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TINDALE’S ANTAKIRINJA AND THE SEARCH FOR THE ‘REAL WESTERN DESERT NATIVES’

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Abstract

This paper presents a critical evaluation of Norman Tindale’s Antakirinja tribal category as found in his catalogue of tribes and accompanying tribal boundary maps (Tindale 1940, 1974). Despite a rigorous examination of the term Antakirinja during the De Rose Hill native title proceedings, O’Loughlin J found that the evidence as to whether there was a distinct group of people who should be identified by this name ‘contradictory and confusing’. Sutton (2010), in research relating to Jango v Northern Territory of Australia, found that the term has had ‘no single set definition’ since the late 19th century. In these legal contexts, such contemporary images of contradiction, confusion and shifting valence are refracted through the prism of Tindale’s work. In this paper I argue that there is often little to be gained by addressing singularities in Tindale’s oeuvre: in particular, by asking an expert linguist or anthropologist how Tindale came up with this or that representation. What is required is a fuller consideration of the various reductive, recursive and productive engines employed by Tindale in his major projects and from which ‘tribal’ representations emerged.

1 De Rose v State of South Australia [2002] FCA 1342.
Introduction

In May 1933 Tindale travelled to Ernabella in the Musgrave Ranges with Dr Cecil Hackett. The two men formed an advance party to the University of Adelaide’s Board for Anthropological Research (BAR) expedition to begin in August. Their primary objective was to contact groups of Aboriginal people living on the nearby North-West Aboriginal Reserve and to bring them in to the proposed Ernabella camp to undergo a series of examinations, including sociological, anthropometric and psychological testing. On his first morning at Ernabella, Tindale noted in his journal:

unpacked gear; spent balance of morning with aid of translator, Tommy, in sounding the possibilities of the Andakeringga natives.
There are more than 100 in camp...
(Tindale 1933a:5–7)

On the facing page in ballpoint pen, Tindale (1933a) added the note: ‘later found to be mainly Jankundjadjara’. Tindale and Hackett commenced their anthropometric investigations, fearing that the people gathered at Ernabella would be gone by August. Records made during the course of these initial interviews show further equivocation between the categories Andakeringga and Jankundjadjara. A number of sociological data cards have under the ‘tribe’ category ‘Andakeringga’ crossed out and ‘Jankundjadjara’ added, in a manner similar to how the following journal entry is amended: ‘spent morning with Hackett measuring six women 5 of the Andakeringga Jankundjadjara tribe and one Aranda who are at the station’ (Tindale 1933a:33). Tindale does not offer a direct explanation in his writings for this apparent ambivalence. The categories Antakirinja and Jāŋkundjara are both later presented as valid tribal names (Tindale 1940, 1974).³ He notes in the 1940 catalogue that Antakirinja are closely related to Jāŋkundjara (Tindale 1940). But questions remain as to how this distinction was maintained:

³ In this paper I have chosen to use Tindale's original spellings of 'tribal' names to cut down on nomenclatural confusion and to stay true to the materials under discussion. The current AIATSIS conventions for the central categories under examination are: Antakarinja, Pitjantjatjara, Yankuntjatjara (AIATSIS 2008).
which linguistic or other criteria were used to support this division?

The abovementioned ambivalence is one of the main causes of the contradiction, confusion and shifting valence in relation to the term Antakirinja that have arisen in contemporary legal contexts. Despite a rigorous examination of the term Antakirinja during the De Rose Hill native title proceedings, O’Loughlin J found that the evidence as to whether there was a distinct group of people who should be identified by this name ‘contradictory and confusing’. Sutton (2010), as part of his research relating to Jango v Northern Territory of Australia, found that Antakirinja has had ‘no single set definition’ since the late 19th century. Importantly, these contemporary understandings are refracted through the prism of Tindale’s work.

One attempt to address this ambivalence is Sutton’s (2010) reanalysis of the full set of sociological data cards recorded in 1933. Sutton’s (2010:52) treatment of the 190 cards as a ‘closed corpus’ yields some positive results. It illuminates, for example, a general correlation between territorial and linguistic identities that Tindale most likely used to determine the Pitjandjara-Jaŋkundjara boundary that he draws between the Mann and Musgrave Ranges (Sutton 2010:52). However, Sutton’s (2010) analysis leaves other questions unanswered. Most significantly Sutton (2010) ignores the question of why, if Tindale considered the category Antakirinja to be reducible to Jaŋkundjara, he accepted the continued existence of Antakirinja as a valid tribal category within the catalogue of tribes and on the tribal boundary map. One has to look well beyond the closed corpus to seek an answer to this question. What is required is a fuller consideration of the various reductive, recursive and productive engines employed

6 According to Peter Sutton ‘the area in which Tindale placed Antakirinja was actually outside the area of the Jango research remit’ and he did not have time to go further afield (pers. comm. 19 September 2015). I am grateful to Peter for this and other comments he has made upon a draft version of this paper. Sutton (2010) inter alia provides a number of important insights into the complexities of contemporary linguistic identities in the eastern Western Desert fringe, a topic that I have not been able to consider in the space available here.
by Tindale in his major projects and from which ‘tribal’ representations emerged.

