East Kimberley
Impact Assessment Project

COMMUNITY SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
A CUMULATIVE STUDY IN THE TURKEY CREEK AREA,
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Helen Ross

East Kimberley Working Paper No.27
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A Joint Project Of The:

Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies
Australian National University

Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies

Anthropology Department
University of Western Australia

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The aims of the project are as follows:

1. To compile a comprehensive profile of the contemporary social environment of the East Kimberley region utilising both existing information sources and limited fieldwork.
2. Develop and utilise appropriate methodological approaches to social impact assessment within a multi-disciplinary framework.
3. Assess the social impact of major public and private developments of the East Kimberley region's resources (physical, mineral and environmental) on resident Aboriginal communities. Attempt to identify problems/issues which, while possibly dormant at present, are likely to have implications that will affect communities at some stage in the future.
4. Establish a framework to allow the dissemination of research results to Aboriginal communities so as to enable them to develop their own strategies for dealing with social impact issues.
5. To identify in consultation with Governments and regional interests issues and problems which may be susceptible to further research.

Views expressed in the Project's publications are the views of the authors, and are not necessarily shared by the sponsoring organisations.

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ABSTRACT

This community impact assessment was carried out as part of the East Kimberley Impact Assessment Project, to try to find methods of social impact assessment suitable for Aboriginal and other indigenous peoples.

The paper reviews new approaches to social impact assessment, particularly with indigenous peoples, and explains the community impact assessment model and methods followed in the present study. It then presents a 'cumulative' (historical and regional) account of the impacts experienced by Aboriginal people in the Turkey Creek area, drawing on Aboriginal accounts and archival sources (presented by Clement in East Kimberley Working Paper No.29). Current Aboriginal aspirations are explained in the context of this impact history. In conclusion, the implications of the study and its findings for the practice of social impact assessment are discussed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research has been inspired by Donna Craig and Ben Boer, who identified the need for new methods of social impact assessment to be developed for use with Aboriginal and other indigenous peoples, and also for methods to be developed which would suit the emerging 'political' approaches to social impact assessment. They also helped generously with literature and ideas on social impact assessment.

The study took shape with the ideas and enthusiasm of the Warmun, Wurreranginy, Juwalinypany, Baulu-wah, Yarrunga, Kawarra, Jarlarlu and Thunpi communities, who decided on the 'story-telling' method and many other features. Eileen Bray's essential contribution as field assistant and translator enabled participants to tell their stories in Kija; Eileen also provided valuable advice and support.

Interpretation of the material relied heavily on the dates and details provided by Cathie Clement through archival searches in Perth. The archival information (presented fully in Clement, 1989) provided substantial support to the Aboriginal people's versions of East Kimberley events. Cathie's collaboration after the stories had been collected (so that archival information in no way influenced the collection of stories) has shown the value of combining archival with oral history research.

Vin and Trish Hindmarsh, Cath Elderton and Audrey Bolger gave invaluable advice and practical support during the fieldwork in October and November 1986, and January to March 1987.

Nancy Williams, Cathie Clement, Donna Craig, Ben Boer and Peter Read commented on drafts of this paper. Nancy Williams, Cathie Clement, Sally Malay, Frances Kofod, Bob Nyalcas, Hector Chunda, Michael Dillon, Ted Beard, Ian Kirkby, Jimmy Klein, Jim Tough and Les Verdon were of great assistance in clarifying details and providing supporting information. Ettie Oakman handled the typing cheerfully and efficiently.

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EXPLANATIONS

This is the first of three papers describing a community social impact assessment carried out with Aboriginal people in the Ord River basin area of the East Kimberley. It makes extensive reference to the stories told by Aboriginal participants in the study, which are published in the paper Impact stories of the East Kimberley (Ross and Bray, East Kimberley Working Paper No.28), and to archival material (Clement, East Kimberley Working Paper No.29).

Quotations from Aboriginal speakers in this text are modified by brackets enclosing explanations, and square brackets where I have substituted words for a speaker's own words. Dots indicate where words have been omitted in the interests of clarity. The orthography used, an English rendering of Aboriginal English and Kriol speech, is explained in Working Paper No.28.

CONTENTS

NEW APPROACHES TO SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

There is a growing demand for new approaches to Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (EIA, SIA), both within and as alternatives to the project-oriented and technical approaches fostered by impact assessment legislation and tight development schedules. One of the greatest limitations of early approaches to SIA is their reliance on quantifiable indicators, which are quite unable to convey the workings of a society and the effect of any new development or policy on people's quality of life. Ways to improve public participation or control, to represent the workings of a community and assess its quality of life, ways to take account of the cumulative effects of developments in an area or on a people, and recognition of SIA as being part of a political process requiring understanding of people's values, are among the emerging trends in SIA worldwide.

Many of the limitations of current approaches to SIA stem from the nature of existing legislation. EIA legislation in Australia and elsewhere requires studies of new resource and construction developments, but seldom of declining industries, towns in decline, or non-environmental initiatives such as legislation (eg Berger, 1985). All of these may have as much social impact as any resource development or construction.

Regional, historic and social views of impact issues are most likely where governments appoint inquiries to examine regional questions (eg the Kimberley Region Planning Study). They are not likely under EIA legislation. Public inquiries, particularly those initiated by governments , also provide the most established form of public participation in impact assessment, and indeed in all policy planning issues. Formby (1986) argues that many inquiries are 'de facto SIA's', even if described in other terms. The 'inquiry' process is based on legal proceedings, including the adversarial methods of the courts. Though some inquiries in western countries have been adapted to cater for a general public without legal experience (Berger 1977; Northern Territory Land Claim hearing procedures), they have the disadvantages of being:

- foreign and intimidating to indigenous minorities, whose forms of presenting evidence (if any) are entirely different:
- expensive and requiring a great deal of preparation on the part of all parties;

- beyond the capacity of citizens themselves to initiate or participate in, without outside financial backing (Inuit commissioning of Berger, 1977 being an exception).

SIA as a process

An emerging style of 'politically-oriented' SIA encompasses approaches which reject the technocratic, empiricist tradition, and emphasise the intangible and intuitive elements of assessment, the analyst's own values, genuine participation on the part of those impacted, and a broad focus which allows specific projects to be comprehended in social context. Politically-oriented approaches in SIA focus on the social process of which the SIA forms part, rather than on the social impact statement as a product (CEARC 1985; Craig, 1985; Corbett, 1986; Torgerson 1980). The decision- making process is acknowledged to be value-laden and political in character, and the ultimate determinant of policy is seen inevitably as value choice. This contrasts with the so-called 'rational' decision-making models favoured under the empiricist approach, which assume that 'objectivity' is possible and 'subjectivity' is undesirable. Conflict over social values is seen as the reality in environmental and social controversies, and politically oriented SIA demands they be debated and determined in a democratic manner through citizen participation. This form of SIA therefore focusses on higher level planning issues such as project 'need' and alternatives, and broader social strategies, in preference to project-specific issues (Craig 1985). Practice of politically oriented SIA requires a keen interest in desired futures, including each community's goals and aspirations, besides forecasting futures with or without the particular project which precipitated the study.

Craig (1985) points out that clear methodologies have not yet emerged in the political approach to SIA. She argues the need for development of:

- regional impact studies, as a policy tool in regional planning;
- studies taking a historical view of development and impacts;
- methods of public participation;
- methods grounding SIA in social contexts,particularly with indigenous people, on whom impacts may be different in nature or scale to those on a non-indigenous community.

Indigenous minorities and SIA

With indigenous peoples in Australia, New ealand, the USA and Canada, the need for alternative approaches to EIA and SIA is even more necessary. As Geisler (1982) points out, SIA has special relevance to indigenous peoples. They live in greater proximity to the earth than other peoples, both culturally and physically, and conceive of themselves as the earthly custodians of its resources. The international quest for resources is focussed on areas in which many indigenous people live, and threatens the wildlife on which they subsist. Consultants hired to conduct SIAs frequently lack the background knowledge of indigenous culture and particular communities necessary to undertake a sensitive study. Indigenous peoples are at disadvantage in making use of legislative provisions for public participation in EIA. They are frequently unaware of proposals and arrangements for public comments, and find the standard timetables and methods of public comment inconsistent with their methods of dealing with such issues.

