Relational returns
Relationships and the repatriation of legacy song recordings in Australia
Reuben Brown and Sally Treloyn

The digitisation of audiovisual media of song and dance has enabled individuals, communities and institutions to reimagine the ways in which records of ‘intangible’ cultural heritage can be accessed, used, and linked to cultural custodians, as well as to other collections and content management systems. In Australia, legacy recordings representing a diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performance traditions are being used and recirculated both physically and online to revitalise aspects of performance traditions: to innovate; to recover aspects of style; to aid memory of lyrics; and to support the reclamation and reconstruction of song practices that, particularly in the south of the continent, were brutally harmed from the late 18th century onwards.

In this article we focus on how repatriation is perceived, enacted and understood by custodians of living performance traditions in the north and north-west of Australia. We observe a relational turn in intercultural research collaborations around Aboriginal Australian song: one that enfolds our personal relationships with Indigenous collaborators, those of past researchers and singers, and past and present archivists and archives. In imagining a future in which recordings are recirculated among a new generation of performers and used to support the vitality of these Indigenous Australian song traditions, we suggest that, alongside technical considerations concerning new systems for archiving and dissemination, a consideration for the relationships and exchanges that brought recordings into being will also be necessary.

A relational turn in research on song
The return of digital recordings of songs from archives, institutions and private collections to communities of origin has evolved as a primary activity of ethnomusicologists in Australia, and has given rise to a critical discourse in ethnomusicology that responds to Indigenous peoples’ rights to their cultural heritage. As a decolonising research methodology, repatriation also addresses acquisitive collection-oriented research methods, and reimagines the local significance of song-based research. The Garma Statement on Indigenous Music and Performance in 2002 identified as a matter of high priority the digitisation of legacy recordings for access and use by custodians, as well as the need to record the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander living performance traditions for future generations.

This statement was formalised with the National Recording Project for Indigenous Music in Australia (NRP), which envisaged a national strategy involving partnerships between institutions such as the National Library of Australia and the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and community archives, to establish local repositories providing permanent access to recordings.

In the intervening years since the Garma Statement, the aims set out by the NRP have begun to be realised through a series of Australian Research Council–funded projects led by Indigenous researchers in their own communities, as well as by non-Indigenous researchers. These projects involve the return and dissemination of digital collections to cultural heritage custodians of Nyungar language and song in the south-west of Australia, the thabi song tradition of the Pilbara and junba of the Kimberley in Western Australia, kun-borrk/manyardi, bunggurr/l and manikay traditions of Arnhem Land, wangga of the Daly region in the Northern Territory, and the song traditions of central Australia. In each instance, the work of repatriation has been enabled through long-established

University of Melbourne Collections, issue 20, June 2017
interpersonal relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers and their collaborators, and the singers and recordists identified in the archival recordings.

Consider the tangled and continually unfolding web of relationships, transactions and exchanges around a small sample of public songs, recorded by ABC (Australian Broadcasting Commission) journalist Colin Simpson and technician Raymond Giles in October 1948 during their visit to Gunbalanya (Oenpelli)—the third base camp of the American-Australian Expedition to Arnhem Land (right). The recordings came into existence in a large part due to Wurrik clansman Nakodjok Larry Marawana, a Bininj (Aboriginal person) who helped arrange public ceremony—known as kun-borrk in Bininj Kunwok language of the plateau country and manyardi in Iwaidjan languages of the coastal country of western Arnhem Land—for the visiting Balanda (European or non-Aboriginal person). Marawana acted as a ‘fixer’ and cultural broker for Simpson and Giles during their two-week stay at Gunbalanya and nearby Red Lily billabong: interpreting, translating and providing contextual information on the origin and style of the songs. Originally captured on a Pyrox wire recorder, the recordings were archived by the ABC to acetate disk before being converted to tape, and in recent years they were digitised. Some of the recorded material was used in the years immediately after the expedition, in the ABC radio feature Expedition to Arnhem Land, and recycled, re-arranged and re-orchestrated into soundtracks for ethnographic films by C.P. Mountford. However, the voices of singers such as Marawana—who was told by Simpson of the intention to broadcast the recordings around Australia, and was recorded in at least one take explaining the origins of the song for an audience
illiterate in the kun-borrk tradition—were omitted from these public broadcasts and film scores. It was not until Linda Barwick and Allan Marett first played back the public songs to Iwaidjan speakers at Croker Island in 2005 (complemented by Martin Thomas and Murray Garde’s carefully negotiated playback of the sub-set of men’s restricted recordings made by Simpson and Giles with senior Elders at Kabulwanamayo in 2005–06), that a better understanding of the origin and diversity of the songs emerged, and the songs could begin to be re-connected to the people and song traditions from which they came.

