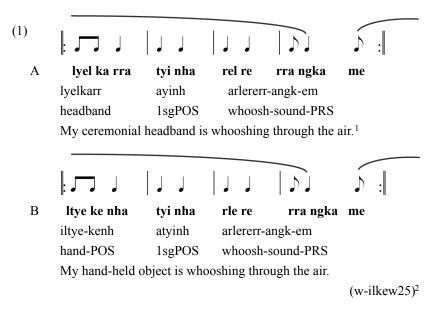# Parallelism in Arandic Song-Poetry

Myfany Turpin

Introduction

      The song-poetry performed by the Arandic people of central Australia is characterized by parallelism of sound, form, and meaning in both auditory and visual modalities. Parallelism here refers to the organized co-occurrence of elements to the extent that each resembles the other, but the elements are not identical to one another (for example, Frog 2014 and Fabb this volume). In Arandic song-poetry we find that adjacent elements as well as elements presented simultaneously in different modalities like song and dance, often resemble each other in a variety of ways. Consider the Anmatyerr couplet below, whose lines A and B exhibit parallelism in both form and meaning:

(1)

A   **lyel ka rra   tyi nha   rel re   rra ngka   me**

lyelkarr   ayinh   arlererr-angk-em

headband   1sgPOS   whoosh-sound-PRS

My ceremonial headband is whooshing through the air.[1]

B   **ltye ke nha   tyi nha   rle re   rra ngka me**

iltye-kenh   atyinh   arlererr-angk-em

hand-POS   1sgPOS   whoosh-sound-PRS

My hand-held object is whooshing through the air.

(w-ilkew25)[2]

The rhythm in both lines of the couplet is identical, but the text differs, albeit minimally. The syntax and vocabulary are largely the same, with both lines ending with the verb "to make a

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[1] The translations provided in this article are as literal as possible to give the reader a sense of the poetic form of the original.

[2] Couplets are referenced by a code that shows their genre, song set, and number identifying the verse.

whooshing sound." Only the initial words differ in lines A and B, though both have the same number of syllables and refer to the same intransitive subject. Line A begins with a poetic word for a ceremonial headband, *lyerlkarr*. This term is replaced in Line B with an indirect expression, *iltya-kenh*, literally "belonging to the hands," a metonym for a hand-held ceremonial dancing prop. Each line thus concatenates different semantic aspects of a single argument: "a ceremonial headband held by dancers." This couplet is accompanied by a dance in which the performers hold both ends of a headband while moving it through the air to create a whooshing sound. Here semantic parallelism spills into the visual domain, as the objects and sounds lexicalized in the text are enacted through the hands and movements of the dancers. A similar dance to the one that accompanies the couplet in (1) is performed by other Arandic groups who have their own set of songs, differing in form but having similar themes (see Fig. 1):

Fig. 1. Lena Ngal and Rosie Ngwarray performing the accompanying dance for the Alyawarr Antarrengeny verse "The headbands made it glisten / The shimmering horizon" (Turpin and Ross 2013:33). (w-ntarr14) Photo by M. Carew, 2011.

Parallelism thus does not only operate at the level of the verse, but also at the level of the "song," that is, the set of inherited verses that belong to each land-holding group (often called "song sets" or "song series"). Across these land-holding groups that span multiple languages there are recurrent themes, dances, and poetic form. In traditional central Australian society,

establishing far-reaching social networks was crucial to survival. Parallelism across the song sets of different linguistic groups may have helped create relationships and cohesion at a broad societal level, since a shared poetic-musical style may have contributed to a sense of shared identity.

This essay shows that parallelism of form and meaning is a pervasive feature in Arandic song-poetry. As a point of departure, I take Jakobson's (1966) cross-linguistic survey of parallelism, in which he notes that there are gaps in many parts of the world (1966:103). Since the publication of this study, there have been numerous studies of parallelism in poetry from the Pacific (Fox 2014), Papua New Guinea (Rumsy and Niles 2011), and the Americas (Gossen 1974; Sherzer 1983 ; Sherzer and Urban 1986; and Epps et al. 2017), yet very little from Australia (although see Walsh 2010). Building on the work of Jakobson (1966), I show that parallelism operates at all levels of the structure of Arandic song-poetry (hemistich, line, couplet, verse, song, genre) and activates all aspects of language, including the visual domain of communication. I also consider the functions of parallelism, drawing on Jakobson's (1960) notion of the "poetic function," the use of language to draw attention to itself. One role of the poetic function is to delimit or constrain the interpretation of Arandic song poetry. For example, in (1) above, the line in a couplet acts as a guide or reference point for how to interpret the other line (compare with Jakobson 1966:102). Another role of the poetic function suggested here is that it does things in Arandic society, drawing on the notion that brings about "metaphysical manipulation as relevant to the goals of the incantation" rather than simply evoke (Epps et al. 2017:67). That is, the poetic function is not only evidence of the ceremonial context of Arandic-song poetry, but it also contributes to the knowledge that one is performing rituals that have the ability to transcend the everyday realm and cause effects in the world (that is, accessing supernatural powers). As suggested above, such shared knowledge may have assisted in creating far-reaching social networks.

This essay focuses on parallelism in rhythm, phonology, grammar, and lexicon of Arandic song poetry. While parallelism is also a feature of the melodic and the visual modality, such an analysis is beyond the scope of this essay. Parallelism, in all its manifestations, operates at multiple levels of the hierarchically structured poetic form. The structure of this essay is as follows: in the remainder of this section I introduce the Arandic people, give a brief outline of the genre, and discuss the current corpus. In the next section I identify types of sound parallelism, showing that these operate at a variety of structural levels. Further on, I identify grammatical and morphological parallelism and then lexical parallelism, both of which are most evident at the level of the line. Following this, I identify semantic parallelism within and beyond the level of the couplet and thematic parallelism, and I conclude with a discussion of the role of parallelism in Arandic societies.

