

# 9 *Ghost-writing for Wulatji: incubation and re-dreaming as song revitalisation practices*

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There is a god of Poesy, Wallatu, who composes music, and who, without temple, shrine, or statue, is as universally acknowledged as if his oracles were breathed by Belus or Osiris: he comes in dreams, and transports the individual to some sunny hill, where he is inspired with the supernatural gift.

Eliza Hamilton Dunlop, 'Native Poetry' (1848a)

## **Abstract**

This chapter elaborates a rationale for revitalising Aboriginal singing practices by means of the traditional but endangered technique of composition through dreams. It is based on exegesis of a song in the language of the Hunter River and Lake Macquarie that was published in 1848 by Eliza Hamilton Dunlop. Her transcription of the song text was accompanied by a commentary that associated the name of the composer with a 'god of Poesy' called 'Wallatu'. I argue, on the basis of a comparative overview of 'dream composition' in Aboriginal Australia, that this mythical being was plausibly responsible for 'song incubation' in this region, and conceivably both ancestor and inspirer of the poet who was Mrs Dunlop's informant.

My reconstruction of the text and metrical pattern of the song provides the foundation for an analysis of its stylistic devices, and this in turn may have implications for understanding both mnemotechnical practices ('arts of memory') and kin classification in the region in question. For the sake of contextualising the notion of 'song incubation', the chapter includes also a brief survey and listing of relevant ethnographic and historical observations from Australia and other parts of the world.

*Keywords:* musical dream, dream composition, song incubation, re-dreaming, arts of memory, Wallatu, Eliza Hamilton Dunlop, Wollombi, Hunter Valley, Lake Macquarie

## 1 Introduction

A. W. Howitt's late-nineteenth century account of Aboriginal song-making in south-eastern Australia includes an observation about what we might call 'dream composition' that has since been replicated, with minor modifications, in many, perhaps even most, of the other regions of the continent. According to Howitt (1887a:329; cf. 1904:416), 'the songs are obtained by the bards from the spirits of the deceased, usually their relatives, during sleep in dreams'.<sup>1</sup>

We could compare this with Jill Stubington's (2007:102) succinct summary of the relevant Australianist research from the intervening 120 years: 'the most commonly reported experience of new songs entering a repertoire is that of a musician being taught a song in a dream by a spirit familiar'. Stubington (2007:102) also observes that 'there seems to be a continuum between songs which were taught by ancestral heroes, songs taught by spirit familiars, songs taught by recently deceased ancestors, and songs which are recognised as being the invention of a living person'.

In the same period, there have been accounts of dream composition from many other parts of the world, but no attempts to survey them for the purpose of developing a comparative theoretical framework. The little theorising there has been comes mainly from sleep scientists, who treat the matter under such rubrics as 'the musical dream' (e.g. Massey 2006; see also Streich 1980, Willin 1999:92, Barrett 2001:66-81, Sacks 2008:307-311, Grace 2012<sup>2</sup>).

It would take us well beyond the limited scope of the present paper to review this body of literature. Nonetheless, I hope to be able to provide here some relevant preliminary observations, as background to my analysis of a song published in 1848 in the language of the Hunter River and Lake Macquarie<sup>3</sup> (New South Wales). Recent language work in this region has made the reconstruction of the words to this song fairly straightforward, and its history, too, is relatively transparent. But what remains mysterious is the identity of the 'god of Poesy', whose name, 'Wallatu', published in conjunction with the song (as reproduced above in the epigraph), suggests that he was its inspirer. My efforts to understand him are intended to support the notion of 'dream composition' as a song revitalisation practice, not just in regions where it is an ongoing tradition, but also in those parts of Australia, such as the Hunter Valley, where Indigenous musical life has suffered a period of interruption.

## 2 The musical dream

The frequency of occurrence of the musical dream varies widely between cultures. At the low end of the scale, dream sounds of any kind were reported by only 1.5 per cent of the American tertiary students surveyed in one study (Barrett 2001:67). But in many Indigenous cultures of North America, dream composition is considered to be not just the norm, but also a responsibility – at least for certain sections of the population (Massey 2006:42). There have been ethnographic reports of this phenomenon among American Indians since the late nineteenth century, and the following passage by the pioneering ethnomusicologist Frances Densmore (1926:77-78) is representative:

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<sup>1</sup> This is not the earliest reference to the oneiric origin of song in Indigenous Australia, but it has the advantage of explicitness. Appendix A of the present chapter provides a fairly comprehensive listing of relevant references in the Australianist literature, with a brief introduction. The Australian list (Table 9.2) is followed by a representative sample of references from other parts of the world, organised by region (Table 9.3).

<sup>2</sup> The broader neglect of this topic in the psychological literature is epitomised by the lack of any reference to it in *The Oxford handbook of music psychology* (Hallam, Cross and Thaut 2009). It is also largely absent from the general psychological discourse on dream theory, and there is no mention of it in the pioneering contribution by Hunt (1989). The anthropological literature tends to comment on it only in passing, as an ethnographic curiosity, and it has eluded specific attention in the recent cross-cultural surveys of dream research, such as Tedlock (1991), Goulet (1994), Lohmann, ed. (2003), Stewart, ed. (2004) and Laughlin (2011).

<sup>3</sup> Hereafter abbreviated to 'HRLM'.

The first song received by an individual in a dream was the boy's 'vision song.' Later in life he might also receive songs in dreams. Every Indian boy, at the age of about twelve years, was expected to fast for several days and watch for the dream or 'vision' in which he saw his individual 'spirit helper,' and usually received a song from that source. In later years, when he wished to receive 'spirit help,' he sang the song and also performed certain prescribed acts. Sometimes the boy fasted at home, with his face blackened with charcoal; more often he went away and remained alone, night and day, waiting for his vision, while in some tribes the vigil was ceremonial in character.<sup>4</sup>

This summary reflects the practices of a large number of North American Indian cultures, but not all. One of the differences between Pueblo and Pima musical traditions, for example (according to Herzog 1936:318-320), is that the Pueblo recognise some songs as the product of human creativity, while the Pima attribute all songs to supernatural intervention in dreams.

Australian Aboriginal cultures are similarly divided, between those (the majority) in which dream composition is the standard practice, and those, such as the Tiwi, among whom 'the designs, songs, and dances are attributed to the creative individual artist or performer' (Goodale 2003:153).<sup>5</sup> It is hard to know whether the Tiwi are unique in this regard, because information about song traditions is scanty or non-existent for many other Aboriginal groups. But the available data suggest a widespread ideology of passivity in the composition process. As Ian Keen (writing of the Yolngu) puts the matter (2003:138): 'creativity in ritual is the result of dreaming and reverie *happening* to a person [emphasis added]'; that is, without the person's volition or agency. 'Yolngu downplay individual creative powers, at least in the domain of religion, displacing agency onto creative ancestors' (Keen 2003:133).<sup>6</sup>

This presents an obvious paradox for any treatment of composition as a factor in the revitalisation of Aboriginal singing practices, since it implies, broadly speaking, that new songs in the ancestral tradition can only be 'found' in dreams, rather than made or composed. Whether musical dreams can be actively sought, in the manner of the North American vision quest or the ancient practice of 'dream

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<sup>4</sup> This passage is taken from a book that Densmore wrote for a general audience. There is greater ethnographic nuance in her specialised studies of particular groups, such as the Chippewa (1910:126-165), Teton Sioux (Densmore 1918:157-204) and Menominee (Densmore 1932:77-98). See also Densmore 1953 and the Densmore bibliography by Hofmann (1968). On the widespread distribution of the vision quest or 'guardian spirit quest' in North America, see Benedict (1922), Hultkrantz (1979:74) and Keeling (1992:18, n. 6).

<sup>5</sup> Nonetheless, two qualifications are necessary. First, there is documentation of Tiwi receiving musical inspiration from the Nyingawi (the mangrove-dwelling hairy beings who were the first teachers of the Kulama rituals). Campbell (2013:242), for example, mentions the case of the late Enrail Munkara, who, according to family tradition, 'first sang Nyingawi to revere his deceased father Munkara, having heard the Nyingawi themselves singing and so incorporating some Nyingawi language'. (The Nyingawi are worth comparing with the mangrove-dwelling, song-giving dwarves called *warranguridjakud* in western Arnhem Land, as mentioned by Brown and Evans in their Chapter 12 in the present volume.) Second, Tiwi initiation practices parallel the Amerindian 'vision song' scenario by requiring the composition of new songs. 'To become a fully initiated Tiwi and able to participate in adult ritual life one must learn to compose many new and original songs to be sung, without any faltering or mistakes in the poetic form of the language, throughout the three day Kulama' (Goodale 2003:161). The crucial difference from those parts of Indigenous Australia (and Indigenous America) where human agency is downplayed in the composition process is that 'Tiwi value individual achievement and originality' (Goodale 2003:163).

<sup>6</sup> Metcalfe and Game (2010:170) have theorised this kind of ambiguity around the question of agency as an intrinsic part of the creative process: 'creative experiences are those in which there is a giving and receiving that is neither sequential nor locatable, experiences where a gift occurs, but not through the desires of any subject, however decentred, and not in a way that allows giving to be distinguished from receiving.'

incubation<sup>7</sup>, is a question rarely addressed in the Australianist literature, and then only in passing. Still, there are enough examples to suggest that what we might call ‘song incubation’ does occur in at least some parts of Aboriginal Australia, and probably also in other regions where it has simply not been observed or recorded.

One good example comes from the Kimberley, in the north-west, and dates back to Andreas Lommel’s field work with the Frobenius expedition in 1938-39. In an ethnography of the Wunambal published some time later (Lommel 1952:55-56<sup>8</sup>), Lommel wrote as follows:

But it also happens that a medicine man who possesses the gift of *miriru* loses it again. He is suddenly incapable of making contact with the spirits and his poetic gift for creating songs and dances dies.

In such a case all the men then get together in order to resume the broken connections with the dead ancestors.

They lay the medicine man on the ground, all the men sit down in a circle around him. The men begin to sing, and as they do so slowly massage the medicine man’s body. The men sing for hours in an even rising and falling tone:

Mmmmmm nnnnnn mmmmmm nnnnnn

(it is a humming such as is found in many Russian folksongs). The medicine man slowly goes into a trance, his soul finally leaves the body and now, so it is said in the accounts, wanders aimlessly around in order to find the spirit of a dead ancestor. After long wanderings it will finally meet such a one.

You see, the dead ancestors themselves send out one from their midst to look for the medicine man. They have themselves already sorely felt the absence of the medicine man and the broken contact with their living descendant and they wish to resume relations with the living.

The medicine man reports to the spirit of the dead that he no longer knows the way to the underworld and is not ‘finding’ songs any more. The spirit of the dead – often it will be the spirit of his father or grandfather – promises to help him and to fetch him in a few days.

After a time – it is perhaps in the evening and the people are sitting there quietly and conversing – the medicine man suddenly hears a distant call. It is his spirit familiar who is asking for him. He goes aside and converses with it for a while.

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<sup>7</sup> This term refers to the rituals of dream induction practised in ancient Greece, Rome, Egypt and Mesopotamia. In the Greek world, they took the form of healing rites carried out in the *asklepieia*, or temples of Asclepius, the god of medicine, and had as their objective the prompting of a dream in which the god himself would appear, in person or by means of a message. Meier’s account of this practice includes the observation (2009:74) that ‘Asclepius commanded many persons to write odes or mimes and to compose certain songs’. See also Jayne (1925), Laufer (1931:210-211), Lincoln (1935:4-5, 22), Reed (1977); Watkins (1977:14-30); Morinis (1982); Miller (1994:109-117; Bulkeley (1995:120-130; Kingsley (1999); Patton (2004); Harrisson (2009); Nielsen (2012). Mrs Langloh Parker (1905:132) used the term ‘incubation’ for the ‘hatching’ of songs by Aboriginal songpersons, which quite possibly indicates that she was familiar with the term’s ancient usage. J. S. Lincoln (1935:22), in his early comparative study, includes Australia among the regions of the world where the ‘division into unsought and sought dreams’ occurs. (The other regions he mentions are Melanesia, Polynesia, Africa and North America.) He notes that the dream-seeking practised in these regions is ‘similar to the ancient temple incubation’. His evidence for Australia comes from Roth (1903:29): ‘The Boulian of North Queensland, after starving for three days, is rewarded by the fancied apparition of a *malkari* or nature-spirit, which proceeds to stick pebbles or bones or quartz crystals into his body, and thus makes him a medicine man’.

<sup>8</sup> Lommel published a number of versions of this account, which appeared originally in German, in Lommel (1952:55-56). The English version reproduced here is from the Campbell translation (Lommel 1997:64-65) of this work. Other versions (in English) include Lommel (1967:138-140); Lommel (1989:33-34); Lommel and Mowaljarlai (1994:283). Lommel defines *miriru* as ‘the ability to separate the soul from the body . . . The people have received *miriru* from the spirits of the dead’ (Lommel 1952:53, 1997:63).

But a few days later his soul then leaves the body. His body lies there quietly and he sleeps. Led by the spirit familiar, many spirits now come from the underworld and take possession of the medicine man's soul that they want to see among them again. They dismember the soul, and each spirit carries one of the pieces into the underworld. There, deep beneath the ground, they put the medicine man's soul together again.

They again show him dances and sing songs to him. Thenceforth, such a medicine man again has the gift of *miriru*.

In this case, the communal nature of the activity, as well as the fact that it is precipitated by an affliction, gives it a strong similarity to the dream incubation practices of antiquity. But the alternative scenario, in which an individual who has no therapeutic motive undertakes a 'spiritual exercise'<sup>9</sup> for the purpose of acquiring a song, is also represented in the literature. A fine example comes from New South Wales. In 1904 and 1909, R. H. Mathews published two accounts of the song-inspiring function of a being called 'the Wahwee'. I reproduce here the 1909 version, since it is preceded by some contextual information lacking in the earlier account:

The story of the Wahwee is current among the Wiradjuri, Kamilaroi, Wailwan, and other tribes of New South Wales. It was related to me by an old Kamilaroi black-fellow, named 'Jimmy Nerang', whom I met at the Bora ceremony held at Tallwood in 1895. The Rev. Wm. Ridley mentions the Wawi (my Wahwee) as a monster living in deep waterholes. I gave a drawing of the Wahwee represented on the ground at the Burbung ceremonies of the Wiradjuri tribe in 1893 (1909:485).<sup>10</sup>

*The Wahwee.*—The Wahwee, a serpent-like monster, lives in deep waterholes, and burrows into the bank beneath the level of the water, where he makes his den. He has a wife and a son, but they camp in a different place. A 'doctor' or clever blackfellow can sometimes go and see a Wahwee, but on such occasions he must paint himself all over with red ochre. He then follows after the rainbow some day when there is a slight shower of rain, and the end of the rainbow rests over the waterhole in which is the Wahwee's abode. On reaching this waterhole, the man dives in under the bank, where he finds the Wahwee, who conducts him into the den, and sings him a song which he never heard before. He repeats this song many times in the presence of the Wahwee, until he has learnt it by heart, and then starts back to his own people. When they see him coming, painted and singing a new song, they know he has been with the Wahwee, and a few of the other head-men and clever fellows take him into the adjacent bush, where they strip pieces of bark off trees, on which they paint different devices in coloured clays. All the

<sup>9</sup> To apply cross-culturally a term that Pierre Hadot has recycled to refer to aspects of the Western philosophical tradition. He sets out his rationale for this usage in Hadot (1995:81-82). There is, as yet, no standard terminology for the comparative study of what others (e.g. Samuels 2010) have called 'inner work'. There are helpful insights in the cross-cultural studies of meditation (e.g. Eifring 2015), but the term 'meditation' is not broad enough to encompass the full range of solo practices that entail directed strategies for modifying subjectivity. In the ethnographic literature there is no lack of studies on institutionalised group activities (such as rituals) intended to alter consciousness (as surveyed, for example, by Bourguignon 1973:3-33), but little attention has been paid to what Foucault (1988) has called 'technologies of the self' in small scale societies. There is some overlap with the literature on 'creative practice', as theorised, for example, by Metcalfe and Game (2010).

<sup>10</sup> The references here are to Ridley (1875:138) and Mathews (1896:301, 315 and plate XXVI, between 295 and 296). See also my account of the 'Waway' in Wafer (2017). Donaldson (1997:6-7) provides two short texts about the 'Waaway' in Ngiyampaa, and from these we learn that 'Waaway made the Lachlan and the Barwon (Darling) [Rivers]'. My thanks to David Nash for drawing my attention to this document, and also to Honery (1872:250). Both of these references are additional to the Waway bibliography included in my article 'Why Waway?' (Wafer 2017:294).

people of the tribe are then mustered, and these ornamented pieces of bark are taken to the corroboree ground, where everyone sings and dances. This is how new songs and corroborees are obtained (1909:487).

The clever man's visit to the Wahwee<sup>11</sup> is liable to be read as pure fantasy, even a tall tale, unless one is able to approach it as an account of purposeful activity. If we treat it as the record of a deliberately undertaken private ritual, akin to the practice that C. G. Jung (1968:190-193; 1997) called 'active imagination'<sup>12</sup>, then it suggests quite strongly that Aboriginal people have techniques for inducing dreams or visionary states in which songs are expected to be manifested – in other words, methods of 'song incubation'. These are not necessarily as elaborately formalised as the examples from Lommel and Mathews. Among Warlpiri, for example, there is an understanding that 'the position of one's body, in relation to both the land and one's kin, must be configured in specific ways' in order to facilitate 'dreams of ceremonial relevance'. The requirements are that one must sleep 'on one's side and in close proximity to the kin with whom one has a *kirda-kurdungurlu*<sup>13</sup> relationship' (Dussart 2000:140-141).

The elementariness of this incubatory practice is probably related to the democratic nature of song acquisition among the Warlpiri, who 'claim that dreams containing ceremonial content can be dreamt by anyone, including the uninitiated' (Dussart 2000:143).<sup>14</sup> Another contemporary incubation procedure comes from western Arnhem Land. There, according to the account by Reuben Brown and Nicholas Evans in the present volume (Chapter 12), a musical dream may be incubated by placing under one's pillow the clapsticks that once belonged to a deceased mentor. In other parts of Australia, the incubation procedure is sometimes even more basic: a composer intent on receiving a song may simply lie on the ground, to make contact with the power inherent in the soil (cf. Bell 1998:193, McDonald this volume, Chapter 7)<sup>15</sup>, and this can happen not just at night, but also in broad sunshine (Gummow 1992:179).

