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During the 1970s, the Marri Ngarr composer Pius Luckan and his brother Clement Tchinburur created a set of liturgical songs ('church lirrga') based on the didjeridu-accompanied dance-song genre Lirrga, one of several public ceremonial genres in Wadeye, NT. Musical analysis and discussion with composers shows that the songs fall into named distinct tempo ranges ('tempo bands'), that tempo bands correlate with different metres in the vocal part (this combination is termed 'rhythmic mode'), and that singers highlight rhythmic mode by systematic juxtaposition of contrasting songs. Accounts of similar compositional practices in other Australian song repertoires are noted.

In the course of a song recording session at Wadeye (NT) in 1998, the Marri Ngarr elders Pius Luckan and Clement Tchinburur demonstrated to Allan Marett several examples of the way that the same Lirrga song text could be set to different clapstick accompaniments. Lirrga is a genre of public didjeridu-accompanied songs used for dance, and indeed the Marri Ngarr names for the slow and fast clapstick styles--termed in Marri Ngarr *kiyirri verri* (literally 'slow foot') and *rtarzi verri* (literally 'rough foot')--refer to the synchronisation of dance-steps with clapsticks (*tiril*). This paper will outline how these and other named clapstick accompaniment styles correlate with distinct tempo bands and metrical types (the combination of which I term 'rhythmic mode') within the corpus of Marri Ngarr Lirrga songs. Examples will be

¹ This research was funded by the Australian Research Council. Thank you to the Marri Ngarr elders: Clement Tchinburur (composer, performer, linguistic and musical consultant), John Nummar, Rex Munar, Jean Jongmin, Mary Jongmin, Marie Long and Columbanus Warnir (linguistic consultants) and to Wadeye Aboriginal Languages Centre. Thanks to Mark Crocombe for permission to use his photographs, and to Claude Narjic. This musical analysis would not have been possible without the wonderful performances by Pius Luckan and Clement Tchinburur recorded so beautifully by SIL linguist Chester Street in 1985, and without the linguistic work by Chester Street (1986) and Lysbeth Ford (2001-2). Allan Marett's recordings and discussions with Pius Luckan and Clement Tchinburur in 1998 were also seminal in developing the ideas presented here.

drawn from a corpus of seventeen 'Church Lirrga' songs composed by Pius Luckan, Clement Tchiburur and other Marri Ngarr performers to be performed at public services of the Roman Catholic church at Wadeye. Parallels will be drawn with other musical traditions in Australia.

The township of Wadeye (formerly known as Port Keats) lies in the traditional country of the Kardu Diminin people, speakers of the Murrinhpatha language, but today the community also includes many other people whose traditional countries lie in the surrounding districts. The seven different language groups in Wadeye today (Wadeye Aboriginal Languages Centre, 1998) include the Marri Ngarr, the owners and performers of Lirrga, whose traditional country lies to the northeast of the community.²

Public dance-song genres play a central role in establishing relationships of mutual support and obligation between the various language groups in Wadeye. Each group identifies with one of the three main public dance-song genres: Dhanba, Wangga or Lirrga. Dhanba (together with two less frequently-performed public genres Wurlthirri and Malkarrin) is the main genre of the Murrinhpatha-speaking groups, including Kardu Diminin and other clans in the vicinity of Wadeye (collectively known in English as 'the Dhanba mob'); Wangga is the main genre of the coastal language groups to the north of Wadeye ('the Wangga mob'), and Lirrga is the main genre of the inland groups to the north and east of Wadeye, including the Marri Ngarr ('the Lirrga mob').

These public dance-song genres are performed in public ceremonies such as circumcisions, funerals and ragburnings (ceremonies for the disposal of the clothes and other belongings of the deceased, typically held several months or years after the person's death). Many people in the community pointed out to us that their songs and dances are always performed for one of the other mobs: thus, depending on the individual circumstances, Dhanba may be performed for the funeral of a 'Wangga mob' or a 'Lirrga mob' person, while on another occasion Wangga may be performed for a 'Lirrga mob' or a 'Dhanba mob' person; or Lirrga for a 'Dhanba mob' or a 'Wangga mob' person.

Marri Ngarr Lirrga songs

Most of the numerous Marri Ngarr Lirrga songs on recordings held at Wadeye Aboriginal Language Centre (WALC) were performed by the noted singer and composer Pius Luckan (ca. 1935-1998), frequently accompanied by his brother Clement Tchiburur on didjeridu. The majority of the songs in Pius Luckan's repertoire were composed by either Pius Luckan himself or his brother Clement Tchiburur, but a number of other Marri Ngarr singers and composers -- including Brian Nummar, Tommy Moyle, Peter Kinthari, Dennis Narjic, Claude Narjic, Fabian Lantjin and Raphael Thardim -- also composed songs recorded by Pius Luckan, and on various occasions were recorded singing with him. Pius Luckan was a remarkable performer, with a very large repertoire and complete command of his musical material (see Photograph 1). In addition to recordings of him made by researchers, teachers or visitors to the community, the WALC holds a number of recordings made by Pius Luckan himself or members of his family under his supervision. In 1998, Allan Marett and Lysbeth Ford began working with Pius Luckan to produce transcriptions and translations of his song texts. Sadly, Pius Luckan himself died later that year. In 2001, Ford, Marett and

² Wadeye Aboriginal Language Centre, 'Wadeye Languages and Clans'.
http://www.indigenet.com.au/wadeye/languages_clans.htm (last changed 15 May 1998; accessed 4 October 2001).



