

Words and Music in Aboriginal Song. Course outline

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Role of singing in Aboriginal society
 - 2.1 Aboriginal socio-linguistic groups
 - 2.2 Role of singing in Central Australian Aboriginal society
 - 2.3 The verb 'to sing' in Arandic languages
 - 2.4 Origin of songs
 - 2.5 Relationship to cosmology *Altyerre* (A) / *Jukurrpa* (W) 'Law, Creation time'
 - 2.6 Ceremony: the prototypical context for singing
 - 2.6.1 Kinship
 - 2.6.2 Country and Place
 - 2.6.3 Traditional and contemporary contexts for ceremonial performance
 - 2.6.4 *Awelye* / *yawulyu* – a women's public ceremonial genre
 - 2.6.5 Ceremony is multi-modal
 - 2.6.6 Hierarchical structure of ceremony
- 3 How meaning is conveyed
 - 3.1 Visual design, movement and sound
 - 3.2 Words in songs: vocabulary
 - 3.3 Broader significances
- 4 Formal properties of song – *akerte*
 - 4.1 Language
 - 4.1.1 Vocabulary
 - 4.1.2 Syntax
 - 4.1.3 Linguistic variety
 - 4.1.4 Poetic devices
 - 4.2 Musical rhythm
 - 4.2.1 Beat
 - 4.2.2 Meter
 - 4.2.3 Grouping
 - 4.2.4 Durational categories
 - 4.2.5 Rhythmic cells
 - 4.3 Setting words to music (text-setting)
 - 4.4 Setting words to musical rhythm: matching rules
 - 4.4.1 No melismas
 - 4.4.2 Prosodic groups should align with rhythmic groups
 - 4.4.3 Duration in speech = duration in rhythm
 - 4.4.4 Prominant syllables should align with strong beats
 - 4.4.5 Note attack should align with syllable onset
 - 4.4.6 Repair strategies when rules conflict
 - 4.5 Musical pitch - *ikwa* 'melodic contour'
 - 4.6 Setting rhythmic text to the melodic contour
- 5 Summary

Further reading

Collections on (mostly) Aboriginal songs:

Barwick L, A Marett & G Tunstill (eds) 2005 *The Essence of Singing and the Substance of Song. Recent responses to the Aboriginal performing arts and other essays in honour of Catherine Ellis* Sydney: University of Sydney.

- Clunies Ross M 1986 'Australian Aboriginal Oral Traditions' *Oral Traditions* 1:231–271. (not a book, but covers most of Australia)
- Clunies Ross M, T Donaldson & S Wild (eds) 1987 *Songs of Aboriginal Australia* Sydney: Oceania Publications.
- Kassler JC & J Stubington (eds) 1984 *Problems and solutions: occasional essays in musicology presented to Alice Moyle* Sydney: Hale and Iremonger.
- Marett A & L Barwick (eds) 2007 *Studies in Aboriginal Song. Australian Aboriginal Studies* 2. (A Special Issue of *Australian Aboriginal Studies*).
- Turpin M, Stebbins & S Morey (eds) 2010 The Language of Song. A special issue of *Australian Journal of Linguistics*, 30: 1.

Regional studies on Aboriginal Song

- Dixon RMW & G Koch 1996 *Dyirbal song poetry: the oral literature of an Australian rainforest people* St Lucia: University of Queensland Press.
- Ellis C 1964 *Aboriginal Music Making: A study of Central Australian Music*, Libraries board of South Australia, Adelaide.
- Ellis C 1985 *Aboriginal music: education for living. Cross-cultural experiences from South Australia* St Lucia: University of Queensland Press.
- Marett A 2005 *Songs, Dreamings and Ghosts: the enactment of Ancestral Precedent in the Wangga of North Australia* Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press.
- Moyle R 1986 *Aywarra Music: Songs and Society in a Central Australian Community* Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.
- Strehlow TGH 1971 *Songs of Central Australia* Sydney: Angus and Robertson.

Songs in their social context

- Hymes D 1970 'The Ethnography of Speaking' in T. Galdwin & W C Sturtevant (eds) *Anthropology and Human Behaviour* Washington, DC: Anthropological Society of Washington.
- Sherzer J 1990 *Verbal Art in San Blas: Kuna culture through its discourse* Great Britain: Cambridge University Press.
- Weiner J 1991 *The Empty Place: Poetry, Space and being among the Foi of Papua New Guinea* Bloomington: University of Indiana Press.

