1 Darwin Moodooonuthi: The cave at Wamakurlld

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:

| tjilmarr | djankà: | [phonetic] |
| tulmara | tjanka: | [phonemic] |
| dul-marra | dangka-a | [practical orthography] |
| land-UTIL | man-NOM | [interlinear gloss] |
| ‘The boss of that place’ | | [free translation] |

1 wamagouta | dafine | dolku | wara:jari |
| wamakut | tatin | tulka | waracari |
| Wamakurlld | datin-a | dulk-a | warra-jari, |
| (place name) | that-NOM | place-NOM | go-M-NEGACT |
| be’djja’ | dolk | be’djja’ | dol? |
| pitiya | tulk | pitiya | tul.. |
| birdi-ya | dulk | birdi-ya | dul.. |
| 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 warraojari here, which express the ill effects of motion on a place.]

2 tjilmarr | djankà: | waraqari | marwa:j | marwa:j |
| tulmara | tjanka: | waracari | marway | marway |
| dul-marra | dangka-a | warra-jari | marrwa-y, | marrwa-y |
| land-UTIL | man-NOM | go-NEGACT | near-MLOC | near-MLOC |
| ‘The boss of that place never went near (it).’ |

3 wara: | wara?: | wara: | t’oujku |
| warara | warac | wara: | tjunku |
| warra-a | warra-j | warra-a | thungku |
| far-NOM | go-ACT | far-NOM | mangrove.scrub(NOM) |
| ‘Far away he walked, (in) the far scrub.’ |
4 ĺāwòmbânt, ĺáiùmpânte wárá: wárèje wâmbâli wárâŋ
kùaumpant kùaumpanta wara: waraya wampali warâŋ
rár-ùmban-da, rará-ùmban-da warra-a, warra-ya wambal-i warra-j
south-ORIG-NOM south-ORIG-NOM far-NOM far-LOC bush-LOC go-ACT
‘(People) from the south (stayed) far off, walked in the scrub far off.’

5 jùrgùjùmbânt dòníkwàja wàráŋ
curkùuumpant¹ tuniquwaya warac
jurkùr-ùmban-da, thungkuwa-ya warra-j
north-ORIG-NOM mangrove.scrub-LOC go-ACT
‘(People) from the north went through the scrub.’

6 jíje júlùŋk bálmùmbânte jà’dëj tòníkwâj
jíya juluŋk palumpanta ñàți bınıküway
rù-ya, rul-ùng-k, bal-ùmban-da jardi-y, thungkuwa-y
east-NOM east-ALL-NOM west-ORIG-NOM mob-NOM scrub-LOC
‘In the east, going east, the western mob (stayed) in the mangrove scrub.’

7 jùlmùmbânte jùndîja tòníkwâja tâz
jùlumpanta ñàțiya bınıküwaya tâz
rulu-ùmban-da jardi-ya thungkuwa-ya tsa-th
east-ORIG-NOM mob-NOM scrub-MLOC return-ACT
‘The eastern mob came back through the scrub.’

8 nòlmòwa tùŋ nòlmòwa¹ dàŋkà:
ñulmuwa tûŋ nûlmuwa ñâŋka:
ngulu-wa thung..., ngulu-wa dangka-a,
deadly-NOM thing deadly-NOM person-NOM
‘(It’s) deadly stuff, (they’re) deadly people (there).’

9 mårwà: wårâmâŋko
marwa: waranaŋku
marrwa-a warra-a-nangku
close-NOM go-M-NEG.POT
‘Nearby mustn’t be gone to.’

10 jûlkânmìrejûlkànta mírâ:
yulkammirayulkahta mira:
yulkaan-mirra-yulkaan-da mirra-a
eternal-INTENS-eternal-NOM 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.

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)
[ʘ] in original corresponds to [ʊ] here
[ɺ] in original corresponds to [i] here
[ɺ̒] in original corresponds to [ɛ] here
[ɺj] in original corresponds to [j] here