Photograph 1: Pius Luckan sings Lirrga at Wadeye, 1988. Photograph by Mark Crocombe. Used with permission of Marri Ngarr elders and Mark Crocombe.

Barwick have collaborated with Clement Tchiburur, John Nummar, Rex Munar, Jeannie Jongmin, Mary Jaurwardi Jongmin, Marie Long and Columbanus Warnir to continue work on Marri Ngarr songs. Having digitised and cross-referenced all the known recordings, we have documented more than 100 Marri Ngarr Lirrga songs, most of which were performed by Pius Luckan.

The 'Church Lirrga' song set

The seventeen Marri Ngarr 'Church Lirrga' songs were recorded by Pius Luckan, Clement Tchiburur and Brian Nummar for the linguist Chester Street in 1985. Fourteen of these songs were transcribed and translated into English by Street in collaboration with Pius Luckan and Brian Nummar in 1986, and the remaining three were transcribed in 2001 by Ford and Barwick in collaboration with the above-named Marri Ngarr speakers and performers. Street has generously made his material available for our project. The 'Church Lirrga' set shares much musical material, including melodies and rhythmic construction, with a much larger set of Marri Ngarr Lirrga songs, termed 'Muyil Lirrga', whose subjects concern Marri Ngarr traditional country and Dreamings on the Moyle River.

The Marri Ngarr Church Lirrga songs were composed at various times between the early 1950s, when the Marri Ngarr settled in Wadeye, and 1985, when the recording was made. Eight songs were composed by Pius Luckan himself, seven by his brother Clement Tchiburur (who plays didjeridu on the recording), and the remaining two by Peter Kintari and Claude Narjic respectively. The Church Lirrga song texts deal with various aspects of Christian theology, seasonal celebrations for Christmas and Easter, and other special occasions, such as First Communion or the participation of Wadeye people in the 40th International Eucharistic Congress in Melbourne in 1973.

Tempo in the Church Lirrga songs

Measurement of tempo of clapstick accompaniment in the Church Lirrga song set shows that the songs fall into four discrete tempo bands, as outlined below (see Figure 1). The tempo of all recorded songs falls within one of these bands, and no Marri Ngarr Lirrga song in this sample was performed in the blank tempo ranges (e.g., there are no songs whose clapstick tempo falls in the range MM134-254).

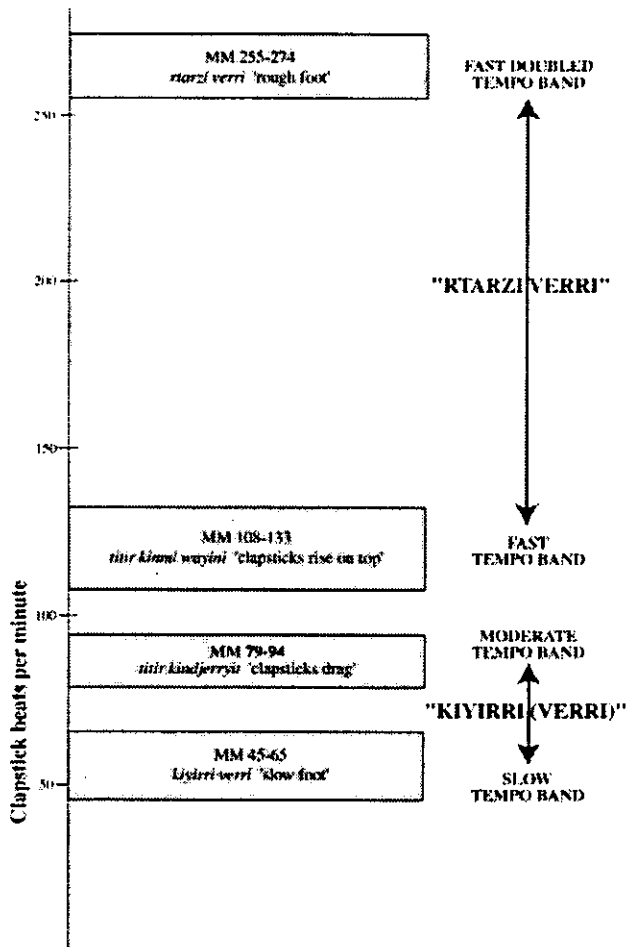


Figure 1: TEMPO BANDS IN MARRI NGARR LIRRGAS SONGS

As is suggested in Figure 1, in presenting examples of the same text set to different clapstick patterns to Marett in 1998, Pius Luckan applied the Marri Ngarr term *kiyirri* 'slow' to what I have termed the slow and moderate clapstick tempo bands, and the Marri Ngarr term *rtarzi verri* 'rough step' to the fast and fast doubled clapstick tempo bands. In further discussion with Clement Tchiburur and other Marri Ngarr elders in 2001, it emerged that there were distinct Marri Ngarr terms for each of the four tempo bands.