Rhythm, meter and poetic form (general)

- Dell F & J Halle 2009 'Comparing Musical text setting in French and English Songs' in Jean-Louis Aroui & Andy Arleo (eds) *Towards a typology of poetic forms: from language to metrics and beyond* Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 63-78.
- Dell F & M Elmedlaoui 2008 *Poetic meter and musical form in Tashliht Berber songs* Cologne: Berber Studies 19 Köppe.
- Deo A 2007 'The metrical organization of Classical Sanskrit verse' *Journal of Linguistics* 43:63–114.
- Dresher B Elan & Nila Friedberg 2006 (eds) *Formal approaches to poetry: recent developments in metrics* (Phonology and Phonetics 11). Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Fabb N & M Halle 2008 *Meter in Poetry. A new theory* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fabb N 1997 *Linguistics and Literature* Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers.
- Halle J & F Lerdahl 1993 'A generative textsetting model' *Music Perception* 55: 3–23.
- Halle J 2009 'Constituency matching in metrical texts', submitted for publication in the proceedings of the conference *Words and Music*, University of Missouri-Columbia, 14 March 2003. <http://www.johnhalle.com/musical.writing.technical/technical.htm>
- Hayes B & A Kaun 1996 'The Role of Phonological Phrasing in sung and chanted verse' *Linguistic Review* 13: 243–303.

- Hayes B & M MacEachern 1998 'Quatrain form in English folk verse' *Language* 74: 473–507.
- Hayes B 1983 'A Grid-based Theory of English Meter' *Linguistic Inquiry* 14: 357–393.
- Hayes B 2002 'Faithfulness & Componentiality in Metrics'. (Can be downloaded from his website: <http://www.linguistics.ucla.edu/people/hayes/FaithfulnessInMetrics/index.htm>)
- Hayes B 2008 'Textsetting as Constraint Conflict' in Jean-Louis Aroui & Andy Arleo (eds) *Towards a typology of poetic forms* Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Jakobson R 1960 'Closing statement: Linguistics and Poetics' in T Sebeok (ed.) *Style in Language* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press: 350–377.
- Jakobson R 1987 'Linguistics and Poetics' in K Pomorska & S Rudy (eds) *Language in Literature* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press: 62–94.
- Kiparsky P 2006 'A modular metrics of folk verse' in EB Dresher & N Friedberg *Formal approaches to poetry* New York/Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter: 7–52.
- Lerdahl F & R Jackendoff 1983 *A generative theory of tonal music* Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.
- McConnell-Ginet S 2008 'Words in the world: How and why meanings can matter' *Language* 83: 497–527.
- Patel A 2008 *Music, language and the brain* New York: Oxford University Press. Chapter 3 'Rhythm'.
- Rodríguez-Vázquez R 2010 'Text-setting constraints: a comparative perspective' *Australian Journal of Linguistics* 30(1).
- Rumsey A 2001 'Tom Yay Kange: A metrical Narrative genre from the New Guinea Highlands' *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 11: 193–239.
- Rumsey A 2007 'Musical, poetic and linguistic form in Tom Yaya sung narratives from Papua New Guinea' *Anthropological Linguistics* 49: 237–282.
- Articles on Aboriginal song**
- Barwick L 2000 'Song as an Indigenous Art' in M Neale & S Kleinert (eds) *Oxford Companion to Aboriginal Art and Culture* Melbourne: Oxford University Press: 328–334.
- Barwick L 2003 'Tempo bands, metre and rhythmic mode in Marri Ngarr "Church Lirrga" songs' *Australasian Music Research* 7: 767–83.
- Barwick L 2005 'Performance, aesthetics, experience: thoughts on Yawulyu Mungamunga songs' in E Mackinlay, D Collins & S Owens (eds) *Aesthetics and Experience in Music Performance* London: Cambridge Scholars Press: 1–18.
- Barwick L, B Birch & N Evans 2007 'Iwaidja *Jurtbirrk* songs: Bringing language and music together' *Australian Aboriginal Studies* 2:6–34.
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- Donaldson T 1984 'Kids that got lost: variation in the words of Ngiyampaa songs' in J C Kassler & J Stubington (eds) *Problems and solutions: occasional essays in musicology presented to Alice Moyle* Sydney: Hale and Iremonger: 228–253.
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- Garde M 2006 'The Language of Kun-borrk in western Arnhem Land' *Musicology Australia* 28:58–89.
- Garde M 2007 'Morrdjdjanjino ngan-marnbom story nakka, "songs that turn me into a storyteller": the morrdjdjanjino of western Arnhem Land' *Australian Aboriginal Studies* 2: 35–45.
- Hercus L & G Koch 1999 'Wire Yard': A song from near Lake Eyre' *Aboriginal History* 23: 72–82.
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- Sutton P 1987 'Mystery and Change' in M Clunies Ross, T Donaldson & S Wild (eds) *Songs of Aboriginal Australia*, Sydney: Oceania Publications: 77–96.
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- Turpin M 2007b 'The Poetics of Central Australian Aboriginal Song' *Australian Aboriginal Studies* 2: 100–115.
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