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American Ethnologist, Vol. 18, No. 2 (May, 1991), 331-361.

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"that was the last time I seen them, and no more": voices through time in Australian Aboriginal autobiography

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On 12 December 1982, I sat down with a couple of old friends from the Hopevale Community, a Lutheran Aboriginal mission at the southeastern corner of Australia's Cape York peninsula, near Cooktown, Queensland. The two men, Roger Hart and the late Tulo Gordon, had been helping me with a project to record on film the reminiscences of several of the oldest people at the mission, particularly reminiscences about their arrivals at Cape Bedford—the forerunner of modern Hopevale—during the 1920s. Roger, Tulo, and I had also been working together, sporadically, on another project: a book about Roger's own life and the demise of the Barrow Point tribe, of which he believes himself to be the last member. It was now Roger's turn to face the camera and to tell how he had come to the mission, several hundred kilometers south of his homeland. It was a story we had heard before, a dramatic, heart-wrenching tale, now become part of the lore of the community. It is the resulting "autobiographical fragment" (transcribed in the Appendix) that I discuss here.

I have several interrelated goals. First, I simply want to share Roger's story, a gripping tale that presents an implicit but penetrating ethnographic and social-historical commentary on Australian Aboriginal life in Queensland. Second, I want to elucidate and to exploit for analytical purposes the pragmatic, discursive process of eliciting and creating autobiography. Finally, I want to illustrate, through Roger Hart's performance, the interleaving of multiple voices in the construction of all accounts of self.

Let me devote a few words, first, to this notion of "autobiographical fragment." The very idea of autobiography has come in for some characteristic anthropological criticism in recent years (cf. Brumble 1987; Clifford 1978; Krupat 1987), in part because it is seen as an imposed, nonnative genre—or, to put it more bluntly, a "Western literary form"—unknown in many societies where anthropologists have doggedly collected "life histories" anyway. Moreover, even if we expand the idea of autobiography to include the more common, perhaps universal, activity of creating "self-accounts" or "narratives of personal experience" (Bauman 1986; Labov 1972), some anthropologists warn against using the resulting "texts" for ethnographic purposes, pointing out that their discursive (hence messily interactive) and yet individual (hence nongeneralizable) provenance leaves them, in Keesing's (1981) words, "inescapably bracketed by doubt."

In the 1920s, Aboriginal Australians in northern Queensland were removed from the bush by force and deposited on missions, where they grew up, were educated, and often lived the rest of their lives. Their autobiographical memories—from conversation—about life in the bush and the events that sundered people from their families are framed in languages provided by subsequent mission life and are discursively shaped by the facts both of the moment and of subsequent biography. This article examines the complex voices in one such autobiographical fragment, drawn from one man's attempt to reconstruct a past for himself. [Australian Aborigines, biography, discourse, oral history, identity, conversation]

A more global criticism suggests that the notion of biography is—as in Bourdieu's recent title (1987)—simply an "illusion" that masks the sociopolitical and institutional conditions of its production and consumption.

a discursive view of culture and self

We can, of course, turn these supposed weaknesses into strengths. Rather than disguise the culturally and pragmatically situated nature of the texts we present as fragments of "life histories," we can stand unashamed with their discursive richness dripping from our elbows. For help in the present project, I should like to invoke two allied claims, recently advanced on various semiotic fronts. First is the claim that biography is *inherently* a discursive matter (and thus necessarily multilogical and multivocal).

More insightful, and perhaps more pervasively insidious, than the charge that "biography" is merely a culture-bound literary form is Crapanzano's argument that what we normally call biography is but one of the "arrests" in a "continuous dialectical movement" whose processes involve "typifications" or "characterizations" of both self and (simultaneously, by reflection and counterpoint) other. A continuous analogic play is captured—frozen—in discontinuous digital moments. According to Crapanzano, these frozen moments have a characteristic discursive form: they are what he calls "metapragmatic ascriptors." That is, they attribute or "ascribe" interactional characteristics, which are "metapragmatic" because they implicitly characterize interactional contexts. He suggests that

> the criteria upon which typifications or characterizations of self and other are based refer less to inherent, referentially describable and essentialized features, or traits, of the individual than to pragmatic features of the verbal transactions (and their accompanying behavior) in which the typifier, if not as an actual participant th[e]n as a witness, is engaged with the typified. [1988:4]

He then borrows a formulation from Silverstein: "typifications and characterizations are essentializations of pragmatic features, or *Gestalten,* of the encounter that are ascribed to the individual to be typified" (1988:4). One cannot, according to this view, *have* a self, without having another around to bounce it off of, catching and incorporating into one's running autobiography the metapragmatic discursive ripples. Moreover, not only does this sort of self emerge in discourse, but it presupposes and builds upon representations of other (also canonically discursive) encounters.

In a similarly Bakhtinian vein, Basso, in recent work on Kalapalo biography, has urged that analysts, like the Kalapalo themselves, must

> represent individual persons "in the here and now" as socially contextualized, action-oriented, and discourse-centered processes, engaged with the practical immediacy of incompatibilities and paradoxes in their understandings of who and what they are. [1989:567]

Indirectly, Bauman's reframing of "the relationship between narrative and event and the management of point of view" (1986:35) in personal narratives implies a similar perspective on the self. For he argues that

> events are not the external raw materials out of which narratives are constructed, but rather the reverse: Events are abstractions from narrative. It is the structures of signification in narrative that give coherence to events in our understanding. [1986:5]

If the integrity of a self depends on the events that constitute its history, then narrative *creates* the self. Bauman's extended study of narratives of personal experience points to just such a conclusion, as the narrative constructions of the self that are available for performance (perhaps only the silent, inner-directed performance of remembering) constitute the primary material from which selves are built, evaluated, refined, and maintained.

The performance-centered approach to narrative (Bauman and Briggs 1990) provides a further useful reminder about the character of all performed autobiographical discourse. Such talk

displays, first, an inherent indexicality: minimally oriented to narrator, narratee, and audience (Duranti and Brenneis 1986), it is probably also anchored in a textual past in which other biography has appeared. Furthermore, the affective nature (Ochs 1989) of such performed discourse—never very far away when people are face to face and mouth to mouth—floods the resulting constructed "self" as well, restoring an emotional tenor to "identity" that often gets mislaid when we reduce biography to sequences of events and values to cultural schemata. These are issues that will arise again in the empirical material that follows.

Complementing this view of biography and the constitution of self is Urban's more global working definition of culture as a socially transmitted system of discourse (1987). The construction of a textual or discursive self is again central. Here, however, the dialectic movement between self and other is to be observed in the assumption, by a speaker, of *different* selves—some merely temporary "cultural" creations and some "iconic others"—as a consequence of the voices triggered by different first-person usages. This is, Urban argues,

> the basic stuff of culture—the participation of individuals in socially transmitted patterns of action and representation of the world, which are adopted "unconsciously" and without reflection. [1987:16]

Goffman's classic decomposition of "speaker" (and the "figure" which we typically represent with the pronoun "I") makes a similar point. Discourse creates a complex "I" with potential "multiple embeddings" (1981[1979]:149), incarnations of incarnations. Thus, one "I" (the speaker) may comment about another "I" (a former speaker), who once said something about "me" (a self of that epoch): "In Mead's terms, a 'me' that tries to incorporate its 'I' requires another 'I' to do so" (Goffman 1981:148).

According to Urban, the self is inherently a discursive product, at two levels:

> At one level, the anaphoric self that is a substitute for a discourse character allows an individual to fit into a culture-specific text. At another level, that discourse or textual self functions as a blueprint for the everyday self. [1987:19]

Thus, the characteristic realm of culture is the discursive construction and display of shared understandings. Such a perspective is congenial to those of us whose work and interests revolve around texts—an expansive sort of domain, in the first place, if we adopt Bakhtin's generous definition of text as "any coherent complex of signs" (1986:103). It also presents an escape from the difficulties I caricatured at the outset: for, by *dwelling* on the discursive provenance of autobiography, we put ourselves at the very heart of individual participation in a cultural order. When confronted with accounts of self and others, the ethnographer (like the perspicacious native) inspects their emergence in talk and analyzes the processes by which such discourses *constitute*—bring into existence—"autobiographies," coherent views of personal identity.

I should add that the processes of entextualization and detextualization by which we move from biographies to selves and back again involve complex sociopolitical processes of the production and consumption of, among other things, discourse itself. This is an issue constantly floating in the background of Roger Hart's story. Why *these* reminiscences emerge, in *this* context, and with *these* interlocutors is in part a political matter, with, as I shall demonstrate, indelible consequences on the self this autobiographical fragment inscribes.

