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Moving Songs: Repatriating Audiovisual Recordings of Aboriginal Australian Dance and Song (Kimberley Region, Northwestern Australia)

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Abstract

Repatriation has become almost ubiquitous in ethnomusicological research on Australian Indigenous song. This article provides insights into processes of a repatriation-centered song revitalization project in the Kimberley, northwest Australia. Authored by an ethnomusicologist and two members of the Ngarinyin cultural heritage community, the article provides firsthand accounts of the early phases of a long-term repatriation-centered project referred to locally as the Junba Project. The authors provide a sample of narratives and dialogues that deliver insight into experiences of the work of identifying recordings “in the archive” and cultural negotiation and use of recordings “on Country.” The entanglement of local epistemological frameworks with past and present collection, archival research, repatriation, and dissemination for intergenerational knowledge transmission between spirits, Country, and the living, is explored, showing how recordings move song knowledge from community to archive to community and from generation to generation, and move people in present-day communities. The chapter considers how these “moving songs” allow an interrogation of the fraught endeavor of intercultural collaboration in the pursuit of revitalizing Indigenous song traditions. It positions repatriation as a method that can support intergenerational knowledge transmission and as a method to consider past and present intercultural relationships within research projects and between cultural heritage communities and collecting institutions.

This chapter focuses on the movement and circulation of audiovisual recordings of the public dance-song genre *junba* in Mowanjum, an Aboriginal community in the Kimberley, a region of northwest Australia. In this chapter, we – Treloyn (an ethnomusicologist who has researched *junba* since 1999) and two members of the cultural heritage community, Martin (an elder dancer and singer) and Charles (a cultural consultant and singer) – will share narratives and stories that were recorded during the early stages of a project called ‘Strategies for Sustaining Aboriginal Song and Dance in the Modern World: the Mowanjum and Fitzroy River valley communities of Western Australia’.¹ As the title suggests, the emphasis of the project was on sustaining song and dance practice, particularly that associated with *junba*. The project was designed as a response to concerns expressed by elder songman and composer Scotty Nyalgodi Martin † (Matthew Dembal Martin’s father) to Treloyn in 2007 that children and young people were increasingly disengaged from the practice of *junba* to the detriment of their social and emotional wellbeing. At the heart of this concern is the interconnectedness of the practice of *junba*, the health and happiness of people, and the spiritual and cultural health of Country that provides food and life (Treloyn and Martin 2013).²

Following a recommendation made in the Garma Statement on Indigenous Music and Dance that repatriation of song recordings to communities of origin should be supported due to the

'role [it can play] in the maintenance and protection of tradition' (Garma 2002), and consultation with elders and Indigenous organisations that support the cultural heritage interests of Kimberley peoples (the Mowanjum Art and Culture Centre and the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre), it was determined that the project would involve repatriation of recordings of *junba*. The research aimed to determine the most effective ways of repatriating and disseminating these recordings so as to support the sustainment of *junba* practices and knowledges. In carrying out the project – known in Mowanjum as 'the Junba project' – we recognized that a research process that supported intergenerational collaboration and knowledge transmission would be a key to achieving this aim. The resultant project involved:

- community-led discovery and identification of records of *junba* (including audio, video and photos) held in the archive of the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and private collections (Treloyn and Charles 2015; Treloyn, Charles, and Martin 2016)
- use of new media tools for discovering, sharing, and producing knowledge about *junba* in collections and the community, such as curating collections for *junba* records for access via digital media libraries and a community-managed digital content management system, (Treloyn and Emberly 2013, Treloyn, Charles, and Nulgit 2013), software for digital storytelling projects, CDs, DVDs, and more recently, USBs, Bluetooth and cloud sharing.
- opportunities to practice *junba* through 'on Country' teaching and learning camps and picnics, and engagement and investment by Indigenous organisations within the local and regional community.

We have charted growth in musical and linguistic diversity in the repertory of *junba* performed at the annual Mowanjum Festival between 2010 and 2015, concluding that while many factors inform what and when *junba* dance-songs are performed, these interventions appear to have accompanied, if not supported, the revitalization of *junba* (Treloyn, Charles, and Nulgit 2013; Treloyn and Charles 2015).