Arandic Languages and People

"Arandic" is a linguistic term that refers to a subgroup within the broader Pama-Nyungan language family that covers the greater portion of Australia. Arandic refers to a group of closely related language varieties spoken in central Australia. The term was initially used by Hale (1962) who later referred to the group as a "language-dialect complex" (1983:78). The Arandic group

can be divided into two subgroups with a number of distinct varieties and up to eleven communalects (Breen 2001:47). Fig. 2 shows the location of Arandic varieties on which this study is based, as well as neighboring linguistic subgroups. Estimates of the total number of Arandic language-speaking people range from 4,500-6,000. The languages and their performance traditions are highly endangered and have only been orally transmitted until very recently. Traditionally, multilingualism was the norm, so it is not surprising that songs and dances draw on the lexicon and iconography of multiple varieties of Arandic.

An important ethnographic work on song-poetry from this region is Strehlow's (1971) *Songs of Central Australia*, which proved the existence of an oral literature of "high culture" in Aboriginal societies. This monumental work, however, consists almost entirely of men's song—poetry that Arandic people regard as excluded from the public domain and restricted solely to initiated men. In contrast, the present study focuses on a genre of women's non-restricted song-poetry called *awelye* [awúʎɐ],[3] and thus the recordings and analysis can be further investigated, and indeed many are publicly available (Campbell et al. 2009 and 2015; Turpin 2004; Turpin and Ross 2013; Turpin and Laughren 2014).

Awelye *Song-Poetry*

In the period known as the Dreaming, ancestral spirit beings traveled the land, created the features, and initiated lore through their actions and song. This included the creation of women's songs called *awelye*, which are practiced across the Arandic region and relate to their inherited estates. *Awelye* is sung as a series of many short verses. Each verse refers to a particular place, ancestor, or an action that the ancestor performed, such as seed harvesting. A performance involves a group of women singing verses in unison to
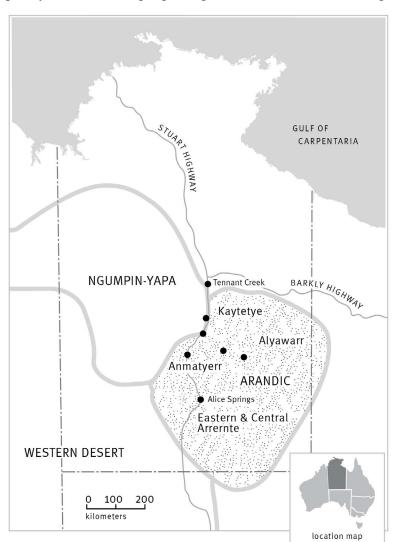

Fig. 2. Map showing the Arandic varieties and two neighboring subgroups that have similar song-poetry (Ngumpin-Yapa and Western Desert). Map by Ben Foley.

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[3] For a description of this genre, its transmission, and its different names, see Barwick and Turpin (2016).

their estate's melody;[4] and in many cases performing accompanying actions such as painting designs on the body, standing a ritual pole in the ground, or dancing. The verses and their accompanying dances and designs are said to have been created by ancestors who then gave them to their living descendants, typically in their sleep. Some have been received recently, while others have been transmitted orally since time immemorial.

These days few people receive new verses, and there are only a handful of people able to interpret their lyrics. While this is in part due to the decline in *awelye* practice, it is also due to a cultural restriction that permits only the most senior owners of the set to interpret the verses (Barwick and Turpin 2016). There is no explicit teaching of the song lyrics; people learn by observing, and when they gain confidence, they join in the singing. The dancing and the body designs, however, are sometimes explicitly taught, as are the broader meanings of the songs.

Performance of *awelye* involves singing a verse repeatedly (usually between 2-6 times) without interruption until the end of the much longer melody. This "song item" lasts approximately 30-40 seconds (Barwick 1989:13). In addition to the repetition of a verse within a song item, in performance at least two song items of each verse must be performed before the performer moves on to another verse. Thus any given verse is usually heard at least eight times and often more.

The analysis in this essay is based on my own fieldwork over many years, through which I have documented twelve sets of *awelye*, spanning four Arandic languages: Kaytetye, Alyawarr, Arrernte, and Anmatyerr.[5] Some sets have only a handful of verses, while others have over 50. The corpus consists of some 350 verses totaling some 600 poetic lines.[6]

Sound Parallelism

Arandic song-poetry shows parallelism of phonology (rhyme sound-patterning), rhythm, and meter at various levels within the units of performance. At the largest level there is sound patterning within the level of the verse (usually a quatrain), and at the smallest, the patterning is within the line at the level of the hemistich or half-line.

Sound-Patterning

In Arandic song-poetry, two types of sound-patterning occur at the edges of lines within a quatrain: line-final rhyme and line-initial consonant repetition. The quatrain consists of a couplet,

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[4] See Turpin (2007:11-112) for a discussion of the relationships between text and melody in *awelye*.

[5] The spelling of Arandic words follows the standard orthography developed for each language. These differ in significant ways despite phonetic similarities between the languages. Words that are shared across Arandic language are written here in the Kaytetye orthography (Turpin and Ross 2012).

[6] I use the term "verse" to refer to a song and its associated dance or other action.

A and B, each of which is repeated in an AABB pattern, exemplified in (2).[7] Both types of sound-patterning follow an ABBA pattern, as exemplified in (2) (Turpin and Ross 2004:11):

(2) A_1 larrinya rrinya rriny**a**

        A_2 larrinya rrinya rriny**ay**

        B_1 lerlangki rrinya rrern**ay**

        B_2 lerlangki rrinya rrern**a**

                   (w-kwely7)

In line-final rhyme the final vowel, which is always a non-contrastive schwa in Arandic languages, is subject to an ABBA pattern of alternating vowels: [a] and [ei]. This is in contrast to the pattern of text-line repetition, which is AABB. The rhyme pattern unites text-lines A_2 and B_1, —*ay*—in contrast to text-lines A_1 and B_2,—*a*. Line-initial consonant repetition similarly unites A_2 and B_1 in contrast to A_1 and B_2, as underlined in (3) (Turpin 2015:86):