The methods commonly used in SIA, such as surveys, statistical analyses, and judicial-style inquiries, may be alienating and may misrepresent the workings of indigenous society and values. SIA needs to be carried out with affected people's input and consultation, and preferably by the people themselves, to avoid such misrepresentation and the risk of reducing indigenous sovereignty and control (Blishen et al, 1979; Boggs, 1982a; Geisler, 1982). Boggs (1982a) explains the necessity for 'Indian SIA', against the criticisms that environmental impact statements are advisory documents only, and that social and cultural analyses appear to have little effect on agency decision making:

> For one, if SIA is ever to affect policy as intended, then it must be done well, be credible, and must address the concerns of local affected people ... . But more fundamentally ... lies the issue of who controls information - specifically, technical information. And in that respect, whose definition of the way things are - whose reality - will become part of the official, and written, record.

The Berger Commission into the Mackenzie Valley pipeline proposal (Berger, 1977) is credited with raising awareness of indigenous peoples' concerns in SIA, and with adapting inquiry methods to ensure effective participation by indigenous peoples. Berger found that community hearings have a unique perspective, and also contributed to the technical debate:

> No academic treatise or discussion, or formal presentation of the claims of native people by native organisations and their leaders, could offer as compelling and vivid a picture of the goals and aspirations of native people as their own testimony. In no other way could we have discovered the depth of feeling regarding past wrongs and future hopes, and the determination of native people to assert their collective identity today and in years to come.

The holding of hearings on Aboriginal land or in Aboriginal communities, in informal and empathic style, and with translation, are standard in Australia: for example in hearings under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*; the Western Australian Aboriginal Land Inquiry (Seaman, 1984), and the Maralinga Royal Commission. Alternative approaches to SIA pioneered with Aboriginal people include ethnographic methods (the Social Impact of Uranium study, Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, 1984), forms of consultation (the Cundeelee Housing Study, Clarke et al 1984 and Ross 1985; follow-ups to the Tindal Air Base Study, King and Mackinolty 1983) and adapted survey methods (Clarke et al 1984).

In the USA and Canada, Indian and Inuit people are exploring the potential of SIA to control or direct development on their land (Geisler et al, 1982). There is a strong desire to include indigenous values and viewpoints, to have control over the conduct of research, and to adapt SIA to unique Indian and Inuit circumstances (Waiten, 1981). New directions include examining the institutional arrangements and value assumptions governing development (Boggs, 1982b; Craig and Tester, 1982), taking control over resource developments so that a tribe is both developer and impacted community (Smith, 1982) developing Indian-controlled research capacity (Boggs, 1982; Smith 1982) and searching for strategies to deal with anticipated impacts (eg Helgath, 1983; Owens, 1983).

Community Impact Assessment

Commmunity impact assessment focusses on the local or neighbourhood scale, and participatory processes. Impacts are assessed primarily from the perspective of those directly affected, and in a way which emphasises community values (Armour et al, 1982). This has both a practical and an ethical basis: it is necessary to include the personal knowledge of community members to obtain a full understanding of impacts, and people have a right to be involved in a meaningful way in decisions which affect their lives and their environments. Involvement also assists community development (Armour et al,

1982; Corbett, 1986). Effective community involvement relies on disclosure of information and sharing of resources, and on equality of access to the channels through which influence is exerted. Armour et al note that:

> to educate without providing access to exert influence at the critical decision points, or to invite involvement without ensuring the quality of that involvement, will merely create frustration (1982).

Community SIA, whether conducted within a project-specific framework or otherwise, is thus distinguished from other forms of impact assessment by its local focus and emphasis on community involvement and values. Though it has often been associated with urban environments (Armour et al 1982; Carley and Bustelo 1984), its principles are applicable to all types of community, including indigenous communities. Gondolf and Wills (1986), for example, used participant observation in a community impact assessment for Hydaburg, Alaska.

A community basis has been taken in a study of northern Canadian communities by Blishen et al (1979). This study, which included indigenous communities, tested a model of community capacity to deal with impact issues, categorised in terms of social vitality, economic viability and political efficacy. Bowles (1981), a contributor to the development of this model, similarly concentrates on communities' capacities to manage change. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) social effects project (Branch and Thompson, 1981) chose the community as the most effective unit of analysis for its model of social impacts based on social organisation and social well-being. This model examines the roles of community social organisation and community resources in social well-being, with an emphasis on community perceptions. The Canadian Environmental Assessment Research Council (1985) advocates that social impact assessment be community based.

Community impact assessment holds the potential to overcome many of the problems identified in SIA. These include the alienating nature of much project-oriented EIA and SIA; the need to incorporate quality of life issues, differing values, and to acknowledge the 'human' element in decision making (Freudenburg, 1986); and the need for effective community participation.

It is important that the nature of people's experience, and their perceptions of events which form that experience, be understood. Impacts are experienced, whether consciously or

not. People may experience events differently and rate the extent and importance of various experiences differently from one another and from the experts hired to undertake SIAs. Underlying the community impact assessment approach is a redistribution of power towards affected people (cf Corbett, 1986). It explicitly addresses the political nature of decision making concerning urban planning and resource development (Torgerson, 1980) and provides for people to influence the process. It is an essentially democratic approach, which should hold considerable appeal for Aboriginal and other indigenous peoples.

Cumulative Impact Assessment

Because of the irrelevance of SIA predictions made without regard for social and economic context, there is a need to study the cumulative effects of developments and occurrences set in the social and historical context of the people concerned, which of course has been shaped by a multiplicity of previous impacts. One-off project-oriented SIAs risk making wrong assumptions about social context, with consequent risk to their forecasts. Attempts to isolate one set of factors in an interwoven mass can be highly artificial (cf Kesteven 1986) and if proponents fail to appreciate how other factors are changing, their analyses of outcomes of the options under study may be wide of the mark. The East Kimberley Impact Assessment Project, of which this study forms a part, has been based on the recognition that mining, tourism, the pastoral industry and the public sector have all had interrelated effects on Aboriginal people, and will continue to do so.

Carley and Bustelo (1984) describe cumulative impact assessment as considering

> the social, economic, cultural and political implications of a number of industrialising (or deindustrialising) projects in a region, with attention to their interrelated effects over time. The sum of these interrelated effects are likely to be greater than those generated by particular projects, considered separately.

Cumulative assessment can also be applied to events long past, as the present study and that of Donovan (1986) demonstrate.

In an example reminiscent of the East Kimberley situation, Carley and Bustelo point out that the development of numerous resource extraction and industrial facilities, with transport and communication infrastructure, will transform

Canada's north and impose unalterable changes on existing communities and native lifestyle. They argue that a cumulative approach is essential to assess the interrelated and long-term impacts of such extensive developments; the collection of project-specific studies is only of partial help. Carley (1984) has developed a cumulative socioeconomic monitoring program for Canada's Beaufort region.

Cumulative impact assessment should be a component of integrated regional planning (Carley and Bustelo, 1984, citing James et al and Ballard). Because cumulative assessment may require periodic expenditure over a number of years, government and industry may need to combine resources to assume the cost. A cumulative environmental database, incorporating current planning and previous project assessments as advocated by Armour et al (1982), with access shared by the public, industries and government (consistent with the information sharing pioneered by Berger) would be fundamental to the success of a cumulative approach.

In their review of the literature, Carley and Bustelo mention among the problem areas related to a cumulative assessment of change the difficulty of measuring 'intangible' cultural and value-related impacts. For indigenous people, these may include rapid increase in physical and psychological exposure to non-indigenous society.

Understanding impacted societies

The emerging community and cumulative approaches to impact assessment share a commitment to understanding the workings of impacted societies, especially where a cross-cultural approach is necessary. Surprisingly, ethnographic methods have not been common in SIA, though Waiten (1981), Roper (1984) and Jobes (1986) have called for them and Gondolf and Wills (1986), Justus and Simonetta (1983), Laidlow (1983), and Jacobs (1978) have shown their value. The Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies (1984) was the first to make substantial use of ethnographic methods in impact assessment with Aborigines - or at least in assessments conducted in the name of SIA. There is in fact a considerable body of anthropological literature assessing the effects of development on indigenous peoples but little of this has been identified with the impact assessment literature.

Rohe (1982) assesses the limitations of orthodox ethnographic methods in predicting social impacts: they are time-intensive, and are primarily designed to describe existing community structures, not to predict change. They are well suited to providing baseline information, and to monitoring

change. Kesteven (1986), a member of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies Social Impact of Uranium project, has produced detailed ethnographic guidelines for social impact research with Aborigines.