In this paper I argue that the key to understanding Tindale’s Antakirinja lies at the intersection of two major aspects of Tindale’s work in the 1930s—his tribal boundary mapping project and his quest for ‘the real western desert natives’ (Tindale 1933b). The category Antakirinja played an important role in the tribal mapping project, where it appears as a valid tribal name with an associated bounded territory, but the people themselves were largely overlooked for anthropological, ethnological and linguistic work with other groups. Groups of more interest, Pitjandjara in particular, but also to a lesser extent Jaŋkundjara, took up more of Tindale’s attention. The basic criterion for research priority among BAR members and associates was Aboriginal peoples’ degree of ‘contamination’ by station life (Monaghan 2008). The Pitjandjara, the jewel of Tindale’s eye, were considered by him to have had no station contacts and were thus considered to be the ‘real western desert natives’ (Monaghan 2008; Tindale 1933b). Tindale’s manuscript materials show that he expected to encounter Antakirinja people in the Musgrave Ranges in 1933. However, through the course of the fieldwork this category was effectively superseded by Jaŋkundjara as a category of people he considered worthy of detailed research. Significantly, other than at the level of nomenclature, linguistic criteria were not used to delineate Antakirinja and Jaŋkundjara. Other non-linguistic criteria played a much greater role in Tindale’s decision making.

This paper proceeds in three parts. The first section discusses Tindale’s tribal mapping project in detail, focusing on what I call Tindale’s recognition procedure: a politico-ontological set of processes that give rise to valid tribes and boundaries. The second section of the article describes the intersecting plane of interest in culture, contact and decay that is prominent in Tindale’s work of the 1930s. The third part of the paper provides a detailed analysis of how these interests play out in Tindale’s Antakirinja representations.
Tindale’s Tribal Mapping Project

Before considering the origins, aims and some limitations of Tindale’s tribal mapping project, it is worth paying attention to his 1940 representations of Antakirinja to help to orientate the discussion. On the map (see Figure 1), Antakirinja tribal territory lies to the east of Jaŋkundjara territory as a clearly delineated and self-contained space. Note also Pitjandjara appears to the west of Jaŋkundjara.

Figure 1 Section of map that accompanied the article ‘Results of the Harvard-Adelaide Universities Anthropological Expedition, 1938–39’ (Tindale 1940).
A second representation is found in the accompanying catalogue of tribes (Tindale 1940:178):

'Anta'kirinja, 'Ande'kerinja
Loc.: Head-waters of Hamilton, Alberga, Wintinna and Lora Creeks north to Eildunda, Central Australia; south to Stuart Range; at upper limits of Lilla Creek, but not extending down to the Finke River, which is Aranda country. (Movements since 1917 have taken portion of tribe south to Ooldea. Earlier movement was from west after massacre by them of some previous inhabitants of Mount Chandler district; closely related to Jangkundjara.)
Ref.: Giles in Taplin 1879, Krichauff 1886, Howitt 1891, Helms 1896, Mathews 1900 (1), Bates 1918, Elkin 1931, 1940, Tindale in Fenner 1936, T.⁷

Tindale introduces changes to both representations in the revised map and catalogue of 1974. Within the map (Figure 2) there is a major change to Antakirinja country with the extraction of a triangle of land to the north-west for a new tribal category 'Matuntara'; a change that is influenced by Strehlow (1965). The list of sources is also increased and Tindale provides further details about alternative names. As the principles of construction of the 1940 and 1974 representations are the same, in the following discussion I focus on the 1940 representations, which are easier to handle in a paper of this size.
Figure 2 Section of map that accompanied ‘Aboriginal Tribes of Australia: Their Terrain, Environmental Controls, Distribution, Limits, and Proper Names’ (Tindale 1974).

Beginnings

Tindale’s tribal mapping project began in response to a challenge issued by Edgar Waite, the Director of the South Australian Museum. Upon returning from fieldwork in the Northern Territory in 1922, Tindale was invited to lecture at various learned societies in Adelaide, including the Royal Geographical Society. Of one such meeting Tindale (1924–36:iii) writes:

the question of Australian aboriginal tribal organization came up and when the late Edgar R. Waite questioned the validity of limits or boundaries, such as I showed on my map of the tribes of the West Coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria [Tindale 1925:63]...I began to gather data from other parts of Australia to test the situation.  

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8 As pointed out by Peter Sutton, many maps with tribal boundaries had already been published by this time by Howitt, Roth and others (pers. comm. 19 September 2015).
Clearly, an emphasis on boundaries directs the project from its earliest beginnings. According to Tindale, the notion of bounded territory was one of his first ethnological field insights. He credits Maroadunei, ‘an old Ngandi tribe songmaker from the interior of Arnhem Land’ with introducing him ‘to the idea of the existence of tribal boundaries, limits beyond which it was dangerous to move without adequate recognition’ (Tindale 1974:3). This insight informed Tindale’s thinking throughout his career: the concepts of ‘strangers’ and ‘trespass’ were basic in helping him to define boundaries (as well as ‘tribe’, see Tindale 1974:30). It is worth noting that Tindale received only brief anthropological training from Baldwin Spencer prior to the 1921–2 field trip (Jones 1995).

By 1927 sufficient progress had been made, particularly in South Australia, for Tindale to address the newly formed Anthropological Society of South Australia:

Mr. N.B. Tindale introduced the subject of the ‘Native Tribes of South Australia’. He said that several local groups, bound together by peculiarities of language, organization, and custom formed a tribe, marked by the possession of a name; its members speaking a common language, which might have several dialects, but differing strikingly from that spoken by adjoining tribes, and they occupied a defined territory. Some 95 local group names had been recorded in literature to date from South Australia, and about 25 tribes were so far definitely recognizable, but the north-western parts of the State had not been exhausted, and probably other tribes would be recorded. A map had been prepared, showing the known distribution of the tribes and local groups.