(3)   A   **w**artepa ngartepa lalherla nek**a**

        A_1 **k**artepa ngartepa lalherla nek**ay**

        B_1 **k**uleri nyela lartepa renh**ay**

        B   **w**uleri nyela lartepa renh**a**

                   (w-ntarr11)

In many couplets the initial consonant is sourced from the end of the previous poetic line in a process referred to as "syllable transfer" (Hale 1984:261).[8] Given that couplets frequently end with the same morphological inflection, it is most common for all four lines to begin with the same consonant, as in (2). Both types of sound-patterning are present only when the verse is sung; spoken versions consist of only the couplet (AB) without line repetition, initial consonant, or contrasting final vowels, that is, the elements in bold in examples (3) and (4). This edge marking sound-patterning may play a role in locating the repeating verse structure in a continuous stream of sounds that has no fixed beginning or end, since most central Australian songs can commence with any line within the verse. This is all the more important as the tradition is one of group unison singing. In the remainder of this section, I identify sound parallelism at the level of the couplet, the abstract rhythmic-text unit, rather than the sung verse.

Parallelism of All but One Sound

Some couplets consist of identical A and B lines except for a single consonant or syllable. This near total parallelism of the lines is exemplified in (4) and (5) respectively (Turpin and Ross 2004:13-15):

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[7]A small number of other verse structures and alternative sound-patterns are observed in Arandic song poetry, for example, AB and ABB (Turpin 2007 and 2015).

[8]For a discussion of this process see Hale (1984:261) and Green and Turpin (2013:377).

(4) A *weyaway lerna*

   B ***p****eyaway lerna*

      (w-kwely22)

(5) A *narlkenya latya**wa***

   B *narlkenya latya*

      (w-kwely24)

Such parallelism is a method of couplet formation, unlike the performance-level sound patterning described below that forms a pattern at the level of the quatrain (AA₁B₁B). It is within the couplet—line formation—that most types of parallelism occur.
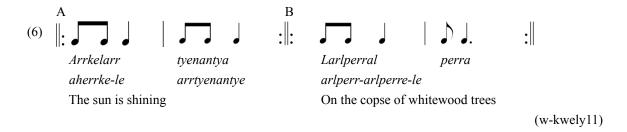
Rhythmic Parallelism within the Couplet

There is no fixed line length in *awelye*. Lines within a couplet can resemble one another rhythmically in three different ways:

 (a) complete identity, that is, same quality and quantity of dipods[9] as in (1);

 (b) different quality but same quantity of dipods, as in (6);

 (c) different quality and different quantity of dipods, as in (7) and (8).

A couplet whose lines have identical rhythm never have identical texts. An example of such a couplet can be seen in (1), wherein both lines have four dipods of three different qualities. Dipods two and three are the same, and differ from both dipods one and four.

 Couplets with lines of different quality but the same quantity of dipods are particularly common. An example can be seen in (6), where both lines have two dipods but Line A has six notes and Line B five[10]:

(6) A *Arrkelarr tyenantya* B *Larlperral perra*

  aherrke-le arrtyenantye *arlperr-arlperre-le*

  The sun is shining On the copse of whitewood trees

      (w-kwely11)

Lines within a couplet may also contrast in number of dipods. In (7) Line A has four dipods and Line B has two. In (8) the two lines differ in quality as well as in the quantity of dipods:

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 [9]A dipod is a rhythmic unit of poetry (for example, trochee, dactyl), which can be made up of strong and weak, or short and long syllables/notes.

 [10] There are no couplets in Arandic song-poetry whose lines make use of the same quality and quantity of dipods with a different arrangement, possibly because there is often a preferred order of dipods (see, for example, Turpin 2015:73).

(7)

Lerala   rimerla   nkityinya   rrerneka   *tyawarra   rrerneka*

The smooth designs much envied were put on   The ones from Tyaw were put on
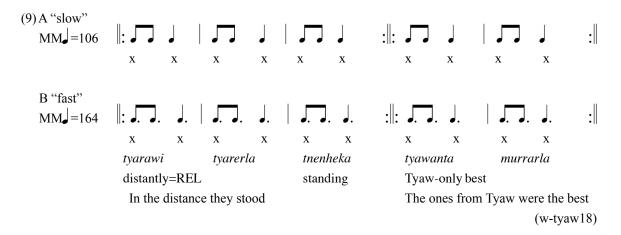
(w-tyaw12)

(8)

kwerratya   melpelel   pelatya   rrerna   *priltyi   ngkatya   rrerna*

I, a girl, put on the healing oil   The delicious lerp I create

(w-kwely3)

These examples also show that the line itself can be made up of parallel rhythmic structures. For example, the two halves of (6A) and (7A) are identical, and those of (8A) are nearly identical.

Metrical Parallelism within the Song Set

Within a song set we find couplets that are identical in their rhythmic text but differ in their meter. The two meters are used throughout the couplets of any one song set, and in this sense the metrical contrast is parallel or recurring. Two such couplets are shown in (9). Here the verse of (9a) is in a slow duple time and that of (9b), which has the same text, is faster and polyrhythmic: a duple meter vocal line sung against a triple meter clap beat:

(9) A "slow"
MM♩=106

x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x

B "fast"
MM♩=164

x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x

tyarawi   tyarerla   tnenheka   tyawanta   murrarla

distantly=REL   standing   Tyaw-only best

In the distance they stood   The ones from Tyaw were the best

(w-tyaw18)

Like the rhythm, the dances of these verses also differ, in that one is slow and the other fast. The fast verse often refers to the culmination of an extended action, such as movement towards the ceremonial pole, culminating at the point when the pole is within the reach of the dancers. Thus while Verses 18a and 18b have an identical rhythmic-text, the fast tempo and polyrhythm reflect a highpoint in an action extending over time and space. Such "twin" verses are performed sequentially, so the tempo and meter become the only contrasting elements in otherwise identically adjacent verses. Arandic song-poetry never permits total identity at the structural

levels of hemistich, line, couplet, or verse. Rhythmic, textual, or metrical (and tempo) variation, —often in the form of parallelism—is always required. This suggests that variation, as a cognitive effect, can jointly operate at both rhythmic and textual levels.

