) in the west to Easter Island or Hawaii in the east. We are dealing here with members of the western branch of this family, particularly Makassarese and Buginese, who came into contact with speakers of Aboriginal languages on the Arnhem Land coast. Other possible contacts include speakers of Malay and Javanese, central and southern Philippine Bisayan slaves (used on trepang expeditions), southern Philippine Lanaw pirates (who apparently operated off the coast of northern Australia), and Bajau entrepreneurs.

Numerous articles have been written on the topic of Macassan influence on Aboriginal languages, but no serious effort has been made to identify the precise donor languages on scientific linguistic grounds. As Macknight has observed:

Enough is now known about the Macassans to set some limit to their usefulness as a general ragbag source of the unusual. This is not to say that there have been no other external cultural influences in northern Australia, but discussion of such other influences should also specify the presumed source of the influence.

* We would like to thank Joyce Ross for access to a preliminary draft of a Gumatj-English dictionary and those Yolngu-Matha speakers who have been most helpful in identifying Makassan loan words: James Galarrwuy, Tom Bakamana, Charles Naunggurr, and Jimmy Dhupah Yungipugu (Gumatj), John Gupunji Wunndjurrkupa (Dhalwaurnu), Florence Jalawurr (Djapu), Jack Badalji Dhurrkay (Wangurri), Betty Marrnyungin Gurrurrwi (Gulp), Gordon Lanyj Dharukula and Thomas Maywunyidjwuy Gaykamanu (Gupapuygu), and Dorothy Boyuminy Ganambarr (Djambarrpuyngu). We are grateful to J. Noorduyn for extensive help in identifying Buginese cognates and for the isolation of a Salayar form (#73) and other data. Other scholars who have offered much advice and assistance are: Geoffrey Benjamin, Paul Black, Tom Dutton, Luise Hercus, C.G. Macknight, Virginia Matheson, Frances Morphy, and James Urry. We assume full responsibility for errors of presentation, interpretation, or fact.

2 For example, Jennison 1927:178, Warner 1932.
4 Macknight 1972:284 states: 'The Makassan industry was certainly in operation by about 1760, and is most unlikely to have been so long before 1700. It thus endured for approximately two centuries'. See also Worsley (1955:2) who reports that 'The written historical records of Macassarese and Buginese enterprise go back to 1768'.
5 See Macknight 1972:284, 1976: Chapter 8. In 1906 the South Australian government, then responsible for the Northern Territory, ceased issuing licences to foreign trepang fishermen; after a brief exploratory test of these regulations (November 1906 to February 1907) the Macassan industry terminated.
6 See the bibliography in Macknight 1976:166-169 or his earlier work 1972:318-321.
7 Wirjosuparto 1969 was a first step in this direction, but suffers from several deficiencies: (1) the Aboriginal languages are not identified and represent data from genetically-diverse varieties (e.g., Anindilyakwa, Burarra, Yolngu-Matha, and Nunggubuyu); (2) most of the data is neither phonemic nor phonetic; (3) the quality of some of the evidence suggests little more than guesswork or chance agreements (e.g., relating the names of the two moieties, yirica (yirritja) and duwa (dhuwa) to Makassarese juragan 'shipmaster' and tua 'old'). See also Macknight 1972.

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Bark painting by Mithinari (193?-1976), Galpu clan, Yirrkala, northeast Arnhem Land. It represents Yolngu and Macassans in Arnhem Bay. The Macassans, arriving in a prau, bring with them steel axes to replace Yolngu stone axes. The painting, done in 1974, is in the National Ethnographic Collection, Canberra.

Photograph and description courtesy of Howard Morphy
and when and how it might have arrived, or if such precision is not possible, clearly say so . . . Further publication of linguistic work in northern Australia should make more definitive lists possible. However it is worth stressing the complexity of the linguistic issues involved and the difficulty of obtaining anything approaching a complete conspectus of Aboriginal knowledge of relevant vocabulary items.8

Macknight points out that Makassarese is obviously 'the most important source of influence'9, although Buginese, Malay and Javanese are worthy of investigation since some crew members appear to have been able to speak these languages.10

This paper will be concerned with Yolngu-Matha, the speakers of which live mainly in northeastern Arnhem Land at Yirrkala, Milingimbi (Yurrwi), Elcho Island (Galiwin’ku), Lake Evella (Gapuwiyak) and Ramingining as well as on outstations of these settlements, and deep into Arnhem Land as far south as Roper River. It is our purpose to offer a preliminary conspectus of lexical items we have noted in our work in dialects of Yolngu-Matha11 that impressed us as Austronesian in nature.12 Since between us we have a good knowledge of several Austronesian languages13 and of historical Austronesian reconstruction, we feel confident to initiate this endeavour, in the hopes of gaining the assistance of other scholars to further this work.

Neither of us has had direct access to Makassarese or Buginese informants, and we have had to rely on Dutch dictionaries14, so we make no claim to comprehensiveness. To date, we have identified approximately two hundred forms that can reasonably be associated with one or another Austronesian language. We have avoided forms that are 'remembered' by very old Yolngu people as being Makassarese15, or those that are not of general knowledge and use, such as specialised boating vocabulary.16 Another area we have excluded are names used exclusively for persons or places which have no known or traceable meaning. Our procedure is to set out suspected borrowings into four groups:

(1) most probably Makassarese, based on soundshifts or innovations limited to that language17;

(2) possibly Makassarese, but possibly other Austronesian languages, since identical forms are found in many Austronesian speech varieties;

8 Macknight 1972:291,295. Note Macknight's definition: 'The term “Macassan” does not refer to any racial, linguistic or cultural group as such. It refers simply to any person who came on the annual fleet of praus to the Northern Territory. Even an Aborigine, when travelling with the trepangers beyond his normal ambit, can be included within the definition' (1976:1-2).


11 The term 'dialect' is used here without prejudice to the possibility that some speech varieties may not form a chain of mutual intelligibility. Most YM speakers are at least bilingual (father's dialect and mother's dialect), and many are multilingual since they come from communities where up to a dozen different varieties are spoken. See footnote 19.

12 Initially our judgments were 'impressionistic', i.e. words 'sounded' like Malay or Austronesian words we knew, but these were later confirmed by research into Makassarese, Malay and other Austronesian languages, and led to the establishment of Groups 1-3 in this paper; Group 4 remains 'impressionistic'.

13 These include: Bahasa (Malay or Indonesian), Filipino (Tagalog), Bisayan (and several other southern Philippine languages), Sawu, Sumba, Manggurai, Ndao, Timor, Beh, and Helong/Rupang (the latter seven spoken in western Timor and adjacent islands (Flores, Sumba, and Ndao)).

14 Matthes 1859 (1885); Cense 1979.

15 See Macknight 1972:297; 1976:89 on 'pepper-potting'.


17 In an unpublished paper, Nothofer 1970 discusses some of these; we have also worked the standard reflexes out for ourselves. Certain sound shifts earmark some borrowings as exclusively Makassarese, particularly the shape of the words that ended in *-D, *-R, *-r, *-s, and *-l, where a support vowel and glottal stop have been added (15, 20, 25, 33, 43, 65, 82, 89, 97, 99) whereas Buginese has replaced the final consonant with -' (see 15, 20, 21, 33, 97). Another outstanding feature (shared with Buginese) is the change of all final nasals to -r (10, 36, 47, 53, 56, 84, 90). The loss of final stops (11, 30, 51, 59, 69, 79, 85, 93) is common to several languages besides Makassarese and Buginese, but is not found in Malay, Indonesian, Javanese, and Southern Philippine languages.

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not Makassarese, but clearly Austronesian, based on word shapes, sound- or meaning-shifts not found in Makassarese, but found in other Austronesian languages; or
possibly Austronesian, but precise donor forms have not yet been identified, established or proven.

Each of these groups will be discussed in greater detail below. A brief discussion of the phonology of Yolngu-Matha and Makassarese is necessary in order to see how borrowings from the latter are mapped into the former. The phonology of Yolngu-Matha (which includes speech varieties such as Gupapuyuŋu, Gumaj, Djambarrpuyuŋu, Rirratjiŋu, Gālpu, DhaLwaŋu, and Ritharrajŋu) is given in Table 1. The phonemic system of Makassarese is given in Table 2. The phonetic interpretation is based on two published phonemic statements, comparison with other Austronesian languages, and the shape of loanwords in Yolngu-Matha. Thus, Mkr t is dental [Mkr t > YM t or d] (12-13, 25, 26, 31-34, 47, 53, 98), while d is alveolar [Mkr d > YM t or d] (07, 28, 29, 30, 39, 46, 81, 85). Since YM has no spirant, Mkr s > YM j in initial position (53, 60, 61, 63-70; less frequently d- as in 35-37, 119), but YM c in intervocalic position (48, 60, 63, 86, 89, 100, 111; less frequently t as in 82, 83). Mkr r > YM r (there are no provable instances of R; 11, 13, 15, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 31, 33, 39, 42, 44, 45, 46, 55, 57, 58, 65-70, 73, 74, 76, 82-84, 90-95, 97, 99). Mkr k > YM 1 (01-03, 05, 06, 09, 12, 19, 23, 24, 29, 35-37, 40-43, 50, 51, 53, 62, 63, 68, 71-81; less frequently L as in 04. 25, 76. 78. 163). Mkr 7 is preserved in two known clusters (09, 62) and sporadically in word-final position (01, 11, 20, 30, 43, 65, 69, 70, 97), but analogically introduced on forms where it never occurred (08, 14, 53, 98; note its loss on 05, 06, 12, 15, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 29, 31, 33-35, 39, 41, 42, 45, 48, 49, 51, 52, 59, 60, 63, 66, 68, 71-74, 76, 77, 79, 81-83, 85, 89, 92, 93, 99). A stressed vowel in the first syllable of a Mkr word not followed by a geminate consonant is usually interpreted as a long vowel in YM (10, 11, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 23, 26-30, 34, 35, 48, 49, 54, 57,

18 From now on the following abbreviations will be used when specific languages are discussed:

AN Austronesian  
Baj Bajau  
Bis Bisayan (Cebuano)  
Bug Buginese  
Ind Indonesian  
Jav Javanese  
Mal Malay  
Mar Maranao (SPh)  
Min Minangkabau Malay  
Mkr Makassarese  
PAN Proto Austronesian (c. 8000 B.P.)  
PHN Proto Western Austronesian (c. 3000 B.P.)  
PIN Proto Indonesian (c. 2500 B.P.)  
PMP Proto Malayo-Polynesian (c. 5000 B.P.)  
Port Portuguese  
Skt Sanskrit  
SPh Southern Philippine  
YM Yolngu-Matha

20 We have 'normalised' the orthography of both YM and Mkr in order to highlight the mapping of the two systems. In YM orthography dentals are written with an h digraph (dh, th, nh), palatal stops with a j digraph (dj, tj), but the palatal nasal with y (ny), retroflexes are underlined (d, t, n, j), while the rhotics are distinguished by single r (retroflex) and double rr (trill); long vowels are written as ä [a:], e [i:], o [u:]. The symbol '2 is used in Indonesian and Malay to indicate the full reduplication of a stem, e.g. balla'balla'-'. It should be noted that a final -k in Malay and Indonesian is pronounced -jok = [joró'] (177).

22 Earl 1842:140 noted that Aborigines could not pronounce the [s] sound. This is perhaps the greatest single change from the Mkr source forms, with shifts in voiced/lax vs voiceless/tense distinctions being second (see below). All in all, however, Yolngu-Matha was perhaps the best equipped Aboriginal language group to 'copy' Makassarese phonetics and phonotactics.

23 Therefore we have retained only two suspect forms with R (215,237), while a large number of others have been excluded on these grounds: giRiRik 'calico, fabric', guRipa 'fish-hook', guwaRiRu 'canoe', maRjapa, maRjapu 'boat, ship', RawJ (RitharrjuJ 'body-hair, fur' (cf: PHN *Da:hun 'leaf'), Rupa 'tin, cup'. Retroflex R does not appear to have any viable AN source.
## AUSTRONESEAN LOANWORDS

### Table 1. Phonology of Yolngu-Matha

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<tr>
<td>Lenis</td>
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<td>Fortis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nasal</td>
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<td>Glide</td>
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</tbody>
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Vowels: u i a + vowel length (:) in first syllable only

Guide: 1 Bilabial, 2 Lamino-Dental, 3 Apico-Alveolar, 4 Lamino-Palatal, 5 Apico-Domal (Retroflex), 6 Velar, 7 Glottal

Syllable types: CV, CVC, CVCC; in CC clusters the first member can be any nasal, glide, or lateral followed by any fortis stop (except t), e.g., gulk 'cut', maŋgi 'know', wuRp.mi 'one', ba:w? 'fragrance'. A large number of dissimilar clusters occur across syllable boundaries, e.g., guR.ta 'fire', gaŋ.bu 'fishnet', gal.ŋa 'skin, bark', man.ŋu 'take it'.

### Table 2. Phonology of Makassarese

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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Nasal</td>
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<td>Glide</td>
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<td>Lateral</td>
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Trill r

Spirant s

Vowels: u o i e a + stress (')

Numbers correspond to places of articulation listed in Table 1.

Source: Ngewa (1972), Cense (1979), and Nothofer (1970).

25. An alternate hypothesis could eliminate one of the series of stops by positing geminate stops contrasting with non-geminate stops in intervocalic position, otherwise a stop is lenis word-initially and fortis word-finally, e.g., [baːpaː] = /pːpːpaː/ 'father', [babaː] = /pːpːaː/ personal name.
59, 62, 65-70, 78, 79, 83-85, 89, 90, 92, 94, 95), otherwise when stress falls on a vowel before
geminate consonants (01, 07, 08, 12, 22, 43, 47, etc.) or other than in the first syllable (03,
04, 13, 16, 19, 24, 36, 39, 40, etc.), such vowels are interpreted as short in YM.24 Generally
speaking, the mapping is reasonably straightforward following the allowed (canonical)
shape of inherited words, so that initial stops in Mkr (whether voiced or voiceless) are
interpreted as lax (e.g., Mkr b- > YM b- in 01., 03, 04, 08 vis 05-07, 09, 10, etc.; Mkr g-,
g- > YM g- in 41, 129, 131-134 vis 39, 40, 42-51, etc., Mkr j-, c- > YM j- in 54, 56, 58, 59 vis
55, 57, 62, etc.). However, it is important to note that the number of syllables and the
basic vowel quality (high vs low, front vs back) is copied in YM quite faithfully, so that
YM bigal ‘axe’ could not reflect Mkr pänkulu” ‘axe’ or bigkunj ‘adze’ (see 188). Only a
few exceptions have been noted (35, 36, 37, 56, 58, 61, 68, 87, 98, 118, 129, 139, 199) where Yolngu-
Matha does not reflect the donor language sound-for-sound and syllable-for-syllable,
but the departure is never drastic (as would be the case in Anindilyakwa, for example),
and can be explained by standard or natural changes (assimilation, reduction, epenthesis,
or syncope).

The productive Makassarese suffix -añ, used inflectionally in making passive
verbs and derivationally in making nouns denoting place or instrument, e.g., bandêra
‘flag’, banderâñ ‘flagpole, place where flag waves’, has apparently led to several analogies
in Yolngu-Matha whereby -ñ has been dropped from Makassarese forms as if it were an
unnecessary suffix (06, 07, 13, 23, 24, 44, 55, 66, 81, 91, 100, 106, 121, 134, 137, 142, 150),
and a few cases where it has been added as if it were a noun-formative (98, 111, 118, 119,
135, 141, 145, 155).

Since Yolngu-Matha does not allow vowels to occur initially in words, w- is
added before u- (97, 98), y-before i- or e- (99), and either ñ- or w- before a- (contrast 89,
236 vs 96, 158; note also wpçpl < English hospital).

Since this study is aimed primarily at the identification of Austronesian source
languages for Yolngu-Matha words (based on resemblances in sound and meaning), it
would seem useful to present an index oriented to various semantic and cultural
domains in order to highlight the many areas of impact on Yolngu material culture and
language. Dubious forms (from Group 4) are omitted.26

INDEX
BOATING: anchor (04), boat (43, 86, 161), sail (35, 45, 175), canoe (80), inside of boat
(49), rudder (134); telescope (123).
BUILDING: house (01), shelter (02), plank (10), steps/ladder (34), plane (47), timber
(41), to build (54, 189), saw (129).
CLOTHING AND ADORNMENT: thread (08), needle (58), to sew (59), shirt (101-2),
trousers (139), shoes (119, 145), cloth (57, 79, 106), hat (148); necklace (132), earrings
(146), perfume (113); naked (68).
COMMERCE AND TRADE: to pay (15), to count (26), money (30, 156), cheap (74),
costly (93), rich (24), poor (126), size (52), equal (91), adequate (92), to buy (120), few
(71, 136), to change/barter (143), separate (170).
DISEASE: medicine (09), ringworm (115), spots (116), diarrhoea (83).
DRINK: alcoholic-beverages (89), drunk (32, 78, 87); bottle (25).
FISHING: fish-hook (17), to dive (36-7), sinker (151, 218); goggles (186).
FLORA AND FAUNA: pig (14), sheep/goat (18), buffalo (28), horse (56), dog (166),
horn (118), prawn (38), mudcrab (61), jellyfish (90), trepang (121), coral (128), pearl
(50, 153), turtle-shell (60); string-bark (51), bamboo (112), tamarind (141); jungle (95).

24 Some exceptions are 25, 33, 38, 50, 56, 58, 73, 97 (which have short vowels which normally would have been
interpreted as long) and 09, 83, 84 (which have long vowels that should have been interpreted as short).
26 Where we are confident, or our informants are most insistant about Mkr or foreign provenance of a form,
they are included (180, 189, 218, 246).
AUSTRONESIAN LOANWORDS

FOOD: corn (19), rice (20), coconut (39, 40, 46), salt (62), banana (98), syrup (133), bread (157), potatoes/vegetables (162); to boil (94).

LITERATURE: paper (27, 69), book (69), to write (97).

METAL: tincan (100), tin/iron (140), wire (146), lead (151, 218), chain (155).

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS: drum (31), mouth-organ (147).

PEOPLE AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS: greedy (03), robber (05), Makassan (13, 21, 82), white-woman (16, 154), white-person, European (103, 247), boss (114).

RELIGION: lord (44), light, radiance (65), prayer (142); grave-post (246).

SEX: to masturbate (176), smooth (72, 77 —used in a number of idioms with direct sexual reference).27

TOOLS AND WEAPONS: revolver (63), rifle (64), gun (84), fighting-stick (104), knife (81, 107, 127, 150, 160), axe (165), digging-stick (180), shovel-nose spear (172).

WIND-DIRECTIONS: west (wind) (11), northeast (wind) (33), south (wind) (53, 174).

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS: pillow (06), gambling (29), mirror (55), spoon (66-7), bucket (99), flag (105), bag/sack (108, 171), bowl (111), prison (122), key (135), soap (137), lamp (149), paint/tar (152), eyeglasses (159).

Of particular interest is the presence of Austronesian words in the basic vocabulary:28

big (12), day/sun (96), do/work (54), feather (163), forehead (22), fragrant (110), good/nice (72, 77), heel (167), high/tall (124), moon (23), rear/behind (168), short (169), smooth (76), sour (177-8), stone (109), tall/long (73), tooth (131), tree/wood (130), wind/air (158), year (125), yes (179, 249), and a tag-question particle (88). An unwary lexicostatistician might find that Yolngu-Matha has enough 'cognates' (5-10% depending on how one scored) to be grouped distantly with the Austronesian family—a tenet ludicrous in the context of Australia, but not so (for at least some scholars) if these languages were spoken in New Guinea instead.

Of considerable importance is the impact on Yolngu-Matha grammar, whereby a new verb type has been formed. Whereas Yolngu-Matha verbs fall into several classes and have at least four inflectional categories,29 a new class of verbs has emerged which have only one basic inflection (26, 54, 97, 138, 143).30 The use of Mkr stems in YM compounds (59, 83) is similarly noteworthy.

Thus, there is a substantial Austronesian imprint upon Yolngu-Matha. In speaking about Malay loanwords in Tagalog, Wolff has noted:

Their very number as well as their character indicates that there must have been a considerable population in the Tagalog speech community which could speak Malay. Some of these Malay borrowings are words of an ordinary, everyday character: forms referring to personal characteristics, . . . words for parts of the body, etc.

27 The practice of a kind of forced homosexuality by or with Makassans has not been discussed to our knowledge in the literature, but should not be prudishly dismissed. The Yolngu guarded their women, not only from the Makassans but also from the young Yolngu who had not achieved the age, prestige, or ceremonial status to claim a promised wife (hence the traditional marriage of older men with younger girls). There are several affectionate or pejorative curses in YM that strongly suggest homosexual activity (gurka laycu 'smooth penis', nu:ku laycu 'smooth anus', nu:ku bu:k-miri 'anus with semen') which is no longer practised due to the now acceptable marriage of young with young. The presence of an AN (SPh) word for 'masturbate' and of the Mkr for 'smooth' in these idioms does not necessarily imply the introduction of such activities by Makassans (including Bisayan slaves on the boats), but reveals the likelihood of sharing such activities with Mkr or other AN speakers.

28 Not all of these would be found in either the Swadesh 100 or 200 word list, but do represent very common words used daily by YM speakers. Enough of these would yield the 'false' percentages cited below, regardless of the list chosen and the items deselected from this list.


30 Macknight 1976:89 cites 26, 54, 97, 138, but not 143; however, he includes bilina 'to finish' (<Mkr, Mai bilaij 'to reckon, count'), which is an unlikely etymology [due to poor match of sound (YM *bi:laj would be expected) and meaning]; furthermore, dialects which drop the final vowel from function words (Djambarrpuyu, Liyagemurirr, etc.) have the form bilin, which suggests it is a genuine YM word, i.e., they do not show signs of vowel-dropping from non-inherited words.

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ABORIGINAL HISTORY 1981 5:2

body, and others of the type that refer to things for which there must have been good native terms. Such basic vocabulary can only have come in if members of the Tagalog speech community could speak Malay.31

Such a situation appears to have obtained where (a form of) Makassarese was used as a pidgin or patois for speaking to foreigners (be they trepangers, Europeans, or speakers of other Aboriginal languages).32 Furthermore, even where perfectly adequate Yolngu-Matha terms existed, adoption of Makassarese forms was surely favoured by the need for synonyms to replace words tabooed because of death: thus 05 is synonymous with YM managgan 'thief', 12 with YM yindi 'big', 29 with YM nakaLindi 'moon', 32 with YM jawuLpa 'old-person', 60 with YM nakuRaka 'bone; shell', 51 with YM Naku 'stringybark', 61 with YM nu:ka? 'mudcrab', 65 with YM baDayala 'light', 68 with YM warragul 'naked', 73 with YM wi:yin 'long', 72 and 77 with YM mahmak 'good, nice', etc.33 Note also the many introduced synonyms for coconut, cloth, and knife (above). Thus, although the contacts ceased some seventy-five years ago, they must have been intensive and long enough to have left such an impact on the language and (perhaps less obviously) the culture of the Yolngu bloc.34

Clearly the main source language for Yolngu-Matha words is Makassarese. Most of the 99 forms in Group 1 show characteristics of shape or soundshift that earmark them as Mkr. In several instances, Buginese has identical forms, some of which (25, 29, 31, 33, 43, 45, 89, 99) are anomalous and which are themselves suspect of being under Makassarese influence. Since no clear instances of Buginese etymologies have thus far presented themselves, we have not assigned any weight to such co-occurrences, and take the Mkr provenance to be the most probable.

The 59 words in Group 2 also have a high probability of being from Makassarese, although (near) identical forms in other Austronesian languages prevent any definitive statements in this regard. A particular problem that arose was the loss or addition of final -ŋ on a number of forms (discussed above). In the absence of any evidence that there is an Austronesian language with precisely such forms that have undergone the same changes, it is most reasonable to assume that the Yolngu coined these forms on their own from Mkr material (based on analogies or abstractions from their understanding of Mkr grammar).

The 21 words in Group 3 should be of particular interest, because they are least likely to be Mkr in origin, although our science and our sources do not allow us to state from which language they derive. The citation of Malay or Southern Philippine forms should not be construed as an indication that they come from these languages, since the full linguistic and historical picture of the islands to the north of Australia has yet to be ascertained. For example, it is known that the Bisayans [bisayə1] of the central and southern Philippine areas have been taken as slaves by various Philippine and Indonesian groups (the word means 'slave' in Maranao and Tausug). It is known that the Tausug of Jolo (Sulu) traded slaves with the Buginese (and thence to the Makassarese).35 If Bisayan slaves were on the Makassan trepang boats, then the presence of forms like 159, 163, 165, 31 Wolff 1976:353.