Over the course of his PhD fieldwork in Arnhem Land from 2011 to 2014, supported by an ARC Discovery Project led by supervisors Linda Barwick and Martin Thomas, Reuben Brown carried out further playback of Simpson’s public recordings with Bininj Kunwok and Mawng Elders and current songmen residing in Gunbalanya and nearby Warruwi community (South Goulburn Island), and disseminated the recordings via USB and Micro SD cards. Elder Kodjok Nawurrbarn Jimmy Kalarriya had been ‘born in the bush’ some time in the late 1930s at a place called Mankorlord. He would come in to Oenpelli Mission with his family for rations and seasonal work skinning buffalo, and remembered the expedition’s visit. In 2011, Brown played back Simpson and Giles’ recordings for Kalarriya and members of his extended family, including artist Isaiah Nagurrgurrba, in the screen-printing room of Injalak Arts and Crafts in Gunbalanya. Upon hearing the first phrase of the song, Kalarriya froze, as he recognised the singer from his childhood:


That old man singing is my uncle—born at Weyirra [North Goulburn Island]. Oh! Yes, that’s him! [kun-derbi term: my uncle and your nephew]. Yes, his country was North Goulburn Island. This song was sung by that old man who is uncle to me and Mukudu [Kalarriya’s brother]. Back in 1948, me and him were little boys—my brother of Djalama clan [Mukudu]. During the Second World War, when they were fighting in Darwin. During that time we were little kids.

Elders such as Kalarriya and contemporary custodians of the kun-borrk song tradition in the communities of Gunbalanya and Warruwi were not only able to identify rich details about recordings—the genre, song-set, traditional country and language origin of the songs, and the Balanda/English, Bininj, kinship, and clan names of the singer—they also situated the hitherto-invisible people in the recordings in the living kinship network of western Arnhem Land. For example, in the passage above, Kalarriya uses a kun-derbi tri-relational kinship term ngorrkbelhwarreeh, which simultaneously encodes the relationships between Kalarriya and Nagurrurrba (listening to the audio playback) and Namunurr (singing on the original recording).

This process of retracing the songs revealed not only the richness of western Arnhem Land kun-borrk and society, but also the efforts of cultural broker Larry Marawana in
Reuben Brown and Sally Treloyn, ‘Relational returns’ curating a sample of 11 songs sung by different singers belonging to both the stone country and the saltwater country of western Arnhem Land and beyond to the Daly region, which would neatly showcase the musical and linguistic diversity of the region (see map below). These ‘snapshots’ of musical life—as Barwick and Marett have described them—also highlight principles of complementarity and variegation, which are a continuing feature of kun-borrk performance. Today, as in 1948, multiple singers are responsible for leading their own distinct song-sets featuring different languages and musical characteristics, and carefully manage together the ordering of songs through performance, in response to social and environmental factors of the ceremony.16

**Burrunguma, maruy and wurnan**

The idea of relational repatriation stems from epistemological frameworks that explain the phenomenon of the existence of voices of ancestors after they are deceased, held in archives often thousands of kilometres from their home. Matthew Dembal Martin—a contemporary custodian