In the course of the project we also reflected upon the complex intercultural relationships that permeate the work: questions that circle around the involvement of Treloyn (an *almara* 'white fella' ethnomusicologist) in the practice, recording, and representation of *junba* beginning in 1999; and contemporary reverberations of colonial acts that have endangered *junba* and its practitioners since the mid-1800s (Treloyn and Charles 2014). Most recently, we have turned to an Indigenous epistemological framework to conceptualize the departure of voices from Country when a recording is moved away to an archive, and their return many decades later when a recording is repatriated (Treloyn, Martin, and Charles 2016).

We have come to understand repatriation as a collection of plural processes that brings personal and political relations (those within the cultural heritage community and those between *almara* researchers and Ngarinyin, Worrorra and Wunambal singers) from the past into the present.³ For us, repatriation has generated discourse that allows us to reflect upon intercultural relationships within the project team, within the local and regional community in the past and present, and between the cultural heritage community and collecting institutions.

In this chapter we provide a sample of narratives and dialogues about recordings, processes of repatriation and their implications that arose in the first few years of the project (to 2014). Our intention is to present to readers with a window into our thinking and conversations, and thus create the potential for continued critical discourse that extends to an international audience.

Ambiguous good(s): An ethnomusicologist's story

In 1999 the Ngarinyin Aboriginal Corporation asked ethnomusicologist Linda Barwick to travel from Sydney to the town of Derby, and onwards to the small community of Dodnun on Mount Elizabeth Station in the northern Kimberley, to record and document *junba* songs composed and sung by Scotty Nyalgodi Martin†. Barwick, along with Allan Marett, had previously traveled to the Kimberley and met Martin and his singers, conducting research to record and document the songs of the northern Kimberley. I (Treloyn), in my first year of graduate studies at the University of Sydney, had been working to transcribe and analyze recordings that Barwick and Marett had made in Bijili (near Dodnun, Mount Elizabeth Station) and Prap Prap (Drysdale River Station) of performances of several *junba* repertoires, including Martin's *jadmi junba* series. I accompanied Barwick on her on the fieldtrip and then returned to the Kimberley in July 2000 to commence long-term fieldwork to research the *junba* tradition. For two years, I worked with elder Ngarinyin, Worrorra and Wunambal men and women to record and transcribe known *junba* songs and research their histories and cultural significance. I documented much of this in my doctoral dissertation, which centered on analysis and ethnography of the performance practice and composition of *junba*, and Martin's repertoire (Treloyn 2006).

With almost four years elapsing between the time I conducted fieldwork (2000 – 2002) and the completion of my dissertation, my experience of writing about *junba* was marked disjunction, between my lived experience of *junba* and living within its community of practitioners, and the tools of description and language at my disposal. I remained in contact with Martin† and others in the Kimberley, responding to requests for copies of compact cassettes and then CDs, and, in 2008, to Martin's request that I return to help "keep *junba* strong". Having held the internal dissonance between my fieldwork and writing for several years, the prospect of returning and responding to these requests was a great personal and professional opportunity. Following consultations with elders in 2008 and 2009 we commenced the Junba Project.

The project sought to support community-based efforts to keep *junba* strong by harnessing the repatriation, dissemination, and creation of recordings. As noted, the rationale for this approach was based on recommendations made in the Garma Statement on Indigenous Music and Dance, requests for access to recordings from the cultural heritage community, as well as a handful of reports about the role that repatriated recordings can play in renewal of musical practice in Australia (for example, Marett & Barwick 2003, 146) and elsewhere. I proceeded with the notion that this was a 'good' that I might do for both the cultural heritage community and myself. However I also proceeded with some caution and, through a review of relevant literature, identified a range of concerns that may arise from the reintroduction of records to cultural heritage communities (Treloyn & Emberly 2013). Of particular concern to me were factors that might serve to ossify elements of *junba* practice.