The distribution of the ability and opportunity to incubate songs clearly varies between Aboriginal cultures. If the practice is open to anyone among the Warlpiri of Yuendumu, it is more restricted for the Western Desert people of Jigalong, where women are told not to undertake dream-spirit journeys, and 'it is also safer for ordinary people . . . to be taken on dream-spirit trips by native doctors' (Tonkinson 1970:280). The special association that 'doctors' or 'medicine persons' or 'clever blackfellows'<sup>16</sup> have with dream (and song) incubation appears to be very widespread, as we see

<sup>11</sup> Although the Wahwee may be one of the main inspirers of song, he has 'attendants and messengers', called *barinma* in Wiradjuri (Günther in Fraser 1892:72; cf. Grant & Rudder 2010: 299), who probably also functioned as instigators of song incubation. For avian and mythological associations of the term *barinma* (in Gamilaraay and related languages), see Giacon (2013:273).

<sup>12</sup> For a history and overview of Jung's development of the concept, see Chodorow's introduction (1997:1-20) to her compilation of Jung's writings on the subject. Jung wrote little on either music or sound, but the relevance of his notion of 'active imagination' to these fields is sketched out in Kittelson (1996:82, 85). This work also provides a useful overview of the Jungian literature on sound, but only mentions the musical dream (1996:67-68) in passing.

<sup>13</sup> *Kirda* are the members of an individual's own patrimoiety, *kurdungurlu* those of the opposite patrimoiety. For a fuller explanation, see Dussart 2000:28-35.

<sup>14</sup> Nonetheless, the author notes that 'in my decade-long research at Yuendumu I have never registered cosmologically significant dreams emerging from the sleep of the young' (Dussart 2000:143).

<sup>15</sup> A similar principle may apply in the case of the sea. As Howitt (1887a:329-31) points out, 'there are other poets who composed under what may be called natural influences as distinguished from supernatural. Umbara, the bard of the Coast Murrumbidgee told me that his words came to him "not in sleep as to some men, but when tossing on the waves in his boat with the waters jumping up round him".'

<sup>16</sup> These individuals have been referred to by a number of other terms (such as listed by Glaskin 2008:39-40; see also Elkin 1977 [1945], Hume 2002:108-163), including 'sorcerers', 'magicians', 'wizards', 'men of high degree', 'shamans', and so on. There is as yet no consensus about the nomenclature. In light of the argument I am putting forward in this chapter, I might suggest calling them 'oneironauts' – a term invented by sleep scientist Stephen LaBerge (1985:71) to refer to people who have the ability to travel within a

from the fact that the examples from Lommel and Mathews come from opposite sides of the continent.<sup>17</sup>

These considerations provide some clues that may be helpful in establishing the identity of the ‘god of Poesy’ who is mentioned in the epigraph that heads this essay.

### 3 Wulatji: patron of song incubation?

On 11 October 1848, Eliza Hamilton Dunlop, wife of David Dunlop, the police magistrate and Protector of Aborigines in the frontier settlement of Wollombi, on a tributary of the Hunter River<sup>18</sup>, published an item of ‘Native Poetry’ in the *Sydney Morning Herald* (Dunlop 1848a). She had been a poet herself, in her native Ireland, and continued to publish verse after she and her husband arrived in Australia in 1838.<sup>19</sup> Her transcription of the words of the song was followed by a very freely versified translation (probably better called an ‘adaptation’), as well as a glossary of individual terms. Between the transcription and the translation, there was a brief account (as reproduced above in the epigraph) of a ‘god of Poesy’ called ‘Wallatu’.

There are unsolved mysteries in this passage. As John O’Leary (2004:91) has already pointed out, the name that Mrs Dunlop applied to this ‘god’ was, according to her contemporary Lancelot Threlkeld, in fact the name of Dunlop’s human informant, who was both the composer and singer of the song. Threlkeld – the missionary linguist whose work provides the foundation for our understanding of the language in which the song was composed – transcribed the published poem (and some of the associated material) in his own reminiscences (Gunson 1974, 1:58), and added the following observations:

This very individual, Wúllati, or as the white folks used to call him, Woolaje, always confounding the sound of a *t* with a *j*, lived near to our establishment, he was esteemed highly by the tribes, and in an increasing ratio as they were nigh or distant from this individual. No doubt he formed the delightful subject of their evening Soirees, and also of their midnight dreams. He favored me several times with his company, and perhaps thought it an honor when he made proposals to me for a matrimonial alliance with one of the members of my family, much to the amusement of us all. He was a very old, thin,

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dream on a conscious basis. Such a definition fits well with what Glaskin says of the *jarlŋungurr* (‘shamans’, in her translation) of the north-west Kimberley: ‘Through dream travel, *jarlŋungurr* can access metaphysical dimensions of the real world that others cannot so readily access, and it is this capacity that lies at the core of their power’ (2008:60). Nonetheless, for the sake of not compounding the terminological clutter, I have generally preferred to use the older (and more widely understood) terms. A readily comprehensible alternative would be ‘dreaming specialists’.

<sup>17</sup> Such an association is common in other parts of the world as well. ‘Basilov [1995] notes the close relationship between bard and shaman among many Central Asian groups’ (Sumegi 2008:29).

<sup>18</sup> Wollombi Brook. I conjecture that the Indigenous name for this watercourse is ‘Mala’ (see appendix D, ‘Notes on some placenames mentioned in the text’). In the year of Dunlop’s publication, the Aboriginal population of the district was already much reduced: ‘the Wollombi tribes, which in the thirties could be counted in the hundreds . . . in 1848 numbered 54’ (Squire 1896:83). For a history of relations between Aboriginal people and colonists in the Hunter Valley in this time period, see Dunn (2015).

<sup>19</sup> Their story, which I can do no more than skim over here, holds considerable interest in itself. Relevant publications include Gunson (1966); De Salis (1967, 1972); Webby (1980:50-52); Dunlop (1981); Vickery (2002:34-35); O’Leary (2004, 2011:39-44). For a more extensive list of pertinent literature, see Austlit (<http://www.austlit.edu.au/>) under ‘Eliza Hamilton Dunlop’ (page A31624) and ‘Native poetry’ (page C696511) [accessed 13 September 2016]. The last of these sources lists two modern editions of ‘Native poetry’, in Dunlop (1981:7-8) and Kinsella (2009:34-35). The poem has also appeared in *The Band of Hope Journal and Australian Home Companion* (Sydney, Saturday 5 June 1858, 179-181); *Evening News* (Sydney, Tuesday 11 February 1908, 2); Goddard (1934: 245); and Gunson (1974, 1:58).

small headed, bald man, of a most cheerful disposition, with a smile always on his countenance, except in the presence of strangers; and whenever he came to our tribe, his company was much enjoyed, an evening feast was provided, and the choicest tit-bits were set before the toothless guest. Oft were his gibes wont to set their table, on the green grass, in a roar of laughter, and their festive board, generally the bark of a tree, was enlivened before it ended in the midnight hour with his song and dance, assisted with his own voice and musical accompaniment of two sticks, beating time to the divine inspiration of the sacred muse.

I deduce from these texts that the poet's name was probably 'Wulatji' (as it would be spelt in the orthography developed for HRLM by Amanda Lissarrague 2006),<sup>20</sup> and that he was named after a spirit regarded as the ancestral prototype of the songman, something like an Aboriginal Orpheus (to draw a classical analogy that is probably more appropriate than Belus or Osiris). We might speculate, for example that the human Wulatji inherited the name, perhaps through a chain of succession, from a deceased teacher or kinsman. This would make the relationship between Wulatji and his namesake a close personal one, involving perhaps the kind of identification of the singer with his predecessor that Marett (2000:23-24) discusses in relation to the *wangga* song traditions of north-western Australia.<sup>21</sup>

On the other hand, Dunlop's reference to this spirit entity as 'a god of Poesy' and her comparison with gods of ancient Egypt and the Near East suggest rather a more universal figure, one whose role is to inspire song in all those capable of receiving the 'supernatural gift'. Such figures are certainly not common in Aboriginal Australia, where most spirit entities are localised and incorporated into the kinship system. Still, the south-east is one of the regions where 'transcendental powers' are known, and these 'stand in equal relation to all things, including men' (Jones 1980:156; see also Parker 1905:7). Jones cites the 'All-Father' of the south-east – probably most widely known by his Wiradjuri name, 'Baayami'<sup>22</sup> – as an example. Moreover, Baayami is reported by a number of sources (e.g. Thomas 1905:51 and Berndt 1947:336) to be a giver of song. So it seems at least plausible that there could be others (one of which might be the Wahwee) who are specifically associated with song incubation.

The notion that Wulatji (as spirit) could be a 'transcendental power' responsible for song incubation is possibly supported by the etymology of his name. My hypothesis is that the name comes not from HRLM, in which Wulatji's poem was composed, but rather from Wiradjuri, where *wula* is glossed by the Wiradjuri dictionary (Grant & Rudder 2010:473) as 'sound, voice, a call', and *-dyi* is a form of the ablative suffix (Grant & Rudder 2010:345, 353). So the whole name could be interpreted to mean something like 'origin of sound'. Apart from the appositeness of the gloss, this interpretation is supported by two other factors: there is no plausible etymology of the name in HRLM; and Wulatji's poem includes another Wiradjuri word that, like *wula*, doesn't occur in the HRLM dictionary.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> The form of Wulatji's name ('Wallatu') that was published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* is probably a misprint. In Threlkeld's transcription of the relevant passage, he rendered the opening words as 'There is a god of Poesy, Wallati' (Gunson 1974, vol. 1:58). In other words, he interpreted the final vowel of the name as *i*. But it is also clear that he regarded Dunlop's interpretation of the first vowel as a mishearing, since he proceeds to spell the name, in his own orthography, as 'Wúllati'. (The accented *u* was his convention for representing /u/. Without an accent, his *u* generally means /a/. See the 'Key' to his Australian spelling book [1836:4].) Threlkeld and Dunlop appear to be in agreement about the consonants. But the fact that 'the white folks' heard the last consonant in 'Woolaje' as a *j* suggests strongly that the phoneme was in fact the laminal stop (represented in the Lissarrague orthography as /tj/), probably realised as the dental allophone, [t̪]. The apical and laminal stops (/t/ and /tj/, respectively) are contrastive in HRLM, but Threlkeld rarely differentiated between them.

<sup>21</sup> To elaborate the classical parallel: in the Renaissance, Orpheus was regarded as the spiritual forebear of a lineage of singer-composers, from Homer to Marsilio Ficino (Warden 1982:86).

<sup>22</sup> As spelt in the contemporary Wiradjuri orthography developed by Grant and Rudder (2010:290). See also Appendix D of the present chapter.

<sup>23</sup> Specifically, *yambi* – see below, and Grant & Rudder (2010:479).



While Wulatji and the Wahwee have in common that they both inspire song, there is one immediately obvious difference between the incubation procedures associated with them. In the case of the Wahwee (and also of the unnamed ‘helping spirit’ in Lommel’s account from the other side of the continent), there is a dream journey to the underworld. But dreams inspired by Wulatji entail being transported upwards, to a ‘sunny hill’. One might compare here a different dream from the same region, as recorded by the missionary Threlkeld (Gunson 1974, 1:134). It has become known in the literature (e.g. van Toorn 2006:47-52, Keary 2009:143) as ‘Biraban’s dream’:

M’Gill [Biraban] came, and related to me as follows:– ‘The night before last, when coming hither, I slept on the other side of the Lake, I dreamed that I and my party of blacks were up in the Heavens; that we stood on a cloud; I looked round about in the Heavens; I said to the men that were with me, there He is? there is He who is called Jehovah; here he comes flying like fire with a great shining – this is He about whom the whites speak. He appeared to me like a man with clothing of fire, red like a flame. His arms were stretched out like the wings of a bird in the act of flying. He did not speak to us, but only looked earnestly at us as he was flying past. I said to the blacks with me, let us go down, lest he take us away; we descended on the top of a very high mountain . . . we came to the bottom, and just as we reached the level ground, I awoke. We often dream of this mountain, many blacks fancy themselves on the top when asleep.’

Possibly this mountain is the same ‘sunny hill’ to which Wulatji transports his songmen.<sup>24</sup> In any case, the two locations have in common that they are associated with high places and thus probably with a mythology in which the distinction between sky and earth is significant (as it is in other parts of Australia, see e.g. Morton 1989:281).

Before we come to the song itself, let me return, for a moment, to the identity of the human Wulatji. He may well be the poet mentioned by Horatio Hale (1846:110) in the account of his visit to Australia with the United States Exploring Expedition in 1839: ‘In the tribe on Hunter’s River, there was a native famous for the composition of these songs or hymns, which, according to Mr. Threlkeld were passed from tribe to tribe, to a great distance, until many of the words became at last unintelligible to those who sang them.’<sup>25</sup> In support of this conjecture, I note that his song is fame-worthy in a number of ways: it is by far the longest of any of the song texts from the colonial period, with the exception of another song in the same language, which (as I argue below) is probably the work of the same songman. The two songs are also, clearly, the compositions of a highly accomplished poet, and (rather rare) examples of what could be thought of as the ‘lyric’ genre in Aboriginal poetry.<sup>26</sup>

The other poem that I suggest is attributable to Wulatji is the one that Percy Haslam published in 1984 and 1986, the first time under the title ‘Awabakal poem’. The only information about its provenance that Haslam furnishes is that it was ‘recorded by a family south of Swansea in the 1850s’

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<sup>24</sup> I conjecture that the mountain in question is probably Mount Yango, in both cases. (See appendix D, ‘Notes on some placenames mentioned in the text’.)

<sup>25</sup> There is at least a suggestion, in Hale’s account, that this ‘famous native’ composed a song (or songs) that was sung in honour of Baayami, and also that he may have been part of the group of ‘strange natives, who went about teaching it’ (Hale 1846:110). This conjecture is necessarily somewhat speculative. Like Katie Parker (1905:80), who transcribed the song in question half a century later, I have been unable to translate it (or even identify the language).

<sup>26</sup> For a discussion of Aboriginal song genres, see the introduction to this volume, and also C. H. Berndt (1978a) and Clunies Ross (1986).

(1984:71).<sup>27</sup> This fits fairly neatly with the evidence that Threlkeld provides about Wulatji, in his commentary on the song published by Dunlop:

Such is a fair specimen of Song, translated with a little poetic licence. The orthography, although different from the system laid down in my Australian Grammar, sufficiently conveys the sound to enable me at once to discover the dialect of Wúllati the Poet who resided, near our residence on the sea shore, close to moon Island, until he died. The word ‘*Nung-ngnún*’ means a song, and when attached to the verbalizing affix *wit-til-li-ko* becomes *Nung-ngún wit-til-li-ko*, according to the idiom of the language, For to song a song, – English, to sing a song.

Moon Island<sup>28</sup> lies opposite Swansea Channel, at the entrance to Lake Macquarie. Geoff Ford (2010:350, note 85) writes that Wulatji ‘retired’ to this location, which might suggest that the poet came from Wollombi – the small Hunter Valley settlement where Mrs Dunlop was living at the time she recorded the words of Wulatji’s song. But as far as I have been able to determine, there is no evidence as to where this original documenting took place. In the likely event that it did indeed happen at Wollombi, Wulatji was most probably a visitor, whether long or short term, since the language of both of his poems is that of HRLM, not the language of Wollombi, which is generally accepted to be Darkinyung.<sup>29</sup>

Other works have also been ascribed to Wulatji, at least by implication. Roy Hamilton Goddard, great-grandson of Eliza Hamilton Dunlop, attributes one of the four songs he has transcribed (1934:245-46) from the Milson manuscript (Milson c. 1840+) to ‘the Wollombi poet’ (1934:245). In the context, this appears to imply (erroneously, in my view) that the poet was Wulatji, and could be read as suggesting that he composed the other songs in the manuscript (images 9, 15, 19, 20) as well.

The manuscript is written in various hands, and Goddard attributes its authorship to ‘Mrs. E. H. Dunlop and her daughter (Mrs. Rachel Milson) and granddaughter (Mrs. J. H. Bettington)’ (1934:244).<sup>30</sup> It includes a vocabulary entitled ‘Words of the Wollombi Tribe of Aboriginal Natives New South Wales’ (images 16-18), of which Caroline Jones (2008:96) says, ‘these pages are recognizably Eliza Dunlop’s handwriting, not Mrs Milson’s’. Authorship of the other sections of the manuscript is not so clear. The document includes vocabularies in several different languages and a

<sup>27</sup> Haslam died in 1987, and I have been unable to trace an original manuscript from the 1850s in his papers – or, at least, among those held in the Haslam Collection at the University of Newcastle (see Cultural Collections 2016). The absence of an original version leaves Haslam open to the suspicion that he has forged the text. Still, the poem has been composed with a level of technical skill that would be very surprising to find in a non-Indigenous person living long after the language ceased to be spoken. (The song has been interlinearised in Lissarrague 2006:272-273.)

<sup>28</sup> This islet appears on Google Maps under the name ‘Green Island’. However, according to the website of the Geographical Names Board of NSW, the official name is ‘Moon Island’. The website notes that ‘Green Island’ was the ‘previous name’ (see Geographical Names Board of New South Wales n.d.).

<sup>29</sup> The Milson manuscript (Milson c. 1840+) includes a vocabulary entitled ‘Words of the Wollombi Tribe of Aboriginal Natives New South Wales’ (images 16-18), which has been attributed to E. H. Dunlop by Caroline Jones (2008:7, 96) and is recognisably Darkinyung. The manuscript is unpaginated, so I have referenced it according to the image numbers in the online version, made available by the State Library of NSW at <http://acmssearch.sl.nsw.gov.au/search/itemDetailPaged.cgi?itemID=950311> [accessed 20 January 2016]. (This incorporates frames 35-57 of the microfilm version.)

<sup>30</sup> See appendix C of the present chapter (‘Sketch genealogy of E. H. Dunlop’s descendants and affines’) for clarification of these relationships. Goddard himself was the son of Rachel Milson’s youngest daughter, Mrs Thalia Dunlop Goddard, and therefore presumably the person who donated the manuscript to the Mitchell Library, referred to in the attribution at the head of the manuscript: ‘by Mrs Milson grandmother of the donor’. He was also the author of a number of publications on the rock carvings and material culture of the Wollombi region (e.g. Goddard 1937a, 1937b). Oddly, the Mitchell Library’s bookplate (Milson c. 1840+: image 2) refers to the donor as ‘D. Goddard’. Since none of Goddard’s siblings had names with the initial letter ‘D’, this is possibly an error.

comparative table (image 14), but the heading ‘Murree gwalda or Blacks Language of Comileroi’ (image 5) evidently applies at least to the pages that occur as images 5-13 of the online version,<sup>31</sup> and probably to other parts of the manuscript as well.