Thus, when it is necessary to distinguish the fast tempo band from the fast doubled tempo band (in other circumstances both are referred to as *rtarzi verri*), the term *titil kinmi wayini* 'clapsticks go on top' is used to specify the fast tempo band. We were told that the term *rtarzi verri* properly refers only to the fast doubled tempo band, although it can also be used more generally for both tempo bands (which, perhaps not coincidentally, are accompanied by identical dance steps). Similarly, for the slow and moderate tempo bands, both referred to as *kiyirri* 'slow' by Pius Luckan in 1998, the term *titil kindjerryit* 'clapsticks drag' is used to specify the moderate tempo band if necessary, while the slow tempo band is always referred to as *kiyirri verri* 'slow foot'. It is apparent that in Pius Luckan's 1998 explanation, *kiyirri* 'slow' was used as a relative term, in that it was only ever applied to the moderate tempo band when it was paired with performances of the same text in the fast or fast doubled tempo bands.

The four tempo bands derived from analysis of clapstick tempo correlate with distinct metrical types in the text rhythm (see Figure 2).

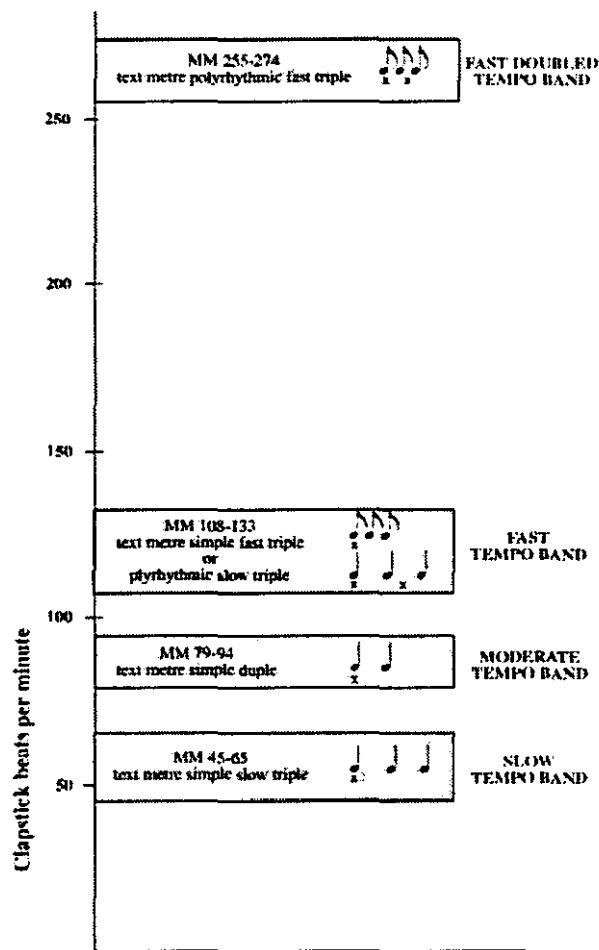


Figure 2: CORRELATION OF TEXT METRE WITH TEMPO IN MARRI NGARR LIRRGAS SONGS

The following correspondences emerge:

- texts set to the fast doubled clapstick tempo band (MM255-274) always have a fast triple metre in the text (notated here as 3/8), accompanied by two clapstick beats per triple text unit;
- texts set to the fast clapstick tempo band (MM 108-133) have either a fast triple metre in the text, accompanied by a single clapstick beat per triple text unit, or a slow triple metre in the text (notated here as 3/4) accompanied by two clapstick beats per triple text unit;
- texts set to the moderate clapstick tempo band (MM 79-94) have a duple metre in the text (notated here as 2/4), accompanied by a single clapstick beat per duple text unit;
- texts set to the slow clapstick tempo band (MM 45-65) have a slow triple metre in the text (notated here as 3/4) accompanied by a single clapstick beat per triple text unit.



Photograph 2: Claude Narjic dances Lirrga at Wadeye, 1988. Photograph by Mark Crocombe.

Sectional structure and correlation with the dance

All Marri Ngarr Lirrga songs are made up of several repetitions (usually three) of the same text. After an instrumental introduction, the Vocal Sections (V) are alternated with Instrumental Sections (I), with the final Instrumental Section including formulaic didjeridu and stick patterns used to cue the end of the item. There are clear and consistent distinctions in tempo and dance movement between the Vocal Sections and the Instrumental Sections. Not infrequently, Instrumental Sections employ a quite different clapstick pattern or tempo band from the Vocal Sections they follow. Even in those cases where the same style of clapstick accompaniment continues throughout both Vocal Section and Instrumental Section, during the Instrumental Sections there is a slight but consistent and measurable slowing of the tempo, even further slowed when sticks and didjeridu perform the ending pattern.

When dancing to Lirrga songs, different types of movement are used to accompany Vocal Sections and Instrumental Sections. Vocal Sections are usually accompanied by travelling movements in time with the clapstick beating (men travel across or around the dance ground, while women typically travel around the periphery of the dance ground). During the Instrumental Sections, both men and women usually dance 'on the spot', again in time with the clapstick beating: the men perform a stamping movement, usually with one leg (see Photograph 2), while the women mark the beat by crisp movements of the arms and upper body, sometimes accompanied by a swivelling action of the feet, which do not leave the ground.

Three Marri Ngarr Easter songs

Turning to specific examples drawn from the Church Lirrga set, let us examine the ways in which text, rhythm and tempo serve to bind together a set of three Easter songs, whose texts are set out in Figure 3.