32 See footnotes 1, 2, 3; in particular Earl 1842:140.

33 Macknight 1976:89 notes: 'Probably the most common degree of assimilation is suggested by informants themselves. They describe many of these loan-words as 'Old Testament' — that is, slightly archaic synonyms for other terms in common use.' This is true of many words omitted from this study, but not for the bulk of the words presented here. In a literacy class at the School of Australian Linguistics consisting of 21 YM speakers, students were asked to spell forms 01-178 (and several items from Group 4). Approximately 120 of the words were known to all of the students, while each of the other 80 words were known by at least six speakers as viable forms or synonyms. Ages ranged from 18-28 and various dialects of both Southern and Northern Yolngu were represented (see footnotes 19 and 39).

34 The use of Mkr and AN nouns and names as personal names, synonyms equally affected by the death taboo, innovations in the funeral ceremony, bark and rock paintings, openness to and awareness of other races and cultures, new artifacts and foodstuffs and uses thereof, introduction of new totems (generally) as members of the Yirritja moiety—to cite a few. See Macknight 1976:88-92 and Urry and Walsh 1981.

35 See Warren 1977 on the extent and impact of the Jolo slave trade; Earl (1853:198) reports on Ilanun 'pirates' shipwrecked on Croker Island. There are thus two sources of SPh loans in YM (slaves and 'pirates').
Austronesian Loanwords

166, 167, 176, in YM would be less surprising. Several forms (160, 161, 162, 169, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 177, 178, 179) may be assumed to be primarily or secondarily introduced through Malay (as a major trade language known to the trepang fishermen).

The words in Group 4 could be taken as Macknight’s ‘general ragbag source of the unusual’ if offered without appropriate caution. The list is presented to both Australianists and Austronesianists for evaluation and assistance. In most instances, the meanings represent cultural innovations, and Austronesian languages would seem to be the best source; some of these may by Pama-Nyungan or Yolngu words that have acquired extended or secondary meanings. In still other instances, the words seem to be similar to forms in Austronesian languages, but the matches are not convincing enough. For example, despite a search for possible Bajau loans, based on the lead of Fox, we found only one reasonable candidate (189)—and the match is weakened because of its singularity. Finally, we have included forms which Yolngu-Matha speakers insist are from ‘Makassan’ (181, 182, 184, 185, 194, 199, 202, 204, 208, 212, 216, 224, 227, 237, 246, 247, 248), on the grounds that a number of such intuitive judgements have been proven in the course of our study.

All in all, we hope to have justified on linguistic and comparative grounds the statements made about the impact of Makassarese (and to a lesser extent, of other Austronesian peoples) upon the Yolngu-Matha speakers of northeastern Arnhem Land. We intend to continue these studies and elicit the help of other scholars in compiling a comprehensive list of loanwords and identifying their provenance.

Group I: Most Probable Makassarese Loanwords


02 balapala ‘bush-shelter; anything that has four legs and a flat top’ < Mkr bália? -240 ‘cottage, small-house; couch’; cf: Ind, Mal balay-2 ‘couch’.

03 balalá ‘greedy’; personal name < Mkr balála ‘greedy’.

04 balanu ‘anchor’ < Mkr, Bug balágo ‘anchor’; cf: Ind, Mal sauh, jökar ‘Id.’.


37 Pama-Nyungan is the name of the proposed parent language of most Australian Aboriginal languages including the Yolngu bloc, but excluding a large number of other Arnhem Land languages, such as Burarra, Nunggubuyu, Anindilyakwa, and other languages that have prefixes or linguistic elements put before (rather than after) the main word. This name comes from the two common words for ‘man, Aboriginal’ found in the family: pama / anna.
38 Fox 1977; although our only source of Bajau data to date has been Schneeberger 1937.
39 It is remarkable how many YM speakers (particularly above age 35, but not exclusively so) will state “that word is ‘MaijgalaraJ’ or ‘bataripai’”. In terms of one popular linguistic theory, besides knowing the denotative meaning of a form, they carry a notion [+Makassan] or [+Foreign] along with the connotative meaning. Of course it does not always hold true that the form is Mkr or AN. Once an informant specified gimatata ‘baking-powder’ as probably Mkr; after a long and futile search for Mkr or AN sources, it finally dawned on us that this was English ‘cream of tartar’ with a semantic shift. (See also footnotes 33 and 42).
40 The convention of writing -2 after a word indicates full reduplication in Indonesian and Malay orthography. (See footnote 20 for other conventions.)
06 baluqa 'pillow' < Mkr pa?luqaq 'pillow' [with -q loss];
cf: Mal bantal, Mar olona? 'Id.'.
07 bamutuka 'pipe' < Mkr pammudukaq 'bamboo opium pipe' [with -q loss], root word Mkr udut, Mal udut 'to suck-at, smoke'.
08 banan? 'thread(s); wool' < Mkr bannan? 'thread, yarn'; Mal bana, Bug wannan? 'Id.' < PHN *bana? 'thread'.
09 ba?:pali 'medicine; wooden-dish' < Mkr pabal?ile 'medicine', root word pali 'to medicate'; cf: Mal ubat, SPh bulu?i 'medicine'.
10 ba:paq 'plank, timber' < Mkr papaq 'board; plate';
cf: Bug papaq, Mal papan 'board, plank'.
11 bar?: 'west(wind)' < Mkr bara? 'westwind, rainwind';
cf: Bug bara?, Mal barat 'Id.' < PHN *hapa:Rat 'monsoon-wind'.
12 ba:ta?la 'big, large' < Mkr batta?la? 'heavy, big, onerous';
cf: Mal besar 'big', barat 'heavy'.
13 bataripa 'Makassarese' < Mkr, Bug pataripa? 'trepang-fisherman' [with -q loss].
14 ba:wii(?) 'pig' < Mkr, Bug bawi 'pig'; cf: Mal babi 'Id' < PHN *ba:buy 'Id.'.
15 ba:yara 'to pay; pay-back, revenge' < Mkr ba:yara? 'pay';
cf: Bug waja?, Mal, Jav bayar < PHN *ba:yaD 'to pay'.
16 bayini 'white-woman' < Mkr bai?ne 'woman, wife, female';
cf: Bug wawine, Mal bini 'wife, spouse'.
17 bi:kan 'fish-hook' < Mkr pekan? 'fish-hook; rod';
cf: Mal kail, pance 'fish-hook'.
18 bi(:)mbi '(young) sheep' < Mkr, Bug bame 'goat';
cf: Mal kambar 'goat', biri-2 'sheep'.

41 Jennison 1927:178 cites Mal padudutan (sic, correctly pomadutan) 'tobacco or opium pipe', but the phonetic match is with the Mkr form.
42 Informants state that ba:ra? was the wind used by Makassans to sail from Ujung Pandang to Australia, and dimuru (33) was the wind used to return. This knowledge is borne out to be factual (Macknight 1976:32), and is yet another instance of the knowledge retained about Makassans so long after they have ceased coming to Australia (see also footnote 39).
43 The legends of the bayini are discussed by Berndt and Berndt 1954:33-9; Worsley 1955:2; Mountford 1956:333-8; Macknight 1976:92,97. Since this word is peculiarly Mkr for 'woman' it may refer to a time when some Mkr did visit Arnhem Land with women companions (see Macknight 1976:29), or it may refer to another group such as the Turiqene-Bajau (although time and lack of data have not allowed us to check words cited in the above-mentioned studies as 'Bayini'). The linguistic data itself presents an enigma: the word comes from Mkr, yet it refers to 'white-woman' (perhaps alluding to the lighter skin colour of the earlier visitors?). Why the YM speakers did not ascertain (or remember?) the identity of their visitors is puzzling.
19 birali 'corn, maize' < Mkr birále 'maize';
cf: Bug warále, Mal jagon 'Id.'.

20 bi:rata_ (var: birata_, biraca_) 'rice; wheat; barley' <
Mkr bérasa_ 'milled-rice'; cf: Bug bérre_, Mal beras,
Jav wos, Baj buas < PHN *bèsRas 'milled-rice'.

21 buki-mangatara (Gum) 'Macassarese' < Mkr bugisi? 'Buginese'
+ Mkr maŋkasara? 'Macassar(ese)'; cf: Bug wugi 'Buginese' +
maŋkasa? 'Macassar(ese)', Mal bugis 'Buginese' + maŋkasar
'Macassar(ese)'.

22 buku 'forehead; cliff' < Mkr búku? 'hump, ridge, lump;
mountainous; roof of a boat'; cf: Bug buku?, Mal bonkuk
'hump, hunchback(ed)'.

23 bu:la 'moon; dugong-stomach' < Mkr bula? 'round' (or) Mkr
bulan 'moon' [with -n loss]; cf: Mal bulan, Bug ulan < PMP
*bu:lan 'moon' and Mal buiat 'round'.

24 bulay 'rich; jewellery; gold' < Mkr buláen 'gold' [with -n
loss]; cf: Bug uláwen < PHN *bula:wan 'gold', Mal amas 'gold'.

25 butuLu 'bottle' < Mkr, Bug bòtolo? 'bottle'; Mal botol < Port
botelha 'Id.'.

26 bu:turu 'to count' < Mkr bòtoto? 'to play-dice, gamble';
cf: Bug bòto?, Mal ber-judi 'to gamble'.

27 bu:yan 'paper' (archaic word) < Mkr búyan 'paper';
cf: Bug úyan 'Id.', Mal kertas, Mkr karátasa? 'paper'.

28 di:tuŋ 'buffalo' < Mkr, Bug tédoŋ 'carabao, water-buffalo';
cf: Mal karbaw, Baj krabaw.

29 du:pu lu 'gambling' < Mkr, Bug dóbolo? 'gamble' < Dutch
dobbelen, Port dobro 'to play-dice, gamble'.

30 du:y? 'money' < Mkr doe?, Bug do? 'money' < Dutch duikt;
cf: Mal duikt.

31 duamburu 'drum' < Mkr, Bug tamboro? 'drum' < Port tambor;
cf: Mal tambur.

32 dawutuwa 'old-man; drunkard' < Mkr, Bug tāu 'person' +
Mkr, Bug tōa 'old'; cf: Mal oran 'person' + tuha 'old',
PHN *ta:uh 'person', PHN *tuqah 'old'.

This form is somehow related to Mkr bugisi? and Bug wugi. It is either a shortening of the Mkr form (by
dropping the final syllable), or a re-analysis of the Bug form based on the presence of b- (rather than w-) in
Mkr.
dimuru 'northeast (wind)' < Mkr, Bug t́irmoro? 'eastwind';
cf: Bug t́irmor, Mal timor < PHN *ti:muR 'east(wind)'.

34 du:ka 'steps, ladder, stairs' < t́uka? 'steps, ladder';
cf: Mal tanga 'Id.'.

du:malu 'sail' < Mkr som`balu? 'sail'; cf: Mal layar, PHN *ia:yaR 'Id.'.

dumblan 'to dive' < Mkr sum`lan 'to dive';
cf: Mal selam 'Id.'.

dumbulan 'to dive' (alternate of 36, q.v.).

duwu 'prawn' < Mkr, Bug doan 'shrimp, prawn';
cf: Mal (h)udan < PHN *q̣udan 'shrimp, crustacean'.

gadaru 'coconut' < Mkr, Bug ka?daro 'husk, shell (of fruit)';
cf: Mal tampuruy 'husk, shard, coconut-shell ladle'.

galuku 'coconut' < Mkr, Bug kaluku 'coconut';
cf: Mal kalapa, ñior 'Id.'.

galumé 'timber' < Mkr galuma? 'deck with loose planks';
Mal galumat 'deck'.

galuru 'cigarette, cigarette-paper' < Mkr, Bug kaluru? 'to roll-up; cigar'.

gapala? 'large-boat; rudder' < Mkr, Bug káppala? 'boat';
cf: Mal kapaí 'Id.'.

garay 'lord, master' < Mkr karaen 'lord, master, title of person of high rank' [with -u loss];
cf: Bug ma-raja, Mal raya 'great, big, high'.

garuru 'sail' < Mkr, Bug káro? 'coarse cloth or leaves woven into sail';
cf: Mal káro 'large matwork sack made of coarse material', Ind bagor 'coarse weave of palm leaves'.
gataru 'coconut' (alternate of 39, q.v.).
gatañ 'carpenter's plane' < Mkr, Bug kättañ 'Id.';
cf: Mal katam 'Id.'.

YM copies the length of the Mkr form, but reduces the -mb- cluster to a simple -m-. Possibly phonotactics may be the answer; we have noted several occurrences of -uma-, but none of -umba-.

YM has introduced -mb- for what should be simply -m-, possibly based on the position of stress or accent in Mkr, i.e., *sumelatj would have become YM *du:milarj, but sumelan had two options, either YM *dumilarj or dumbilajj (as here).

As for footnote 45, but with assimilation or change of i to u, which is not uncommon in YM; note Dhalwanu wiña-yun = wuña-yun 'disappear', Gumatj wugili = wuguli 'shadow, spirit, image, photo, movie'.

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48 gi:cu 'tobacco' < Mkr késo? 'to scrape or scour (action as involved in the preparation of tobacco for smoking)'.

49 gu:Du 'the inside of something (especially a boat)' < Mkr kódo? 'roof or shelter of a boat made of canvass and bamboo'.

50 gulawu 'pearl' < Mkr kúlu 'bezoar-stone; any stony-hard substance (e.g., mother-of-pearl, seeds in fruit, etc.)'.

51 gu:liyu 'stringy-bark' < Mkr kúli? 'bark, skin, outer-covering' + káyu 'wood, timber'; cf: Mal kulit, Bug úli? 'bark, skin', Mal kayu, Bug aju 'wood, timber'.

52 jaka 'size' < Mkr jákka?, Bug cákka? 'unit of measure from thumb to middle-finger'.

53 jalatáŋ 'south(wind)' < Mkr, Bug sallátaŋ 'southwind, land-wind'; cf: Mal selatan < PHN *sálatang 'south(wind)'.

54 ja:ma 'to work, do' < Mkr, Bug jáma 'do, work; handle, touch'; cf: Mal jamah 'handle'.

55 jarami 'mirror, glass' < Mkr carámmeŋ [with -ŋ loss]; cf: Mal, Jav cérmin, Bug cémmeŋ 'mirror, looking-glass'.

56 jaraŋ 'horse' < Mkr járaŋ 'horse'; cf: Bug aňñarang, Jav jaran, Mal kuda 'Id.'.

57 ja:ricari 'cloth, material' < Mkr, Bug cár-2 'cloth(s), textile', cf: Tag sari-sa:ri 'various things'.

58 jaruŋ 'needle' < Mkr, Bug járuŋ 'needle'; cf: Mal jarum, Jav dom < PHN *Za:Rum 'Id.'.

59 ja:y- (stem in: ja:y-deRpuma, ja:y-nupan) 'to mend, sew' < Mkr, Bug jái? 'to sew'; cf: Mal jahit < PMP *Za:qit 'Id.'.

60 jici 'turtle-shell' < Mkr sišsi? 'scale (of fish), shell (of turtle)'; cf: Mal sisek 'Id.'.

61 jikuyu 'mudcrab' < Mkr sikuyu 'crab'; cf: Mal kapitlo, kätam 'crab'.

62 ji:la 'salt' < Mkr cé?la 'salt(y), brackish'; cf: Bug pèje, pejje, Mal garam 'salt', asin 'salty' < PHN *qasín 'salt(y)'.

63 jillicilikan 'revolver' < Mkr seleʔ-selekan 'pistol'.

64 jinapan 'rifle' < Mkr, Bug sinápuŋ 'rifle, musket' < Dutch snaphaan 'flintlock', Mal senapan 'gun, musket, rifle'.

65 ji:ŋara? 'light' < Mkr sŋara? 'clear, bright'; cf: Mal sínar 'ray of light; radiance' < PHN *sínar 'bright'.
66 jiru 'spoon; shovel' < Mkr sfru? (or) sfruŋ [with -ŋ loss; cf: 67]; cf: Mal sudu, sêndok 'spoon'.
67 jiruŋ 'spoon' < Mkr sfruŋ 'spoon, ladle' [cf: 66].
68 jirara 'naked' < Mkr sólarə? 'naked, bare'.
69 jirara? 'paper; book' < Mkr súra?; Bug súra? 'letter'; cf: Mal surat 'Id.'.
71 labina (Gup) 'few, some' < Mkr la?binna 'remainder, surplus, rest'; cf: Mal lâbih 'excess, more than'.
72 lacu 'nice, good, smooth' < Mkr lâccu? 'smooth; slippery; clever, cute'; cf: Mal licin 'smooth, slippery'. [cf: 77]
73 lambiri 'long, tall' < Mkr (Selayar dialect) lâmberə? 'long, tall'; cf: Mkr la?bu, Bug lampe?, Mal panjaŋ 'long'.
74 lamuru 'cheap (in price)' < Mkr lâmmoro? 'cheap'; cf: Mal murah 'Id.'.
75 lañiŋ 'bright, clean, polished' < Mkr lâñiŋ 'totally-clean, pure, beautiful'.
76 lapara (Gup), Lapara (Gum) 'smooth' < Mkr lâppara? 'flat, level, smooth'; cf: Bug lappa, Mal rata 'Id.'.
77 laycu 'nice, good, smooth' (alternate of 72) < Mkr léco? 'to make smooth or slippery'; cf: Mal lecok 'to make smooth and shiny, polish'.
78 li:nu, Li:nu 'intoxicated, drunk' < Mkr li:nu 'confused' (cf: Mkr a?-li:nu-2 'sleep-walking'). [cf: 87]
79 li:pa 'material' < Mkr, Bug li:pa? 'sarong'; cf: Mal lipat 'fold(ing)'.
80 lipalipa 'canoe' < Mkr, Bug lópa-2 'dugout canoe (smallest and simplest type)'.
81 malati 'knife' < Mkr ma?- verb prefix denoting 'to use (x), to do (x)' (= Mal bar-) + lâdiŋ 'knife' [see 150, with -ŋ loss].
82 mangatara 'Makassar(ese)' < Mkr maŋkásara? 'Id.'; cf: 2l.
84 ma:riyaŋ 'gun, rifle' < Mkr, Bug ma:riyaŋ 'gun, cannon'; cf: Mal meriam, Jav meriyem 'gun, cannon'.
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85 ma:ta 'pipe' < Mkr, Bug máda? 'prepared-opium'; Mal madat, Arabic madad 'Id.'.
86 miciyan 'boat, vehicle' < biséan 'boat, vessel' (cf: pammisean 'to row').
87 miciyao 'boat, vessel' < biseag 'boat, vessel' (cf: pammiseag 'to row').
88 mi:r]u 'drunk, intoxicated' < Mkr bego 'to stupify, drug; drunk' (cf: ammego 'make drunk', pommego 'to intoxicate, drug'); cf: Mal mabuk < PHN *ma-buhuk 'drunk'.
89 muká (question or agreement particle) 'O.K.? ' < Mkr múkka 'all right, in order, sound, valid', Bug múkka 'useful, appropriate'.
90 muka (question or agreement particle) 'O.K.? ' < Mkr múkka 'all right, in order, sound, valid', Bug múkka 'useful, appropriate'.
91 muká (question or agreement particle) 'O.K.? ' < Mkr múkka 'all right, in order, sound, valid', Bug múkka 'useful, appropriate'.
92 mi:nu 'drunk, intoxicated' < Mkr bego 'to stupify, drug; drunk' (cf: ammego 'make drunk', pommego 'to intoxicate, drug'); cf: Mal mabuk < PHN *ma-buhuk 'drunk'.
93 muká (question or agreement particle) 'O.K.? ' < Mkr múkka 'all right, in order, sound, valid', Bug múkka 'useful, appropriate'.
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96 muká (question or agreement particle) 'O.K.? ' < Mkr múkka 'all right, in order, sound, valid', Bug múkka 'useful, appropriate'.
97 muká (question or agreement particle) 'O.K.? ' < Mkr múkka 'all right, in order, sound, valid', Bug múkka 'useful, appropriate'.
98 muká (question or agreement particle) 'O.K.? ' < Mkr múkka 'all right, in order, sound, valid', Bug múkka 'useful, appropriate'.
99 muká (question or agreement particle) 'O.K.? ' < Mkr múkka 'all right, in order, sound, valid', Bug múkka 'useful, appropriate'.

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GROUP 2: LOANWORDS THAT ARE POSSIBLY MAKASSARESE OR POSSIBLY OTHER AUSTRONESIAN LANGUAGES

100 bacikali 'tin, can' < Mkr básí, Bug básí, Mal basí 'iron' + Mkr kálíq, Mal kálen 'tin, can' [with -n loss].

101 bacupacu 'shirt, coat' < Mkr, Bug baju 'jacket', baju-2 'short-sleeved jacket (worn by men)', Mal baju 'shirt, jacket' < Persian bazu 'shoulder'.

102 ba:ju?baju? (alternate of 101, q.v.).

103 balanda 'European, white-man' < Mkr, Bug balanda, Mal balanda 'Holland, Dutch' < Dutch Holland, Hollander (with unexplained b- for h- common to Mal/Ind languages).

104 bai:napalu 'fighting-stick' < Mkr, Bug pálu-2 'knocker, hammer, club', Mal palu 'to hit with rigid weapon' < PMP *pa:lu? 'beat, hit'.

105 bandira 'flag' < Mkr, Bug, Jav bandéra, Mal bandera < Port bandeira 'flag, standard, banner'.

106 barambara 'cloth, clothing' < Mkr báran-2 [= báran-báran], Mal, Ind baran-2; Bug wáram-páran 'goods, things, commodities' [with -n loss].

107 ba:ti 'two-edged knife' < Mkr, Bug bádi?, Mal badek < PHN *badi? 'knife'.

108 ba:ti 'dillybag, container' < Mkr patti, Bug patti, Mal pátí 'box, chest, case'.

109 ba:tu 'stone' < Mkr, Bug, Mal, Jav bátu 'stone' < PMP *bátu 'Id.'.

110 ba:wi? 'fragrant, good-smell' < Mkr, Bug báw? 'fragrances, smell', Mal bau 'scent, odour' < PMP *ba:hu(?) 'smell'.

111 bu:cuñ 'bowl' < Mkr busu 'jar, pot' [with -n addition] (or) Mal bocox 'earthenware jar/jug'.


113 bu:na 'perfume, powder, aromatic' < Mkr, Bug bûna, Mal buña 'flower, blossom' < PMP *bu:na? 'flower, fruit'.

48 Note Gumatj variant bandira (with glottal stop preserved), and personal name bandira (with -y addition).
bunugawa 'boss; government' < Mkr, Bug punugawa 'captain of a ship', Jav punugawa 'official, dignitary', Mal pengawa 'district-officer' < Skt punugawa 'chief, eminent-person' (Gonda 1973:97).

bugawu 'ringworm' < Mkr, Bug puru 'pustule, ulcer, boil', Mal puru 'sore, ulcer' (specifically due to yaws or Framboesia tropica) < PHN *puru 'ulcer'.

burupuru? (Ritharrgu) 'spots on body due to sunburn or disease' < Mkr, Bug puru-2 'pimples, pustules'. [cf:115]

dambaku 'tobacco' < Mkr tambako, Bug campako, Mal tembakaw, tambako < Port tabaco 'Id.'.

danduruŋ 'horn' < Mkr, Bug tambak, Mal tandak, tandak < Port tabaco 'Id.'.

[with -ŋ addition].

dapatiŋ 'shoes' < Mkr, Bug sapatu, Mal sapatu < Port sapato 'Id.' [with -ŋ addition].

darima 'to buy' < Mkr, Bug tarima, Mal tarima 'to accept, receive, take'.

daripa 'trepang, sea-cucumber' < Mkr, Bug tarîpaŋ, Mal terîpaŋ 'Id.' [with -ŋ loss].

darungu 'prison' < Mkr, Bug, Ind tarunku < Port tronco 'prison, goal'.