(The Register, 5 July 1927:10)

There are a number of points of interest arising from this report, not the least being the definition of ‘tribe’ presented to the audience by Tindale. Note also that before Tindale himself ventures to the north-west, he already expects to find tribes as the object of his research.

The first published version of Tindale’s tribal distribution map accompanied the article entitled ‘Results of the Harvard-Adelaide Universities Anthropological Expedition, 1938–39’ (Tindale 1940). Although Tindale had been working on the question of tribal distribution and boundaries for a number of years, the Harvard-Adelaide expedition presented him with the opportunity to interview almost 2500 people during 14
months of fieldwork across vast areas of the country. It was at this point, according to Tindale, that ‘the study of tribes and the tribal situation came of age’ (Tindale 1924–36:iv).

Even though the tribal distribution maps may be the most well-known and influential aspects of his work, Tindale (1940, 1974) also produced a catalogue of tribes and their distribution intended primarily for use in anthropometric and serological studies and theorising. In such contexts, a well-defined or fixed boundary separating distinct populations was an extremely useful theoretical tool, as explained by Tindale (1957:284–5) in the following passage:

many anthropologists are studying the distribution of the various customs, beliefs, practices, languages and other cultural traits of the aborigines. Others are keen to have a better understanding of the genetics of the Australian, as expressed in his blood groups and in the distribution of such items as blondness in hair, range of stature, head form and so on. When they come to plot their data on maps they all need to know the exact distribution of the tribes whose characters they study. The more exactly this can be done the more accurately the distribution patterns can be read and interpreted...Thus the plotting of tribal boundaries can be regarded as of fundamental use for the more exact study of the aborigines of Australia.

Of course, the concepts of ‘tribe’ and ‘tribal boundary’ have been controversial both in terms of their definition and their suitability as terms for describing land tenure patterns in the Western Desert. There is a body of literature that discusses problems in Tindale’s use of these concepts (e.g., Berndt 1959; the contributions to Peterson 1976 and Sutton 1995; and Knight 2003) and these issues are so well known that there is little use in rehearsing them here. It is worth pointing out, however, that Tindale seems to have settled his mind on these matters quite early on and did not substantially waver, continually defending his views in later publications.
Recognition Procedure

Tindale’s major sets of representations of Aboriginal Australia were produced according to the basic procedure presented in Figure 3. Put most simply, Tindale combined written sources with field interviews and geographical observations to produce a set of named and bounded tribes. What I have termed the ‘recognition matrix’ in Figure 3 is a set of operations that is performed on the gathered data to determine valid tribal names and tribal boundaries. These operations, variously reductive, recursive and productive, are the engines that drive the tribal mapping project. I will briefly address each of them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WRITTEN SOURCES</th>
<th>FIELD CONTROL</th>
<th>RECOGNITION MATRIX</th>
<th>FIXED REFERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>interview</td>
<td>reduction</td>
<td>catalogue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>observation</td>
<td>recursion</td>
<td>map</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>production</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3** Tindale’s recognition procedure.

**Reduction**

In his treatment of nomenclature, Tindale (1940:141 and 144) employs the simple metaphor of sifting, winnowing and discarding to describe his way of dealing with the problem that there are many more names in the literature than there are ‘valid’ tribes. The American anthropologist D.S. Davidson, whose Australian Aboriginal tribal map (which did not represent tribal boundaries) was the state of the art for the Australian context just prior to Tindale (1940), observed from his work that ‘of the several thousands of names recorded it often is impossible to come to any definite conclusion as to just what they represent’ (Davidson 1938:666–7). It was in attempting to resolve this confusion of terms that Tindale’s work engaged in reductive processes. This metaphorical usage is, however, at once naïve and deceptive. It obfuscates what is in fact a set of actions with politico-ontological implications, both in terms of determining...
an authorised set of recognised tribes and of putting them forward into the broader scientific and administrative domains. The creation of a catalogue involves the collecting, sorting, categorising and displaying of knowledge, a set of cultural practices intimately related to post-Enlightenment scientific and colonialist projects, such as encyclopaedias, dictionaries and other genres of written standardised forms and meanings. As Tindale (1974:32) himself states: ‘a major purpose of this work is to discover the real tribal units, to determine their proper names and their real bounds, and to relegate alternative names, corruptions, and misapplied terms to their rightful places’.

A case can be made that Tindale’s work remained primarily at the level of nomenclature, focusing on name/ethnicity over population. Tindale’s overriding concern in his handling of names was to fix the reference of the terms. He believed that autonyms or self-ascribed names were far more reliable for this purpose than names bestowed by outsiders. A number of categories of names were to be discarded, including: those based on ecological or geographical differences; words incorporating a term for language or speech; names derived from compass directions, general and descriptive terms, terms referring to agglomerations of tribes, and misunderstandings.

A minor complaint, and one that is perhaps inevitable given the scope of the task, is that there are a number of elementary problems with Tindale’s handling of data. For example, he is inconsistent in the application of his recognition rules, accepting and defending the use of a term from an excluded category when no other term is available to fill a gap in the map and catalogue. There may also be an element of mutual scaffolding to this practice. For example, Wangkangurru (‘Woŋkaŋuru’) appears as a valid tribal name on the 1940 map, adjoining the eastern boundary of Antakirinja country. Tindale’s (1974:43) justification for considering this a valid term is that wangka is ‘an integral part of the name’. According to Luise Hercus (1994:7), however, Wangkangurru is ‘literally … “the hard and strong language”’. This is an example of an otherwise undesirable name, one that incorporates a term for language or speech, being accepted by Tindale. In turn, the Wangkangurru category buttresses Tindale’s (1974:136) Antakirinja:
Antakirinja of the country along the Alberga and Hamilton rivers in the northern part of South Australia regard this as their proper name and no more valid term has been detected. Among the Wongkanguru people who live to the east, the term (andakirila) is stated to mean ‘western’. This could mean that the basic meaning is ‘west’. Perhaps it is as likely that the term signifies ‘direction of the Andakiri’. This seems to receive some support from the Antakirinja themselves, among whom the suffix (-nja) has the meaning of ‘name’, hence their name has the form ‘those whose name is Antakiri’.