The three Easter songs were recorded consecutively and are marked as a set by shared textual and thematic material referring to the stations of the cross and the crucifixion. The first two songs were composed by Clement Tchiburur, while the third was composed by Pius Luckan. In 2001 Clement Tchiburur discussed the performance of these songs in the Easter liturgy of the church at Wadeye, and demonstrated some of the dance movements. Leaving aside fascinating melodic differences and parallels between the three songs, I will limit my comments here to variation in textual, metrical, tempo, and sectional construction in each of the three songs (see Figures 4-6).

The first song in the set, song 8, demonstrates parallelism in the textual and rhythmic construction of the two lines (which I shall term A and B). The sequence of lines reproduces the order of events in the Easter story: first Christ is whipped, and then dies on the cross. The two lines are textually and rhythmically identical in their first (*yitha kanggi* 'our father') and last (*kangginimni kangginim* 'for us all, for us') phrases, differing only in their middle phrase (*kunmel-dhadhaga* 'they were whipping' in line A, and *nan-girr-djiraknima* 'he died for all of us' in line B). Rhythmically speaking, the extra syllable in this middle phrase of line B is accommodated by subdividing the final crotchet of the phrase in line A into two quavers, so the two phrases occupy exactly the same duration (seven quavers).

Song 8

yitha kanggi kunmel+dhadhaga kanggi=nim=ni kanggi=nim
 Father yours and mine they were going + whip yours and mine=PL=PURP yours and mine=PL
Our father, they were whipping him for us all, belonging to us all

yitha kanggi nan+girr+djirak=nim=a kangginimni kangginim
 Father yours and mine he+we.pl.INC.IO+die+PL=PAST yours and mine=PL=PURP yours and mine=PL
Our father, he died for us all, belonging to us all

Song 9

yitha kanggi kunmel+dhadhaga kangginimni kangginim
 Father yours and mine they were going +whip yours and mine=PL=PURP yours and mine=PL
Our father, they were whipping him for us all, belonging to us all

kan ngananya vardi+vi+gulilh=a nandji watjen na vungirdit
 this after they use thing dog- on head
 force+head+put on+PAST thorn
After this they forced the dog-thorn onto his head

Song 10

yitha kanggi nan+girr+djirak=nim=a kanggi=nim=ni kanggi=nim=ni
 Father yours and mine he+we.pl.INC.IO+die+PL=PAST yours and mine=PL=PURP yours and mine=PL=PURP
Our father, he died for us all, belonging to us all

vundi vundi verri vuli+ dim=a
 hand hand foot they do with fingers+sink=PAST
They sank things into his hands and feet

yitha kanggi wurlkirrim dha+girr+wardat=nim=a
 Father yours and mine blood he+we.PL.INC.IO+ingest=PL=PAST
Our father drank blood for us all

Songs composed by Clement Tchinburrur (8, 9) and Pius Lakan (10). Marri Ngarr text transcriptions and translations first made by Chester Street 1985; amendments to the orthography and translations, and further linguistics analysis, by Lysbeth Ford 2001-2.

Used by permission, Marri Ngarr elders and Wadeye Language and Culture Centre.

Figure 3: TEXTS OF THREE MARRI NGARR EASTER SONGS

Song 8

<i>yitha</i>	<i>kanggi</i>	<i>kunmel-dhadhaga</i>	<i>kangginimni</i>	<i>kangginim</i>
Father	our	they were whipping him	for us all	for us
x	x	x x	x x	x x

<i>yitha</i>	<i>kanggi</i>	<i>nan-girr-djiraknima</i>	<i>kangginimni</i>	<i>kangginim</i>
Father	our	he died for us	for us all	for us
x	x	x x	x x	x x

This song is performed at the low end of the fast even tempo band, with regular even beating throughout (see Figure 4). As is usual in this set of songs, the tempo of the instrumental sections (normally MM126) is slightly but consistently slower than the vocal sections (MM127), and the final instrumental section is performed significantly slower to end the song (MM108).

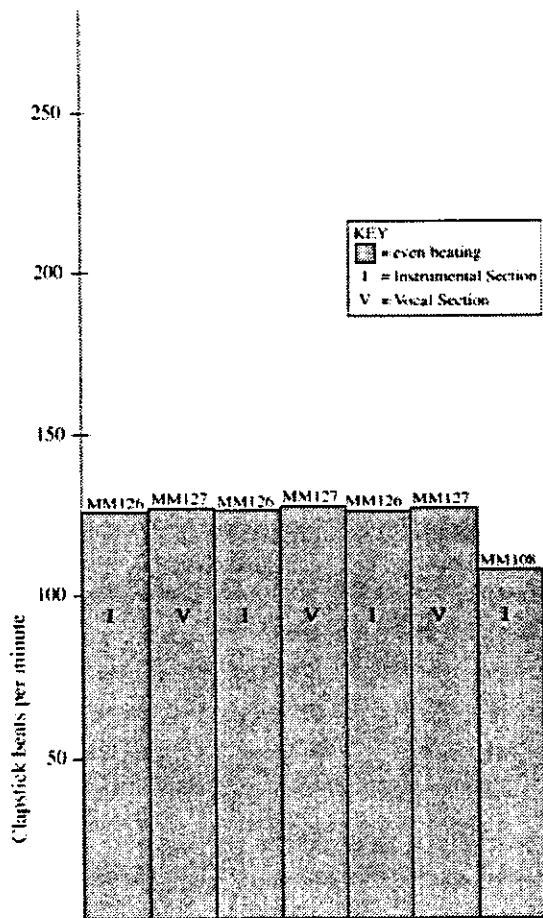






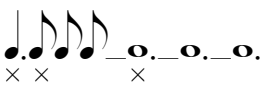


Figure 4: SECTIONAL AND DURATIONAL STRUCTURE OF SONG 8










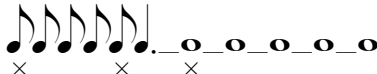
Song 9

<i>yitha kanggi</i> Father our	<i>kunmel-dhadhaga</i> they were whipping him	<i>kangginimni kangginim</i> for us all for us	
			