[with -g addition].

darupun 'telescope' < Mkr, Bug tarîpoŋ 'telescope', Mal tarpoŋ 'tube; telescope; spy-glass'.

dingi 'high' < Mkr tîngi, Mal tîngi 'high, tall, lofty'.

dungara 'year' < Mkr, Bug tungara 'southeast wind', Mal tangara, Min tungara 'Id.'.

gaci-gaci 'poor, not much money' < kâsi-âsi 'poor, needy', Mal kaseh(an) 'pitiable', kaseh-2 'favour me with'.

galiwâŋ 'big-knife, scythe' < Mkr, Bug kalêwâŋ, Mal kaléwâŋ 'sword, sabre'.

garaŋ 'coral' < Mkr, Bug karaŋ, Mal, Jav karaŋ 'coral'.

garkaci, garakaci, garkeji 'saw (tool)' < Mkr, Bug garagâji, Mal gegaji, gergaji < Skt krakaca- 'carpenter's saw' (Gonda 1973:158)

gau 'tree, wood, stick' < Mkr kau, Mal kau, Bug au 'wood, timber; tree (in compounds)'.
gikina 'tooth' < Mkr, Mal gigi 'tooth', but Mkr gigi-na 'his tooth'.
girig-girig 'necklace, ornament, jewellery' < Mkr girig-2, Mal girig-2, Bug girig-kirig 'ornamental-bells'.
gula 'syrup, treacle' < Mkr, Bug gôlia, Mal gula 'sugar' < Dravidian, Prâkrit guâla- 'molasses' (Gonda 1973:93).
gi:ri 'rudder' < Mkr, Bug gi:ri [with -n loss].
gi:njì 'key' < Mkr, Bug kûnci, Mal kunci < Skt kuânci 'lock, bolt; key' (Gonda 1973:93) [with -n addition].
gu:njig 'key' < Mkr, Bug konci, Mal kunci < Skt kuânci 'lock, bolt; key' (Gonda 1973:93) [with -g addition].
gurrag 'few, little, not-much, not-many' < Mkr, Bug kûra, Mal, Jav kura 'too-little, falling-short, not-quite'.
ja:bu, ja:pu 'soap' < Mkr, Bug sâbun, Mal sabun < Arabic sabun 'soap' [with -n loss].
jalwara 'trousers' < Mkr salûwara?, Bug saluwâra?, Mal saluar < Persian shalwar (or) Arabic sarwal 'Id.'.
jambaka 'steel, roofing iron' (Gum), 'tin, pannikin' (Gup) < Mkr, Bug tambâga, Mal tambaga 'copper' < Prâkrit tamba-ga 'copper' (Gonda 1973:91).
jambaya 'prayer' < Mkr sambâyan 'Muslim worship', Mal sambhâyân 'divine worship' (< sambah 'obeisance' + yañ 'gods, divinity') [with -g loss]; Bug sambâyan 'Id.'.
jambaya 'prayer' < Mkr sambâyan 'Muslim worship', Mal sambahyâñ 'divine worship' (< sambah 'obeisance' + yañ 'gods, divinity') [with -n loss]; Bug sambâjan 'Id.'.
jambi 'change, exchange' < Mkr sâmbe 'money-changer', Iban samb? 'get in exchange', SPh sâmb? 'to change, replace' < PHN *samb? 'change, barter'.
jandu 'pipe' < Mkr, Bug cându, Mal, Jav candu 'prepared-opium (softened with water before use)'.
japatûn 'shoes' (alternate of 119, q.v.) [also with -n addition].

49 Note personal name jambayarj (with -rj retained).
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146 jinjį 'wire; earrings'. Mkr cicinč, SPh sīnsī; Mal cincin, Bug cicić < PHN *cinćin 'ring'.  
147 jūliŋ 'mouth-organ' < Mkr, Bug suľin, Mal sulin 'fife, flute, flageolet'.  
148 juŋgu 'hat' < Mkr, Bug sǒŋko? 'hat', Mal sōŋkōk 'flax-like cap'.  
149 landira 'lamp' < Mkr, Bug lantičra, Mal lanter < Port lanterna 'lantern'.  
147 laːti 'knife' < Mkr ladin 'knife', Mal ladin 'cleaver' [with -ŋ loss]; alternate Lati; see also malati (81).  
151 laːtuŋ 'sinker; lead; fillings in teeth' < Mkr, Bug lāduŋ, Mal batu-ladon 'sinker, plummet'.  
152 miña 'paint, tar' < Mkr, Bug miňa?, Mal mińak 'oil, fat'.  
153 mutiýara? 'pearl; shell' < Mkr, Bug mutiāra, Mal mutiara, mutia 'pearl' < Prākrit muttia 'pearl' (Gonda 1973:93).  
154 nuːna 'white-woman' < Mkr, Bug nọna 'Miss, Mrs', Mal nona 'miss, unmarried European or Chinese girl'.  
155 raːndin 'chain' < Mkr, Bug rānte 'chain', Mal rantay 'chain; necklace; links' [with -ŋ addition].  
156 rupiya 'money' < Mkr, Bug rupia, Mal rupiah 'money' < Skt rūpya- 'silver; rupee'.  
157 ruːτi 'bread' < Mkr, Bug roti, Mal roti 'Id.' < Indic roti 'bread without yeast' (Gonda 1973:94).  
158 waːqi 'wind, air' < Mkr, Bug aqīq, Mal aqīn < PMP *haːqin 'wind, air' [with w- addition and -ŋ loss].

GROUP 3: LOANWORDS THAT ARE PROBABLY NOT MAKASSARESE

159 baramata 'eyeglasses'. Note Mkr paramāta, Mal permata 'jewel, precious stone' (<Skt); several SPh languages (e.g., Bisayan) have forms like para 'for' + mata 'eyes' which offer a closer semantic match, but the source language cannot be specified.

160 baran 'cane-knife, machete' < Mal paran 'cleaver, machete'; cf: Mkr beran 'shopping-knife, cleaver', which would have been borrowed as YM *biːran.

50 Although YM appears to copy the SPh form more precisely, it is quite possible that YM speakers interpreted the form as a reduplication of a single syllable, as indeed it was in PHN and is amongst SPh languages.
161 barawu (Ritharrugu) 'boat' < Mal pərahu 'Id.'; cf: Mkr sámpaŋ käppala? 'Id.'.

162 ba:wan 'potatoes, vegetables'. Mal bawan 'bulb of Allium sp' < PAN *ba:wan 'garlic'; cf: Mkr bán 'no-good, worthless'.

163 bulpul 'feather' flower'. Cf: PMP *bulbul 'hair; feather', SPh bülbul 'body-hair, feathers, fur'; not Mkr bulu 'body-hair'; Mkr does not allow consonant clusters other than NC (nasal+consonant), and words can only end in the consonants -? or -ŋ.

164 bül?bul?-yu- (Ritharrgu) 'to sneak along with branches as camouflage'. [See 163, related to PMP *bulbul (?)].

165 Dakul 'axe'. Cf: SPH pa-dākūl 'axe, hatchet'; not Mkr paŋkūl?, PHN *wa:say (Bug uwase), nor PIN *kapak (Mal, Ind, Baj kapak); cf: Ind caŋku 'broad hoe'.

166 di:tuŋ (Gumatj) [dog's name]. Cf: PHN *ti:tuŋ 'dog, puppy'; not Mkr konkoŋ nor Bug ásu 'dog'. [Compare with di:tuŋ 'buffalo' (28) in other YM dialects.]

167 da pa 'heel'. Cf: PHN *dāpəh 'heel', SPh dapa(h) or dapa-2 'Id.'; not Mkr kátulu? 'heel', Mal tumit 'heel', Mkr, Mal kāki 'foot'.

168 dudi 'bottom, behind, buttocks'. Cf: PMP *uDéhi 'behind' + *di- locative > Iban dudi 'late; behind' Jav udi 'posterior; behind'; not Mkr bóko 'behind, back-of' or Mkr dôngko? 'back'.

169 dumbul? 'short'. Cf: Mal tumpul 'blunt, dull'; not Mkr típu? 'blunt, dull' or Mkr bóko 'short'.

170 gaDa-gaDa 'separate, apart'. Cf: SPH kāda kāda-2 < Spanish cada 'each'.

171 ga:ruŋ (Gumatj) 'sack', (Gupapuygu) 'blanket; bag' < Mal karon 'large matwork sack of coarse material'; contrast #45.

172 gayit 'shovel-nosed spear'. Cf: Mal kait, Mkr kai? 'hook'.

173 jalajala?yu- (Ritharrgu) 'to stagger, walk-unsteadily'. Cf: PAN *Ze:lan 'road; to walk, wander', Mal jalán 'road; to walk'; not Mkr lalaŋ 'walk'.

174 jalatan 'south'. Cf: Mal selatan 'south(wind)' and YM jalaŋ? (53).51

51 A number of speakers have this as a variant; note both alveolar t and n, which rule out Mkr as a source.
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175 jalinda 'sail, cloth, towel, sheet'. Cf: Mal selendang 'scarf, sling, cloth-band', Mkr salinriq 'Id.' [with -ŋ loss].

176 jal?jal?-yun 'to masturbate'. Cf: SPh sarsar (or) salsal 'to work-metal; to masturbate'.

177 jaru? 'sour, poisonous'. Cf: Mal jérók 'acid-fruit, citric-fruit'.

178 majiq (Gumatj) 'bitter, sour'. Cf: Mal masin 'brackish, salty' < PAN *ma-qāsin; not Mkr cē?la 'salty', Mkr kācci 'sour'.

179 ya: (Gupapuyngu) 'ah, oh yes'. Cf: Mal ya 'yes, it is so' < Dutch ya 'Id.'.

GROUP 4: POSSIBLE AUSTRONESIAN LOANWORDS (REQUIRING FURTHER RESEARCH)

180 ba:cu 'digging-stick'. Cf: Mal bacok 'to hack, slice-off', Jav pacul 'hoe', Mkr paso? (= Mal pasak) 'peg, wedge'.

181 ba:kala 'harpoon'. Source language not identifiable.

182 bakura 'robber'. Cf: YM baluka (05); source language not identifiable.

183 baNara 'clear of rubbish'. Cf: Mkr pánnara? 'to let stay uncleared or messy'; possibly a case of misunderstanding, or of semantic reversal.

184 ba:pa? 'father, uncle (FB)'. Cf: Mkr, Mal, Jav bāpa? < PHN *bapa?; note the stress induced vowel length.

185 barupu 'tobacco'. Source language not identifiable.

186 batuman 'swimming-goggles'. Cf: Mkr padoman, Mal padoman 'compass', if the product of misunderstanding or extension of meaning.

187 bicara 'like-this' (note inflection: bica-na 'it was like this'). Cf: Mal bicara 'speak', Mkr bicara 'speak; thing, affair, matter; given that'.

52 See footnote 27.
53 Mal -k is pronounced [-ʔ], and [a] is likely to be interpreted as [ŋ]
54 Warner (1932:491), among others, argues against this as a chance agreement, citing Australian *papa or *pa:pi as the source. YM speakers recognise malu and gunu 'father' as indigenous terms, and refer to many Makassan captains as 'ba:pa-X'; furthermore, the cognate of the Australian forms appears to be YM wa:wa 'brother', with regular change of *-p> -w.
bigal 'axe'. Source language not identifiable. Macknight says 'this is a good case of a specifically Macassarese
derivation' relating it to Mkr pąŋkulu? 'axe', 55 which YM
speakers would have borrowed as either *bąŋkulu or *baŋkulu.
It is not related to any of the forms cited at #165.

bu:can(a) (Gupapuyqu) 'to build'. Cf: YM ja:ma (54): note the
prefix bu- in Bajau (< PHN *baR- as in Mal bar-), e.g.,
bu-guliq 'to roll', bu-guno 'to be useful'.

buluk 'white-feathers (used for armband)'. Source language
not identifiable, but see discussion at 163.

bulukku 'rotten, mouldy'. Cf: Ind bulukan 'mouldy, mildewed',
SPh buluk 'rotten, decayed'.

bulumbul 'white-hair'. Cf: Mkr bulu 'down, fluff' and 163.

bu:tiri 'to deceive, tell a lie'. Cf: PHN *butiR 'lie,
falsehood' > Bisayan butiɣ 'Id.'; an Ind cognate could show
a Mkr-like development of *R > r, followed by a support vowel
(amongst other languages of Celebes).

Da:ci 'very itchy skin disease (used to be fatal)', considered
to have been introduced by Makassans, but source language not
identifiable.

Dalwa-Dalwa 'thick material (like canvass)'. Source language
not identifiable.

Da:mbak 'boat'. Cf: Mal dompak 'squat, broad, low in
proportion to its breadth' (could have been used to describe
some kinds of boats).

dandaŋa 'tin'. Cf: Mal, Jav dandaŋ 'large copper vessel for
steaming rice' (possibly an indirect loan through a vowel-
introducing language such as Anindilyakwa); Mkr dandaŋaŋ 'bar,
ingot' [with -ŋ loss].

Danja 'inside; hold of a ship'. Source language not
identifiable.

damam? 'dinghy'. Cf: Mal sampan, Mkr sampan 'canoe, dinghy'.

damba la 'small inlet where canoe stands; landing'. Cf: Mal
jambaran 'landing, gangway'.

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201 damuku (Gupapuyu) 'canoe'. Source language not identifiable.
202 daramaka [dog-name]. Cf: Mkr taraŋ-mata 'sharp-eye'.
203 du:ŋ (Gupapuyu) 'ladder'. Cf: Baj odon 'Id.' and 34.
204 gacipal [bad sickness: boils with more than one head, sometimes fatal]. Source language not identifiable, but cf: Mal kasih 'give' + pali 'taboo'.
205 gadara (Gupapuyu) 'coral'. Cf: Mkr kataraŋ 'form, shape' (or) Mkr gattara? 'tinsel; shining substance'.
206 gadubala, gaduwaLa 'paddle, oar'. Source language not identifiable.
207 garamat 'sky, above'. Cf: Mal karamat 'saintly, working miracles'; may be product of misunderstanding, or simply a chance resemblance.
208 gatabaga 'buffalo, caraboa'. Cf: Mal kerbaw, Baj krabaw 'Id.'.
209 gayi-gayi (Gupapuyu) 'core of boil'. Cf: Mkr gae 'open-up'.
211 gitkit-tun 'to laugh.' Cf: Tondano ke?ke? 'Id.'.
212 gućikai 'pocket'. Source language not identifiable.
213 gu:lku 'tobacco; ash; buts'. Source language not identifiable.
214 guluo 'medicine; doctor'. Cf: Mal guloŋ, Mkr guluo 'to roll-up'; this action is involved in rolling up medicinal leaves and poultices.
215 gu:ta (Gupapuyu) 'pliable iron, tin'. Source language not identifiable.
216 jakaRun 'cup, pannikin'. Cf: Bug, Mkr câŋkiri?, Mal, Jav câŋkir 'cup'.
217 jaiamat 'foot'. Cf: Mal salamat-jalan 'good-trip', said when people go away; possibly the product of misunderstanding.
218 jaiatun 'sinker'. Cf: 151, possibly with sa- or se- 'one' as prefix.
219 jatu (Gumatj) 'sour, poison(ous)'. Source language not identifiable.
220 jimbiya (Gupapuyu) 'axe'. Source language not identifiable.
221 jimuku 'piece of steel, iron-crowbar'. Source language not identifiable.
222 jiriT 'small stick across sail from mast'. Source language not identifiable.
223 Lucu (Gumatj) 'big-red-kangaroo'. Cf: Mal lucu 'cute, amusing; make fun of'.
224 lulu 'coconut'. Source language not identifiable.
225 Lu:Lu (Gupapuyŋu) 'fence, fenced-in area'. Cf: Mkr lulu 'contents'.
226 lu:nduŋ (Gupapuyŋu) 'black-tobacco' (archaic). Source language not identifiable.
227 Luŋiŋ 'pipe'. Source language not identifiable.
228 LupLup-tun 'to bathe; swim'. Cf: Tondano li?lip 'swim'.
229 marwala 'paddle, oar'. Source language not identifiable.
230 mat_in? 'paddle, oar'. Cf: Mal masin 'machine'.
231 mi:wuŋ (Gumatj) 'buffalo, big-animal'. Source language not identifiable.
232 miyapunu 'turtle'. Cf: FMP *pœnh, SPh punu 'tortoise', although the miya- part is not identifiable; this may be the product of chance resemblance.
233 muNungari (Gumatj) 'glass-bottle; piece of glass'. Source language not identifiable.
234 mu:wayak (Gumatj) 'calico, material; clothes'. Source language not identifiable.
235 Nupuyŋa 'coconut'. Source language not identifiable.
236 namma? 'mother'. Cf: Mkr ámma? 'mother' [with ñ- since YM does not allow a word to begin with a vowel (see 89)]; contrast PAN *ŋma(?), Bug ama 'father'.
237 Raki? 'rope, string'. Cf: Mkr ráki?, Mal rakit 'raft (logs or bamboo tied together)'.

56 However, note m- : L- alternation in forms like miŋgu : Liŋu (87:78), Gumatj miyaman : Gupapuyŋu Liyaman 'sing', possibly miya- is an alternate of YM Liya 'head', i.e., turtle (shell) + head = 'living tortoise'.

57 There is, of course, a perfect Australian cognate of *gama-, e.g., Koko-Bera gamá-yar 'mother', Warlpiri gama 'female', ngama 'mother'. YM speakers generally recognise ngandi as their word for 'mother', which would be cognate with the Warlpiri form (above), i.e., *gamaDi > *nam(i)Di > gaNDi (with assimilation of m to retroflex D). The agreement with Mkr is certainly striking, especially in light of the fact that the Mkr form disagrees with the other AN evidence, viz: PAN *ama(?) 'father', *ma(?) 'mother'.

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AUSTRONESIAN LOANWORDS

238 rica-rica (Gumatj) 'to dive (for trepang)'. Cf: Mkr réja-2 'to do together, to do in a large group'.

239 waDak, waDaka (Gumatj) 'seat of canoe or dinghy'. Source language not identifiable.

240 wa:k 'crow'. Cf: PHN *ũak 'crow'; onomatopoeia is probably involved.

241 walpaNa 'canoe'. Source language not identifiable.

242 waTu 'dog'. Note resemblance to PAN *u-a:su 'dog', which in some languages has reflexes watu, although Bug ãsu.

243 wa:wula (Gupapuygu) 'axe'. Source language not identifiable.

244 wiri-cun 'to go paddling or rowing'. Source language not identifiable.

245 wulu (Gupapuygu) 'hair of dead person of Dhawa moiety'. Cf: Mkr, Bug ulu, Mal (h)ulu 'head; chief'; contrast Mkr, Mal bulu, Bug, Jav wulu 'hair, plumage, bristles' ('body-hair, not head-hair').

246 wuramu 'Makassar grave-post'. Cf: Mal oraŋ 'person' + -mu 'your'. Arnhem Landers claim the word and the design to be of Makassan origin, but no Mkr word can be found. Cense discusses this problem.58

247 wurapanda 'white-person'. Possibly Mal: oraŋ 'person' + belanda 'Dutch'; it is unlikely to be a reduction of ujun pandan 'Makassarese city and port', since it refers only to 'white-person' and never to Makassans, Japanese, Chinese, etc. Compare: Anindilyakwa (Groote Eylandt) urabaranda, urubalanda, urubanda 'white-person'.

248 yiki 'knife; anything sharp made of steel'. Source language not identifiable.

249 yu: 'yes'. Cf: Mkr fo 'yes'. Words like ya- and yu- are distributed amongst many Australian languages and are likely to be descended from Proto Pama-Nyungan rather than loans.

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58 Cense 1952 (although neither he nor Wirjosuparto 1969:157 associate the YM form with any Mkr or AN word) states that 'wuramu is said to mean something like "swindler, thief, or collector of moneys"' (translation by C.C. Macknight, personal communication).
It is the long vowel that makes this particular form suspect as a Mkr loan, although, conversely, the Mkr form may be a borrowing from Aboriginal languages since AN languages generally have cognates of PHN *heʔa or PHN *aiʔ 'yes'. The factor of chance resemblance must also be considered.

NORTHERN TERRITORY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCHOOL OF AUSTRALIAN LINGUISTICS, DARWIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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JOURNAL OF A VOYAGE AROUND ARNHEM LAND
IN 1875

C.C. Macknight

The journal published here describes a voyage from Palmerston (Darwin) to Blue Mud Bay on the western shore of the Gulf of Carpentaria, and back again, undertaken between September and December 1875. In itself, the expedition is of only passing interest, but the journal is worth publishing for its many references to Aborigines, and especially for the picture that emerges of the results of contact with Macassan trepangers along this extensive stretch of coast. Better than any other early source, it illustrates the highly variable conditions of communication and conflict between the several groups of people in the area. Some Aborigines were accustomed to travelling and working with Macassans and, as the author notes towards the end of his account, Aboriginal culture and society were extensively influenced by this contact. He also comments on situations of conflict. Relations with Europeans and other Aborigines were similarly complicated and uncertain, as appears in several instances.

Nineteenth century accounts of the eastern parts of Arnhem Land, in particular, are few enough anyway to give another value. Flinders in 1802-03 had confirmed the general indications of the coast available from earlier Dutch voyages and provided a chart of sufficient accuracy for general navigation, but his contact with Aborigines was relatively slight and rather unhappy. Phillip Parker King continued Flinders' charting westwards from about Elcho Island in 1818-19. The three early British settlements, Fort Dundas on Melville Island (1824-29), Fort Wellington in Raffles Bay (1827-29) and Victoria in Port Essington (1838-49), were all in locations surveyed by King and neither the settlement garrisons nor the several hydrographic expeditions that called had any contact with eastern Arnhem Land, except indirectly by way of the Macassans. Leichhardt coming north by land to Port Essington in 1845 kept well to the west after crossing the Roper River and Stuart in 1862 reached the sea not far from modern Darwin. The exploring activities associated with the unfortunate South Australian settlement at Escape Cliffs (1864-67) were all in western Arnhem Land or further west, and it was not until Cadell set about searching for a better site in 1867 that Europeans again visited eastern Arnhem Land. His account and especially that of his second-in-command, Napier, are comparable with that published here. Permanent European settlement at Darwin from 1869 and the steady expansion of administrative control by the South Australian authorities led to occasional voyages collecting cypress pine and maritime products, and a pastoral holding on the Goyder River was briefly occupied. However the account published here is not only among the earliest descriptions of eastern Arnhem Land but is also one of the more interesting from the point of view of Aborigines.

Although E.O. Robinson, a member of this party, sent some information about Aborigines on the Cobourg Peninsula to A.W. Howitt in 1880-81, the whole of coastal Arnhem Land remained beyond the range of significant anthropological work until the first missionaries arrived in the area from 1916 onwards. Within ten years, W. Lloyd Warner began the field work at Milingimbi in the Crocodile Islands, which led to his justly famous book, A Black Civilization (1937). The social and cultural complexity of the area and the artistic creativity of its people have attracted an enormous research effort since then. The vigorous social and cultural development of Aboriginal societies in

1 For general discussions of the conditions of Macassan contact with, and influence on Aborigines, see Macknight 1972 and 1976.
2 Cadell in South Australian Parliamentary Papers 1867/178, 1868-9/24, 79 and 79A; Napier [1876].
3 Robinson to Howitt, 6 June 1880, 21 November 1880, 20 July 1881. Howitt Papers, La Trobe Library, Melbourne.
Arnhem Land today is all the more interesting because of the opportunity to trace changes over time. There is still much work to be done on the history of these societies. This document, for all its self-interest and bias, can serve as a source for that history. At the least, it shows that even if coastal Arnhem Land was relatively poorly known to Europeans a century ago, it was by no means cut off from contact with a wider world.  

In origin and objectives, the expedition described in this journal had nothing to do with Aborigines or Macassans: it was a gold prospecting expedition. Payable gold had been discovered in reefs south of Darwin in 1872 and a minor rush had developed bringing a relatively substantial addition to the Territory's European population. Although the mines continued to provide the major part of the Territory's export income for the remainder of the century, it was clear as early as the beginning of 1875 that a new field, especially an alluvial field that could be easily and cheaply worked by the miners already in the Territory would be most welcome. In January G.B. Scott, the Government Resident, reported to his Minister in Adelaide:

Unfortunately no alluvial finds of any great extent have yet been discovered. Whether they will or not is an open question. Some experienced men say Yes, some say No. If something of this kind is not soon developed I fear there will be quite an exodus of the European population and if so the country cannot progress.

In March Scott obtained approval to supply a party of volunteer prospectors with horses and rations. The resulting expedition under Thomas Walker eventually reached Blue Mud Bay overland, but returned to the telegraph line on 21 October with nothing but a sorry tale, a map of its travels and a quantity of black sand thought to be from the head of the Liverpool River. When eventually analysed, the sand contained neither tin ore nor gold. The party's route was noted by the Surveyor General, G.W. Goyder, but, as he observed, the information that the country was barren and utterly worthless only confirmed previous reports. Worst of all, however, the leader Walker had been killed by Aborigines and two others of the party wounded.