Map showing origins of song-sets recorded at Gunbalanya by Simpson and Giles in 1948. Song-sets shaded blue represent saltwater country origin, song-sets shaded orange represent stone country origin, and the purple shade represents Daly origin. Map adapted from Aidan Wilson.
of Ngarinyin, Worrorra and Wunambal junba at Mowanjum in the western Kimberley—for example, has described to Sally Trelown how burrunguma—the spirits of deceased ancestors—reside in recordings that sit in the archive of AIATSIS in Canberra and that, when he listens to them, the burrunguma help him learn and remember songs:17

The old people beside you sitting, and you can feel the spirit. Makes you remember songs too—songs you forget. You get them back on your mind; like the old person singing there, you get the words off him. That’s how it works … The spirit it is like a magnet going into your mind. It might be the composer is beside you. The songs that you pick up, he put it in your mind. You think you got the words and you got the tune. You pick it up, like a magnet in your mind … It’s like a recording … It’s like that spirit is singing that song in the recorder while you are singing, picking the words up, and the tune.18

Marett describes how in the Batjamalh language of the Daly region the word maruy—which means ‘baby spirit’ or ‘conception agent’ (broadly, an equivalent to the Ngarinyin language burrunguma)—is also used to refer to computer, recordings, photographs, films and shadows (and was the word used to refer to one of the early local repositories set up to hold wangga recordings for the Belyuen community in 2001):

… songs are given to songmen by ghosts, who sing to the songman in dream. In ceremony, singers reproduce this ghost-given song, while dancers perform as ghosts … Moreover, when … a person’s appearance is reproduced in a photograph (or on film or video), or when the sound of their voice is played back from tape, this too is seen or heard as a manifestation of the person’s maruy, and as such it has a certain power.19

To understand the role that recordings and repatriation have played in both the circulation and production of song knowledge, and in intercultural researcher–singer relationships, we can also turn to the legacy recordings themselves and the precedent set by Indigenous singers using recordings to pass messages to distant family across space and time, and to use recording technologies to transmit knowledge.

Well before non-Indigenous researchers thought to provide cultural heritage communities with access to their research products, in recordings made in the 1960s by singers of the western Pilbara region of Western Australia with German-Australian linguist Carl von Brandenstein, we hear numerous singers recording messages addressed to family members in distant towns that von Brandenstein was due to visit. Brandenstein’s recording equipment became a kind of modern message stick, and the linguist its carrier, as he conducted substantial linguistic work over a period of five years all over the Pilbara region with numerous interlocutors.

In the Kimberley, the circulation of recordings is rooted in the law of sharing known as wurnan. Hilton Deakin, in his doctoral dissertation of 1974, describes the inclusion of a cassette tape containing recordings of balga (an equivalent to junba) songs in a wurnan trade package that arrived in the mission community of Kalumburu in the northern Kimberley region. And Matthew Martin has described how his distribution of CDs containing recordings of songs by various junba composers, made by Lesley Reilly in 1974 and Ray Keogh in 1985, to the families of composers and singers in
2012, was an act of wurnan enfolding the composers, their descendants, and extended family, including Martin himself:

Sally Treloyn: 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 the old man composers—and I remember when we were in Kalumburu you went around handing out those CDs.

Matthew Martin: 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, father. They listen to the songs. They’ll dance, they’ll pick it up too you know. Some time, if they’re wanting to sing the song or put on their show. They can pick up the song from their old timers. … That’s real good that. That’s real good, handing it back to the family. … It is the wurnan.20

For Martin, the singers whose spirits reside in the recordings left recordings of their voices and songs as a gift for current and future generations:

MM: Wurnan, it’s a gift. The spirit is giving you something. It’s gift. Your family passed away, they give you the wurnan. Passing it on to you.

ST: So wurnan can work between generations like that?

MM: Yeah. To do their work, what they did in the past … and they want someone to carry on from them. Because they are not around to pass it on.

ST: That wurnan comes alive even from those old recordings?