<i>kan ngananya</i> then after	<i>vardi-vi-gulilha</i> they forced onto his head	<i>nandji watjen</i> dog-thorn	<i>na vungirdit</i> on head
			

The first line of song 9's text is identical in both text and rhythm to line A of song 8, while the second line is constructed of almost entirely different textual and rhythmic material—with the exception that the rhythmic setting of the two words of the second line *kan ngananya* (quaver, quaver, quaver, crotchet) is identical to that of the first two words of the first line, *yitha kanggi*. Thematically speaking, this song presents two stages of the stations of the cross, where Christ is whipped and then has a crown of thorns placed on his head. We can thus think of song 9 as an elaboration of the first half of song 8.

This song is performed at the upper end of the fast tempo band, with vocal sections having a tempo of MM133 (see Figure 5). The introductory Instrumental Section is performed at a slightly lower tempo (MM130) and each Vocal Section is immediately followed by an Instrumental Section consisting of gapped beating in the repeating pattern xooo... (which I have indicated in the table by the notation of a dotted semibreve), performed at the significantly slower tempo of MM113. Gapped beating is termed *titil kin-djur kani* 'the clapsticks keep on cutting it in half'. The song ends by reverting to regular even beating at MM127.

Song 10

<i>yitha kanggi</i> Father our	<i>nan-girr-djiraknima</i> he died for us	<i>kangginimni kangginimni</i> for us all, for us all	
			
<i>vundi</i> hand	<i>vundi</i> hand	<i>verri</i> foot	<i>vuli-dima</i> they nailed him
			
<i>yitha kanggi</i> Father our	<i>wurlkirim</i> blood	<i>dha-girr-wardatnima</i> he ate for us	
			

Textually, the first line of this song is identical to line B of song 8. However, since the song is set in the moderate tempo band, it is rhythmically quite different (see further below). The imagery in this song moves to the suffering figure of Christ on the cross, as the nails are rhythmically hammered in (*vundi vundi verri vuli-dima* 'hands and feet they nailed down' — set to an unusual sequence of six successive crotchets), and

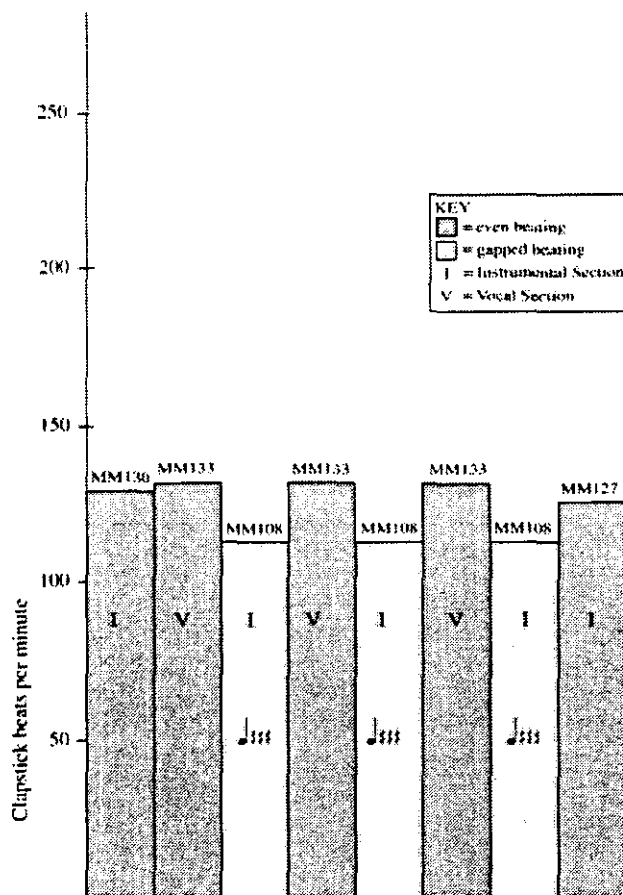


Figure 5: SECTIONAL AND DURATIONAL STRUCTURE OF SONG 9

the blood from the crown of thorns trickles down his face (*yitha kanggi wurlkirrim dha-girr-wardatnima* 'Our father drank his blood for us').

This song, which, unlike songs 8 and 9, was composed by Pius Luckan rather than by his brother Clement Tchinburur, is set to the moderate tempo band, with regular even beating throughout (see Figure 6). Again we see slight but consistent tempo variation between the vocal sections (MM89) and the instrumental sections (MM85, with MM81 to end).

There are a number of ways in which the three songs are tied together and differentiated from each other by commonalities and differences in rhythmic/textual construction, tempo and metre.