Roger Hart's story

The circumstances of both Roger Hart's life and his presentation of it in the materials to be discussed here render his "autobiography" particularly susceptible to the kind of interpretation I have just sketched. As I mentioned, Roger and I had been working together for several years, trying to reconstruct details of his language from somewhat evanescent memories, and also patching together details of the demise of the Barrow Point tribe. Roger was telling about his arrival at the mission as a boy of six or seven years of age; it was a story that both of his inter-

locutors knew—Tulo Gordon because he had been there at the time and I because I had often talked about the events with Roger. The exact circumstances of *this* telling are of central importance to my argument about the interactive construction of self. However, consider first the "bare facts" of the narrative.

Figure 1 is a schematized representation of Roger's story, broken into rough episodes and incorporating a somewhat unmotivated distinction between chronology (marked from top to bottom) and narrative elaboration (marked from left to right). This is probably the form in which such "life history"—an austere chronology of events, rendered into propositions—would find its way into ethnography of the usual sort. Let me guide you through the unfolding account. Although the original question by which I prompted Roger to begin is lost from the recording, we had spent the day asking other elderly people around the mission to tell *wanhdharra gaday mission-bi* (how they had come to the mission). Roger was trying to comply with a similar request.

Roger's part-European ancestry, and indeed his surname Hart, are attributed to a white settler who owned property in the Barrow Point area in the early decades of this century. The man Roger calls "father" was his mother's Aboriginal husband from the Barrow Point tribe. The narrative starts at the camp at Barrow Point where Roger was born; he says he found out that "they" were going to take him to "the white man." Members of the tribe thus set out toward the south, traveling on foot where the beach was good, occasionally using canoes to cross dangerous rivers or rough stretches of coast.

Why, we ask, were they going to take him to the white man? "You see they want to get rid of me," he says (see Appendix, line 39). Tulo Gordon suggests that the old people wanted Roger to go to school, even though, as Roger points out, "I didn't know what school is" (44). There is another possibility: that the Barrow Point people were afraid of police. In this period, native troopers made periodic raids on traditional Aboriginal camps as part of the government program of "Aboriginal Protection" (which in turn was legislatively linked, in Queensland, to an act for the control of opium). These troopers—uniformed Aborigines recruited by the colonial authorities from both local and distant tribes to serve as a police force to pacify native populations—were often after women. They also had express instructions to search for part-European ("half-caste") children who were not, according to contemporary mores, to be suffered to grow up uncivilized in the bush.

The Barrow Point group came at last to several large Aboriginal camps, located near white settlers' properties in the hinterlands of Cooktown, near the Cape Bedford mission. Aboriginal people in this area spoke a language called Guugu Yimidhirr, a mutually unintelligible distant relative of Roger's own Barrow Point language. Here Roger met some of the children he was later to know at the mission; he remembers that he was older than they. At the same camp were several of the old men of the Cooktown tribe who regulated relations with the German missionary Reverend G. H. Schwarz, known as "Muuni" (black) in Guugu Yimidhirr. These elders urged the Barrow Point people to deliver Roger to this man, known for his flowing *walarr* (beard).

Roger ultimately did go with his father to Cape Bedford, and he remembers being terrified precisely of that beard. Rather than move into the boys' dormitory as the missionary instructed, Roger remained at the mission only two days and then accompanied the adults back to the camps. After leaving the mission, he and the other Barrow Point people stayed for several months in the mixed, shifting communities of Aborigines who alternately squatted on the fringes of white settlement and led a more traditional life in remote bush areas, first at the mouth of the McIvor River and later on European-owned properties like Glenrock and Flagstaff.

Missionary Schwarz did not forget about the little "half-caste" boy, however, and he soon sent orders, via older mission residents from the Cooktown (Guugu Yimidhirr) tribe, that Roger should be returned to Cape Bedford to school. Accordingly, Roger's father went back to the mission settlement and handed the boy over to Muuni, who tried again to induce the child to

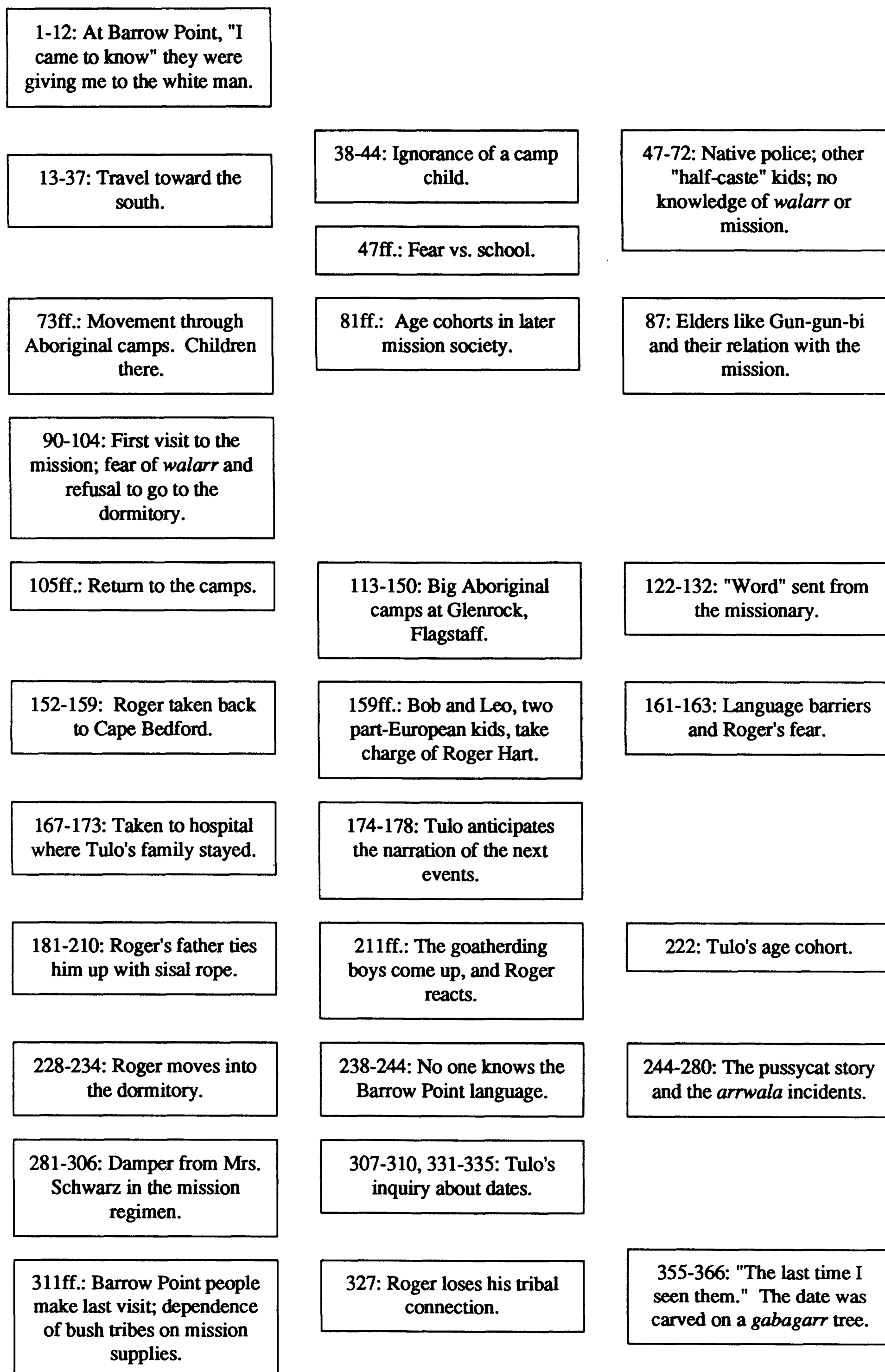

Figure 1. Schematized story of Roger Hart's arrival at Cape Bedford.

stay at the dormitory, where there were other part-European children his age. Roger was still terrified, however, and ultimately Schwarz dispatched him, with his father, to the wooden hospital building at the edge of the mission settlement, where there was also a large plantation of sisal hemp plants.

When, on their first visit to the mission, his father had headed back to the camps, Roger had run away to join him. This time Roger's father made sure he would not escape. Breaking some sisal leaves, he fashioned a rough hemp rope and tied Roger's arms and legs. He then locked Roger in the wooden hospital building. It was there that Tulo Gordon, a preschool child whose parents stayed at the hospital and cared for the mission's herd of goats, first saw the little boy from Barrow Point, locked up, "singin' out and cryin' and kickin' the wall" (175, 178). Roger in turn tried to poke out Tulo's peering eye by jabbing a stick through the slats in the hospital wall.

After staying for a while with Tulo and his family, Roger finally did move to the dormitory, and his words conjure up the image of a solitary life: there was no one who spoke his language, he had no playmates except for the dormitory cat, and he felt a deep confusion about the routines and procedures of mission life. The other boys dubbed him *arrwala,* the Barrow Point imperative "Come!"—the only word they had picked up from his language.