MM: Yeah, it’s still alive.

ST: So if one person didn’t get to teach a song when they were alive they can still do that?

MM: Yeah. Yeah. They leave them songs and things in your mind. The words they told you, you keep it, it’s sort of gift given to you. So you’ll have that thing all the time. No matter who can
leave you. They still there. It’s all in your mind. Once it grows in your mind you don’t forget, you keep remembering. You don’t have to. You don’t have to go and ask someone to tell you what to do. You got that thing. It’s always in you. It’s in your system.21

A wurnan-like regard for the subject status of both the material and non-material similarly characterises the way in which Bininj and Arrarrkpi22 of Gunbalanya and Goulburn Island dealt with the recent return of both tangible and intangible ‘goods’ arising from the legacy of the 1948 expedition.23 In 2011, as part of a reburial ceremony at Gunbalanya to return human bones and the deceased spirits belonging to them, western Arnhem Land singers led a procession of community members and Balanda visitors from the northern end of the community to the southern end, between the foot of Arrkuluk and Injalak hills, where a majority of the bones had been stolen from their resting places among stone caves and burial sites.24 The bones were returned by Museum Victoria, the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, and the Smithsonian Institution. They had been stolen from various sites near Gunbalanya in Mirarr and Manilakarr clan country, including Malakananja, Red Lily billabong, Arrkuluk hill and Injalak hill. The thefts occurred not only during the 1948 expedition to Arnhem Land, but also during Baldwin Spencer’s visit to Gunbalanya in 1913, and archaeologist Carmel Schrire’s fieldwork in 1964.

The task of physically handling and preparing the bones for burial had been carried out by traditional owner families in the days leading up to the ceremony. Yet the tangible act of repatriation could not be carried out without particular and significant intangible acts taking place. Ceremony leader Jacob Nayinggul addressed the spirits using his rarely spoken language of Mengerrdji, reassuring them that they were home, as others painted the bones in ochre in order to ‘cool’ the spirits, before wrapping them in paperbark. The kun-borrk/manyardi ensemble of singers and dancers then led the procession to a large grave site and danced and sang the bones into the grave, continuing until the last shovel of dirt was laid.

Solomon Nangamu: I’m from the saltwater country, I was born there. So when the bones arrived here, I came and collected the bones, and I took it and gave it to all the stone [country] mob, from this country. I passed it on to them, them mob now, them take it and bury it.

Reuben Brown: Right, OK. So you’re carrying the bones in, through song, right?

SN: From the sea.

Conversely, when it came to the repatriation of intangible objects—the Simpson and Giles recordings, silent colour film and photographs made during the expedition’s three months at Gunbalanya—Elders such as Kalarriya physically re-embedded these records into their place of origin by requesting a playback session at an old mission-era shed where he used to hear old people singing during his childhood.
Relational returns and the return of relations

In these examples from western Arnhem Land, the Pilbara and the Kimberley, singers are shown to make recordings with future audiences in mind, drawing attention through their curated songs and recorded messages to networks of family, language, kinship and country. A relational approach to the repatriation of songs might also be thought of in terms of its attentiveness to these relationships in both the design of the content management system in which the records are held, and the ways in which the recordings from the archive are accessed by cultural heritage communities and contemporary singers. Both in Australia and internationally, we have seen examples of databases that aim to reflect and embed local Indigenous ontologies, cultural protocols and traditional knowledge in both the content and schema of the system (for example, Ara Irititja in Australia and Mukurtu in the USA).25

It is no coincidence that the content management system designed to provide the Mowanjum community with access to records of its cultural heritage refers to wurman and is called ‘Wurnangga jaruy ngardmen Storylines’, which broadly translates to ‘Gathering together regularly to exchange’. In the Pilbara, a digital collection of more than 1,000 legacy songs has been assembled from archives such as AIATSIS, by Sally Treloyn, Reuben Brown, Nicholas Thieberger, Mary Anne Jebb and PhD candidate Andrew Dowding—maternal grandson of the prolific Ngarluma composer Robert Churnside—for return and reuse by Elders who are custodians of the thabi tradition.26 In order to represent connections between songs, people, places and country geospatially (in the same manner that they are thought of by Elders and singers), the team will draw on Dowding’s previous work as a consultant documenting cultural heritage and songs with Elders and singers of the Pilbara and Kimberley regions, in which audiovisual material including the song, dance and singer’s explanation for the song is mapped in the three-dimensional landscape of Google Earth.