Commonalities:

- Songs 1 and 2 share text line A;
- Songs 1 and 3 share text line B;
- Songs 1 and 2 are both set to the fast tempo band and use triple metre in the text;

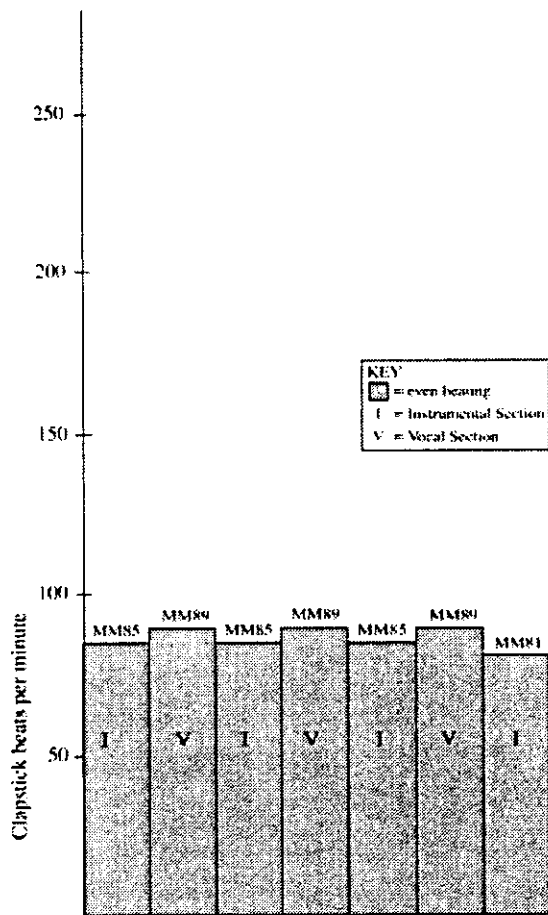


Figure 6: SECTIONAL AND DURATIONAL STRUCTURE OF SONG 10

- All three songs employ even beating to accompany the Vocal Section;
- Songs 1 and 3 both employ even beating also in the Instrumental Section.









Differences:


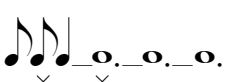

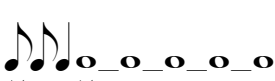
- Song 1 has parallel textual construction and identical durations in the two lines of its couplet, while the couplets of both song 2 and song 3 use quite different textual constructions and durations;
- Unlike songs 1 and 2, song 3 is set to the moderate tempo band;
- Within the fast tempo band, song 1 uses slower tempi (e.g. vocal section MM127) while song 2 uses faster tempi (vocal section MM133);
- Unlike songs 1 and 3, song 2 uses different beating patterns for the vocal section (regular even beating) and the following instrumental sections (gapped beating).

If we were to include melodic construction in our analysis the picture would be even more complex.

Comparison of the same textual material set in different rhythmic modes

Because text line B occurs in almost identical forms in the fast tempo band in song 8 (using fast triple text metre), and in the moderate tempo band in song 10 (using duple text metre), we have an opportunity to compare the setting of almost identical text in two different rhythmic modes (see Figure 7).

Marri Ngarr	<i>yitha</i>	<i>ganggiŋ</i>	<i>nanngirr-</i>	<i>djiraknima</i>	
English	Father	our	for us all	he died for us	
Fast triple setting (song 8)					4 beats
Moderate duple setting (song 10)					4 beats

Marri Ngarr	<i>gangginimni</i>	<i>gangginim[-ni]</i>	
English	for us all	[for] us all	
Fast triple setting (song 8)			9 beats
Moderate duple setting (song 10)			7 beats

Songs composed by Clement Tchinburrur and Pius Lakan

Marringarr text transcriptions and translations by Chester Street, with further analysis by Lysbeth Ford

Rhythmic transcriptions by Linda Barwick

Note: Only the first clapstick beat is shown for line-final long notes.

Figure 7: COMPARISON OF RHYTHMIC SETTINGS OF THE SAME TEXT IN FAST TRIPLE AND MODERATE DUPE RHYTHMIC MODES

Marett has remarked in various papers on text setting in Wangga songs that long notes regularly mark the end of the textual phrase, and longer notes also tend to be used at the ends of words and/or morphemes.³ In these texts we can see similar tendencies. The line-final long notes are very pronounced, and need no further discussion. Within the line, we can discern lengthening at significant morpho-syntactic

³ Allan Marett, 'Music-text relations in Australian Aboriginal music: the case of Bobby Lane's Wangga.' (paper delivered to the Chinese University of Hong Kong Colloquium Series, Friday 7 April 1995); and 'Musical complexity as an index of spiritual power in Australian Aboriginal music.' (paper delivered to the 40th Meeting of the Society of Ethnomusicology, Los Angeles, 19-22 October 1995); and 'The conventions of song and dance', chapter 4 of *Wangga: The enactment of Ancestral precedent in Australian Aboriginal song and dance* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan UP, forthcoming).

boundaries within both settings. For example, in both settings the phrase *yitha kanggi* 'our father' has a long note at the end, but no lengthening between the individual morphemes *yitha* 'father' and *kanggi* 'our'.

The next phrase *nan-girr-djiraknima* is split into two parts: *nan-girr* 'for us' and *djiraknima* 'he died for us', and is treated differently in the two settings. In the triple setting of this text there is a lengthening at the first boundary (after *nan-girr*) but not after the second (*djiraknima*), while the duple setting reverses this situation, lengthening at the end of the whole phrase *nan-girr-djiraknima* but not internally.

