

5 THE FIRST FUNERAL DANCE (I)

milimika pu-ɬ-kəsimi, milimika ɲa ɲara alikampwani, apu wuta ɲara ɲimini
 dance pl they-lk-make dance pl for him pelican well they his brother

ʃaŋkənaŋki. waij auɲwara joi pu-ɬ-mi kayi mlimika. pu-tə-ɬ-waijaŋir-aʃiri,
 eagle now here dance they-lk-do at dance pl they-p-lk-compete-rip

wuta alikampwan a'wi nəmini ʃaŋkənaŋki. waruma pu-tə-ɬ-piɬn-ani. ap awara
 they pelican and that eagle dance they-p-lk-hit-rep that

ɲəni wəni-tampuɲa kapi-naŋki, ɲəni joi wu-ɬ-mi, a-wuta kapi-naŋki
 them-follow pl-here when dance they-lk-do that-they pl-here

ɲənaʃi ɲarakaraki ɬatuwati. awarawoŋa, am-pə-ɬəpə-ta-kua, ɲiɲwampa
 this two island the same she-np-them-fut-die others

awarawoŋa joi wu-ta-ami. ʃarəkalan-uwi, ʃatiŋas-uwi, waij awara jati kayi
 the same dance they-fut-do turtle-pl boy-pl now that one where

pu-ɬ-kəsimi wuta alikampwani wuta ʃaŋkənaŋki. kipiua karampi —
 they-lk-make they pelican they eagle pelican far

auɲykwə pwaʃa, ɲəni kəɬama ʃi-nə-ɬ-piɬn-ani. wuta ʃaŋkənaŋki, wut
 no bone when dance he-loc-lk-hit-rep they eagle they

alikampwani,¹ wut awuta pu-tə-nə-ɬ-pəmayi kəɬama. ap awuta
 pelican they those they-p-loc-lk-know dance and those

ɲən-tu-wən-tampuɲ-aɲimi, ka ɲara ma-manta purukupali. ɲara maɲtiɲa
 we-p-them-follow-all to his pl-friend Purukupali he boss

purukupali. ʃi-mu-kua ɲara məɬani kiʃi-ni, purukupali. apu waij auɲwara
 Purukupali she-him-die his son little-m Purukupali now here

joi pu-ɬ-mi. taikuwa-pi wutə'ɬi ɲəni ʃərəkəpai joi wu-ɬ-mi. (only)
 dance they-lk-do all-pl mixed when crocodile dance they-lk-do only

jati purukupali maɲtiɲa. jati maɲtiɲa purukupali. ɲiŋku-ti maɲtiɲa awara
 one Purukupali boss one boss Purukupali big-m boss that

purukupali. ɲi-i-marə'-mu taikuwa-ɲa ɲimpaɲiɲa. wamutirasa, wamutirasa,
 Purukupali he-lk-with-sit many-f woman ten ten

ɲar awara ɲi-i-marə'-mu purukupali. ɲiŋku-ti maɲtiɲa awara. ju-wən-tolimpiri
 he that he-lk-with-sit Purukupali big-m boss that he-them-carry

taikuwa-pi kapi-naŋki.
 all-pl pl-this

Textual Note

¹ The informant actually said *wuta ʃaŋkənaŋki wuta ɲərəkati*, 'eagle and eagle', but what he meant to say was *wuta ʃaŋkənaŋki wut alikampwani*, 'eagle and pelican', and I have amended the text accordingly. *ʃərəkati* (pronounced *ɲərəkati* by this informant) is simply an alternative name for *ʃaŋkənaŋki*, the white-breasted sea eagle.

Translation

They made a dancing place, a dancing place for Alikampwani and his brother-in-law ʃaŋkənaŋki.¹ Then they danced at the dancing place. They competed with one another, Alikampwani and ʃaŋkənaŋki. They did the *waruma*.² And these people here follow them in that when they dance, these people on these two islands. And, when they are all dead, others will dance just the same. Women and men will dance that same one that was made by Alikampwani and ʃaŋkənaŋki.

The pelican was by far the best, because he was supple when he did *kəlamə*.³ *Ṭaŋkənaŋki* and *Alikampwəni*, they really knew how to *kəlamə*. We have followed them, *Purukupəli*'s friends. *Purukupəli* was the boss. His little son was dead. That was when they danced. Everyone is mixed up when they do the crocodile dance. Only *Purukupəli* is boss. Only *Purukupəli* is boss. He was a big boss that *Purukupəli*. He had many women. He had twenty. He was a big boss, that one. He ruled over all these people.

Explanatory Notes

- Text 5 is an account of the original funeral dance, held according to *Purukupəli*'s instructions after the death of his son *Ṭiŋani*. All funeral dances held since then, and all those to be held in the future, are modelled on this original dance and derive from *Purukupəli*'s command. *Alikampwəni* (pelican) and *Ṭaŋkənaŋki* (white-breasted sea eagle) were the original dancers. The dancing place referred to is a circular space cleared of stumps, roots and stones so that the dancers will not hurt their feet.
- waruma* is a dance imitative of that performed by pelicans. The legs are kept wide apart and the arms are bent over the chest and flapped like wings.
- kəlamə* is an alternative name for *waruma*.