While anthropological methods are valuable for placing SIAs in cultural context, the standard methods in which people are treated as informants rather than as participants, do not necessarily lend themselves to effective public participation. The emerging trends in social impact assessment point to the need for SIA with Aboriginal people to be approached within the 'politically-oriented' style, to encourage Aboriginal participation, and to be based in a thorough understanding of local Aboriginal societies and their circumstances. It is desirable that SIA with Aboriginal people take a cumulative view, both historically and regionally. Aboriginal control and involvement in SIA, in whatever form, will help to ensure trust and comprehensiveness in the exploration of impact issues. Where people are treated as objects of study, and otherwise excluded from the SIA process, findings are likely to be limited and erroneous.

There is an ethical basis for SIA research taking this path, either in conjunction with or as a counterpart to more empirical methods (eg Clarke et al, 1984). Aboriginal people are experiencing rapid and substantial change: SIA, which is intended to avert unintended negative consequences of change, must be attuned to the circumstances and needs of those experiencing the effects. This entails basing SIA in the social and cultural realities of the people, and accepting their perspectives. Research based solely in the empiricist scientific tradition, with its emphasis on measurement) and disdain for 'subjectivity', cannot do this adequately. The inclusion of human experience and perspectives is most important: to avoid intangible, qualitative and subjective aspects misrepresents people's lives and the nature of social impacts. Exclusion of these aspects of SIA invites the empiricist research tradition to be used in the interests of proponents to discount the objections of those affected. This is changing, partly under the influence of Aboriginal people promoting research over which they have effective control, and devoted to topics of interest and benefit to them.

Historical (Crimmins, 1978) and folklore (Burrison, 1978) analyses have been used to examine past social patterns and the values associated with them, with a view to informing future planning and conserving cultural resources (Dickens and Hill, 1978). Despite the relevance of both historical and folklore analysis to cumulative impact assessment and to the appreciation of social values, neither method has been promoted extensively.

Predictive models based on appreciation of social dynamics, and requiring a blend of sociological and other research methods, have been developed by Branch and Thompson (1981), Blishen et al (1979), and Bowles (1981).

THE COMMUNITY IMPACT STUDY

In response to one of the East Kimberley Impact Assessment Project's aims (EKIAP 1985), namely to contribute to new methods of social impact assessment within a multidisciplinary framework, Donna Craig, Ben Boer and I, decided to combine aspects of each of the approaches described above in a community impact study. Our hope was to advance the state of the art in appropriate and sympathetic methods of impact assessment for indigenous peoples, and to test the feasibility of the community approach we proposed. Its essentials were:

- community control and community involvement;
- methods which Aboriginal people would find comfortable to use and which would reflect their realities;
- emphasis on Aboriginal people's perceptions of impacts and events;
- a cumulative historical and regional view (if this accorded with the community's plans for the study);
- incorporation of a social developmental approach, integrating aspirations for the future and adaptations to past impacts with the assessment process, and relating Aboriginal aspirations to the context of development in the region.

The study was also intended to provide links to, and support other research carried out within the East Kimberley Impact Assessment Project, by contributing historical data concerning East Kimberley Aboriginal communities as well as data concerning their present social conditions, and community aspirations. These data would be relevant to other researchers' studies of the local economy, Aboriginal health, involvement in cattle stations, and possible involvement in the tourist industry. The research was carried out by myself in fourt months between October 1986 and March 1987, with part-time assistance from a member of Warmun community, Eileen Bray. Archival research in Perth was contributed after the completion of fieldwork by historian Cathie Clement.

Location

The study was conducted with members of the Warmun community at Turkey Creek and its 'outstation' communities Wurreranginy (Frog Hollow), Baulu-wah (Violet Valley) Yarrunga (Chinaman's Garden) and Juwulinypany (Bow River) communities, and members of the still-establishing Jarlarlu and Lunpi communities (see

Figure 2). Another community, Kawarra (Bungle Bungle outcamp) was not included because of its intensive involvement with other East Kimberley Impact Assessment Project researchers. Most members of these communities were congregated at Turkey Creek from the mid- 1970s, but are now reoccupying their traditional country and former abodes.

The area of the study is Kija country, shared by Kija and Miriwung speaking people, and borders on Worla country.

Aboriginal residence in this area has been comparatively stable. Prior to the establishment of the pastoral industry Aboriginal descent groups each had affiliations to particular stretches of land, and access to the land and resources of other descent groups, allowing considerable mobility (Palmer and Williams, forthcoming). Aboriginal religion and philosophy, codes of behaviour and relationships among people derived from the land relationships and associated mythology. When the pastoral industry became firmly established, and independent living became hardly viable owing to massacres and depletion of bush foods, Aboriginal people settled mainly on the pastoral stations which coincided with their own lands. Some were obliged to move when small stations and outstations closed down or station headquarters were moved, but in the process new affiliations to land and people were formed. Individual stockmen travelled widely. When Aboriginal groups left all the pastoral stations in the early 1970s, mainly at the station owners' or managers' insistence or provocation, but on occasions through choice, the people of this area avoided becoming 'fringe-campers' around the towns of Halls Creek and Kununurra. Most settled on a government reserve at Turkey Creek, with which all had had previous associations. A few established a camp outside Wyndham (Guda Guda), but maintained close contact and returned to the area when schooling became available at Turkey Creek and the possibility of forming camps on their traditional country arose.

Though anthropological research has been carried out with these people (Kaberry, 1939; Palmer and Williams, 1980; Williams and Kirkby, in preparation), their history has been neglected in the few sources available on the area, with the exception of Aboriginal autobiographies recorded by Shaw (1981, 1983, 1986 and Kofod,in progress).

Aboriginal involvement and control

The communities were offered the study which this paper describes, and the opportunity to decide the topic and methods, in a letter and follow-up discussions before the commencement of the study. The senior people liked the idea of telling their own story about how changes of recent years had affected

them, and what they would like to happen in future, but progressively changed the suggested focus of the study to give greater emphasis on 'early days' stories. Whether strictly by intention or as the result of miscommunication (I had used the expression 'getting stories' as a working description of 'research', 'research' being difficult to translate into Kriol), they seized on story telling with enthusiasm as the method of research. This enabled them to express themselves in a familiar and unconstrained form, and yielded the additional benefit of having their stories recorded.

Difficulties with the offer of Aboriginal control of the research process emerged after the study commenced. I canvassed formal means of control, such as a committee to guide me, regular reports to the community leaders, or regular reports to and guidance from the Warmun Council (which in practice represents all nearby communities, and consists of all community members who wish to attend) . A 'committee' consisting of two women, the Chairman's wife and a descendant of the first Aboriginal people to settle at Turkey Creek was provided in the beginning. Their role was to befriend, assist and guide me, but did not provide the overt control the (academic) designers of the study thought important. When I raised the offer of control again, younger members nodded vigorously, but the senior people insisted that control was unnecessary because they trusted me. (They had known me since 1980, when I was living in Halls Creek and visited Turkey Creek several times.) In effect, the initial decision of the senikor people to accept the research included a judgement as to my integrity, so that in their view further guidance would be unnecessary and offensive. These people were also perhaps mystified by the offer, as it did not match the research or other non- Aboriginal roles they were accustomed to. My repeated attempts to pursue the issue of control were interpreted as a failure of understanding on my part, and discussion was closed. I then volunteered unsolicited weekly reports of my work at council meetings, except when meeting agendas were so full that the use of extra time would have been unwelcome.

It was well into the research period before I realised that people were firmly but discreetly leading the research in directions to suit themselves, as they saw potential for the work to support particular aspirations, and as occasion arose. The direction given by the choice of stories was evident from the beginning, but it took a little time for people to extend the exercise to support their aims of acquiring land leases and starting outstation communities, their concerns about traditional culture and the future of the young, and their race relations motives. People reiterated to me that they wanted the project to 'help kartiya (non-Aboriginal people) understand', and also to have their stories recorded to help teach young people. I was also used as a submission-writer;

the people were planning oral submissions to be made to the consultant conducting the Kimberley Region Planning Study, and decided that they should support their spoken message up with a written submission. As time passed, people began to ask that specific matters be covered in this report.

With the Warmun Council's agreement, a role as research assistant and trainee in research methods was offered to the Aboriginal language workers at the community school, who were literate in the Kija language. Eileen Bray's acceptance of this role enabled people to have the choice of speaking in Kija, Kriol or English. Ms Bray also provided valuable suggestions which influenced the work and acted as an intermediary for people wishing to put forward ideas. The research experience contributed to formal requirements for a correspondence course in Aboriginal language work she was undertaking.