This is a speculative attempt to find a favourable etymology by shifting an exonym into an autonym category. The generally accepted etymology of Antakirinja is that it is a non-Western Desert exonym of Arandic origin meaning ‘southerner’ or ‘westerner’ depending on context (cf. Breen 1993, discussed in Monaghan 2003:79).

A more serious complaint is that one of the primary reasons for the confusion and ambivalence associated with particular categories is that the recognition procedure is at odds with Indigenous Australian points of view, concepts and practices. This can be illustrated by the fact that contemporary groups have been deeply offended by their misrecognition in Tindale’s schema. For example, Jacobs (1986:6) describes Adnyamathanha responses to Tindale’s refusal to recognise their preferred name. Tindale’s major discussions on his winnowing methods are found at Tindale (1940:141–146; 1974:40–49), and these are critiqued in Monaghan (2003:65–80).

**Recursion**

Although it is not immediately obvious there is a recursive loop in operation between the encyclopaedic and cartographic representations. The primary process involves Tindale assigning historical ethnological source materials produced by others to a tribal category based on the initial place of recording. In terms of clear identification or reference, the early vocabularies and other ethnological information published in Curr (1886–7) and Taplin (1879), which Tindale relies upon in establishing the foundations of his project, vary significantly. An individual vocabulary and accompanying information may consist of or include too many names, an indistinct or vague name, or no name at all. Examples of the latter from Curr, often appearing in the form ‘Place-X (tribe)’, include ‘North-west of Lake Eyre’ (Curr...
1886–7, Vol.II:12), ‘West of Lake Eyre’ (Curr 1886–7, Vol.II:16) and ‘Adelaide Tribe’ (Curr 1886–7, Vol.II:148). By assigning such source materials in this way, Tindale determines the tribe name and therefore language label of this material based on the point of recording within a physical space determined by his own cartographic and catalogue representations. In this way, reference is established according to location by place rather than by linguistic criteria. This can be seen in operation in Tindale’s (1974:217) attribution of two Gawler Ranges vocabularies to ‘Parnkalla’: Sawers in Curr (1886–7, Vol.II:130) and Bryant in Taplin (1879:142–152). On linguistic criteria the latter is Wirangu not ‘Parnkalla’ (Barngarla). This process is then extended by Tindale beyond the earliest sources (Curr and Taplin) to later ones. It can be seen operating, for example, in Tindale’s handling of the vocabularies recorded during the Elder Scientific Exploring Expedition of 1891. When one feeds the Elder expedition material into this process we find that the Everard Range lists of Helms and Wells become known as ‘Jangkundjara’. Under this heading in the 1974 catalogue, Tindale (1974:212) writes: ‘this is the Everard Range tribe of Helms and White’. As for Wells, Tindale’s own copy of Wells’ (1893) wordlist includes the annotation: ‘= Jaŋkundjara’ beside the title: ‘Collected from the Everard Ranges (Mount Illbillee)’. The making of this type of annotation was not unusual for Tindale, as attested by a copy of Curr’s *The Australian Race* located in the State Library of South Australia, which is littered with annotations, emendations and marginalia in Tindale’s hand. Most are simply alterations to the titles or names of the vocabularies into Tindale’s preferred orthographic system, but in many other cases Tindale seems to provide an alternative name, presumably from his own research activities.

*Production*

If the major reductive function of Tindale’s recognition procedure is focused on nomenclature, the major productive function is the delineation of bounded territories associated with the valid or authorised names. The chief methodology for this delineation is a temporal framing that seeks to represent pre-contact tribal distribution. Tindale (1974:5) writes:
I have endeavored to give a clear picture of the distributions of all aboriginal tribes as they were prior to the onset of the major disruptions and displacements that have accompanied the coming of Western man during the nineteenth and early twentieth century...

While Tindale’s logic of mapping the pre-contact state of affairs is quite clear, the final product representing neatly fitting tribal territories is an illusion. It is illusory for the simple reason that contact occurred at different times across the continent; so data gathered in Central Australia, where contact occurred relatively late, is temporally (and therefore spatially) incompatible with data reconstructed from sources from the early colonial days in the eastern states.

The American anthropologist Alfred Kroeber, with whom Tindale corresponded in the 1930s, was acutely aware of temporal-representational limitations of his own tribal boundary map of North America. Kroeber (1939:8–9) takes care to clearly articulate the conflicting temporal frames of what can be glossed, for the purpose of the present discussion, as T\textsubscript{DISCOVERY} and T\textsubscript{OCCUPATION}. The former, although synchronic, is limited because of insufficient or poor data. The latter is limited because it purports to represent a snapshot that covers a 300-year time range (c. 16\textsuperscript{th}–19\textsuperscript{th} in North America). In weighing up the options, Kroeber (1939) chose the latter representational frame. Tindale’s approach is arguably the same, and it involves temporal variation but over a shallower time depth (100+ rather than 300 years). The problem still remains, however. The implication of this approach is that it casts serious doubt upon the neatly fitting arrangement of tribes presented.

