

Walakandha Wangga



Archival recordings by Marett et al.
Notes by Marett, Barwick & Ford



Ambrose Piarlum dancing wangga at a Wadeye circumcision ceremony, 1992. Photograph by Mark Crocombe, reproduced with the permission of Wadeye community.

Walakandha Wangga

THE INDIGENOUS MUSIC OF AUSTRALIA CD6

Archival recordings by Allan Marett, with supplementary recordings by Michael Enilane, Frances Kofod, William Hoddinott, Lesley Reilly and Mark Crocombe; curated and annotated by Allan Marett and Linda Barwick, with transcriptions and translations by Lysbeth Ford.

Dedicated to the late Martin Warrigal Kungjung, Marett's first wangga teacher

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© Recordings by Allan Marett, Michael Enilane, William Hoddinott, Frances Kofod, Lesley Reilly, & Mark Crocombe 2016

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Introduction

Wangga is a genre of public dance-song from the Daly region of northwest Australia; the country that lies to the north and south of the mouth of the Daly River. This CD is one of a series focusing on the songmen who have composed and performed *wangga* over the last 50 years. More information can be found in our book *For the Sake of a Song* (Marett, Barwick and Ford, 2013) and the companion website wangga.library.usyd.edu.au.

Wangga songs originate as the utterances of song-giving ghosts (*walakandha*, in Marri Tjavin language) singing to the songman in his dream. But the words that we hear are also the words of the songman as he reproduces what the *walakandha* has taught him for an audience of living humans. This ambiguity allows song to bridge the worlds of the living and the dead.

This CD is a comprehensive record of one of the most important *wangga* repertoires. At least one performance of each known Walakandha *wangga* song is included, arranged in chronological groupings from the earliest recordings in the 1970s through the ‘Golden Age’ of the 1980s, when Marett first visited Wadeye, to the early 2000s. Where songs exist in a number of versions (for example with different musical settings), each version is included. While there must have been other songs that were never recorded, particularly in the 1970s and early 1980s, what is presented here is a substantial and important corpus of 34 song compositions.

The listener is provided with transcribed and translated texts, together with contextual information for each song. Further information is presented in chapter 8 of our book. Publications by Marett, notably his 2005 book *Songs, Dreamings and Ghosts*, include extensive discussion of the Walakandha *wangga* repertoire.

Walakandha Wangga

For the last 40 years or so, the Walakandha *wangga*, a repertory composed by Wadeye-based Marri Tjavin singers, has been the most prominent *wangga* repertory performed there. Initiated at Wadeye in the mid-to-late 1960s by Stan Mullumbuk (1937–1980), the Walakandha *wangga* repertory has come to function as one arm of a tripartite ceremonial system organising ceremonial life at Wadeye, in complementary relationship with sister repertories *djanba* and the *muyil lirrga*. All three repertories contain a high proportion of text in normal human language (as opposed to untranslatable spirit language).

The dominant themes are related to the activities of Marri Tjavin ancestral dead—the *walakandha*—as givers of *wangga* songs and protectors of their living descendants. Several specific ancestors, the deceased kin of living Marri Tjavin involved in creation and performance of the repertory, are named in songs. Death is likened to the going out of the tide or to being hit by a breaker. There are also numerous references to ceremony.

Longing for return to Marri Tjavin ancestral country is another common theme. Many songs contain the expression *nidin-ngina* (my dear country). Many specific places are named. Foremost amongst these is the important hill Yendili, one of the places where *walakandha* ancestors reside. There is even mention of one Marri Ammu site, Pumurriyi, underlining the fact that although the Marri Tjavin compose these songs, the Marri Ammu form company with and dance alongside their Marri Tjavin countrymen in ceremony.

The 39 tracks are split over two CDs, 6.1 and 6.2.

CD 6.1

The early period: Stan Mullumbuk's repertory (tracks 1–5)

Stan Mullumbuk composed the first Walakandha *wangga* songs. The earliest recordings were made in 1972 by Michael Walsh and in 1974 by Lesley Reilly. Although Frances Kofod recorded Thomas Kungiung and others singing a Stan Mullumbuk song ('Walakandha No. 8') as late as 1986, by 1988 none of Stan Mullumbuk's songs were being sung ceremonially. One song from this period (track 5) was elicited by Marett from Ambrose Piarlum in 1999.

TRACK 1

Song i: Walakandha No. 8a

karra walakandha kimi-nginanga-wurri kavulh-a
The walakandha has always sung to me and I can't stop him

The text asserts that songmen have always received songs from *walakandha*, and—since the *walakandha* appear unbidden in their dreams—that there is no way for them to resist this. There is considerable evidence that once a living songman has been given the germ of a song, he does a significant amount of cultural work in order to render it suitable for the ceremonies of the living. According to the late Frank Dumoo, this was the first Walakandha *wangga* song ever composed. We do not have a recording of Stan Mullumbuk himself singing this song. This performance by Thomas Kungiung and others was recorded by Frances Kofod in 1986, and shows influence from Belyuen singers, including Muluk (CD3). A further two recordings of this song by Kungiung appear below at tracks 6 and 7.

TRACK 2

Song ii: Walakandha No. 6

aa yene yene
aa karra walakandha ki-nyi-ni venggi-tit-nginanga-wurri
kavulh marzi mungirini

The Walakandha always manifests himself, lying down with one knee bent over the other and singing to me [or facing me] in the jungle

This song also refers to the singer receiving it from a *walakandha*. The vocable text in line 1—*yene yene*—quotes the sung utterance of the *walakandha*. Spirit-language texts containing similar vocables also occur in songs by Belyuen singers Barrtjap (CD2), Muluk (CD3) and Mandji (CD4). Lying with one leg crossed over another in ‘number four leg’ is a posture associated with song-creation. The part of speech *-wurri* means ‘toward the speaker’—glossed as either ‘[singing] to me’ or ‘[facing] towards me’. The jungle mentioned lies behind Truwu beach near Nadirri outstation. This is the first of three songs recorded at a circumcision ceremony at Wadeye in 1974 by Lesley Reilly (née Rourke).