At the end of the field research, I asked, among other matters, what issues people particularly felt should be included in the report. Though people had little energy for discussion in a Warmun community meeting (my leaving followed a heavy period of internal strife and incessant meetings) several firm requests to cover or emphasise issues were put forward through the Chairman. These form the basis of the section of this report on 'new directions'. My proposed report outline was endorsed and a decision reached that the community's copies of the type recorded material should be held in the school. Several put views to me privately. When I took drafts back to show people on two return visits, several senior people eagerly checked the drafts and offered further material and suggestions.

Through this process I learnt that the issue of control was itself a matter over which the community, or at least its elder members, sought to have control. They sidestepped European means of control which were foreign to their ways of conducting business. They affirmed the importance of interpersonal dealings, expressed in terms of trust in me but actually entailing mutual trust. Given this trust, structured means of control seemed to the older people superfluous and potentially insulting. They achieved the degree of control they sought in their own ways - control which did not need to be demonstrated symbolically through European forms which are, in any case, only as effective as the participants permit. Their approach reflects positive experiences with a succession of previous researchers and contrasts with that of Aboriginal organisations elsewhere which have seen the need for formal means of control as a matter of principle and a necessary safeguard. The handling of this issue followed closely on a debate among East Kimberley Impact Assessment Project researchers about the need for and viability of Aboriginal

control over the research efforts of the East Kimberley Impact Assessment Project as a whole, but has not provided much substance to that debate. Structured forms of control may be feasible in a single community of representation encompassing the Aboriginal communities of a region (cf Wafer n.d.). In the East Kimberley, there is no such general system of representation: local groups of communities have a forum through resource agencies (see Sullivan, 1987), but these agencies have no linking structure. Participation in the Kimberley Land Council enables regional consideration of land issues, but not general research. Even so, representation and formal decision making are the forms of the European tradition of government, not Aboriginal forms. In a cross-cultural situation, which society's forms of 'control' are appropriate?

Terms of reference

The 'terms of reference' emerged through a process of community initiative and response to my ideas. They were:

- that the people's stories be recorded and compiled into a community social history showing how Aboriginal people have experienced the major changes which have occurred since white settlement of the area;
- that peoples' aspirations be presented as part of this continuing history;
- that the aims be to 'help kartiya understand', particularly those in a position to assist or to prevent the achievement of community aspirations, and to record the stories for the benefit of children and grandchildren;
- that story-recording be the principal method of research.

These terms of reference were consistent with the academics' objectives to explore methods of social impact assessment suitable for use with indigenous peoples, and held special meaning for the Aboriginal participants.

The people's rationales in reaching these terms of reference included redressing the lack of information available about what had actually happened to Aboriginal people in the region, and hence countering the non-Aboriginal 'popular memory' which has been allowed to prevail. The aim 'to make Kartiya understand' demands a persuasive form of communication, more than a 'dry' report. The people feel that their stories are a persuasive and effective way of communicating; the onus

is on the researcher to present this material in a way which both retains the immediacy of the communication and explains it. The linking of past, present and future through the inclusion of the people's aspirations is unusual in research terms, but very meaningful in the people's terms. Aboriginal studies has only in recent years turned from presenting Aboriginal people as passive victims of circumstance, to acknowledging them to be active manipulators of events. By emphasising their efforts to influence the future, and to overcome past impacts, the people affirm their interest in and capacity for action.

Participants

Participation in the study was dominated by the generation involved in community leadership. These are the people with the right to relate stories, and the responsibility to promote their groups' aspirations. Within this age bracket of mature adults and the active elderly, a comprehensive range of women and men, leaders and more reticent people, joined in.

Extended and detailed interviews were held with 46 Aboriginal people, 20 women and 26 men. Numerous others made shorter contributions in the course of conversation and bush trips. Thirty-seven of the participants were taped, with 45 tapes being recorded in all as some gave more than one interview. Some non-Aborigines who had participated in events described by the Aboriginal people also supplied details.

Most of the participants were selected or self-selected on a 'key informant' basis. All of the community and camp leaders, male and female, were asked for stories, as well as a cross-section of less prominent people from each group. People acknowledged within the communities to be the best informed about the 'early days' were sought out or put themselves forward, especially those whose grandparents had been among the first Aboriginal residents of the white settlement at Turkey Creek. The categories of leading and knowledgable individuals were virtually synonymous. Most of these people came from the generation of active elderly people in their fifties to seventies, though a few very elderly people and some as young as their thirties were included. It was impracticable to include people below this age, because older people gained precedence with the researcher's time, and younger people did not feel confident to relate stories which were the prerogative of living elders. Many did, however, listen intently and suggest to their elders or myself that certain stories should be included.

As the study progressed, the basis of sampling altered from social groups and knowledge of particular areas, to knowledge of particular events which had been underrepresented so far. While saturation point had been reached on 'early days' stories (a priority with the older people, of Shaw 1980), with few new stories or versions coming forth, detail was still needed on more recent events. In the search for material on leaving stations, establishing Warmun community, and the crisis surrounding the discovery of the Argyle diamonds, people in their thirties to forties were informative.

Methods

The term story telling as used here encompasses oral modes ranging from narrative story telling, to life and event-based histories, interviews, and discussions. I was thankful that such a method emerged so easily. My original idea, of using small-group, camp-based discussions, would not have worked too well at Warmun, where public meetings are expected to include the whole community, spontaneous public discussion is less prevalent than I had been accustomed to elsewhere, and people are saturated with meetings. As people's consciousness became raised by the story telling, and as new people saw the political potential for explaining their own aspirations, small group discussions did occur - when several people joined together in an interview, at outstations, on car trips, and among these lingering on after Warmun community meetings.

The format was as unstructured as possible. Some had stories prepared, and sought no instruction. Others sought prompts, so I proferred broad ones such as 'tell me some stories', 'tell me about your parents' and grandparents' times', or 'tell me about your life' (cf Read, 1979). Following these, I would backtrack to seek more detail. Some people came ready for a discussion of issues, telling me about impacts they had identified, or about their plans and aspirations, and impediments to these. Bush trips provided important opportunities for stories, interviews and discussions. People would take me to see the site of an occurrence, or the site of their hoped-for outstation. Some would take a fishing trip, then get talking about an issue after being reminded by something seen along the way. People found it easiest to talk about Argyle Diamond Mine when in view of it.

The story-telling method allowed people to introduce the topics of their choice, and to explain issues in their own ways. A disadvantage, significant from the point of view of adoption by anyone undertaking project-oriented or commercially-funded research, is the time involved in transcribing and translating the recordings. Much of this was

done in the field, where Eileen Bray was available for translations as well as second opinions on unclear passages in tapes-recorded material.

Story telling was supplemented with participant observation along with some discussion and interviewing, and observation of community activities and events. While this report is based mainly on taped-recorded stories and discussions, interpretation of the material would have been quite impossible without participant observation, my prior knowledge of the area and its people, and the archival research by Cathie Clement.

The stories

To the extent that the forms can be separated, this work is as much in the tradition of 'popular memory' (Popular Memory Group, 1982) as oral history. The material recorded included oral history, mythology, history-becoming-myth, conversations, and statements of attitude. The study thus presents the socially-produced memory of this group of people, the 'experience' which informs their beliefs and actions today, rather than being limited to strictly historical content. As so much Aboriginal experience has been disguised or omitted from public records (especially massaces), and details of the Aboriginal accounts differ, verification has been difficult. Nevertheless, archival records have supported the historical basis of most of the main events related by the Aboriginal people. (Shaw 1981 considered his finding of archival support for a story by Grant Ngabidj a rare event). Some distortions in detail, possible incorrect attributions, and possible telescoping of events must be allowed for, in both Aboriginal accounts and archival records (see Shaw 1980)

The selection of stories for the companion paper to this (Ross and Bray, 1989) was made on the basis of recording material little known to non-Aborigines, and presenting a cross-section of people's experience. Primary emphasis on verification would have limited the range of material which could be presented, allowing aspects of earliest events to be repeated, where accounts are so much in agreement that nearly-rote learning of key sequences is apparent, but forcing the exclusion of material revealing current narrative conventions, attitudes and values, but which was at variance with the accounts of other story tellers, or which would require inappropriate or impossible judgments as to veracity. I have sought to examine and present Aboriginal people's own understandings of past events, recognising that they have inevitably been reconstructed and reinterpreted through later experience and values (cf Popular Memory Group, 1982). This

is, after all, the version of events that the people in general believe and which informs much of their contemporary perspective on life.