Grammatical Parallelism

Couplets frequently consist of two lines that have the same word order, despite the fact that word order is not syntactic in these languages (Turpin and Ross 2012:29). They often have the same morphological inflections as well, even when the stems differ. This grammatical parallelism is illustrated below.

Part of Speech Parallelism

Most lines of Arandic song-poetry consist of a nominal followed by a verb, as in (9A).The grammatical roles of the nouns in the couplets will be discussed later.[11] There are, however, some songs whose lines consist of just nominals.[12] In such cases the verb is inferred, as in (10):

(10)   A   *wulpere*   *ntyinyintye*
                quick   red_mallee
                Quickly (go towards) the red mallee trees
        B   *wulperel*   *pere*
                quick-quick
                Quickly, quickly.

                                    (w-kwely13)

Couplets may consist of one line with a verb and one without, as in (11) which has a nominal in both lines and a verb only in Line B.

(11)   A   *niwarni*   *wilarla*
                front-LOC=REL
                Up ahead
        B   *tywarteka*   *relhaka*
                rain-SEMB   see-MED-PST
                It looks as if it's raining
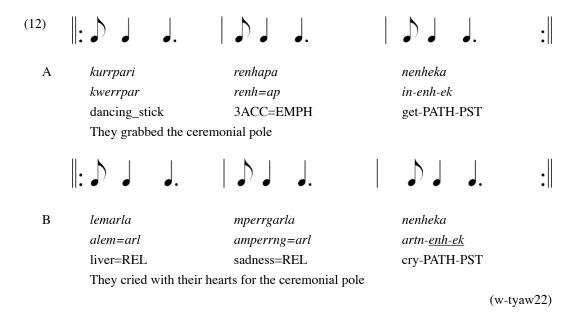   (w-tyaw11)

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[11] Line final verbs are also a feature of *Dyirbal* Aboriginal song poetry (Dixon and Koch 1996:14). Fox (2014:103) notes that noun+verb is a common line structure in poetry cross-linguistically.

[12] For example, the Kaytetye rain song set (Turpin 2005:50, Appendix 1).

Couplets in which the lines have no parts of speech in common are not attested; that is, there are no couplets in which one line consists solely of one or more verbs while the other is made up of one or more nominals. This suggests that there must be some sort of minimal contrast, rather than complete juxtaposition, in terms of the parts of speech in the lines of a verse. A preference for minimal contrast in relation to the music has also been observed in Western Australian Aboriginal songs (Treloyn 2007).

Morphological Parallelism

　　　Arandic languages are agglutinative, so it is perhaps not surprising to find a great deal of morphological parallelism, especially in verbs.[13] An example of morphological parallelism is shown in (12), where the verb stems differ but the inflections are the same: *-enh-ek:*

(12)

A
kurrpari	*renhapa*	*nenheka*
kwerrpar	*renh=ap*	*in-enh-ek*
dancing_stick	3ACC=EMPH	get-PATH-PST

They grabbed the ceremonial pole

B
lemarla	*mperrgarla*	*nenheka*
alem=arl	*amperrng=arl*	*artn-enh-ek*
liver=REL	sadness=REL	cry-PATH-PST

They cried with their hearts for the ceremonial pole

(w-tyaw22)

The inflection *-enh-* signals that the action happens while on a path of motion, and it is ubiquitous in the Alyawarr song sets (77 out of the 107 lines discussed in Turpin 2015:83-93).

Lexical Parallelism

　　　Where two lines of a couplet partially share the same lexemes, they are said to be lexically parallel. Where the parallel lexemes have the same rhythm, as in (1), they are considered "formulaic frames" (Fox 2014:175). In most cases the substitute lexeme is in the initial position, although final and intermediate positions are also possible. I discuss each of these below.

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[13] Morphological parallelism in verbs is also found in many other oral traditions (Fox 2014:219).

Variable Element in Initial Position

The variable element is most often the first word of a line, and the subsequent lexeme(s) are the same. This is exemplified in (13), wherein the two place names underlined are substituted. This is the position associated with new information in spoken Arandic languages, which, like most Australian languages are syntactically free word-order languages:

(13)	A	*"Tyarenp-tyarenp" akirrerrerl-alhern*	"Tyarenp-atyarenp" (we) named it and went on
	B	*"Arlpepenty Artep" akirrerrerl-alhern*	"Arlpepenty Artep" (we) named it and went on
			(w-ilkew23)

Fabb (2015:116) refers to this as "line final cadence" and suggests that such regularity between lines reduces processing effort, thus increasing a person's capacity to remember lines. Line final cadences are also common in Dyirbal song-poetry from Australia (Dixon and Koch 1996:58). In Arandic (and Dyirbal) song-poetry the substituted elements invariably have the same number of syllables, and therefore in some cases the substitution involves more than one lexeme. This can be seen in (14), wherein line A consists of three words corresponding to one word in Line B, *wetyerrpetyerrp*, a poetic word meaning "beautiful ceremonial designs":

(14)	A	*Iltyelay kwey nta athernerl-arrernek*	With your finger, girl, you spread them out
	B	*Wetyerrpetyerrp athernerl-arrernek*	So beautifully, (you) spread them out
			(w-ilkew26)

Thematic Role Alternation

Substitution of the initial position is frequently filled by two thematic roles of a single clause, retaining the verb in both lines. This can be seen in (15), wherein the subject, a song-giving ancestral woman, is replaced with the object, a poetic word for a thorny devil lizard, in the alternate line.[14] The transitive verb "to cook" is retained in both lines (as in 14):

(15)	A	*Kwerrimpelarl ampernerl-anek*	The ancestral woman was cooking
	B	*Tharnkerrth-arnkerrth ampernerl-anek*	A thorny devil lizard, (she) was cooking
			(w-ntarr23)

The substituted nominal may have other semantic roles. Example (16) has a locative phrase in Line B and (17) has an instrumental phrase in Line B (Campbell et al. 2015:40):

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[14] The everyday word for this lizard is *arnkerrth*. Words of the poetic register are frequently a partial reduplication pattern $\sigma_1\sigma_2\sigma_3\sigma_2\sigma_3$ such as the poetic word for this lizard (*Moloch horridus*). This is another level at which sound parallelism operates.