TRACK 3

Song iii: Wutjelli No. 2

yene yene yene yene yene yene yene yene yene yene
yene yene ... [number of repetitions varies]
karra wutjelli ki-nyi-ni venggi-tit-nginanga-wurri
kavulh marzi mungirini

Wutjelli always manifests himself, lying down with one knee bent over the other and singing to me (or facing me) in the jungle

Wutjelli, a ‘grandfather’ (father’s father’s brother) of Philip and Stan Mullumbuk, is mentioned in a number of Walakandha *wangga* songs. Here he appears as a *walakandha*, lying down in number four leg position.

The text of this song is closely related to that of the previous song, with the word ‘walakandha’ being replaced by ‘Wutjelli’. Substitution of one word for another within a textual template is a time-honoured compositional means for generating new songs, found frequently in the Walakandha *wangga* repertory. Here, despite the textual similarity, and as if to underline the innovation, we find that the musical treatment differs significantly.

TRACK 4

Song iv: Nginimb-andja (Two items)

aa yene yene
aa karra nginimb-andja kudinggi meri ngindji-nginanga-
wurri kuniny kan-gu

*Who are these strangers who keep staring at me
and don't recognise me?*

In this song, a *walakandha* expresses suspicion about an approaching stranger. One of the duties of the ancestral dead is to protect their living descendants, and they are notoriously hostile to outsiders who have not been properly introduced to them or their country. Interlopers are likely to be assaulted, or to suffer unfortunate accidents. In this track two items are dovetailed: the didjeridu (*kanbi* in Marri Tjavin) begins item 2 before the stick beating for item 1 has been completed.

TRACK 5

Song v: Walakandha No. 7

yene yene yene yene yene yene yene
karra walakandha
karra

Walakandha

This song by Stan Mullumbuk was sung for Marett by Ambrose Piarlum in 1999 as a historical curiosity rather than an item in the current repertory. In a subsequent rendition (not included here), a number of singers attempted to add text to line 2 in a rather chaotic and unsatisfactory manner. One version was *karra walakandha kiminy-ga kavulh* ‘walakandha always sing like this’, which Frank Dumoo suggested was the correct form of the text, while the form sung here is an abbreviation.

The transition from the early period to the golden age (tracks 6–11)

In 1998, Gemma Ngunbe, John Dumoo’s daughter, gave Marett a tape she had found at the Wadeye school. Marett has concluded that it was probably recorded by William Hoddinott in 1982. The singer is Thomas Kungiung. Several of the songs are early compositions by Stan Mullumbuk, while others are early compositions by Kungiung himself. The recording seems to document the transition from the early period, in which Mullumbuk was the dominant songman, to the golden age, when Kungiung emerged as pre-eminent.

The ordering of songs in the session contrasts Mullumbuk’s practice of singing the same song in a number of contrasting musical treatments with Kungiung’s practice of consistently singing a song in the same way. Marett has argued that the deliberate simplification of musical practice was an important

innovation introduced when Kungiung took over from Mullumbuk as the main Walakandha *wangga* songman, designed to facilitate the participation of a greater number of dancers from a wider range of language groups.

There is a small degree of text instability, perhaps because the songs had not yet been used extensively in ceremonial performance, which usually requires the song to become predictable to facilitate dance participation. None of these early Kungiung compositions survived into the golden age (1986–96), perhaps because of their closeness to Mullumbuk’s songs.

TRACK 6

Song i-a: Walakandha No. 8a

karra walakandha kimi-nginanga-wurri kavulh-a
karra walakandha

The walakandha has always sung to me and I can't stop him

Here and in the next track Thomas Kungiung performs the text of ‘Walakandha No. 8’ (track 1) in two different rhythmic modes—the songs are thus labelled 8a and 8b. The listener can easily perceive the differences in tempo and organisation of clapstick beating. In both performances, line 2 descends into the lower octave, a feature typical of Kungiung’s compositions.

TRACK 7

Song i-b: Walakandha No. 8b

karra walakandha kimi-nginanga-wurri kavulh-a-gu
karra walakandha

This is what the walakandha has always sung to me and I can't stop him

In this version, the text is very slightly modified by the addition of a final focus marker *-gu*, which slightly shifts the meaning from 'the *walakandha* has always sung ...' to 'this is what the *walakandha* has always sung ...'. We saw similar subtle shifts of meaning brought about by minute adjustments to the text in consecutive couplets of Muluk's song 'Wörörö' (CD3).

TRACK 8

Song vi-a: Walakandha No. 9a

karra walakandha kimi-wurri kavulh-a
karra walakandha

He [a walakandha] has always sung 'walakandha' to me

In tracks 8 and 9 Kungiung performs the text of 'Walakandha No. 9' with two different musical settings (the two versions of the text being thus labelled 9a and 9b). The melody of track 8 is shared with Kungiung's own song 'Yendili No. 6' (track 10).

TRACK 9

Song vi-b: Walakandha No. 9b

karra
karra walakandha kimi-wurri kavulh-a
karra walakandha

He [a walakandha] has always sung 'walakandha' to me

Reflecting its different melody, the text here is preceded by an additional line consisting of the untranslatable song-word *karra*.

TRACK 10

Song vii: Yendili No. 6

karra yendili kimi-wurri kavulh-a [repeated]
aa

karra yendili kimi-wurri kavulh-a [repeated]
karra walakandha kimi-wurri kavulh-a

karra yendili kimi-wurri kavulh-a [repeated]
aa

He [a walakandha] has always sung 'Yendili' to me ...