Reece (1982) underlines the importance of appreciating the context in p2 which Aboriginals view their stories. He points out that historians and Aborigines may differ in their ideas about what is important, especially where massacre stories are concerned. He suggests that Aborigines tend to focus on their total life experience in oral history, and to place massacres in the contexts of being part of the story of their country 'from the events of the dreaming right down to the present', and of genealogical information concerning what happened to kin. Reece argues that the point or moral seen by Aboriginal people in particular stories needs to be appreciated; the stories collected in this study support his observation that massacres are the background rather than the main point of stories which, to Aborigines, illustrate themes such as the cleverness of those who escaped massacres. Reece notes that if there is a 'moral' in these stories for Aboriginal-white relations, 'it is the idea that though things were bad, an amicable relationship has been reached now'.

The Kimberley Aboriginal people's view of past events deserves to be disseminated alongside the non-Aboriginal public's reconstruction of the same past, not only on equity grounds but because the predominant non-Aboriginal view is so heavily reconstructed, omitting major events such as the massacres and distorting race relations in a highly justificatory way. The stories collected in this project complement Shaw's oral history work with men (1981, 1983, 1986) and Kofod's work in progress with women in the East Kimberley.

> They read about book or something, what we done, hard way. Read about book, *kartiya* (white people) can feel sorry, some of people got feel inside, you know. We was stand on in the hard way. Nothing like today. That day was really hard.
>
> (David Turner)

Evaluation

The essentials of the community impact assessment approach being tested were:

- community control and involvement;
- methods to suit Aboriginal people;
- emphasis on Aboriginal perceptions;
- cumulative analysis; and
- inclusion of aspirations for the future.

The approach of community impact assessment clearly has appeal for Aboriginal people. The participants in this study, disillusioned by their regular exclusion from regional affairs but still willing to try an approach which might help them to be heard, seized on the opportunity to participate. This group of people has been the subject of two previous impact assessments associated with the Argyle Diamond Mine (Dames and Moore, 1982; Donovan 1986), but in no way considered this study superfluous.

The commitment to Aboriginal control of the study not only guaranteed the participants' involvement and enthusiasm; the Warmun people came up with a method which would not have occurred to the researcher, but which satisfied all of the other aims admirably. Early confusion over the mode of control (see above) was valuable, in that it demonstrated that the means of control itself needs to be on the community's terms. The existence of structured arrangements such as communities is not necessarily important (though it may be to some communities), but the actuality of being able to accept, reject, and steer research is. Aboriginal control to the extent of selecting the research method demands considerable flexibility of the researcher, who may be called on to adopt unfamiliar methods without the option of returning to base to study books on methodology. The result may attract criticism from those more versed in the methods chosen by the community. In this case the method was consistent with my interviewing and participant observation skills, but interpretation of the stories required me to share some of the difficulties faced by historians and linguists.

There is perhaps a risk of communities choosing methods they have seen used by other researchers, which may seem inappropriate for the study proposed. If this arises, researchers may need to explore the reasons for a choice, and suggest alternatives if a first choice seems unworkable or beyond the researcher's capacity, or help to find a different researchers.

The concentration on Aboriginal perceptions of impacts led me to include issues which might be missed by other methods, and issues which could be considered more important by outsiders being relegated to the background or excluded altogether. As omissions may be accidental, it is valuable, as Amour et al (1982) advocate, to use community evidence alongside other sources, not exclusively.

Overall, the study has demonstrated the appropriateness and potential effectiveness of the adapted community impact assessment model with Aboriginal people. It is essential that the model be seen as being based a set of principles, not as a

rigid set of rules: for example the essence of the model is that Aboriginal people should make the major decisions about how the research should proceed, not that the story-telling method should necessarily be used in other studies.

The issue remains as to how the community impact assessment approach should be used in relation to project-specific or proponent-initiated studies, and also how other forms of data collection besides the community's own perceptions of impacts should or could be included. The first will depend very much on circumstances, and particularly on the relationship between the community, developers and the government. A developer or group of developers could fund a SIA on the community model, either to be carried out by the community with a facilitator, or by a neutral and mutually acceptable party. Government, similarly, could take this initiative. Such an SIA could include or be supplemented by data collected by people outside the community, such as empirical environmental data. If a community is unable to reach such cooperation with a developer, it may be necessary for it to conduct its own SIA in parallel, and submit this to government for consideration alongside a development proponent's SIA.

While this study has concentrated on communities' perceptions of impacts and data contributed by community members (but has also used the researcher's observations and archival material), it would be desirable in most circumstances to combine qualitative and quantitative data, and empirical and subjective data. This SIA model is not intended to exclude empirical data, but to ensure that other forms of data besides the empirical are included. Ideally, all relevant forms of information should be incorporated in a community SIA, for evaluation by the communities affected and others with an interest.

THE IMPACTS

Resource developments and impacts in the Ord River basin can be separated into three main phases (see Figure 1):

1. An 'early development' phase, from about 1886 to 1910. Pastoralism was opened up in nearby areas of the East Kimberley in 1884, but not in the area of this study until between 1895 and 1898. The study area was first affected by people passing through to the Halls Creek gold rush from 1896 onwards, and particularly by the infrastructure which was provided to cater for the gold rush and remaining settlers: the tracks ('roads'), the building of a telegraph line, and the small service settlements of hoteliers and police. This period was marked by massacres of Aborigines throughout the study area from 1888 onwards.

2. A comparatively stable 'pastoral' phase from the 1890s to the 1970s. Aborigines became incorporated as a cattle industry workforce, some also working in non-Aboriginal service activities including police work.

3. A renewed phase of intensive development and structural change, from the late 1960s to the present. The resource base of the area is changing from pastoralism, which has been in gradual decline, to mining and tourism centred on Argyle Diamond Mine and the Purnululu (Bungle Bungle) National Park. Some former pastoral land is under regeneration. The majority of Aboriginal people in the study area and elsewhere were evicted from cattle stations in the mid 1970s, and were forced to form new communities near the towns and at Turkey Creek.

The impacts experienced by Aboriginal people during each of these phases, Aboriginal initiatives and responses to the impacts and mitigative interventions by government and others, are summarised in Figure 1 and described in the following sections.

FIGURE 1. NON-ABORIGINAL DEVELOPMENTS AND THEIR IMPACTS IN THE STUDY AREA

PHASE	IMPACTS ON ABORIGINES	ABORIGINAL ACTIONS AND RESPONSES	MITIGATION BY GOVERNMENT
EARLY DEVELOPMENT (1886-1910)			
Gold Rush - Halls Creek (1886)	Massacres (1886-early 1900s) - loss of population - climate of fear	Intermittent attacks on whites	Belated protection by government after worst of massacres - creation of ration depot/refuges at Turkey Creek (1901), Moola Bulla (1910) and Violet Valley (1912)
Establishment of pastoral stations (late 1890s – about 1910)	Technical dispossession from land by non-Aboriginal ownership (though Aborigines able to live there)	Survival through submission and cooperation	
Infrastructure supporting gold mining and pastoralism, 1886 – (Wyndham Halls Creek road, telegraph line, service industries, police).	Forced then voluntary recruitment to pastoral and infrastructure activities	Social change - survivors pass on their knowledge including their recent experiences	
PASTORAL PHASE (1890s-1970s)			
Pastoralism predominates as basis of European occupation	Incorporation into pastoral and infrastructure workforce	Maintenance of traditional activities and knowledge. New values incorporated, absorption of 'work ethic', pride in skills and effort contributed	Limited government intervention in labour relations. Maintenance of Moola Bulla and Violet Valley as ration depots/refuges. Removal of children, health programs have serious impacts.