When the party with which we are here concerned was in eastern Arnhem Land a few months after Walker's party, it heard reports of the earlier party and found traces of its passage. (It is tempting to suspect some local Aboriginal help with locating the camp site and tracks, though this is not stated.) Not suprisingly, given that forty Aborigines were said to have been killed in the affray in which Walker died, news of the overland party had spread far and wide. The present journal provides good evidence on how much Aborigines knew about European exploring parties and massacres beyond the actual route of the Europeans.

On the same day, 15 November 1875, that the Government Resident wrote to tell his Minister of the outcome of Walker's expedition, he also reported that he had lent the government cargo boat Woolner to 'a Mr Robinson and four others' to go prospecting. Wishing to appear careful, he added that he had obtained guarantees for the safety of the boat, but in the event the Minister was 'glad to find [the Government Resident] alive to the necessity of doing all in his power to develop the resources of the Territory' and recognized the need for discretionary action. The Woolner had left over two months before.
As the local newspaper at the time had reported, the party comprised 'E.O. Robinson, J. Lorance, Eb Francis, — Brown, Fred Arnold and a black boy'.

Robinson was apparently the best known, at least to officialdom, and probably acted as leader. He seems to have arrived in the Territory about a year before and went on to a long and eventful career there as cattle station manager, trepanger, Customs official dealing with the Macassans and, probably most profitably, buffalo shooter and hide exporter.

Nothing is known of the other men, nor is it clear why the present journal is written by Lorance. The destination of the party was apparently the same as that of Walker's party: the Government Resident reported that they were bound for 'a place about two hundred miles to the Eastward of Port Essington, ... it being alleged that the Aborigines in the locality obtained gold and trade therewith with the [Macassans]'.

It is now impossible to track down the ultimate source of this rumour about gold near Blue Mud Bay, which seems to be quite wrong, but it was certainly no secret.

The Lorance journal as we have it was apparently written up after the return of the party, though it would seem to have been based on a log kept at the time. Thus, a retrospective comment doubting Aboriginal information, which is found in the long entry for 13 October, is distinguished by brackets in the manuscript. The whole would appear to have been written out at one sitting with the handwriting steadily growing in size and confidence, and there is no reason to doubt the date of 18 December 1875.

Although expression and spelling are often a little rocky, the sense is not obscure and I have kept editorial corrections to a minimum.

Immediately after the arrival of the party in Palmerston, a brief account of the voyage, which agrees in all but a few details with the information in Lorance's journal, was provided by 'one of the party' to the local newspaper. On 8 January 1876, the Government Resident forwarded the journal to his Minister in Adelaide with a covering note saying that it 'gives information relative to country we have been hitherto unacquainted with'. Two months later, it reached the Minister's office where a file was made up which determines its present location.

The first minute is by J.P. Boucaut, Premier and Commissioner of Crown Lands, ensuring that the file was passed on to the Surveyor General, Goyder, 'for his & Bishop [Bugnion's] information'. More than three months later, Goyder noted merely that 'The route & description of country had been laid down on Land Office plans' and the file was returned to the Northern Territory office.
G.B. Scott Esq.
Government Resident
Palmerston

Sir

On behalfe of myselfe & Party latly returned from Blue Mud Bay I beg to submit to your notice the following particulars of our Expedition.

We left Palmerston on the ninth of Sptbr. 1875 & arrived in Port Essington on the 12th, took in a supply of fresh water & some native blacks to serve as interpreters.17

Sptmbr. 18 left Port Essington 9 a.m. anchored at Smith Point got a supply of Geese of which there were thousands
19 anchored in Bowen straits
20 at Valencia Island found native well with water
21 experienced strong headwinds ran under De Courcy Head for shelter. Saw lots of Buffaloes on shore, on wind calming got under way again & arrived at Sims's Island 2 a.m.
22 shifted to Goulbourn Island, found Water about haelfe a mile in land, at night had a visit from the natives with their Lubaraas, they brought some Tortoise shell to Trade, but as I did not want it, they sold some to Robinson for a knife.

The Goulbourn Islands are very poorly timbered & very stony, the strata is a sort of conglomerate in which occur a few Quartz Pebbles;

Our water being stinking had the blacks to fill with fresh & left in afternoon 23rd, made mouth of King River & anchored.

Sptbr. 24th Came to Hall Point, where natives swamm off to Woolner, I gave them some Tobacco when they invited us on shore telling us there were plenty Geese & Ducks; myself & Arnold went and were received very friendly. Lubaraas bringing us water nuts & yams; found Game plentifull but shy; Buffaloes according to natives, very numerous in land, saw some Buffalo tracks, found country low but well timbered some trees of large dimensions, description same as around Palmerston.

Darkies shifted camp & came near vessel where they honoured us with a grand corroboree the lubaraas danced a very peculiar but very gracefull dance, to the accompaniment of their national instrument, a hollow piece of wood, on which they make a droning noise, but keeping excellent time.

I gave them a dish full of flour to make dampers, when several old Warriors stept forward, smell't it, took pinches and tasted it, when I made them understand it was for to eat, they seemed very much displeased with it, and retired to some sort of counsil, discussing no doubt the merits of my present, when one young warrior stepp'd forward, dipt his fingers in the flour, & put some on his breast, a cry of delight was the result, the consil broke up in a hurry and about haelfe a minute afterwards all the men were beautifully floured allover, from top to toe when they were a deal more cordial to us.

Afterward when on[e] of our blacks made the flour into dampers for them, all clouds disappeared from their brows & they did their utmost to please us.

17 The newspaper account (see note 14) says they collected 8 Aborigines. Their main skill as interpreters probably lay in a rough knowledge of Macassarese, which served as a lingua franca around the coast. For another example of a presumably Port Essington man with the same skill, Robinson noted on the Goyder River in 1885 that 'my blackboy who had been there many times before in the pros, informed me that the Macassar name for the sandy beach inside the Goyder is "Limba Toodi" [Limba Tudea or Shell Bay]' (CRS A1640/1885/1151).
JOURNAL OF A VOYAGE

iptbr. 25th came to Haulround Island.

" 26th had calm anchored about 8 p.m. under Cape Stuart, passed a large river opening\(^{18}\) & saw what I took to be the wreck of a Malay Parw, on false Point.

27 Landed\(^{19}\) to bake bread. had seen three blackfellows, were very shy, had great difficulty in getting near them, but induced one of them to come.

I gave him some Tobacco, and sent him to fish for us, he was unsuccessful, next I had him questioned by our blacks about water, he pointed out a place about three miles away, on going there we were joined by three more blacks, when we came to the water found it a native Well about fourteen feet deep, sunk in a hard cement, how the blacks managed to excavate it with their tools is a riddle to me.

Found Water very bad and stinking, so went back to beach, when the four blacks proposed to fetch water for us from a well further along the beach, I let them go, but keeping one as hostage, on second thought I determined to go along with them to hurry them up, they went a long way along the beach, around false Point when they led about half a mile in land I noticed that they always tried to get behind me which I would not allow, on coming near well, saw a large camp of blacks at some distance; While one cleared out the Well, the two others went to the camp, when I saw lubaras & pikaninnies leaving in the opposite direction then blackfellows kept arriving by twos and threes, me sitting in the shade on the foot of a tree; They got very impertinent asking for tobacco, which I refused to give, when they tried to take the pipe out of my mouth; ten or twelve gradually worked themselves behind me, when the idea struck me that it was getting rather warm, having two revolvers & a splendid rifle, I did not think much of it, but thought discretion the better part of valour; so I jumped up, turned the muzzle of my rifle towards them & gave them to understand there was danger of it going off, if they did not move out of the road; I also pointed one of my revolvers toward them; they seemed perfectly to understand the quality of both, for they instantly cleared to either side of range, then there was a great yabber amongst them, apparently trying to encourage each other to attack me, by this time there was a little water gathered in the well, so I ordered my first acquaintance, to fill the bucket, me following to beach. As soon as they saw me leave there was a great commotion, some of them stepped in my way when I laughingly poked them in the ribs with my rifle, (muzzle) finger on trigger, they opened out & I walked through keeping rifle pointed, at them, they hung back & then the negro, carrying bucket, refused to move any further, so I went out the beach by myself, where I met two of the party who had become rather uneasy on my account, we returned to the well & found the negroes occupied in taking the hoops off the cask, but on seeing us they cleared, taking hoop & pannikin with them.

Afterwards we heard from the blacks that those were the worst negroes on the whole coast, surprising Malay Praws killing & eating the crews & breaking up the vessel for the iron, we found some good Turtle spears in their possession also a Malay axe & tomahawk, the country flat but pretty fairly timbered.

iptbr. 28th came to Crocodile Island

" 29 Went into an inlet laid ship close to a native Well\(^{20}\)

" 30 Emptied old Water & filled with fresh

Island seems very rich soil, low lying but very prolific growth and luxuriant in all native plants, splendid timber, saw fresh tracks of natives on northern side but did not fall in with any.

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18 Probably the mouth of the Blyth River.
19 From what follows, it is clear that this was on Cape Stewart.
20 It is tempting to believe that this was Macassar Well at Milingimbi.
Octbr. 1th. Left daylight, wind dead ahead came [to] Point Guy, found strata all on its flat

Octbr. 2th Off daylight, on rounding Point Guy saw five big canoes, entered Cadell straits.

" 3 " made about five miles more last night, beat with a strong Tide in our favour; found Cadell Straits passable for largest vessels, six to seven fathoms in Channell, but a few shallow banks, if those were properly marked out on chart, the biggest ships could pass in safety. All the Malay Praws are in the habit of passing through them; the Main land appears very low, but Elcho Island is undulating with little rises, Water Plentyfull the valeys black soil fine growth of timber but open forest strata sandstone.

4th Saw more canoes, came to one of Cunningham Islands, composed of white sandstone having nearly the appearance of Quartz.

Octbr. 5th. Came to Inglis Island, went ashore and met an old lubaraa who took us right across; the Island is very high, from three to four hundred feet composed of a slaty sandstone laying flat, land barren & stony.

" 6 " Darkies coming on board told us about four white men with lots of horses were camped about three sleeps from Arnhem Bay, Wanted them to take us to them they promised to do so, but in morning left in a great hurry.21

" 7 " Came near Cape Wilberforce, on carrying away sail, returned to a little Bay for shelter

" 8 " Lots of darkies come on board, got them to bring us water. Crossed Peninsula found strata consisting of white sandstone, natives very friendly, will work for slight remuneration, the finest body of darkies I have seen, not tattooed circumcised are all this side Hall Point22 left at noon & came to Melville bay where we found strata composed of Granite, found Melville Bay a good land lo[c]ked Harbour.

" 9 " Came around Cape Arnhem, found a terrible Tide rip some of our darkies who had been down here before with the Malays, cautioned us to be silent and not speak if any Macasser men (Malays) should appear, a good many Praws have been lost in this tide rip, which looked more like a boiling cauldron than an agitated sea. Got safely through & anchored on other side in a little bay.

" 10 " Came to Carricaglan,23 past left hand harbour & came to an enormous land lo[c]ked sheet of Water of great depth, mountainous to the West, to the north west low land heavily timbered, saw swarms of ducks, returned to left hand branch24 and went up about eight miles

" 11 " Came about 6 miles further and found Water getting shallow which sofar was from three to four fathoms.

" 12 " Filled Water casks & anchored in centre of harbour

" 13 " Started overland to Arnhem Bay to solve the mysterie about the white men. found Buffalo tracks, some quite fresh. Splendid Grazing country, well watered fine description of timber, water every three or four miles, plenty of permanent creeks a fine big river25

21 The newspaper account says that here 'they first heard of the Walker and Marshall affair. One native mentioned white people in the country looking for gold, and was asked to take the party there, which he promised to do, but in the morning he was nowhere to be found: this was supposed to be about three days' journey from the scene of the outrage.' The four surviving members of Walker's party had started back from a point southwest of Arnhem Bay on 4 September.

22 From later observations, this is accurate. The division between circumcising and non-circumcising occurs about Maningrida.

23 The newspaper account has Karakagion. This is presumably a distant corruption of the Macassan name for Port Bradshaw, Karäkaraenga (Macknight 1976:96).

24 That is, Holly Inlet.

25 Probably the Cato River.
larger than the Adelaide emptying into Arnhem Bay from the east. Rocks are Granite, fine undulating country, black soil, seems not subject to inundations, river and creek channels being deep and wide enough to carry off all storm waters, Kangaroos Co[c]katoes white Pigeons native Compagnions Ibis & Turkeys plenty full, also saw one alligator. On coming near Arnhem Bay, found it surrounded by Plains of from four to six miles wide, met darkies who had heard of us from adjoining tribes, came with their families & camped near us. One very intelligent fellow with a broken leg gave us a deal of information he had been to Maccasser & Singapore with the Malays and had a great admiration for those places, knew the points of the compass in malay and even spoke a few words of english, he told us of the whites we had heard of and said it was about [a] three day journey to the south west [to] where they had been, had seen them himself, there had been a great fight between the blacks and them two whites had been killed and in return they had shot forty blacks, he had lately returned from there where he had broke[n] his leg in escaping from hostile blacks \(26\) (My believe now is that he was one of the party attacking Walker & party and broke his leg escaping from them) he advised us to go by water and said he was very sorry to have his leg broke[n], or he would go with us, about the whites, he told us they had lots of Horses, Pi[c]ks, Shoffels, Tin Dishes eating bread and drinking Tea out of Pannikins. \(27\) As there was not the slightest indication of aurifirous country, I concluded to return and make Blue Mud Bay, made a present of tobacco and some empty tins to them and returned; I found this the finest part for a Cattle station I have seen in all Australia being covered with a fine silky Grass very thick, almost like an old country meadow in the lower grounds while the little rises are covered with Kangaroo Grass. \(28\)

We returned to vessel and left for Blue Mud Bay on

br. 20th on coming down harbour saw some blacks with canoes who were very frightened of [us], could not get near them our darkies wanted to hunt them, having an old score against them. four Prt. Essington blacks coming with a Malay Praw to here, the skipper of the Praw sold them for a quantyty of tortoise shell to those niggers, they making a feast of them, knowing the relations of the devoured being with us, they kept clear.

br. 23th Lost anchor, cable being cut by coral. had darkies diving several days but could not recover it made an anchor out of Pi[c]ks \(29\)

The journal of Walker's expedition explains some of what happened. Despite an attack in central Arnhem Land on 17 June, in which Bridson was wounded in the hand, the party reached the southern end of Blue Mud Bay on 7 August. On 9 August, some distance south of the bay, they 'Started this morning from about 30 natives who had been very friendly the day previous, we making them small presents they followed us unperceived, entered the camp and speared two of our party, wounding them very severely, we beat them off ... having travelled a long distance we had no thought of natives following us.' The attack occurred about 11 p.m. and Walker, the leader, died early next morning. Marshall, though badly wounded and in much pain, eventually got back to the telegraph line. A mile or so away from the scene of the attack, on 12 August, the author of the journal notes, 'Natives all round us during the night. They don't like to come too close to the rifle tried to bum us out in afternoon, and ten days later, 'Natives about all last night going as usual after the horses they surrounded me about a mile from the camp intending to kill, had the bridle on one of the horses, fired my revolver at them and galloped into camp and got the rifle to bear on them one shot was enough they cleared' (CRS A1640/1875/623). It is not hard to believe that forty Aborigines were shot.

The newspaper account adds that the Aborigines said 'that the quarrel arose in consequence of their not being able to understand one another.'

In 1885 on the Goyder River, E.O. Robinson recalled that 'Some ten years ago I walked from the Gulf near Sir Rodericks Rocks to Arnhem Bay and at the end of the dry season, November, no rain had fallen "Struck a fine fresh water river running into Arnhem Bay." There are several openings left in the coastline in Arnhem Bay and I dont think any one so far has looked at them, except the Malays. I shall endeavour to get some information from them when they come down' (CRS A1840/1885/1151).

The newspaper account says the Aborigines dived for two days in search of the anchor.
“28” In consequence of delay were short of water; serve allowance had landed Cape Shields, found no water; not auriferous; find Blue Mud Bay very shallow, landed and sunk wells without success. Went to range marked in chart, found some Quartz Pebbles, saw cement on beach possible for Gold to be here.

29 Ashore again, found no water rounded Point southward and saw what looks like a river opening.

30 Went up river with dingy followed right hand branch and found Water on very head about 15 miles from entrance, string of waterholes, must be big creek in wet season Country flat with little rises at distance deep chocolate soil.

Octbr. 31th Filled breaker & water bags and returned to vessel which had come up about 10 miles found water in a swamp but a little brackish.

Nvbr. 1st & 2nd Filled Casks & went up river about six miles.

3rd Left with tide and came three or four miles further when stopt by a rocky bar, river apparently closed up.

4th Went up river on foot, splendid stream, pitty bar stops navigation. Found an old camp of whites, many horse tracks. Darkies consider tracks to be three or four months old, found a small chlorodyne bottle, empty, must have been Walker and party.

5th Started with dingy up river leaving Arnold and Lubaras aboard, came about ten miles when river was blocked up with dead timber and network of palms. Left dingy in charge of one man and two blacks, travelled about ten miles west over sandstone ranges, strata all flat no signs of any minerals camped on a water hole.

6th Went about four miles and came to river again, which makes a great half circle travelled about six miles further up river bank which goes to the N.W. but seeing no indication of auriferous country in river wash, which must have come a long way down country, concluded to return, came back to dingy toward night splendid River, running very rapid, country having a large fall, some very high land towards head of river must come a long way, shot lots of Kangaroos and Ducks river valley not very wide sides covered with heavy wash long way up. Great floods apparently coming down in wet season, river higher up clear of obstructions navigable for boats but strong current.

Nvbr. 7th Came back to vessel, (found tracks of one horse high up river) this morning found tracks leading northward across a bar in river, on returning heard shots fired in direction of vessel when arrived, Arnold told me, had been surrounded by about sixty blacks who shook their spears at him, filled Water casks and made ready for starting.
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Nvbr. 8th Saw a few blacks, but kept their distance.
Saw a few alligators

9 Squally, not save to go into shallow Bay so stopt.

10 went further down headwind, went to ranges where I had seen Quartz previous, found them to consist of Granite with a layer of about twenty feet thickness of the white sandstone having the appearance of Quartz. Country about lower part of river splendid for rice plantations, very little cutting would irrigate hundreds of square miles in parts there are thousands of acres of black soil, near the seacoast I found some large salt pans looking like water at a distance, on coming near they have the appearance of a frozen lake covered in parts with three inches of salt, white as snow.

11 Went out at daylight sailed northward and entered another large river, saw plenty of alligators in this river some of enormous size

13 Found a large brackish lagoon swarming with Game, disturbed some Gins who were gathering nuts, they hooked it and our blacks after them on a lubara hunt, but they returned unsuccessful

14 Went up river about 12 miles and came to branches, stopt, Water perfectly fresh. Our darkies grumble and want to go back home

15 Our darkies went to lagoon again, heard some niggers holler lefthand side

16 Started up what appeared biggest branch but notice strongest current in smallest. Went with dingy about eight miles when it divided in numerous small branches clomb tree and had a look around; saw some high land 10 to 15 miles to the southwest, country all flat with channels of fresh water through it splendid Grassland but rather low could see no flood marks, if dry, would be magnificent country for any purpose excepting Gold digging. Saw very heavy timber, larger trees than I have seen anywhere else in the N.T. Returned to Woolner

17 Went up right hand branch with dingy and found it a large river alive with alligators right hand bank rising ground, a sort of rotten honey combed rock, left hand flat, deep black soil heavily timbered but well grassed went above influence of tide and marked tree with initials and date went a few miles further and found river blocked up with dead timber, stream about forty yards wide and on rapids from 3 to 4 feet deep seems to come from N.W.

18 Jack in morning came aboard with news that four of our darkies had left to go back to Port Essington by land. Am afraid will never get back.

19 Came to Morgan Island

20 Arrived at Bikerton Island, saw what looked like Quartz at a distance went and found it conglomerate mixed with Quartz Pebbles, splendid Island for Water, natives very friendly fishing for us and bringing us Water and ballast, for which I rewarded them with rice and tobacco with which they were highly pleased, I find all the coast blacks in

37 Koolatong River. The newspaper account adds that 'There was a bar at the entrance, with about a fathom of water on it, when it deepened to three or four fathoms all the way. The water was fresh about six miles up.'

38 This seems to be the Maidjunga River junction.

39 The newspaper account mentions that the party was trying to discover more information 'about the affray between the whites and the blacks' as well as searching for gold.

40 It is unclear whether they went further up the Koolatong River or followed the Matta Murta River southwards, but the latter is perhaps more likely.

41 Perhaps the Mitchell Ranges.

42 This seems to have been the Maidjunga River.

43 On 26 February 1877 Charles Levi at Port Essington wrote to John Lewis, 'Of the darkies who went to Blue Mud Bay, three returned overland out of four one speared — the others returned in the boat' (SAA PRG 247, Series 9).
a slight degree civilised, having been from time immemorial connected with the Malay fishermen, working for them and in return getting paid by them in kind, as tobacco rice spearheads canoes &c&c they all speak Malay and look forward to their arrival with joy. In all the sheltered nooks along the coast there are beacons stuck and on asking the blacks what they are for, they tell you with pride, Maccasser man sit down, they have their regular stations and there must be some hundreds annually come here for the Trepang fishing, I found their boiling places all along the coast what I can make out from the blacks they arrive in January and leave in April or May.

21 Left for homeward bound sailed along Grote Island, composed of Granite looking very stony, thought it not worth while to land

22 & s.f. Rounded Capes Arnhem, Wilberforce, through Cadell straits, landed Elcho Island found it beautiful land fit to grow anything, fertile look well watered, Landed at several places along coast, went up some rivers but saw no indication of Gold any where, found all the country far superior to land about Port Darwin stopp a cupple of days at Goulburne Islands came to Smith Point landed remainder of our niggers left next day

13th returned with fair wind last Monday to Palmerston.

Thanking you for you[r] kind assistance given

I remain yours very devoted

J. Lorance.

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CRS. Material held in the Australian Archives, Canberra. Commonwealth Record Series A1640 consists of correspondence dockets, N.T. series, 1868-1910. (For its history see Aboriginal History 1, 1977:109-10. The files used were originally part of SAA 790).


44 For more detail on the information about Macassans in this entry, see Macknight (1976). I believe the Macassan voyages began very roughly about 1700 A.D.

45 The newspaper account adds some detail. 'Arrived at Bickerton Island. The Port Essington natives said the whites had been living at the “Wakea” a long while ago. At Bickerton Island found that “Wakea” was Malay for the Roper River.' In fact, Wakea seems to be a Nunggubuyu word meaning south. It is reported as a name for the Roper River in several sources (Macknight 1976:61). Possibly the author of the newspaper account assumed that Wakea was ‘Malay’ because it was known to the Aborigines brought from Port Essington, some of whom, as we know, had been on the praus. The Macassans did, occasionally, adopt Aboriginal place-names (Macknight 1972:291). A close reading suggests that the Port Essington Aborigines had only a vague knowledge of Wakea, which they may have picked up anywhere, and presumably through the Macassarese lingua franca, the friendly Aborigines on Bickerton Island provided more details. Whatever the precise course of events, it is a good illustration of the communication made possible by a lingua franca. The mention of the whites on the Roper River may refer to the parties associated with the construction of the Overland Telegraph in 1872, or more probably, to a visit by Captain Marsh in the government vessel Flying Cloud in August 1875 (SAA 790/1875/439). This trip was to supply the party visiting justice upon the Roper for the murder of C.H. Johnston earlier in the year.

46 The newspaper account mentions the King River ‘which proved to be only a salt water inlet’.
ABORIGINAL HISTORY AND HISTORY '82

HISTORY '82 is the first general conference organised by the Australian Historical Association. It will be held over three days at the University of New South Wales, 26-28 August 1982. Some twenty specialist historical organisations will hold meetings and operate in planning the program. Arrangements for presenting papers will be largely in the hands of the relevant specialist organisations.

Sessions will cover a wide variety of topics and themes, and various symposia and plenary sessions are planned. Historical geographers, oral historians and specialists in African, Asian and Pacific history will make contributions, and there will be reports on the progress of Australia 1788-1988: A Bicentennial History.

The co-convenors of the HISTORY '82 conference are Dr Heather Radi of Sydney University and Dr Frank Farrell of the University of New South Wales. News of arrangements will appear in coming issues of the Australian Historical Association Bulletin. For general information write to: HISTORY '82, School of History, University of New South Wales, P.O. Box 1, Kensington, NSW 2033.