In any case, the ‘spring song’ (‘Curreele yananay curreelba’) that Goddard attributes to ‘the Wollombi poet’ has been partly reconstituted by John Giacon (2010), and, even with gaps, the language is clearly Gamilaraay or a related dialect. The style is also so different from the HRLM song transcribed by Dunlop that there appears to be no good reason for attributing it to Wulatji. This probably applies to the other songs in the Milson manuscript<sup>32</sup> as well. Giacon has been able to recognise Gamilaraay words in some of them, and I have not been able to find any positive indication that the language is HRLM.

#### 4 Wulatji’s song: the text

Here is the first published version of the song, as it appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in 1848.

Nung-Ngnun  
Nge a runba wonung bulkirra umbilinto bulwarra;  
Pital burra kultan wirripang buntoa

Nung-Ngnun  
Nge a runba turruma berrambo, burra kilkoa:  
Kurri wi, raratoa yella walliko,  
Yulo Moane, woinya, birung poro bulliko,

Nung-Ngnun  
Nge a runba kan wullung, Makora, kokein,  
Mip-pa-rai, kekul, wimbi murr ring kirrika:  
Nge a runba mura ke-en kulbun kulbun murrung.

Dunlop included her own verse translation (or adaptation), which, although extremely free, at least provides some guidelines for the reconstitution of the original song.

Our home is the gibber-gunyah,  
Where hill joins hill on high;  
Where the turruma and berrambo,  
Like sleeping serpents lie; –  
And the rushing of wings, as the wangas pass,  
Sweeps the wallaby’s print from the glistening grass.

Ours are the makoro gliding,  
Deep in the shady pool;  
For our spear is sure, and the prey secure . . .  
Kanin, or the bright gherool.  
Our lubras sleep by the bato clear,  
That the Amygest’s track hath never been near.

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<sup>31</sup> John Giacon (2010) has confirmed that the vocabulary in the wordlists on these pages comes predominantly from Gamilaraay and the related language Yuwaalaraay.

<sup>32</sup> See also O’Leary (2011:40-41).

Ours is the koolema flowing  
 With precious kirrika stored;  
 For fleet the foot, and keen the eye,  
 That seeks the nukkung's hoard; –  
 And the glances are bright, and the footsteps are free,  
 When we dance in the shade of the karakon tree.

Dunlop divides the poem into three unequal sections and precedes each one with the word 'Nung-Ngun', which we know from Threlkeld (in Gunson 1974, vol. 1:58) means 'song'.<sup>33</sup> It is unclear whether these headings have been supplied by Dunlop or whether such 'announcements' formed part of the actual performance of the song. This latter possibility seems unlikely, since the interpolations break the song into three unequal sections. It is more plausibly analysed as falling into four equal sections, each consisting of eight measures, as below, where I treat each of the four sections as a 'verse', and each half verse of four measures as a 'line'.<sup>34</sup>

**Table 9.1 (part 1):** Reconstitution of 'Nung-Ngun' ('Song'), based on Dunlop's 'Native poetry' (1848a)

**Nung-Ngun** (*nannguyn*, 'song')

<b>Verse 1, line 1</b>														
Measure 1				2				3				4		
♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪
<i>ngayaran</i>	<i>-pa</i>	<i>wanang</i>	<i>palkirr</i> <sup>i</sup>	<i>yampi</i> <sup>ii</sup>	<i>-li-n</i>	<i>-tu</i> <sup>iii</sup>	<i>pulwarra</i>							
1PL	-GEN	where	mountain	live.with	-CT-PRS	-ERG	high.place							
<b>Verse 1, line 2</b>														
Measure 5				6				7				8		
♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪
<i>pital</i>	<i>para</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>-tan</i> <sup>iv</sup>	<i>wiri</i> <sup>v</sup>	<i>pang</i>	<i>pantu</i> <sup>&gt;</sup>	<i>wa</i> <sup>vi</sup>							
happy	3PL.NOM	be	-PRS	eaglehawk		wallaby								
<b>Verse 2, line 1</b>														
Measure 9				10				11				12		
♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪
<i>ngayaran</i>	<i>-pa</i>	<i>tarama</i>	<i>pi</i> <sup>&gt;</sup>	<i>rampu</i> <sup>vii</sup>	<i>para</i>	<i>-kiluwa</i> <sup>viii</sup>								
1PL	-GEN	war.boomerang	waddy		3PL	-SEMB								
<b>Verse 2, line 2</b>														
Measure 13				14				15				16		
♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪
<i>kariway</i>		<i>ngaratuwa</i> <sup>ix</sup>		<i>yalawa</i>	<i>-li</i>	<i>-ku</i>								
snake		asleep		sit	-DVB	-PURP								

<sup>33</sup> Lissarrague (2006:125) reconstructs the word as *NanguN*; I hypothesise rather *nannguyn*.

<sup>34</sup> For present purposes, I define 'line' (of a song) as the smallest metrical unit with a boundary cue (such as a pause or a lengthened final note). In this context, a verse is a group of lines based on a metrical schema that recurs in the course of the song.

Verse 3, line 1													
Measure 17				18			19				20		
♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪
<i>yulu</i> <sup>x</sup>		<i>muwayn</i>	<i>wuyu</i>	<i>-nya</i> > <sup>xi</sup>		<i>pirang</i>	<i>puru</i> >		<i>pa</i>	<i>-li</i>	<i>-ku</i>		
dance		kangaroo	grass	-MT		-ABL	smooth		-DVB	-PURP			
Verse 3, line 2													
Measure 21				22			23				24		
♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪
<i>ngayaran</i>		<i>-pa</i>	<i>ka -n</i>	<i>walang</i> <sup>xii</sup>		<i>makurr</i>	<i>kukuyn</i>		<i>miparay</i>				
1PL		-GEN	be -PRS	head		fish	water		honeycomb				
Verse 4, line 1													
Measure 25				26			27				28		
♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	◦		
<i>kaykal</i>		<i>wimpi</i>	<i>marrarring</i> <sup>xiii</sup>		<i>kiri</i> >		<i>ka</i>						
sweet		coolamon	inside		honey								
Verse 4, line 2													
Measure 29				30			31				32		
♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	
<i>ngayaran</i>		<i>-pa</i>	<i>marrakiyn</i>		<i>kalpankalpan</i>				<i>marrang</i>				
1PL		-GEN	girl		beautiful				good				

My glosses are almost all taken from Lissarrague's HRLM wordlist and grammar (2006). The few exceptions are noted in Table 9.1 (part 2) below. A list of abbreviations used in the glosses is provided at the end of this chapter, before the appendices.

**Table 9.1 (part 2):** notes to the reconstitution of 'Nannguyn'

- <sup>i</sup> The final *a* in Dunlop's 'bulkirra' is probably not a separate syllable but rather a superfluous element of her orthographic convention for representing the alveolar rhotic /r/ at the end of a word. She has used the same convention in the case of 'makora' (*makurr*, 'fish').
- <sup>ii</sup> I have assumed that this word has the same form and meaning as Wiradjuri *yambi*, 'live with, stay together as a man with a woman (as husband and wife)' (Grant and Rudder 2010:479), and that the initial consonant, *y*, has been elided in Dunlop's transcription (and possibly in Wulatji's rendition as well).
- <sup>iii</sup> The only sense I can make of *-tu* is as a likely example of poetic licence. I take it that *yampi* must be a transitive verb, in which case the ergative suffix required on the noun (here, *palkirr*) has been displaced to follow the verb (and observes the same morphophonemic rule as with a noun).
- <sup>iv</sup> The source form is 'kultan'. This can only be a misprint for 'kuttan'.
- <sup>v</sup> Where a morpheme crosses the boundary between two measures, I have indicated this by using the right-facing chevron symbol (>) after the first part. This permits the hyphen to be reserved for suffixes.
- <sup>vi</sup> HRLM *pantarr*, 'kangaroo' (Lissarrague 2006:130); Gathang *bandaarr*, 'wallaby' (Lissarrague 2010:176). I have adopted Mrs Dunlop's interpretation of the meaning ('wallaby'), and also of the phonology

- (/pantuwa/). This apparently aberrant form may be dialectal, or possibly a poetic convention is in play. While it would be possible to treat Dunlop's version as a mishearing, it is actually a better fit with the rhyme scheme and metre.
- vii I have found two sources for the translation of this word. One is the 'Comileroi' wordlist in the Milson manuscript (c. 1840+), where 'Birrambo' occurs with the meaning 'Waddy' (image 11 of the online version). The other is the glossary that accompanies E. H. Dunlop's adaptation of Wulatji's poem in Isaac Nathan's *Southern Euphrosyne* (1848:94), where Dunlop spells the word as 'berrambo' and glosses it thus: 'the waddy or war-club, similar to those of New Zealand'. Wulatji's original poem is not included with this version, which is headed 'Pialla Wollombi', rendered as 'the poetry or language of Wollombi'. 'Pialla' is probably borrowed from the Sydney language, where the verb *baya-* means 'to speak' (Troy 1994:73). Dunlop does not include Wulatji's original song text in this version, and her adaptation differs in a number of ways from the version published in the same year in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. But both versions include a number of 'Aboriginal' words that are not actually in Wulatji's original, and the two sets of such words (and their glosses) are not identical. Appendix B ('E. H. Dunlop's glossaries', at the end of the present chapter) provides a comparative table (Table 9.4) of these words, with likely language affiliations.
- viii The source form appears to be 'kilkoa'. I have assumed this is a misprint for 'killoa'; that is, the HRLM semblative suffix *-kiluwa* (Lissarrague 2006:62). If this supposition is correct, and the usage here is not an example of poetic licence, it suggests that the suffix can be used with free pronouns (otherwise only attested on nouns and demonstratives).
- ix Since there are no words in HRLM that begin with a rhotic, Dunlop's 'raratoa' is clearly a mishearing, and the most likely basis of the word is HRLM *ngarapu*, 'asleep' (Lissarrague 2006:126). The distortion of the usual form of the word follows a pattern very similar to the one noted above in relation to *pantuwa*. In other words, it is possible that the same poetic convention (omitting the last syllable of the word and substituting it with *-tuwa*) is being applied.
- x Gamilaraay, Yuwaalaraay, Yuwaalayaay: *yulu-gi*, 'dance, play' etc. [intransitive verb] (Ash, Giacon and Lissarrague 2003:156).
- xi I am obliged to treat *-nya* as a metrical element or some other kind of poetic convention. The usual ablative case suffix here would be *-kpirang*.
- xii The significance of 'head' in this context is unclear, since the three words *walang*, 'head', *makurr*, 'fish' and *kukuyun*, 'water', are juxtaposed without any indicators, apart from the sequence, of their syntactic relationship.
- xiii HRLM *marraring*, 'inside' (attested in Threlkeld's translation of Luke 9:34, e.g. in Fraser 1892:153).

The literal translation is as follows:

Ours is the place where the mountains cohabit with the heights  
The eaglehawks and wallabies are happy

Ours are the boomerangs and waddies, they are like  
Snakes lying asleep

The kangaroos dance on the grass to smooth it down  
Ours is the head of the fish in the water

The sweet honeycomb, the nectar inside the wooden bowl  
Ours are the splendid and beautiful young women.

## 5 Wulatji's song: formal analysis

This reconstruction treats the song as divided into 32 measures with a value of 4 beats each. These are grouped into lines of 4 measures, each of which is divided into 2 hemistichs (half-lines) of two measures each. The underlying pattern for each line is 16 quarter notes, lengthened to half notes or whole notes when required by the metre, often at or towards the end of a line. The main ambiguity in my reconstruction is the placement of the caesuras (which is relevant to where the long notes occur in the line). The major caesuras occur between the two halves of each line, and the minor caesuras between each measure (or, to put it another way, between the two halves of each hemistich). I have based my decisions about the caesuras largely on the premise that the composer of this song puts the stress in the normal position on a word – that is, on the first syllable – when this is possible. (This contrasts with some practices in other parts of Australia, where the stress is intentionally distorted.) A noteworthy thing about this song is its use of metrical breaks in the middle of words. This occurs across (major) caesuras in line 2 (*wiri- // pang*), line 3 (*pi- // rampu*), and line 5 (*wuyu-nya // -pirang*).

If my analysis holds good, the song shows a quite remarkable symmetry, consisting as it does of 8 lines of 16 beats each. The structure can be conceptualised in terms of powers of 2. Each measure consists of  $2^2$  beats; each hemistich consists of  $2^3$  beats; each line consists of  $2^4$  beats; each verse consists of  $2^5$  beats; and the song as a whole consists of  $2^7$  beats. This suggests that there is probably also an implicit grouping of  $2^6$  beats, which divides the song into halves – two groups of two verses each.<sup>35</sup> This is hinted at also by a change in the metrical pattern. In the first half of the song, two short notes followed by one long note is the underlying pattern for the last measure in each line; in the second half of the song, it is the underlying pattern for the last (i.e. second) measure in each hemistich. The only deviation from this pattern occurs in the last verse, where the meter needs to accommodate an aberrant number of syllables in both lines. The syllable count for the whole song is 15/12/15/12/14/14/10/13, which suggests a metrical schema of AABB (or possibly AABC).

This may also have implications for the melodic structure. There are no repetitions in the song text, but the metrical similarities with songs from other parts of Australia suggest that the melody is likely to be strophic (rather than through-composed). Moreover, the relationship between melody and text is likely to be mainly syllabic, although the irregularities in the syllable count could be indicative of melismas. Beyond that, we can speculate that the melodic contour might plausibly follow a descending pattern covering an octave. I base this conjecture not just on the premise that this contour is common (and perhaps the commonest) in Aboriginal music in most parts of Australia (Jones 1965:371-372), but also on the fact that we know it was used in the immediate linguistic region in which Wulatji was active. Threlkeld wrote, of Indigenous singers he heard in Newcastle, that 'their tune is rather dismal; they begin high and end in about an octave below the pitch' (Gunson 1974, 1:86).<sup>36</sup> While the metrical variations suggest that the melody is unlikely to be the same for

<sup>35</sup> We could perhaps call these two units 'stanzas', although this would imply either that they have distinctive formal properties that are recognised in the relevant literary tradition (as in the stanzas of a Petrarchan sonnet), or that they represent distinct iterations of the melody. In neither case do we have the evidence to apply the usage to the present song.

<sup>36</sup> This is Threlkeld's most specific account of melody. He also makes a number of less informative comments on Aboriginal singing and dancing (e.g. Gunson 1974:56-59, 63). There are no audio recordings or transcriptions of the Indigenous music of this region, and very few reports that attempt to describe it verbally. Apart from Threlkeld's passing references, there is also an account (Anon. 1869), by an anonymous journalist from the *Maitland Mercury*, of an 'Aboriginal corroboree' performed in 1869, in Maitland. This took place on Nicholson Racecourse, in front of a paying public. (My thanks to Stephen Wye for drawing this article to my attention.) By contrast with the poverty of the written accounts, at least two of the most detailed early images of Aboriginal ceremonies come from this region – Joseph Lycett's painting known as 'Corroboree at Newcastle', dating to about 1818, and the engraving attributed to Walter Preston called 'Corroboree, or Dance of the Natives of New South Wales, New Holland'. (See <https://coalriver.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/a928350u.jpg>; <https://downloads.newcastle.edu.au/library/cultural%20collections/images/PrestonCorroboree1820.jpg>;

every verse, it is impossible to know how the melodic sections and repetitions might be aligned with metrical units.

Throughout the song, we find a clever use of end rhyme, internal rhyme, alliteration and assonance. There are only a few linguistic ambiguities, where I have had to resort to ‘poetic licence’ as the justification for my reconstruction.

1. *-tu* in measure 3.
2. *pantuwa* (instead of *pantarr*) in measures 7-8.
3. *ngaratuwa* (instead of *ngarapu*) in measure 14.
4. *-nyapirang* (instead of *-kpirang* in measures 18-19).

This kind of ‘aesthetic alteration of spoken vocabulary in Aboriginal song’ (Bracknell, this volume<sup>37</sup>) is very common throughout Australia.

The ‘foreign’ words (by which I mean the words that don’t occur in Lissarrague’s 2006 HRLM wordlist and have to be reconstructed on the basis of words from other languages) are:

1. *yampi* (measure 3). Dunlop translates this as ‘joins’, which almost certainly indicates that the Wiradjuri meaning, ‘live together as man and woman’ (Grant and Rudder 2010:479) applies here. The fact that it is used with HRLM tense suffixes suggests that the word is likely to have occurred in HRLM as well as Wiradjuri.

2. *yulu* (measure 17). This is a verb root meaning ‘dance, play’ in Gamilaraay, Yuwaalaraay and Yuwaalayaay (Ash, Giacon and Lissarrague 2003:156). It is used here without tense suffixes, which suggests that the word is being treated as a nominal (so either ‘the dancing of the kangaroos’ or ‘the dancing kangaroos’). The occurrence of this word in HRLM is possibly attested also by the first line of the second of two songs that Threlkeld published in 1826: ‘Yulo burrah mirre’. My tentative interpretation of this line is as *yulu para mirri* (play 3PL.NOM dog) ‘the dogs (are) dancing/playing’. If this is correct, it means that in HRLM *yulu* is a nominal, not a verb, and means not just ‘a dance/play’ but can also be used adjectivally: ‘dancing’, ‘playing’, ‘at play’ etc.

3. *pirampu* (measures 10-11). We know from the Milson manuscript (c. 1840+: image 11) that the word spelt there, in the ‘Comileroi’ section, as ‘Berrambo’ is translated as ‘Waddy’. This gloss is confirmed in the notes to the poem that Dunlop (1848b) published under the title ‘Pialla Wollombi’ in Isaac Nathan’s *Southern Euphrosyne* (1848:94). I have not been able to trace it in other Gamilaraay sources (such as Ash, Giacon and Lissarrague 2003).

## 6 Kinship and Aboriginal ‘arts of memory’

In many parts of Aboriginal Australia songs function as mnemonic devices for memorising placenames and/or their associated stories and features (Hercus and Simpson 2002:12; Payne 1984:265, 1989:46-47). Indeed, certain categories of song constitute what we might call ‘audible maps’. There is good evidence to support this in the areas where a substantial song corpus has been preserved (see e.g. Strehlow 1971 and cf. Ellis 1984:152). But it needs to be emphasised that songs of this type (such as the travelling song cycles that narrate mythical journeys) codify more than just topography. They are also social maps, in which the individual localities constitute the nodes in a vast kinship network.

Each site is associated with a mythical being who stands in a particular kin relationship to all the relevant components of its environment: other places and their ancestral beings, as well as humans, animals, plants and some natural phenomena, such as moon and rain. The geographical features (and some celestial features – see Johnson 1998:103-114) provide the focal components of a mnemotechnical system in which the ‘loci’ (Yates 1966:18-19 and *passim*) or ‘topoi’ (Carruthers 1990:29 and *passim*) are *literal* (as distinct from, or perhaps in addition to being, metaphorical or mythical) ‘places’. These places are related to each other not just by the routes of travel that connect them, but also by a taxonomic schema that is based primarily on kinship.