At the end of the narrative, Roger places the date of his arrival at the mission in 1923. In 1925, members of the Barrow Point tribe—including his mother—returned to Cape Bedford. (Roger's mother had been abducted by native troopers and was, in fact, not at Barrow Point when Roger was brought to the Cape Bedford mission. She later had two other sons; one of them, like Roger, was taken to Cape Bedford and grew up on the mission, and the other came to the mission later in life.) The Barrow Point people had come to receive their government rations and supplies from the missionary. This time Roger did not try to follow them. "I didn't came near them because I was frightened to go near them . . . but I knew them but I didn't wanted to mix up you see" (324–325, 327). This moment marked the end of his connection with tribal life in his homeland.

resuscitating interactional life

In this austere schematization of Roger's "story," I have deliberately rendered his *performance* into *narrative.* I have reduced the discourse of this time and place to a linear text. I have also withheld other "information" about Roger's life and his people that emerged in the course of our researches but that did not surface in this one telling. Here I intend to focus on something else, something that should be clear from a cursory study of the sequential organization of the transcribed talk (and that would be even clearer if the reader could watch the original film from which the transcript is taken). The *interactional details* of the emerging account must inform our understanding of the proposed "autobiographical fragment." That is, the ongoing form of the discourse reveals how Roger constructs himself—his own current identity—in counterpoint both to his created (that is, "remembered") childhood self and to the selves he sees reflected off others, interlocutors and narrative protagonists alike. Let me point out, first, some of the interactionally salient moments to which marked organizational features of the talk—overlaps or laughs, for example—draw our attention.

the interactive negotiation of the linguistic code

The talk by all three interactants switches frequently between English and Guugu Yimidhirr. In fact, the normal linguistic medium at modern Hopevale is just such a mixture of languages, and the parameters of switching are heterogeneous and complex (Haviland 1985a). Moreover, in the given circumstances—performing before a camera, when there is a certain indetermi-

nacy about the resulting film's eventual audience—normal constraints on language choice may be presumed to be altered.

There are, for example, interactively *prompted* code switches at various points in the discourse. One such switch, occurring between turns, appears early on. (The fragments that follow preserve the line numbering and notational conventions of the full transcript, which appears in the Appendix. For an explanation of the notational conventions, see the Appendix headnote.) At lines 19–20, Roger switches from Guugu Yimidhirr to English in his account of the trip south from Barrow Point. Tulo then suggests a Guugu Yimidhirr alternative for the English word "camp" (21). Roger in turn accepts the substitution (22), before switching *back* to English (23).

1. Code switching

18   *nganhdhaan nhayun guwanun galbaaygu gadaaray* .
We came all the way down from the west,

19   you know *gaari* straight through *gadaaray* .
you know, we didn't come straight through.

20   camp there-
[

21 t: *barrbiilbi*
[You] camped.

22 r: *barrbiilbi galbaaygu*
[We] camped all along the way.

23   might be two nights and then off again

This negotiation of the narrative medium is not preserved in the bare propositional reduction to story—in my schematization above, for example—and it is thus unavailable to analysis when the whole performance is taken merely as a biographical fragment. How to understand such code switching is a topic to which I shall allude again.

"conflicting accounts" and conflicting motives

There is, more substantively, negotiation of narrative content. Consider school, one image through which Roger and Tulo discuss the reasons for Roger's removal to the mission. (Note also that Roger raises this issue not spontaneously but rather in response to my question at 38.) There is here a somewhat adversarial dance: Roger blames his removal on racial fears in the Barrow Point camp, but Tulo offers a different sort of explanation—that Roger's parents simply wanted him to go to school, to get an education.

2. Why school?

38 j: *ngaanii wangaarrbi wu- wudhinda?*
Why were they going to gi- give you to the white man?

39 r: *dagu* . you see they want to get rid of me
Well, you see, they wanted to get rid of me.
[   ]

40 t: school-*ngu*
For school.

41 j: mm

42 r: *aa* . because of-
Yeah, because of-
[

43 t: school-*bigu*
Just for school.

44 r: *walu* school-*bi nguba nhaadhi* but I didn't know what school is .
Like for school perhaps, see? But I didn't know what school was.

45 I didn't know=

[

46 t: mm

Roger clearly has doubts about Tulo's suggestion (note his use of the particle *nguba,* "perhaps," at 44), and he remembers being ignorant, as a young child, about "what school is."

There is an alternative explanation: that bush-dwelling natives were afraid of the unwanted attentions of native troopers, brought on by the presence of part-European children in the camps, and thus tried to rid themselves of Roger, who represented such a liability. This idea is also interactively developed, prompted by my pointed question (47) and furthered by Tulo's *sotto voce* remark "half-caste" (50, echoed by Roger at 51) and his later musings about *other* part-white children, taken from the bush earlier (57–58, 60), who ultimately showed up at various Queensland Aboriginal missions.

3. Police and "half-castes"

47 j: =you don't think they mighta been frightened of police then?=

48 r: =yeah

49 they WAS frightened of police

50 t: (half-caste)

[

51 r: if any half-caste *bama nhaway banydyiilndyiga nhaadhi*
If they were keeping any half-caste people there, see?

52 j: mmmm

[

53 r: *bidha*
Children.

54 they was frightened of that

55 j: mm

56 r: *nhaamuu*
That's why.

57 t: because *dhagaalbigu dhanaan maaniiga yi*
Because earlier they had taken the [others].

58 *warra* Bob
Like old Bob, here.

59 j: *iii*
Right.

[

60 t: *nhangu gaanhaalgarr*
And his elder sisters.

61 r: *aa*=
Yeah.

62 t: =might be *nhaamuu gala*
Perhaps that was why, indeed.

63 r: *aa nhaamuu budhu nhayun*
Yeah, that IS why!

In this, as in much discourse at the modern Hopevale mission, there is an insistent current of background racial issues—an important problem which I cannot develop fully in the scope of this article, but to which I will return.

At various points Roger and Tulo struggle for the floor—both discursive and narrative. When Roger comes to the central dramatic moment of his now legendary arrival at Cape Bedford—when his father ties him up at the hospital so that he won't run away—Tulo breaks in to try to recount his *own* memory of the event. There results a sequential scuffle in which Tulo starts to

get ahead of the story (174–175, 178) and Roger explicitly shushes him (179–180) to give his more "orderly" (and authoritative) version.

4. Struggle over telling the story

174	t:	I still remember when *nhinaan* . lock-im-up *gurray* and then **I still remember when they locked you up and then**
175		you was sin gin' out and cryin' =
		[ ] [
176	r:	*ngali yii- ngayu- nyundu yii nhaawaa* **You and I here- I- you listen to this**
177		yeah
178	t:	= and kickin' the wall
		[
179	r:	*nyundu-* **you-**
180		*aa* you- you still *ngaanaarru* remember now **Yes, you- you whatchamacallit, remember now.**

Two competing narrative streams—or contested claims to the narrative floor—are, here, merged and interactively smoothed into one.

At several moments the distinct interests of Roger's interlocutors clearly change the course of the narrative. We have seen such a moment already, where my question "Why were they going to gi- give you to the white man?" (38) prompts a digression from the running account of the group's travel southward. (Notice that much Guugu Yimidhirr narrative, like the celebrated hero myths common throughout Australia and some parts of North America [Witherspoon 1977], consists of running accounts of travels, a kind of linearized, verbal geography.) In a similar way, my zeal to have Roger repeat on film a story he had told me on other occasions leads me to prompt him for it explicitly: "and you were telling me you used to sit down and play with that . pussycat" (see example 9, below).

Tulo's concerns, on the other hand, lead him to ask Roger whether he is sure of his dates: "in what year you think—nineteen twenty-?" (307; compare 331, "you sure *nyundu* come there nineteen twenty?"). The issue here is practical; the Australian government pays old-age pensions to people over 65, and at modern Hopevale such a pension is a prized (and rare) regular source of income. One reason people don't get their pensions is that they have no birth records by which to prove their ages. Tulo was, at the time of filming, engaged in a battle with the social security authorities to establish his eligibility. Thus, the date of Roger's arrival—a time when, Tulo recalls, "I wasn't a schoolboy I was just a little boy" (222)—is a datum of some immediate fiscal import to him.

the emotional content of autobiography

Not only the interaction but also the *affective* impact of a performance (Ochs 1989) may fade when a biographical narrative is reduced to chronology and propositional form. However we are to understand Roger's story as a factual account, it is clear that it also stands as a striking emotional performance, even if only by virtue of the *suppressed* emotions, withheld rather than displayed. We might call it—in a phrase suggested to me by Ranajit Guha—an "antinostalgic account." Repeatedly, as Roger describes what we can only imagine through a child's eyes as terrifying scenes of dislocation, violence, and incarceration, he masks or brackets his own feelings—then and now—with laughter and reticence. Such moments are evident in the discursive scene, though not explicitly in the schematized biographical "text."

Consider Roger's laughter (Jefferson 1977). When he relates his first meeting with Schwarz, he masks his terror—perhaps not only of the missionary's beard, but also of his entire existence—with a torrent of giggles (89, 94).