As detailed elsewhere (Treloyn and Martin 2014), singing *junba* is an act of composition, wherein the composer brings together lyrics, melody, and rhythm with the accompanying dance—all associated with the taste and bone of ancestors residing in Country—to stimulate Country and people, making them healthy and happy. *Junba* is core to personal and community identity and social connectedness, and it is considered to maintain both the health of Country and the health of people. According to ethnomusicologist Catherine Ellis, the power of Central Australian style singing, of which *junba* is an example, is activated by the "correct interlocking" of musical elements, dance, place, and accompanying ritual/ceremonial action, which she effectively illustrates with interlocking, layered cog-wheels (Ellis 1985, 95). Repertoires comprise multiple songs, each with unique, relatively short texts that repeat cyclically and are set isorhythmically (i.e., each repeat has an identical rhythmic setting) throughout each song performance. The length of the song varies according to the progress of accompanying ritual

and social activity. Each song in a repertory is set to the same tune, often associated with the taste or scent of the ancestor and Country being celebrated, and this tune expands and contracts to accommodate texts of different lengths. As Ellis explains: “Through correct interlocking the power of the ancestor, being drawn out of the earth by the strength of the song, is present” (Ellis 1985, 109). Composer Scotty Nyalgodi Martin † has described singing as an engine, a “power generator” that “lights up” his community and Country (personal communication, October–November 2011). Hence, as Marett has suggested musical patterns in Australian song can “make and unmake the world” (Marett 2010, 205).

At the risk of over-theorizing the mechanics of the social efficacy of *junba* musical systems, I was concerned that if a single recording of a single performance of a song is selected and privileged time after time by a listener (due to availability of a single recording or the sound quality of the recording, for example), the variable interlocking of melody and text/rhythm that is intrinsic to the power of the singing may become fixed. Should the listener apply the principles of melodic setting learned from one performance in their setting of other songs in a repertory, the variable interlocking of elements, the expansion and contraction of melody around points-of-fit with rhythmicized text that characterizes the tradition, may be restricted. As one anonymous reader of a funding application indicated, repatriation is not an “unambiguous good.” Similar concerns expressed by senior ethnomusicologists in Australia, including Stephen Wild (1992, 13) and Steven Knopoff (2004, 181), ensured that I would come to weave these concerns into the project rather than simply attempt to ignore them.

This being the case however, during the project evidence mounted that such a concern ought not be prohibit repatriation. Numerous factors indicated this. First, *junba* musical knowledge is transmitted and acquired implicitly. Knowledge is transmitted and acquired when individual songs are repeated multiple times, each minimally varied, during a performance, over years, and in their correct social, geographical, and spiritual contexts. The collections of recordings repatriated to the cultural heritage community were held in the digital media libraries and burnt to CDs in such a way as to accommodate this mode of listening and learning with multiple performances of the same songs included, sung by multiple people, sometimes over several decades. Barwick has outlined how new music technologies have allowed a strengthening of networks and relationships that underpin song performance and production in Wadeye to the northeast of the Kimberley (Barwick 2017, 170). Second, even if a learner were to prefer just one performance, and this resulted in an ossification of its musical form, simplification of a song form does not necessarily mean that there has been a dissolution of its power. As a study of rhythmic mode in the Wangga-performing community of Wadeye (to the northeast of the Kimberley, in the Northern Territory) shows, expert singers deliberately reduced the number of complex rhythmic modes used in performances to facilitate maximum participation in dance, and thus enhanced personal and group identity (Marett 2007). Third, songs and performances typically are selected on the basis of family connections and Countries of origin, both of which are core to individual and group identity (see also Toner 2003, writing of Yolngu listening). Fourth, as noted, the initial analysis appears to indicate that the repatriation activities project may have stimulated a greater musical and linguistic diversity, and larger number of dance-songs in *junba* performance events (Treloyn, Charles, and Nulgit 2013, Treloyn and Charles 2015).