ABORIGINAL HISTORY will occupy a full day’s program at the conference. Three groups are co-operating to plan the sessions: the Interim History Committee of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, the Editorial Board of Aboriginal History and the Working Party of Aboriginal Historians formed at the February 1981 Bicentennial History conference. The planning committee hopes to structure the program around two themes: ‘Family and community in Aboriginal society’ and ‘Language, method and the past’, and will welcome papers (either 15 minute reports or 45 minute presentations) related to these themes. If you would like to propose a topic for consideration, or wish further information about the Aboriginal history section of HISTORY '82, please write to: Dr Isabel McBryde, Department of Prehistory and Anthropology, Faculty of Arts, Australian National University, P.O. Box 4, Canberra, ACT 2600.
AUSTRALIA 1788-1988: A BICENTENNIAL HISTORY

Since the last report in this journal (1980 4:2), the bicentennial history project has moved from the exploratory period to the second and final stage of writing and research. All nine books in the series now have editors, who are responsible for nominating contributors, determining the final shape of the books, and presenting completed texts and illustrations to the general editors, Ken Inglis and Frank Crowley. The books will be published before 1988, so as to influence discussion of Australia's past during the bicentennial year. Aboriginal history will feature prominently throughout the series. Two books will include large sections on Aboriginal Australia before European settlement.

AUSTRALIA TO 1788, edited by John Mulvaney and Peter White, will be mainly about Aboriginal Australia to 1788. One fifth of the book will consider Asian and European arrivals. In May 1981 a meeting at the ANZAAS Congress elected a working party to shape the Aboriginal segment of this volume. The group, comprising Sandra Bowdler, Jim Bowler, John Clegg, Eve Fesl, Sylvia Hallam, Marcia Langton, Isabel McBryde, John Mulvaney, Peter White and Michael Williams, subsequently proposed that the Aboriginal segment should be in two parts: the first will deal with 'Humans and landscapes', Aboriginal societies from Pleistocene origins to the time of European contact; the second and longer section will discuss diversity and unity in Aboriginal society around the time of European colonisation. In order to stress the wide-ranging diversity among Aboriginal societies two hundred years ago, most of the 1788 'slice' will consist of accounts of Aboriginal societies (language group or other appropriate unit) from different parts of the country. Each chapter will incorporate both Aboriginal and European accounts of that society, its technology, subsistence, cosmology, languages, art, drama, music and relationships with the land.

In the Reference Section of the project, the HISTORICAL ATLAS, edited by Jack Camm and John McQuilton, will include some fifteen pages on traditional Aboriginal life and prehistory. John Clegg, who is advising the editors regarding the Aboriginal section, is currently seeking ideas and information which might be included.

The Atlas will include large and small scale maps, as well as illustrations, photographs, drawings, etc.). Each large double page will be self-contained and will include an explanatory and analytical text. The following suggestions for inclusion are being considered, but no decisions have yet been made. John Clegg and the editors will welcome further suggestions, or ideas which could be incorporated into any of the following:

Map of Australian languages, along with local linguistic situations.
Archeological sites for various time brackets, analysed according to type. To be accompanied by archaeological sections, illustrations and text.
Regional art styles, both rock art and art mobilier, with illustrations of the various styles.
Local maps of land ownership, to show the complexity of Aboriginal relationship to the land. Names and significant site locations to be included where appropriate.
Environmental changes through time.
Trade and exchange networks at 1788 (or thereabouts).

The Atlas also has a bulletin, entitled Australian Historical Geography, which will welcome notes and discussions concerning the mapping of prehistoric or recent Aboriginal situations (e.g. how do we deal with the fact that tightly defined borders are a rare phenomenon?).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION about Australia to 1788, write to John Mulvaney, Department of Prehistory and Anthropology, Faculty of Arts, ANU or Peter White, Department of Prehistory and Anthropology, University of Sydney. For the Atlas write to John Clegg, Department of Prehistory and Anthropology, University of Sydney. And for information about other books or the series generally, write to Stephen Foster, Assistant General Editor (Section A), Bicentennial History, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University, P.O. Box 4, Canberra, ACT 2600, or John McQuilton, Assistant General Editor (Section B), School of History, University of NSW, P.O. Box 1, Kensington, NSW 2033.
Black family history is a relatively new genre and as such is one of the more positive manifestations of the new school of Black history. It is the history of people of mixed origins who identify themselves socially and politically with their black-skinned ancestors. They call themselves Blacks and are known as such in the United States, South Africa and, to a lesser extent, Australia. Their family history differs from African, Aboriginal or Melanesian family history in that the families concerned have had their life crises in the midst of a society alien to their own cultural origins. Black family history has much in common with the family history of other ethnic minority groups except that colour consciousness, prejudice and discriminatory policy have been far more evident. It further differs from European or White American and Australian family history in its freedom from social pretension. European family history began as the history of great families, was then shared by the landed classes, and only in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries became the preoccupation of the middle and lower middle classes. In the modern period, sociological studies have been made mainly of lower class families. Black family history does not fit easily into this class categorisation for its distinguishing characteristic is ethnic pride irrespective of the class status and professionalism achieved by members of the families concerned.

It is significant, then, that the pioneer study in this genre published in 1956 was entitled *Proud shoes: the story of an American family*. The author, Pauli Murray, graduated from Hunter College, Durham, North Carolina in 1933. Member of a professional family (her father was a school principal and her mother a graduate nurse) Miss Murray suffered much from discrimination in pursuit of her distinguished career. In 1938 she was rejected as a graduate student at the University of North Carolina because of her race and in 1944 was rejected by Harvard Law School (having won a scholarship to go there) because of her sex. Notwithstanding, she obtained a master's degree in law from the University of California at Berkeley and in 1965 she was awarded her doctorate at Yale. She was ordained to the priesthood of the Episcopal Church in Washington Cathedral in January 1977.

Dr Murray thought of writing a family memoir as early as 1933 intending merely to entertain and instruct her small nieces and nephews.

What changed my direction, and gave me a motive so compelling that I interrupted my law practice for four years to devote myself full time to researching and writing *Proud Shoes*, was the political and social climate of the 1950s. The civil rights movement was gathering momentum . . . anyone who championed a liberal cause was vulnerable to the charge of disloyalty . . . As a civil rights activist fighting against racial segregation when challengers of segregation policy

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1 Black history, like gay history and women's studies, is one of the new sub-disciplines deriving from the civil rights and related movements and is largely concerned with themes such as resistance and social oppression. Black history as such in Australia is only one facet of Aboriginal history and is clearly differentiated by its socio-political content and message. A typical Australian example is Robinson and York 1977.

2 Murray 1956. I am indebted to Dolores Janiewski of Washington for introducing me to *Proud shoes*. Harper & Row classified Murray 1978 as autobiography rather than family history, yet Rubin 1981 does not mention Murray. Family history is here understood in its traditional sense (i.e. the history of individual families) and not as the new discipline developed by sociologists and demographers which is concerned with the impersonal history of family units.
were few and defeats were customary, I found it imperative to declare my American heritage. Not Communism, but the ideals and influences within my own family had made me a life-long fighter against all forms of inequality and injustice.³

So Black family history was born in a spirit of ethnic pride and assertiveness in 1956. Pauli Murray stressed the fact that her story was not unique, that the 'multi-racial origins of both blacks and whites' were realities that could be ignored but 'not wholly discounted'.⁴ She wrote her story before the polarisation of the races in America and the emergence of the Black Consciousness movement which dominated race relations in the 1960s. Proud shoes, important and well-written as it was, excited little public interest in 1956.

In 1965 another Black author, Alex Haley, began work on a similar exploration of his family past which took twelve years to complete. Roots,⁵ which first appeared in the American Bicentennial Year 1976, was an immediate best-seller coinciding as it did not only with a revival of interest in American history but also with the aftermath of a crusade for social justice. Roots was, in fact, praised for doing what Proud shoes had already achieved twenty years previously. A new edition of Proud shoes appeared in 1978, but it was Roots which captured the public imagination, going through many printings and being dramatised for television audiences throughout the world.

In one respect Roots went further than Proud shoes in that Haley took his narrative back into Africa, opening his saga with the birth of Kunta Kinte (later an American slave) in West Africa.⁶ Pauli Murray also explored her African cultural roots in Ghana in 1960-61. This 'cleared [her] vision of whatever negative stereotypes had blurred [her] understanding of the African background'; it also confirmed her in her essential Americanness.⁷

Both Proud shoes and Roots are based on authentic family material. Both authors spent many hours perusing records and checking detail. Both relied heavily on the memories and folk-memory of elder relatives. Indeed, it is almost possible to believe that the real authors were the elderly aunts and cousins as they told anecdotes from their rockers, checked the manuscript drafts, and in Haley's case, even seemed to direct his researches after death.

It seemed to me then, it seems to me today, that I was a conduit, no more, enacting my particular role in a quest that would result in a book, that could play a positive role within a society which on a worldwide scale seems all too much afflicted with a sense of what might well be termed rootlessness.⁸ For Haley there was and is a real belief that he was writing for his ancestors in the spirit world; he tells of his cousin Georgia going 'up there' — 'as she used to say, to be with grandma, and Aunt Liz, and Aunt Till, and Aunt Plus, and all the others, all of them "settin' up there watchin' " me, to see what I was going to do'.⁹ Murray is less mystical in this respect but her tribute to her aunts is just as real. My great regret is that none of my aunts lived to read the published result. At least, in their closing years, they were part of its making. They shared in the findings of my field research and had a sense of significant undertaking which made them feel productive to the end. I know the story has a flavor which comes from the wealth of human detail they gave me; it could have come from nowhere else.¹⁰

⁴ Murray 1978:xvi.
⁶ Haley used oral tradition, interpreted by Dr Jan Vansina, to locate his origins in Gambia.
⁷ Murray 1978:xvi.
⁸ Haley 1980.
⁹ Haley 1980.
¹⁰ Murray 1978:xii.
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Both authors were able to illuminate the social history of their country through the records of real but otherwise little known people. Murray's was the more scholarly approach with its greater attention to factual incident and detail. Both authors admit to literary licence. Murray states that 'in a few instances' she 'took liberties and drew conclusions which the facts seemed to justify'.

It is an attempt to give a coherent account of my forebears, based on tales told to me and facts discovered in my search of the historical record. I was able to confirm enough of the family stories to trust the credibility of our oral traditions. Throughout the narrative, I tried to distinguish between the facts and the legends which could not be substantiated.

On the other hand, Haley's account is historical fiction; only the outline has any factual base in the records. Both reconstruct conversations but Haley's narrative is dominated by the conversational form in full idiom.

The popularity of *Roots* led to a general quickening of interest in family history. Appearing as it did in a climate sympathetic to Black consciousness, *negritude*, and equal rights, *Roots* achieved an acceptance of the integrity of Black family history. Indicative of this was the recognition of 'a Black heritage' by the Mormons whose church had long held aloof from admitting Blacks to the priesthood. As early as 1971 an organization for Black Mormons known as the Genesis Group was formed, but it had a chequered history until 9 June 1978 when the Mormon leader, Spencer W. Kimball, announced that he had received a divine revelation that 'all worthy male members of the Church could hold the Priesthood of God — including Black men'.

The president of the Genesis Group, Ruffin Bridgforth, was ordained the first Black High Priest and rose rapidly in the hierarchy. The first Black couple were married in the Salt Lake Temple in June 1980.

In August 1980 Alex Haley was the principal guest speaker at the Second World Conference on Records hosted by the Genealogical Society of Utah at Salt Lake City, and attention was given to the collection of Black family records and genealogies for the first time. One outcome of this was a new Mormon policy: to collect the oral family traditions of the Australian Aborigines.

Black family history is as relevant in Australia as it is in America. It is important for Aboriginal authors, as it was for Dr Pauli Murray, to show that their interest in social justice and basic human rights has no necessary connection with imported ideologies but stems naturally from their Australian experience. It is even more important for them to walk with proud shoes. Until recently most Aborigines were in the same position as Black families in America before 1956: while many 'had a rich oral tradition which they shared privately, few had the time or incentive to develop formal genealogies or to write family histories'. Certainly the older members of families had preserved the lore and many anthropologists had enough information to construct elaborate descent charts, but no one had attempted a narrative history based on the genealogical links.

The first Aboriginal family history to be published was usually condensed into a few introductory pages in biographies and autobiographies of distinguished Aborigines. The accounts ranged from several pages in Charles Perkins's *A bastard like me*, to two chapters in Mavis Clark's biography of Sir Douglas Nicholls. This material hardly qualifies as Black family history. In most of these accounts there has been little sense of

12 Genealogical societies throughout the English-speaking world were besieged by enquiries.
13 For the traditional racial view held by Mormons see Douglas 1974.
14 Brief history 1980.
15 Haley addressed the full Congress and a section devoted to African origins in which Africans participated.
17 Perkins 1975:8-11; Clark 1965:12-42.
continuing family values and the most substantial narratives have usually been written by white biographers. They have contained little social message or a real desire to trace 'roots'.

In 1977, the year after the publication of Roots, Faith Bandler produced a fictionalised account of her own father's origins in the New Hebrides and his experiences in the Queensland labour trade. Her book, Wacvie, purported to be a piece of historical detection similar to Roots. Although Mrs Bandler did not explore Aboriginal origins in Wacvie this work heralded Black family history in Australia. It was followed by another fictionalised account of Aboriginal family life, Karobran. The story of an Aboriginal girl by Monica Clare, published posthumously in 1978. Hailed as the first novel by an Aboriginal woman, Karobran had been written before 1972 when the manuscript was offered to the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. Although not Black family history as such the story shared the social character and pride of that genre which may well serve as the guideline for authentic Aboriginal family histories. As Faith Bandler wrote of Karobran in her preface to the book in 1977 it clearly portrayed the 'uncertainty, humiliation and degradation endured by Black Australians in and out of the work force'. She pointed out that 'the struggle of the Blacks to keep their families united epitomises the whole sad history of Black and White relationships in Australia'. The only other Aboriginal family records to be published before 1980 have been purely genealogical.19

Phillip Pepper's You are what you make yourself to be: the story of a Victorian Aboriginal family 1842-1980 is a fine example of Black family history in Australia and either shares or varies many of the characteristics of the American prototype. First, it is a first-person record by an Aboriginal. In this case Phillip Pepper has been assisted by his researcher and friend, Tess De Araugo,22 a successful combination similar to that between the professional Black authors and their older relatives steeped in oral history. The conversational idiom of Roots and Proud shoes finds parallels in Pepper's colloquial narrative. The editor's interspersed gloss, although happily wedded to Pepper's first-person account, is sometimes unsatisfactory in that it ignores some useful sources but this does not detract from the overall effect of seeing events through Aboriginal eyes.

The history, like all good family histories, reflects the times and events in the world at large. Just as the American authors were able to relate the human drama to great issues in American history (particularly those which affected them most such as slavery and the Civil War, as well as local events in North Carolina, Delaware and Virginia) so Pepper's narrative is acted out in terms of both national and local events. Tribal wars, mission station life, discriminatory legislation, the First World War, soldier settlement and the Great Depression are looked at with the same subjectivity as family celebrations and the passing of colourful or sympathetic characters. Family history can be at once extremely personal and representatively national, a point confirmed by the excellent illustrations. Just as Pauli Murray derived her essential Americanness from the North Carolina experience of her family, so Pepper's identity stems from the Gippsland experience.

There is, too, a religious parallel; not essential to the genre, but a source of motive. Pauli Murray wrote:

If Grandfather had not volunteered for the Union in 1863 and come south three years later as a missionary among the Negro freedmen, our family might not have walked in such proud shoes and felt so assured of its place in history. We might have fought our battles with poverty and color troubles, thinking of ourselves as nobodies or not thinking of ourselves at all, dying out with nothing

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18 Bandler 1977.
19 Clare 1978, Wild cat falling by Colin Johnson (1965) is regarded as the first novel by an Aboriginal.
21 For example Mollison and Everitt 1978.
22 Pepper 1980.
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to remember of us except a few census figures... What he attempted — far more than what he finally achieved — made him our colossus and beacon light. Because of him we felt that we belonged, that we had a stake in our country's future, and we clung to that no matter how often it was snatched away from us.23

So also Phillip Pepper looks back to his grandfather Nathaniel Pepper, who belonged to the Wotjoballuk tribe of the Wimmera. He had the distinction of being the first tribal Aboriginal to be baptised in Victoria; he served as an evangelist to his people until his death in 1877. Mr Pepper was responsible for organising a memorial service at Nathaniel's grave in 1977. The Moravian missionary's granddaughter told him that she was 'thinking all the time about how over a hundred years ago our grandfathers had such a shining faith and that it was something she felt we can't hold a candle to, but we just have to keep on trying. And she was right'.24 In the modern religious affiliations there is an interesting contrast. While Pepper's family moved from a conservative Presbyterian Moravian background to the less formalised Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship, Pauli Murray's family with its liberal Quaker and Presbyterian associations finally embraced the Episcopalian faith of her Southern slave-owning ancestors.

While Phillip Pepper's book lacks the literary finesse and sustained narrative of Murray's book (which deserves to become a classic of its kind), it has qualities which will do much to convince other Australians — both Aboriginal and European — of the richness and diversity of the 'Black' heritage. Above all, a quiet pride pervades Pepper's story, a dignity commensurate with the motto which he chose for his family history; 'You are what you make yourself to be'. This piece of home-spun Aboriginal lore echoes the wisdom of the Upanishads: 'As a man acts, as he behaves, so does he become'.25 One is reminded of the words written in 1934 which inspired Pauli Murray with the title of her book:

Here is a new voice — and the voice of a new generation... its clear incisive speech cuts deep into native ground. Here is somebody, walking in [Australia] in proud shoes.26

S.M. Kelly's Proud heritage, published by Artlook Books, is aptly named; it is the family history of Mrs Clara Jackamarra of Broome, who grew up on her father's station Changergoodering or Thango in Western Australia. The story has parallels with Pauli Murray's experience. On the negative side one reads between the lines that Mrs Jackamarra has been the victim of discrimination. On the positive side she shares with Pauli Murray a pride in the quality and achievements of her European ancestors. The book's origin is her quest for recognition as a descendant of the prominent Australian pioneer John Septimus Roe (1797-1878), naval officer, surveyor and explorer who arrived in New South Wales in 1817 and who was progenitor of one of Western Australia's founding (English) families in 1829. Her mother Mary Budjinka, of Aboriginal and Asian descent, was de facto wife of George Harriot Roe, an outstanding man in his own right. The three daughters and son, like other station children in the district, were 'well-spoken and well brought up',27 but normal homestead life ended when they were sent to a mission school at Beagle Bay in 1909-12.

As with Phillip Pepper's story the actual compiler is a friend, in this case Sheila M. Kelly. The first chapter tells of Clara Jackamarra's search and features correspondence which highlights the negative response she received. The second chapter is a brief family history prefaced by charts of the Roe family and its alliances with other Australians of Aboriginal, European, Afghan, Chinese and Malay descent. The third chapter consists of Mrs Jackamarra's recollections told in the first person. In her own words she is 'proud to be black . . ., proud to be white . . .! It is this double pride in being descendants of the 'original proud owners of the country' and of the European pioneers

26 For Stephen Vincent Benet's original words see Murray 1978:viii.
27 Kelly 1980:55.
which is being newly discovered. Australians of mixed descent have every cause for frustration and bitterness in their own experience. Not only has traditional land been alienated from them but in many cases, such as that of Clara Jackamarra's family, Aboriginal children have been excluded from the estates of their prosperous European forebears, and have received no financial or other legacy comparable to that claimed by white children. Mrs Jackamarra displays no bitterness but she hopes that a few acres of her old home Thangoo will be set aside as a permanent trust for her father's descendants. Like Proud shoes her story demonstrates that it is experience in Australia and not imported ideologies which inspire the Aboriginal search for justice, equality and recognition. It would be fitting if one of G.H. Roe's descendants or an Aboriginal of similar descent could be sufficiently inspired by this story to write a saga of Black family history which would explore both sides of the heritage. Such narratives might assist the achievement of reconciliation and equal justice by 1988, when the much vaunted Bicentennial celebrations take place.

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BOOK REVIEWS


My first contact with Lake Tyers was in 1937 as a boy of thirteen years. In the company of Aborigines I illegally visited and stayed with friends. In those days the gate to the mission was locked (we hopped over it). You had to obtain permission from the manager to visit anybody on this mission, as government Aboriginal settlements were called. These visits were to continue regularly for many years until 1963, when as a field officer with the Aborigines Advancement League (Victoria) I officially visited Lake Tyers with Sir Douglas Nicholls. It was during the Save the Lake Tyers Campaign when the Government was trying to close Lake Tyers. Our role was to give support to those that wished to stay and prevent the closure of Lake Tyers.

In 1967 I transferred from the A.A.L. to the Aborigines Welfare Board and was appointed Officer-in-Charge of Lake Tyers. The clock had turned a full circle. I was now supposed to evict illegal tenants and visitors: friends who had previously lived at Lake Tyers but had been forced off by Government policy with nowhere to live. Many families were living in huts and humpies others were sleeping under the Snowy River bridge at Orbost and on the fringes of rubbish dumps. When the A.W.B. was abolished I became a field officer for the newly formed Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs and I was stationed in East Gippsland.

I first met Phillip Pepper and his family in 1939 when I stayed at Mrs Pepper’s mother’s place in Newmerella. Granny Aggy Thomas lived only a few doors from the Pepper family. In later years, in particular the 1960s when the Aboriginal rights movement was gaining momentum, Phillip and Ethel Pepper were in Melbourne and Canberra regularly attending the meetings. Phillip Pepper’s book is about Victorian Aboriginal history and the Pepper family. In it Phillip traces his family’s history from his grandfather Nathaniel Pepper, the first tribal Aboriginal to be baptised in Victoria. He tells his story with the help of a close friend, Tess De Araugo who did the research and documentary references.

We are most fortunate that Phillip has told his story. Most Aboriginal people of his generation have passed on and today there are no more than three or four Aboriginal people of his age group living in Gippsland. So many Lake Tyers people died so young, through consumption and other diseases. White Australian history tells you that Australia was discovered by Captain Cook, yet Aborigines will tell you they were here thousands of years before he arrived. Since the arrival of the white man the Aboriginal has suffered in many ways through white men’s treachery, attitudes and non-acceptance of the Aboriginal as an equal except with his forced attention on Aboriginal women.

Until recently the white community was unaware what was happening on Aboriginal settlements in south-east Australia; yet these Aboriginal communities, victims of government policies, lived only a few miles from neighbouring white communities. All important issues were decided by whites; when Aborigines objected to white men’s authority they were moved from the station and separated from their families. Any Aboriginal that had the courage to complain to the Board would have his complaint referred to the manager, who could then expel him as a trouble maker.

This book should have been written many years ago but most Aborigines did not have the opportunities or the financial resources that are now available. The Aboriginal Arts Board of the Australian Council assisted with a grant which has made possible the publication of this book. We are fortunate that there are people like Tess De Araugo who has listened and recorded as Phillip told in his own words. It is a book that tells of Aboriginal history passed on by word of mouth from one generation to another. You are what you make yourself to be is the previously untold part of Australian
history that every Australian should read. There has long been a need for such a book, not only for white people but for Aborigines, especially the young who are now wanting to know more of their forgotten history and culture. It may enable some white people to understand why most Aborigines have hatred for whites.

Phillip talks of policies and regulations which divided families, children taken away from their parents, the tragedies and misery that fell on so many families. He laughs and jokes and remembers the good times but for others who lived at Lake Tyers, Framlingham and other settlements it was a life of hardship. At Lake Tyers they were not allowed to own a vehicle until about 1965. Phillip tells of the good managers, like John Bulmer. Captain Newman was a beauty, he loved the people. The likely reason he left Lake Tyers was that he displeased the Board by helping residents. As for Captain Howe, he was a hard one. Phillip gives a detailed criticism of Mr Len Rule, who spent over thirty years at Lake Tyers as Assistant Manager and Manager. But many former Lake Tyers people have come to Mr Rule's defence. To this day they keep in contact with his widow, who still lives a few miles outside the Lake Tyers boundary gate.

Very few Australian people realize the contribution that Aborigines made in the First and Second World Wars. Phillip tells us about his dad, his brother-in-law, his uncle and other Lake Tyers men that served in France and at Gallipoli. His uncle Henry Thorpe was awarded the Military Medal; so was Bill Rawlings of Framlingham. They were both killed in the same battle a few months before the war finished. Then there were the twenty-six Lake Tyers men who enlisted in the Second World War.