Tindale also struggled with determining local boundaries over relatively short periods of time. In Tindale’s published works from the late 1930s the tension between flux and stasis described above remains when areas of the Western Desert are being discussed. His formal statements on the matter are slightly confusing. For, while he concedes that the boundaries of tribes seem to ‘interdigitate or overlap’ as people move out from their permanent waters to exploit resources at times of abundant rainfall, he also maintains that they retreat to their ‘rather rigidly defined’ territories in dry times (Tindale 1940:151; 1974:65). Of course, this raises the question of which type of boundary is represented on the map: are the boundaries
the relatively fixed and rigid ‘dry time’ boundaries or an estimate of the extent of ‘wet time’ limits? The boundary lines on the map seem to fit snugly enough, but is this a further element of arbitrariness creeping into the process, an element of inconsistency, or simply a cartographic limitation?

Tindale was aware of the fluctuating basis of boundaries in the Western Desert as early as 1930. While writing of his observations after the BAR expedition to MacDonald Downs (NT) of 1930, Tindale (1929–34) notes:

modification of the tribal areas under pressure of new conditions is proceeding. In the present paragraphs it must be understood that the distribution of the tribes at the latest time before their disruption of [sic] Europeans is being outlined. It is thus an arbitrary crystallisation of a continuously varying process of which the full expression, could it be depicted, would show all the movements of a ‘carte film’. Our information concerning tribal distribution must always be incomplete.

This appears to be an exceedingly rare recognition by Tindale of the limitations of his project. Much of the blame rests on the technical limitations of cartographic representation in dealing with phenomena in a constant state of flux. Tindale’s neologism ‘carte film’ or cartographic film is particularly illuminating in this regard, for it suggests, according to Claude Levi-Strauss, with whom I corresponded on this matter, that ‘a map in the form of a cinematographic film would be needed to show the fluctuating tribal boundary through time, of which he could only offer a still’ (Levi-Strauss pers. comm. 2000). A further point to take from this is that, while a tribal distribution map is ‘an arbitrary crystallisation’, this is more than simply the result of technical limitations. It also flows from the problem of unrecoverable data: the arbitrary nature of the map is caused in no small part by the theoretical impossibility of reconstructing the complete pre-contact state of affairs.

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9 Although, according to Peter Sutton, ‘across Australia there were states of flux, great flux, relative stability, and cases of great immobility—a flat earth of ‘constant flux’ cannot be assumed’ (pers. comm. 19 September 2015).
Culture, Contact and Decay

I have focused so far on providing an account of the *raison d'etre* and the development of Tindale's tribal mapping project, a work that was foundational to many of his other research activities and interests. In the 1930s Tindale sought out at least one surviving member of each valid tribe in producing his 1940 tribal distribution representations. I wish to extend this argument now by showing how another major interest intersected this work: how the ‘pure’ or ‘uncontaminated’ Aborigine became the prime object of his investigations (Monaghan 2008).

When the BAR formalised a proposal for a handbook entitled *Handbook on Aborigines of Southern and Central Australia*, Tindale was nominated to contribute on a number of topics, including a final chapter entitled ‘culture, contact, and decay’ to be jointly authored with Professor J.B. Cleland (BAR 1941). Notions of purity and corruption were central ideological planks upon which the BAR’s activities proceeded (see Monaghan [2008] for a detailed discussion). Given the tenor of the BAR’s research programme, ‘pure’ or ‘uncontaminated’ Aborigines were the preferred subjects for study. As late as the 1960s an interest in the question of eco-physiological adaptation to desert conditions endured (Macfarlane 1969). The BAR held a long interest also in cultural adaptations to physical environments (Jones 1987). According to this perspective, the effects of decay through colonial contact can be traced from the body (miscegenation) through to the material culture, social institutions and hunter-gatherer economics. In writing up his impressions gained during the 1930 BAR expedition to MacDonald Downs, Tindale (1929–34) notes:

> the degree of contact with European settlements is difficult to define. There is a vast difference between the station native whose life has become reoriented towards the semi indolent pastoral life & whose skill as a hunter has strongly altered by one generation of contacts...
He goes on to note the effects of contact on the Aranda at Hermannsburg mission, and suggests groups such as the Anmatjera and ‘Antakeriŋa’ had been altered by one generation of contact. Notably, the Pitjandjara are considered by Tindale (1929–34) to have had ‘no station contacts’.

The ‘Real Western Desert Natives’

In the lead up to the 1933 expedition, with plans still on the drawing board, Tindale (1933b) wrote to T.G.H. Strehlow seeking his advice on a number of logistical issues including the route that would get him into best contact with ‘the real western desert natives’. In 1936 the BAR proposed an urgent 10-year research programme in the Western Desert and Tindale appealed to the Carnegie Corporation in the USA for funding. Tindale (1936b) describes the nomadic Australian Aborigines as ‘the most primitive beings living on the earth to-day’ and adds that ‘in only one area, the Western Desert, do they still maintain, unaltered, their Old Stone Age type of culture’. The following year, Tindale (1937) produced his major linguistic work, the Vocabulary of Pitjandjara, the Language of the Natives of the Great Western Desert. It is worth noting that Tindale’s linguistics generally remained at the level of nomenclature where he could use nominals to assist in tribal identification (tribal or group names, parallel vocabularies); examine social structures (kinship and divisional terms, personal names); population movements (place names, names of material culture items) and ecological adaptation (names of plants and animals). With Pitjandjara, however, Tindale operated with a broader set of criteria. In particular, his aim was to produce a resource for the long-term field study. As I show in Monaghan (2008), this is a productive process in which a number of dialects are subsumed under the master concept: Pitjandjara. Even words recorded from Jankyndjara speakers at Ooldea, well outside of Pitjandjara country, in 1934 appear as ‘Pitjandjara’ words in Tindale (1937). Jankyndjara, first encountered by Tindale in 1933, held some interest as he considered it less contaminated than Antakirinja but more so than Pitjandjara. Most notable by its absence is a total omission of any words listed as ‘Antakirinja’ in his master wordlist of the Great Western Desert (Tindale 1937).
Tindale’s ‘Antakirinja’