Bring them back to Country: Stories from culture-bearers

We begin with a conversation that took place on the evening of 8 June 2011 at a place in Wilinggin (Ngarinyin Country) called Anbada (also known as ‘Old Station’) on the Mount Barnett pastoral lease. Anbada was the site of an historical *bororru* (dance ground) and, looking to the east as the sun goes down in the west, you can see Geyelnggu (Mount Barnett Range)

glowing red (see Figure 1). We – a group of Ngarinyin from four generations, Treloyn, and visiting ethnomusicologist Andrea Emberly – had gathered for what we called a ‘Junba camp’. Our intention was to immerse children and young people in *junba*: how to prepare for it, what it means, and how to dance and sing. We held the camp at Anbada, which is approximately 300 kilometres from Mowanjum and the nearest town of Derby, to ensure that children and young people were free of the distractions, because it is in the heart of Wilinggin, the site of an ancestral *bororru*, and close to the nearby Kupungarri Aboriginal Community where many Ngarinyin live and where many Ngarinyin *yilila* (children) attend school.

[insert Fig 1 here]

The camp, which went for five days, involved a range of daily activities centred on *junba*: clearing the dance ground of grass, constructing the *wurawun* (bough screen) behind which the dancers would prepare, refreshing the paint and weaving on the boards that the dancers carry on their shoulders, harvesting the bark of the paperbark tree (*Melaleuca leucadendra*) to craft *ngardarri* (paperbark headcaps) to be worn by dancers, and collecting *ornmal* (white ochre) for body paint. In the evenings we prepared food, Matthew Dembal Martin and Pansy Nulgut led singing and stories, and we watched video recordings of *junba* performed by Ngarinyin children and recorded by Linda Barwick and Allan Marett at nearby the *bororru* at Bijili (on Mount Elizabeth Station near the Dodnun community) and Prap Prap (also known as Maranbabidingarri, near Drysdale River Station) in 1997 and 1998. The following conversation, recorded as we watched one video (played on Treloyn’s laptop, powered from the battery of a motor vehicle) illustrates the nature and pluralism of responses to a recording from the recent past.

Pansy Nulgut (PN): Where this one longa? Where this one la? [Where is this performance taking place?]⁴

Sally Treloyn (ST): Ah, this one is those Wanalirri boys at Bijili in 1997. ... They did Nyalgodi’s *iadmi* beforehand.

PN: Ah yeah, I know. ... That’s the boys what bin [that were] dancing. But today nothing, you can’t get those *pobela* (poor fellows) [to dance]. (Speaking to children, crowded around the laptop showing the video) Come on we can’t see!

Matthew Martin (MM): (Addressing the children watching the video) Get the idea, how they bin learn? This one now [is] Wanalirri (the *junba* dance-song that celebrates the Wanjina named Wanalirri).⁵ This mob want to look im [These children need to look at the rock painting of Wanalirri and the dance].

PN: You bella hear im? [Do you boys and girls hear the singers?] Neville (a well known singer from Derby) singing there.

(A new song commences and singing with a clapstick accompaniment can be heard with the lyrics *gubardwardangu balja gumandangi wurre gowadnggerri...*)

MM: That’s the, what now?

ST: Warm up song [It is the type of song known as a ‘warm up’ song, sung while the dancers are preparing to dance]

PN: We never sing that *gubard* [the warm-up song beginning with *gubardwardangu*] [anymore]. *Galanba* (Nulgut states the language term for this type of song – *galanba*)

MM: (Instructing the children who are watching the video what to do when the singers sing this type of song) Stand up one time [Stand still on the dance ground]

Anonymous: (Speaking to child sitting in front of the screen) Move back a bit mummy!⁶ We want to watch! (pauses) Ah, you right.

PN: (Commending the high quality of the singing) Lucy Ward (a senior, very highly skilled singer), [is] right there! (With sadness in tone of voice) And old girl (a singer who had since passed away).

(M. Martin, Pansy Nulgit, and Sally Treloyn, 8 June 2011, Anbada).