New performances of song traditions such as thabi are being revived as a direct result of these relational returns of songs from the archives. In April 2016 in Roebourne, Dowding’s cousin Patrick Churnside led a public performance of thabi inspired by legacy recordings Dowding had located several years earlier, which he had passed on to his cousin and other relatives. The songs were composed by their relative Robert Churnside, as well as by other composers from nearby language groups. The process of constructing a community performance in an intercultural setting (Churnside collaborated with non-Indigenous artists and producers from artistic company Big hART as well as Ngarluma Elders and a dance ensemble of local children from primary school age to late teens) sparked productive discussion around issues such as how to gain permission to perform the songs, how to order the songs for performance, and how to choreograph accompanying dance, in ways that were culturally appropriate to the composers and their descendants. In the program for the performance, Churnside depicted the songs as an interconnected circle of circles, each containing the song title, family of the composer, and affiliated country, including Ngarluma, Yindjibarndi, Martuthunira, Kariyarra, Kurrama and Banyjima. These circles representing songs were in turn connected to a central circle, titled ‘Journey of the Tjabi show’. Together, this illustration seemed to graphically represent the relational nature of the song tradition, which was shared by past singers such as Robert Churnside who lived and worked throughout the
region, spoke languages other than his native Ngarluma, and accompanied and sang other composers' songs in performance.

Cree scholar Shawn Wilson makes the connection between ceremony, which can be understood as the recognition of relationships made between people and environment that are brought together through performance, and a relational approach to research that involves bringing people together to strengthen relationships based on respect and reciprocity. This concept of research as ceremony has been borne out in the Australian context on a number of occasions where the return and production of recordings has been marked ceremonially, and has raised memories of the people, places and events linked to recordings, often stimulating new connections between people or material to be worked up into songs. In a recent example, ceremony leaders from Belyuen and Warruwi (Goulburn Island) came together to perform, for the first time in decades, on Rak Mak Mak Marranunggu country near Litchfield National Park in the Daly region. The event was supported by Dr Payi Linda Ford’s research project and involved the sharing of resources such as recordings and teaching of manyardi and wangga to younger generations in a culturally safe environment, hosted by the traditional owner families. Linda Barwick, Allan Marett, Deborah Rose and Reuben Brown were invited as research collaborators with both Ford and the wangga/manyardi ceremony leaders, and helped bring people together for the event, documenting as well as participating in the wangga and manyardi.

Significantly, the return of goods from decades of research—including Barwick and Marett’s series of wangga CDs and Rose’s monograph—were presented after the ceremony, to direct descendants of those singers and families with whom the researchers had collaborated. This highlights the intergenerational nature of research collaborations and the transactions and recordings they produce. For Brown, Marett, Barwick and others, the relational process of research is embodied through performance as well as through the record.

Having forged collaborations and kinship connections with Bininj and contemporary songmen such as Nangamu at Gunbalany through the process of returning legacy recordings of kun-borrk, and after accompanying Nangamu and other songmen during his doctoral research while attending and documenting ceremonies throughout the region involving the performance of kun-borrk, Reuben Brown himself became the recipient of a *mamurrng* (diplomacy) ceremony in 2012, performed by singers from Goulburn and Croker Islands for Brown, Barwick, Marett and Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal collaborators. In the photograph opposite, Nangamu accompanies Jamie Milburru and Rupert Mannurulu as they perform a *mamurrng* ceremony for the children of the host family at Rak Mak Mak Marranunggu country, with Brown still helping with the recorded documentation, but now also dancing the handover of the *mamurrng* ceremonial pole alongside the same people that gave it to him four years earlier.