In sum, and in contrast to people he records as Pitjandjara or Jankundjara, Tindale seems to have had very little direct contact with people identifying as Antakirinja before the publication of his 1940 tribal distribution map. He does not appear to have engaged seriously in the collection of vocabularies, songs and wapar (stories), nor attempted a grammatical analysis as he did with Pitjandjara. Tindale saw Antakirinja as a group ‘contaminated’ by station contacts. According to his own representations of Antakirinja territory, they would have been in the forefront of early contact in the far north of South Australia and Central Australia during the building of the overland telegraph and the setting up of pastoral stations in the 1870s (the disruption brought by such activities to neighbouring easterly groups is attested by ethnographers such as Spencer and Gillen [1912]).

Tindale’s first encounter with people he describes as Antakirinja seems to have occurred at the Finke railway siding in 1930, and was most likely brief as only a few details of the encounter were recorded. Tindale writes:

At Finke Crossing saw three old men of a two class tribe to the far west who had come in to get food on the line; they sold members of the party a typical stone churinga from W of Hermannsburg which they had obtained. In their own tribe of which the local group name appeared to be Andekeringa (‘Lily’ Creek) a...wooden churinga...was used...
(Tindale 1930:75–6, ellipses relate to descriptions of ceremonial objects)

There is a further note added by Tindale (1930) reading: ‘Lilla Creek runs into Finke west of Crown Point’, accompanied by the comment that E.A. Colson ‘independently made a statement which confirmed tribal name in 1931’. Considering these comments, it may be the case that this was the first time Tindale had heard the term Antakirinja (or a variation of it).10 Certainly it seems that he was not familiar with the place Lilla Creek, which reappears in later accounts of Antakirinja country provided by Colson and Allen (below). Although there is an

10 Although the term appears in Bates (1918), a paper Tindale assisted in preparing for publication (Tindale 1986:240).
element of confusion and uncertainty involved, Tindale appears to have come into contact with ‘Antakirinja’ people on his first day at Ernabella (29 May 1933) and to have subsequently treated most of them as Jajkundjara people in the documentation associated with the expedition. It is impossible to know now who was the first to utter ‘Antakirinja’ in this interaction—Tindale, his interpreter or one or more of his subjects—or even whether the word was uttered at all. It may simply have remained a preconceived label that Tindale brought with him to the north-west and then entered into his journal. For the purpose of the argument being developed here, however, the issue of how the label was used in this interaction is secondary to Tindale’s subsequent actions. On the following day Tindale (1933a:25) learns that:

About 150 natives in the camp almost all ‘travelling’ natives from the west. They claim to be all Pitjintara (’Pitjanja’tara). The main Andekeringa camp is at Running Waters 8 miles from here. We have not yet seen them. They are more civilised than the locally camping ones who are all with two exceptions quite uncivilised. One man has been in jail for cattle stealing & is a little cheeky. Another has been attached to Brumby’s camp for some time & wears half a shirt & one sock. All the others are free from dress. They keep themselves well greased with red ochre. Their hair is in a long bun at the back & serves as a repository for flints (adze stones) wooden hair pegs etc.

Considering the relatively ‘civilised’ state of these people, as well as the tenor of the BAR’s research activities, it is hardly surprising that it appears as though Tindale made little effort to visit the ‘Andekeringa’ camp and interview those people. On 6 June, while still at Ernabella, Tindale (1933a:55–57) records the following interaction:
After evening meal walked over to the camp and sat down with the young men who came up yesterday. They shewed us their head gear & Gave us names. They are bright boys. Two of them outsizes in heads. The youngest of the three has a large face, very Papuan in appearance. The eldest is a typical abo. type. Their hair is matted with grease and ochre & is tied up with a head pad of emu feathers. Two of them also wear feather plumes in their coiffure. Their country is W. of Ernabella beyond ‘Aparanja & they consider themselves Jaŋkundjadjara. The Pitjindjara according to them live more to the north-west, across flat country (evidently in the Petermanns). The Pitjindjara have stolen the snake of Opparina (’Aparanja) & with it the water. The Jaŋkundjadjara may have a big fight about it soon.

It is here that Jaŋkundjara appear to enter into the picture. On the basis of this analysis, it seems that Tindale was not particularly interested in Antakirinja, a view further supported by comments from Gordon Gross, the chief source of Tindale's Antakirinja vocabulary material, who maintains that Tindale never asked him for the names of his informants at Anna Creek station in 1953 (Gordon Gross pers. comm. 2002).