In this conversation we hear interest from an elder (Nulgit) about the location at which the performance is taking place (“Where this one longa?”). In determining this, the watchers glean information about who may be dancing, who may be singing, and what, as the practice and content of *junba* is inseparable from Country. We hear sadness expressed that the participation of young people in *junba* is declining (“That’s the boys what bin [that were] dancing. But today nothing, you can’t get those *pobela*”). We become aware that children are enthusiastically crowded around the video that elders are attempting to watch (“Come on we can’t see!”). We hear Martin directing children’s attention to learn choreography and gestures from the video, to educate them about the Wanjina spirit and Country that is being danced and sung, and about the finer details of performance that they ought to remember (“Get the idea, how they bin learn? This one now [is] Wanalirri. This mob want to look im”). We also hear elders identify singers in the recording, enjoying and exclaiming at their skills.

Martin, tasked with leading *junba* performances and teaching children to sing and dance, had explained to Treloyn how he tells stories and videos to support children to learn how to dance today, in much the same way as children in the past ‘the old days’ learnt from witnessing actual performances ‘the show’:

[I] tell kids about the DVD. In the old days the old people didn’t do that [watch], because there was no DVD. We would see it in the show. We got it from the story [that goes] to the dancing part of it. [The reason is] you got to be told first the story, and when it comes to the show time, you can see it clear – dancing and music playing and when they are singing. That’s like the real thing in the dancing and you think back to the story, so you can easily pick it up from there. Especially the young people. Good for the imagination. Just like when you read a book and see it later on.

It [the DVD] makes them think and when it comes to real time [a performance] it comes out clear in their mind now, they can see that thing in the dancing. They think ‘I hear that song, I can dance it now’. And they can hear that song when they [the singers are] singing. When it comes to dancing they know the tune, they know when to stop, when to go. They know how it goes from the spirit (Martin in conversation with Treloyn, 19 March 2012, Mowanjum Community).

In the months before the Anbada *junba* camp, Martin explained his motivation for pursuing the return of recordings from archival and private collections to support his teaching/learning efforts:

We have to get that thing straight. Get it down in computers and, like in CDs, many *junba* [songs and repertoires], dancing and singing. That’s the special thing for our kids then—our next generation coming up. They got to pick all that [up] like the old people did. They pass it on to generation after generation. Well that’s what I’m trying to get now, trying to teach these kids properly you know? Proper way of dancing, proper way of singing, to learn to sing. So if I am not around, well they got a CD there to look at. A picture to see. They can listen to CD, DVD, look at the pictures. That spirit will bring their mind back, and the kids will carry on from there. When they get older, older, older, they’ll, sort of, get everything in their mind. Just in case something happens to us. ... They can have their *junba* but they can [also] have another song, [from] other old people, that [have] all passed away now. They [the old people are] not singing here with us but we have got to keep carrying on how, teaching our children,

let them listen. We can show them our dancing, how they dance from old, old songs. ... DVDs that's the main thing. They can watch the pictures, see the show. (Martin in conversation with Treloyn, 15 March 2011, Mowanjum Community).

In November 2012, Martin, Charles and seven other Ngarinyin, Worrorra and Wunambal ranging in age from twenty-three to seventy visited AIATSIS (a journey of some 5,000 kilometers) with Treloyn, Allan Marett, and a staff member from the Mowanjum Art and Culture Centre, to identify audio and pictorial resources relating to *junba* and organize for their replication and return. Charles, speaking with Treloyn at a conference in Melbourne in 2013, recounted her experience:

We went to the archive, Canberra. And I was so amazed. I found lot of the old stuff: a lot of photographs of *junba*, and also my old people [family] that I grew up with and I knew. We were able to go and get copies and bring him back because our Art Centre is establishing an archive. [Because of this] we [are] getting all the archive material from Canberra and maybe Western Australia to put them in our own system in the community (Charles in conversation with Treloyn, 2 December 2013, Melbourne; Treloyn and Charles 2015, 196-197)

[insert Fig 2 here]

Reflecting on the trip, Martin explained the cultural and personal significance of the recordings and of the need to bring them to the places—the Country—in which they were recorded.