The institution at Lake Tyers served the purpose of removing Aborigines from public view and conscience. I think Phillip and his family are fortunate that they did not remain at Lake Tyers. There were opportunities off the mission and the Pepper family, with some education and skills, took those opportunities. But life was not easy. Phillip recalls the year of 1924 at his father's soldier settlement block at Koo-wee-rup when his mother died and the farm was ravaged by floods. Then the depression — it was hard times for black and white.

Phillip speaks highly of Rev. F. Hagenauer, the Moravian missionary who brought his grandfather from the Ebenezer Mission in the Wimmera to Ramahyuck Mission. The old people called Hagenauer Moongan and his wife Yucca, words in the Gippsland language for father and mother. He died in November 1909 after having worked for and amongst the Aborigines of Australia, mainly the Victorians, for over half a century. He had during his time held the office of Secretary of the Board for some years, and had been inspector of the Aboriginal missions in Victoria.

Phillip tells us Hagenauer saved the people in those days because he stopped all the tribal business on the mission. He got them to bring all the weapons and things and put them in a heap and burnt them. Once they were Christians there was no more need for corroborees either. Much praise is given to missionaries. It is true that they provided Aborigines with support that the government and community lacked. But the missionaries, by their attitudes of that time (not now) played a major role in destroying Aboriginal culture by banning their languages and culture.

In Our land till we die, a history of the Framlingham Aborigines recently published by Jan Critchett, she quoted a Parliamentary debate of 1890. The local member stated: 'No matter what the treatment of the blacks might be in other places, the Aboriginal Board had shown itself thoroughly unsympathetic toward the Aborigines in the neighbourhood of Warrnambool; and as to the inspector, the blacks there would rather see the devil himself than old Hagenauer coming amongst them, because every visit the inspector paid them was followed by some treatment ... distressful to the blacks'.

Phillip talks about the 1886 Act which required all able-bodied half castes under thirty-four years to leave the stations and support themselves. The Act broke a lot of people's hearts. One could not have chosen a worse time, for Victoria was severely affected by the depression. The Board prevented marriages between fullbloods and half castes. Aborigines suffered by harassment in the Board's attempts to close the stations, but people were determined to stay. The Act was later amended so that half
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castes could be assisted by the Board for the Protection of the Aborigines. But later the Board’s policy extended to all people living on settlements. Families who had no employment training, who had depended on rations, who had never paid rent, were suddenly dumped on the fringes of towns.

This is a book that deserves to find its way into every home and onto the reading lists of school courses in Australian history. Among the most valuable features of this book are its reproductions of many old photographs, some taken over a hundred years ago.

This is Phillip’s story, but it is only the beginning. He plans to publish a two-volume history titled ‘What did happen to the Aborigines of Victoria’.

ALICK JACKOMOS


This well-illustrated brief history of the Framlingham community grew out of Jan Critchett’s thesis research on the history of two Aboriginal stations in the Western District of Victoria. This book was written to explain the background of a modern controversy about the management of the Framlingham Forest near Warrnambool. In April 1979 Aboriginal people blocked public access to this park, and requested the State Government to recognize their rights to own and protect this land.

The forest area had been owned by their ancestors; indeed, it was part of the Framlingham Aboriginal Reserve from 1861 until 1891, when 3,679 acres were excised, leaving only 586 acres as Aboriginal reserve. Most members of the Aboriginal community had to camp illegally on the excised land until the 1930s, because officialdom considered these ‘half castes’ ineligible to reside on the Aboriginal reserve. But the exiles and their descendants resisted all efforts to disperse their community. They had their own definition of Aboriginal identity. They were loyal to their own place and their own people. They went on caring for this land and the graves of six generations of relatives and friends buried here.

Finally policy changed to accommodate reality. In the 1960s their right to remain was acknowledged, although officials continued to encourage dispersal for ‘assimilation’. For generations members of this community had earned their living by casual labour and dairy farming on the remnant reserve and excised land. Since the 1960s there has been a continuous campaign to regain control of the forest area. A thousand acres had been sold to local farmers but the authorities continued to reject all proposals for its use by Aborigines.

The 1979 protest, which gained nationwide publicity, has a special significance as one of the first ‘land claims’ in south-eastern Australia. In September 1980 Prime Minister Fraser, in his role as the local federal member, intervened to suggest a possible formula for settlement of the Aborigines’ claim to own and manage the forest area. After twelve months the State Government has not yet announced any final settlement.

Critchett’s study is mainly devoted to a sketch of the period between 1829 and 1894, outlining the consequences of European intrusion, the struggle to establish the Framlingham station in the 1860s, and the dispute over its closure in 1889/90. She draws on the archives of the Board responsible for Aboriginal policy, but the greatest contribution of this book is the detailed analysis of local newspaper reportage. Five of the six Victorian Aboriginal stations were closed between 1890 and 1924, to suit bureaucratic convenience and to placate neighbours who coveted the reserved land. Only Framlingham was defended by a sizeable proportion of the local European population.

The letters and deputations of the Framlingham folk are mentioned in Critchett’s book, but I wish she had given us a little more biographical detail about the families who have fought for their homeland for so many generations. I wish, too, that she had
said a little more about the just and warm-hearted manager of Framlingham, William Goodall Jr. This Tasmanian-born son of a local farmer had taught in a district school for three years before he was hired by the Board in 1869, largely at the Aborigines' request. He was then twenty-two. In 1889 he was hastily transferred to another public service branch when (for the second time) he escorted an Aboriginal deputation to Melbourne to protest to the responsible Minister about harmful Board decisions. Critchett does give more detail about the local member, John Murray, the brash youngster elected in 1885 who campaigned for the 'half castes' through the 1890s, changed the Act for their benefit in 1910, and assumed direct control of Aboriginal affairs while Premier and Chief Secretary 1913-1915. But she does not mention Murray's spinster sister, who assisted the Framlingham folk for decades. In a 1951 publication, *Their music has roots*, Anna Vroland recorded a number of songs composed by Victorian Aboriginal communities. She mentioned that Europeans in the Warrnambool district recalled a lament sung by the Framlingham folk at the death of a prominent resident decades before. After the funeral the Aborigines had gone into the bush to continue their keening and observers had caught only the refrain of their lament: 'Miss Mary Murray, Miss Mary Murray, Miss Mary Murray...' 

This district was developed by impoverished selectors, many of them Irish. Their views about dispossession, like their views about mourning etiquette, coincided with those of the Framlingham folk. In 1889 some 556 residents of the surrounding district sent the Chief Secretary a petition protesting the injustice of removing the 'original possessors of the soil'. Almost everyone in the vicinity eventually protested Board plans to alienate all of the Aboriginal reserve and send the occupants elsewhere.

We need many more local histories of this kind before we can make authoritative pronouncements on Australian 'race relations' in the nineteenth or twentieth centuries.

DIANE BARWICK


Most people with even a smattering of knowledge about Australia or Australian Aboriginal Studies, would be aware of a number of features of Aboriginal demography. After contact with the European population in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, there was a considerable population decline. In recent years there has been a high rate of natural increase. Indeed the demographic parameters are in many cases similar to those of an underdeveloped country, high fertility and lowering mortality although infant mortality had historically been very high. But past these generalities, and the wider debates they engender because of the reality of the living conditions that they reflect, there is very little of substance known to anyone outside a fairly small circle of people who have attempted to unravel the complexities of the issues.

Dr Smith's book is a welcome contribution to the Academy of Social Sciences series on Aborigines in Australian Society. It is based on his doctoral thesis some ten years ago and his work for the National Population Inquiry between 1972 and 1976. It also contains material from his time with the Health Research project at the Australian National University. The very nature of the subject matter means that it may be a little offputting for some readers. The quality of the data he has had to work with would horrify most demographers, while the demographic detail and subtleties of the piecing together of the history of Aboriginal population may be a little too much for some anthropologists or prehistorians to come to grips with. It is a painstaking piece of work, putting together information from a wide range of sources and assessing their meaning for the Australian Aboriginal population. Given this wealth of detail it is unfortunate that the production contains a number of proofing mistakes, mainly typographical.
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The book also contains a long overdue debunking of the demographic work of Professor J.B. Birdsell, whose seemingly sophisticated methodology for ascertaining the historical demography of the Australian Aboriginal population has reigned unchallenged for years in disciplines where mathematical expertise is rare.

This book is more than a study of demography, because Dr Smith has had to address himself to another question before he can attempt to state how many Aborigines there were at a particular point in time and what the likely future population might be. That other question is a sociological one, "who is an Aboriginal?" Changes that have taken place between the various data sources as to who is doing the identification, together with the more complex issue of change over time in the propensities of people to identify themselves as Aborigines, make the study of the demographic characteristics of this population, its fertility and mortality, extremely complex. For this reason alone Smith's work and his conclusions are cushioned throughout with a wide range of caveats and suppositions. Indeed he concludes, at one stage, by saying, 'whether the high rates of growth of the population continues, increases or decreases, it may not be possible, at least in the medium term to tell with any certainty whether natural increase, or changing identification, or both, are responsible' (p.245).

Smith uses this point to call for the institution of a system for collection of reliable Aboriginal vital statistics. Whilst there seem to be excellent reasons for supporting this call, it raises a question which has implications for the future of the Aboriginal population. The simple sequence of events, one that has occurred recently in the United States in one form, and in the United Kingdom in the other, is whether the better identification of a minority groups leads to increased government support or increased discrimination. In the United States, minority groups are anxious to see their numbers fully accounted, (some would say over counted) for the benefits this will lead to from programs distributed on a per capita basis. The other line of reasoning, relating to increased discrimination, has been used in the United Kingdom by groups pressing for the collection of less data in censuses on the grounds of invasion of privacy. There are groups both within the Aboriginal community, and associated with it, who would take a similar line.

Given the fact that there are differences in the demographic parameters between the Aboriginal population and the non-Aboriginal, the question becomes: will it be easier to identify the preconditions that lead to these differences and hence enable actions to be taken to reduce them if reliable statistics are kept? The answer would have to be yes, although there is an implicit assumption that there is something inferior about the values of the parameters in Aboriginal society. Whilst there would be little disagreement that a reduction of mortality (especially infant mortality) is desirable, there is more room for disagreement, particularly culturally specific, about fertility rates. But is not just a question of the initial identification, much of which is patently clear in a qualitative way; it is one of monitoring change and increasing the effectiveness of the programs.

Dr Smith has provided the background, laid down the parameters of future study and produced a book that should be a standard reference for anyone seriously working in the field of Aboriginal Studies.

GRAHAM HARRISON
DEPARTMENT OF IMMIGRATION AND ETHNIC AFFAIRS, CANBERRA

The Aboriginal Health Service (A.H.S.) in Fitzroy, an inner Melbourne suburb, is an Aboriginal-run service delivering medical (including dental) services to Aborigines. Decision making in connection with administration and policy determination is in the hands of Aboriginal people; professionals provide medical expertise and advice only.

The A.H.S. began in 1973 as a self-help scheme by local Aborigines with assistance from a volunteer medical practitioner. Growth has been quite spectacular. The April 1981 Newsletter of the Service states that there is a current staff level of 32 (25 Aboriginal people and seven non-Aborigines) and that in the first nine months of the present financial year there was a patient load of 9,550 (total figure for the previous year was 11,000). The same Newsletter announced that staff was currently working without wages because of financial problems. Main funding since 1974 has come from the Commonwealth Government through the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. At the same time the same government more generously funds another Aboriginal health agency, the Special Services Health Section (S.S.H.S.) of the Victorian Health Department.

Nathan's study, based on 239 interviews with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal health workers and non-specialist Aboriginal community members, is concerned with the V.A.H.S., and S.S.H.S. and 'main stream' providers of health care such as local doctors and hospitals. Nathan sees little difference between the approaches of the S.S.H.S. and 'main stream' providers. Their shared viewpoint is that the chronic health problems of Aborigines will only be remedied when they learn to overcome their nervousness about presenting themselves to health agents and learn to use services which are available to all citizens. Readers may recall that, in essence, this is the opinion of Max Kamien in The dark people of Bourke (A.I.A.S., 1978).

The conclusion reached by Nathan is that the V.A.H.S. is best able to meet the health needs of Aborigines, because it is controlled by Aboriginal people and because it treats disease within a contextual framework, taking into consideration the economic and cultural factors which hinder or prevent many such Aborigines from presenting themselves for medical attention. Generalising from the Fitzroy situation, Nathan emphasises that in order to cope with Aboriginal chronic ill-health it is more beneficial and economic for Aboriginal-run health services to be established and encouraged than it is to adopt other approaches.

Hopefully, the message of Nathan's well-researched book may have a positive influence on those who provide health funding, and save the V.A.H.S. from the periodic financial crises which trouble it and disrupt its important services.

It is a cause for some concern that Nathan's first chapter dealing inter alia with the methodology of her study fails to provide information on how her informants were chosen. This omission could lay her open to a charge of bias and could lessen the impact of the study.

ALAN WEST
ABORIGINAL ARTS BOARD, SYDNEY

Law: the old and the new — Aboriginal women in Central Australia speak out. By Diane Bell and Pam Ditton. Published for Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service by Aboriginal History, Canberra, 1980. Distributed by Australian National University Press. Pp x + 147, p.b. $5.95 plus postage.

This is an important book. It is part of a current move to put the record straight about the role and status of Aboriginal women. There is little literature on Aboriginal women; this book makes a significant addition. To quote page 5:
In the past women have rarely been consulted on matters concerning their life choice. Their attitudes and preferences on the basics of life — health, housing, education, community development — are neither known nor sought by those fact finding missions which regularly visit Aboriginal communities in search of data on which to base programmes, policies, and projected estimates. Yet we found women had opinions which are important and respected within their society.

As a report commissioned by the Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service for the Law Reform Commission, its data and presentation are somewhat different from general academic works. The authors are both women. Diane Bell is an anthropologist and Pam Ditton is a legal practitioner. They had just three months in which to conduct the fieldwork and prepare this detailed and comprehensive report. Given the speed and accuracy of the production the authors must surely be forgiven the points where readers may feel the treatment is a too slight or the comments not sufficiently distilled.

In this short space of time the authors visited six different types of Aboriginal communities in Central Australia which they felt were representative of the range of problems facing Aboriginal women today. They recorded the views of women in each place and have presented them as six case studies and as an overview of the main issues concerning Aboriginal women in Central Australia.

The scene is set in the introduction to the book, with a story told by Myrtle Napanangka Kennedy. She describes how she ordered 'white men' off her land while her brothers stood by and watched. 'Poor bugger, they went', she said; 'We never saw them again'. Her authority rests on a complex set of factors. She is ritually very important and well known for her songs, stories and designs. She is also a very intelligent and strong person with wide experience in both traditional and European worlds. As such she is representative of many women in Central Australia today. Small wonder they wish to be consulted and have their views taken into account.

The greater proportion of the book details the six communities visited. A brief summary of the present situation in each community is given and this provides excellent background material for readers unfamiliar with the diversity of life situations in which Aboriginal women find themselves today.

Warrabri is a large settlement of some 750 Aborigines and a considerable number of white 'managers'. Almost half of the Aborigines are traditional owners of the area but at least as many speak a different language and were brought here from an area much further north. It has all of the familiar and negative features of large isolated, institutionalized settlements elsewhere in Australia. Gambling, alcohol and fighting are commonplace. The old and the new law are in conflict.

Willowra is an Aboriginal-managed cattle station. It is run by a stable and integrated Aboriginal community. The women who have inherited the land are important and respected. Here the old and the new law work together. The women feel that they are consulted. Ngurrantiji is an outstation or homeland. It was established in 1977 by several families who walked off the Kurundi cattle station and is now a flourishing and stable community. It is the home of Myrtle Napanangka Kennedy.

Murray Downs is a European-managed cattle station which has an Aboriginal camp living near the homestead. The quality of life varies enormously from one station to another. At Murray Downs both family and ritual life continue and although the people are not managing their own affairs as fully as at Willowra the women feel that they do maintain some authority.

Respect and authority are harder for women to maintain in the towns. The book cites examples from both Tennant Creek and Alice Springs. The problems women face in these areas are explained and the difference in attitudes between town camps where the residents have a lease to their property and those without are enunciated.

The book concludes with a section which sums up the issues as women see them in each situation. Women in the different communities experience the impact of the new law upon the old in different ways. In the areas where Aborigines are in control, as on the outstations and their own cattle stations, women do not seek new or formal
channels to express their opinions. But in European-controlled situations they require safeguards to protect their views and their interests in a largely male-dominated political and legal system. It is clear that in all issues, whether they be related to the old law, like tribal marriage, or to the new, like alcohol, women have important and constructive comments to make.

The authors prove their point quite cogently that, in future, 'women must be included at all levels of the consultative process and the delivery of services'. It is not often realised that the loss of land ownership has had just as devastating an effect on women's authority, identity and self-respect as it has had on men. Their rituals are also tied to land and their role in these is crucial in the maintenance of harmony in the community and the resolution of conflict in the family.

FAY GALE
UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE


The penultimate chapter of Sansom's *The camp at Wallaby Cross* is the best. By describing how one man successfully mounts a ceremony, Sansom introduces the main types of camp residents, their basic inter-relationships, and the social situation they share and daily reconstruct. Unfortunately for the book as a whole, this chapter also undermines the basic assumptions of the rest of Sansom's analysis and, thereby, questions its general validity. Throughout the book Sansom argues that because the Darwin fringe-dwellers are people 'entirely without property', they invest their relationships with each other with words. According to Sansom, words are objects of exchange and constitute an economy. In the penultimate chapter, however, Sansom lists other items which, although not all 'property' in any straightforward sense, are nonetheless valuable resources which the fringe-dwellers exchange. Cash, food, liquor, tyres, hair, women, and even protection get exchanged during the preparations for the ceremony which is itself but the culmination of quite significant, long term exchanges between the fringe-dwellers and other Aborigines. Without a doubt the fringe-dwellers value what people say, how they say it, and even have developed a proprietary sense about the right to express certain meanings and understandings. Given Sansom's evidence, however, it is extreme to argue that the fringe camp's economy is based on words and, particularly, that the Darwin fringe camps are distinctive sociological entities because they emerge as 'jurisdictions of the word'. The penultimate chapter also denies Sansom's basic assumption that Aboriginal fringe camps be understood apart from their relationships with 'white' Australians. The very categories 'fringe' and 'Mission' (categories which Sansom takes as sociologically self-evident) document the fundamental importance of 'white' power in everyday Aboriginal social life. In particular, the exchange of ceremony for hair which the Wallaby Cross people tried to complete makes little sociological sense without consideration of how the two communities were related to 'white' authorities. Sansom's emphasis on the 'jurisdiction of the word' and on the fringe camp as locale of Aboriginal 'escape' combine to reproduce yet again the failing of most studies of contemporary Aborigines. In his final chapter Sansom states: 'Because each countryman of the Darwin hinterland has more to do with other Aborigines than with Australian whites, relationships between countrymen can be treated as events within a segregated social field in which social processes are determined by an internal dialectic' (p. 265). Nothing could be further from the truth.

These fundamental reservations aside, Sansom has highlighted an interesting and important aspect of the fringe-dwellers' social life — how they do politics by managing the meaning of everyday events. He explains how negotiations about what people accept as the facts (the 'given word') gradually give rise to highly typified and
socially accepted units of experience ('happenings'). Of particular interest is his discussion of the relationship between these emergent typifications and the recruitment of people who attest to the authenticity of a 'happening'. He also explains how changes in the identities of individuals and groups with respect to Wallaby Cross can be negotiated by manipulating who has access to political discussions. In the light of my earlier comments, however, what remains unclear is precisely the conditions which determine what gets accepted as true, who is allowed to speak authoritatively, and why. Sansom has demonstrated that people's talk is important to this. Are we to accept, however, that the talk itself determines how people understand what is said and whom they permit to say it?

This raises an ambiguity in Sansom's use of the term 'word'. He apparently derives his use of the term 'word' from the Aborigines. As I read it, however, the term 'word' does not refer to units of spoken language, but to knowledge. People do not own spoken units of language, they own authoritative knowledge and the right to transmit it to others. This is generally characteristic of Australian Aborigines and cannot be explained with reference to the propertylessness of Aboriginal lifestyles. In the pre-colonial era, the monopoly of authoritative knowledge (particularly religious knowledge) by old men was a critical element of their generalized gerontocratic monopoly of all valuable resources, including women. In the current situation, there is a multiplicity of types of knowledge, command of which conditions access to, and control of, different types of resources. Australian bureaucrats, for example, variously value Aborigines' command of 'white' knowledge or 'black' knowledge and dispense conventional houses, pensions, support for outstations, rights to speak in negotiations about land rights and uranium, and many other resources accordingly. Aborigines negotiate with 'whites' as much as with each other about what counts as knowledge and who controls it.

This is common knowledge. Nonetheless, it raises two questions relevant to Sansom's analysis. How distinctive are such negotiations to fringe-dwellers? In Sansom's terms, are the camps distinctive because they are 'jurisdictions of the word'? More generally, is a sociolinguistic mode of analysis which focuses on the formal properties of speech the most useful approach? My answer to both questions is no. Neither the fringe camps nor Aborigines generally are distinctive in their politics of meaning. The key to politics of meaning, moreover, lies not only in speech, but in the many and varied conditions which determine how people come to interpret speech, property exchanges, the allocation of value and the like. The generation of meaning is not limited to acts of speech. Talk is a critical aspect of social life. It does not exhaust it.

In conclusion, what worries me most about this type of analysis is how it perpetuates the myth that Aborigines are somehow quite distinct from non-Aboriginal Australians. It is an anthropological commonplace that different peoples share different cultures and interpret the world accordingly. But a principal problem for analysis is how much Aborigines must take others' cultural understandings into account in their everyday interpretation of the world.

Moreover, one cannot take for granted that Aboriginal cultural understandings have not themselves changed in confrontation with Europeans. The unilateral segregation of Aboriginal culture from its context denies the relevance of these questions.

JEFF COLLMANN

UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE


The publication of Annette Hamilton's book is long overdue. Written originally as an M.A. thesis on the basis of anthropological fieldwork carried out in 1968-69 among Anbarra at Maningrida, Northern Territory, it was at that time the only available
detailed study of Australian Aboriginal child-rearing methods. It was pathfinding in much the same sense that Phyllis Kaberry's ethnography of *Aboriginal women* was in 1939. Both ethnographies broke new ground in an area of Aboriginal research that had previously been treated as marginal and unimportant. Now, more than a decade later, despite the growing number of publications dealing with the lives of Aboriginal women, *Nature and nurture* still remains the only study of its kind. Though the present publication is aimed at a slightly different audience — 'for the generalized, as well as the specialized, reader' — to that of the academic thesis from which it has been revised, its strong point is still undoubtedly the detailed ethnographic description that Dr Hamilton presents of child-rearing practices amongst the Anbarra.

How refreshing it is to find an account (Chapter One) of the researcher in the field coming to terms not only with other people's expectations of her but also with her own expectations of what, ideally, her research should be about, and of how sensitivity to this dialectic can temper the fieldwork approach. It is apparent that Dr Hamilton's responsiveness to these factors — 'So I stopped trying to be a proper anthropologist and sat all day in the camp with mothers and children' (p. 12) — allowed her to capture the minutiae of everyday action and behaviour necessary for an understanding of Anbarra child-rearing and child development. Interestingly, this willingness to observe and record the fine detail of camp life is similar to the methodological emphasis in Kaberry's excellent ethnographic accounts. Also, Hamilton has made an innovative use of more statistically oriented, time-interval observations of interactions and behaviour which gives an added dimension to her description, even given the limited sample that she dealt with.

The first eight chapters constitute Part One. They provide an enormous wealth of information on the way in which the Anbarra deal with all aspects of child development, from the practices and beliefs concerning conception, pregnancy, birth, through infancy and childhood up to the age when children enter into adult status. This is presented as an 'inside picture' (p. 116), an 'Anbarra model of child development' (p. 16) — though Hamilton's own information indicates that no such explicit, coherent model exists in the minds of Anbarra adults. Though some of the findings of Part One might be expected, the thoroughness of her data is welcome. Many comments are provocative and demand further attention and thought. Anbarra childhood is said to be characterized by an open air of adult permissiveness and indulgence with few constraints on the child in terms of eating patterns and routine, and little or no attempt being made by adults to toilet-train infants. The stress in adult-infant interaction is on the child's autonomous control over people and food. Hamilton presents numerous points of comparison with European child-rearing practices and beliefs. She notes the importance of people, not things, as the source of stimulation for Anbarra children, emphasizing physical and sensory stimulation and a mode of adult communication with children which is initially based on 'non-semantic' sounds. She also points out the increasing sexual differentiation between boys and girls in terms of how adults talk to and physically relate to them. Her painstaking observation of the child's social environment removes it from the amorphous group of undefined 'others' typically referred to in many ethnographies.