He [a walakandha] has always sung 'walakandha' to me

Another of Thomas Kungiung's early compositions bases its text on the model established by Stan Mullumbuk, but restructured into an AAB pattern in which the B line is either a vocable sung to a melisma, or Marri Tjavin text (see verse 2). Here Kungiung uses the same melody as Stan Mullumbuk's song 'Walakandha No. 9a' (track 8). In the instrumental sections of this song we hear for the first time a pattern of beating that typifies the Walakandha *wangga*, differing in key respects from the pattern usually followed by Stan Mullumbuk.

TRACK 11

Song viii: Yenmilhi No. 2

karra yenmilhi kimi-wurri kavulh-a [repeated]
karra wutjelli kimi-wurri kavulh-a

karra yenmilhi kimi-wurri kavulh-a [repeated]
karra walakandha kimi-wurri kavulh-a
karra yenmilhi kimi-wurri kavulh-a [repeated]
karra wutjelli kimi-wurri kavulh-a

*He [a walakandha] has always sung ‘Yenmilhi’ to me
He has always sung ‘Wutjelli’ / ‘walakandha’ to me*

Using AAB form, like the previous song, this early Kungiong composition shows some variability in the last line of each verse, where the singer switches between ‘Wutjelli’ (the name of an ancestor of Stan Mullumbuk) and ‘walakandha’.

The golden age of the Walakandha wangga (tracks 12–29)

The heyday of the Walakandha *wangga* was the decade from 1986 to 1996, a period in which there was a large number of active songmen/composers. These included Thomas Kungiong (1934–1993), Wagon Dumoo (1926–c. 1990), Martin Warrigal Kungiong (1935–c. 1997), Les Kundjil (1935–2009) and Philip Mullumbuk (1947–2008). There was also a strong body of dancers from Marri language clans, including Frank Dumoo (Marri Tjavin), Ambrose Piarlum (Marri Ngarr), John Chula (Matige), Edward Nemarluk (Marri Ammu) and Maurice Ngulkur (Marri Ammu) (all now deceased)—and several excellent didjeridu players, the foremost of whom was John Dumoo (1922–1997).

This period is represented by Marett’s 1988 recordings, and the 1992 recordings of schoolteacher Michael Enilane held by the Wadeye Aboriginal Sound Archive (tracks 12–23). The earliest

recordings for this period, made by Frances Kofod in 1986, included five songs (tracks 24–28) that by 1988 had apparently fallen out of the repertory. We also include an undated and unprovenanced recording discovered in the Wadeye Aboriginal Language Centre archive (track 29), whose subject matter and performance style suggest that it also belongs to the golden age.

TRACK 12

Song 1: Kubuwemi

karra kubuwemi kimi-wurri kavulh[-a] [repeated]
aa

He [a walakandha] has always sung 'Kubuwemi' to me

Wagon Dumoo composed this song about Kubuwemi, the site on which the outstation of Nadirri now stands. Like other songs, it asserts that *walakandha* are an eternal source of songs about country. This and the following three tracks were recorded by Marett at a circumcision ceremony at Wadeye in May 1988. The excitement surrounding the ceremony is palpable.

The text is given in the form spoken to us, using the same construction as other songs (tracks 10, 11 and 13). Here the sung version seems to consistently omit the final syllable (the perfective suffix *-a*). In everyday speech, this omission would change the meaning from 'he has always sung' to 'he always sings', but our consultants always included the *-a* in their explanations of this song. The next track also omits the suffix.



Wagon Dumoo, composer of 'Kubuwemi' and 'Yendili No. 1', sings at a circumcision ceremony in Wadeye in 1988. Photograph by Mark Crocombe, reproduced with the permission of Wadeye community.

TRACK 13

Song 2: Yendili No. 1

karra yendili kimi-wurri kavulh[-a] [repeated]
aa

He [a walakandha] has always sung 'Yendili' to me

Wagon Dumoo composed this song, which is clearly modelled on 'Kubuwemi.' Here the song's topic is Yendili, an iconic hill where there are a number of important Marri Tjavin Dreaming sites.

TRACK 14

Song 3: Yendili No. 2

karra yendili yendili arr-girrit-ni [repeated]
aa ye-ngin-a

Yendili! Yendili! Look after it!
My dear children/my dear descendants

This song was composed by Maudie Attaying Dumoo, who gave it to her husband Wagon Dumoo to perform. Because Attaying is Marri Ngarr, not Marri Tjavin, the text is in Marri Ngarr language. This is a rare example of a *wangga* song composed by a woman.

The more common explanation of this song is that the words of the text were originally spoken by the song's composer to her children as she and her husband were leaving their house at Nadirri to go back to Wadeye. A second, deeper meaning is that the song is a call from the ancestral dead to their living descendants urging them to look after their country. The melody is shared with track 30 by Les Kundjil and track 32 by Philip Mullumbuk.

TRACK 15

Song 4: Walakandha No. 1

karra walakandha

Walakandha!

Nobody can remember who made this song, or the two other songs with the same melody: ‘Nadirri’ (track 19) and ‘Karra’ (track 28). Even in so simple a text, the communicative function is complex. Because of reciprocal use of the term ‘walakandha’ by the dead to call the living, and by the living to call the dead, the vocative text ‘karra walakandha’ simultaneously constitutes a call from the dead to living *walakandha* in the act of song creation, and a call of the living to the dead when sung in ceremony. As discussed in Allan Marett’s 2005 book *Songs, Dreamings and Ghosts*, the reciprocal use of the term articulates and enacts intimacy between the two orders of being, so that the song functions as two-way communication.