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and <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2014/01/20/corroboree-wickham/> [all accessed 29 August 2017].

<sup>37</sup> Chapter 1 (see section entitled ‘Poetic alterations’).



In the south-east, where the documentation of Aboriginal music is fragmentary, there are no records of songs of this ‘cartographic’ type.<sup>38</sup> Nonetheless, the surviving song material has the potential to illuminate other relevant aspects of the cultures of the region. In the case of Wulatji’s song, for example, there appear to be implicit references to a particular type of kin classification that is known from other parts of the country (in central NSW) but not from the Hunter River and Lake Macquarie, where the language of the song was spoken. So little is known about the kinship system of this region that the poem may well prove to be one of the only relevant sources.<sup>39</sup> At the same time, it can possibly tell us something about mnemotechnical practices in this culture area.

In 2012 Carlo Severi published an article that drew attention to the relevance of the ‘arts of memory’ discourse to anthropology. He also provided a helpful definition of an ‘art of memory’ (or ‘mnemotechnic’): ‘the use of taxonomic thought and the creation of a visual form of salience’ (Severi 2012: 475). While I question the need for the ‘forms of salience’ to be visual (and propose that in Australia they are predominantly auditory<sup>40</sup>), the main point is that ‘arts of memory’ are intimately linked to a language’s classification system, its organisation of all cultural knowledge into semantic domains. Wulatji’s poem suggests that the same kind of ‘binarising’ taxonomic thinking that is common throughout Australia may have been characteristic of the Hunter River and Lake Macquarie region as well.

The opening line of the poem includes the word *yampi*. As mentioned above, this is probably a loan from Wiradjuri, where it is glossed as ‘live with, stay together as a man with a woman (as husband and wife)’ (Grant and Rudder 2010:479). This word is applied to the relationship between *palkirr*, ‘the mountain(s)’ and *pulwarra*, ‘the high place(s)’. My suggestion is that there are two specific peaks or ranges involved, and that the relationship between them has something to do with intermarrying groups.<sup>41</sup>

It seems likely that the theme of cohabitation that is introduced in the first line is continued in at least the second, and possibly in later ones as well. In the second line the eaglehawk is paired with the wallaby. The eaglehawk is mythologically significant in many parts of Australia, and is often partnered with another creature. Most famously, in the Upper Murray region there was a widespread matrimoiety system that treated the eaglehawk and the crow as emblematic of the two moieties (see Wafer and Lissarrague 2008:420).<sup>42</sup> This is not to imply necessarily that the eaglehawk and wallaby had a function as straightforward as this in the Hunter district.<sup>43</sup> I suggest that the more likely import

<sup>38</sup> But note that McDonald (this volume, Chapter 7) argues persuasively that songs of the travelling song cycle type probably did occur in the south-east.

<sup>39</sup> Sources from the late-nineteenth century (Fawcett 1898:180; Fison and Howitt 1880:280) indicate that the inland dialects of HRLM, such as Wanarruwa and Kayawaykal, used the same section system as the speakers of Gamilaraay (see also Wafer and Lissarrague 2008:449-450). But Threlkeld’s substantial body of work on the coastal dialects makes no mention of this system (nor, for that matter, of any other).

<sup>40</sup> This runs contrary to the standard assumptions of the ‘arts of memory’ discourse. Mary Carruthers (1990: 18), for example, has said that ‘material presented acoustically [must be] turned into visual form’ to be mnemotechnically useful. This is not the place to debate the point; but I refer the reader to Walter Ong’s (1983:281) observations about the shift ‘toward the visual throughout the whole cognitive field’ that happened in fifteenth and sixteenth century Europe; and also to Gary Tomlinson’s (1993:135) and Murray Schafer’s (1994:10-11) comments on the same subject.

<sup>41</sup> Wollombi, where Mrs Dunlop probably heard this song from Wulatji, is the closest settlement of any size to Mount Yango. Since Yango is a site of major significance, I conjecture that it could be one of the peaks implied. (See appendix D, ‘Notes on some placenames mentioned in the text’.)

<sup>42</sup> The pairing of Eaglehawk and Crow is widespread in Australia (see, for example, Waterman (1987:38, 54, 62, 78, 107). Some representative interpretations include Mathew (1899:15-22), Blows (1975, 1995), and van Toorn (2006:31-34).

<sup>43</sup> Such an obvious moiety system is unlikely to have escaped the attention of Lancelot Threlkeld. In spite of his general disinterest in and disdain for Indigenous mythology, he did impart some precious details about the place of the Eaglehawk in the lore of the Hunter Valley-Lake Macquarie region to W. Augustus Miles

of their pairing in this song has to do with a principle of kin classification about which we know very little. It is a form of dual classification that appears not to be based on any of the three types of moiety that are fairly well understood in Australia (matrimoieties, patrimoieties and generation moieties), but on some other principle of recruitment that has never been adequately explained in the literature. It is vaguely known as ‘totemism’, but in its manifestations in NSW, it is sometimes called ‘bloods’, ‘shades’ or ‘winds’. The moieties are based on contrasting properties of these terms – quick and slow blood, shade of branch and trunk, hot wind and cold wind (Testart 1980:76-79; Wafer and Lissarrague 2008:442-445).

The relevant form of totemism in the present case is based on a distinction between creatures that have fur and those that have scales or feathers, as occurs in Wangaaypuwan (Radcliffe-Brown 1923:425) and other languages of central NSW. It seems at least plausible that this type of binary classification could underlie Wulatji’s pairing of the eaglehawk and the wallaby, as well as the juxtaposition of some of the other creatures (and artefacts) in the poem. It is applicable, for example, in the case of ‘snake’ and ‘kangaroo’, and probably also of ‘fish’ and ‘honeycomb’.<sup>44</sup> It could also be metaphorically applied in the case of the two different kinds of weapons.<sup>45</sup> This does not necessarily mean that this type of totemism was in use in the Hunter region. Its appearance in the poem might be an exotic reference that Wulatji picked up on his travels. On the other hand, we have absolutely no information at all about kin classification in the coastal dialects of HRLM, so there are no a priori reasons for not considering the fur/scale system as a possibility.

It could perhaps be argued that the structural features I have pointed out are merely a result of the *parallelismus membrorum* that characterises Aboriginal song. This term was invented in 1788 for the study of Hebrew poetry, but as Jakobson (1987) has shown, the stylistic device it designates is common in poetic-linguistic traditions around the world. Sachs (1943:92) defines the term as follows: ‘the half-verse is answered by another half-verse that expresses either an intensification or an antinomy’. Strehlow (1971:109-117) has drawn attention to the use of this device in Arrernte songs from Central Australia, and to the range of musical and textual means Arrernte song-persons deploy to achieve it. It appears to be common throughout the continent (cf. Donaldson 1987:36).

The relevant linguistic techniques include various kinds of word-play, such as the use of homonyms and words with a similar phonology but different meanings. We probably see an example of this in the last verse, where *marrakiyn* ends the first line and *marrang* the second. But in the rest of the poem, the parallelism seems to be semantic rather than phonological. And if it is semantic, then it is reasonable to hypothesise that the fur/scale division furnishes the principles according to

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(1854:23-25). ‘These tribes believe that the world was created by the diamond-tailed eagle, and that he brought in his beak, and deposited, the stones which form the mystic stone circles on many of the hill tops . . . The Rev. L. Threlkeld informs me that he has seen them on the very summits of the mountains at Lake Macquarrie [sic]; and the legend is, that they were brought there by the eagle-hawk, a bird of mysterious omen, and much revered by the blacks.’ Threlkeld himself wrote of the Eaglehawk’s role in the creation of the stone circles in his reminiscences (Gunson 1974, 1:66, cf. 73 n. 29, 78 n. 114). He had come across a group of these structures on an unspecified ‘high hill’, and his description (Gunson 1974, 1:66) bears comparison with that given by McDonald (1993:85) of the stone arrangements she and her party found on top of Mount Yango in 1987. It is worth noting as well that Threlkeld provided the HRLM name ‘Bo-ro-yi-róng’ for Pulbah Island (Threlkeld 1834:84), and I have argued elsewhere (Wafer 2017:295 n. 4) that this placename is probably derived from HRLM *puruyi*, ‘eaglehawk’ (Lissarrague 2006:135). For further relevant associations of the Eaglehawk, see Appendix D of the present chapter.

<sup>44</sup> Fish obviously belong with the creatures that have ‘scales and feathers’, and there is evidence (admittedly from a location far from the Hunter Valley) that bees (and therefore honeycomb) are more likely to be aligned with those that have ‘fur’. In the kinship system of the Annan River (near Cooktown), the section names are based on a distinction between (types of) bees and (types of) eaglehawks (Howitt 1904:118; see also McConvell and McConvell, forthcoming).

<sup>45</sup> C. H. Berndt (1978b:76) notes the opposition of digging stick and spear as symbolic of the division of the sexes, both in everyday life and in rituals (see also Payne 1993:16-17 on the ritual significance of the digging stick). My suggestion is that an analogous opposition may underlie the juxtaposing of boomerangs and waddies in the present poem – a distinction based not on gender, however, but on a different cosmological division, such as fur as opposed to scales and feathers.

which the antinomies are organised – even though the relevant paired terms are not systematically distributed in alternating half-verses.

A. P. Elkin (1970:705) observed that ‘the dual division is an essential feature of Aboriginal ritual, comprising aspects of opposition and co-operation’. There is evidence from many parts of Australia to support this generalisation (see also Radcliffe-Brown 1958, Durkheim and Mauss 1963:6-15); but there are also large gaps in the data, particularly in the south-east. If, as I speculate here, the semantic pairings in the poem do indeed reflect social divisions, this not only extends our understanding of the distribution of dual classification in Australia, but also indicates the fundamental nature of the role this binary principle plays in Australian taxonomic thinking and arts of memory.

## 7 Conclusion: song revitalisation through dreams

‘In ancient Greek religion . . . the Earth was believed to engender dreams’, according to Kimberley Patton (2004:205). I have not come across a formulation as explicit as this from Aboriginal Australia, but it is certainly implied in observations such as the following, by Arrernte speaker Margaret Kemarre Turner (2010:66-67):

This is a story that was told to me: We’d taught dancing to all these *Pertame*, Southern Arrernte girls, they were doing *anthepe*, women’s-side song and dance. And on that *anthepe* songs, it had all *Arrernte* people singing, old men singing. And when they took it down to Canberra – they did that dance traditional down there – well, they reckon all those Little People from that country, when they went to sleep they heard them singing! All these People from that country came talking to them in the Dream they reckoned, *akwele angketyekewe*, *apetyewarreke*, *alyelhewarreke*, *alyewerle*, talking, and singing their own songs in that country. That’s how people learn their own songs, you know, when people go and dance. *Irrerntarenye mape*, the People of that Land gives you them songs from your own place, wherever it might be. Anyhow, they could just hear all the Old People singing, and dancing, sitting around. But those young women didn’t understand the language. It wasn’t any of their language, so I think that the other language must still be alive *itethe ahelhele*. They couldn’t understand them because it was different. And it’s still there, the language and those songs and dances are definitely alive in the ground somewhere ’round there, Canberra-*thayate*. It’s good to know that.

The *irrerntarenye*<sup>46</sup> are essentially spirits of place, ‘People of that Land’.

*Irrerntarenye mape*, the People of that Land gives you them songs from your own place, wherever it might be (2010:67). *Irrerntarenye*’s everywhere, all over this country, and overseas as well . . . And some people may not know that there’s these Little Spirit People. But you’ve got to talk to the Little Spirit People, they’re waiting for you to talk to them and tell them who you are (2010:118).

The notion that at least some songs have their origins in ‘Country’<sup>47</sup> is widespread and possibly universal in Aboriginal Australia, though the land is generally understood to operate through

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<sup>46</sup> Defined by the Arrernte dictionary as ‘spirits in the shape of small people that live in the ground in some places’ (Henderson and Dobson 1994:404). There is a more comprehensive account of these beings in Róheim (1972:124-126). For further references to Australia’s ‘Little People’, see Clarke (2007:146, 150).

<sup>47</sup> When the noun ‘country’ is used in its distinctively Aboriginal sense, I capitalise it, in conformity with a convention that is becoming increasingly common among Aboriginal people themselves. For an example

intermediaries – such as the *irrerntarenye* (and other kinds of spirit beings), who communicate their messages to humans via songs that are received in dreams or visions.

Patton points out that ‘dream incubation’, in the ancient Mediterranean world, originally meant “going to sleep in a sacred place” . . . In other words, the starting point in a given incubation tradition could be the belief that the place “does” many things of metaphysical value, including sponsor iconic dreams for those who sleep there’ (Patton 2004:195 n. 2). This belief appears to be fundamental in Aboriginal cultures as well.<sup>48</sup> To give one clear example: Marett (2005:42) cites the case of John Dumoo, who ‘received a *wangga* song from a group of Walakandha [ghosts] while sleeping near their *kigatiya* Dreaming site at Wudi-djirridi’.

But the dreamer does not need to be physically present in the vicinity of a sacred site to receive a song from a spirit entity associated with that location. Bob Tonkinson (1970:276) notes that Western Desert people who live in the settlement of Jigalong, at some distance from their traditional homelands, nonetheless ‘claim to maintain continuous contact by making journeys to and from their home territories in dream-spirit form.’ It is in the course of these dream-spirit journeys that new songs are received (Tonkinson 1970:284).

Another strategy for maintaining the continuity of traditional practices in a changed physical environment is the dreaming of songs inspired by the spirits who inhabit the new location. Stephen Wild (1987) describes this process of ritual adjustment at Lajamanu, and Allan Marett (2000:27; 2005:4-5) gives an analogous account from Belyuen. Marett (2000:27) also observes that ‘in the aftermath of the displacements suffered by Aboriginal societies in the course of European settlement, the phenomenon of song dreaming has arguably become one of the principal mechanisms by which displaced social groups adapt to changing patterns of residence.’<sup>49</sup>

The underlying logic of this adjustment procedure is that every Aboriginal person has a duty to take care of Country (understood in the distinctively Aboriginal sense of the word, as referring to both ancestral land and the land in general<sup>50</sup>). This responsibility is not limited to issues of environmental management (as often interpreted by non-Aboriginal people), but requires entering into a communicative relationship with the land, which may then send dream songs via the spirits

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of this usage, and the reasons behind it, see <http://www.visitmungo.com.au/aboriginal-country> [accessed 9 May 2017].

<sup>48</sup> There are undoubtedly cases in Aboriginal Australia where the sonic properties of a place constitute a major factor in its mythological associations and metaphysics. Lake Alexandrina, for example, is mentioned by George Taplin (1879:62-63) as emitting a booming sound that local Aboriginal people attribute to a ‘water-spirit . . . called Mulgewanke’. (See also Clarke 2007:145.) The whirlpool of Jindirralgun, near Sunday Island in the Kimberley (Glaskin 2008:53-54), is another likely example. But the investigation of ‘soundscapes’ (Schafer 1994) is at such an early stage in Australia (see for example Richards ed. 2007) that it is too soon to make generalisations or draw conclusions. Whether the emerging fields of archaeoacoustics (Scarre and Lawson 2006; Eneix 2014) and acoustic ecology (Feld 2001) will be able to contribute to our understanding of Aboriginal musical traditions remains to be seen. Certainly, archaeologists in other parts of the world have reported good results from ‘treating the landscape as an intelligent interlocutor’ (Devereux 2013:61). This is also the approach that Australian sound artist Ros Bandt (2014) has used at Lake Mungo.

<sup>49</sup> Commenting on a similar situation among the Pintupi, Fred Myers (1986:53) observes ‘that historical change can be integrated, but . . . is assimilated to the pre-existing forms’. See also Redmond (2001).

<sup>50</sup> Deborah Bird Rose (2013:100) provides a good summary (based on fieldwork with people of the Victoria River District) of the concept of Country: ‘Australian Aboriginal people have picked up the word ‘country’ and remade it into a powerful signifier of local, multispecies belonging. In Indigenous country there is no nature/culture divide. One could say that country is all culture, but the more interesting point is that it is all sentient, communicative, relational and inter-active. In this sense, culture is not something you have, but rather is the way you live, and by implication, the way your knowledge arises and is worked with. Country is both the context of life and the emergent result of life being lived.’ Elsewhere (2004:153-154) she observes as follows: ‘A fundamental proposition . . . is that the living things of a country take care of their own. All living things are held to have an interest in the life of the country because their own life is dependent on the life of their country.’

who inhabit the place. The composition of new songs (of the ancestral kind) is not an end in itself, but is subordinated to the need to fulfill an obligation to the land by creating public performances of its messages.

Revitalisation strategies based on this principle could perhaps be summed up under the concept of 're-dreaming', which I borrow from an article by Ursula McConnel (1935:66<sup>51</sup>) on totemic rituals in Cape York:

One man said he had 'dreamed' the ritual of which he was in charge, but that his father had also 'dreamed' it before him. The ritualistic procedure is apparently handed down from one generation to another relatively intact, but it seems that a man 're-dreams' the ritual and so acquires the necessary mystical qualifications for carrying it on.<sup>52</sup>

If the incubation of new songs is considered an appropriate response to displacement in those regions where ancestral singing practices are ongoing, perhaps it can also serve to restore relationships to Country in the places where the song traditions have suffered serious disruption. The conclusion I draw from M. K. Turner's story is that the land itself has the potential, everywhere, to inspire contemporary Aboriginal people with musical dreams.

But how can the potential inherent in Country be realised in places where intergenerational ritual transmission has been disrupted? Does it require an understanding of traditional incubation techniques and performance practices? If so, can these be taught; for example, by veteran songpersons recruited from those parts of the country where the song traditions are still active?<sup>53</sup> These are the kinds of questions that can only be addressed by Aboriginal people themselves, as they face the multiple challenges of cultural renewal.

To leave the matter there would be to treat song revitalisation as a purely technical matter, and thus to neglect the broader philosophical issues that this discussion raises. If scholars, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, are to take seriously James Maffie's (2009) call for a 'global polycentric epistemology', we are obliged to face the task of developing the necessary conceptual tools. In the present case, for example, we have to find a 'bridging' language for discussing propositions like '*irrerntarenye*'s everywhere, all over this country, and overseas as well' – a language that avoids, on the one hand, the ethnocentric trap of dismissing such statements as

<sup>51</sup> See also Róheim (1945:6 and note 10).

