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Rob Amery worked with Ngarrindjeri people in the late 1980s and early 1990s, including the production of the 1990 songbook, and subsequently worked briefly with people in Murray Bridge. However, for the last 25 years he has focused mainly on the Kurna language of the Adelaide Plains, and earned a reputation for his work in reclaiming languages from written sources.

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Jane Simpson has worked extensively on the Indigenous languages of Australia for over three decades, beginning with the Kurna language of Adelaide. She has also worked on the languages of the Northern Territory, particularly Warumungu and Warlpiri, and has a long term interest in making dictionaries and learners grammars of Indigenous languages that are useful for both learners and linguists.

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Mary-Anne Gale has worked with the Ngarrindjeri community on their language since 2004, and with them produced the Ngarrindjeri Dictionary (Edition 1), a Learners Guide and several smaller booklets that have assisted the language revival process. She has also written and offered language training courses, alongside the Elders, through the TAFE sector, resulting in recognised Certificates for language learners and teachers from many South Australian languages, including the Ngarrindjeri language.

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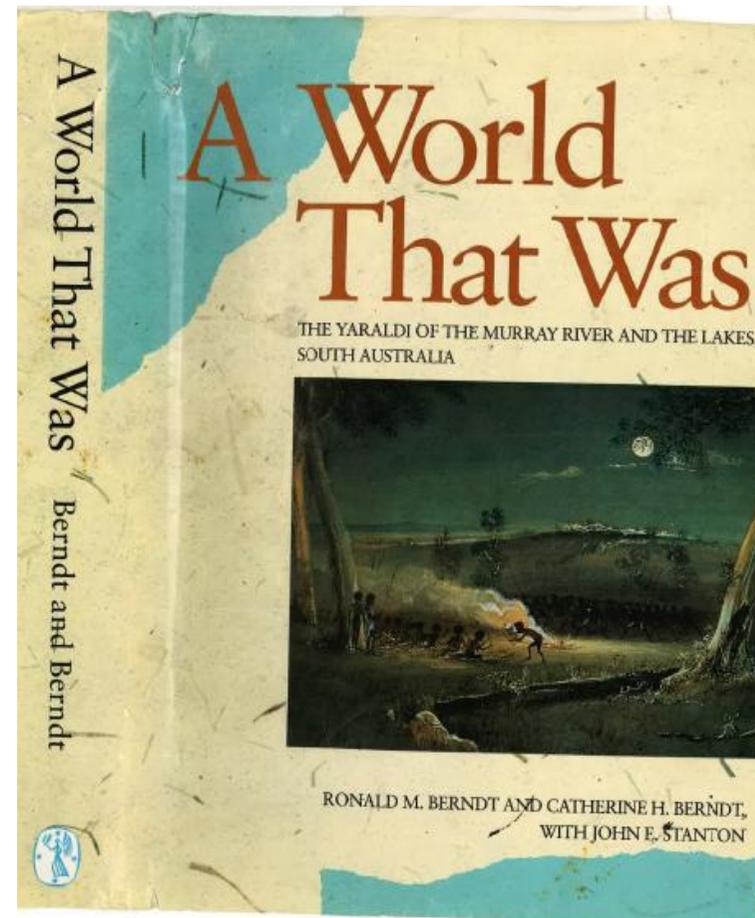
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Australian Research Council (ARC) Discovery Grant

**Analysis of Ngarrindjeri texts of the Lower
Murray, Lakes & Coorong region, as recorded in
the book: *A World That Was*
by Ronald & Catherine Berndt.**

Australian Research Council Discovery Grant, DP150103287

Based at the University of Adelaide, 2015 - 2017

Project title:

Analysis of Ngarrindjeri texts from the Lower Murray, Lakes and Coorong region of South Australia, as recorded by Ronald and Catherine Berndt in the early 1940s.

Chief Investigators:

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Research Associate:

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Project aims to:

- Analyse the 163 texts in the Appendix of the 1993 book: *A World That Was*
- Compare these Berndt texts with other Ngarrindjeri texts by HAE Meyer & George Taplin
- Make the (analysed) Berndt & Berndt texts more widely available to the Ngarrindjeri community
- Use the texts to produce a second edition of the Ngarrindjeri dictionary (with Grammar notes), including words from different clan dialects
- Evaluate language variation and change over time, as a result of mission and colonial impact

Project Description:

The aim of this ARC project is to eventually make all of the Berndt ethnographic texts and Dreaming narratives available, in an accessible form, to the Ngarrindjeri community. Ngarrindjeri people have been reclaiming the Ngarrindjeri language over the last 30 years. There are more resources on the Ngarrindjeri language in the archives and in out-of-print books than in most languages being revived in Australia today.

However, these resources have been largely inaccessible to Ngarrindjeri people. This issue is now being addressed by a team of linguists, who (with the support of the Ngarrindjeri community) were awarded a three year Australian Research Council (ARC) Discovery Grant (2015 – 2017) based at the University of Adelaide.

The Research Associate, Dr Mary-Anne Gale, will conduct detailed linguistic research on the 163 texts in the Appendix of the 1993 book *A World That Was* (by Ronald and Catherine Berndt).

The texts are an enormously valuable resource on Ngarrindjeri words, grammar and culture, but have not been translated into everyday English. They were collected by the Berndts, over the period 1939 to 1943, primarily from Albert Karloan and Pinkie Mack. Soon after the passing of Ronald Berndt in 1990, Catherine Berndt wrote (for her Acknowledgement page, in the 1993 book) of Ronald's 'delight... that he had been able, at last, to fulfil his earlier commitment to Albert and Pinkie by making this material available in its entirety'.

This book has been out-of-print and therefore inaccessible to the Ngarrindjeri community for quite some time. We will collect the extra words from these texts and incorporate them into a second edition of the *Ngarrindjeri Dictionary*,

We aim to gain a linguistic understanding of this large body of texts, and their implications for language and cultural revival.

These texts are in demand by the Ngarrindjeri community. Analysing them linguistically will reveal insights about how Ngarrindjeri speakers organise their thoughts in telling stories and recounting events and practices. These insights should help today's Ngarrindjeri people in reclaiming their language beyond the use of words and simple sentences.

A primary outcome of this project will therefore be to assist the community in their efforts to reclaim their language at the text/discourse level. We will continue to collaborate with the Ngarrindjeri people throughout this project with several community meetings over the three year period. Our research findings will be made public through a series of published papers.