5. Laughter and fear

92 when I seen M- Muuni I was got frightened of his *walarr nhaadhi*
When I saw S- Schwarz I got frightened of his beard, see?

93 t: mm

94 r: ((he he heh heh))

Similarly, when he talks about being forced to go to the dormitory with two strange boys with whom he shares no language ("I was FRIGHTened and then they didn't know my language . . . and I didn't know the English" [161, 163]), he laughs aloud.

6. Laughter and language problems

159 *bula* Leo Rosendale and Bob Flinders *bula gaday* to take me but I .
Leo Rosendale and Bob Flinders both came to take me but I

160 didn't wanted to go with them

161 and I was FRIGHTened and then they didn't know my language

162 and .

163 and I didn't know the English ((eh heh he he heh heh heh))

Compare lines 273–275 and 290–291 in the following passage, where Roger also describes his linguistic difficulties with the other boys in the mission dormitory:

7. "They didn't know the language"

261 they didn't know the language but they .

262 some of them .

263 they used to sing out to me

264 *arrwala arrwala*
"Arrwala! Arrwala!"

265 t: mm .

266 mmm

267 r: that means come

268 t: mm
[

269 r: th- they called me

270 calling me my name *arrwala* too you see

271 j: yeah

272 r: I didn't- *nganhi di-*
I didn't- me-
[

273 j: ((hnn hnnn))

274 r: ((hnn hnn ha ha))
[

275 t: ((ha ha ha))

276 r: the- that's only the language they knew

277 j: mm

278 r: *arrwala*
"Come!"

279 t: mmm

280 r: and then

281 *nganhdhaan mayi dampaangu dhadaaray guwaar*
We used to go west to get damper to eat.

282 *mayi guwaar wanhdhaa budhu* Mrs. Schwarz-*ngun wuudhiildhi nhaadhi*=
For food there somewhere in the west, Mrs. Schwarz would give it out, see?

283 =*mayi*
Food.

284 t: mm

[

285 r: *nganhdhanun* piece of damper
Our piece of damper.

286 and then I the- I got my share then went home and then ate it=

287 =and I went back again but .

288 I thought . they would give me another piece you see

289 t: mm

290 r: ((hhhnn heh heh ha ha ha))

291 t: *aa* ((hn ha ha))
Yeah.

Here Roger's laughter is, sequentially, *collaborative*. That is, he either offers to his interlocutors or accepts from them the response of shared laughter. The conversants thereby together implicitly gloss as humorous Roger's distress and confusion about the strange and uninterpretable routines of mission life; his discomfort becomes mere "failure to understand"—either by the other mission children, who know no Barrow Point language, or by Roger himself.

Finally, Roger laughs as he sketches two other crucial scenes. In the first, his father breaks sisal hemp plants to fabricate a rope with which to tie Roger up and leave him behind.

8. Breaking sisal hemp

187 *dagu* sisal hemp-*gu nhaadhi*
There was sisal hemp there, see?

188 *ngaanaarru*
Whatchamacallit

189 t: *aa*
Yeah.

[

190 r: *dhurrbu*
shoots

191 *nhamidhirr dumbi* .
He broke some of them.

192 well *ngayu* didn't know what he was BREAKin' it for
Well, I didn't know what he was BREAKin' it for.

193 t: *aa*
Yeah.

194 r: ((hhhhh heh))

195 *maandi nagaar* .
He took it east.

196 *dagaadhi* . veranda-*wi*
He sat down on the porch.

And in another scene he laughs about the dormitory pussycat who became his only playmate.

9. The pussycat

244 j: and you were telling me you used to

245 sit down and play with that . pussycat

[

246 r: pussycat

247 *aa*
Yeah.

248 I was s- sitting down and

249 *nganhi gunggarra* dormitory *maandi*=
They took me north to the dormitory
250 =they had a cat there you see and then-
251 and then I
252 they- the boys was talkin' to me
253 I didn't understand them
254 I said, oh . it's no use playing . with them
255 j: mm
256 r: well, and .
257 I got the pussycat and I used to . play 'round with the pussycat
258 j: ((hhn hh))
259 r: this was my friend then ((hnn hnn))

Here, just as Roger's story echoes my prompt at 244–245, his laughter at 259 seems to echo mine at 258, and with it the suggested affective interpretation of this sad memory as merely something to joke about.

Though he sometimes masks his emotions through such gestural distancing, Roger is throughout the account explicitly concerned (and sometimes interactively prompted) to articulate his feelings, particularly fear. He was frightened of Schwarz's beard (and, Tulo prompts, you "want to run away" [97]), frightened of the other boys, "frightened very . madly" of the dormitory (but, Tulo suggests, you "got used to it" [230, 231]), and, most poignant of all, "frightened . to go near" his own Barrow Point people when they returned to the mission after he had been there for two years (324–325).

interactionally responsive sequencing and content

There are formal signs, in Roger's story, of the complexity of the (minimally) triadic footing (Goffman 1981[1979]) of the telling: there are potentially three people to be dealt with here. Roger must, among other things, juggle the two members of his audience, who do not sit idly by in the meantime—as audiences never do (Duranti and Brenneis 1986). Consider, for example, the play of pronouns in the eye-poking incident. Tulo had been with a group of children who brought the mission's flock of goats back to the hospital, discovering Roger tied up inside:

10. Poking with a stick

214 r: *gaday gurra*
You came up then.
215 *nganhi nagaar wungga-wi wungga-dhirr waami*
And you found me there in the east crying.
216 *nha-gala nyundu nganhi* hole-*ngun waanuunurrin gurra*
Then you were spying on me through a hole, too.
217 t: mm
218 r: *nha-gala bama ngayu nha-gala . gaday*
Then I just came.
219 *bama nyulu nganhi yii nhaamaalma*
"Man, that one, he's looking at me."
220 *yuguunh ngaanaarru . miil bagaalgay nhangu*
So with a stick I was—uh—poking him in the eye.

Prompted, perhaps, by the indexical shift represented by the reported speech at line 219, or perhaps because he turns to address me instead of Tulo, Roger's "you" (= Tulo) of line 216 becomes his "him" (= Tulo) of line 220. He shifts what Kuno (1987) calls "camera-angle" and at the same time changes Goffman's "footing," by directing segments of his story to different segments of his audience.

Moreover, not even pacing is left to the narrator. His interlocutors shift uneasily on their discursive feet, not only prompting for topic but also prodding the pace. Witness Tulo's occasional impatient use of the particle *ma,* which means "get on with it" (164, 224), or his repeated *mm* in the following sequence, a sound that Roger clearly perceives as a continuer (Goodwin 1986), a prompt to carry the story forward.

11. Get on with it

66	r:	but I . heard that old fella was saying to me
67		*nhanu walaarrbi wudhinhu nagaar* **I want to give you to the beard, there in the east.**
68	t:	mm
69	r:	*walu dhirraaynggurrbigu muuni-wi* **Like to old man Schwarz.**
70		well I couldn't understand what he was meaning [
71	t:	mm
72		mm
73	r:	and .
74		*nganhi maandi guwaalmun yi: . galbaaygu* **They took me all the way from the west.**

At several places in the story, Tulo seems to prod Roger along. Here, where Roger adds at lines 69–70 what in a Labovian framework (Labov 1972) might be considered non-narrative evaluative commentary, Tulo's impatient response brings him back onto the narrative track. The dance of "facts," then, follows an interactive beat.

the wider parameters of Roger Hart's discourse

The interactive organization of Roger's story has revealed both the poverty of the reduced textual sediment of this schematic fragment of autobiography and the "situated richness" of its discursive provenance. It is, indeed, precisely attention to the microstructure of conversational sequence, to the play of turns and voices, that exposes the interactive social texture of this autobiographical moment. Still, putting this filmed conversation into the wider context of a collaborative ethnographic study of social history, and of Roger's life in particular, requires a further step, beyond the transcript. Even the conversation analyst's question—"Why this, now?"—can only be imperfectly addressed in the conversation itself, as I shall try to show.

The history of my engagement with Roger Hart's autobiography and its various discursive vehicles is a long one. It began on a rainy December afternoon about ten years ago when Roger sought me out, in front of the Hopevale store, to ask me if I would help him try to write down his language. I had been working for some years on Guugu Yimidhirr, and Roger, newly returned to the community, had decided that his *own* Barrow Point language, on the verge of extinction by his reckoning, should also be recorded before he himself departed this world. As our friendship progressed, what began as casual autobiographical remarks in linguistic interviews over tea and biscuits gradually became consciously mustered autobiographical reminiscences, some—as in the present instance—filmed, with or without interlocutors.