<sup>52</sup> Two other chapters in the present volume also discuss re-dreaming. Nancarrow and Cleary (Chapter 10) mention that Lardil songmen re-dream songs not just in their own Country, but also when travelling (see note 53, below). Similarly, the account of 'dream-conceived songs' in Brown and Evans's Chapter 12 suggests that, in western Arnhem Land, musical dreams often entail a re-dreaming (although the authors do not use this term), rather than a creation *ex nihilo*. These accounts come from quite diverse locations, which suggests that the practice is very widespread in Aboriginal Australia. It is probably a familiar occurrence in Indigenous cultures of other continents as well. Linda Hogan (2013:23-24), for example, writes of 'a Northern Cheyenne man who said that some of their songs were lost during the times when the Americans chased Black Kettle's band back and forth across the continent . . . But, he said, the songs of those they lost during those painful times were held in trust for them by the wolves who taught them back to the people.' The presumably oneiric nature of this transmission suggests a plausible counterpart to 're-dreaming'.

<sup>53</sup> Nancarrow and Cleary, in the present volume, document a number of cases where Lardil songmen have dreamt songs during visits to places in southern Australia, including Jenolan Caves, Robinvale, a beach near Adelaide, and Morialta Falls. They make a couple of points that are worth noting here: 'These songs are regarded by the songmen as belonging to the country where they are dreamt, and are not necessarily meant for Lardil people . . . On one occasion Lardil songman Kenneth Jacob dreamt a red kangaroo song after visiting Morialta Falls near Adelaide. In the following days we returned to the falls to film him singing the song in situ. The footage and the song were passed on to Kaurna people as they were regarded as the true owners of the story.'

superstition, and, on the other, the New Age trap of simplifying Indigenous culture to the point where it can be appropriated and marketed.

### **Towards an ethnography of listening to silence**

My attempt to sketch some of the elements of such a bridging language begins with the contention that ‘dreaming’, in the sense in which Aboriginal people use the term, has a semantic range that overlaps, in some ways and to some extent, with ‘listening’. The Indigenous concept, I suggest, extends beyond what the word ‘dream’ means in English to include waking forms of attentiveness to Country. Thus Wulatji, as ‘god of Poesy’, speaks to the song-seeker on a ‘sunny hill’, where he (or she) might, indeed, be having a dream or daydream – or they might just be listening to the land. Perhaps song incubation can, in some cases, be as simple as that.

This is a bit speculative, and could do with better ethnographic support. Unfortunately, the ‘ethnography of listening’<sup>54</sup> is still relatively undeveloped, and the kinds of auditory attention it deals with usually involve the human voice. It is rare to find any mention of the arts of listening to silence.<sup>55</sup> There is, however, one ‘ethnography of listening’ that offers a number of relevant observations. Donal Carbaugh, in his article on ‘listening and landscape’ among the Blackfeet of northern Montana, notes that ‘at least for some people, places can (and do) “speak,” if only we – citizens and scholars alike – take the time to “listen” accordingly’ (1999:252). This kind of listening is ‘a non-linguistic mode of learning from, and inhabiting places’ (Carbaugh 1999:257).

Such acts are . . . not so much internally focused on one’s meditative self, but externally focused on one’s place through an active attentiveness to that scene, to the highly active powers and insights it offers. In the process, one becomes a part of the scene, hearing and feeling with it (Carbaugh 1999:259).

Further, ‘there is an ‘important cultural sense in which sacredness, place and listening are interrelated’ (Carbaugh 1999:258). This means that listening ‘can be doubly placed as a cultural attentiveness to a known sacred place, and to the sacredness in just about any place’ (Carbaugh 1999:259).

There is the potential for mystery in this ‘listening’ process that is important to emphasize. One does not make ‘listening’ happen through an assertion of one’s own will. In fact, efforts to ‘listen’ this way will likely fail. In other words, one can put oneself in a proper place to ‘listen,’ but the success and quality of the process is something that issues forth from the place, coming along of its own. On special occasions, and if good fortune permits, the spirits in the world can come in ways that defy normal expectations, and reveal sacred truths (Carbaugh 1999:262).

Much of what Carbaugh says of Blackfeet practice applies also to Aboriginal understandings of listening, place and sacredness. In the Australian context, however, we would need to add that not only do places speak – they themselves also listen (Povinelli 1995:505-506). Moreover, the communication between place and person that happens in silence is not limited to the (metaphorical) ‘inner ear’ but involves all the senses. Places are particularly sensitive to smell, to the extent that they have the ability to differentiate between humans on the basis of their distinctive sweat (Povinelli 1995:509-514).

The ability to listen is based on the skills of the hunter:

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<sup>54</sup> The concept was probably first formulated by Bendix (2000). For other relevant literature, see also Purdy (2000) and Back (2007).

<sup>55</sup> But see Glenn (2004), Voegelin (2010). It is important to note that listening to silence is not always or necessarily an individualised activity. Le Clézio (1993:77), for example, mentions an Aztec ritual in which ‘for eight days, people danced in silence, without songs or music, without moving their feet, merely lifting and lowering their arms’.

Snowy's story [about hunting porcupine] tells us that there are many active intelligences out there paying attention. Indeed, within a context of hunting, killing and eating, creature-culture intelligence can be highly charged . . . Consider the crocodile: its silent and concealed attentiveness is very far from passive! Often it exercises its intelligence precisely by paying attention without drawing attention. Good hunters (nonhumans and humans) do this: they know others are paying attention, they know the ways in which others pay attention, and they find ways to circumvent that attention. The exercise of agency calls for both communication and attention; one is not so much an actor as an inter-actor or participant. Let us think that to participate is to be attentive, to be knowledgeable, to act on knowledge, or to refrain from acting (which is also a form of intelligence). Snowy was explaining all this in relation to porcupines: part of what makes porcupines intelligent and hard to hunt is that they are actively paying attention, actively knowing what is going on in their world, and inter-acting on the basis of that knowledge (Rose 2013:101-103).

If the skills required to listen to animal life have developed as a survival mechanism, they have done so through a cultural process that has linked them closely to the kinds of listening that occur between humans, and between humans and the manifestations of the unknown, such as spirits and dreams.

### **Beyond hauntology**

The lack of a clear boundary between 'listening to Country' and dreaming has two significant implications. It means, first, that dreams have a special relationship with place (cf. Hacking 2001:246, 256), and, second, that attentiveness to the 'voice' of a place opens it to the emergence of images and sounds from the 'dream world'.<sup>56</sup>

It is important to recognise that this 'voice' is necessarily layered, multiple and mediated. If we assume that Wulatji's song had its origin in the place that Mrs Dunlop referred to as the 'sunny hill', and that he received it by listening to the voice of his metaphysical namesake, we are already dealing with at least three layers (the hill, the 'god of Poesy', and the human Wulatji). I say 'at least' because the spirit being was probably the apical ancestor of a lineage of songmen who were Wulatji's forebears and/or teachers, and their voices were no doubt present, to varying degrees, in the voice that Wulatji heard. In the process of reaching its present 'projection' in this chapter, the voice behind the song has accrued further layers, contributed by the likes of Eliza Hamilton Dunlop and Lancelot Threlkeld, as well as by the Indigenous and scholarly ghosts<sup>57</sup> I have invoked to assist with the hatching of my interpretation.

As a way of approaching this kind of literary layering, from 'there' and 'then' to 'here' and 'now', Jacques Derrida has made use of various Gothic tropes, including the neologism 'hauntology':

Repetition and first time: this is perhaps the question of the event as question of the ghost. What is a ghost? What is the effectivity or the presence of a specter, that is, of

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<sup>56</sup> This is less a world in any kind of spatial sense than a dimensionless solution that sometimes crystallises into forms (or at least emergent forms) of varying intelligibility. Some of these become coherent enough to be recognisable as (culturally constituted) entities, such as narratives, answers to problems, ghosts, texts, songs, spirits, mathematical formulae, pictures, scenarios, dance steps – occasionally even scholarly articles (Hunt 2014:20), books (Wolf 2014:xiii), and game-changing theories (Hacking 2001).

<sup>57</sup> My use of this term is not intended to imply that all of these entities are deceased, but rather that my relationship to most of them is virtual and therefore, if not literally 'disembodied', at least 'decorporealised' (Calise 2015), or perhaps 'heterotopian' (Foucault 1986).

what seems to remain as ineffective, virtual, insubstantial as a simulacrum? . . . Let us call it a hauntology (Derrida 1994:10).

Jodey Castricano elucidates Derrida's hauntological preoccupations in terms of '*transgenerational haunting*, that manifestation of the voices of one generation in the unconscious of another' (2001:16). '[Thus] . . . *to be* is to be *haunted*, if not be the dead, then by . . . "their lives' unfinished business [that] is unconsciously handed down to their descendants"' (2001:39).<sup>58</sup>

While this transgenerational haunting is inevitably a part of everyone's lives, Australia's colonial history means that Indigenous and non-Indigenous people experience its impact differently. My task in this paper, then, has necessarily entailed an attempt to develop a language that does justice to two distinct (but historically mingled) kinds of transgenerational haunting.

There are other potential kinds of bridging language that could be used for this discussion, some of them more scientific and less directly associated with 'popular' and 'folk' notions of the supernatural. But the more technical the language, the more it sacrifices something in terms of both comprehensibility and 'experience-nearness'.<sup>59</sup> As I see it, the task that lies ahead is to develop a language that goes beyond hauntology<sup>60</sup> and still 'has the effect of protecting traditional beliefs and accounts from mere translation into the cultural idiom and tacit beliefs of scholars' (Hufford 1995:34). At this point in time, such a language is still in the process of being (collectively) dreamt.<sup>61</sup>

The main task I have given myself in the present chapter is the more modest one of drawing attention to some possibilities that are rarely considered in the prevalent discourses on Aboriginal cultural renewal. Nonetheless, the argument I have presented has broader implications. The one which I want to highlight, in conclusion, is that the musical dream appears to be one of those 'anomalous' human experiences (Cardeña, Lynn and Krippner 2014) that have a universal distribution 'independent of prior belief or knowledge' (Hufford 1995:14). But this is not the place to develop the point.

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<sup>58</sup> The internal quotation is from Nicholas Rand, in his editorial introduction to section V ('Secrets and posterity: the theory of the transgenerational phantom') of Abraham and Torok (1994:167).

<sup>59</sup> To give an example invented for the purposes of the present discussion: one might frame the experience of receiving songs from a ghost in terms of 'a comparative ethnometapragmatics of emergent coherence'. (I borrow 'ethnometapragmatics' from Michael Silverstein, 1992:60.) This formulation is not intended as satire (least of all on the work of the generations of scholars who have contributed to it), rather as an illustration of the point that, to the sceptical non-specialist, technical language can sound like (mere) scholarly glossolalia. Victor Turner (1969:141) enunciates the problem succinctly when he says, 'abstractions appear as hostile to live contact'.

<sup>60</sup> This is actually implied in the notion of hauntology itself. As Colin Davis (2005:378-379) puts the matter, 'For Derrida, the ghost's secret is not a puzzle to be solved; it is the structural openness or address directed towards the living by the voices of the past or the not yet formulated possibilities of the future. The secret is not unspeakable because it is taboo, but because it cannot not (yet) be articulated in the languages available to us. The ghost pushes at the boundaries of language and thought.' Davis's article is part of a growing body of literature on hauntology – see, for example, Sprinker ed. (1999), Sword (2002), Weinstock ed. (2004), Davies (2007), McCorristine (2010), Trigg (2012), Blanco and Peeren eds (2013). 'Hauntology' and 'the spectral turn' have also gained some traction in Australia, and Indigenous spirit beliefs figure prominently in many of the relevant studies (e.g. Gelder and Jacobs 1998, P. Clarke 2007, Turcotte 2007, Althans 2010, Finegan 2014, R. Clarke 2016, Waldron ed. 2016). In other pertinent works, these beliefs still haunt the background (e.g., Turcotte 2009a, Turcotte 2009b). Music, musicology and sound studies have also experienced the 'spectral turn', to the extent that 'hauntology' is now established as a genre, or 'musical movement' (though the usage of the term in this context is not quite the same as in textual studies – see Sexton 2012:562-566). The literature includes such works as Young (2010), Reynolds (2011), Elferen (2012), Fisher (2013), Reid (2017).

<sup>61</sup> There are signs that point towards the development of such a language in fields like comparative philosophy (e.g. Maffie 2013) and what we might call 'comparative ethnohistoriography' (e.g. Le Clézio 1993, Landes 2011).



A more personal conclusion I draw from Indigenous philosophy (as presented, for example, by people like M. K. Turner and Deborah Rose) is that every human has an obligation to care for Country. As part of my own attempts to exercise this responsibility, I have tried to demonstrate how much a single song can reveal about traditional culture and singing practices in the ‘sacrifice zone’ of the Hunter Valley region (Cottle 2013<sup>62</sup>), which I call home. Another way of putting this would be to say that I have made an effort to care for the region’s ghosts.

In the last decade or so there has been a ‘multispecies turn’ in a number of fields of scholarship, including the human sciences:

Creatures previously appearing on the margins of anthropology – as part of the landscape, as food for humans, as symbols – have been pressed into the foreground in recent ethnographies. Animals, plants, fungi, and microbes . . . have started to appear alongside humans in the realm of *bios*, with legibly biographical and political lives’ (Kirksey and Helmreich 2010:3).

While this approach is a welcome corrective to an earlier anthropocentrism, it tends to overlook the invisible inhabitants, the ghosts (if you like) who are an intrinsic part of the ecology. Even in the ‘eroded and disowned no-places’ that Donna Haraway (2014:247) calls ‘unexpected country’, we have a responsibility towards them; for they, too, have ‘legibly biographical and political lives’, as I have tried to show through the modality of ghost-writing for Wulatji.

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The chapter is dedicated to my parents, Eric and Beryl Wafer, whose benevolent presence has sustained me throughout this project.

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<sup>62</sup> Cottle makes no mention of the impact that living in this ‘sacrifice zone’ has on its Aboriginal residents (such as the members of the Wonnarua Nation with whom I have been collaborating for a number of years). But see Hooks and Smith (2004) on ‘national sacrifice areas and Native Americans’.

### **Abbreviations used in the text**

1PL = 1<sup>st</sup> person plural  
3PL = 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural  
3PL.NOM = third person plural nominative  
-ABL = ablative case  
-CT = continuous aspect  
-DAT = dative case  
-DVB = deverbaliser  
-ERG = ergative case  
-GEN = genitive case  
HRLM = the Hunter River-Lake Macquarie language  
-KIN = kin term suffix  
-MT = metrical element  
NSW = New South Wales  
-PRS = present tense  
-PURP = purposive case  
-SEMB = semblative suffix

### **References follow the Appendices.**

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## Appendix A

### The oneiric origin of song in the literature from Australia and beyond

#### The musical dream in Indigenous Australia

Table 9.2 (below) includes all the references I have been able to find that allude, with a reasonable degree of explicitness, to the oneiric origin of song in Indigenous Australia. The requirement for a 'reasonable degree of explicitness' means that the earliest item on the list is E. J. Eyre's account of 1845 (Eyre 1845, vol. 2:367):

He then told me, that occasionally individuals had been up to the clouds, and had come back, but that such instances were very rare; his own mother, he said, had been one of the favoured few. Some one from above had let down a rope, and hauled her up by it; she remained one night, and on her return, gave a description of what she had seen in a chaunt, or song, which he sung for me . . .

It is possible that some earlier sources may be relevant, but they have been omitted as requiring too much interpretation to be regarded as 'reasonably explicit'. To give just one example: Judge-advocate Collins, writing of the early days of the Colony of New South Wales (Collins 1798, vol. 1:595-596), reported as follows:

We were told by him and others, . . . that by sleeping at the grave of a deceased person, they would, from what happened to them there, be freed from all future apprehensions respecting apparitions; for during that awful sleep the spirit of the deceased would visit them, seize them by the throat, and, opening them, take out their bowels, which they would replace and close up the wound. We understood that very few chose to encounter the darkness of the night, the solemnity of the grave, and the visitation of the spirit of the deceased; but that such as were so hardy became immediately *car-rah-dys*,<sup>63</sup> and that all those who exercised that profession had gone through this ceremony.

Collins does not refer to this rite as a means for acquiring songs, but it is clear from later accounts (e.g. Lommel 1952:55-56, quoted in the main body of this chapter) that the equivalents of the '*car-rah-dys*' in other parts of Australia undertook similar practices for the sake of receiving 'corroborees' from the ghosts of the dead. There are relevant data from outside Australia as well. Chadwick (1946:61-62), for example, has assembled records from mediaeval Scandinavia of analogous procedures for acquiring the ability to compose skaldic panegyric verse. (Cf. also Laufer 1931:211.)

#### The musical dream beyond Australia

Much of the literature cited in Table 9.3 – a listing of references to the musical dream outside of Australia – treats the subject only in passing, though there are a few cases (such as Roseman 1993, Graham 1995) where the topic constitutes a major ethnographic focus. There may be a degree of overlap with the research on music and trance (Rouget 1985, Becker 1994) in some places, particularly in Africa (see for example Friedson 1996:27, Olivier 1998:364), and also in the literature on 'musical mediumship' (e.g. Parrott 1978, Willin 1999:72-90), but as a general rule these two phenomena (trance and the musical dream) appear to be fairly clearly distinguishable.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Elkin (1977 [1945]:79-80), who cites this episode, uses the more recent (and now more common) spelling *karadji* and defines the term as 'clever man'. See also Troy (1994:38) and Clarke (2007:155 n.11).