TRACK 16

Song 5: Truwu [Truwu A melody]

karra walakandha purangang kuwa-vapa-winyanga
truwu nidin-ngin-a walakandha
karra munggum kimmelha kuwa karrivirrilhyi
truwu nidin-ngin-a walakandha
karra walakandha

Walakandha! The waves are crashing on them
Truwu! My dear country! Walakandha!
Munggum! He stands behind a beach hibiscus and peeps out
Truwu! My dear country! Walakandha!
Walakandha!

This most popular and enduring song of the Walakandha *wangga* repertory was composed by Thomas Kungiung. It refers to a specific *walakandha*, a deceased ancestor called Munggum who lived around the beginning of the 20th century (also mentioned in track 35). Here Munggum stands behind a beach hibiscus (*Hibiscus tiliaceus*) at Truwu beach and watches his descendants—whom he calls by the reciprocal term ‘walakandha’—being battered by the waves, which in this case stand for the exigencies of life. When sung in the context of a mortuary ritual the song stands as an expression of ancestral sympathy for the pain being suffered by the living as they mourn a dead relative. This performance, recorded by Allan Marett at a ceremony held at Nadirri in June 1988, is discussed in detail in his book *Songs, Dreamings and Ghosts*.

The text of ‘Truwu’ is sung to three different but related melodies. Marri Tjavin people whose traditional estates lie at the coast (such as Thomas Kungiung, heard here) perform the song to the Truwu A melody, the most frequently used melody during the golden age. The other two melodies, Truwu B and Truwu A/B, can be heard in tracks 17 and 18.

TRACK 17

Song 5: Truwu [Truwu B melody]

Here ‘Truwu’ is sung to the Truwu B melody used by Marri Tjavin people (such as Les Kundjil, heard here) whose country lies inland. It is not unusual for melodies to represent an association to particular tracts of country and their associated Dreamings. Just as the people who live near the coast are closely related to those who live immediately inland, so too are their melodies.

Although strictly speaking this performance by Les Kundjil lies outside the golden age (having been recorded by Allan Marett during a procession at a funeral at Wadeye in July 1999), this melody was almost certainly performed during earlier times.

TRACK 18

Song 5: Truwu [Truwu A/B melody]

This performance of Truwu, sung by Thomas Kungjung, Les Kundjil and Philip Mullumbuk, was recorded by Enilane in 1992. Here ‘Truwu’ is set to the Truwu A/B melody, which takes the notes of the pentatonic Truwu A melody (track 16) and combines them with those of the pentatonic Truwu B melody (track 17) so as to produce the heptatonic melody in dorian mode that underlies them both. This melody emphasises the commonalities rather than the distinctions between inland and coastal people.

CD 6.2

TRACK 19

Song 6: Nadirri

karra walakandha nadirri ka-rri-tik-nginanga-ya
aa nadirri ka-rri-tik-nyinanga-ya
(aa nadirri ka-rri-tik-nyinanga-ya)

*Brother walakandha! The tide has gone out at Nadirri and I
couldn't stop it [I couldn't stop him dying]
The tide has gone out at Nadirri and I couldn't stop it*

For the Marri Tjavin, tide is a metaphor for the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. The ebbing tide symbolises death, as a *walakandha* sings of the death of one of his descendants. This song (composer unknown) was performed by Martin Warrigal Kungjung in an elicited performance for Marett at Peppimenarti in 1988. Backup singers included Warrigal's ‘father’ (father's brother) Thomas Kungjung, with didjeridu player Raphael Thardim. The tune is shared with two other songs (tracks 15 and 28).

TRACK 20

Song 7: Yenmilhi No. 1

karra mana ngumbun-nim djeni ngumbun-nim djeni
pelhi yidha wandhi yidha yidha yenmilhi
mana tittil kuwa ngangga-nim djindja-wurri
ee

*Brother! Let's all go now; let's all go now / Pelhi is there, there
behind Yenmilhi Hill / Brother, there are clapsticks for all of
us / Come with us!*

John Dumoo, the composer of this song, was crossing the Moyle floodplain and got lost. He lay down and went to sleep and then heard this song, in which the *walakandha* dead invited him to accompany them to the ceremony ground at the site Pelhi. This elicited performance by Martin Warrigal Kungiong and others was recorded by Marett at Peppimenarti in November 1988. Unusually for the *Walakandha wangga* of the golden age, the song uses fast beating throughout. Today most men at Wadeye do not know how to perform the dance for this song.

TRACK 21

Song 8: Mirrwana

karra
karra walakandha mirrwana kavulh-ni verri ngangga-ya
karra
karra walakandha kimi-wurri kavulh

aa
karra walakandha mirrwana kavulh-ni verri ngangga-ya
karra walakandha kimi-wurri kavulh

*A [living] walakandha has laid himself down at the foot of a
cycad palm and there is nothing that you and I can do about it
The [dead] walakandha always sings to me*

Martin Warrigal Kungjung composed this song and performs it here. Initially we hear an utterance by a ghost: one of the *walakandha* dead notices a living descendant lying under a cycad palm (*mirrwana*) and seizes this opportunity to give him a song. In the final line, performed in the lower octave, the focus switches to the singer's perspective. The text differs in the two verses, though the same Marri Tjavin lines appear in each. Marett recorded this elicited performance during a mortuary ceremony at Batchelor in September 1988.

TRACK 22

Song 9: Wutjelli No. 1

mana wutjelli ka-ni-put-puwa kuwa rtidim nidin-ngin-a
karra walakandha purangang devin kuwa-vapa-winyanga
truwu nidin-ngin-a
(karra walakandha purangang)

*Wutjelli is standing with one leg crossed over the other, Rtidim!
My dear country! / Walakandha! The lonely waves are
crashing on them / Truwu! My dear country! / Walakandha!
Waves*

This song, composed by Thomas Kungjung, concerns Wutjelli (mentioned in tracks 3 and 11). Here he stands in the number four leg pose characteristic of the dead, watching the waves crashing down on his descendants from his vantage point at Rtidim, the headland to the north of Truwu beach. As in 'Truwu', the waves here are a metaphor for the exigencies of life. Singers in this performance, recorded by Enilane at a circumcision ceremony at Wadeye in 1992, include Thomas Kungjung and Les Kundjil.