There was more: Roger composed a written text to help gain financial support for the project. Roger and I, once with Tulo Gordon and once unaccompanied, made two trips on foot to Roger's birthplace at Barrow Point—a spot which he had not seen for 60 years and which had been free of human settlement since the 1950s. The reconstructions and memories thus engendered led to visits to other Queensland communities to look for Roger's countrymen and to weeks spent sitting in the reading room of the Queensland State Archives in Brisbane, the permitted

sharpened pencils in our hands, as we pored over records ravaged by white ants and monsoon rains, in search of references to his people.

Hovering in the discursive air that afternoon when we filmed, then, were multiple "intertexts," which resonate through the stretch of talk I have been examining. Some of these drew upon events well beyond our own joint investigations. In 1982, as Australian society as a whole celebrated its coming bicentenary and as the Lutherans commemorated the coming centenary of the founding of the Cape Bedford mission, much effort was being devoted to revisionist histories: of the goldrush that had opened the Cooktown area to Europeans, of the abnegation of the Bavarian missionaries who had devoted themselves to the Cape Bedford tribes. The question of *Aboriginal* memories of these events was relevant to all these histories (though often ignored). Similarly, the conversations that Roger, Tulo, and I had recently shared about local history provided potential conversational raw material. Our recent work in the archives had, for example, raised the question of precise dates, and Tulo makes specific reference (57–60) to police reports we had seen about the removal of other part-European children from the bush. In much the same way, my own prompts aim at introducing onto the film choice narrative fragments from previous conversations.

The background, above all, makes plain the sense in which Roger Hart is, in this fragment, *fashioning* an identity and a biography: for himself, but in collaboration with the rest of us; in his own voice, but with echoes of other voices. Our long treks through the bush back to Barrow Point—where Roger was able, for the first time since I had known him, to speak his own language fluently, as he addressed the rocks and trees of his birthplace (Haviland 1985b)—were journeys of discovery, in the guise of *re*discovery.

The whole project, then, is vulnerable to Bourdieu's analysis of "the biographical illusion":

> The subject and the object of the biography (the interviewer and interviewee) have in a sense the same interest in accepting the *postulate of the meaning* of narrated existence (and, implicitly, of all existence). So we may assume that the autobiographical narrative is always at least partially motivated by a concern to give meaning, to rationalize, to show the inherent logic, both for the past and for the future, to make consistent and constant, through the creation of intelligible relationships, like that of the cause (immediate or final) and effect between successive states, which are thus turned into *steps* of necessary development. [Bourdieu 1987:2]

the immediate context and the participants

Let me return to the narrative performance to focus more narrowly on the voices that surfaced during the afternoon in question. In the first two decades of this century, the Cape Bedford mission became a repository for Aboriginal "waifs and strays" from all over Queensland. Even today, people with traditional patrilineal ancestral claims to the land where the mission stands are somewhat in the minority in the community (Haviland and Haviland 1980). As I have mentioned, we had spent the morning filming elderly Hopevale residents; the theme was, uniformly, "coming to the mission." *Mission* history was thus also heavily in the air, complementing the topics inherent in modern Aboriginal community structure: race, school cohorts and generations, kinship, and old-age pensions. (Bourdieu also notes how life histories are linked to "the official presentation of the official model of the self [identity card, civil record, curriculum vitae, official biography] and to the philosophy of identity which underlies it" [1987:4].)

Roger has a large and important family at Hopevale; his story is almost a mission legend, used, according to one's taste and perspective, to display a variety of potentially conflicting morals: the cruelty of the missionary, as against the cruelty of wild Aborigines; the complicity of the mission in the destruction of traditional life, as against the role of the mission in saving children from the bush and helping the remnants of the wild tribes in their cultural twilight.

These considerations make problematic (and highlight the importance of) the identities of the participants, the discursive interlocutors. Roger and Tulo's relationship, which mixes and

matches race and friendship, temperament and religion, education and opportunity, is somewhat too complex to cover at length here. Roger, favored recipient of the preferential treatment meted out to mission residents of mixed ancestry, and married into a powerful family whose roots lie in other parts of Queensland, stands in marked contrast to his friend Tulo, a *bama buthuun.gu* or "true 'full-blooded' Aborigine," but also traditional owner of or claimant to the Guugu Yimidhirr heartland where the mission was located. Roger and Tulo are old friends—indeed, distant kinsmen—but their relationship cannot escape the issues of power and legitimacy, race and opportunity, that cloud all Hopevale social life.

My role is also multiply ambiguous, for I am at once an American (thus *wangarr,* "white," but not Australian *wangarr*); an ethnographer (thus student of the "exotic" and "primitive") but also, more neutrally, a linguist (student of language); an academic (thus member of a certain powerful professional establishment); a polyglot (thus potential overhearer as well as hearer); a vehicle owner (and thus controller of other resources), and so on. It is nonetheless clear that Tulo and I are the central *others* through whose mutual polylogues Roger is able to create himself, discursively. His story, here, is told partly in our voices.

There is also another participant, hidden, as it were, behind the camera itself. Its identity arises, fleetingly but explicitly, from time to time. For example, Roger asks me, moments before the transcribed segment begins: "*Dhawuunh* [friend], you think you going to show this to everybody—*yii* [this] what *nyundu maandii badaamun* [you take back down (to Canberra)]?" The politics of modern Australian Aboriginal life, in its local Hopevale incarnation, are as invisibly present in this scene as the camera lens itself. Canberra, the Australian capital and icon of the federal welfare bureaucracy that provides, among other things, Roger's pension and, indirectly, the movie camera, is thus a fourth interlocutor here. (It is, as well, one to be sharply distinguished from the corresponding Queensland state bureaucracy, whose role and ideological posture are significantly different from those of the federal government in Hopevale life and opinion.)

The camera, curiously, also makes Roger his *own* other: distanced from himself in the telling, unsure how he ought to present or react to his own narrative. For while Hopevale history is a topic of local concern, how *this* story, in *this* telling, and before *this* audience fits into the purely local context is not entirely clear, as Roger's remark shows. Moreover, my own role as ethnographer, standing in for that somewhat hazy "outside world," is further compromised by my being on the other side of the lens.

the voices and the languages

The cast of characters (participants and protagonists) engenders, but does not exhaust the range of, the voices conversing in this fragment of autobiography. I return to my title: voices through time. Referring again to Roger's performance, crystalized as transcript, I shall end with an exploration of its symphony of voices.

We begin with Roger Hart's "own" voice. But where is it? Notice, first, the complications of "his language"—part of a general confusion of tongues and selves in modern Hopevale. For nowhere in the rapid switching between Guugu Yimidhirr and English does Roger's own Barrow Point language surface, except in the representation (in "reported speech") of other children's mistaken use of the Barrow Point imperative *arrwala* (come!) as Roger's name. Instead he uses the languages of his adopted self, the self raised, educated, married, and living on the mission. Even the voices of people in the Barrow Point camp and of his father are rendered into Guugu Yimidhirr.

The "Roger" who *has* a voice is a similarly slippery entity, for the voice now emanates from his current "self," now jumps back to the reconstructed mouth (or mind) of his six-year-old self. Notice that it is not only third parties who are "quoted" in reported speech, but Roger himself, as in the pussycat scene, repeated here.

12. The pussycat

250		=they had a cat there you see and then-
251		and then I
252		they- the boys was talkin' to me
253		I didn't understand them
254		I said, oh . it's no use playing . with them
255	j:	mm
256	r:	well, and .
257		I got the pussycat and I used to . play 'round with the pussycat

Once again the first person pronouns, Urban's "I of discourse," provide the indexical shell through which Roger (re)constructs a culturally plausible childhood self.

Roger's narrative emerges as well in the stylized voices of significant others, whose understandings and formulations frame his own. There are narrated alters, most significantly Roger's father and the missionary Schwarz. The father's voice emerges in his decisions and commands: informing Roger that he is to be taken to the mission or barking an abrupt command—*"gadii"* ("Come!")—as he heads for the sisal hemp field (185). Muuni, the Bavarian Lutheran pastor who was for over 50 years the autocratic head of the Cape Bedford mission, is portrayed as elderly Hopevale people always portray him: stern, disciplined, with a heavy German accent, spitting out fluent Guugu Yimidhirr orders, even through the mouths of his lieutenants.

13. Muuni's voice

122	and then *gurra budhu guugu gaday (guwa) (dhilin)* **And then word came back again.**
123	*Muunii (waaday)* **Schwarz had said,**
124	*wanhdhaa bidha nyulu nhayun* oh, Gl- *guwa* McIvor . **"Where is that child?" "Oh, Gl- west at McIvor."**
125	Glenrock .
126	*nhangu maandii* back **"Bring him back!"**

Roger reproduces Muuni's voice, accent and all, as he replays this scene.

Interlocutors' voices, as we have seen, also inject themselves into the autobiography, molding the phrases and, it seems, even the memories. Observe the following duet between Roger and Tulo.