<sup>64</sup> See also Bourguignon (1973:12-15) for a discussion of the distinction between dreams and (types of) trance. There are occasional references to trance-like phenomena in the Australianist literature (e.g. Threlkeld in

**Table 9.2:** Reports of the musical dream in Indigenous Australia, by date

1845	Eyre, vol. 2:367	1886	Myers: 51
1848a	Dunlop	1987	Berndt: 171-172
1876	Smyth, vol. 1:473	1987	Clunies Ross: 5
1880	Kühn: 287	1987	Wild: 105-112
1884	Howitt: 195	1989	Keogh: 3
1884	Palmer: 291	1989	Lommel: 33-34
1885	Howitt: 310, n. 1	1989	Payne: 46-47
1887a	Howitt: 329	1992	Gummow: 179-185
1887b	Howitt: 39, 44-45	1992	Marett: 195
1896	Gillen: 175	1995	Evans: 23
1897	Roth: 117	1995	Gummow: 123
1899	Spencer and Gillen: 278, 294	1995	Keogh: 39
1902	Roth: 20	1995	Marett and Page: 27-28
1904	Howitt: 436-437	2000	Bradley and Mackinlay: 13
1904	Spencer and Gillen: 451	2000	Dussart: chapter 4 (139-176)
1905	Parker: 132	2000	Marett
1905	Thomas: 51	n.d. (2001?)	Ellis
1924	Horne and Aiston: 137	2001	Magowan: 275-276
1927	Spencer and Gillen: 563	n.d. (2001?)	Marett
1933	Elkin: 267-268	2001	Redmond: 121, 126
1933	Róheim: 221, 227, 259 and <i>passim</i>	2003	Keen: 128-129
1935	McConnel: 66	2003	Mackinlay and Bradley: 2, 5-7, 10-13, 21(n.2)
1935	Tennant-Kelly: 469	2003	Marett and Barwick: 145, 147, 149
1935	Tindale: 223	2003	Tonkinson: 94
1939	Kaberry: 257	2003	Treloyn: 209-211
c. 1940	Bates [published 1985:339-340]	2005	Barwick: 5, 12
1945	Reay: 323	2005	Glaskin: 299, 305
1945	Róheim: 6, 98	2005	Marett: chapter 2 (39-54)
1947	Berndt: 336	2005	Poirier: 178, 207
1949	Reay: 96 (cf. 92, 103,105)	2006	Garde: 86
1951	Berndt and Berndt: 211-214	2006	Treloyn: 153-154
1952	Lommel: 53-56	2007	Barwick, Birch and Evans: 9, 11
1952	Róheim: 106-107	2007	Magowan: 289-290
1953-1957	Elkin and Jones: 12, 63, 77, 136 (single volume edition)	2007	San Roque: 153
1953	Petri [trans. 2014:101-104 and <i>passim</i> ]	2007	Stubington: 102
1954	Elkin [3 <sup>rd</sup> edn]: 259	2007	Turpin: 103
1961	Pentony: 146	2008	Glaskin: 61
1963	Stanner: 259, n. 9	2008	McCaul: 140
1965	Hiatt: 58	2010	Apted
1965	Petri: 285	2010	Glaskin
1969	Schneider and Sharp: 65	2010	Reid: 320, 325
1970	Berndt and Berndt: 561	2010	Turner: 67
1970	Tonkinson: 284-285	2011a	Glaskin: 87-88
1971	Strehlow: 244, 640	2011b	Glaskin: 44-48
1973	Munn: 145-149	2013	Campbell: 242
1978	Payne: 9	2013	Marett, Barwick & Ford: 25
1979	Moyle, R.: 58-59	2013	Tonkinson: 134-136 and <i>passim</i>
1980	Moyle, A.: 717	2014	Brown: 173, 180
1984	Ellis: 151-152	2014	Treloyn: 214, 215, 232
1984	Payne: 269	2015	Glaskin: 670-671
1986	Moyle, R.: 52-63, 132-134	2016	Głowczewski: 201-206.

Gunson 1974:63; Elkin 1977 [1945]:24-26, 184 and *passim*; Petri 2014 [1952]:173 and *passim*; Petri 1965; Lommel 1952:55; Strehlow 1971:557-558; Payne 1993; Glaskin 2008), but this is a potential field of research that remains largely undeveloped.

Table 9.3: Reports of the musical dream outside Australia, by region, then date

<i>North America</i>		<i>Latin America</i>	
1895	Boas: 645, 649	1976	O'Brien: 40-41
1900	Teit: 320	1978	Grebe: 91
1902	Kroeber: 279-280	1990	Ereira: 128
1904	Dixon: 23	1992	Perrin
1907-1930	Curtis, vol. 7:81-83, 129, 133; v. 8: 184; v. 10:83-84; v. 13:84-85; v. 14:96	1994	Graham
1910	Densmore: 126-165	1995	Graham: 114-128
1912	Wissler: 100, 263 and <i>passim</i>	1996	Olsen: 40, 205-206, 242, 251
1918	Densmore: 157-204	1998	Orobitg: 47(n.16), 128 and <i>passim</i>
1922	Benedict: 1, 17	1999	Augé: 33-35
1922	Lowie: 321, 323 and <i>passim</i>	2007	Kracke: 112
1925	Kroeber: 670, 754	2009	Beyer: chapter 6 (63-80)
1926	Densmore: 77-78	2010	Labate & Pacheco: 68
1926	Gifford: 59	2013	Piedade: 317, 319
1930	Teit: 384	2014	Cemin: 46
1931	Forde: 127-128	<i>Africa</i>	
1932	Densmore: 77-98	1967	England: 61
1934	Park: 101-103	1978	Fischer: 16, 18
1935	Demetracopoulou: 483-488	1979-1980	Garfias: 213-214 and <i>passim</i>
1935	Lincoln: part 3, 311 and <i>passim</i>	1982	Yonker: 246-247
1936	Herzog: 318, 320	1992	Charsley: 161
1953	Densmore	1996	Friedson: 27, 99, 114, 147
1958	Ewers: 163, 166	1998	Kisliuk: 177
1964	Smithson and Euler: 6 and <i>passim</i>	1998	Olivier: 364-366
1966	Hallowell: 283	2005	Waugh: 163
1967	Merriam: 3-24	2011	Grauer: 99
1971	Ridington 1971	<i>Asia</i>	
1979	Hultkrantz: 77	1959	Stein: 332-334
1980	Hinton: 276, 278-279	1965	Emeneau
1981	Spaulding: 335	1979	Ellingson: 83-84, 335-338, 767
1983	Nelson: 172	1986	Roseman: 67-70
1985	Flannery and Chambers	1988	Wagner: 15
1989	Nettl: 56-57 and <i>passim</i>	1993	Roseman: 80, 82 and <i>passim</i>
1991	Beaudry	1995	Basilov: 238 and <i>passim</i>
1992	Beaudry	1996	Baptandier (para. 34 of online edition)
1992	Keeling: 8-9	1996	Roseman: 234, 237, 240
1992	McClintock: 146, 430	1998	Roseman
1994	Bahr	2000	Franke: 285-287
1994	Irwin: 143-150	2000	Roseman
1999	Tedlock: 87, 96	2003	Green: 290, 300, 305
<i>Europe</i>		2005	van Lint: 346, 374, 376
731	Bede: book 4, ch. 24; tr. 2008: 215-218	2008	Sumegi: 29-30, 130 note 81
1929	Pound	<i>Oceania</i>	
1946	Chadwick: 61-62	1917	Landtman: 196
1978	Parrott	1927	Ivens: 14
1992-93	Uí Ógáin: 200, 202 and <i>passim</i>	1979	Stephen: 8-9
1999	Willin: 72-136		
2009	Davis: 49-50		
2009	Meier: 74		
2015	Faery Folklorist		

## Appendix B

### E. H. Dunlop's glossaries

There are two versions of Eliza Dunlop's English adaptation of Wulatji's poem. The one published under the title of 'Native poetry' (*Sydney Morning Herald* 11 October 1848, p. 3) has been reproduced above in section 4. This was probably the first of the two, and it was preceded by a transcription of the original song-text, in the Hunter River-Lake Macquarie language. The other version (Dunlop 1848b, transcribed below) appeared in Isaac Nathan's miscellany *The southern Euphrosyne* (p. 94) and is probably later, since this publication is variously dated to 1848 (most sources) and 1849 (e.g. in AustLit, see References, below). The transcription of Wulatji's original was omitted in this case.

PIALLA WOLLOMBI.\*<sup>65</sup>

The poetry by Mrs. E. H. Dunlop – inscribed to William Hamilton Maxwell,<sup>66</sup> Esq., author of 'Stories of Waterloo,' &c

Our home is the *gibber-gunyah*,  
 Where hill joins hill on high:  
 There *berrambo* and *boomerang*  
 Like sleeping serpents lie!  
 There our *lubras* can look on the *battwan* clear,  
 That the track of a white man hath never come near.

Ours are the *wascera* gliding –  
 Deep in the shady creek;  
 Where bright *gerool* and *cooperra* tell  
 How sure the prey we seek:  
 While the rushing of wings, as the *wangas* pass,  
 Sweeps the *wallaby's* print from the glist'ning grass.

Ours is the *coole-man* flowing,  
 With fragrant *contiyon* stored:  
 For fleet the foot, and keen the eye,  
 That seeks the *conindin's* hoard!  
 But dearer the glance, and the footsteps to me,  
 Of the *lubra* who laughs by the *kurrijong* tree!

The two versions share the same overall structure and content, but in the second one (as transcribed here) some lines have been transposed, some phrases and sentences modified, and a number of vocabulary items changed. These include both English words and lexemes from a number of different Aboriginal languages. Dunlop provided glossaries for both versions of her adaptation, and Table 9.4

<sup>65</sup> The asterisk refers to a footnote in the original source, which reads '\* The poetry or language of Wollombi'. This is presumably intended as a translation of the poem's title, 'Pialla Wollombi'. See 'Pialla' in Table 9.4.

<sup>66</sup> The Scots-Irish novelist William Hamilton Maxwell (1792-1850) was Eliza Dunlop's cousin, and the presumed namesake of Eliza and David Dunlop's third child (and second daughter) Wilhelmina Hamilton Maxwell Dunlop. W. H. Maxwell's novel *Stories of Waterloo* was published in 1829.

(below) sets out the contents of these glossaries in a format that enables them to be compared with each other and with other (mostly modern) linguistic sources.

The comparison permits a number of observations about Dunlop's use of words from Aboriginal languages. In the first version of her adaptation, most of these words come from the Hunter River-Lake Macquarie language (HRLM); — that is, the language in which Wulatji's poem was composed. Nonetheless, a number of them (*bato*, *kanin*, *karrakun*, *nukkung*) do not in fact occur in Wulatji's original song-text. In the second version, almost all of these words have been omitted and replaced with words that have been borrowed into English from other Aboriginal languages (the majority from the Sydney language). The first version, with its mixture of HRLM, Darkinyung, Gamilaraay and NSW Pidgin probably reflects the linguistic situation at Wollombi better than the second one, where my conjecture is that Dunlop has preferred common English loans from Aboriginal languages because they would be more familiar to her audience.

There are three words for which I am unable to suggest a source form: *amygest*, *contiyon* and *wascera* (spelt 'wascerra' in the glossary). The form '*contiyon*' is consistent with the phonology of Aboriginal languages of the region, but the other two forms (*amygest*, *wascera*) are not. (The /s/ phoneme is rare in Aboriginal languages generally, and does not occur in those of New South Wales.) This does not necessarily mean that these words have not been borrowed from Aboriginal languages, since they could be phonologically hybrid forms influenced by English. But their etymology remains a mystery.

In Table 9.4, the first column includes the items in the glossary that Dunlop appended to 'Native poetry', listed alphabetically. Where the same or a similar term occurs in the glossary of 'Pialla Wollombi', it is listed in column 2, next to the relevant item in column 1. The balance of the items in this second glossary then follow in column 2, in alphabetical order. The third column lists the language from which each vocabulary item is presumed to come, and the fourth column provides references to the sources on which this presumption is based. Abbreviations used for these sources are as follows:

A: Ash, Giacon and Lissarrague 2003

D: Dixon, Ramson and Thomas 1990

J: Jones 2008

L: Lissarrague 2006

M: Milson c. 1840+

T: Troy 1994

**Table 9.4:** Vocabulary items from E. H. Dunlop's glossaries

'Native poetry'	'Pialla Wollombi'	Language	References
<b>Amygest</b> – White-fellow.			
<b>Bato</b> – Water.	<b>Battwan</b> <sup>67</sup> : spring water	HRLM <sup>68</sup> , Darkinyung	paTu: water (fresh) (L 132); badhu: water (J 148)

<sup>67</sup> I reconstruct this word as HRLM /patu-wan/ and conjecture that *-wan* is an augmentative suffix. Compare Yuwaalaraay and Yuwaalayaay *-wan*, 'prominent (big)' (Ash, Giacon and Lissarrague 2003:138).

<sup>68</sup> The Hunter River-Lake Macquarie language.

[Turruma and] <b>Berrambo</b> – War arms.	<b>Berrambo</b> : the waddy or war-club, similar to those of New Zealand	Gamilaraay?	birrambo: waddy (M 9)
<b>Gheerool</b> – Mullet.	<b>Gerrool</b> [, and Cooperra]: the mullet and eel.	Darkinyung	djirul: mullet (J 156)
<b>Gibber-gunya</b> – Cave in the rock.	<b>Gibber-gunyah</b> : cave-of-the-rock	Sydney, English loan	giba: stone or rock (T 50); gunya: house or hut (T 44); gibber-gunyah: a shallow cave used as a dwelling or for shelter (D 200; see also 192-193 and 199-201)
<b>Kanin</b> – Eel.		HRLM	kaNiyn: eel (L 114)
<b>Karrakun</b> – The oak-tree.		HRLM	karakan: swamp oak (L 114)
<b>Kirrika</b> – Honey.		HRLM	kiR[i]ka: honey, white (L 118)
<b>Makoro</b> – Fish.		HRLM, Darkinyung	makurr: fish (L 121); magur: fish (J 164)
<b>Nukkung</b> – Wild bee.		HRLM	Nakang: small, stingless native bee (L 125)
<b>Turruma</b> [and Berrambo] – War arms.		HRLM	TaRama: war boomerang (L 137)
<b>Wanga</b> – A species of pigeon.	<b>Wanga-wanga</b> : a wild pigeon of the largest kind, of most exquisite plumage.	Darkinyung, Sydney, English loan	wangawanga: wonga wonga (pigeon) (J 172); wungawunga: wonga pigeon (T 56); wonga-wonga: the ground-feeding grey and white pigeon (D 95)
	<b>Boomerang</b> : striking-weapon – from <i>boomallee</i> , to strike.	Sydney, English loan	bumarang: boomerang for fighting (T 43); boomerang: a crescent-shaped wooden implement used as a missile or club (D 175-177)
	<b>Conindin</b> : the small native honey-bee easily tracked through the air by a white down adhering to it, which is strewed by the natives on the sweet yams, on which the insect loves to feed.	Gamilaraay	guni: native bee (A 96)
	<b>Contiyon</b> : honey		
	The <b>coole-man</b> is a bowl, hollowed with great ingenuity by the aborigines, from an excrescent substance of a semi-circular form, found growing on the iron-bark, apple, and other gumiferous trees; the inner wood is rather more porous and fibrous than that on which it grows; but the bark (which is the cooleman) is hard and smooth, one or two inches in thickness, and containing from a pint to two gallons. On a first examination I was inclined to the opinion of an author (Professor Rennie,) on ‘Insect Architecture,’	Gamilaraay English loan	guliman: coolamon, dish (A 94); coolamon: a basin-like vessel of wood or bark (D 184)



	who believes that ‘such growths may be caused by the juncture of the <i>lynips</i> ,’ but admitting, with that authority, that these excrescences are ‘pseudo-galls,’ I rather infer them to be like wens on animals, ‘produced by too much nourishment.’		
	[Gerrool, and] <b>Cooperra</b> : the mullet and eel.	Darkinyung	gubira: eel (J 160)
	<b>Kurrijong</b> : a tree, from the inner rind of which nets are woven.	Sydney English loan	garradjun: fishing line – lines were made from bark of trees such as the kurrajong (T 44); kurrajong: a name given to any of several plants yielding a useful fibre (D 119)
	<b>Lubra</b> : female or daughter – young females of a tribe.	English loan (origin uncertain, possibly Tasmanian)	lubra: a derogatory term for an Aboriginal woman (D 170)
	<b>Pialla</b> : poetry or language	Sydney	baya: to speak (T 73)
	<b>Wallaby</b> : a small species of the kangaroo, which is also called <i>barwan</i> , and <i>billoo</i> – they are yet found in thin herds in the mountainous [sic] ranges of the Wollombi.	Sydney English loan	wulaba: rock wallaby (T 50); wallaby: any of many smaller marsupials of the family Macropodidae (D 80-81)
	<b>Wascerra</b> : fish		

## Appendix C:

### Sketch genealogy of E. H. Dunlop's descendants and affines

The genealogical chart that appears below as Table 9.5 is intended mainly to provide an overview of the kin relationships between the various members of Eliza Hamilton Dunlop's family mentioned in the text. It incorporates as well all of her children (from both marriages)<sup>69</sup>, but only a selection of their descendants.

Dunlop's name appears twice on the third row of the chart, distinguished by the number [1]. The first occurrence, on the left of the chart, relates to her second marriage (to David Dunlop) and her descendants from that marriage. The second occurrence, on the right, refers to her first marriage (to the Irish astronomer James Silvius Law).

The other individual whose name appears twice is Thalia Mary Raine, distinguished by the number [2]. In the second row she appears as the daughter of Captain Thomas Raine and Frances Worsley, and in the fourth row as the wife of David Henry Dunlop. This layout has been necessitated by the fact that two of the Raine children married two of the Dunlop children. (Thalia's brother Edmond William Worsley Raine married David Henry's sister, Eliza Augusta Dunlop.) It is for the same reason that Eliza Augusta's name precedes (that is, occurs to the left of) David Henry's, even though he was the eldest child. (The other Dunlop children occur in the correct birth order.)

The two Dunlop descendants who have published works relevant to the present chapter are Roy Hamilton Goddard (sixth row, middle of page) and Margaret De Salis (*née* Raine) (seventh row, far left). Goddard's work on Aboriginal poetry (1934) and rock carvings of the Wollombi district (1937a, 1937b) are included in the list of references below, and he was presumably the person who donated the Milson manuscript (Milson c. 1840+) to the Mitchell Library. The attribution at the head of the manuscript reads, 'by Mrs Milson grandmother of the donor'. (Rachel Rhoda Nevin Milson, *née* Dunlop, was Eliza Dunlop's daughter and Goddard's grandmother.) But in his article on Aboriginal poetry, Goddard credits authorship of the manuscript to 'Mrs. E. H. Dunlop and her daughter (Mrs. Rachel Milson) and granddaughter (Mrs. J. H. Bettington)' (1934:244). The last named of these is presumably Goddard's cousin, Alice Elliot Bettington (*née* Milson), who was in fact the the *great* granddaughter of Eliza Dunlop, but the granddaughter of Rachel Milson.