STRUCTURAL CHANGE **(late 1960s–)**			
Award wages (1969)	Eviction of majority of Aborigines from stations (others left voluntarily); loss of access to land, employment; wage income for the few still employed	Mass movement to town camps; formation of new settlements; relative political independence	Limited intervention at local level: welfare assistance, individual government employees help Aborigines to gain land and services
Removal of barriers to Aboriginal citizenship rights (1971)	Access to alcohol - threat to health and social relations		
Provision of social security income	Financial autonomy	Used for collective purposes to develop communities	
Structural change in pastoral industry, declining importance; more rapid turnover of station owners and staff.	Further erosion of jobs; harder for Aborigines to visit land	Attempts to buy pastoral land (joining industry as owners)	Reviews of pastoral industry and land use (not explicitly seeking Aboriginal involvement) followed by Kimberley Region Planning Study
Exploration and mining on major scale at Argyle (1979 –). Increased tourism and development of new destinations including Bungle Bungle	Damage to sacred sites, fears of loss of quality of life.	Efforts to return to land. Seeking of powers of control and economic returns from development. Seeking influence through political means and personal interaction with developers and government officials	Limited mediation by Commonwealth and State Governments; concentration on physical standards of living before land and social and psychological wellbeing
Non-Aboriginal population growth.	Further marginalisation of Aborigines in towns and politically. Race relations changes; paternalism of pastoralists replaced by polarisation between supporters and		

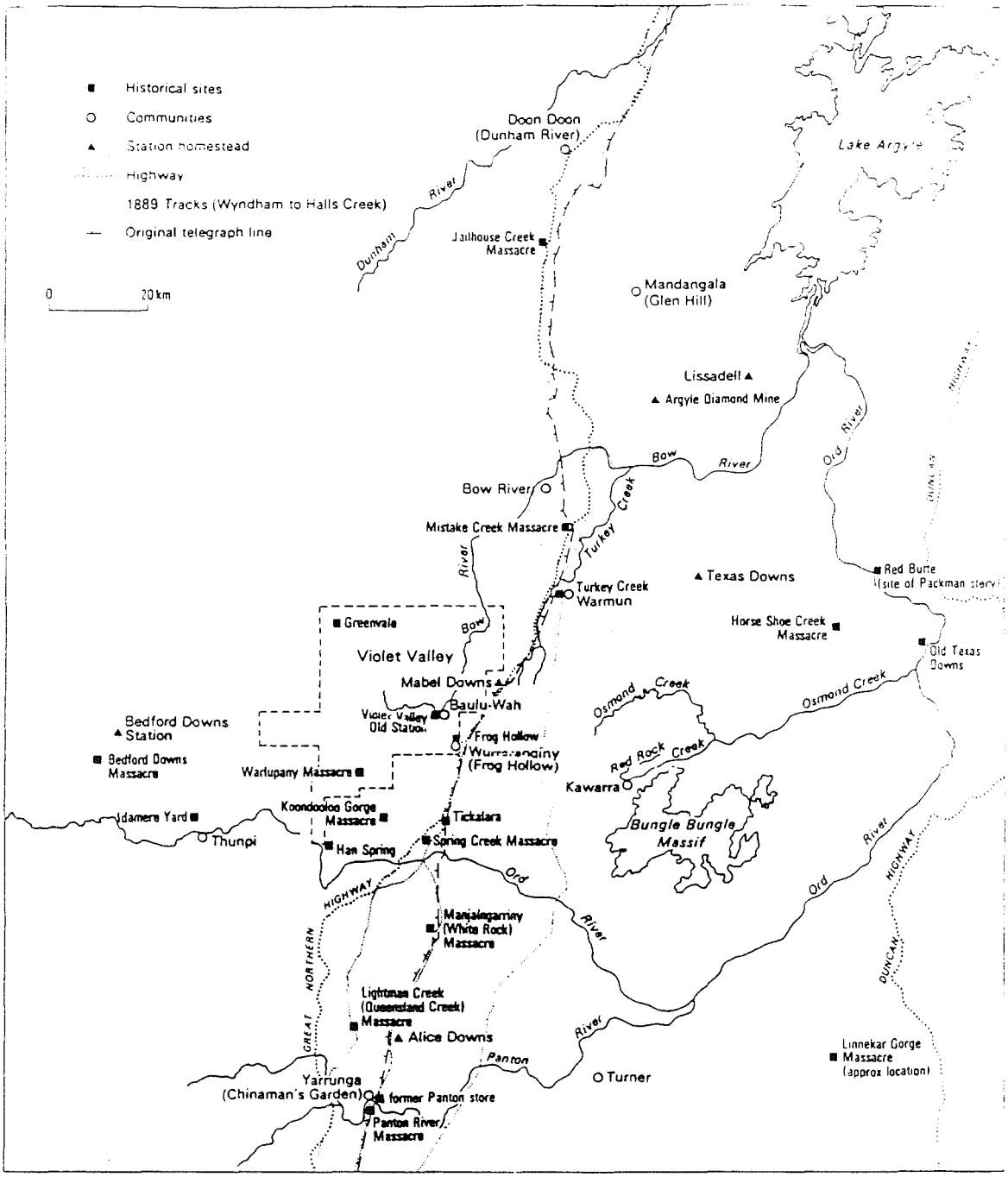

FIGURE 2: LOCATIONS OF HISTORICAL SITES AND PRESENT COMMUNITIES.

EARLY DEVELOPMENT (1886-1910)

Gold rush, pastoralism and infrastructure

Commercial development in the East Kimberley followed Alexander Forrest's exploration expedition in 1879 sponsored by the Western Australian Government (Clement, 1988; Bolton, 1953). Forrest presented a glowing picture of Kimberley pastoral potential, particularly of the upper Ord River area. This led to most Kimberley land being taken up by speculators between 1881 and 1883, though many of these early leases lapsed. The reports of a geological surveyor in Forrest's party suggested the possibility of gold, which was discovered in payable quantities at Halls Creek in 1885 following government and private surveys (Bolton, 1953; Clement, 1988).

Though pastoralism began earlier in nearby areas, the 1886 gold rush to Halls Creek was the first 'development' to affect the Aboriginal people of the area in which this research was conducted, because the main transport routes to the goldfields traversed it (see Figure 2).

Infrastructure rapidly followed the discovery of gold: the establishment of tracks and eventually a road from Wyndham to Halls Creek, followed by service settlements supplying travellers and police, and the construction of a telegraph line.

The people of the Panton River area were affected directly by the gold mining. They say that as the rush passed quickly in the Halls Creek area (the population declined from about 2000 in September 1886 to about 500 in mid 1887) prospectors followed the traces to the Panton area, where gold was found in October 1886. Small settlements remained after the rush and a few prospectors continue to work the Halls Creek and Panton areas to the present.

Pastoralists brought cattle to the East Kimberley from 1884 onwards. The first cattle stations, Ord River (1884) and the stations founded from the Durack cattle drive, Argyle, Lissadell (1885) and Rosewood (1888), bordered the area included in this study to the west and north. The first cattle stations in Kija country were established in the late 1890s (see Clement, East Kimberley Working Paper No.29). Texas Downs was established in 1897, and Mabel Downs (then known as Cartridge Springs) around the same time. Frog Hollow followed in about 1900, then Alice Downs (1901), Mistake Creek (1904)

Bedford Downs (1906) Bungle Bungle (then called Stonehenge) in 1907, and the small back-country stations of Greenvale (about 1910) and Han Spring (about 1915).

Prior to about 1889 several tracks were used between Wyndham and Halls Creek (see Figure 2) consolidating into one route, if hardly a road, after the survey of the telegraph line. The telegraph line was built between about 1888 and 1890, becoming fully operational in 1893.

Panton, Fletcher and Turkey Creek were significant locations connected with infrastructure, and also in conflicts between Aborigines and settlers (see Clement). Liquor and general stores were sold at a wayside house at Panton, which was licenced in January 1888 though alcohol was sold there illicitly before this. Fletcher began as an exchange point for mail carried by police between Wyndham and Halls Creek, and travellers used it as a camping ground. A police camp was established there from 1890 to 1896, and the area was made a police reserve in 1893. Three Aborigines were rationed there in 1900. A small inn and butcher's shop was established at Turkey Creek in 1890, but soon abandoned. Turkey Creek was resettled (after a short-lived attempt in 1890) with the opening of a post and telegraph station there in 1897, initially with three staff. Aborigines were employed there by 1900, tending the station garden. Rationing commenced at Turkey Creek in 1901, initially through the postmaster and after 1903 through the linesman, Mick Rhatigan, who handed the duty to his wife Kate until the contract ceased in 1912. Kate Rhatigan ran a store until 1938, for which she tried unsuccessfully to obtain a liquor licence.

Impacts

Sporadic killings

From the Aboriginal point of view, impacts commenced with the appearance of strange people and objects in their country. Wagon tracks resembled giant snake tracks:

> They used to see em coming along, and they reckon 'that's the big water snake coming along the road'. They used to go across with a spear, wait in the road. They used to kill em (the white people). One white bloke shoot em one, another bloke spear em white man, all that used to be before, all over this country in the hills. They had a road there other side of this big hill here (near Turkey Creek), the old road, across over that side. [From] Frog Hollow come out, keeping in that road, go down to Stony Creek way... (Frank Budbaria)

There was no reference in the stories collected for this study to the first sight of cattle, but a story from Jaru country to the south (Bill Matthews, recorded 1983) describes Aborigines hiding and watching many devils with horns (cattle) - and a man with skin painted white as if with ochre. At nightfall the man caused horror by removing his skin (his shirt) and showing a red light (a cigarette) like a devil. Such stories show how, as Dixon (forthcoming) and Sahlins (1985) argue, Aboriginal people were attempting to interpret the strange events according to their own cosmology.