14. Negotiating feelings

92		when I seen M- Muuni I was got frightened of his *walarr nhaadhi* **When I saw S- Schwarz I got frightened of his beard, see?**
93	t:	mm
94	r:	((he he heh heh))
95	t:	((coughs)) *nhamuun . gu yiniil-gurray (nha)nu* **That's what frightened you.**
96	r:	*nhaamuu nganhi yiniil-gurray ngayu baadyiildyi gurra yiniil-dhirr*= **That's why I was frightened, and I was crying with fear.**
97	t:	=*nyundu* want to run away **You wanted to run away.**
98	r:	I want to run away

Note that the precise interactional details of these conversational turns allow us to appreciate how Roger's very feelings and memories are collaborative constructions. The selves that emerge (for Roger, his protagonists, and his interlocutors) are typified selves, displayed with their shifting characters through their different, sometimes shared, sometimes overlapping voices.

history, memory, and the (emotional) construction of self

The expected product (or is it, perhaps, the cause?) of such a multiplicity of voices and personae is ambivalence. For Roger, as for many Hopevale *bama* (aboriginal person[s], the standard Guugu Yimidhirr/Hopevale English term of self-reference), the domain of ambivalence is Aboriginality. The whole history of the mission, initially established to protect (and convert to Lutheranism) the remnants of a dying race, has involved a dual goal: easing the passing of the doomed Aborigines, but also transforming those who can be salvaged into something *other* than Aborigines. Indeed, recent social and political events at modern Hopevale—a topic deserving of a volume all its own[1]—repeat the same ambivalent theme.

Just as Roger jumps from English language to mission language to his *own* language, he jumps between selves and loyalties. In this discourse, then, Roger apparently continues to try to *discover* who he is and how to feel about himself. One may imagine that he tries to create for himself a coherence, or a never quite articulated continuity, as he leaps from one vantage point to another. Wrenched from his homeland, incarcerated and abandoned by his family, groomed for the part-European pseudonobility by a Lutheran education that made him fear his own people, Roger lived much of his life in a mold cast by the missionaries. Now, at the moment we hear his words, Roger has rediscovered a past (and a language) that much of his life has set to one side. The autobiographical fragment itself, like our treks back to the beach where he was born, is a discursive journey into the past. Once there, Roger reconfronts the loss of his family and his tribe. The memory of initials and a date, carved on a gabagarr tree at Cape Bedford, recalls when his mother, along with the rest of the Barrow Point people, passed through the mission in 1925:

15. A carving on a gabagarr tree

337		in nineteen- in 1925 *ngayu dhanaan* last *nhaadhi bama nhanharrin* **In nineteen- in 1925 I last saw those people.**
338		even *galmba ngadhu ngamu galmba ngayu nhaadhi* in that same year **And even my mother I also saw in that same year.**
339		that was on May 9th, I think err-
340		I seen it . *ngaanaarru* **I saw it—whatchamacallit.**
341		*bamaal wagiiga ngaanaarru-wi nhaadhi, ngaanaarru-wi* **Somebody had cut it on a whatchamacallit.**
342	t:	mm
343	r:	knife-*ngun wag;iga* **Had cut it with a knife.**
344		May 9th 1925
345	t:	mm
346	j:	that's the last time =
347		*nyundu nhangu* *nhaadhi nhayun ngamu nhanu* **You saw your mother then?** = [ ] [
348	r:	that's the last time I seen
349		*aa* **Yeah.**
350		but I wanted to go to see that *yugu* if that mark still . **But I wanted to go to see that tree, if that mark still**
351		*nguba nhaway wunaaygu nguba buli gabagarrbi* . **perhaps was still there, or if the gabagarr had fallen down.**

Once, standing on the beach at Barrow Point, Roger turned to me to remark, with both the loneliness of a last survivor and the triumph of an abandoned little boy who has outlived his

tormentors: "all these people gone, *nhila wanhdhaa-budhu* [now wherever are they]?" Here, telling his autobiography, after his narrative has merged the chorus of voices through time, he observes of his ancestors: "That was the last time I seen them, and no more" (366–367). It was not, as I have suggested here by displaying their voices, the last time he *heard* them.

appendix: transcript of Roger Hart's story

The following transcription uses a somewhat simplified version of standard conversational notation (Atkinson and Heritage 1984:ix–xvi). Numbered lines show the original spoken material, with Aboriginal English words in roman type and Guugu Yimidhirr words in italics. The letters "r," "t," and "j" introducing lines stand for the speakers, Roger Hart, Tulo Gordon, and John Haviland. Interlinear free English glosses, where necessary, are given in boldface. Where two people speak simultaneously, such overlap is shown by lines linked with the symbols "[" and "]"; latched lines, which are spoken with no intervening pause, are connected on the transcript with the symbol "="; a hyphen indicates a word that is apparently cut off in mid-utterance; a short pause is indicated by a period; a question mark signals rising intonation; single parentheses indicate places where the transcription is uncertain; double parentheses enclose interpretive labels for untranscribable sounds such as laughter; a colon indicates a lengthened syllable; and emphasis or volume is roughly indicated with capital letters.

1 r: well *nhilaangaaynggu ngay-* .
Well, recently I-

2 became to know
[I] came to know

3 *guwaalu* Barrow Point
[We were staying] up to the west there at Barrow Point.

4 j: mhm

5 r: and then these *bamaal dhana nganhi gurraalay*
And then these people were saying to me,

6 *nhanu wangaarrbi wumaa*
"You'll be given to the white man."

7 j: mhm .

8 r: *yarrba gurray nganh- ngadhun.gal*
That's what they said to m- to me.

9 t: *wangaarrbi wumaa?* =
Give you to the white man?

10 r: = *aa, wumaa wangaarrgal* .
Yeah, give [me] for the white man [to take care of].

11 t: mm

12 r: and .

13 well *nganhdhaan* was . *nhaway nhin.gaalnggay guwa* .
Well, we were staying up there in the west.

14 and .

15 well, we started

16 I dunno what time *nganhdhaan start-madhi* I dunno the time .
I don't know what time we started, I dunno the time,

17 and . month *galmba binaalmul* .
and I also don't know what month.

18 *nganhdhaan nhayun guwanun galbaaygu gadaaray* .
We came all the way down from the west,

19 you know *gaari* straight through *gadaaray* .
you know, we didn't come straight through.

20 camp there-

[

21 t: *barrbiilbi*
[You] camped.

22 r: *barrbiilbi galbaaygu*
[We] camped all along the way.

23 might be two nights and then off again

24 t: *aa*
Yeah.

[

25 r: and then nother two nights

26 and off again

27 and sometimes *nhayun ngayu . wangga-way ganbanbarringga*
and sometimes I would jump onto a canoe.

28 t: mm

29 r: and then .

30 *walu* . rough country-*ngu-gu, nhaadhi*
like when it was rough country, see?

31 t: mm

32 r: *maandiiga wangga-dhirr yi:*
[They'd] bring me along in the canoe.

33 well . good beach

34 t: mm

35 r: well

36 *waguurr ganbarringga, dhamaalbi dhadaariga*
We would jump out, go along on foot.

37 t: mm

38 j: *ngaanii wangaarrbi wu- wudhinda?*
Why were they going to gi- give you to the white man?

39 r: *dagu* . you see they want to get rid of me
Well, you see, they wanted to get rid of me.

[ ]

40 t: school-*ngu*
For school.

41 j: mm

42 r: *aa* . because of-
Yeah, because of-

[

43 t: school-*bigu*
Just for school.

44 r: *walu* school-*bi nguba nhaadhi* but I didn't know what school is .
Like for school perhaps, see? But I didn't know what school was.

45 I didn't know =

[

46 t: mm

47 j: = you don't think they mighta been frightened of police then? =

48 r: = yeah

49 they WAS frightened of police

50 t: (half-caste)

[

51 r: if any half-caste *bama nhaway banydyiilndyiga nhaadhi*
If they were keeping any half-caste people there, see?

52 j: mmmm
[
53 r: *bidha*
Children.
54 they was frightened of that
55 j: mm
56 r: *nhaamuu*
That's why.
57 t: because *dhagaalbigu dhanaan maaniiga yi*
Because earlier they had taken the [others].
58 *warra* Bob
Like old Bob, here.
59 j: *iii*
Right.
[
60 t: *nhangu gaanhaalgarr*
And his elder sisters.
61 r: *aa* =
Yeah.
62 t: = might be *nhaamuu gala*
Perhaps that was why, indeed.
63 r: *aa nhaamuu budhu nhayun*
Yeah, that IS why!
64 but I didn't know . they was takin' me to Cape Bedford you see
65 t: mm
66 r: but I . heard that old fella was saying to me
67 *nhanu walaarrbi wudhinhu nagaar*
I want to give you to the beard, there in the east.
68 t: mm
69 r: *walu dhirraaynggurrbigu muuni-wi*
Like to old man Schwarz.
70 well I couldn't understand what he was meaning
[
71 t: mm
72 mm
73 r: and .
74 *nganhi maandi guwaalmun yi: . galbaaygu*
They took me all the way from the west.
75 *nganhdhaan* . Glenrock *wunaarnay*
And we stayed at Glenrock.
76 Glenrock *yii gunggaarr*
Glenrock, here to the north.
77 t: *aa*
Yeah.
78 r: *wunaarnay yi:* and then *dha- nganhi maandi gurra dhana naga*
We stayed there awhile and then they took me east again.
79 *yi: nagaar* . McIvor
All the way east to the McIvor River.
80 *nh-* McIvor *nhaway wun- nhin.gaalnggay*
And we stayed there at McIvor.
81 and I was playing around with the other kids well like Tom =
82 = Charlie and them

83 but I was little bit . *warrga nhadhi*
But I was a little bit bigger, see?