**Published Sources**

So how did Tindale determine the valid tribal name and bounded tribal territory for Antakirinja? Within Tindale’s published sources (e.g., 1940:178) the denotative range of the term ‘Antakirinja’ is highly ambivalent. It appears at times to denote Arandic groups and at other times Western Desert groups (for a detailed analysis see Monaghan [2003:209–220]). Also, it appears unlikely that the term functioned grammatically as a ‘proper tribal name’. More telling is the fact that when taken together, there is no common core territory described by these published sources. There is such a high degree of variation and ambiguity in terms of tribal distribution data that it can be concluded safely that Tindale’s manuscript materials must hold the key to his delineation of Antakirinja territory.
Manuscript Sources
A thorough search of Tindale’s relatively vast manuscript collection in the South Australian Museum reveals the following pre-1940 sources: Bolam c. 1926, Colson 1931, Milina 1934 and Dick Allen 1939. I will discuss each in turn.

Bolam, c. 1926
Anthony Bolam, the stationmaster at Ooldea railway siding, provided Tindale with a sketch map of tribal distribution from his base at Ooldea in the 1920s. The ‘Ande-gerrie’ are represented by a circle drawn around Tarcoola, a railway siding to the east of Ooldea. Bolam (in Tindale 1924–36:5) writes:

Ande-gerrie, Allen-jurra [i.e., ‘northern’], and Youl-barrow [i.e. ‘southern’] are the three tribes that I know most of, as they are still in the land of the living and visit here periodically...This map represents almost a copy of a map drawn upon the ground with the finger by natives here at the moment of writing.

While Bolam’s map represents an Antakirinja group in the vicinity of Tarcoola at that time, we are not told how long they had been at that location. Tarcoola is outside of Tindale’s (1940) Antakirinja area, so it is likely that Tindale took this information to reflect a ‘tribal movement’ rather than traditional territory of the Antakirinja.

Colson, 1931
From discussions in 1931, Tindale (1933c) gleaned the following tribal distribution information from E.A. Colson:

Mount Ilabi W. of Hermannsburg is Pitjintara country. Kukatja is the name for the natives west of the Finke, often known by the Arunta word meaning ‘stranger’, i.e., Luritja. The headwaters of the Lilla Creek belong to the Antakurina, who are out of their country when they venture down to the Finke. All the tableland country of the Hamilton and Lilla Creek areas is theirs. In the south-east the Antakurina are said to extend to Nilpena and Arkaringa where get [sic] a sudden change to the Oodnadatta language.

This information is contained in a number of typed pages entitled ‘Antakurina Tribe Everard Range to Musgraves and Pitjintara Tribe Mann and Petermann Ranges’. From further information contained in the notes, however, it appears that
Colson considered the Antakirinja tribe to extend westwards to the Musgrave Ranges. For instance, there is a further passage claiming that ‘Alpara, eight or nine miles north by east from Opparinna [Aparanya], is the north-western most camp of the Antakurina’ (Tindale 1933c). This is a curious claim as Aparanya is near the ‘border’ of Jaŋkundjara and Pitjandjara territory on Tindale’s map (which runs between the Musgrave and Mann Ranges), and many other sources in the historical record assert that this was a significant transition zone. This evidence, as well as the fact that Jaŋkundjara does not appear in the title, suggests that Antakirinja is being used as a cover term to subsume Jaŋkundjara. I have found no record of the latter term in Colson’s correspondence with Tindale and A.P. Elkin (Elkin n.d.). The most likely explanation is that from his Bloods Creek orientation in the east, near the intersection of Western Desert, Arrernte and Lakes systems, Colson operated with the Arandic exonym for eastern Western Desert people—Antakirinja.

As noted above, Colson ‘independently made a statement which confirmed tribal name in 1931’ (Tindale 1930:76). When the two met again in 1932, Tindale showed Colson his ‘map of the Musgrave country to have annotations made’ (Tindale 1932a:20). The exact nature of these annotations is not known, but they are likely to be the source of ‘Antakurinya’ on an early draft map of tribal distribution in South Australia (Tindale c. 1929). Not all names on this draft map are bounded. However, the label ‘Antakurinya’ itself appears on the map in a very similar position to ‘Antakirinja’ on Tindale (1974, see Figure 2 above). In 1931 Colson (1931) wrote to Tindale informing him that he had just returned from a trip out west and had encountered Aboriginal people in the Everard and Musgrave Ranges who ‘spend nearly all their time corroboreeing’, adding that it is a ‘wonderful field for scientist [sic] to work there’. This must certainly have whetted Tindale’s appetite. More generally, the Colson relationship was clearly important in setting up Tindale’s expectations. Certainly Colson’s account of Antakirinja territory resonates in Tindale’s 1940 representations, suggesting that Tindale took Colson’s information seriously even if he did not adopt it in its entirety.
Milina, 1934
Tindale recorded the following information at Ooldea in 1934, where he worked mainly with Jaŋkundjara informants. Milina, a Yankunytjatjara man, was one of Tindale’s favourite informants.

Antakari:nja: North east of Illili (Mt. Illillina) lives a people whom the Jankandjara people call Njuntundjara, They have not seen these people, only heard of them.
(Tindale 1934b:80)

‘Njuntundjara’ is listed as an alternative name for Antakirinja in the 1974 catalogue of tribes (Tindale 1974:210), but otherwise it will be noted that this reference is particularly vague in terms of Antakirinja country. At a later point in the Ooldea field journal Tindale (1934a:228–9) notes: ‘Antakurina = Antakerinja: NE of the Everard Range men’s country’, which adds little to the above passage.