Yet, children are reared in a predominantly female world, but more particularly it is the actual biological mother and then actual and close classificatory female matrilineal kin (in that order) who are the consistent caretakers of children. Her data show clearly that from early childhood onwards girls also tend to remain closely linked with their mothers and other female relatives while boys progressively become more involved with their fathers and other males. This leads one immediately to reassess the established descriptions of male initiations as a sudden wrenching away of boys from the female world: Hamilton's information shows that the separation has been a constant, but gradual development from a boy's earliest childhood.

Hamilton's occasional speculative forays on the relationship between Anbarra beliefs and practices concerning childrearing and development and adult social interaction are perceptive though frustratingly abrupt. Her comments on the role of breast-feeding as a 'ritual of attachment' (p. 31) and the focussing of children's assertive behaviour towards food; their primary dependence on actual biological kin; their exposure to
non-verbal communicative systems; and the apparent disdain and coolness with which adults seemingly respond to highly emotional, aggressive children, all lead us on to further questions about the nature of adult interaction and behaviour. In Part One these questions are only minimally alluded to. We are told how Anbarra adults view children but not what this tells us about how they view themselves and other adults. One could continue detailing the array of information presented in Part One of this book — it remains an invaluable source of comparative material for future researchers. Her Appendix on Anbarra demography circa 1968 increases its ethnographic value; such studies should be an obligatory part of all future publications.

The remaining four chapters of Part Two briefly deal with some of the wider theoretical issues raised by the data. Though these later chapters contain a number of provocative and well-argued reflections on the nature of Anbarra child-rearing and development, it is the less satisfying section of the book. A discussion of the significance of demographic pressures, natural selection and infanticide for Anbarra child-rearing and development leads her to conclude that Aboriginal infancy is more a period of socialization through modelling, rather than direct training, in which a rigorous selection is unconsciously imposed by people: '... the surviving child had to be self-assertive and make its wants known to its caretakers while, in turn, its caretakers had to be responsive to the child's demands' (p. 127). The Anbarra child is characterized as active in making overt demands and the caretakers 'passive' to what are regarded as the child's innate needs, which can only be met through social interaction rather than through direct training, routines, punishment and reward. In this second half of the book Hamilton deals in brief, somewhat disconnected chapters, with issues such as the development of language, sensorimotor skills and intelligence. She notes amongst other things the consistently advanced motor development of infants in the first 15 months of life. Discussion also examines the nature of the child's developing perception of self and other; and the relevance of Freudian, Piagetian and social learning theories for understanding the nature and outcome of Anbarra child-rearing practice and beliefs. These discussions are then used to foreshadow what has been an underlying premise of the book — that '... there is a natural, biologically determined way for infants and adults (and others) to relate to one another and that this produces an eminently 'social' (though not particularly hard-working or well repressed or wealthy) type of human being' (p. 161). While the latter comments may bring protests from some, and there could be a more detailed analysis of the relationship between childhood and adult society, nevertheless, Hamilton's speculations are penetrating and clearly indicate directions for future research and discussion.

There is always more that one could expect of a book, especially one which has led the reader to ask further questions of his or her own, and in this latter respect Dr Hamilton has succeeded; Nature and nurture should be recommended reading for people in need of some new ideas. Given then, the general excellence of the contents of the book it is unfortunate that the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies has chosen a format which bears a closer resemblance to a women's magazine cookbook, or a children's storybook, than to an academic publication.

DIANE SMITH

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY


Aborigines of the west fills gaps in the literature on Australian Aborigines by describing those who live today in Western Australian cities and towns alongside European Australians, and other who live on remote stations and settlements, and by
reconstructing to some extent the way their ancestors lived and how Europeans disrupted this traditional life over the last 150 years. It is one of the valuable series commissioned for the sequicentennial year of European settlement, though it would be a wry joke to suggest that this book in any way celebrates that event. For the Aborigines 1829 presaged death by violence for many and by painful new diseases for countless more; destruction of their way of life; and 150 years of hardship and discrimination. The consequent despair and reaction is revealed by some of the contributors, particularly by those who are themselves Aborigines, such as Ken Colbung, Jack Davis, May O'Brien and Joan Winch, though more hopeful developments are described by Ribnga Green and Keith Truscott.

A great merit of the book is that is does not in any way imply that the Aborigines of today have 'lost their culture', a common attitude of European-Australian writers even if they are sympathetic to Aborigines. The same writers do not suggest that they themselves have lost their culture because the car and the tractor have replaced the horse, and electricity and gas have replaced wood fires. The contributors to this book emphasise that Aborigines in Western Australia have maintained an Aboriginal identity and have changed by degrees their ancient culture into one which is still predominantly Aboriginal.

Because of their remoteness many Aboriginal groups in the north and west of the State were almost unchanged by European contact at the turn of the century, but for these there are no published reports equivalent to those of Spencer and Gillen on the Northern Territory, Roth on Queensland, or Howitt, Curr, Brough Smyth and R.H. Mathews on southeastern Australia. Admittedly the State government attempted to match these reports, but made a doubtful choice of author in Mrs Daisy Bates. She collected much valuable material between 1901 and 1911 but lacked the training to analyse and present this material, so that the book she wrote for the Western Australian government has not yet been published.

Ronald M. Berndt's opening chapter on traditional Aboriginal life 'concentrates', as he explains, 'on traditional Aboriginal areas existing today', and his information 'relies mainly on systematic investigations . . . made since the 1930s, with only indirect reference to earlier literature'. (It is worth noting that most of these systematic investigations have been made in the 1960s and 1970s and were initiated by the editors of this book, who came to the University of Western Australia in 1956.) Professor Berndt admits that there is valuable information in the archives; but there is no doubt that there is less published literature about the Aborigines of the south-west than about those of the south-east of this continent.

In just over five hundred pages a remarkably wide range of subjects is covered: traditional life, history since contact, conditions today, language, education, health, traditional medicine, race relations, government policy past and present, Aboriginal studies in educational institutions. There are thirty-nine contributions, mostly ten to fifteen pages long, so the treatment of each subject is short. Though carefully condensed to present the most important aspects, they often leave the reader tantalised and wanting to know more. Nowhere is this more so than over prehistory and archaeology. Ian Crawford's seventeen-page article on 'Aboriginal Studies at the Western Australian Museum' — a survey of extensive research in several fields — can afford to devote only three pages to prehistory, so that this important aspect is almost left out of the book, even though the few sites that have been studied by archaeologists suggest that Western Australia could yield discoveries as important as those anywhere on the continent. In their foreword the editors explain why they have not included archaeological material, as they originally intended. They write that, 'as it took shape, the focus on the socio-cultural and linguistic dimensions became plainer: the emphasis, clearly had to be on traditional Aboriginal life seen through the eyes of the present...'. So, with the satisfying feast this book offers, one should not ask for more.

The book is divided into five main headings. Part One consists of Ronald M. Berndt's review of traditional Aboriginal life, Catherine H. Berndt's contribution on Aboriginal women, with new and original ideas from one who is pre-eminent in her development of this subject; an overview of Aboriginal languages by W.H. Douglas,
which made the special features of these easily understandable to a layman; and Jack Davis' moving poem and prose essay on the first 150 years.

Part Two deals with traditional culture, contact history, and the present condition of Aborigines in four main divisions of the State. It is the longest and most detailed. The first section is about the south-west corner, an enclave of non-circumcising people surrounded on two sides by the sea, and on the other two sides by people of decidedly different culture, whose initiation rites included circumcision and subincision. The opening contribution by Sara Meagher and W.D.L. Ride, on the Aboriginal use of natural resources in the south-west reveals one important difference — the richness of the resources enabled the inhabitants to maintain an almost sedentary existence. This is followed by Ronald M. Berndt's brief summary of traditional social and cultural organisation, and Michael Howard's short history of what has happened to the Aborigines since European settlement, and how in spite of much disruption they maintained a separate identity. Then Ken Colbung describes what it was like to be on the Aboriginal side of this culture contact.

The next section, on the Eastern Goldfields, begins with W.H. Douglas describing the special features of the Western Desert language and some of the differences between its dialects. J.E. Stanton gives an account of the Mount Margaret community and how it has changed from its mission-directed days to being an autonomous Aboriginal entity. W.J.K. Christensen traces the history of the Aborigines of the Kalgoorlie-Boulder area, which had an influx of people at various times from different districts; he then tells what it is like to live there today.

There follows a section of the central-west of the state, which Robert Tonkinson opens with a description of the people of the western fringe of the desert, in particular those now regarded as the 'Jigalong mob'. John Wilson then recounts the story of the Pilbara, from the strike of stations hands in 1946 through the period of Aboriginal mining enterprise in the 1950s and 1960s. Dennis Gray examines the survival into the present of traditional medical practices on the Carnarvon Aboriginal Reserve.

The longest of these regional sections is the one on the Kimberleys, perhaps because a considerable amount of research has been done there in recent years, though little reliable factual information was known previously because of remoteness. Michael V. Robinson's contribution is about local organisation and kinship in northern Dampier Land, the home of the Bardi, while C.D. Metcalfe's paper follows logically as it deals with the Bardi language, emphasising particularly the versatility of the verb. Later in the same section Eric Vaszolyi writes about Kimberley languages in general, with Wunambal as an example, showing how these languages use prefixes and suffixes. K. McKelson describes the various Aboriginal linguistic groups now living at La Grange Mission, beginning with the division of the Garadyari known as Nadya Nadya, in whose traditional territory Broome and the Mission lie. Helmut Petri's interesting contribution concerns the upbringing and early training of boys before initiation among the Njangomada of the Western Kimberleys, and dates from research in the late 1950s. Kim Akerman has contributed two articles, one about the renascence of Aboriginal religion and law in the southern Kimberleys, and the other about changes in material culture since European contact and the importance of ceremonial exchange in maintaining the manufacture of some ritual objects, even though these may no longer be used for their original purpose. Bruce Shaw tells of race relations in the east Kimberleys, a brutal story with many massacres of Aborigines by Europeans, the latest in 1926. In contrast Erich Kolig describes a post-contact myth which includes a legendary Captain Cook, his landing in that area with other beings, a mythic re-enactment of the European invasion and dominance over Aboriginal land and law. One aspect of Aboriginal experience in the Kimberleys that seems lacking is an assessment of the strong influence of the many Catholic missions right across the Kimberleys. These are mentioned by only one contributor to this section, Father McKelson of La Grange. Yet the Catholic missions, and to a lesser degree the Anglican mission at Forrest River and the Methodist Mission at Mowanjum, have been the greatest European influence on individual Aborigines.

Part Three opens with the longest contribution in the book; it is by the late Professor Elkin and the editors write: 'We are particularly pleased that it has been
possible to include this chapter, virtually the last contribution of an outstanding anthropologist'. It records Aboriginal-European relations over the previous 150 years, including the actions of government and government departments and other institutions such as missions. For the last fifty years Elkin had had personal involvement through being asked for advice, and consequently there is some first-hand experience included. Susan Tod Woenne next reviews the many commissions of enquiry which have been set up by the Western Australian Government, the first in 1883, the last in 1975. This investigated the much publicised 'Skull Creek incident', which involved a clash between police and Aborigines near Laverton. Terry Long then deals with the development of government policy toward Aborigines, first at the Colonial Office in London, which was more sympathetic than its successors in Perth. The tone of Perth seems to have been set as early as 1837, when, to reproduce a statement from the Legislative Assembly quoted by Long: (p. 358)

The Council has all along thought that although the amelioration and civilisation of the Aboriginal people was an object desirable, yet the protection of the lives and property of the British subject was a matter of more urgency and still greater importance.

B.J. Wright follows with an article on Aboriginal sites and their protection; he shows more confidence in the determination of government to protect these sites than the nation witnessed during the Noonkanbah confrontation (presumably the article was already in press when those events took place). Keith Truscott's contribution 'Changing perspectives of local Aboriginality' and Ribnga Kenneth Green's on 'Aborigines and international politics' give important and original viewpoints on these matters from the side of Aborigines themselves.

Part Four focuses on education and is perhaps the most hopeful part of the book; it suggests that education can best enable Aborigines to take over decisions for their own future and to deal with European-Australians on equal terms. Susan Kaldor and Ian Malcolm write about language, not in this case about indigenous languages, but about the special kinds of English spoken by Aboriginal children, often making it harder for them to learn from teachers who speak standard Australian English; so that there is now a specialist field known by the letters TSESD (Teaching Standard English as a Second Dialect). May L. O'Brien then writes of the educational difficulties of the children who are between two cultures; Michael George describes the programmes for adult education for Aborigines; and Joan Winch explores the problems connected with Aboriginal health.

Part Five, 'Aboriginal Studies' contains descriptive articles about the kind of studies that are operating in the Museum of Western Australia (Ian Crawford); in the schools (C.F. Makin); in teacher education (John L. Sherwood); in the Western Australian Institute of Technology (Rodney McKeich and Ray F. Morland) and the University of Western Australia (Ronald M. Berndt). This is an impressive account of growing attention being paid in these institutions to the oldest Australians.

Altogether this must have been the greatest book bargain offered for years — 543 pages, hardcover, for $15.00 ($10.00 in Western Australia, we are told). Before this review was sent to press, the second edition appeared. It is encouraging to hear of a good book whose first edition is sold out in a year, at a time when worthwhile books are remaindered before some potential buyers have even heard of them. The new edition is in paperback at $19.95, but it is still worth the price. The few misprints have been corrected and it has an index, sadly lacking from the first edition, in the rush to get it out on time. It has also an interesting additional article, by Paul Hasluck, historian and at various time politician, cabinet minister and Governor-General. He makes some wise and thought-provoking comments which should not be dismissed out of hand by concerned European-Australians or politically active Aborigines. His main theme is that the past is water under the bridge and cannot be reversed, the Europeans are not going to return whence they came and the Aborigines have vastly different cultures from those at the time they first met and accordingly the accommodation between them
has to be different. Paul Hasluck seems to hanker still after the assimilationist policy of which he was the chief architect in the 1950s. Those readers who do not agree with him must concede that he puts his case well.

ISOBEL WHITE
AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY


Living archaeology is an attempt to set out a unified theory of ethnoarchaeology. Gould argues that general, uniformitarian principles can be established between ecological variables and human adaptive responses to a level at which we can look at variations from these principles as evidence of symbolic and ideational (i.e. ‘cultural’) behaviour. ‘Only by looking for and recognising anomalies to general patterns of conformity to utilitarian expectations in human behaviour can we reliably infer when and under what conditions symbolic and ideational factors make a difference in the ways people actually behave’ (p. xi).

If this is the program, we can ask two questions. Has Gould established any general principles? Can the archaeological record be looked at usefully in terms of deviations from these (Gould’s ‘anomalies’)? Gould’s key, indeed his only principle, is derived from ecology, and is that there is a limiting factor in any environment, that is, some factor which will determine the number of individuals which can survive a period of maximum stress. The idea of a limiting factor, he claims, ‘is as decisive for explaining human behaviour as any other uniformitarianist principle in natural science’ (p. 112).

Using this principle, and assuming that Aboriginal society is technologically (sensu lato) static, Gould then looks at the adaptive strategies of the forty or fewer Western Desert Aboriginal people he worked with during two field seasons. He concludes that these strategies are based on a ‘risk-minimising’ pattern and never violate environmental requirements to any extreme degree.

He then looks at the works of Meehan on contemporary Anbara shell-gathering, H. Allen on the contact-period Bagundji, Flood on moth-hunters and Beaton on macrozamia collectors, and suggests that the same ‘risk-minimising’ principle was common to all Aboriginal societies (‘Windfalls won’t do’). He accounts for the large gatherings common to many groups of Aboriginal societies in terms of information exchange — information which served to minimize risks. He also appears to suggest that away from the desert where limiting factors are less limiting, Aborigines continued to develop resource optimising behaviour through technological change until the nineteenth century.

He then turns from ethnographic and ethnohistoric subsistence data to lithic technology, where he attempts again to demonstrate that a ‘risk-minimising . . . mode of adaptation’ (p.138) exists. This he does by showing that at Puntutjarpa rockshelter in the Western Desert, used over the last 10,000 years, there is throughout a small component of ‘exotic’ stone used for adzes. This stone makes adzes which are less durable than those made in some local stone, and its use is therefore an anomaly in terms of mechanical efficiency or economy of effort. The anomaly is explained by the use of stone to maintain the long-distance social networks that are critically necessary in times of subsistence stress.

Other anomalies are discussed, including Gould’s own studies at the James Range East site, the irregular distribution of Victorian greenstone hatchet heads (McBryde), the ever-popular fishless Tasmanians (Jones), and the increase in exotic stone at Burke’s Cave in the recent past (H. Allen). Then, with a swift trot through Chinese markets, crashed World War II aircraft, the last gunflint maker of Brandon, a bow in the direction
of two anomalies which defy Gould (Aboriginal — dog relations and the absence of waterbags in parts of the desert), the book ends. What has been achieved?

In terms of the two questions asked earlier, not much. Gould's approach is far too crassly utilitarian to be of much value in theory building, while at the operational level his 'general principles' turn out largely to be based on his belief as to what a 'reasonable person' might be expected to do.

But at a more particularistic level the book is quite worthwhile. Gould does bring an intelligent and inquiring mind to bear on some real problems in Australian archaeology, such as how is the lithic record likely to be formed. His description and discussion of variations in subsistence behaviour throughout Australia will be an eye-opener to many people who think all Aboriginal people lived in the desert. The book is well-written, though the humour is heavy-handed. Above all, perhaps, the book does try to start work on the problem of how to utilise the wide range of information on modern Aboriginal societies in the interpretation of the archaeological record. Given that the usual approaches have been either to ignore the ethnography in archaeological analyses or apply it, like whipped cream, as a garnish, Living archaeology is at least a sustained attempt to point towards a new approach.

J. PETER WHITE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY


In the assessment of a descriptive grammar of any language the following basic questions are usually asked:

a) is it a full and accurate account of the language?

b) what is the theoretical framework of the linguistic analysis?

c) does it throw light on any related languages and on any general linguistic principles?

These important questions fade into relative insignificance when one looks at Tamsin Donaldson's work, because it has a different dimension: it brings back to life the language of northern central New South Wales which was at the verge of extinction. This is achieved from the linguistic point of view because it is a thoughtful and sensitive description 'from the inside' as it were, because the author has in fact become one of the most competent living speakers of Ngiyambaa, though she modestly only hints at this in passing (p. 10). This resurrection of Ngiyambaa has also been achieved in a practical way: Tamsin Donaldson's work has imbued the remnants of people of Wanggaaybuwan descent with pride in their language. Having worked on the neighbouring language, Baagandji, I know that in the 1960s members of the older generation of Wanggaaybuwan — the only ones who have real competence in the language — actually 'planted' in the bush rather than admit their knowledge, whereas now they speak happily amongst themselves and are even willing to let members of the younger generation listen and try to learn. The texts (Appendix A) and the songs (Appendix B) are an important element of this description 'from within'. The traditional stories, for example 'dhuwal, the hairy wanda' and 'wa:way, river-maker' represent at least a fragment of what the extensive traditional literature in Ngiyambaa once was, while the recent stories such as a pig that wasn't lets us share in the life and the humour of the Wanggaaybuwan.

The Ngiyambaa grammar, though well organised and carefully thought out, does not attempt to squeeze Ngiyambaa into a fixed framework, a tendency that makes some linguistic work so dull and monotonous to both technical and lay readers. Tamsin Donaldson's grammar uses those aspects of modern linguistics that are most apt to
describe Ngiyambaa, and she pays particular attention to those characteristics that single out Ngiyambaa from other Australian languages.

In the phonology one of the most interesting features is the series of sequences of vowel — glide — vowel, such as -ayi- usually pronounced [e:] and -awu- usually pronounced [o:]. At first glance one might feel tempted to think that this transcription obscures what is really there — the language is full of ‘e’ and ‘o’ sounds, yet none appear in the transcription. In fact from the practical point of view the old transcriptions Wongaibon and the spelling of place-names such as Girilambone ‘full of stars’ seem to give a marginally better impression of the actual pronunciation than -buwan. Even a linguist — who had obviously failed to read section 2.4.3 carefully — has actually been heard to pronounce [wąna:y bwa:n] instead of [w o:ə ː b ə ː n]. Nevertheless I cannot see any solution to the problem better than the one adopted in this book: it is in fact the only solution that is linguistically justifiable. Furthermore, the few literate people who do know some Ngiyambaa have never had the slightest difficulty reading the transcription correctly and it is after all for them and for their descendants that the book will hold an even greater significance than for the general public.

Morphology and syntax are on the whole treated together in this book because the most interesting features of both are inextricably interwoven. This is of significance particularly in the discussion of the complex system of compound verb roots. One of the most difficult aspects of Ngiyambaa grammar is the array of ‘implicative’ and aspectual suffixes. Only the suffixes referring to time were previously known for central New South Wales languages, i.e. different verbal suffixes implying that an action took place in the morning, the afternoon, all day or all night. Tamsin Donaldson has been able to analyse the finest nuances of Ngiyambaa expression, being able to sense the implication of suffixes that convey intricate and to the outsider unexpected shades of meaning. She discusses for instances verbal suffixes which show that an action was undertaken ‘to get even’, ‘of necessity’ and ‘in a group’. This is of importance from the general linguistic point of view as an example of extreme focussing of all kinds of concepts in the verb, but it also gives most valuable insights into modes of expression and the corresponding modes of thought and social behaviour. Fortunately Tamsin Donaldson and the other Ngiyambaa speakers are now preparing a dictionary and this means that despite the centuries of almost complete neglect we will have the good fortune of getting a first rate record of the major language of northern central New South Wales. This will enhance knowledge of the other languages of this group, Wayilwan, and particularly the now extinct Wiradjuri which once covered such a large part of New South Wales. The work is a major contribution to the study of Aboriginal languages.

In such an outstanding work there is little to criticise. In the introduction it might have been good to mention John King ‘Tap’ of Dareton, and Edie Kennedy of Ivanhoe, the only first-class speakers who permanently live away from the Murrin Bridge community. A serious major problem is the price of the book, which at $55 is far beyond the reach of many younger Wangaaybuwan and other interested people who would love to own it.

LUISE A. HERCUS

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY


This is one of those books which become landmarks, if not watersheds, in the history of a scholarly pursuit. Basically a summary of R.M.W. Dixon’s own encyclopaedic grasp of Australian (Aboriginal) linguistics, it presents a unique synthesis and distillation
of the recording and analysis of Australian languages since 1770, and introduces many new hypotheses. Aimed at three main audiences — the general reader, the general linguist, and the student of Australian languages — the book reflects Dixon's prodigious ability to engage the mind of the non-specialist in an encounter with a difficult subject.

It is perhaps inevitable that someone writing such an overview arouses the pedantic ire of specialist readers, even if they have restricted their more dogmatic and simplistic statements to the area of their least competence. The best parts of this book are concerned with descriptive and historical linguistics. They contain much that will inform and stimulate not only general readers but specialists as well.

Dixon actually attempts not only to survey and introduce the entire field of Australian linguistics, but also to present the first detailed and copiously supported argument concerning the genetic unity and historical development of the languages. Dixon considers the latter to be the main contribution of the book (p. xiv); I agree. Some readers of Aboriginal History will take a special interest in this, especially where Dixon considers the relationships of Tasmanian and Tiwi, for example, to mainland languages, and the possibility of links with language families outside Australia (see Chapter 8). Demonstrating the genetic unity of a set of languages involves being able to reconstruct at least significant amounts of the proto-language from which they are thought to have descended through various intermediate stages, and being able to show what regular changes they have undergone. Much of the new content of this book consists of the advancing of reconstructions and other hypotheses of a historical order, interspersed mainly through Chapters 6, 7, 10, 11 and 12.

I will not give a blow-by-blow account of the book's contents — interested readers can scan the list of contents in their bookshop or library. Instead let us examine one particular aspect of them that may be of greatest interest to the anthropologists, archaeologists and historians of Aboriginal society who may be the principal readers of this august journal. I refer to Dixon's exposition of the role of language in the social and cultural life of Aboriginal people.