6 THE FIRST FUNERAL DANCE (II)

kari ɣara məsani, ɣiŋani, paɣuŋwani ji-pinti, apa ji-i-mi nakayi,
when his son Ṭiŋani dead he-stand then he-lk-say look

'*ɣə-ru-wa'ɣi!* *ɣə-ru-wa'ɣi ɣə-ra-kəɣimi tutini. ɣə-ru-wa'ɣi ɣə-ra-kəɣimi tutini.*
pl-imp-go pl-imp-go pl-imp-make post pl-imp-go pl-imp-make post

pakiŋa jilaniya' — *paupau a-wu-ra-api. kiɣiŋi awara* — '*apa, kari waija*
first dance clap he-cp-fut-do little that then when already

(finishim)¹ — *kari ɣəm-pə-ɣə-kuu'ɣi, kari ɣəm-pə-ɣə-piŋəniya jakuluwini,*
finish when you-np-lk-finish when you-np-lk-clear ground

ap auŋwari ɣə-ru-waɣi-pa ɣə-ɣən-ta-ɣiara.' paɣtua, 'ɣa-wiɣa waija ɣəni waija
then pl-imp-go-loc pl-me-imp-tell then we-go now as now

jiloti. joi. aɣikula-ni. joi.' paɣtuaŋ ki joi pu-ɣi-mi. ɣira-tu
final dance big-m dance finished then dance they-lk-do she-too

ɣimpəliŋa pamatikimi. ɣira-tu pamatikimi ɣimpəliŋa, apa ɣira ɣi-i-məɣiŋa.
woman Pamatikimi she-too Pamatikimi woman she she-lk-sit

ɣira-tu ɣoŋa ɣi-i-mi ɣəni — ɣira-tu ɣoŋa ɣi-i-mi — ɣara purukupəli
she-too other she-lk-do er she-too other she-lk-do he Purukupəli

ɣunanta-ni apu ɣara ji-i-mi kiau. pili ɣara aɣikula-ni, ɣara kaɣlu
bereaved-m he he-lk-do kiau for he big-m he not

kiɣiŋi-n-amasi. ɣara aɣikula-ni. ɣara ji-i-mu auŋwari, joi ji-i-mi. ɣira-tu
little-m-not he big-m he he-lk-sit when dance he-lk-do she-too

ɣimpəliŋa ɣi-i-mi, pamatikimi. mua nar-uwi, aɣikula-ŋa wuta. ɣira-tu
woman she-lk-do Pamatikimi our mother-pl big-f they she-too

waijai, waijai ɣi-i-m-ani. waija wuta ɣara punaj-uwi, purukupəli.
Waijai Waijai she-lk-do-rep already they his wife-pl Purukupəli.

Textual Note

¹ The informant broke off at this point and apologised for using an English word.

Translation

When his son, Țiṭani, was dead, he called out¹ 'Go, all of you! You must go and make grave posts. Go and make grave posts!² First there will be a preliminary dance,³ (that's when they clap.⁴ It's a little dance) 'then, when you have finished — when you have finished, when you have cleared the ground,⁵ come and tell me.'

Then,⁶ 'We're going, as there's a big dance now!⁷ A dance. A big one. A dance.' Then they danced. She too the woman Pamatikimi.⁸ She too Pamatikimi the woman. Then she sat down. Then the other woman — the other woman.⁹ But first the bereaved Purukupali stretched out his arms,¹⁰ for he was a big man.¹¹ He was not young. He was a big man. First he sat down, then he danced. The woman Pamatikimi danced as well. Our mothers were big. Waijai as well, Waijai danced. They were Purukupali's wives.

Explanatory Notes

- ¹ Both pronouns refer to Purukupali. The death of Țiṭani occurs in the story of Purukupali and Țapara (Text 1). Text 6, like Text 5, is an account of the original funeral ceremony — that held by Purukupali for his dead son.
- ² The grave posts are carved painted posts, anything from five to fifteen feet high, and anything up to fifteen in number, which are stood in the ground around the grave. The only reason the Tiwi can give for making the posts is that Purukupali commanded it.
- ³ A Tiwi funeral ceremony consists of a series of dances held at intervals over a period of several months. There are first a number of small preliminary dances (called *jilaniya*), and then the whole series culminates in a big final dance (called *jiloti*).
- ⁴ The Tiwi clap their hands on their buttocks to provide the rhythmic beat for dancing.
- ⁵ A circular space is cleared for dancing by removing all stones and other objects which might hurt the dancers' feet. The ground is, of course, only soft dust, so, once the stones are removed, the dancers can stamp as hard as they like.
- ⁶ The reader has to imagine a time interval at this point, during which all the preliminaries have been gone through and the day of the final dance has arrived.
- ⁷ That is, the final dance, *jiloti*.
- ⁸ Pamatikimi (angel fish) was one of Purukupali's wives.
- ⁹ Waijai.
- ¹⁰ The informant suddenly remembered that, before the women could dance, the proceedings had to be begun by Purukupali. Purukupali begins the ceremony by extending his arms horizontally in imitation of the outspread wings of Țankonajki (white-breasted sea eagle), and intoning the necessary ritual phrases. The congregation respond to each phrase with a shout of 'ia!'
- ¹¹ Not big in a physical sense, of course, but in the sense of seniority and importance.