(16) A   _Kwerrpar-ampenyarl_ tyarek-tyarekarl   The last ceremonial pole, faintly
             rtnenhek   visible it stood

       B   _Aywerrp-aywerrpelarl_ tyarek-tyarekarl   On a slope, faintly visible it stood
             rtnenhek

                                                                            (w-tyaw1)

(17) A   _Namaywengkel_ rnternep-ernem   Spirit women are piercing the air
       B   _Taty-tatyel_ rnternep-ernem   With a dancing stick, piercing the air

                                                                          (w-ngenty5)

Thematic role alternation can also employ different verbs. Example (18) is a couplet that expresses a single idea that in its most literal and simplistic form means "the visitor adorned the best headdress," but instead of maintaining the same verb—"the visitor adorned // the best headdress was adorned—," the object in Line B is expressed as an idiom that means "do or have the best (one)," literally "to eat something up" (Turpin 2015:85-86):

(18) A   _Ulerenyelay arrernelhenhek_   The visiting woman adorned
       B   _Arrkaylpel arlkwenhek_   A ceremonial feather headdress that outshone
                                                                           them all
                                                                           (w-ntarr12)

The divvying up of a single idea so that both lines are required to comprehend the utterance is a common method of forming couplets in Arandic song-poetry. On one hand thematic role alternation is a contrastive device but on the other hand it is additive (Frog 2014:191), since augmenting the verb with an additional phrase enables the comprehension of the whole. It may be that by splaying a single idea over two lines, something more than the literal meaning is conveyed, creating an effect similar to that of a metaphor (Fabb 2016, personal communication).

        Note that the meaning of a couplet with thematic role alternation only emerges once both lines have been heard. The splaying of a single idea over the couplet may have some specific aesthetic effect, akin to a metaphor. Here there is some similarity with the ceremonial painting, where singers state that the design only comes out once the final color, white ochre, has been applied. Until then, what is transpiring is unclear; it is only with the final color, white, that the whole design is revealed.

Variable Element in all but Final Position: Line-Final Formulas

        Variability can occur in all but the final position of the lines. Frequently the final position is occupied by a formula—an element that recurs in this position and is set to the same rhythm across many songs. These often have broad meanings and only partial resemblance to a speech word, and are regarded as special "song words." Example (19) shows one such formula, _arrerne,_ based on the verb _arre-_ "put, create," which occurs in nine lines in this song set (Turpin 2005:318):

(19)   A   *Kwerre atye merlperlelperle atye <u>arrerne</u>*   The girl, I make healthy
       B   *Kwerrimpele atye <u>arrerne</u>*   I, an ancestral woman, make (her healthy)

<div align="right">(w-kwely3)</div>

Variable Element in Final Position

When the variable element is in line-final position it is most frequently a verb. This is exemplified in (20) where the identically inflected verbs, both rarely encountered in speech, refer to aspects of performance. The ideophone *arlererr-angke-* ("to whoosh") conjures up images of headbands moving quickly through the air; while *arlwert-ilpangke-* connotes the girl's visual brilliance, either from her bright designs or fast dancing, as she appears to rise above the ground like a mirage:

(20)   A   *Irrweltyelan kweyan <u>arlererr-angkerlan</u>*   At Irrwelty the girl whooshed (as she danced)
       B   *Irrweltyelan kweyan <u>arlwertilp-angkerlan</u>* At Irrwelty the girl rose in her shining brilliance

<div align="right">(w-ilkew16)</div>

This couplet illustrates how verbs can be part of a motif relating to the events within *awelye* performance itself. More will be said about this later.

Variable Element in Intermediate Position

Very occasionally the variable element is in medial position. This is exemplified in (21) where words for "oil" and "women's ceremonial designs" are substituted[15]:

(21)   A   *Kwerrep-kwerrel <u>anter</u> nte arrerneme*   All the girls you adorned with oil
       B   *Kwerrep-kwerrel <u>awely</u> nte arrerneme*   All the girls you adorned with designs

<div align="right">(w-ilkew2)</div>

A further couplet (22) places "women's ceremonial designs" in a synonymous pair with the word *arlkeny* "designs." The semantic relationship between these can also be considered a type of part-whole relationship, as *awelye* is a specific type of *arlkeny* "design":

(22)   A   *Kwerrek-atherran <u>awely</u> malangk*   The two girls with beautiful ceremonial
                                                        women's designs

       B   *Kwerrek-atherran <u>arlkeny</u> malangk*   The two girls with beautiful designs
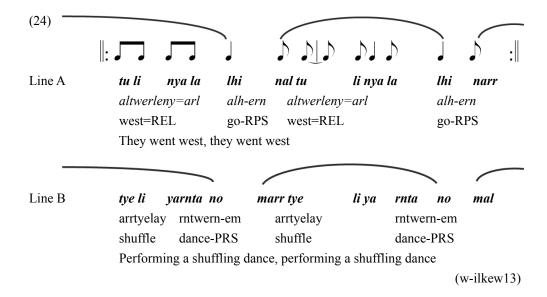
<div align="right">(w-ilkew24)</div>

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[15] In everyday speech *awelye* means "women's ceremony" but in song it refers specifically to body designs.