**Conclusion**

Through this article we have given a glimpse into the way that the return of legacy recordings of distinct genres of Aboriginal song are being received by custodians. Curated recordings of kun-borrk/manyardi of western Arnhem Land have been re-connected with contemporary singers, and triangulated within kinship networks that link Bininj and Arrarrkpi from the past to the present. Junba songs recorded in the Kimberley, sent off as gifts for future
generations and stored for years in archives, have made their inevitable return to country as part of the wurnan law of sharing. Digital retrieval of thabi songs from the Pilbara region has complemented community efforts to revive a new generation of singers, and to bring song knowledge back into the public sphere. And recordings of wangga from the Daly region have been returned and celebrated ceremonially as part of an intergenerational and intercultural collaboration of embodied practice and research in the song tradition.

In the future, a number of factors signal a potential shift towards the decolonisation of important archival collections. These include greater access to archival collections via increasingly compact digital storage, the ability to stream recordings and other digital media to mobile devices in more areas of Australia where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live, and the development of content management systems that respond to and reflect Aboriginal knowledge production as it relates to different languages, song genres and cultural protocols. At the same time, in order for custodians of Australia’s living performance traditions—descendants of the likes of Matthew Dembal Martin, Larry Marawana, Patrick Churnside and others—to remain connected to songs in the archives, relations who can act as conduits between the archive and the community will be a vital part of the equation. Without such conduits, even the most technologically capable or culturally responsive collections may remain silos: as useful or knowable to cultural custodians as Simpson’s wire recordings from 1948 were to Bininj and Arrarrkpi before their digital return.

In the same way that spirits can enter bones, recordings and computers, the digital trace or imprint of a song manifests in different mediums and is mobilised through the sharing of objects that emerge from and inform human relationships. The repatriated song may take a digital form, but manifests as tangible when it enters the field of relationships. In this sense, when considering the role that legacy recordings of Indigenous Australian song can play in sustaining the vitality of performance traditions, the future of the object, as it merges from tangible to digital and back again, is glimpsed only once we consider it as a subject, to be situated among the people, places, events and cultural worlds that brought it into existence.

This article has been independently peer-reviewed.

Dr Reuben Brown is an ARC research associate at the University of Melbourne, and a research affiliate with the ARC Centre of Excellence for the Dynamics of Language. He has collaborated with ceremony leaders from western Arnhem Land and the Pilbara, as well as linguists, anthropologists and historians, to return legacy recordings of kun-borrk/manyardi and thabi, and to document intercultural encounter through performance ethnography. His current collaborative research project involves the creation of a song database to support efforts to maintain and revitalise Indigenous Australian song traditions. Dr Sally Treloyn is an ARC future fellow at the University of Melbourne for the project Singing the Future: Assessing the Effectiveness of Repatriation as a Strategy to Sustain the Vitality of Indigenous Song (2016–20), which investigates the interplay of new technologies and music vitality and resilience in various Australian and Ugandan sites. She has conducted long-term participatory research in the Kimberley with junba performers since 1999 and more recently with thabi performers in the Pilbara.

Authors’ acknowledgements: We acknowledge the Wurundjeri and the Boonwurrung people of the Kulin nation as traditional owners of the land on which we work at the University of Melbourne, and their ancestors past, present and future. We also acknowledge the Nyikina, Ngarinyin and Wunambal, the Kunwinjku and Mawng, and the Ngarluma and Kariyarra on whose land we work in the Kimberley, western Arnhem Land and Pilbara regions respectively.

