

1 Darwin Moodoonuthi: The cave at Wamakurld

This text, recorded in July 1982, recounts the fatal consequences of an expedition made to Bentinck Island in the early 1960s with two Europeans. It has become a modern myth, and is constantly repeated to children to demonstrate the importance of following the old law, and as a warning against further European intrusion into secret/sacred places.

In this first text the opening few lines are given in the following format:

dǔlmàɾɛ	dǎŋkà:	[phonetic]
ɬulmara	ɬaŋka:	[phonemic]
<i>dul-marra</i>	<i>dangka-a</i>	[practical orthography]
land-UTIL	man-NOM	[interlinear gloss]
‘The boss of that place’		[free translation]

1	wámagùɾɿ	dǎŋtɩɛ	dǔlkɛ	wára:ǰàrɿ
	wamakuɾɿ	ɬaŋtɩna	ɬulka	wara:cari
	<i>Wamakurlda.</i>	<i>dathin-a</i>	<i>dulk-a</i>	<i>warra-a-jarri,</i>
	(place name)	that-NOM	place-NOM	go-M-NEGACT
	bé ¹ dǰja ¹	dǔlk	bé ¹ dǰje ¹	dǔlʔ
	piɬiya	ɬulk	piɬiya	ɬul..
	<i>birdi-ya</i>	<i>dulk</i>	<i>birdi-ya</i>	<i>dul..</i>
	bad-NOM	place(NOM)	bad-NOM	place(NOM)

‘Wamarkuld. That place was never gone to, it’s a bad place. A bad pla...’

[A recurring theme of the story is unauthorized trespassing. Grammatically, this results in a number of passivized motion verbs, such as *warraajarri* here, which express the ill effects of motion on a place.]

2	dǔlmàɾɛ	dǎŋkà:	wára:ǰàrɿ	márwàj	márwàj
	ɬulmara	ɬaŋka:	wara:cari	marway	marway
	<i>dul-marra</i>	<i>dangka-a</i>	<i>warra-jarri</i>	<i>marrwa-y,</i>	<i>marrwa-y</i>
	land-UTIL	man-NOM	go-NEGACT	near-MLOC	near-MLOC
	‘The boss of that place never went near (it).’				
3	wára:	wára:ɬ	wára:	ɬ ^o ŋkù	
	wara:	warac	wara:	ɬuŋku	
	<i>warra-a</i>	<i>warra-j,</i>	<i>warra-a</i>	<i>thungku</i>	
	far-NOM	go-ACT	far-NOM	mangrove.scrub(NOM)	
	‘Far away he walked, (in) the far scrub.’				

4	.iá.ùmbànt .ia.rumpant <i>rar-umban-d,</i> south-ORIG-NOM	.iá.ùmpàntɛ .ia.rumpanta <i>rar-umban-da</i> south-ORIG-NOM	wára: wara: <i>warra-a,</i> far-NOM	wáraɛje waraya <i>warra-ya</i> far-LOC	wámbàli wampali <i>wambal-i</i> bush-LOC	wáraɲ waraj <i>warra-j</i> go-ACT
‘(People) from the south (stayed) far off, walked in the scrub far off.’						
5	ǰúrgu.ùmbànt curku.rumpant ¹ <i>jurrkur-umban-d,</i> north-ORIG-NOM	ǰúŋkuwàja tuŋkuwaya <i>thungkuwa-ya</i> mangrove.scrub-LOC	wáraɲ warac <i>warra-j</i> go-ACT			
‘(People) from the north went through the scrub.’						
6	.íje .iia <i>ri-ya,</i> east-NOM	.í.ùŋk .í.ùŋk <i>rul-ung-k,</i> east-ALL-NOM	bálùmbàndɛ palumpanta <i>bal-umban-da</i> west-ORIG-NOM	ǰá ¹ ǰɛj caɲiy <i>jardi-y,</i> mob-NOM	tuŋkuwàj tuŋkuway <i>thungkuwa-y</i> scrub-LOC	
‘In the east, going east, the western mob (stayed) in the mangrove scrub.’						
7	.í.ùmbàndɛ .í.ùmbànta <i>rul-umban-da</i> east-ORIG-NOM	ǰá.ǰija caɲiya <i>jardi-ya</i> mob-NOM	tuŋkuwàja tuŋkuwaya <i>thungkuwa-ya</i> scrub-MLOC	ta:t ta:t <i>thaa-th</i> return-ACT		
‘The eastern mob came back through the scrub.’						
8	ŋúlmòwa ŋulmuwa <i>ngulmu-wa</i> deadly-NOM	tuŋ tuŋ <i>thung...</i> thing	ŋúlmòwa ¹ ŋulmuwa <i>ngulmu-wa</i> deadly-NOM	ǰáŋkà: taŋka: <i>dangka-a,</i> person-NOM		
‘(It’s) deadly stuff, (they’re) deadly people (there).’						
9	márwà: marwa: <i>marrwa-a</i> close-NOM	wára:nàŋku wara:nàŋku <i>warra-a-nangku</i> go-M-NEG.POT				
‘Nearby mustn’t be gone to.’						
10	júlka:nmèrɛjúlka:nta yulka:nmirayulka:nta <i>yulkaan-mirra-yulkaan-da</i> eternal-INTENS-eternal-NOM	mírà: mira: <i>mirra-a</i> good-NOM				
‘(That’s the way it’s) always been.’ [Literally: ‘Absolutely always (it had been) good’. (The law was observed.)]						

¹ Exceptionally, this word exhibits vowel harmony here—it is normally pronounced *jirrkurumbanda*.

NOTES:

Taken from Nicholas D. Evans, 1995, A grammar of Kayardild. With comparative notes on Tangkic. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, pp.571-572.

In the original text, older IPA characters are used for the palatal plosives and the near-close vowels. The following correspondences have been adopted for this transcription (using SIL Doulos Unicode IPA)

[ɯ] in original corresponds to [u] here

[ɿ] in original corresponds to [ɪ] here

[ɟ] in original corresponds to [c] here

[dʝ] in original corresponds to [j] here