The two texts diverge in the last phrase, as to whether they partially or fully reduplicate the word *kangginimni* (for all of us). The triple setting, which only partially reduplicates, has lengthening at the end of the first element *kangginimni*, as well as after the second *kangginim* (which is also the line-final). By contrast, the duple setting fully reduplicates the word, but does not have lengthening at the end of the first element.

As Marett observed for Wangga songs, while all long notes occur at the ends of morphemes, not all morpheme-final notes are lengthened, and in some cases at least, the composer's choice of text-setting seems to relate to exigencies of the metre (for example, both settings for *yitha kanggi nan-girr-djiraknima* occur over the duration of exactly four clapstick beats).

Tempo in other genres and song styles

It is interesting to compare this sample with the diversity and systematic variation evident in combination of tempo and metre in songs and dances of other groups in Australia. The following summary is far from exhaustive. In some cases the comparison is not straightforward, because researchers have tended to express tempo with relation to the vocal rhythm rather than the clapstick beating. This would be a fruitful area for further comparative research.

In Central Australia a number of distinct metrical/tempo types have been identified (for example, three tempo bands in Pitjantjatjara and Antakirinya music are described by two terms *puriny* 'slow' and *wala* 'fast'.⁴ In northern Central Australia, Warumungu Yawulyu Mungamunga songs have slow (*warlinginji*) and fast (*kulumpurr*) songs, which correlate with distinct melodic types as well as rhythmic/metrical styles.⁵ For the northern Kimberleys, Sally Treloyn has recently discussed distinct tempo/metrical types in Ngarinyin music.⁶

For Arnhem Land, Stephen Wild and Margaret Clunies Ross have identified systematic use of different metrical types and tempi in composition and performance of didjeridu-accompanied clan songs (*bunggurl*

⁴ McCardell, Anthony, *Rhythm and Melody in Australian Aboriginal Songs of the Western Desert*. (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Western Australia, 1976), pp. 245-7; Ellis, Catherine .J., A. Max Ellis, Mona Tur and Anthony McCardell, 'Classification of sounds in Pitjantjatjara-speaking areas,' in L.R. Hiatt (ed), *Australian Aboriginal Concepts* (Canberra and New Jersey: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies and Humanities Press, 1978), pp. 73-74; Ellis, Catherine and Linda Barwick, 'Musical syntax and the problem of meaning in a Central Australian songline.' *Musicology Australia* 10 (1987): 41-57; Barwick, Linda, 'Creative (ir)regularities: the intermeshing of text and melody in performance of Central Australian song.' *Australian Aboriginal Studies* 1/1989: 12-28.

⁵ Barwick, Linda, 'Wumpurrarni songs for *pupulanji*: producing a CD of Warumungu women's songs for an Australian and a global audience' (paper delivered to the 35th World Conference of the International Council for Traditional Music, Hiroshima, 21 August 1999); *Yawulyu Mungamunga: Dreaming Songs of Warumungu Women* (booklet to accompany CD of the same title) (Sydney: Festival Records D139686), p.7.

⁶ Treloyn, Sally, 'Scotty Martin's *jadmi junba* — the composition/performance of song texts.' Paper delivered to the 24th National Conference of the Musicological Society of Australia, Melbourne, 18 April 2001.

or *manikay*) belonging to Anbarra people of central Arnhem Land.⁷ Greg Anderson undertook extensive analysis of the limits of this variability in Rembarrnga clan songs from south central Arnhem Land.⁸ For both Anbarra and Rembarrnga clan songs, the researchers identify three tempo bands (termed by Wild 'moderate' 'fast' and 'fastest'). Anderson's extensive analysis identifies three tempo bands but only two descriptive terms in Rembarrnga: *djurrkdjurrkna* is applied to the fastest tempo band (around MM250), while *burlpurlna* is applied to the moderate and slow tempo bands (around MM200 and around MM150 MM respectively). Steven Knopoff has identified a number of named tempo/metrical categories in northeast Arnhem Land *manikay*,⁹ and more recently, Peter Toner has discussed terminology relating to rhythmic, metrical and clapstick patterning in Dhalwangu *manikay* at Gapuwiyak.¹⁰

Paired items

The pairing of items in different tempo bands is one of the main ways in which learners become aware of the importance of this dimension of performance. In analyses of Central Australian music Ellis, Strehlow, McCardell, Wild, and Ellis and Barwick have all discussed the phenomenon of consecutive performance of the same text set to different metrical styles.¹¹ In Pitjantjatjara language the term *kampa kutjupanyi* 'to burn or ripen',¹² translated into English by expressions such as 'turn im over' or 'show the other side', is used to describe this and other instances of paired songs exhibiting minimal variation (described in English sometimes as 'link verses').¹³

The pairing of slow and fast songs is commonly found in northern Central Australia and the Kimberleys *junba* or *balga* genres, although in these cases it is rare for exactly the same text to be maintained, and the important element appears to be consecutive performance, in slow and then fast style, of a pair of thematic-

⁷ Clunies Ross, Margaret and Stephen A. Wild, *Djambidj: An Aboriginal Song Series from Northern Australia* (Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, 1982); 'Formal performance: the relations of music, text and dance in Arnhem Land clan songs.' *Ethnomusicology* 28 (1986), 209-35.