Dick Allen, 1939
The following account of Antakirinja territory was recorded by Tindale at Port Augusta in 1939 during the HA expedition:

The boundaries of the Antakerinja tribe were from Mt Chandler to Wintinna...thence taking in the Evelyn Creek country as far as Cootanoorina. Stuarts Range was just beyond their boundary. The eastern boundary ran northwards from the Peake to the Bagot Range – the Macumba country was that of the Aranda who were complete strangers in the olden days. Their country also extended to Lilla Creek but only in the Ranges, the Finke River was Aranda country. West of their country were the Waŋkapitjar – a name applied to all the people W. of their country – all of them spoke similar languages (‘nearly the same’).
(Tindale 1938-9a:1029)

Unfortunately Tindale provides little of Dick’s biographical details. He does note that Dick was ‘one of the last men to be initiated before the tribe broke up’ (Tindale 1938–9a:1027) and that he had left his country for employment in the south and had not returned (Tindale 1938–9a:1029). It would appear that the tribal ‘break up’ relates to the movement south of part of the tribe in 1917 reported elsewhere by Tindale (1940:178), given Dick’s age in 1939 is recorded as 45 years old (Tindale 1938-9b:166, probably an approximation), which would place him around initiatory age in the years prior to 1917. It is difficult to
determine whether the picture of cultural decline represented in the above comments derive from Dick or are based on Tindale’s perceptions; either way, this picture is at least partly contradicted by the Berndts’ (1942–5) later observations at Macumba. Apart from this point, it is notable that, as with Colson’s account, Jaŋkundjara is not mentioned in this account of Antakirinja territory.

Dick Allen also provided Tindale with a small amount of linguistic material, including a short vocabulary of 18 words, a number of kinship terms, and what appears to be a song fragment (Tindale 1938–9b:166). While this linguistic material is generally consistent with Jaŋkundjara, the recording of ‘padu’ for ‘man’ could have provided Tindale with a linguistic point of difference between Antakirinja and speech varieties to the west (or indeed to the south-west)—if he was looking for one. Indeed, there is very little evidence to suggest that Tindale used linguistic criteria when distinguishing between Jaŋkundjara and Antakirinja. As has been seen, the linguistic material in these accounts is brief, but one must also consider that Tindale seems often to have operated in the opposite direction—particularly when subsuming diverse speech varieties under the Pitjandjara banner. Furthermore, it should be appreciated that the linguistic material presented in the sources listed in the 1940 catalogue appears often to have been ignored.

When we consider the above accounts, it seems reasonable to conclude that Tindale relied upon very few sources for his representations of Antakirinja territory. Of these sources, it is the information provided by Colson and Allen that appears to have been most influential in Tindale’s calculations. While these two accounts concur on some aspects, a degree of vagueness remains. Perhaps this is why Tindale introduced ecological criteria to support his 1974 representation of Antakirinja territory. He writes: ‘their boundary with the Matuntara falls generally at the northern margin of the blue-bush covered plains; they do not venture into the more wooded hilly country farther north; at their southern boundary the country drops away to gibber plains’ (Tindale 1974:210).
Conclusions

All of the available evidence shows that in 1933 Tindale travelled to Ernabella with preconceived notions about who he might find there. Of course, we will never know who was the first to utter ‘Antakirinja’ on that first day, 29th May: Tindale, his interpreter or his subjects. Nevertheless, I favour the view that interpellation has played a role in post-contact settings and that a focus on self-naming, such as Tindale’s (and indeed Sutton’s 2010:60), misses a potentially important mechanism informing patterns of shifting Aboriginal identities over time. While I have not presented evidence in support of this counter view, it is worth mentioning as it is a topic worthy of further research.

The main point I wish to stress is that Tindale recognised Antakirinja as a valid tribal term that was closely related to, but not reducible to, Jaŋkundjara. Further, it would appear that no linguistic criteria other than the names themselves were used to maintain this delineation. Antakirinja is supported on its own as a valid tribal name by the use of (spurious) etymological evidence quite separately to the issue of Jaŋkundjara. Curiously, at the same time, linguistic criteria were used to reduce a number of ‘dialects’ into the Pitjandjara language as part of Tindale’s promotion of Pitjandjara as the language of the Western Desert. It is here that one can see most clearly the imposition of non-Indigenous frames onto Western Desert practices and lived experience. This practice of language making is itself a recognition procedure, although of a different stripe to the processes involved in the production of the tribal distribution map and catalogue of tribe. I believe that Tindale did not probe the closeness of Antakirinja and Jaŋkundjara because he did not understand or credit, like O’Loughlin J failed to do in De Rose Hill, the potential for individuals to traditionally operate with multiple group-label identifications. After all, his primary concern was to fix reference.

Part of the enduring power of Tindale’s representations, particularly the lines on maps, is their reassuring simplicity. They are also comfortingly familiar to those schooled in nation-state thinking. While Sutton (2010:54–5) observes that Tindale ‘ironed out’ variations in the 1933 data set to suit his concept of tribe, I have tried to show that there is more to the situation than this. Antakirinja was useful to Tindale, particularly for his tribal
mapping project. But in a period of tight research funding and research priorities in anthropometric and ecological adaptation, it was useful only up to a point. Their purported ‘contamination’ through station contacts, even if only one generation old, placed them well behind Pitjandjara as the ‘real western desert natives’.

Finally, in this paper I have tried to demonstrate that rather than questioning singularities in Tindale’s oeuvre, what is required is a fuller appreciation of the various reductive, recursive and productive engines employed by Tindale in his major projects and from which ‘tribal’ representations emerged. Only in this way can the ways of knowledge creation utilised by Tindale be fully revealed, including the ideological forces that underpin them. While Tindale remains a foundational figure in the fields of Australian anthropology and Indigenous studies more broadly, his representations, both cartographic and discursive, continue to deserve rigorous interrogation rather than uncritical reproduction.

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