

27 October 2025

In alphabetical order, Buda Dji Aboriginal Development Association Aboriginal Corporation, Buluwai Indigenous Corporation, Djabugay Native Title Aboriginal Corporation, Djabugay Tribal Aboriginal Corporation, Ngoonbi Community Services Indigenous Corporation, Djabugay Aboriginal Corporations (djabugay.org.au)

Dear Kuranda Organisation Office Bearers,

RE: Correcting the Records Project 2020-2030

RE: Discrediting Mr Michael Quinn's Position, ie. Not legitimate cultural information

RE: Requesting change to dictionary map page - add the linguist's disclaimer regarding dialects to avoid future misunderstandings

Back in the 1980-90s, Mr Michael Quinn's source was PATZ1980 who provided the map on page 3 in her 1980 thesis (link on the map page). The map label is:

"The Dialects of Dyabugay"

Linguistics Professor R.M.W. Dixon is sourced by PATZ in 2002:

Where the self-termed "languages" of several tribes are mutually understandable, the linguist may recognise these as **dialects** of one superordinate language. But **"there was not usually any name for a group of tribes whose speech was mutually intelligible"**, nor for the language[^] [the superordinate language] that we can - on linguistic criteria - assign to them. It is necessary to **choose some label for each language[^]**, and this usually has to be done fairly **arbitrarily by the linguist**" (Dixon 1980:43).

Mr Michael Quinn has been advised many times regarding his misunderstanding* and is now being dishonest by failing to assist our community to correct the record.

I have provided Mr Michael Quinn ample academically sourced documents (hundreds of pages) over the last five (5) years and he has, not once, provided any evidence that his alternative position is accurate. Not once. If Michael Quinn's position was truthful he could have easily put his fingers on the documents and provided them to me, or pointed me in the right direction. Instead, nothing. Why is that?

Mr Michael Quinn has been asked to apologise to the Kuranda community for his:

* misunderstanding / misrepresentation / misdirection / misleading / mistake / misreading / misconstruction / incomprehension / misimpression / misconstruing / misjudgement / misperception / misreckoning / miscalculation / etc

Mr Michael Quinn owes us all an apology for causing problems in Kuranda, particularly for the Aboriginal community who have been utterly confused and deceived by his misinformation for the last 30 years.

I, personally, would like to say how sorry I feel about this dire situation and offer my sincere apologies for the wrongs caused by Mr Michael Quinn's misunderstanding*, and for the damage and disharmony to family relations over the last 30 years. This misunderstanding is not my opinion – see above the text that **Mr Michael Quinn failed to interpret correctly**, as provided by Professor R.M.W. Dixon (DIXON1980) and Dr Elizabeth Patz (PATZ1980 and PATZ2002). It says it right there in black and white. Dialects of a super-group called 'Dyabugay' is an invention – it was never, ever true.

I urge everyone toward forgiveness, even for the perpetrator Mr Michael Quinn. Mistakes can happen - they can certainly be painful and the suffering is real - however we are all human and we all make mistakes sometimes.

In summary, there were no dialects of an umbrella super-group called "Djabugay [Language] Nation". The term 'dialect' was used by linguists to group neighbouring languages that were similar, and then the linguist arbitrarily (m. by chance) named the new grouping. Prior to Mr Michael Quinn's misunderstanding, and his use of the PATZ1980 map, Primary Sources ROTH1910, MCCONEL1938, TINDALE1939, then following DIXON1970, TINDALE1974 and BOTTOMS1989, in their mapping ALL illustrated: Djabugay on the north side of the Barron River, Yirrganydji down on the Cairns coastal plains (Barron Valley) and sea country, and Buluwai on the south side of the Barron River. Each tribe had it's own language. See all the available mapping for the Cairns Area at the web page below.