Queenie McKenzie (stories: 3-5) tells the story of Aboriginal people killing a packman near Red Butte on the Ord River, and, not knowing what his packs and saddles were, using them for a ceremony. A number of Aboriginal people recognise later massacres to have been in retribution for such sporadic killings. They now interpret killings of individuals by both sides as an activity consistent with the context of intra-Aboriginal killings: they say that pay back killings and violent feuds between groups were rife at the time (Shaw 1986). Indeed, they point out that one of the few positive impacts of the early development period was that intra-Aboriginal killing virtually stopped because non-Aborigines posed a greater threat. Police sometimes hunted and gaoled people for intra-Aboriginal killings, such as Ord River killings by Frog Hollow people in December 1910.

Massacres

The major impacts of this period were widespread massacres (mainly from 1888 to 1894; see Clement for archival details) and subsequent forced and voluntary incorporation of Aboriginal people into labour roles. Understandably, Aboriginal accounts do not distinguish the massacres connected with mining infrastructure and pastoral activities.

The killing of large groups, and the use of firearms, were quite outside prior Aboriginal experience, codes of behaviour and comprehension. Non-Aboriginal people seemed like devils, gunfire seemed like lightning, and the people were taken by surprise:

> They reckon they didn't know what the English bin, *kartiya*. They bin reckon some kind of people, devil devil. They reckon 'I don't know what this one got a red ochre' (with skin seeming to be painted with red ochre), they said got (in) their language. Nothing, that *kartiya* bin go *thuwu*, knock em. And that nother blackfella reckon 'oh knock em over got a lightning' (gunfire) he reckon. 'Oh, he bin kill em got a lightning'. He bin crying, and that *kartiya* come behind now, *thuwu* knock em again. Two of them gone! Oh, three of them gone! Oh, one hundred gone! They didn't know what happening.
>
> (Hector Chunda).

> Some fellas laughing. Well, that man getting knocking (hit). They laugh la him 'oh, poor bugger'. They didn't know what. Don't matter they bin laughing, they bin knock the lot. Baby and all, dogs and all. Finish them up there and burn the lot down the creek there. Jack Britten)

Many massacres are included in the oral history of the area. A group was killed and burnt near the Panton River, a few kilometres from Panton store and the road, and near the present site of Yarrunga community (Kenny Bray, Biddy Malingkal, pc). The people point out the remains of the burning at the site. The story of one man's daring escape from this massacre is told by Biddy Malingkal (Stories: 14). Also near the road and telegraph line were massacres at Lightman or Queensland Creek on Alice Downs (Biddy Malingkal, Stories:.6-8; Paddy Rhatigan), Spring Creek and Koondooloo Gorge (Jack Britten), Turkey Creek (Hector Chunda; Frank Budbaria), Manjalngarriny near Turkey Creek (Hector Chunda) and Jail Creek to the north (Hector Chunda).

Away from the road and telegraph line were early massacres at Warlupany, west of Violet Valley (Jack Britten, Stories: 16), Linnekar Gorge on Ord River station (David Turner, Stories: 19), and Texas Downs (Hector Chunda, Stories: 19; Bob Nyalcas, Stories: 12-14). One Texas Downs massacre is attributed to a pastoralist; one account (Queenie McKenzie, pc) links it with the discovery of the murder of the packman (Stories: 3), while another connects it with cattle killing (Bob Nyalcas, Stories: 12-14). The sites of these massacres are shown in Figure 2.

Historians attribute many of the major massacres to protection of the telegraph line, which Aborigines damaged frequently between 1888 and 1893, and vengeance for white deaths (see Clement; Gill, 1977). After the murder of a teamster, George Barnett, near Fletcher in July 1888, a police party travelled 700 miles to punish Barnett's killer and to `disperse' the threatening mobs of natives collected on the Wyndham-Halls Creek road (Gill 1977). This party travelled 700 miles in three weeks and 'dispersed' over 600 Aborigines (see Clement's notes on Fletcher Creek). A private party set out for the same purpose. Biddy Malingkal's accounts of massacres at Panton River, Lightman Creek and Violet Valley and Jack Britten's account of his grandparents escaping massacres at Spring Creek and, after their tracks were followed, Koondooloo Gorge (Stories: 10) could well refer to these retaliations.

Settling down

In time the massacres provided opportunities to recruit labour for roadside businesses and cattle stations. Hector Chunda and Winnie Budbaria's maternal grandmother and some other young people were preserved from a massacre, and trained as workers for the Rhatigans at Turkey Creek (Stories: 21). When Hector and Winnie's grandmother died, their mother, Lola, was brought up by Mrs Rhatigan. When one of these early workers, Mariyal (Maria), ran away or was abducted from Turkey Creek, she was recaptured and brought back to work along with her Aboriginal husband and others (Winnie Budbaria, Stories: 25). (This may be another version of the massacre story at Manjalngarriny told by Jack Britten.) It is unclear whether individuals were directly spared for work. Some of the Aboriginal accounts imply this, but archives show that women and children left unable to fend for themselves adequately in the bush were brought in to Turkey Creek by police from 1901.

As Aboriginal people began to work on white settlements, others came in voluntarily, either to escape being killed in the bush, or to join relatives. Jack Britten says that his grandparents, after surviving two massacres, were eventually persuaded by an Aboriginal woman from Borroloola, who contacted them in the bush, to settle at Frog Hollow station where the Muggletons would treat them well. They were warned that they would be killed if they remained in the bush.

Helen Ross: How did they quieten them down (at Frog Hollow)?

Ida Milbaria: Bring em out from that way, that granny belong mefella all abat, from long way. That granny from Margaret (River) way. (They brought our grandmother from far away). All bin get tucker, tucker, cover em up like this. Cover em up. Sit down out there little bit, little bit good now. He bin like a that one now (food) ... Next time he bin used to it now. (They put food near them. They didn't touch it at first, but then they liked it.)

Winnie Budbaria (Stories: 26) tells how Bob Nyalcas' mother was kept at Turkey Creek at some Aboriginal workers' suggestion. She had run away from Aboriginal men who had abducted her, and was trying to return to her own country on Texas Downs.

Before we had to live in the bush, and we didn't like *kartiya* much. We didn't know what the *kartiya* looked like. Mother and father wasn't too happy because they bin killing people, kid and all, the *kartiya* (before).

(Joe Thomas)

The consequences of the massacres recognised by surviving Aborigines include rapid depopulation, with loss of traditional knowledge by some groups:

Old people bin die. You can't get much story from this place. All the Warmany (Warmun, Turkey Creek) old man finished, they bin get shot.

(Hector Chunda)

Not much Kija people. All died out. They all died, station to station - Violet Valley, Greenvale, Mabel Downs, Texas, Dunham, Bow River, Lissadell.

(Jack Britten)

Hector Chunda: They bin fight back, some fellas, got a spear. They bin kill em one *kartiya* -

> Jack Britten: and they bin make em worse and worse. *Kartiya* bin come more and more.

> Hector Chunda: Got a big mob of rifle.. Finish em up whole lot now. Only all this school kids longa every community making up for them (the numbers lost).

However, a few surviving older people such as Mariyal at Turkey Creek passed on knowledge and stories to members of other families.

There was a climate of fear, with people on the run. Jack Britten describes (Stories: 10) how his grandfather and grandfather's brother escaped a massacre at Spring Creek by hiding in the pile of dead bodies. The white men followed their tracks to where they had joined another group of Koondooloo Gorge, and massacred this group also. Again the two men survived by hiding among the bodies.

Those rounded up for massacres are reported to have acted with resignation:

> People just gave up. They asked each other, 'why have they put us in chains? Where are they taking us?' 'To kill us.' They knew they couldn't get away, so they gave up. (Hector Chunda)

Social change was inevitable as an impact of the early development of the region. The base of Aboriginal knowledge was altered, as some information was lost but conflict and survival stories were added and passed on by survivors. New attitudes and values towards non-Aborigines and work were later incorporated and amended during the decades of Aboriginal involvement in pastoralism.