Matthew Martin (MM): [I]t was good [to] see those old, old things from old people, and the song. [We] pick the song from old, old people. They [the old people] are still there [in the recordings]: like the old people are gone but their spirit is still there. What you call that place? (AIATSIS) They (the old people) are still there, they still remain. Can't forget them.

Sally Treloyn (ST): And is that why it is important to bring them back.

MM: ... [We need to] bring the whole lot back, ... bring them back to Country (Martin in conversation with Treloyn, 16 January 2014, Mowanjum Community; Treloyn and Charles 2015, 197)

Martin explains that the need to move recordings back to Country relates to the presence of spirits—namely *burrunguma* (the spirits of deceased family members)—singing in recordings and pictured in photos. Key to appreciating the significance of this requires understanding that Country is not simply a geographical place or landscape, it is intrinsic to individual and group identity: people are born from Country, live their lives in relation to Country, and in death return to Country. Spirits of deceased people reside in Country and respond to *junba*. Spirits are emotionally moved by the actions of their living family and living family is moved by spirits (see Treloyn 2006, Treloyn and Martin 2014). Matthew has previously explained how spirits travel with totems (dance boards used in dance), and with singers and dancers as they travel to perform (ibid.). Singing and dancing makes spirits, and therefore Country, healthy and happy (ibid.). To return copies of recordings and photos to Country and families is to strengthen the bond between living and deceased kin.

For Martin, retrieving the recordings is also a way to recall and, in some cases, learn songs that have fallen out of his repertoire or that, since he was a dancer (and not a singer) for much of his life, he may have never sung before. This is not simply a process of listening to and learning from a recording, it also relies on the presence of spirits (“old, old people”) whose voices are heard in the recordings. In August 2012 Martin was asked by a famous Wunambal *junba* dancer to travel to Kalumburu in the far north Kimberley to perform songs that his (the dancer's) deceased father had composed. While Martin was familiar with a handful of the songs he did not hold enough to maintain an entire danced performance. He requested that we burn CDs of

recordings held in the collection at the Mowanjum Art and Culture Centre, made by teacher Lesley Reilly in 1974 and ethnomusicologist Raymond Keogh in 1985. From these, he repeatedly listened to and sung along with the recordings, both prior to our departure from Mowanjum and over the long two-day rough road journey to Kalumburu, and he acquired the necessary songs:

Listening to the songs reminded me of all the old people and it was like they were in me. They were sitting beside me, you know? And I picked them songs up. It was like they was telling me “that way”, “sing this song that way”. It was like they were telling me which way to sing (Martin speaking to Treloyn, 16 January 2014).

Having learned the songs and sung in Kalumburu fulfilling his family duties to perform, Martin also requested that Treloyn prepare multiple CD copies of other repertoires known to have originated in or to be related to family groups who resided there. Once we arrived in Kalumburu, Martin traveled around the community greeting family members, distributing the recordings.

ST: I remember that we made a little set of CDs with [the songs of] old man Wurumalu, Karadada and Wunanggu (deceased composers with living family in Kalumburu), all them old man composers, and I remember when we were Kalumburu you went around handing out those CDs.

MM: Yeah, yeah.

ST: Do you reckon you could say a little bit about why that was important?

MM: That was the family you know, family takes that. You have to give them back the recording, so they can listen to their grandfather, uncle, whatever, father. They listen to the songs. They’ll dance, they’ll pick it up too. Slowly, some might. If they’re wanting to sing the song for themselves. They can pick up the song from their old parents. That’s real good that. That’s real good, you know, handing it back to the family. ... It is the Wurnan. (Martin speaking to Treloyn, 16 January 2014).