84 they were bit smaller .

85 and .

86 *dhana nganhi .*
They [took] me.

87 *warra* old man Gun-gun-bi .
That old man Gun-gun-bi .

88 *ngadhu warra* old man *dhirraaynggurr biiba .*
My old man "father."

89 ((heh))

90 *maandii naga*
"Take him east!"

91 and then I was

92 when I seen M- Muuni I was got frightened of his *walarr nhaadhi*
When I saw S- Schwarz I got frightened of his beard, see?

93 t: mm

94 r: ((he he heh heh))

95 t: ((coughs)) *nhamuun.gu yiniil-gurray (nha)nu*
That's what frightened you.

96 r: *nhaamuu nganhi yiniil-gurray ngayu baadyiildyi gurra yiniil-dhirr* =
That's why I was frightened, and I was crying with fear.

97 t: = *nyundu* want to run away
You wanted to run away.

98 r: I want to run away

and then (they called me *dhadanhu* =
And then they called for me to go

100 = *wanggaar)*
up.

101 *maandi (nganhi) gunggarra nha gala* boys' dormitory =
They took me up toward the north to put me in

102 = *yidhanhu*
the boys' dormitory.

103 I wouldn't go

104 t: mm

105 r: and then *ngayu dhaday* back and then
And then I went back and then

106 well-

107 two days *nganhdhaan nhaway nhin.gay* and then .
we stayed there for two days and then

108 *dhaday*
set out.

109 *bula .* start *dhaday bama nga-*
The two men started out, and I-

110 *ngayu galmba dhaday guwa*
I also went west.

111 McIvor back again

112 and from McIvor to Glenrock

113 *nhaway bada nhin.gaalnggay .*
We stayed down there.

114 *nhaway nhin.gaalnggay nhin.gaalnggay yi:*
There we stayed and stayed for a while.

115 j: just *m- murrga nyundu- nyunduugu*
Just o- only you alone?

116 r: *gaari bama nganhdhanun gu-* big camp there
No, we had a big Aboriginal camp there.

117 j: oh yeah
[
118 r: it was a big camp . was there

119 big lot of Barrow Point people was . was there

120 *galmba nhwaya nhin.gaalnggay*
were also staying there.

121 and

122 and then *gurra budhu guugu gaday (guwa) (dhilin)*
And then word came back again.

123 *Muunii (waaday)*
Schwarz had said,

124 *wanhdhaa bidha nyulu nhayun* oh, Gl- *guwa* McIvor .
"Where is that child?" "Oh, Gl- west at McIvor."

125 Glenrock .

126 *nhangu maandii* back
"Bring him back!"

127 *guugu-dhirr* old man Arthur . Arthur *wanhaarragu*
Old man Arthur carried the word—what's his name, Arthur.

128 Arthur . *yarra* Willie Mt. Webb-*bi biiba*
Arthur, that Willie Mt. Webb's father

129 t: *yuu*
Yeah.

130 r: *nyulu guugu-dhirr gaday*
He came with word.

131 eh, *nhangu nhayun bidha wawu-dhirr nagaar* .
"Hey, that child is wanted to the east."

132 *nhangu maandii* back *nagaar*
"Take him back east."

133 t: mm

134 r: *nhamu-nguwaalgu* .
After that

135 *gaday* .
he came.

136 all right *bama* . next day *bada*
All right, the people on the very next day

137 *nagaalu dhaday yi:* McIvor *wunaarnay*
went back east to McIvor and stayed there.

138 Flagstaff *wunaarnay gurra*
And [we] stayed at Flagstaff, too.

139 t: mmm
[
140 r: *wunaarnay yi:*
We stayed there for a while.

141 I used to go . *dyibaalnggurr buga dhabaga*
I used to go over to the south side to "Fly Hill."

142 t: mm

143 r: Dabunhdhin.*gal*
With Dabunhdhin.

144 *nhaway nhin.gaalnggay*
He used to stay there.

145 oh we used to . camp at . Flagstaff *(yarrba gunggaarr)*
Oh, we used to camp at Flagstaff there on the north side.

146 *nhaway nhin.gaalnggay yi: (badhaadhi)*
So we stayed there awhile, then that ended.

[

147 t: Dabunhdhin?

148 r: *aa*
Yeah.

149 *nyulu* Dabunhdhin *dyibaalu nhin.gaalnggay*
Dabunhdhin used to stay on the south.

150 I used to go there *galmba walu*
And I used to go to that side too.

151 and then *nhamu-nguwaalgu nganhdhaan gaday gurra*
And then after that we came back again.

152 three weeks *nhin.gay nhayun guwaalu* McIvor and then
We stayed three weeks there at McIvor and then

153 took me back

154 t: mmm

155 r: and then . *muunii-gal nganhi maandi nagaar*
And then they took me east back to Schwarz.

156 and then he said all right .

157 *nhangu maandii (nha-gala)*
"Take him."

158 and I couldn't-

159 *bula* Leo Rosendale and Bob Flinders *bula gaday* to take me but I .
Leo Rosendale and Bob Flinders both came to take me but I

160 didn't wanted to go with them

161 and I was FRIGHTened and then they didn't know my language

162 and .

163 and I didn't know the English ((eh heh he he heh heh heh))

164 t: *ma . nyundu bin* go *nagaalu* then
Right. So you went a bit east then.

165 r: *aa*
Yeah.

166 *gaari*
No.

167 *nagaalu dhaday yi: bama yi:*
We went east, where that man,

168 *biiba warra* Nugal *wunaarnay*
your old father from Nugal was staying.

169 *nyundu yii galmba bada . bidhaaygu*
You too were there, still little.

170 t: hospital-*bi?*
In the hospital?

171 r: hospital-*bi*
In the hospital.

172 t: *nyundu* was THERE then?
You were THERE then?

173 r: yeah *nha-gala- ngayu nhaway wunaarnay*
Yeah, that's where I was staying.

174 t: I still remember when *nhinaan* . lock-im-up *gurray* and then
I still remember when they locked you up and then

175 you was sin gin' out and cryin'-

[ ] [

176 r: *ngali yii- ngayu- nyundu yii nhaawaa*
You and I here- I- you listen to this

177 yeah

178 t: =and kickin' the wall

[

179 r: *nyundu-*
you-

180 *aa* you- you still *ngaanaarru* remember now
Yes, you- you whatchamacallit, remember now.

181 *nganhi maandi muuniigal*
They took me to Schwarz.

182 all right .

183 *nhangu maandinhu gunggarra yidhanhu .*
"I want to take him and put him there in the north."

184 *nha-gala ngayu . dyibaalu gaday* hospital-*bi- nhaway*
Just then I came south, there to the hospital.

185 *nyulu dhirraynggurrnda gurray gadii*
The old man said, "Come!"

186 *nyulu dhaday guwa yi:*
He went over to the west.

187 *dagu* sisal hemp-*gu nhaadhi*
There was sisal hemp there, see?

188 *ngaanaarru*
Whatchamacallit

189 t: *aa*
Yeah.

[

190 r: *dhurrbu*
shoots.

191 *nhamidhirr dumbi .*
He broke some of them.

192 well *ngayu* didn't know what he was BREAKin' it for
Well, I didn't know what he was BREAKin' it for.

193 t: *aa*
Yeah.

194 r: ((hhhhh heh))

195 *maandi nagaar .*
He took it east.

196 *dagaadhi .* veranda-*wi*
He sat down on the porch.

197 tease-it-*gurray* tease-it-*gurray* tease-it-*gurray*
He teased it and teased it [into fibers].

198 you know

199 *dagu dumbiilmbi-gu* in strips
That is, he broke it into strips.

200 t: yeah

201 r: I didn't know what was going on

202 t: *aa*
Yeah.

203 r: *nha-gala garra* I was sitting down there
So right then I was sitting down there.

204 *nha-gala nyulu nganhi garrbay .*
Then he grabbed me.

205 *guman gadhay*
He tied up my legs.

206 *ngaaguul gadhay*
Tied up my arms.

207 *miidaarrrin(h) wanggaar*
Lifted me up.

208 *wawu-wi yidharrin gunggaarr*
And he put me inside there to the north.

