

fruit, but it is possible that this song was originally intended to comment on some person or event known to the singer. The Songman sings four verses accompanied by the didjeridu and rhythm sticks, with short instrumental preludes before each verse. The text of each verse, like many Aboriginal songs, combines phrases of padding syllables with phrases of actual, meaningful text. The didjeridu and rhythm sticks are played continuously. The rhythm sticks provide a steady pulse throughout the piece, supported by a variable drone from the didjeridu. Although there is a steady pulse, there is no sense of a metre in the Western sense, i.e. a patterned succession of strong and weak beats. Nonetheless, many of the repeated vocal rhythms can be conveniently grouped into the equivalent of simple duple time.

In melodic terms, *Birruck* demonstrates a tendency of Arnhem Land songs: to begin on a high note and descend gradually to a lower pitch. This melodic descent is decorated with falling glides and occasional ornamentation. In this case, a hexatonic (six-note) scale of A, C, D, E, F# and G is used (approximately a semitone lower on the recording). Each verse consists of a gradual fall from G down to A. The verse can be divided into three parts: reiteration of the pitch G (bars 17–21), descent to and repetition of E (22–28) and the fall to and repetition of A (29–37).

India

Music for *Vīnā*

Cultural background

Indian art music is amongst the best known traditional musical styles world-wide, and has been extensively documented, both by Indian scholars and by foreign musicians. Skilled practitioners now reside in many countries, top soloists tour internationally and recordings are readily available. In these respects, the Indian art music tradition quite closely resembles that of the West. The parallel can be taken a little further. In each case, these are elite traditions with historical roots in religious ceremony and court entertainment. They are both primarily urban styles, performed principally at formal concerts where the roles of performer and listener are clearly demarcated. Both require of would-be professional musicians a long period of specialist study and apprenticeship, and are most deeply appreciated by experienced audiences. Both are accompanied by considerable amounts of written and spoken musical theory and terminology. Supporters of each tradition see their music as being substantially different from – and more valuable than – other musical styles occurring within the same area, such as village bands or popular music. Of course, there are important differences in the sounds and practices of Indian and Western art musics. However, the point is that parallels between these two traditions are not accidental or incidental: they arise from their similar social and historical contexts.

Indian art music

Art music in India is divided into two main types, that of the North and that of the South. Within these two broad categories there is a great deal of local and regional variation. Nonetheless, a few general points can be made. First of all, there are certain parallels in the combinations of instrument-types typically found in both North and South Indian art music. Secondly, much of this music