Lexical Parallelism within the Line

Some lines consist of a repeated hemistich (half-line). There is, however, always one minor difference to either the rhythm or the text. The second hemistich often has one less rhythmic syllable. This can be seen in (23), a line that consists of a repeated poetic word for "adorned upper arm" *akwelanty-alantye*.[16] The first hemistich adds a vocable *na*, differentiating it from the second[17]:

(23)

kwelantya-lantya na   *kwelantya -lantya*

(w-kwely1A)

In other cases the second hemistich has an identical lexicon to the first, but the repetition differs rhythmically. The Anmatyerr native current song set makes frequent use of this parallelism to create lines, an example of which is given in (24), where Line A consists of a repeated "they went west," and line B consists of a repeated "performing a shuffling dance." Rhythmically, the second hemistich differs significantly from the first. Note that the hemistich-final consonants form part of an anacrusis to the following hemistich/musical phrase (Hale 1984), a process also found in Tashliyt Berber (Dell and Elmedlaoui 2008):

(24)

Line A	*tu li*	*nya la*	*lhi*	*nal tu*	*li nya la*	*lhi*	*narr*
	altwerleny=arl		*alh-ern*	*altwerleny=arl*		*alh-ern*	
	west=REL		go-RPS	west=REL		go-RPS	

They went west, they went west

Line B	*tye li*	*yarnta no*	*marr tye*	*li ya*	*rnta*	*no*	*mal*
	arrtyelay	rntwern-em	arrtyelay		rntwern-em		
	shuffle	dance-PRS	shuffle		dance-PRS		

Performing a shuffling dance, performing a shuffling dance

(w-ilkew13)

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[16] Again this word illustrates the preferred partial repetition pattern for poetic words.

[17] In the neighboring language Warumungu, this genre also shows a strong preference for hemistich parallelism using the vocable *na* in this way (Barwick 2000:329).

Lexical Parallelism within the Song Set

The same line may occur in more than one couplet and, sometimes, in as many as four (Turpin 2015:88). Such couplets need not be adjacent. They are, however, usually performed in close succession and often share a single theme or meaning. Example (25) shows two couplets that share the same B line. Both A lines begin with the same word "limestone" (*ulterntan*) and while their verbs differ in form, they both have similar meanings. Both A lines connote a mirage, which makes the limestone hills appear closer than they are in reality. The B line may also be a metaphor for the dancers piercing the sky with their ceremonial headbands.

(25)   A   *Ulterntan alwert-ilpangkem*   The limestone was lifted and exposed

         B   *Alernngel iltyel rnternem*   The rays of sun pierced the sky

                                                  (w-ilkew15)

         A   *Ulterntan <u>itenty-amperlan</u>*   The limestone rose

         B   *Alernngel iltyel rnternem*   The rays of sun pierced the sky

                                                  (w-ilkew17)

Couplets that share a line may also differ in meaning. Earlier, we saw how the alternate line of a couplet may reveal the object or some other theme of a single clause. In the same way, couplets that share a line may also select one couplet for one theme and the other couplet for another. This is the case in (26), wherein the A line of the couplet contains an instrumental phrase ("with the finger"), and the A line of the second couplet contains the object ("the ceremonial designs").

(26)   A   *<u>Iltyelay</u> kwey nte athernerl-arrernek*   With your finger, girl, you spread them out

         B   *Wetyerrpetyerrp athernerl-arrernek*   So beautifully, spread them out

                                                  (w-ilkew26)

         A   *<u>Arlkeny</u> kwey nte athernerl-arrernek*   The ceremonial designs, girl, you spread them out

         B   *Wetyerrpetyerrp athernerl-arrernek*   So beautifully, spread them out

                                                  (w-ilkew27)

Semantic Parallelism

In this section I discuss how lines within a couplet can be semantically parallel without necessarily having parallel forms. Semantic parallelism in *awelye* is of three broad types. In one type, lines within a couplet can refer to the same thing using different words. In another type, two couplets provide complementary information to express a larger idea. In the final and most widespread type of semantic parallelism, adjacent lines and couplets refer to the theme of *awelye* performance itself. This is a powerful device for transcending the everyday world as it blends the here-and-now with the ancestral realm in a highly ritualized way. Thematic parallelism is a

regulating force in the selection of vocabulary and thus a type of canonical parallelism. Other related characteristics are the tendency to use the first person in the lines, the use of ancestral women as actors, and the use of vocabulary that refers to luminosity, which is an aesthetic quality highlighted in the visual domain of performance.

Synonymy

Commonly, one line of the couplet provides more specific or general information about what is described in the other. In (27) the term "ancestral woman" is replaced with "curly-headed," narrowing the referent to a specific ancestral woman (Turpin 2015:79):[18]

(27)	A	*Kwerrimparlay arnperlp-arnpenhek*	The <u>ancestral woman</u> set off on her way
	B	*Aka amikw-amikw arnperlp-arnpenhek*	The <u>curly-headed woman</u> set off on her way
			(w-ntarr21)

In some cases the more specific term has a figurative meaning. In (28) the general word for ceremonial designs is replaced with a term denoting "yellow." This is not the everyday word for yellow, but in the context of *awelye* this yellow-flowering plant is understood as "yellow ochre."

(28)	A	*Arlkeny-aperlay rnternelh-erlanern*	The ceremonial designs were adorned
	B	*Yawerrawerrarl rnternelh-erlanern*	The yellow was adorned
			(w-ilkew7)

There are some instances in which the more specific term is associated with a specific context, as in (29) where the everyday word *anter* ("fat, oil") is substituted with the less-common *rtway* ("oil/fat used for healing purposes") (Turpin 2015:83):

(29)	A	*Anterarl arrernerl-anek*	The oil was adorned
	B	*Rtwayarl arrernerl-anek*	The healing oil was adorned
			(w-ntarr56)

Sometimes the synonymous pairs are place names, and they may be true synonyms or refer to nearby places, as in (30).

(30)	A	*Alerrerrepentyarl arenherl-anem*	(The place) Alererrepenty came into view
	B	*Arrkeytepenty alernelhenhek*	At Arrkeytepenty they rested
			(w-ntarr5)

There are times when the synonymous pairs refer to the painting and the body part painted as in (31). In this couplet the poetic word meaning "adorned upper arm" is based on *akwa* "upper

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[18] See Turpin and Ross (2013:14) for a story that recalls this particular ancestor.

arm." This word is not in the singers' language but is used instead of Kaytetye words like *tyarlenye* "arm" or *ertnwethe* "elbow, upper arm."