As he often does, Kungiung sometimes repeats the beginning of line 2 in the lower octave.

TRACK 23

Song 10: Walakandha No. 2

karra walakandha ngindji kiny warri kurzi
kubuwemi nidin-ngin-a
karra ngatha devin bugim rtadi-nanga kuwa
kubuwemi nidin-ngin-a

*A certain walakandha is living there for a whole year,
Kubuwemi! My dear country!
There is a solitary house with a white roof there,
Kubuwemi! My dear country!*

This song was received in dream by Terence Dumoo and Thomas Kungiung simultaneously. It is about Terence Dumoo living alone for a whole year following his move from Wadeye to an outstation at Kubuwemi on his traditional country. The song-giving *walakandha* refers to Terence as ‘a certain *walakandha*’. This performance was recorded by Enilane at a circumcision ceremony at Wadeye in 1992. A version of this song, re-composed by Maurice Ngulkur, is also included in the Ma-yawa *wangga* repertory (CD7).

TRACK 24

Song 11: Pumurriyi (two items)

mana walakandha pumurriyi kin-kurr-nginanga-ya
ee mana pumurriyi kin-kurr-nginanga-ya [repeated]

*Brother walakandha, it [a breaker] hit me at Pumurriyi and I
couldn't stop it
Brother, it hit me at Pumurriyi and I couldn't stop it*

Pumurriyi is a well-known site of the Marri Ammu people, and its mention in a Marri Tjavin song acknowledges that the Marri Ammu also participate in the Walakandha *wangga* repertory. The impact of death on the singer is likened to being hit by a breaker. The arhythmic stick-beating at the very end of the track is a signal that a performance session has concluded. This and the following four tracks were recorded by Frances Kofod at Wadeye in June 1986. It shares a melody with ‘Mirrwana’ (track 19).

TRACK 25

Song 12: Thidha nany (two items)

karra walakandha ambi thidha nany devin
yigin kangi-da-rzan walakandha
karra walakandha

*Walakandha, your father is not alone / I am sitting facing him /
Walakandha*

Here a *walakandha* is comforting the bereaved, whom he addresses as ‘walakandha’, asserting that their deceased father is not alone but in the company of other deceased relatives. This song is sung to Kungiung’s Truwu A melody.

TRACK 26

Song 13: Dhembedi–ndjen

karra walakandha dhembedi-ndjen ngumbu-vup-nim
[repeated]
aa

Walakandha, let’s all get going now

A *walakandha*, in the course of giving Martin Warrigal Kungiong this song, tells him that both the living and the dead now need to collaborate to bring the song into the world (by rendering it as a *wangga* song fit to be performed in ceremony).

TRACK 27

Song 14: Tjagawala

karra tjagawala wumburli ki-ny-i-ng-kurr[-a] [repeated]
angga wakai ki-ny-i-ng-kurr[-a]

Tjagawala! A breaker has hit me
Grandson! Dead! It's hit me

Wagon Dumoo made this song for his deceased grandson, Tjagawala, whose name means 'frigate bird'. As in Pumurriyi, death is likened to being hit by a breaker. This is vividly confirmed by the final line, 'Grandson! Dead! It's hit me'.

TRACK 28

Song 15: Karra

This text, by an unknown composer, consists simply of the word *karra* sung to the same tune as 'Nadirri' (track 19) and 'Walakandha No. 1' (track 15). Another point of similarity to the latter song is the economy of its text.

TRACK 29

Song 16: Yendili No. 5

yendili yendili yendili yendili
karra karrila karrila yendili
ngatja windjeni ngumunit-nginyanga-ndjen
wudi yendili ngil-dim-mi-nginanga-ndjen

*Yendili, Yendili, Yendili, Yendili! Hill, Yendili Hill!
My child, I have to tell you something bad
I have to close down the spring at Yendili*

This song is about the death of Honorata Ngenawurda, the mother of Frank, Wagon, Terence, Claver and John Dumoo, all key figures in the Walakandha *wangga* tradition. Here, her spirit appears in a dream to her son, Wagon Dumoo, announcing that because of her death, she has to close down a particular Dreaming waterhole at Yendili, causing it to dry up. As in ‘Walakandha No. 4’ (track 34), we see the country itself responding to death. The date, occasion and recordist of this performance, which is in the collection of the Wadeye Aboriginal Sound Archive, are unknown.

The Walakandha wangga in the decade 1996 to 2006 (tracks 30–37)

By the mid-to-late 1990s, the singer/composers Thomas Kungiung, Wagon Dumoo and Martin Warrigal Kungiung, as well as many of the dancers and the didjeridu player John Dumoo, had passed away or ceased to be ceremonially active. In the early part of this period, Les Kundjil, a singer who had played a key role both in the initial creation of the Walakandha *wangga* and its blossoming in the golden age, emerged as the senior songman, but he was already old and his powers were dwindling. Before long Philip Mullumbuk, the much younger brother of Stan Mullumbuk, eclipsed Kundjil as the most active songman, composing many complex and beautiful songs and taking on the main ceremonial role, continued until his death in 2008. Thomas Kungiung’s son Charles has now emerged as the leading singer in this tradition. We have recordings of him leading a ceremony in 2009 but we are not able to include them here.

TRACK 30

Song 17: Yendili No. 3

karra yendili yendili karra mana nidin-ngin-a [repeated]
ee karra mana nidin-ngin-a

Yendili! Yendili! Brother! My dear country!
Brother! My dear country!