Reuben Brown acknowledges and thanks past Elders Jimmy Kalarriya and Jacob Nayinggul, as well as Don Namundja, Isaiah Nagurrgurrba, Solomon Nangamu and the Manmurulu family for sharing their knowledge of kun-borrk/manyardi. Thanks to Andrew Managku and Murray Garde for assistance in transcribing and translating Kunwinjku, and to Linda Barwick, Martin Thomas and Paul Dwyer for sharing the archival material that served as the foundation for the research that informed this article, and for their advice on previous incarnations of the article.
Sally Treloyn thanks Matthew Dembal Martin for sharing his reflections on the retrieval of junba recordings from AIATSIS and their return to the communities of origin. Thanks also to the Mowanjum Art and Culture Centre for supporting the research presented here.


3 Our attention to the relational in processes of research collaborations was prompted by the work of Treloyn with Ngarinyin/Wunambal Elder Matthew Dembal Martin and Ngarinyin/Nyikina consultant Rona Googninda Charles, who have referenced the relational law of sharing wunan to explore their intercultural collaboration to sustain song and dance in the Kimberley (Sally Treloyn, Matthew Dembal Martin and Rona Googninda Charles, ‘Cultural precedents for the repatriation of legacy song records to communities of origin’, Australian Aboriginal Studies, no. 2, 2016, pp. 94–103), as well as Cree scholar Shawn Wilson’s discussion of relational accountability as an Indigenous research paradigm (Shawn Wilson, Research is ceremony: Indigenous research methods, Halifax, Winnipeg: Fernwood, 2008).


7 Current Indigenous Discovery projects include Mobilising Song Archives to Nourish an Endangered Aboriginal Language (IN170100022) led by Clint Bracknell, Linda Barwick and Kim Scott in south-west Australia, and New Ways for Old Ceremonies: An Archival Research Project (IN150100013) led by Payi Linda Ford in the Daly region of the Northern Territory. Other current projects include Hearing Histories of the Western Pilbara: An Interdisciplinary Study of Indigenous Songs Composed in the Pilbara Region of Western Australia in the Twentieth Century and Technologies to Sustain Them into the Future (DP150100094); Singing the Future: Implications and Significances of Repatriation of Legacy Song Records and New Technologies for Music Vitality (FT150100141); Strategies for Preserving and Sustaining Australian Aboriginal Song and Dance in the Modern World: The Mowanjum and Fitzroy River Valley Communities of Western Australia (LP0990650); Intercultural Inquiry in a Trans–National Context: Exploring the Legacy of the 1948 American–Australian Scientific Expedition to Arnhem Land (DP1096897); and Reintegrating Central Australian Cultural Community Collections (LP140100806).


10 Colin Simpson (writer and producer), Arnhem Land Expedition, 1948, ABC Radio Archives 83/CD/1239.

11 See Anthony Linden-Jones, ‘The circle of songs: Traditional song and the musical score to C.P. Mountford’s documentary films’, in Amanda Harris (ed.), Circulating
The recordings were originally published as part of a set of twelve 12-inch discs, PRX2809–10, PRX2845–52, by Colin Simpson in 1949 under the title *Aboriginal music from the Northern Territory of Australia, 1948*, with annotations by Professor A.P. Elkin, Sydney: Australian Broadcasting Commission (processed by Columbia Gramophone). A number of recordings from Oenpelli were then given to Mountford and published under his own name (see C.P. Mountford, *American-Australian Scientific Expedition to Arnhem Land 1948* (nine 78 rpm discs), Sydney: Australian Broadcasting Commission, 1949). Elkin’s annotations provide some minimal information on the musical style of the recordings and, in some instances, the place recorded and singer’s first name. However, this information was not drawn upon in Simpson’s radio broadcast or in the official records of the expedition. For further details on the provenance of Simpson’s 1948 recordings, see Linda Barwick and Allan Marett, ‘Snapshots of musical life: The 1948 recordings’, in *Exploring the legacy of the 1948 Arnhem Land Expedition*, Canberra: Australian National University E Press, 2011, pp. 355–77 (364).


Intercultural Inquiry in a Trans-National Context: Exploring the Legacy of the 1948 American-Australian Scientific Expedition to Arnhem Land (DP1096897).