(31)	*Akwe-lantyelantyarne akwe-lantyelantye*	The ceremonially painted upper arm, x2
	Awelyewe arrerne	The ceremonial designs were adorned
		(w-kwely1)

As noted earlier, people traditionally spoke multiple Arandic varieties, and this multilingualism was exploited fully in song-poetry, as the verses select dialectal variants from across the Arandic language-dialect complex to create semantic parallelism (Turpin and Green 2010:301). While this "extends comprehension and communication beyond single speech communities" (Fox 2014:125), the language ideology across central Australia is that songs are in the language of ancestral beings rather than in dialects. Here songs are strictly associated with land ownership, and so the relegating of language to the ancestral realm may wipe the texts clean of any territorial affiliation and instead bestow upon them a common ancestral past. Evans (2003:29) notes that such ideologies may "act as a selective force favoring particular reconfigurations of structure," and this particular ideology may have facilitated the borrowing of vocabulary and sharing of poetry and poetic forms.

Parallelism in Couplet Pairs

Some couplets form a pair as they present complementary information about a particular event. Example (32) shows two sequentially sung couplets that refer to an occasion where an ancestral woman, seeing her husband return from a hunt somewhat battered, asks him what has happened (Turpin 2015:91).

(32)	A	*Irrtyartarl anperang akenherlanek?*	Did the spear snap in two?
	B	*Arengelamay atwek?*	Did a euro attack you?[19]
			(w-ntarr78)

	A	*Kwerrimpelay angkenherl-anek*	The ancestral woman said
	B	*Ilekarlamay arlkwek?*	"What got stuck into you?"
			(w-ntarr53)

Sometimes such couplets may even form triplets, presenting multiple aspects of a single narrative event.

Thematic Parallelism

A common theme throughout Arandic song-poetry is the song-giving ancestors performing ceremonies, which I refer to as the *awelye* schema. This tendency goes well beyond

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[19] A euro (*Macropus robustus*) is a type of large wallaby.

central Australia, as Barwick (2006) refers to the prevalence of "songs about performance" in northern Australia.[20] Self-referencing has aesthetic effects at many levels. In one sense, songs about songs create a sense of infinity reminiscent of "the last visible dog."[21] Additionally, these couplets are accompanied by an enactment of the actions to which they refer, just as we saw in (1). Green (2014:42) similarly notes a Western Desert song in which the text and accompanying actions refer to one and the same thing—a traditional women's sand-drawing practice. Self-referentiality can also be created through the accompanying painting-up stage of a performance, as in (33), which is a song to complete the final stage of painting-up, involving the application of white ochre on the ceremonial body designs (Turpin 2015:84):

(33)   A   *Ngwenty-ngwentyarl arrernerl-anek*   Adorned with white ochre
         B   *Arlkeny marany alimarrankek*   The traditional designs glistened
                                                                                    (w-ntarr76)

Frog (2014:202) describes ritual actions performed in conjunction with a verbal text describing the activity as having a "magical effect," whereby "the orders of representation collapse and the parallelism converges into an immediate identity." Combined with multi-modal parallelism, the *awelye* schema establishes parallelism between the performers and their song-giving ancestors: the *awelye* ceremonies performed now are also those that were enacted by their ancestors.

Couplets that refer to the *awelye* schema occur at specific stages of performance.[22] These are: the opening and closing song, which may involve the placement/removal of a ceremonial pole,[23] painting up, and dancing. An *awelye* performance is a symbolic reenactment of the physical journey taken by ancestral beings. The opening song symbolizes the summoning of spirits from underground, and the closing song puts them safely back under the earth again. They resemble what Frog (2014:197) calls "boundary formulae" which "mark both the beginning and conclusion of the journey."[24] Songs that refer to other topics, such as places and historical events, frequently lack an accompanying dance. As Fig. 3 implies, *awelye* themed couplets accompany specific actions in the ceremony:

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[20] Barwick (2006) uses this phrase in describing this same phenomenon in northern Australian Aboriginal songs. Moyle (1997:33) refers to this phenomenon in Western Desert songs as "self-referencing" and "autobiographical."

[21] This is a reference to Russel Hoban's (1967) children's novel *The mouse and his child*. "The last visible dog" refers to a can of dog food with a label picturing a can of dog food, with a label picturing a can of dog food, and so on, as far as the eye can see.

[22] An *awelye* performance need not involve all stages. Painting and dancing may be omitted, in which case these stages are cut short, and performances that involve painting and dancing may leave out the couplets that do not accompany actions.

[23] Much more could be said about the symbolic identity of ritual objects and the dancing ground, especially in the use of cardinal directions, which, as Frog (2014:203) notes, reciprocally inform their own meaning in performance.

[24] See also "boundary markers" in Lamb (2015:236).

opening   painting up   dancing   singing (may have no actions) closing

Fig. 3. Stages within an *awelye* performance. Songs that accompany actions are shaded, and their relative size gives an approximate indication of their length in performance.

Couplets that refer to the *awelye* schema are found in all song sets and they make up a significant proportion of the total couplets in any given set. Additionally, the substitutions are drawn from a delimited semantic domain, and thus the parallelism can be considered "canonical" (Fox 2014:15, 47). A line need not contain vocabulary specific to *awelye* to refer to this schema; the alternate line may be enough to signal a meaning in this domain. Example (34) illustrates a couplet that refers to the process of painting ceremonial designs. Line A refers to an *awelye* painting brush, *tyepal*, (which was inadequate here), and Line B, the subsequent use of a finger in place of a brush:

(34) A *Tyepal akengel rnternerl-arrernek*   With a no-good brush they were painted on
      B *Iltyelay kweyel athernerl-arrernek*   With a finger, girl (you) laid them out
                                                                        (w-ilkew6)

The use of the word *tyepal*, a special brush for applying *awelye* designs, creates an expectation that the alternate line will also refer to this domain. The breadth of meanings that these cultural images and networks (for example, finger/brush) connote has not yet been fully explored . It is, however, clear that seemingly mundane words such as "finger" or "pillow" suddenly become powerful when they occur in the context of *awelye*: they become "primed as potential symbols with the activation of a performance arena, both empirical and imaginal" (Frog 2014:205).