The text of this song composed by Les Kundjil follows the AAB structure found in numerous Walakandha *wangga* songs, but it is unusual in a number of ways. It contains no verbs, just exclamations. The melody is the same as Maudie Dumoo's song 'Yendili No. 2' (track 14), which also shares several text elements. The recording was elicited by Marett at Wadeye in October 1998.

TRACK 31

Song 18: Lhambumen

karra lhambumen lhambumen kimi-wurri kavulh[-a]
[repeated]
aa

He [a walakandha] has always sung 'Lhambumen' to me

This song by Les Kundjil affirms that *walakandha* ancestors are an eternal source of songs about country, as do Wagon Dumoo's songs 'Kubuwemi' (track 12) and 'Yendili No. 1' (track 13), with which it shares a melody and text structure. Lhambumen, one of two billabongs on the Moyle floodplain, was where the ancestral Wallaroo, Wedjiwurung, jumped from Yederr when he was fighting with the Emu (see Philip Mullumbuk's song 'Wedjiwurung', track 38).

TRACK 32

Song 19: Yendili No. 4

karra yendili yendili ngirrin-ni [repeated]
aa yeri-ngin-a

*We all have to walk to Yendili
My dear children/descendants!*

While Philip Mullumbuk, who composed this song, regarded it as a discrete composition, others argue that it is a version of Maudi Dumoo's 'Yendili No. 2' (track 14), on which it is clearly based (it also shares a melody and some text with Les Kundjil's 'Yendili No. 3' on track 30). This is the first time we hear Mullumbuk's uniquely delicate and flexible style of singing, in a recording made by Enilane at a circumcision ceremony in 1992.

TRACK 33

Song 20: Walakandha No. 3

karra walakandha-ga kiminy-gimi-vini kunya aven-andja
kan-gu kavulh-wuwu duwarr kubuwemi-gu
karra walakandha kudinggi-yirrir kuniny purangang
ngindji ngandjen
kubuwemi nidin-ngin-a

Walakandha! They are saying, 'Where has everyone gone?'
As for here, Kubuwemi is deserted
The walakandha are wandering around at a certain other coastal
estate
Kubuwemi! My dear country!

In this song by Philip Mullumbuk, a group of *walakandha* (in this case, the ancestral dead) find Kubuwemi deserted and ask where everyone has gone. They are told that everyone (the living, in this case also referred to as ‘walakandha’) has gone to another coastal estate. This song refers to an occasion on which Wagon Dumoo, Les Kundjil and Philip Mullumbuk went south to perform ceremony on the estate of the Murrinh-patha-speaking Yek Nangu clan. The performance shows Philip Mullumbuk’s love of long, elaborate lines, often sung to the same melody. We will see this pattern repeated in the following song.

TRACK 34

Song 21: Karra yeri-ngina

karra yeri-ngin-a
ka-rri-yitjip-wandhi-nginanga ka-ni dhenggi-diyerri
nidin-ngin-a
karra yeri meri yigin-ga djindja-wurri
kangi-nginanga yenmungirini na pumut pumut kurzi

*My dear children! / They keep appearing in the distance behind
me at the mouth of the Moyle River, my dear country
You boys, come here / I've got to stay here at Yenmungirini where
the Headache Dreaming is*

This song was given to its composer Philip Mullumbuk by the ghost of Wagon Dumoo, whose spirit has returned to Yenmungirini, the site of his Dreaming, Pumut (Headache), where he must remain. He can see his male descendants only faintly as they gather at the mouth of the Moyle River. At this time the Dumoo family were living in Mullumbuk’s country at Nadirri, some distance away from their clan estate near Perrederr. The recording was elicited by Allan Marett at Wadeye in 1999.



Philip Mullumbuk sings his wangga for Allan Marett, 1997. Photograph by Allan Marett, reproduced with the permission of Wadeye community.

TRACK 35

Song 22: Walakandha No. 4

karra walakandha ngindji kimi-nginanga-wurri kavulh na
karrivirrilhyi
karra berrida munggumurri kunya-nin-viyi-nginanga-
vini-wurri
karra wandhi wandhi kiminy-gimi-vini kunya
karrila yendili kuwa-thet-viyi-ngangga-wurri mana
purangang kavulh nginanga-wurri [mana]

*A certain walakandha is always singing to me beside the beach
hibiscus and I can't stop him
He says, 'Berrida and Munggumurri are both standing looking at
the top of their hill [Yendili] and I can't stop them
They are standing, looking behind them [over their shoulders].'
He says, '[The trees and grasses] on the top of Yendili hill are
standing upright, brother.
The tide is always coming in on me, [brother]'*

Here a *walakandha* sings of two other *walakandha* ancestors: Berrida (Bruno Munggum Berrida, the son of Munggum); and Munggumurri, grandfather of Philip Mullumbuk, the composer of this song. They are looking over their shoulders at Yendili hill, where in response to a death the trees and grasses are standing up like hairs on the back of a dog. The final line affirms that like the tide, life and death are in constant flux. Formally this is the most complex of Philip Mullumbuk's *wangga*. Lines 1 and 2 are sung to one melodic descent, which is repeated for lines 3 and 4. The poignant final line is set to its own melody.

TRACK 36

Song 23: Walakandha No. 5

karra walakandha kakap kiminy-vini kuniny
kurriny-rtadi-warambu-nganan-wurri-ya dhenggi-diyerri
djanden-ni
wuuu
yakerre ngumali nidin-ngin-a

*The walakandha kept calling out
as they came towards me from high in the inland country to there,
at the Moyle River mouth
'Wuuu!' / Oh Ngumali, my dear country!*

In this song, composed by Philip Mullumbuk, a *walakandha* who is standing at Ngumali, the men's ceremonial ground near the mouth of the Moyle River, watches a group of *walakandha* (probably living Marri Tjavin men) coming back from the high inland country to the northwest, calling out 'wuuu' as they go.