209 t: lock the door

210 r: lock the door

211 and then *garrgu yurra gaday gurra*
And then afterwards you all came.

212 nanny goat *diigaayga nhaadhi*
Herding the nanny goats, see.
[
213 t: mm

214 r: *gaday gurra*
You came up then.

215 *nganhi nagaar wungga-wi wungga-dhirr waami*
And you found me there in the east crying.

216 *nha-gala nyundu nganhi* hole-*ngun waanuunurrin gurra*
Then you were spying on me through a hole, too.

217 t: mm

218 r: *nha-gala bama ngayu nha-gala . gaday*
Then I just came.

219 *bama nyulu nganhi yii nhaamaalma*
"Man, that one, he's looking at me."

220 *yuguunh ngaanaarru . miil bagaalgay nhangu*
So with a stick I was—uh—poking him in the eye.
[
221 t: ((ha ha ha))

222 *dagu* I wasn't a schoolboy I was just a little boy
Well, I wasn't a schoolboy, I was just a little boy.

223 r: *aa*
Yeah.

224 t: ((cough)) *ma*
So!
[
225 r: *miil bagaalgay*
Poked him in the eye.

226 and then I used to camp . with you fellas then

227 t: ((cough)) yeah
[
228 r: *nhaway nhin.gay nhin.gay yi:*
I stayed there for a while.

229 *garrgu nganhi* dormitory-*wi gunggarra maandi gurra*
Afterwards they took me north to the dormitory again.

230 I was only *dagu* I was frightened very . madly
[ ]
231 t: *nyundu* got used to it
You got used to it.

232 r: ((mm hmm hmm heh he ha))
[

233 t: ((ah ha ha))

234 r: hmm?

235 j: and what that you (were saying) you-
[
236 t: and afterwards

237 j: *nyundu- . dhagaalbigu* first time
You- at the beginning, at first

238 well . nobody knew your language then

239 r: nobody knew the- my language true

240 that's true

241 even English *galmba ngayu binaalmul*
and I also didn't even know English.

242 j: mm

243 r: that's why I really was getting frightened

244 j: and you were telling me you used to

245 sit down and play with that . pussycat
[
246 r: pussycat

247 *aa*
Yeah.

248 I was s- sitting down and

249 *nganhi gunggarra* dormitory *maandi*=
They took me north to the dormitory

250 =they had a cat there you see and then-

251 and then I

252 they- the boys was talkin' to me

253 I didn't understand them

254 I said, oh . it's no use playing . with them

255 j: mm

256 r: well, and .

257 I got the pussycat and I used to . play 'round with the pussycat

258 j: ((hhn hh))

259 r: this was my friend then ((hnn hnn))

260 and then *garrgu*
and then afterwards

261 they didn't know the language but they .

262 some of them .

263 they used to sing out to me

264 *arrwala arrwala*
"Arrwala! Arrwala!"

265 t: mm .

266 mmm

267 r: that means come

268 t: mm
[
269 r: th- they called me

270 calling me my name *arrwala* too you see

271 j: yeah

272 r: I didn't- *nganhi di-*
I didn't- me-

[

273 j: ((hnn hnnn))

274 r: ((hnn hnn ha ha))

[

275 t: ((ha ha ha))

276 r: the- that's only the language they knew

277 j: mm

278 r: *arrwala*
"Come!"

279 t: mmm

280 r: and then .

281 *nganhdhaan mayi dampaangu dhadaaray guwaar*
We used to go west to get damper to eat.

282 *mayi guwaar wanhdhaa budhu* Mrs. Schwarz-*ngun wuudhiildhi nhaadhi* =
For food there somewhere in the west, Mrs. Schwarz would give it out, see?

283 = *mayi*
Food.

284 t: mm

[

285 r: *nganhdhanun* piece of damper
Our piece of damper.

286 and then I the- I got my share then went home and then ate it =

287 = and I went back again but .

288 I thought . they would give me another piece you see

289 t: mm

290 r: ((hhhnn heh heh ha ha ha))

291 t: *aa* ((hn ha ha))
Yeah.

292 r: and then Charlie McClean *bula*

293 old Charlie McClean Herbert's father

294 t: mmm

295 r: I dunno who that nother one

296 I think Simon I think

297 and then I was running up you see to get m- more . piece o' damper

298 t: mm =

299 r: = and then they said to me-

300 sing out to me

301 *arrwala arrwala . arrwala .*
"Come! Come! Come!"

302 t: ((a ha ha)) =

303 r: = and that's all they knew

304 t: mm

305 r: but I didn't know but *ngayu dhaday*
I didn't know, but I went.

306 *ngayu bulaan galmba wugurrin*
I also followed the two of them.

307 t: in what year you think—nineteen twenty-

[

308 r: in 1923-*wi*
In 1923.

309 *aa* in 1923
Yes, in 1923.

310 *nhamu nhamu*
Then.
[

311 j: af-

312 afterwards when did you-

313 when was the next time that you saw people from up there

314 r: in 1925 .
[

315 j: Barrow Point

316 what they came down . Cape Bedford then?

317 r: yeah they came down to . *wanhdhaarru* Cape Bedford
Yeah, they came down to what's it—Cape Bedford.

318 (supplies)
[

319 j: Cape Bedford

320 r: to get their blankets and clothes and . something else

321 j: you still knew them?

322 r: yeah I knew them yeah

323 but when I- they came . the second time

324 and I didn't came near them because I was frightened . to go=

325 =near them

326 *aa* .
Yes.

327 but I knew them but I didn't wanted to mix up you see

328 t: mm

329 j: why was that?

330 r: oh I dunno
[ ]

331 t: you sure *nyundu* come there nineteen twenty .
Are you sure that you came there in nineteen twenty-

332 r: Nineteen- in 1923-*wi*
Nineteen- in 1923.

333 t: 1923?=

334 r: =yeah

335 t: *gunggarra-aygu*
There to the north [to Cape Bedford]?

336 r: *aa* .
Yes.

337 in nineteen- in 1925 *ngayu dhanaan* last *nhaadhi bama nhanharrin*
In nineteen- in 1925 I last saw those people.

338 even *galmba ngadhu ngamu galmba ngayu nhaadhi* in that same year
And even my mother I also saw in that same year.

339 that was on May 9th, I think err-

340 I seen it . *ngaanaarru*
I saw it—whatchamacallit.

341 *bamaal wagiiga ngaanaarru-wi nhaadhi, ngaanaarru-wi*
Somebody had cut it on a whatchamacallit.

342	t:	mm
343	r:	knife-*ngun wagiiga* **Had cut it with a knife.**
344		May 9th 1925
345	t:	mm
346	j:	that's the last time=
347		*nyundu nhangu* *nhaadhi nhayun ngamu nhanu* **You saw your mother then?** =[ ] [
348	r:	that's the last time I seen
349		*aa* **Yeah.**
350		but I wanted to go to see that *yugu* if that mark still . **But I wanted to go to see that tree, if that mark still**
351		*nguba nhaway wunaaygu nguba buli gabagarrbi* . **perhaps was still there, or if the gabagarr had fallen down.**
352		carve-it-out *gurrayga* **They had carved [the date on it].**
353	j:	*wanhdhaalbi? dhiidharrin?* **Where? At Cape Bedford?**
354	r:	eh? Cape Bedford [
355	j:	Cape Bedford mission
356	r:	yeah
357		but it was *gabagarr nhaadhi* **But it was a gabagarr tree, see?**
358		*yugu gabagarr* **A gabagarr tree.**
359	j:	mm
360	r:	well
361		*nhaway dhana* carve-it-out *gurray* **That's where they carved it out.**
362		and *ngadhu ngamu nhamu nhamu galmba gaday* it- **And my mother also came at that time, and it-**
363		was still .
364		and then those . Barrow Point .
365		people and .
366		that was the last time I seen them .
367		and no more

notes

Acknowledgments. Versions of this material were presented in the session "Biography," organized by Ellen Basso, at the meetings of the American Ethnological Society in Santa Fe on 7 April 1989, and in a seminar at the Department of Anthropology, University of California, Davis, on 8 June 1989. I am indebted to Ellen Basso and John Beaton for their invitations on those occasions. The fieldwork on which this essay is based was sponsored by grants from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, with further support from the Department of Anthropology, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University. I am, of course, also particularly indebted to Roger Hart himself and to our friend, the late Tulo Gordon (ca. 1918–89), to whose memory I should like to dedicate this essay.

[1]The rapid recent evolution of policy about Aboriginal land rights, bilingual education, social welfare, health, and political autonomy, throughout Australia but especially in Queensland, has left Hopevale, like its sister communities, in turmoil. In a community where many people, like Roger, claim ancestors from

different areas of the state, the incompatibilities between local notions of community and identity and those enshrined in (constantly changing) state and federal law have led to serious contradictions and difficulties. These go well beyond the scope of this essay but are the focus of continuing research.

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submitted 28 February 1990
accepted 14 May 1990

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