This exposition is largely contained in Chapters 2, 3 and 4. Chapter 2, 'Tribe and language', deals with the relevance of linguistic variation to Aboriginal society, or rather to a set of aspects of that society. This set is presented as an ordered, but unstructured or non-integrated, string of social institutions of the kind that commonly receive titles (nouns) or other marking (e.g. in pronouns) in Aboriginal languages. Thus we hear of sections, moieties, subsections, totems, 'tribes'; curiously, semi-moieties do not rate a mention but appear to have been identified with sections (p. 25). This discussion reveals little vision of the society as such, few unifying principles on which to ground and rationalise — or even poetically unify, in the Stannerian manner — the seemingly gratuitous paraphernalia of social categories and distinctions. This is all the more surprising, in a sense, when one reflects that Dixon frequently treats ethnically defined categories as if they were the sociological constructs of an anthropological analysis: for Aborigines do, after all, have a vision of their own society. Dixon's Aborigines tend to lack flesh and blood, coming together under the ethnic cement of linguistic unity in annual tribal hoots to perform their intricacies, but seemingly rather like a band of Morris dancers in Whyalla, in the innocence of entertainment and with the rootlessness of official 'culture'. The simplicity of Dixon's exposition of Aboriginal cultural life mocks statements such as this: 'In terms of social organisation, however, it is Europeans who appear to be primitive by comparison with Aboriginal Australians...'. (p. 6). Perhaps all comparisons are odious, although we make and act on them hourly. But how does one compare whole societies? Or bits of them? Refugees vote with their feet on such matters. Academics may enjoy the luxury of setting Aranda kinship against the Toongabbie Leagues Club, but I know of none who have become permanent members of Aboriginal society.

It is clear from Chapter 2, and especially from Chapter 3, that the features of Aboriginal cultural life which most elicit Dixon's interest are those features formally manifested in language, and which are therefore necessary explanatory elements in
grammatical or phonological descriptions. Ultimately, the relevance of a survey of ‘avoidance styles’ (Chapter 3.3) is, from this point of view, their contribution to semantic theory rather than their elucidation of the ‘principles out of which social relationships, in their interactional aspect, are constructed’ (Brown and Levinson 1979:60). Thus we have an exposition of an elaborate form of hyponymy known by Dixon as ‘mother-in-law language’; yet without an ethnographic (i.e. not simply an informant’s) account of how such a device is manipulated in conversation we do not have an etiquette so much as a highly interesting pocket dictionary of generics. Overt lexical manifestations of this kind are readily identified and investigated from a socially external standpoint, while other devices of equal interest, such as the sliding scale of vulgarity in humour, are harder to isolate and often can only be adequately ‘studied’ as the ethnographer acquires them as part of his or her own competence.

While Chapter 3 is essentially a pre-structural-functionalist collection of customs, Chapter 4 provides a contemporary account of Aboriginal English, the role of language in Aboriginal community cohesion and disintegration, and the bilingual education programme. There is a fascinating account of the origins of aspects of present-day Aboriginal English in eighteenth-century New South Wales. But I think Dixon over-emphasises the influence of language loss on the decline of sociality among Aborigines. In 4.2 he effectively writes off the cultural future of about half the relevant population when he writes:

Many tribes have completely disappeared; there are others that retain a considerable population but have quite lost their language — largely as a result of the dormitory system [?] — and must be indistinguishably assimilated into white society, almost inevitably at the lowest level. Their remaining sense of ‘Aboriginality’ depends to a large degree on a few linguistic shibboleths . . . (query and italics added).

In 1972, announcing plans for bilingual programmes in the Northern Territory, the Sydney Morning Herald supplied an apt headline — ABORIGINAL CHILDREN TO KEEP OWN DIALECTS; they could have added that only in this way could they hope in the long term to keep their own culture, to retain any sense of ‘Aboriginality’. As von Sturmer (1973) has pointed out, this is rather like saying that the survival of Italian culture depends on the continuance of spaghetti.

The greater (linguistic) part of this work is a highly scholarly edifice of summation, survey, and generalisation, the creation of a body of knowledge from a body of facts. It now gives us a linguistic counterpart to the set of classic texts which include Elkin on traditional society and Mulvaney on prehistory in Australia. With regular updating and revision, it should enjoy a much deserved success for many decades to come.

References


PETER SUTTON

ADELAIDE
We do not normally publish correspondence relating to reviews, nor encourage such debates. However in this case the reviewer suggested that the author might wish to write a 'rejoinder' or some reply to the review. So we publish Dixon's comments, sent in a letter to the Review Editor:

I don't like replies to reviews but I would like to make just one point, as follows:
I would question Sutton's suggestion (after von Sturmer) that saying the survival of Aboriginal culture depends in large measure on the continued use of Aboriginal languages is rather like saying that the survival of Italian culture depends on the continuance of spaghetti.
Surely saying that the survival of Aboriginal culture depends on the continued use of Aboriginal languages is like saying that the survival of Italian culture depends on the continued use of Italian. If anyone were to suggest that the survival of Aboriginal culture depended on the eating of witchetty grubs then this would be like saying that the survival of Italian culture depends on the eating of spaghetti.

R.M.W. DIXON
AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY


The photogenic qualities of Aborigines and of the wilder areas of Australia make this book a feast to the eye, since every page has one or more magnificent coloured photographs. In addition, it has a thoughtful text, with a few mistakes evident to the specialist but perhaps excusable in view of the considerable knowledge of Aboriginal culture to be gained from it. It reveals to the layman the richness, beauty and variety of Aboriginal culture as it was in the past and as it persists in some areas today, a matter for pride for all Aborigines, not only for its material content but also for its splendid body of beliefs and myths. The myths come from all over the continent, some from vanished people of the south-east and south-west, even though the photographs of living people are from the north and west. Australian dreaming should enlighten those who still think of Aboriginal culture as meagre in content and degraded in quality.
The illustrations show not only the people themselves but also their art, their daily activities of hunting, gathering, tool-making, painting and carving, and the country which means so much to them, with its rocks and mountains, its seas and deserts, and the wild animals and birds that dwell there. The art includes rock engraving, cave and bark painting, carving and decorating figures, as well as music-making, dancing and body decoration.
A sad comment is that the book presents a somewhat idealised picture compared with the real living conditions of most Aborigines today. An interesting contrast would be revealed by a companion volume containing pictures of city slums and town reserves where so many Aborigines perforce live. Such a volume could not conceal the miserable conditions, but might be able to capture what Australian dreaming cannot do - the abiding warmth and personal support that still exists in even the poorest Aboriginal community.

ISOBEL WHITE
AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

In *Lords of the ring* Dr Peter Corris provides fight fans with an historical account of prize-fighting in Australia — from the first recorded bare-knuckle contest of 1814 to modern day boxing promotions of the 'Rocky arvo' kind held in February 1979. From his researches Corris has put 'flesh on the bones' in just sufficient quantity to create the atmosphere of smoke, blood and sweat; ingredients which have been an inescapable part of boxing for generations. Corris' book should have wide appeal to those who wish to reminisce or learn more from the factual biographies of the boxing greats of yesteryear.

The sociologist, interested in sub-culture development, will also find the book appealing. It was fluctuating economic factors during the first half of the twentieth century which, Corris believes, maintained the steady flow of boxing talent and the fans who supported particular idols. The boxing tents, a familiar sight at showgrounds and which Jimmy Sharman helped make popular, provide the main recruiting source. From the boxing tents, the link between country and city, most fighters graduated to the preliminary bouts the stadiums scheduled, and then on to feature in main attractions. Money was important to both boxer and promoter. The exploitation of their boxers by promoters, entrepreneurs and handlers is not shirked by Corris who 'pulls no punches' in exposing this sordid side of professional boxing where money, rather than talent, often dictated who would win or lose.

Corris forecasts the extinction of professional boxing. A softer more comfortable age, together with '... widespread education, greater social mobility, large scale investment in other sports and a growth of other forms of entertainment' (p.188), are the reasons given for declining interest. Could Australia's present high unemployment provide the re-birth professional boxing so desperately needs in this country? This is unlikely in an age when a first grade rugby league player has greater income earning potential than a boxer, and a much larger fan club. Boxing, whether amateur or professional, will still continue to attract it's 'Fancy'.

A highlight of the book is the contribution Aboriginal fighters have made in creating Australia's boxing history. Perhaps the honour of encouraging Aborigines to participate in prize-fighting is due to John 'Black' Perry. Son of a black American drummer in the 3rd Regiment of Foot and a Jamaican woman, Perry is the first recorded coloured person to have fought professionally in Australia. His ability proved no match for the local talent and when no one was prepared to accept his challenges he turned to handling fighters. His protegé, 'Perry's Pet', a part Aboriginal, beat Sam Bishop in eight rounds of bare-knuckle fighting in June 1850. Other Aboriginal fighters to emerge at this stage were Yellow Johnny and Yellow Jemmy, both part Aboriginal and a fullblood, Black Billy, alias 'Young Sambo'. One of the most successful Aboriginal fighters in the 1850s was Harry Sellers who gave exhibition bouts on the goldfields following his win over Jack Bailey in 1859.

Corris informs us that the first Aboriginal to hold an Australian title was Jerry Jerome, who became middleweight champion in 1913. He graduated from the boxing tent to stadium fighting in 1907 at the age of thirty-three!

Thereafter, Aboriginal boxers featured regularly between the two World Wars. Such fighters as Irwin 'Tiger' Williams, whose ankle weakness limited him to four round bouts; Alby Roberts, a tough welterweight, and Merv Blandon, who won the bantamweight title in 1933. The 1930s saw the rise of Ron Richards, a part Aboriginal, who many consider to have been one of the best professional fighters Australia produced. Despite his boxing skill, which enabled Richards to win titles in three divisions and the Empire middleweight title, he died penniless in 1967, a victim of poor financial management, drink and gambling. Similar fortune befell the Queensland Aboriginal 'Elley' Bennett and the part Aboriginal Jack Hassen. When Dave Sands, the holder of the Australian middle, light heavyweight and heavyweight titles and the Empire middleweight title,
died in a truck accident in 1952 he, like Jerome, was penniless. The experiences of these Aboriginal fighters add support to Corriss' charges of exploitation by their connections.

In more recent times Aboriginal fighters to excel have been Lionel Rose, holder of the Australian and world bantamweight titles, Hector Thompson and Tony Mundine. But for the Aboriginal contribution much of Australia's boxing history would lack lustre.

Corriss' book will complement others which trace particular facets of Australia's historical development. One is left wondering if the timing of the book's publication is a trifle early. With Australia's Bicentenary planned for 1988 the book will make a useful contribution. Indeed it will, in the boxing vernacular, 'go a round for a pound'.

PETER J. GRIMSHAW AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY


In Portraits of "the Whiteman" Basso documents one type of Western Apache verbal play which deals with the Apache vision of 'the Whiteman'. He also offers an interpretive framework for this kind of joking.

The book has a foreword by Dell Hymes, five chapters, an appendix of a number of joking performances, notes and references. Chapter 1 outlines Indian models of 'the Whiteman'; Chapter 2 sketches the historical background and the current local situation. Chapters 3 and 4 are devoted to interpreting the jokes. Chapter 3 presents a few jokes and proposes answers to why they are funny. Chapter 4 places joking behaviour within the context of Western Apache society. Chapter 5 considers change and its effect on joking themes. Through the book cartoons provide a graphic counterpart to the verbal joking described by Basso.

Basso's interpretive framework, according to the blurb, 'draws on current theory in symbolic anthropology, sociolinguistics, and the dramaturgical model of human communication developed by Erving Goffman'. More specifically, Basso develops the notion of a primary text, actual observed non-joking behaviour of white men which is used as raw material, from which joking performances are constructed. Through the two principles of contrast and distortion (pp 44-5) the primary text is transformed into a secondary text which is a kind of rough facsimile of the primary text. I find the notion of primary text rather vague. No primary texts are actually presented in the book and it is difficult to see just what, such as text would contain. Surely they cannot be perfect, undistorted renditions of chunks of Apache life? This would be a tall order even if one knew how or where to segment 'bits of life'. Presumably the ethnographer would have to reconstruct the primary text by looking at what actually is a text (whether as oral literature or as a transcription) viz. the secondary text. In fact Basso may be merely telling us that the Western Apache draw on everyday experience for their jokes.

It is a pity that so much space is devoted to the interpretive framework. Hymes in the foreword rightly remarks that 'the portraits speak for themselves'. The detailed commentary (pp 48-55) on a single text is for me the most illuminating part of the book but does not draw its force so much from the interpretive framework as from Basso's thorough ethnographic knowledge of the Western Apache. In presenting the texts and in descriptive accounts (e.g. Chapter 2) Basso is at his best. Elsewhere the prose can be unnecessarily burdened with jargon, for example: 'Concomitantly the joker confers a joking identity upon the butt, imputing to the latter membership in a status-role category that is structurally implicated by the fore-grounded category in which the joker has placed himself' (pp. 40-41). For instance, the joker is a subordinate and the butt is the boss; in the joke, the boss becomes an underling and the joker, the boss. Simple enough?
BOOK REVIEWS

Basso’s achievement should not be underestimated however. Imitations of Anglo-Americans occurred relatively infrequently, especially in comparison with other forms of verbal play. Over a ten year period Basso witnessed only 12 performances and gathered reports on only 27 more, stopping when one of his consultants said ‘Stop, you’ve bothered it too much already’ (p. xix). Only after nineteen months fieldwork did Basso witness a joking performance. Not surprisingly people are loath to engage in verbal play in front of a whiteman when that verbal play highlights the shortcomings of whites. The ethnographer needs the trust of the local people formed from long and close association and considerable fluency in their wider context. The Western Apache ‘whiteman’ jokes are in a special joking register of English, but the explanation of these jokes and the native categories used to refer to whitemen are of course only accessible through the Western Apache language.

*Portraits of “The Whiteman”* points to a neglected area of Aboriginal life. There have been many opportunities in Australia for Aborigines to observe and satirise the behaviour of Europeans. Since first contact Aborigines have coexisted with Europeans with varying degrees of intimacy: as domestic servants in European homes, as employees in cattle and other industries, as clients to missionaries and government officials, as part of the frontier. In Australia many researchers must have at least had an inkling that jokes were made about whitemen but so far no-one has documented them. Researchers on Aborigines will face similar problems to Basso. Aborigines may be reluctant to let Europeans in on the joke; especially when they are the butt. European investigators will need a good sense of humour, a long acquaintance with the people, a thorough knowledge of their language and know when to stop! Perhaps it would be easier for the documentation of such jokes to be undertaken by Aboriginal researchers.

More attention might have been focussed on the status and function of the joker in Western Apache society. In at least one Aboriginal society, the Murinbata (Murrinhpatha), attitudes to the joker are ambivalent: he is valued because he is ‘always making people laugh’ but there are some reservations because the ideal in this society is the ‘quiet man’ with whom the joker is explicitly contrasted. The joker’s status is sufficiently recognised that there is a special term in Murinbata for this category of person, but one suspects that the joker can never achieve the universal respect given to the ‘quiet man’. It would be interesting to know (in Aboriginal or any other society) how individuals become jokers, whether they have a special function in ceremonial life, whether individuals cease to be jokers after a period, and similar questions.

Of particular relevance to Aboriginal history is the changing nature of jokes about Europeans. Basso stresses that Western Apache jokes are not merely acting out a set of fixed stereotypes but are consistently innovative and contemporary. A team of physicians came to the Western Apache community during Basso’s fieldwork to eradicate diarrhoea in infants and to ‘educate mothers in the proper techniques of breast feeding’! They soon earned the rather unflattering title of ‘those who play with babies’ shit’ and became the subject of joking imitations. Jokers produce new conceptions of ‘the Whiteman’ and to that extent function as active agents of cultural change. It is a pity that researchers had not recorded Aboriginal jokes about Europeans from first contact but in the future recording of such jokes on a regular and widespread basis will provide an inside view of the changing visions of the European in Aboriginal society.

MICHAEL WALSH

UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
BOOK NOTES

(Inclusion here does not preclude review in future issues)

Peter Stanbury ed. 10,000 Years of Sydney Life: a guide to archaeological discovery. The Macleay Museum, University of Sydney, 1979 and reprint 1980. n.p. This volume gives a survey of archaeological approaches to reconstructing the diversity of human life and activities in the Sydney region since the late Pleistocene. Its chapters cover historic and prehistoric archaeology, discussing both the reconstructed picture and the methods used to acquire it.


Gordon Connell. The mystery of Ludwig Leichhardt. Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1980. n.p. A survey of Leichhardt's exploration and 'the mystery' of his last expedition. Plates and maps add to the interest and there are many references to Aboriginal contacts with the explorer and those who searched for him.

Jennifer J. Bryant. The Robinvale Aboriginal and Islander community: transition to independence. Department of Geography, Monash University, Working Paper No. 13., February 1981. Pp. x + 125. p.b., n.p. The text and 55 tables (including statistics on housing, income, health and education) provide up-to-date information on a Victorian community. The author explains that her intention is to make available the data to the people who provided it.

C. Haigh and W. Goldstein eds. The Aborigines of New South Wales. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Sydney, 1980. Pp. 125, numerous plates, many in colour. p.b. $5.00. An excellent survey of Aboriginal culture, past and present, in the various regions of New South Wales, presenting the response to environmental diversity from the desert plains of the west to the snow fields of the southern uplands. The chapters cover the life styles of the various regions, as well as general themes such as technology, social organisation, tribal divisions, and rock art. Preservation and conservation questions are canvassed, with discussion of legislation, and also the role of local Aboriginal communities in this and in site recording programmes.
BOOK REVIEWS

The Heritage Unit of the South Australian Department of the Environment produced in mid-1981 several publications relating to its recording programme in the Flinders Ranges in association with local communities. *Mnerawuta — Ram Paddock Gate* is a 24 page booklet with many illustrations. It presents the results of a site survey and collection of oral history from the elders of the Adnjamathanha community relating to the settlement of Ram Paddock Gate from 1920 to 1929.

*The push from the bush; a bulletin of social history devoted to the year of grace 1838*, (9), July 1981.

These bulletins of the Australia 1788-1988 Bicentennial History project each contain several articles on Aboriginal history. Free copies and information on the project may be obtained from Dr S.G. Foster, Assistant General Editor, Australia 1788-1988, c/o History, R.S.S.S., Australian National University. P.O. Box 4, Canberra, A.C.T. 2600.

*Social Alternatives*, 2 (2), August 1981. *Special Issue: Black Alternatives in Australia*. Edited by Christopher Anderson and David S. Trigger. Department of External Studies, University of Queensland, St. Lucia. $2.75.
Twenty articles, poems and short stories, plus book reviews, provide useful coverage of contemporary Aboriginal history in Australia.

Various authors discuss issues in the methodology of oral history and pay tribute to the pioneering work of Jan Vansina.

A new interdisciplinary journal publishing material on native people and native affairs in Canada and other countries. 'Native' is the term preferred by the indigenous Inuit (Eskimo) and Indian people of Canada, and the editors invite contributions in English, French, or 'any of the native languages of Canada'. As well as original articles, the journal includes special sections. In this issue, 'Discussion and debate' is focussed on land claims research. Other sections on 'Policy', and 'Native Studies' programs in Canadian universities, as well as book reviews, have considerable relevance for researchers in Aboriginal history.

This volume of case studies of women's economic, social and political roles in twelve societies is devoted to analysing the changes which followed European colonization. Detailed studies of specific societies or communities in North and South America, Africa and the Pacific (including Diane Bell's account of marriage choices in Central Australia) challenge the timeless and static depiction of the past in much anthropological
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literature. The editors' introduction, entitled 'Women and anthropology: conceptual problems', provides a useful discussion of ethnocentrism, gender bias and the hazards of an ahistorical approach to the study of other societies.

Sally M. Weaver. Making Canadian Indian policy: the hidden agenda 1968-1970. University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1981. xxi + 236. h.c. and p.b., n.p. This anthropological analysis of decision-making by Canadian politicians and public servants focusses on the formulation of a radical new policy expressed in a 1969 White Paper. The negative response of Indians and the public forced the Trudeau government to repudiate the policy, and admit that the history of Indian land rights had relevance for the present. Weaver was given access to government documents, and interviewed the people who played a major role in formulating the disputed policy. Her comments on the 'liberal' ideology underlying policies aimed at assimilation and her analysis of political strategies in the policy-making process should interest researchers studying the history of Australian Aboriginal administration.

By the people of 'Ksan. Gathering what the Great Nature provided: food traditions of the Gitksan. Douglas & McIntyre, Vancouver: University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1980. Pp. 127. h.c., n.p. This superbly illustrated volume by 'the Book Builders of 'Ksan' could be a model for Australian Aboriginal communities wishing to publish a historical record of some aspect of their past. Individual authors are not named. This history is based on consensus agreement about the validity of oral texts recorded by the elders of one community of the Tsimshian tribe of northern British Columbia, Canada, together with archaeological and documentary evidence. When the elders' recollections do not agree, the conflicting evidence is noted. The Book Builders provide a meticulous description of past and present usage, giving details of the timing and transformation (including incorporation into their language) of innovations acquired from Russian and British visitors to their homeland. This history of food traditions demonstrates the continuity of their heritage. The photographs of food preparation show the people of today using the skills of past and present in their normal domestic routines. The people of 'Ksan have always used all the resources of their environment; thus their book tells how to use modern freezing and canning techniques, as well as the older methods of drying and pit storage, to preserve the bounty of their land. Their recipes utilize innumerable varieties of fish and shellfish. 'Ksan the past is not dead, and innovation is not evidence of assimilation. At 'Ksan the flavours of past and present mingle. Nearly a century ago the anthropologist Franz Boas began to write about the indigenous cultures of the Northwest Coast; the vitality of one of these cultures is exemplified in this second production by the Book Builders of 'Ksan.
THE ABORIGINAL TREATY COMMITTEE
WE CALL FOR A TREATY-WITHIN AUSTRALIA, BETWEEN AUSTRALIANS

We believe that experience since 1788 has demonstrated the need for the status and rights of Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders to be established in a Treaty, Covenant or Convention freely negotiated with the Commonwealth Government by their representatives. Australia is the only former British colony not to recognise native title to land. From this first wrong two centuries of injustice have followed. We believe there is deep concern among Australians of European descent that our ownership of this land, as defined in the imported European law, should still be based solely upon force. It is time to right this wrong.

In 1979, the National Aboriginal Conference asked unanimously for a Treaty to be negotiated. We call upon the Commonwealth Government to respond and we urge the Commonwealth Parliament to resolve:

1. to accept in principle the need for a freely negotiated agreement with the binding force of a Treaty between the Commonwealth and Aboriginal Australians;
2. to establish a Committee to confer with the N.A.C. and Aboriginal organisations and communities and report on:
   (a) action necessary to enable Aborigines effectively to prepare for negotiations;
   (b) procedures by which negotiations could fairly be conducted;
   (c) issues which should be covered in such an agreement;
   (d) the legal and constitutional form and status of such an agreement.

The Committee invites all Australians to support this proposal by writing to their Parliamentary member and Senators. To help us ensure that the concept and the content of a Treaty, Covenant or Convention are widely discussed, we ask you to sign the statement below and make a donation to the costs of this campaign. Donors will receive the publications produced by the Committee.

Dr H.C. Coombs, Chairman.

I/We agree that a Treaty, Covenant or Convention of Peace and Friendship should be negotiated between Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders, and the Commonwealth of Australia.

I/We enclose a donation of $.....to the costs incurred by the Aboriginal Treaty Committee, P.O. Box 1242, Canberra City, ACT 2601.

Name.....................................................................Signature...............................................................
Address...........................................................................................................Postcode............................
I would (not) be interested in joining/starting a regional support group.

INFORMATION FOR AUTHORS

Manuscripts must be typewritten, double-spaced and with ample margins to allow for editorial marking. Submit two copies and keep a carbon. Footnotes should be as brief as possible, typed on a separate sheet and numbered consecutively throughout the paper. A short form of citation should be used for references to literature (for examples see current issue). The bibliography, on a separate page, should show the author's name and full publication details as given on the title page of the work, listed alphabetically by author and chronologically for each author. Tables and maps should be submitted in final form (except for size), on separate sheets, numbered on the back, and accompanied by a list of captions and photographic credits.

Authors should follow the usage of Style manual for authors and printers of Australian government publications except for numbers: use numerals for all requiring more than two words (eg. 105, five thousand). Express percentages as: 45 per cent.

Footnote style:
2. Police Magistrate, Somerset, to Colonial Secretary’, 1 January 1872, end. Normanby to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 19 March 1872 (QSA GOV/A26/1872/20).

Bibliography entries:
Author's first name or initials must appear as on title page; do not abbreviate to initials.

Queensland State Archives (QSA) Governor's Correspondence, QSA/GOV/26/1872/20; QSA/GOV/26/1872/65.
Somerset Magistrates' Letter Book. 1872-1877. Oxley Library, Brisbane. MS.