TRACK 37

Song 24: Kinyirr

karra mana kinyirr waddi kunyininggi-mukurr-vini-ya
karra mana nidin-ngin-a
kinyirr mana nidin-ngin-a

*Look out for Kinyirr brother, you should have told those two
people to make it clear with the Dreaming.
Brother, my dear country / Kinyirr, brother, my dear country*

This song by Philip Mullumbuk is about the making of the airstrip for the Nadirri outstation, during which operation the Leech Dreaming site, Kinyirr, was damaged by a bulldozer.

Miscellaneous songs (tracks 38–39)

For completeness, we decided to include in our corpus two songs that are somewhat peripheral to the Walakandha *wangga* repertory. Philip Mullumbuk's song about the ancestral Wallaroo, Wedjiwurang, does not conform to the normal conventions of *wangga* and, as Ford discussed in a 2007 article, there is some question about whether it is really a *wangga* at all. Similarly, Ambrose Piarlum's song about the Seagull Dreaming, 'Tjinmel', composed without the assistance of the ancestral dead, is not strictly speaking a Walakandha *wangga*—but is included here because of his close association with the *thanggurralh* 'company' group of Walakandha *wangga* performers.

TRACK 38

Song 25: Wedjiwurang

CHORUS: kurzi namadjawalh namadjawalh

awu kanyi-ngin
wedjiwurang-ga yivi-ndja kurru-kut-a-ga
yi kanbirrin devin-da
ngadja-wurl-da-ni

yimurdigi na-ndjen
kimelh-a-wurri
meri karru-tjip-wurri
ngadja-wurl-ni

ku-muyi-ni masri-ndjen ka-ni
yelhi-ndjen kundjiny-vini-ya
nang-ga mutjirr-ga viyi
nang-ga ka-rri-birr-a vi-rtadi-gu ka-ni
ngadja-wurl

nang-ga wedjiwurang-ga
kurzi-varrvatj-a
lhambudinbu na-ndjen ka-ni-thung-mi-ya
kuwa-wurl-a yivi-ndja
namadjawalh-dja nang-ga yivi-ndja
ka-ni-wurr-a-gu

CHORUS: He lives at Namadjawalh, Namadjawalh

*The animal is our totem / It was the Wallaroo that went down
there / Alone again, to Kanbirrin over yonder / I'm going
back*

*Then at Yimurdigi / He peeped out [from the bushes] / A black
man is coming towards him / I'm going to go back*

*Then, he kept coming out of the swamp to him [Emu] /
The two of them had a stick fight / As for that fellow, Emu, his
head [got hit by Wallaroo] / Emu grabbed the same stick and
hit Wallaroo on the top of the spine / I'm going to go back*

*As for that fellow, Wallaroo / He was still jumping /
At Lhambudinbu he cracked open the ground and made a
waterhole / He went back yonder to that place properly called
Namadjawalh / That place Namadjawalh over yonder, which
is his true place / That is where he died*

This song about the Marri Tjavin totemic Dreaming Wedjiwurang (Wallaroo) is structurally quite unlike other Walakandha *wangga*. Ford notes that its verse-and-chorus structure resembles an English ballad. Verses comprising narrative text about the activities of Wedjiwurang in the ancestral period alternate with a chorus asserting over and over that the ancestral Wallaroo lives at Namadjawalh. The verses themselves resemble those of other Walakandha *wangga*, though each line is sung to a melodic phrase comprising only two notes. Each move from a verse back to the chorus is cued by the sung phrase 'I'm going back again' or 'I'm going back'.

Another unusual feature, also encountered in the songs of Muluk (CD3), is that in some of the verses, the singer starts without clapstick beating, then introduces a very quiet tapping that gets gradually louder throughout the verse. Perhaps Mullumbuk learnt this technique from recordings of Muluk circulating in the community.

We have included this less-than-ideal recording because it is the only record we have of this extraordinary song. Despite a number of attempts, we were unable to make another recording before Mullumbuk's unexpected death in 2008.

TRACK 39

Song 26: Tjinmel

karra mm
karra tjinmel devin rtadi-wunbirri ka-rr-i-wuwu rtadi ka-ni-ya
karra mm
aa rtadi-wunbirri tjinmel devin

karra mm
karra tjinmel devin ka-rr-i wuwu rtadi ka-ni-ya rtadi-wunbirri
karra mm
kagandja

karra mm
karra mana kagandja rtadi-wunbirri devin ka-rr-i wuwu
rtadi
karra mm

*The solitary seagull kept soaring above Rtadi-wunbirri
Above Rtadi-wunbirri, the solitary seagull*

...

*The solitary seagull kept soaring above Rtadi-wunbirri
Here!*

...

Brother, right here above Rtadi-wunbirri he soars alone

Tjinmel ('Seagull') Dreaming site lies at a *wudi-pumuniny* (freshwater spring) in the sea at Yederr in Matige country. As common with less-performed songs, the text is organised differently in each verse. The instrumental sections follow the patterns common for Walakandha *wangga* of the golden age.



Philip Mullumbuk and Les Kundjil sing wangga, accompanied by didjeridu player Leo Melpi, during a circumcision ceremony at Wadeye in the early 1990s.

Works cited

Marett A (2005). *Songs, Dreamings and Ghosts: The Wangga of North Australia*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.

Marett A, L Barwick & L Ford (2013). *For the Sake of a Song: Wangga Songmen and their Repertories*. Sydney: Sydney University Press.