Wurnan sharing binds neighboring and distant groups between clans and individuals of opposite but complementary and interdependent moieties (Redmond 2001). *Junba* repertoires are shared and passed from group to group along Wurnan paths. Songs and their associated dances generally move from the people who conceived them and the place where they were conceived, toward the clan and families of the places that are named and depicted in them (Treloyn, Charles & Martin 2016). The relational sharing ethos of Wurnan also underpins the transmission of songs from generation to generation and continues as groups share their songs with others under the direction of elders and the composer. As Martin explained, this has continued through the transmission of songs and dances via repatriated recordings:

It’s the Wurnan. We have to do it for family. We have to give the families back. We musn’t forget about [them], they musn’t forget about their family that passed away. They must remember their songs. [When they] see the picture, they will always remember them then. Old people passed away, some of us too young to know. They didn’t know [them] but they can look at the picture and the boys when they start singing and they can see how they was, in their days (Martin speaking to Treloyn, 16 January 2014)

Recordings play a role in the continuation of *junba* and Wurnan when children and young people participate in the practice. Just as Ngarinyin have used Wurnan to accommodate incoming settlers and the pastoral industry through the twentieth century (Redmond 2005), similarly Wurnan is used to enfold new technologies in intergenerational song transmission. When children and young people participate, elders and the spirits of deceased family respond by joining them on the dance-ground.

ST: So, anything you want to say about why it's important to bring those old recordings back from Canberra, and how you have been using those old recordings for yourself, to teach kids?

MM: Yeah, well the main thing is learning (teaching) kids, our next generation coming up, before it (the songs and dances) die away you know—[before] the Culture dies away, the songs, the dancing. ... [T]o keep it up for them, you know—keep teaching, learning songs, dancing, get them dance. You seen it.

ST: How do you teach the kids to dance with the old recordings?

MM: Well that's the recording, you go by the words. The meaning you know, the meaning of the songs and, what it's about—Country or it's about spirits, birds. Just follow that. Like they copy dancing, how that animal dances. Follow the spirit. Spirit is always there.

ST: And what does it mean if you have an old recording with old, old people singing in it and you can hear their voices?

MM: Yeah. It's sort of bringing in to it, you know. Old, old songs, old people, all what been passed away, like they're bringing the spirit back to you. So you can carry on, and like you're the teacher for the next generation.

ST: It's like the spirits are helping you do the teaching?

MM: Yeah, it's like the old spirits comes back. You can't see it but you can feel it.

ST: You can feel it.

MM: Yeah, by singing... Totems and all those things. Dancing, it brings memories back too, from the old people. When young people dance, it brings back the memories of old people. They [the old people that have passed] are teaching them. It's just like they're happy to dance and you see the young kids running around. They are willing to dance. The spirit comes back to them,

(Martin speaking to Treloyn, 16 January 2014)

Finally, it is important that we note that in the Kimberley and elsewhere in Australia, remembrance of family that has passed can bring sadness and sorrow. People may avoid saying the name of a deceased family member aloud, instead using a kinship term, and may avoid viewing their image. Nationwide, cultural warnings for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers and viewers have become standard whenever there is a possibility that a person, recorded or pictured, may now be deceased. Aware of this, Treloyn asked Martin:

ST: And when you hear an old, old recording of old people singing, how does that make you feel?

MM: Ah, it makes you a bit sad, but you know you feel like getting those old songs back, so you can have it here from the old people singing to your time.

ST: Why do you feel a bit sad?

MM: [You] feel sad for listening to their voice, the old people's voice. [It] sort of makes you feel off. But when you start singing it you feel the power coming into you.

ST: Aha.

MM: [It is] like the old spirit coming to you. So you start singing, and you don't miss a word. You pick those songs up. You listen to it a couple of times maybe, and you pick it up. [That] thing can't get away from your mind, it stays there. ... It comes into your, just like, when a spirit comes into you, you just understand more, you understand the words. You pick up those words, sing those songs, you don't forget it. It stays in your brain you don't forget. Like a recording ... [You] go by the spirit see - that thing (song) he sings to you. I didn't try it (receiving songs from spirits in dreams) but I just get songs from the old people what that have passed away. I just get it from listening. ... Sad, next one you feel happy now. [You] start to sing that old, old songs... You have to explore, carry it out. It's like the spirit comes to you and tells you you are the boss man now. Just like the spirit been leave it up to you now. That

anguma (spirit of a deceased family member) you know, *anguma*. That *anguma*, you know, he says something to you and tell's "carry on".