If you have any questions, require assistance, or need more research material to read, please call me or visit the web page:

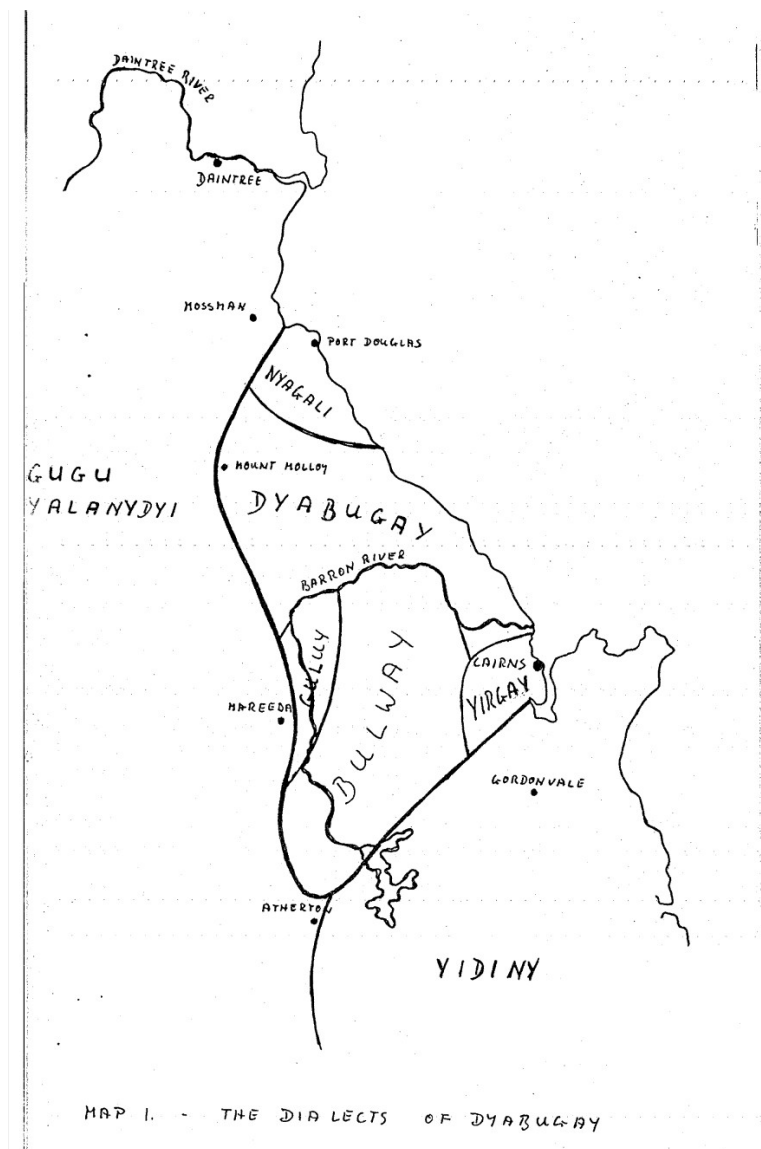
www.kurandaregion.org/correcting-the-records

Kind regards,

Jo Martin
for Correcting the Records Project 2020 - 2030
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MAP 1 – THE DIALECTS OF DYABUGAY

SOURCE: <https://digitalcollections.anu.edu.au/items/15b4e08e-2fc5-428a-8b9f-1d764bfb1787/full>



SOURCE: A grammar of the Kuku Yalanji language of North Queensland By Elisabeth Patz 2002, sourcing R.M.W. Dixon

Where the self-termed "languages" of several tribes are mutually understandable, the linguist may recognise these as **dialects** of one superordinate language. But "**there was not usually any name for a group of tribes whose speech was mutually intelligible**, nor for the language^ [the superordinate language] that we can - on linguistic criteria - assign to them. It is necessary to **choose some label for each language^**, and this usually has to be done fairly **arbitrarily by the linguist**" (Dixon 1980:43).

According to expert Professor R.M.W. Dixon in the text above, the linguists arbitrarily (m. by chance) chose a name, in this local case 'Dyabugay', as a reference point for the neighbouring tribes that had similar languages. This naming convention using **dialects** is not primary source or traditional law and custom, instead a linguistic 'adjustment' that is confusing and simply, by definition, not true.

Therefore, the neighbouring tribes Buluwai and Yirrganydji are NOT dialects, clans or subgroups of a super-group or nation called Djabugay.