Track	Song	Title	Recording*	Composer
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CD 6.1

Early period (Stan Mullumbuk's songs)

Track 01	(i-a)	Walakandha No. 8	Kof86-03-s07	S. Mullumbuk
Track 02	ii	Walakandha No. 6	Rei74-01-s15	S. Mullumbuk
Track 03	iii	Wutjelli No. 2	Rei74-01-s16	S. Mullumbuk
Track 04	iv	Nginimb-andja	Rei74-01-s19	S. Mullumbuk
Track 05	v	Walakandha No. 7	Mar99-04-s18	S. Mullumbuk

Transition from the early period

Track 06	i-a	Walakandha No. 8a	?Hodd82-s01	S. Mullumbuk
Track 07	i-b	Walakandha No. 8b	?Hodd82-s04	S. Mullumbuk
Track 08	vi-a	Walakandha No. 9a	?Hodd82-s02	S. Mullumbuk
Track 09	vi-b	Walakandha No. 9b	?Hodd82-s03	S. Mullumbuk
Track 10	vii	Yendili No. 6	?Hodd82-s06	T. Kungiang
Track 11	viii	Yenmilhi No. 2	?Hodd82-s08	T. Kungiang

Golden age (1986–1996)

Track 12	1	Kubuwemi	Mar88-23-s02	W. Dumoo
Track 13	2	Yendili No. 1	Mar88-23-s03	W. Dumoo
Track 14	3	Yendili No. 2	Mar88-23-s08	M. Dumoo
Track 15	4	Walakandha No. 1	Mar88-24-s02	Unknown
Track 16	5a	Truwu [Truwu A melody]	Mar88-39-s02	T. Kungiang
Track 17	5b	Truwu [Truwu B melody]	Mar99-02-s14	L. Kundjil
Track 18	5c	Truwu [Truwu A/B melody]	Eni92-s08	T. Kungiang & L. Kundjil

Track	Song	Title	Recording*	Composer
CD 6.2				
Track 19	6	Nadirri	Mar88-30-s15	Unknown
Track 20	7	Yenmilhi No. 1	Mar88-54-s03	J. Dumoo
Track 21	8	Mirrwana	Mar88-40-s11	T. Kungiong
Track 22	9	Wutjelli No. 1	Eni92-s11	T. Kungiong
Track 23	10	Walakandha No. 2	Eni92-s06	T. Kungiong & T. Dumoo
Track 24	11	Pumurriyi	Kof86-01/2-s15	T. Kungiong
Track 25	12	Thidha nany	Kof86-01/2-s11	T. Kungiong
Track 26	13	Dhembedi-ndjen	Kof86-01/2-s12	M. Kungiong
Track 27	14	Tjagawala	Kof86-03/4-10	W. Dumoo
Track 28	15	Karra	Kof86-03/4-09	Unknown
Track 29	16	Yendili No. 5	WASA23-s06	W. Dumoo
<i>Later period (Les Kundjil and Philip Mullumbuk's songs)</i>				
Track 30	17	Yendili No. 3	Mar98-15-s06	L. Kundjil
Track 31	18	Lhambumen	Mar99-04-s16	L. Kundjil
Track 32	19	Yendili No. 4	Eni92-s24	P. Mullumbuk
Track 33	20	Walakandha No. 3	Mar99-04-s07	P. Mullumbuk
Track 34	21	Karra Yeri-ngina	Mar99-04-s08	P. Mullumbuk
Track 35	22	Walakandha No. 4	Mar99-04-s10	P. Mullumbuk
Track 36	23	Walakandha No. 5	Mar98-15-s21	P. Mullumbuk
Track 37	24	Kinyirr	Mar99-04-s21	P. Mullumbuk
<i>Miscellaneous songs</i>				
Track 38	25	Wedjiwurang	Croc04-01-s01	P. Mullumbuk
Track 39	26	Tjinmel	Mar98-07-s11	A. Piarlum

*For a list of codes used to identify recordings, see Appendix 2 of our book *For the Sake of a Song*, pages 417-18.



CD 6.1

- TRACK 1 Song i-a: Walakandha #8
- TRACK 2 Song ii: Walakandha #6
- TRACK 3 Song iii: Wutjelli #2
- TRACK 4 Song iv: Nginimb-andja
- TRACK 5 Song v: Walakandha #7
- TRACK 6 Song i-a: Walakandha #8a
- TRACK 7 Song i-b: Walakandha #8b
- TRACK 8 Song vi-a: Walakandha #9a
- TRACK 9 Song vi-b: Walakandha #9b
- TRACK 10 Song vii: Yendili #6
- TRACK 11 Song viii: Yenmilhi #2
- TRACK 12 Song 1: Kubuwemi
- TRACK 13 Song 2: Yendili #1
- TRACK 14 Song 3: Yendili #2
- TRACK 15 Song 4: Walakandha #1
- TRACK 16 Song 5a: Truwu [A melody]
- TRACK 17 Song 5b: Truwu [B melody]
- TRACK 18 Song 5c: Truwu [A/B melody]

CD 6.2

- TRACK 19 Song 6: Nadirri
- TRACK 20 Song 7: Yenmilhi #1
- TRACK 21 Song 8: Mirrwana
- TRACK 22 Song 9: Wutjelli #1
- TRACK 23 Song 10: Walakandha #2
- TRACK 24 Song 11: Pumurriyi
- TRACK 25 Song 12: Thidha nany
- TRACK 26 Song 13: Dhembedi-ndjen
- TRACK 27 Song 14: Tjagawala
- TRACK 28 Song 15: Karra
- TRACK 29 Song 16: Yendili #5
- TRACK 30 Song 17: Yendili #3
- TRACK 31 Song 18: Lhambumen
- TRACK 32 Song 19: Yendili #4
- TRACK 33 Song 20: Walakandha #3
- TRACK 34 Song 21: Karra Yeri-ngina
- TRACK 35 Song 22: Walakandha #4
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- TRACK 38 Song 25: Wedjiwurang
- TRACK 39 Song 26: Tjinmel



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