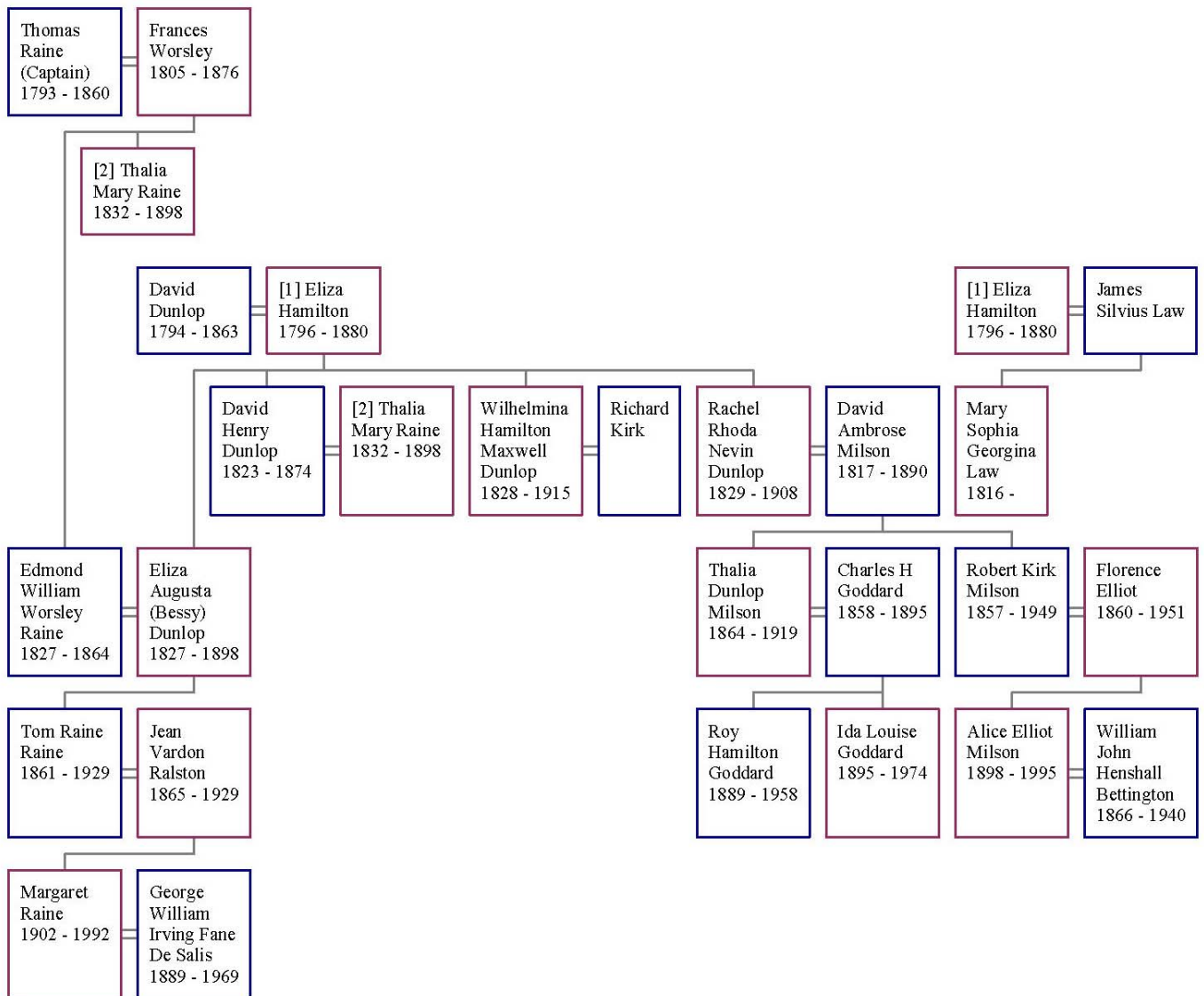
Margaret De Salis published a monograph on the lives of David and Eliza Dunlop in 1967 and a newspaper article summarising this book in 1972. The black and white portrait of Eliza Hamilton Dunlop facing the book's title page is 'by courtesy of Miss I. L. Goddard'; that is, Roy Goddard's sister, Ida Louise (sixth row). (A colour print of this portrait currently hangs in the Wollombi Museum.) Margaret De Salis also wrote a book about her other pioneering ancestor, Captain Thomas Raine, which was published in 1969.

David and Eliza Dunlop's second daughter, Wilhelmina Hamilton Maxwell Dunlop, was presumably named after Eliza's cousin, the Scots-Irish novelist William Hamilton Maxwell (1792-1850).

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<sup>69</sup> Gunson (1966) mentions another child (a son) from Dunlop's first marriage, but no further information about this individual is currently available.

**Table 9.5:** Sketch genealogy of E. H. Dunlop's descendants and affines



## Appendix D

### Notes on some placenames mentioned in the text

#### Wollombi Brook

I have assumed that the Indigenous name for Wollombi Brook is ‘Mala’, based on De Salis’s 1972 reference to a poem by Eliza Hamilton Dunlop with the title ‘The Mulla (or Wollombi) Creek’. I have been unable to trace this poem, but Dunlop uses ‘Mulla’ in the same sense in a poem called ‘Erin Dheelish’, published in 1865. I conjecture that the name may be related to the Gamilaraay word *mala*, which means ‘fork’, in the sense of ‘something that branches into two’ (Ash, Giacon and Lissarrague 2003:106). This would be appropriate for the location of Wollombi, which sits in the fork created by the junction of Wollombi Brook and Congewai Creek (also known as the North Arm of Wollombi Brook). Indeed, Needham (1981:8) gives the meaning of ‘Wollombi’ itself as ‘place where the waters meet’. (I have been unable to confirm this gloss.)

According to the map in Gordon, Crousen and Jones (1993:44), Wollombi lies at the place where three distinct groups (Darginung, Wonarua and Awabagal) converge. In other parts of Aboriginal Australia, the merging of watercourses has symbolic implications that could possibly be relevant in the present case. Fiona Magowan writes that, among Yolngu of eastern Arnhem Land, ‘the confluence of two rivers may unite different clans of the same moiety through the meanings of the song texts’ (1994:141), because ‘waters . . . represent the spiritual essence of each clan’s identity’ (1994:140).

The Dunlops’ residence (built with convict labour in 1841 and still standing) was called ‘Mulla Villa’. De Salis (1967:98) speculates that this name owes its origin to the Irish toponym ‘Mullavilly’. If this is the case, then the name is likely to have been adapted to ‘Mulla Villa’ precisely because of the duplication of referents.

#### The mountains and the heights

I suggest that the *palkirr* (‘mountain’) and *pulwarra* (‘high place’) mentioned in Wulatji’s song are probably specific peaks or ranges, and that their identity would have been readily apparent to his Aboriginal audience. The fact that they are not specified by name is probably a feature shared with song traditions in many other parts of Australia.<sup>70</sup> Because Mount Yango is both the highest<sup>71</sup> and also the most mythologically significant summit in the vicinity of Wollombi, I speculate that it is likely to be one of the elevations in question.

R. H. Goddard (1937b:4) mentions the relevant myth in his account of a spirit called ‘Wa-boo-ee’, who ‘was supposed to have sprung from Devil’s Rock<sup>72</sup> and landed on Yango, in the West (Yango, or Yengo dilla, meaning “caught by the foot” or “stepping over”). Wa-boo-ee was of great stature – he thought nothing of stepping up to the sky for a change of residence and of throwing a few rocks, in the shape of mountains, down to the earth as stepping stones.’

‘Wabbooe’ receives the longest entry in the section of the Milson manuscript (1840+: image 9) devoted to ‘Gods and goddesses’, where he is described as ‘The greatest spirit of all; he commands the seasons and weather, his residence is in the North’. He is the god of the daylight, and his wife, Malamala, is goddess of the south and the night. Both are also apocalyptic deities. When he dies,<sup>73</sup> ‘the world will be destroyed by huge rocks which fall from Heaven.’ When Malamala dies, ‘darkness

<sup>70</sup> For example, in Arrente song traditions, according to T. G. H. Strehlow (1971:159), ‘very few of the placenames mentioned in the myths have found their way into the songs . . . the “secret name” of a place is very frequently a couplet which describes the scenic setting of the sacred site without actually naming it.’

<sup>71</sup> ‘Between the Hawkesbury River and the Hunter Range, elevation is consistently between 250-350m AHD. Mt Yengo, in the north-west of the region, has the highest elevation at 386m. Closer to the coast, the elevation is between 100-150m AHD’ (McDonald 2008:11).

<sup>72</sup> Burragarra. (See Enright 1898:182; Needham 1981:8; Macqueen 2004:125.)

<sup>73</sup> The Milson manuscript has ‘whenever he died’, which suggests that this happens periodically.

rests upon the earth until her husband removes it'. (See as well Ash, Giacon and Lissarrague 2003:135, under *wabuwi*.)



**Figure 9.1:** Sunset over Mount Yango, vernal equinox, 2017 (photograph by the author)

There is also a more recent account of Wabuwi, as told by Uncle Paul Spearim<sup>74</sup>, in ‘the story of Buwadjarr and the six Wandabaa spirits’ (2014). ‘Buwadjarr’ means ‘father’ in Gamilaraay (and related languages), and is also the term used by women and the uninitiated to refer to the ‘All Father’, Baayami.<sup>75</sup> According to Spearim, Wabuwi is a ‘weather spirit’ who, along with five other spirits, was punished by Buwadjarr for his disobedience. In this account, Buwadjarr shuts Wabuwi away in a cave near Yetman (on the Macintyre River, in far northern NSW). When the initiation season arrives and the weather changes, Wabuwi escapes from the cave, leaves behind a single footprint and ‘tries to snatch away the girls and young boys’.

The story points up an interesting contradiction in the data. Some writers<sup>76</sup> have identified the presiding spirit of Mount Yango as Baayami (variously spelt<sup>77</sup>) rather than Wabuwi. But in the Spearim narrative, these two personae are represented as enemies. So what are we to make of their relationship to the mountain and to each other?

Frederic Slater (1937:13) avers that Wabuwi is ‘another name’ for Dharramalin,<sup>78</sup> who is variously regarded as ‘a sort of half brother or near relative’ of Baayami (Mathews 1904:343), his ‘agent’ (Ridley 1875:137) or his son (Howitt 1904:585). In one report (Howitt 1904:407) there is a plurality of Dharramalins, who are collectively regarded as Baayami’s sons. This is not the place for a systematic analysis of the pertinent sources,<sup>79</sup> but I summarise below the points that relate to the association of these figures with Mount Yango.

All of the earliest references to Baayami come from Wiradjuri country. These include Henderson (1832:147-148), Hale (1846:110) and Günther (1892:70, 94).<sup>80</sup> Moreover, in Wiradjuri there is a plausible etymology for Baayami’s name. According to Günther (1892:94), Baayami has ‘emu’s feet’, which suggests an etymological link to *baayi* (‘a footprint’) and *baaya* (‘tread’) (Grant and Rudder 2010:290).<sup>81</sup> I note also that, among Wiradjuri, the Emu is not just under Baayami’s direct

<sup>74</sup> <http://kindigenous.weebly.com/about-paul-spearim.html> [accessed 11 August 2017].

<sup>75</sup> Ash et al. (2003:52). I borrow the term ‘All Father’ from K. Langloh Parker (1905:4-10). The collective name ‘Wandabaa’ is no doubt derived from *wanda*, ‘ghost; white man’ and the suffix *-baa*, ‘time of; place of’ (Ash et al. 2003:138, 25). Apart from Wabuwi, two of the other Wandabaa spirits (Yarayawu and Bagii) are mentioned in the Milson manuscript (1840+: image 9), as ‘Yarree yarwoo’ and ‘Buggee’. ‘Nguruma’ is defined in Ash et al. (2003:127) as ‘spirit-haunted stone’. I have not been able to find an earlier source for ‘Mardu’.

<sup>76</sup> For example, Slater (1937:12-13), Needham (1981:11), McDonald (1993:85), Jones (2009:4-5).

<sup>77</sup> In the standard orthography of both Gamilaraay and Wiradjuri, it is ‘Baayami’ (Ash et al. 2003:27; Grant and Rudder 2010:290). The most common earlier spellings are ‘Baiaimai’, ‘Baiaime’, ‘Baiami’ and ‘Byamee’. The word occurs only once in the early HRLM sources, in Fawcett (1898:181), who spells the name as ‘By-a-me’ (in Wonnarua).

<sup>78</sup> There is good support for this in Gamilaraay (and related languages), where ‘Dharramalan’ is analysed as *dharra*, ‘thigh, leg’ plus *maal*, ‘one’ (Ash et al. 2003:57). The fact that this entity is represented iconographically as having only one leg (cf. Slater 1937:13 and Plate III) confirms his identification with Wabuwi, who is said to leave behind only a single footprint (Spearim 2014). In Wiradjuri the name is spelt ‘Dharramalin’ (Grant and Rudder 2010:344), and this supports an alternative etymology based on the verb *dharra*, ‘to eat, swallow’. I have adopted the Wiradjuri spelling, on the grounds that (as I conjecture below) the name is more likely to have originated in Wiradjuri country. Other spellings of the name include Turramulan (Ridley 1875:136-137), Dhuramoolan (Mathews 1896:297-298), Daramulun (Howitt 1904:555), Dharramulan (Mathews 1904:343-344) and Turramullan (Slater 1937).

<sup>79</sup> The literature is fairly substantial because of the ‘Australian High God controversy’ that took place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. (For a succinct overview, see Cox 2014:21-26).

<sup>80</sup> Günther’s work on the Wiradjuri language dates back to 1838, but was not published until late in the century.

<sup>81</sup> See also Grant and Rudder (2010:452), under ‘*nguruwiny dyinanggarang*’. Ridley (1875:17) cites C. C. Greenway as the source of an etymology that derives ‘Baia-me’ from a putative verb ‘baia’, translated as ‘to make or build’. But Parker (1905:4-5) notes that this verb ‘is not known to me in Euahlayi [Yuwaalayaay]. Wiradjuri has *bai*, a footmark, and Byamee left footmarks on the rocks’. Admittedly, she adds that this ‘is probably a chance coincidence.’ (The evidence at Mount Yango could indicate otherwise.) Mathews (1904:340) suggests a derivation of Baayami’s name from the word *bai*, which he translates as



protection (Berndt 1947:353); in the symbolism of the Bora ritual he is also Bayaami's intended prey (Mathews 1896:300). This perhaps provides some evidence for the purported link of Baayami with Mount Yango, since there is an abundance of emu footprints carved into the rock platforms in the surrounding area, as detailed by Goddard (1937:3-5; see also Slater 1937:11).

This association with the Emu makes Baayami potentially a relative of the 'so-called "high god"' of the Western Aranda (Róheim 1974:111; cf. Róheim 1934:74-75), the great emu-footed one, first mentioned in print (as 'iliinka') by Carl Strehlow (1907-1920, 1:1-2). T. G. H. Strehlow (1971:614-620) has devoted a longish discussion to this being, whose name he spells as 'Iĩĩĩka'. Although the accounts by Róheim and the two Strehlows differ in some details, they all grant that Emu-foot's domain was the sky (see also Morton 1989:283).

Astronomer Ray Norris (with his collaborator Cilla Norris) observes that 'this Emu in the Sky'<sup>82</sup> features in the songs and stories of Aboriginal groups right across Australia, from Western Australia to New South Wales,<sup>83</sup> although it's not universal, and detailed interpretations differ' (Norris and Norris 2009:5). Among the Warlpiri neighbours of the Arrernte, the Emu in the Sky is known as 'Wanya-parnta',<sup>84</sup> the Flying Emu (Corn and Patrick 2014:156). The Gamilaraay associate the emu with earthly waterholes but also with a celestial waterhole, located in the Coalsack (Fuller, Norris and Trudgett 2014:3).

It is interesting to note, in connection with the discussion of incubation in the main body of this article, and with K. Langloh Parker's reference (1905:132) to the 'hatching out' of songs among the Yuwaalayaay, that 'in real life it is the male emu which patiently sits on the eggs and hatches them' (Strehlow 1971:619). In the Bora ceremony of south-eastern Australia, this unusual avian practice provides the basis for the Emu's important symbolic role: 'male emus care for emu chicks, and elder men take young men through the knowledge ceremony that is the Bora' (Fuller, Norris and Trudgett 2014:3).<sup>85</sup> There is good evidence for Baayami's association with initiation ceremonies (e.g. Ridley 1873:269, Mathews 1896: 297-298, Parker 1905:5-7), and also for his function as a giver of song (e.g. Thomas 1905:51, Berndt 1947:336).

Dharramalin enters the written record a little later than Baayami. The earliest source I have been able to trace is Ridley (1861:445): 'They also believe in the existence of many demons, of whom Turramullun is the chief. They say that Turramullun is the author of disease and of medical skill, of mischief and of wisdom also; that he appears in the form of a serpent at their great assemblies.' This summary is based on stories from people of the Namoi and Barwon Rivers (speakers of Gamilaraay and the related languages Yuwaalaraay and Yuwaalayaay).

Late in the nineteenth century, Dharramalin's name begins to appear in the Wiradjuri literature too (for example in Mathews 1896:297-298). The following definition is provided by the Wiradjuri

'the semen of men and animals'. The Wiradjuri dictionary (Grant and Rudder 2010:303) only lists *bayiin*, glossed as 'semen of animals'.

<sup>82</sup> An Indigenous constellation that stretches along the southern Milky Way, from the Southern Cross and the Coalsack (the head) through Scorpius to Scutum (the feet). See also Norris 2007-2011, 'Australian Aboriginal astronomy', online at <http://www.emudreaming.com/index.html> [accessed 29 August 2017].

<sup>83</sup> According to Doug Williams, the Githabul people of northern NSW associate the site of Julian Rocks with 'wayo jalgumboonj, the fairy-emu' (quoted in McClean 2013:88). The first part of this expression is probably related to the verb *wayah*, 'to fly' (Sharpe 1995:97) and the second to the placename Jalgambuyn (Mount Lindesay; Sharpe 1995:187).

<sup>84</sup> *Wanya*, 'emu down'; *-parnta*, associative suffix: 'having, possessing'. (See Swartz 2012, Interactive Warlpiri-English dictionary, at <http://ausil.org/Dictionary/Warlpiri/aboutwarlpiri.htm> [accessed 10 May 2017].)

<sup>85</sup> Variations in gender role and 'leggedness' are crucial factors in the distribution of characteristics between Baayami and Dharramalin and their close associates. Baayami has a wife who is sometimes figured as an emu (Blows 1995:61); in Dharramalin's case, the emu is sometimes his wife (Howitt 1904:560) and sometimes his mother (Howitt 1884:456). As for the possession of only a single leg: this is generally attributed to Dharramalin (e.g. Greenway 1878:242, Greenway 1901:114, Mathews 1904:343, Howitt 1904:585) but sometimes to Baayami (e.g. Slater 1937:12-13).

dictionary: ‘guardian spirit responsible for metaphorically swallowing young men by taking them “inside” the burbang [initiation ceremony] and then regurgitating them trained and transformed as men’ (Grant and Rudder 2010:344).

Nonetheless, the earliest Wiradjuri allusion to Dharramalin may come from the same source as that in which Baayami appears for the first time, namely, John Henderson’s account (1832:147) of his visit to the Wellington Valley mission in 1830. The passage is worth quoting at length:

Piame is the name of the god of the black people of New South Wales; he is the father of their race, and formerly appears to have sojourned amongst them. Mudjegong, on the other hand, is an evil spirit, who after having derived his existence from Piame, declared war upon him, and now endeavours with all his power to frustrate his undertakings. The offspring of Piame were numerous; but the whole, with the exception of two, were destroyed by Mudjegong, who converted them into different wild animals. A number of the devices on the trees are intended to represent these transmigrations; such as the snakes, the opossum, the emu, the kangaroo, the cockchaffer, &c.; while others were stated to indicate the forked lightning, warlike instruments, and falling meteors. The evil spirit seemed to be described under the form of the eagle-hawk; an imitation of his erie forms a conspicuous object at the upper extremity of the grove.