First Person Reference

        Arandic song-poetry tends to be in the first person. This creates an ambiguity: is the referent of a song such as (35) the performer or the ancestral being?[25] Merging the contemporary performer and ancestor in a kind of auditory illusion in which both meanings are possible substantiates the power of song as a tool to access the extraordinary powers of their ancestors (compare Marett et al. 2013:100).[26] Even couplets that do not refer to the *awelye* schema are limited to the first person. For example the couplet in (35) refers to a ceremonial healing practice that is not part of *awelye* performance. The final verb in both lines is an ideophone describing the sound made by a traditional healer removing a sickness from a body:

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[25] In West Arnhem Land songs a similar ambiguity exists in that the referents can be both living people and the dead (Marett 2000:18).

[26] The merging is also in other modalities: the dancer, for example, is both the ancestor and the performer.

(35) A   *Ngangkar altyerrepenhel atya*   I, a traditional doctor, clicked as I worked
            iylparerr-rnternek

       B   *Tyawant mwerrel iylparerr-rnternek*   "Tyaw are the best," (I) clicked as I worked
                                                                                      (w-tyaw9)

Mythic Images

Also related to thematic parallelism is the tendency for the participant, when overtly expressed, to be a *kwerrimp*—a deceased female ancestor who performs and gives *awelye* (Turpin and Ross 2013:3). In (36) the ancestral subject is overtly expressed and the text is in the first person—*aylernanth* "we two related as cousins" (Turpin and Ross 2004):

(36) A   *Aylernanth-arrpe ikngwerrerl-iweyewe*   Let's go together the two of us
       B   *Kwerrimpe kwerre*   Ancestral girls
                                                                                   (w-kwely18)

As the protagonists of songs are ancestral women, the use of the first person pronoun creates an immediacy and identity between the contemporary performers and the ancestral creators of the songs.

Luminosity

Finally, a recurrent subplot of the *awelye* theme is the prevalence of terms denoting whiteness or brightness, shimmering or glistening.[27] Such qualities are frequently found in the ritual objects used in central Australian Aboriginal ceremonies, and these ceremonies are believed to be able to bring about change (such as, alter a person's feelings or stimulate good health). For example, white shell pendants are often used in ceremonies to bring about rain (Akerman and Stanton 1994). This is also a feature of the ritual objects used in *awelye*—white cockatoo feathers, white headbands and white and yellow ochre. These objects and their luminous qualities are frequently referred to in the text, as in (37).[28]

(37) A   *Ayengarl arrkaylparl ilewelelhenhek*   I displayed my (white) headdress
       B   *Anngerrenty atnenhek*   I, an ancestral spirit, stood there
                                                                                   (w-tyaw13)

Shimmering objects such as sunlight, mirages, water, limestone and oiled thighs moving rapidly in dance are also frequently invoked (see Turpin 2015:76-77). Even words in the songs that do not refer to shimmering can connote luminous phenomenon in the context of *awelye*, as in (38), in which the word for dancing stick is a metaphor for a beam of light:

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[27] See Turpin (2015:77) for a discussion of this semantic domain in one Arandic song set.

[28] It is interesting that there is no reference to "red ochre" or "black ochre," which are also used in *awelye* body designs.

(38)	A	*Kwerrparelarl nawirrtyernek*	Where a beam of light shone
	B	*Aherrkelamay alhernek*	Was it daylight shining (already)?
			(w-ntarr9)

Songs can gain additional meanings by inferences that can be made in the *awelye* context, wherein words are selected for their luminous and thus potentially magical abilities. To determine the extent to which "broad principles of pragmatic inference interact with encyclopedic knowledge to generate particular interpretations in context" (Evans 2003:21) will require more detailed ethnography. Frog raises the question of the extent to which formal parallelism, such as repeated lexical items and rhythms, may foreground semantic and thematic parallelism (Frog 2014:195). It may be that formal mechanisms play a role in assessing the implications and inferences that enable enculturated performers to access the associated mythological, geographic, and cultural knowledge indexed in the verses of Arandic song-poetry.

Conclusion

Parallelism is a pervasive phenomenon in the organization of Arandic song-poetry. It is complex in the sense that it shows equivalence sequentially (for example, adjacent lines and couplets share the same theme) and simultaneously through expression across multiple modalities. When taken as a multimodal whole, the units of equivalence (hemistich, line, couplet) are never totally identical, but parallel. In considering the role of such complex parallelism, Frog (2014:202) suggests that "parallelism across media may converge with the construal of parallelism between performance and experiential reality." Ellis (1984:160) similarly suggests that the multiple ways in which melody and text are synchronized in central Australian songs creates an iridescent quality, facilitating the merging of the everyday realm with that of the performer's ancestors. A performance of Arandic song-poetry is a communion with the ancestors who sang the world into existence and who continue to exert influence on the living. The integration of the visual domain, enabling simultaneous parallelism across modalities, may further contribute to the effect of transcending the everyday realm. As a hallmark of shared poetic-musical style, parallelism across the songs of different Arandic language groups may have enabled groups to draw upon far-reaching social networks in times of need, which may have been necessary in traditional (pre-contact) central Australian societies.

Evans (2003:16) argues that high frequency of usage has an impact on language structure. Barwick (2006) similarly suggests that the cyclic structures of Aboriginal song act as "a type of positive feedback loop . . . in which each iteration of the cycle reinforces the first." These forces may have helped shape the parallelism of form that we find at multiple levels in Arandic song poetry. Similarly, the language ideology of songs as being of ancestral origin, as well as the coupling of verses with action in performance, may have shaped the pervasive self-referencing *awelye* theme. This "invisible hand process" (Evans 2003:13) of cultural selection show how hyper-intentional actions can produce tightly constrained structures in creative artistic practices.

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