ST: When you [are] happy for singing a song that you have picked up and that spirit's come and handed it over, do you feel that feeling of *liyan*?

MM: Yeah. That *liyan* make you, sort of, feel happiness come to you more. Start singing the song after the old people come to you. It makes you feel proud. Proud to carry on from the old, old people.

ST: Having those old old recordings in your hands is important.

MM: Yeah that's important yeah, more people to know about the old, old songs. (Martin speaking to Treloyn, 16 January 2014)

While hearing the voices of deceased family may bring sadness, the presence of spirits and the continuation of the deceased family members songs may bring feelings of happiness, well-being, and connectedness associated with the feeling referred to as *liyan*. In response to a question following a conference presentation in Melbourne in 2013, Charles provided an eloquent example of how *junba* recordings can also support physical and emotional wellbeing in aged care facilities. Martin's mother, struggling with the transition from her remote community to an aged care facility in Derby, was able to physically move, make eye contact with Charles, rise from her bed, and bathe when Charles played her recordings of *junba* (Treloyn and Charles 2015).

Conclusion

In this chapter we have presented narratives and dialogues to do with repatriating recordings of *junba* to the cultural heritage community in the Kimberley region of northwest Australia. Treloyn outlined her concerns as an *almara* ethnomusicologist as she grapples with the impact that repatriation and her long term engagement with *junba* practitioners may have on the dance-song practice. We have also provided a sample of narratives and dialogues about recordings, processes of repatriation and their implications. *Junba* repertoires have been shared from group to group across the Kimberley, moving the spirits and Country with which they are laden as they go since time immemorial. In the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries this movement of dance and song has enabled Ngarinyin, displaced from their Country, to manage new social and physical environments.

New technologies have provided a further means of moving dance and song: as recordings of *junba* are discovered and replicated from archival collections and transported back to kin and Country; as these recordings are used to support the continuation, teaching, and learning of the practice; as recordings support intergroup efforts to continue Wurnan. Many questions that arise from this technological innovation are yet to be considered. However, in the sample of narratives and dialogues that we have provided in this chapter it can be seen that when songs are moved from archives to communities of origin, children may be moved to dance, and elder singers may be moved to feel happiness and pride.

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² ‘Country’ is term commonly used in Aboriginal English and refers to place or places to which individuals and families trace their identity and have hereditary and spiritual ties. The term is capitalised to distinguish it from other uses.

³ Residents of the Mowanjum community identify as Ngarinyin, Worrorra and Wunambal, three language groups indigenous to the northern Kimberley. The site of Mowanjum community is situated on Nyigina country.

⁴ Treloyn has transcribed the speech of co-authors and others, and has provided written interpretations of these narratives and dialogues. There has been an attempt to preserve the distinctive features of the Aboriginal English employed by the speakers and the ‘orality’ of their discourse (Martin 2003). To assist non-speakers/readers of Aboriginal English, Treloyn has minimally normalized transcriptions, provided contextual notes in parentheses (), and translations, glosses, and additional words in brackets [].

⁵ Wanjina are local ancestral spirits that created the landscape, language and *junba* in the Ngarranggani (Dreamtime). Wanjina spirits are intrinsic to a person’s identity and people and both born from and return to the Wanjina in death. This repertory, composed by Worrorra composer Watty Ngerdu in the 1950s-60s, is named after the Ngarinyin ‘boss’ Wanjina spirit and the place known as Wanalirri. The performance was at Bijili—a dance ground site near the community of Dodnun (Mt Elizabeth Station), and the dancers in this video were predominantly from the nearby Ngallagunda Community. The video was recorded by Linda Barwick with Allan Marett in 1997.

⁶ In Ngarinyin culture, parents and grandparents often address their children and grandchildren by the kinship term that the child should use to address them, hence here a woman addresses a young child as ‘mummy’.