There are two entries for *mudyi-gang* in the Wiradjuri dictionary: one of them glosses the term first as ‘elders who train and accompany novices preparatory to initiation’ and then as ‘an old man’. The other defines the word as ‘bull-roarer’ (Grant and Rudder 2010:414).

The interpretations given for the name ‘Dharramalin’ in early sources also link the initiator (who is actually and symbolically an ‘old man’) with the bull-roarer (Howitt 1904:541, 493; Mathews 1896:298). Moreover, according to Howitt (1884:192), it was Dharramalin who made the original *mudyi* (an alternative name for the *mudyi-gang* bull-roarer). What this suggests fairly clearly is that ‘Mudyigang’ was the public (or ‘exoteric’) name for ‘Dharramalin’ (Thomas 1905:52). The latter word, was, in fact not supposed to be spoken outside the ceremonial ground of the Bora (Howitt 1904:528).

If this conjecture is correct, it implies that the supposed enmity between Baayami and Dharramalin (Mathews 1896:297-298) and the demonisation of Dharramalin in public accounts (see e.g. Ridley 1875:137; Henderson 1832:147) are additional exoteric features of the story.<sup>86</sup> To the uninitiated, Dharramalin is the fearful being who makes himself known in the sound of thunder and the bull-roarer (Howitt 1904:431). It is he who, either as serpent (Ridley 1861:445) or as eaglehawk (Henderson 1832:147), swallows the boys undergoing initiation. No doubt his association with these two species is founded on their propensity for snatching and eating the young of other species (cf. van Toorn 2006:31), since this parallels the ritualised snatching of young men from their mothers for the purpose of putting them through the Law.

In fact, the very distinction between Baayami (as benevolent All Father) and Dharramalin (as Baayami’s demonic or at least tricksterly agent) may be exoteric (Howitt 1904:499-500). In any case, the way their relationship is explained, as well as the associated terminology and symbolism, varies from group to group – and no doubt from one time-period to another. Their association with Mount Yango, as represented in the literature, appears to be based largely on Gamilaraay stories about the mountain. Among Darkinyang, in whose country Mount Yango is said to lie, the relevant entities are called ‘Dhurramoolun’ and ‘Ghindaring’ (Mathews 1897:3, 6), and the latter takes on the demonic characteristics associated elsewhere with Dharramalin. For speakers of the Hunter River-Lake Macquarie language, who also have an interest in the mountain, the All Father is known as ‘Kuwiyn’ (Lissarrague 2006:120; Threlkeld, in Gunson 1974, 1:62; Howitt 1904:499),<sup>87</sup> and his more

<sup>86</sup> One might compare the Book of Job. See Stanley Diamond’s introductory essay (‘Job and the trickster’) to the 1972 edition of Paul Radin’s classic book on the trickster.

<sup>87</sup> In other sources this name is spelt as Koun (Threlkeld, in Gunson 1974, 1:62), Koin (Hale 1846:111, Howitt 1904:496-499), Koen (Hale 1846:111), Goign (Mathews 1897:328-334), Coen (Howitt 1904:431, 496), and Kohin (Howitt 1904:498-500).



ambiguous exoteric aspect is probably Patjikan, 'the Biter' (Threlkeld in Gunson 1974, 1:50, 61; Lissarrague 2006:132).

I suspect that the distinction between the benevolent All Father and his ambiguous agent is based not just on the need to sustain separate exoteric and esoteric perceptions of these entities, but also on more fundamental cosmogonic principles. If it is true, as Parker (1905:7) says, that Baayami stands outside the kinship system, he then represents a primordial unity that existed prior to the differentiation of species, humans and places. According to Parker (1905:7), he is 'the original source of all totems, and of the law that people of the same totem may not intermarry.' He 'had a totem name for every part of his body, even to a different one for each finger and toe. And when he was passing on to fresh fields, he gave each kinship of the tribe he was leaving one of his totems' (Parker 1905:7). In other words, humans and their social groups constitute a fragmentation of the undivided wholeness represented by Baayami. This perspective makes it easier to understand the darker aspects of such paradoxical figures as Wabuwi and Dharramalin: they are representatives of the dualistic world of division and multiplicity.<sup>88</sup>

The import of this discussion is that Baayami may be associated with Yango as its original creator, while Wabuwi is the part of himself with which he invested it before moving on to create other places. Wabuwi could also (like Dharramalin) have links to the Eaglehawk. There are stone circles on top of the mountain (McDonald 1993:85), and Threlkeld wrote, of other such structures he found in the Hunter Valley, 'the tradition was, that the Eagle-Hawks brought these stones and placed them together in the form in which they were found' (in Gunson 1974, 1:66). Moreover, according to W. A. Squire's account of 'Baiaimai' (1896:50), 'the eagles are his emissaries, who overlook the tribal rites and report to their master any error or slip in the ceremonial.'

The fragmentary stories about Mount Yango that have survived appear to be attempts to reconcile the differing kinship systems and ritual practices of the various groups from the local region and beyond who used the site. Tony Swain (1993:145) has argued that the introduction of 'All Father' figures like Baayami into Aboriginal beliefs was a millenarian innovation that resulted from the invasion of Australia. While it may indeed have been an innovation, I see no need to interpret it as a specific reaction to the arrival of the English and their religion.<sup>89</sup> Even if it did post-date the invasion (and the evidence for this is weak), I am more inclined to see it as a normal step in the ongoing Aboriginal practice of reinterpreting kinship categories and their associated mythology in the light of changing political contingencies, particularly in areas such as marriage alliances and succession. In other words, the genesis of Baayami was probably due to a broader set of relevant social changes, many of them already taking place before colonisation. Surely we must also allow that pre-invasion Aboriginal history may have had its own pattern of home-grown 'apocalyptic episodes' (Landes 2011:16 and *passim*).

If Baayami's association with Mount Yango is indeed of recent origin, this implies that there are layers of earlier stories there; so it is possible that the stories about Wabuwi originated in a different stratum of the narrative palimpsest. Goddard (1937:7) notes that Wabuwi is represented by the sun, and is said to have leapt to Mount Yango from Burrigurra (otherwise known as 'Devil's Rock').<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> The relationship between the one and the many is a universal theme of metaphysical systems and their mythological elaborations, including those of the contemporary world. Richard Coyne (2001), for example, has analysed the manifestations of this motif in the theoretical literature of information technology.

<sup>89</sup> See Ian Keen's review of Swain, in particular the section headed 'The "All-Father"' (Keen 1993:102-103); also Blows (1995:67, n.5).

<sup>90</sup> According to Goddard (1937:7), the mountain lies due west of the place from which Wabuwi undertook his leap. This implies that the location is actually much closer to 'Finchley Aboriginal Site' than to Burrigurra. Mount Yango is *almost* due west from Finchley (actually slightly south of west), whereas it lies at about 40 degrees north of west from the site today known as 'Burrigurra Aboriginal Site'. (See the map in National Parks and Wildlife Service 2004 for the contemporary location of both sites). In other words, there appears to be a discrepancy in Goddard's account. Later writers (e.g. Sim 1966:16, 18; Needham 1981:27, 29-32) have consistently identified Burrigurra ('Devil's Rock') and Finchley ('Flat Rock') with the sites

No doubt further research may be able to extend and refine these preliminary interpretations of the available knowledge about Mount Yango. For example, Wabuwu could possibly be associated with the stories of the sun's origin as an emu egg, as reported from many other parts of eastern Australia (Haynes 2000:57).<sup>91</sup> But to pursue this attempt at cosmogonic reconstruction further would take us well beyond the limited purposes of the present appendix.

So let me conclude with some observations on the mountain's name. The term 'Yango' was probably first recorded by William Parr<sup>92</sup> on 7 November 1817, in the field book of his expedition in search of a route from the Hawkesbury to the Hunter (Macqueen 2004:142.) A week later, on 15 November, he made a sketch of the mountain from a hill north of Putty (Macqueen 2004:49, 148). The mountain is mentioned by name again a couple of years later, in John Howe's journal of his first expedition through the same country. On 1 November 1819 he took his bearings from two peaks, one of which he referred to as 'Yango' (Macqueen 2004:168<sup>93</sup>) – 'so called by the Natives'. Then in 1833 the site was mapped by the surveyor Frederick Robert D'Arcy, who spelt the name as 'Yungo' (see map detail reproduced in Jones 2009:32<sup>94</sup>). But none of these explorers provided a gloss; nor did they give any indication of how to interpret their spelling for the purpose of correct pronunciation.

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that today go by those names. Still, Goddard may have been using the name 'Burrigurra' in a broad sense, to refer to the whole of the north-south ridge that joins Finchley and Burrigurra. The orientation of these two sites, and of other rock carving sites along the same track, is of particular interest because it is likely to have astronomical and calendrical significance. To give just one example: from the point on this ridge that lies due east of Yango, the sun would be seen setting directly over the mountain at the vernal equinox. This can hardly be coincidence, though I am obliged to leave it up to the archaeoastronomers to elaborate the ramifications. There is a small body of older literature on Aboriginal stone alignments (see Lane and Fullagar 1980:146-151) and a few recent studies that interpret some of these structures in terms of their probable function as astronomical measuring devices (see e.g. Hamacher and Norris 2011:4-7). But I have not been able to locate any research into Aboriginal alignment of *sites* for the purpose of astro-calendrical observations.

<sup>91</sup> Haynes (2000:57) is worth quoting at length in this regard: 'Amongst the Boorong people of western Victoria, it was believed that Gnowee, the sun, was made by Pupperimbul, one of the Nurrumbunguttias, or old spirits, who were removed to the heavens before the advent of *homo sapiens*. The earth was in perpetual darkness until Pupperimbul prepared an emu egg which he threw into space, where it burst, flooding the sky with light. Variations of this story are found in many areas of eastern Australia, but in Boorong mythology, Gnowee is closely related by kinship to other celestial bodies: Chargee Gnowee, Venus, is the sister of the sun and wife of Ginabongbearp, Jupiter (Stanbridge, 1861:301). Thus the celestial bodies reflect family relationships, thereby both dignifying the latter as an integral part of the cosmos and familiarising the sky.' Variants of this story are summarised by Waterman (1987:31, 56), who provides references to the relevant sources. Cameron (1903:47) gives a NSW (Wangaaypuwan) version (in English).

<sup>92</sup> Nonetheless, Andy Macqueen (2004:26) speculates that Benjamin Singleton may have been the first English speaker to ascertain it.

<sup>93</sup> Howe also mentioned Mount Yango, in passing, on his return journey (Macqueen 2004:173). His journal of the expedition was originally published in *The Surveyor*, in the issue of 30 June 1917 (pp. 71-86), where it was mis-attributed to James Meehan. More recent (and correctly attributed) versions occur as Howe (1989) and in Macqueen (2004:165-174).

<sup>94</sup> Online at <https://www.wollombi.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/yengo.pdf> [accessed 29 September 2017]. Jones provides no source for the map, which is captioned as 'Yengo recorded as "Yungo" by Darcy in 1833'. But it is presumably a detail from F. R. D'Arcy's map held by State Records of NSW under the title 'Plan McDonald River (then spelt Macdonald) from Yango Creek to Warren Creek, showing ranges & Mounts Bulgalben, Yungo, Moruben' (SRNSW, SG Maps & Plans, Item 3034), dated 1833. D'Arcy made several expeditions to the Wollemi Creek region, just to the west of Mount Yango and the Macdonald River, in the years 1833-1835 (Macqueen 2010:59-87). Macqueen's account of the expedition of June-July 1833 mentions that D'Arcy's party was camped at 'Putty Creek near its junction with Wollemi Creek' (Macqueen 2010:62) in June of that year. This location is close enough to Yango to suggest that D'Arcy may have drawn the map while he was in the vicinity. The map in question is listed in the online repositories of Tim Sherrat (wragge) at <https://github.com/wragge/srnsw-indexes/blob/master/data/list-of-maps-and-plans-and-supplement-csv> [accessed 29 September 2017].

It is hard to reconcile Goddard's interpretation of the meaning ('caught by the foot' or 'stepping over') with other evidence. Two of the responses to the Anthropological Society of Australasia's 1899 questionnaire concerning 'native names of places' mention Yango (~Yengo),<sup>95</sup> and in both cases the meaning has to do with mountains or rocks. These glosses are at least plausible, given that the word *yuyngu* means 'mountain' in Gathang (Lissarrague 2010:285; see also Sim 1966:38, n. 14<sup>96</sup>) and that there is an equivalent form in HRLM, spelt by Threlkeld as *yinku* in his translation of Luke 23:30 (in Fraser 1892:190), where it applies to 'the hills'. Moreover, there are no words for 'foot' or 'step over' that provide a likely etymology in any of the relevant languages.

If the toponym 'Yango' is indeed derived from an Indigenous word that means simply 'mountain', I conjecture that the place may also have had a more distinctive name that was less commonly used, either because it was esoteric or because Yango was significant enough to be referred to simply as 'the mountain', without requiring further specification.

Nonetheless, the concept of 'stepping down' could well be etymologically linked to the names of other sites associated with Yango, in particular Barraba and Burrigurra. Needham (1981:8)<sup>97</sup> glosses 'Barraba' as 'place of descent', so it is plausibly interpreted as consisting of two HRLM morphemes: *para*, meaning 'down' (Lissarrague 2006:131) and *-pa*, 'place of' (Lissarrague 2006:63). In this case, the available evidence seems to support Needham's interpretation. The etymology of 'Burrigurra' is less straightforward. Needham (1981:8) glosses it as 'place where the spirit walked'; and this site, too, is plausibly associated with the descent of the presiding spirit of Mount Yango and thus with the word *para*, 'down'. The meaning of the second part of the name (presumably *-kara*) is less obvious, but it could well be the same morpheme that occurs in the two principal words for 'clever person' in this region, namely, *kara-kal* and *kara-dji*.<sup>98</sup>

I have left till last a conjecture that ties this appendix back to the chapter's beginning, specifically to the 'sunny hill' mentioned in the epigraph. Earlier I suggested that this hill could be Mount Yango.

<sup>95</sup> In 1899, the Anthropological Society of Australasia distributed a questionnaire to police stations, mainly in NSW and Queensland, requesting information for a 'Collection of Native Names of places with their meanings'. A compilation of the responses was microfilmed in 1991 by W & F Pascoe Pty Ltd, as the first of five rolls of the Society's manuscript material. A digital version (PDF and TIFF files) of all five rolls was made available on compact disc by the Geographical Names Board of NSW in 2003 (see References, below). The Society gained the prefix 'Royal' in 1901, so the original documents, now held by the Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney, are catalogued under 'Royal Anthropological Society of Australasia - Records, 1885-1914, with additional material, 1921-1926, ca. 1991, and papers of Alan Carroll, 1886-1892' (MLMSS 7603). But the most practicable method for referencing the individual responses to the questionnaire is probably to use the roll and image numbers of the PDF files (which are the same for the TIFF files) as they are listed on the CD. In the present case, the scanned responses are included in roll 1 as image 010384 and image 010401. Neither response includes the name of the author or the location of the police station, but there are enough recognisable words in both lists to be able to ascribe language affiliations with a fair degree of certainty. The language of the wordlist in image 010384 is HRLM, and the relevant entry in this list reads, 'Yengo: Big Rocks'. The language of the other wordlist (image 010401) is Gathang, and there the relevant entry reads, 'Yango: small mountain'. This is followed by 'Milly buring [?] Yango': Large mountain'. (My thanks to Amanda Lissarrague for assistance with identifying the language of this list.)

<sup>96</sup> Sim interprets the name to mean 'mountain', based on the Kutthung vocabulary of W. J. Enright (1900:114) and an anonymous article on Aboriginal placenames that was itself based on the Anthropological Society of Australasia's questionnaires mentioned above. Lissarrague (2010:285) cites even more sources, including Scott, Branch and Holmer.

<sup>97</sup> Admittedly, Needham and his sources need to be treated with some caution. To give just one glaring example: the myth he recounts in the section on the so-called 'defloration cave' (Needham 1981:18-20) is borrowed from Andreas Lommel's work (1949:160-161) on the Wunambal of Western Australia, but treated as being of local (Darkinyung) origin.

<sup>98</sup> *Karakal* comes from HRLM (Lissarrague 2006:114); *karadji* appears to have been widespread in the languages of coastal NSW (Elkin 1977 [1945]:79-80).

There is possibly support for this in a small book published by W. A. Squire in 1896, called *Ritual, myth, and customs of the Australian Aborigines*. Squire was a solicitor in the Hunter Valley town of Maitland, a member of the Maitland Scientific Society, a friend of amateur ethnologist W. J. Enright, and at least an acquaintance of R. H. Mathews and John Fraser (Squire 1896:5).<sup>99</sup> In addition, he collaborated with A. J. Prentice<sup>100</sup> on an article about Aboriginal use of quartz crystal (Prentice and Squire 1896).

Much of Squire's book is a generalised sketch of Aboriginal culture derived from earlier published ethnographic material. But some of his observations are evidently based on his own experience, including a trip he made to the Wollombi region with Enright and Prentice (Squire 1896:79). There is one passage in particular that is relevant to the issue at hand. In it Squire (1896:60) remarks as follows: ' . . . in his primitive observatory the Karaji kept a three days' and three nights' solitary vigil within a stone circle on a mountain top, communing with *Wanda*, the Unknown Spirit'.

This is unlikely to be an eyewitness account, and Squire provides no source for it. Still, if we accepted it as well founded, it could supply a number of pieces of the puzzle that are otherwise missing from this narrative; in particular: the function of the stone circles on top of Mount Yango; the identity of the 'sunny hill' that songmen frequent to seek the inspiration of the 'god of Poesy'; and a motive for Wulatji's visit to Wollombi.

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<sup>99</sup> Enright and Mathews are well known (both have entries in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*). For biographical sketches of Fraser, see Barcan (2011:72), Roberts (2008:107-108) and <https://downloads.newcastle.edu.au/library/cultural%20collections/awaba/people/fraserjohn.html> [accessed 11 August 2017]. I have based my brief account of Squire partly on his own publications, and partly on an obituary that appeared in the *Newcastle Morning Herald* on 25 January 1908 p. 6 (<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article138393809> [accessed 11 August 2017]).

<sup>100</sup> Also, like Squire, a lawyer. See his obituary in the *Maitland Daily Mercury* 30 July 1936 p. 4 (<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-page13540762> [accessed 12 August 2017]).

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