⁸ Anderson, Gregory D. *Murlarra: A Clan Song Series of Central Arnhem Land* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Sydney, 1992); 'Striking a balance: limited variability in performances of a clan song series from central Arnhem Land,' in L. M. Barwick, Marett, A.J., and G. Tunstill (eds.), *The Substance of Singing and the Essence of Song: an Anthology for Catherine Ellis* (Sydney: Oceania Monograph 46, 1995), p. 15.

⁹ Knopoff, Steven, 'Yuta manikay: juxtaposition of ancestral and contemporary elements in the performance of Yolngu clan songs.' *Yearbook of the International Council for Traditional Music* 24 (1992), p. 148.

¹⁰ Toner, Peter, *When the Echoes are Gone: A Yolngu Musical Anthropology* (unpublished PhD thesis, Australian National University, 2001), pp. 82-100.

¹¹ Ellis, Catherine, 'Rhythmic analysis of Aboriginal syllabic songs.' *Miscellanea Musicologica* 3 (1968): 38; Strehlow, T.G.H., *Songs of Central Australia* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1971), p. 26; McCardell, Anthony, *Rhythm and Melody in Australian Aboriginal Songs of the Western Desert*, pp. 139-40; Wild, Stephen, 'Warlbiri Music and Culture: Meaning in a Central Australian Song Series,' in J.C. Kessler and J. Stubington (eds), *Problems and Solutions: Occasional Essays in Musicology presented to Alice M. Moyle* (Sydney: Hale and Iremonger, 1984), p. 193; Ellis, Catherine and Linda Barwick, 'Musical syntax and the problem of meaning'.

¹² Goddard, Cliff, *Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara to English Dictionary*, 2nd edition (Alice Springs: Institute of Aboriginal Development, 1992).

¹³ Ellis, C. J., A. M. Ellis, M. Tur and A. McCardell, 'Classification of sounds in Pitjantjatjara-speaking areas,' pp. 73-74

ally related song texts. In these cases the English term 'mate' (Aboriginal English term 'banji') may be used to describe such song pairs.¹⁴

In central Arnhem Land clan songs too, in which song texts tend to be rather freely structured, it is common for a set of songs in one tempo band to be followed by the same song subject in a different tempo band.¹⁵ In other northern Australian genres, for example Wangga, it seems comparatively rare for systematic tempo variation to be highlighted in this way during performances.¹⁶

The widespread occurrence of thematically-related song pairs in different tempo bands, and the frequent correlation of tempo band with metrical organisation of the song text, may point to an underlying system of rhythmic modes in northern Australian music. It seems likely that integrated analysis of dance style, tempo and rhythmic mode would point to further commonalities in sequencing of different tempi and performance styles in ritual organisation.

More broadly, the principle of tying together a sequence of songs by structured textual and musical variation is widespread throughout Australia. In this respect, tempo band is just one of the organisational principles that can be highlighted by juxtaposition. For example, Strehlow highlighted repetition of textual elements when he observed of Aranda song style that:

The slow onward movement of native verse is perhaps portrayed best by means of sections of songs that are tied together by "rhyme", i.e. by couplets occurring in groups of three or more, in which each line terminates in one common polysyllabic word.¹⁷

For Arnhem Land, Clunies Ross and Wild commented:

This patchwork quality of the same stylistic components being used in different combinations and given different degrees of prominence in the verses of different subjects is characteristic of *bunggurl* performances.¹⁸

The evidence summarised here may suggest that it is specifically through sequential performance of related songs that this effect is achieved, and that such aesthetic principles are characteristic of a number of different Australian performance traditions.

I have spoken elsewhere of the metonymic qualities of Australian song texts and their musical settings.¹⁹ Each song is so densely packed with reference, and so tightly structured musically, that in stringing together a thematically-, geographically-, poetically- or musically-related sequence the knowledgeable song leader

¹⁴ For example, by the Ngarinyin composer Nyalgodi Scotty Martin (personal communication, 1998); and by the Warumungu songleader K.F. Nappanangka (personal communication 1997, see Barwick, *Yawulyu Mungamunga: Dreaming Songs of Warumungu Women*).

¹⁵ Personal communication with Anderson, 2001, see also Clunies Ross and Wild 'Formal performance' Toner, *When the Echoes are Gone*.

¹⁶ Personal communication with Marett, 2001.

¹⁷ Strehlow, *Songs of Central Australia*, p. 112.

¹⁸ Clunies Ross and Wild, 'Formal performance'

¹⁹ Linda Barwick, 'Song as an indigenous art,' in Margo Neale and Sylvia Kleinert (eds), *Oxford Companion to Indigenous Art and Culture* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press,) p. 329.

has an almost endless choice as to which facet of a song text to highlight in any one performance by following it with another that maintains some structural elements while varying others. In contrast to the widespread organisational principles of explanatory narrative and causality that underlie the products of European academic thought, the great monuments of Australian culture — the enactments of Dreaming agency in multimedia performances of superabundant meaning-making — are put together according to aesthetic principles that employ parataxis rather than hypotaxis, juxtaposition rather than subordination. The juxtaposition of densely signifying and structured segments (found also in the visual arts) leaves a range of possibilities open to the creative and educative purposes of the song leader and to the learner's level of understanding of similarity and difference.

Pius Luckan and Clement Tchiburur, by performing for Marett a sequence of their Lirrga songs that systematically varied tempo band and rhythmic mode, elicited the questions from him that have generated this article and led to public recognition of this aspect of Marri Ngarr musical artistry.