The massacres are remembered with great sorrow though the stories are related dead pan and often with humour. The details have been memorised by succeeding generations, and the locations are visited reverentially. The Yarrunga people specifically located their community (Chinaman's Garden) to be near the site of the Panton River massacre (Kenny Bray, pc). The stories most often retold emphasise Aboriginal reactions to the massacres, such as the surprise and confusion of victims who had never seen white people or gunfire, and celebrate the wit and skill of the few who escaped.

The memories of the massacres, and evidence still visible where bodies were burnt, have had an enduring psychological effect on Aboriginal people of the area. The stories form an important part of young people's education. The massacres are sometimes raised as a reminder that things have improved for Aboriginal people since those days. Though it is seldom pointed out so bluntly, the massacres also remind Aboriginal people that white 'progress' and 'development' in the region were achieved at their forebears' expense.

Aboriginal initiatives and responses

Aboriginal responses to the establishment of white presence in the area commenced with surveillance and intermittent attacks on people travelling the road and pastoralists, followed by capitulation and cooperation over a long period after the 1880s, when the first Aborigines began to work for white people. Cooperation was not constant: Bob Nyalcas (Stories: 69-72) recounts a Northern Territory man, Major's career as an outlaw (also discussed by Shaw 1983).

These responses were essentially pragmatic. Initially precautions were taken against the strange intruders. They were observed, and some were killed. As massacres became prevalent, survival by associating with white people became essential. It is a testimony to Aboriginal resilience that they managed to survive on terms which came to suit them as well as their subjugators. Despite the disruptions, continuity of Aboriginal knowledge and values was maintained. These continuities and changes are elaborated in the description of the pastoral phase.

Mitigation

Aboriginal people consider that the turning point came when government intervented to stop the killings. Intervention included issuing rations to needy people at Turkey Creek from 1901, and providing refuges at Moola Bulla in 1910 and Violet Valley in 1912. The killing of Aborigines was one of the reasons for the establishment of these reserves, following the Roth Royal Commission of 1905 (Bolton, 1953; Gill 1977), but reduction of cattle killing was recorded as another motivation for the establishment of the two reserves (Biskup, 1983; Bolton, 1953). Violet Valley also enabled rationing to be withdrawn from Turkey Creek and Frog Hollow, the sexual exploitation of women attracted to Turkey Creek for rationing having become a concern to the authorities (see Clement).

> New white people bin come in this country now. Some quiet mob, not hurting native people much. Well, government bin come in more close here, not shooting em down blackfellas in this country. People bin sort of settled down now. 'Don't hurting em fella', government bin start tell white people round this country. And blackfella bin settle down too, not to hurting white people.
>
> (Frank Budbaria)

Kenny Bray and Simon Drill (p.c.) mention a reserve created near Panton Store and the present Katy Yard, where people used to camp. A public purposes lease of 2560 acres encompassing this area was created in 1890, but no Aboriginal reserve.

> Too much white people, (they) were frightened the wild people would be killed.
>
> (Kenny Bray)

> Policeman and welfare bin start come in ... Welfare come along from Perth, two welfare.

> They come along, stop every people round here, everywhere. 'Don't knocking them people, poor buggers, we want to give em jobs! They good. They might be learn some way', they reckon ...[police continued to kill people on the sly] ... But that welfare, that's the one bin put a stop on it.

> When they bin hear em too much people getting shot, well, one old welfare bin come along and put a stop onto em. Well I reckon, myself, we can't condemn that welfare, he's the one bin put a stop. You know, he bin save our lives. I reckon. He save our life, and grandmother. Because [if] they bin keep carry on, well that lot would've bin finished, whole lot. Nobody left ...

> When sergeant (constable) was there (at Fletcher police station), he bin stop every *kartiya*. Stop every *kartiya* 'don't trying to cruel thing on a blackfella. I got a word from government', he told em.

> He bin always go out this way, go out that way, keep bring em back you know, give em a job. Keep quieten em down. Till that Violet Valley bin open for Aborigines. That fellas bin start keep coming in there, everywhere from, that police bring em up and leave em there. Welfare. Not much there now (then), nothing, because that welfare and that sergeant bin put a stop on it.
>
> (Jack Britten)

> We was happy when the government came in, to put us in the safest place. Without trouble, because they shooting and poisoning people, most of the people got killed from the *kartiya*.
>
> (Joe Thomas)

Some Aborigines remain very grateful to government for saving their predecessors in this way. Nevertheless, the intervention was limited. Massacres continued occasionally until the mid-1920s, and Aboriginal people relate how police and station supervisors killed surreptitiously for decades. Many of the abuses identified by the Roth Commission in 1905, such as roughshod methods of police, and the prevalence of cohabitation with Aboriginal women (Bolton, 1953) continued. The latter was not always an abuse; there were several longstanding relationships in the study area.

Some individual pastoralists and employers were also credited with saving Aboriginal people. At Turkey Creek, Mrs Rhatigan was apparently well regarded for giving work and shelter to a number of people and for bringing up an Aboriginal child, Lola.

Frog Hollow was unusual among the stations for the refuge it provided. The owners, Sam and Arthur Muggleton, were assisted by an Aboriginal woman from Borroloola (Turkey), who rode around the district explaining to Kija people in sign language that they would be safe and well fed at Frog Hollow, whereas they would be sure to be killed if they stayed in the bush. Jack Britten says that she later learnt Kija and married one of his relatives, but eventually returned to the Northern Territory. Wurreranginy community has been established on the site of the old Frog Hollow homestead, by the grandchildren of the first Kija people to be settled there.

Some fellas (other white people) bin fight, now. They bin fight back to *kartiya* now, not to kill em. They bin keep some mother belonga, old aunty for Jack (Britten), they bin keep em, not to shoot em. They bin keep em now, Frog Hollow ... Old *kangkayi* (grandmother), old Jatpariya, granny, they bin keep him, well and they bin save him there now. That's the way all this lot bin born. Even me; my *kangkayi* they bin save em. They bin working ... some *kartiya* bin save em, *kangkayi* mob, that's why we live here, some Kija people. If we had a bin born that time, *kartiya* would've just bust em round here (hit them on the head).

(Hector Chunda)

PASTORAL PHASE (1890s-1975)

Working lifestyles

Aboriginal people started gathering at white settlements and forming a workforce from the 1890s, but the majority of Kimberley Aborigines had not settled on cattle stations until the early 1920s (Bolton, 1953), and a number remained in the bush long after (Shirley Bray, pc).

Work

The extent of Aboriginal involvement in the cattle industry is well known. In fact Aborigines played crucial supporting roles in almost all of non-Aboriginal people's endeavours. In the police force, trackers contributed their knowledge of people and the country, knowing where to look for people and using their tracking skills to find them. George Mung Mung describes how his father, Charlie Mung Mung, tracked an Aboriginal murderer to Bungle Bungle and persuaded him to return for trial, and accompanied a Wyndham police patrol to Kalumburu, Forrest River (now Oombulgurri), Mt House, Tableland and Bedford Downs to 'settle' Aboriginal people (Stories: 34-38). He also accompanied a doctor on a long medical patrol. Police 'boys' were the means of liaison between police and bush people, and often interpreted for both. The presence of East Kimberley Aborigines in police parties during and after the 1890s also afforded some Kija people a degree of protection from killing that was not enjoyed by people from Wyndham and in areas they patrolled further westward (Clement, pc).

Domestic workers maintained the police stations and their gardens. The 'publican house' (so-called by Aboriginal people but never licenced) and store at Turkey Creek was among the earliest employers of domestic workers. The post office also used domestic workers and Aboriginal assistants on the line. In the southern part of the area Aborigines assisted white prospectors and prospected for gold themselves (Simon Drill, Kenny Bray, pc). The only enterprise which Aboriginal people did not mention involvement was transport, though Afghan camel drivers or teamsters formed close relationships with women and children at Mabel Downs and Tickalara (Judy Turner, pc).

In the cattle industry, Aborigines worked with stock and the land, and around the homesteads. Men and women maintained bores, erected and mended fences, broke in horses, mustered, branded, and went droving (cf McGrath 1987). Around the homesteads women, children, and some older men carted water and firewood, gardened, tended animals, cooked and cleaned. The

first people to perform these tasks had to be taught to understand English first, an experience which has been handed down in stories (David Turner, Stories: 24; Frank Budbaria, Stories: 33). Bob Nyalcas, (Stories: 44) relates the hardships of learning to ride and break in horses. People emphasise the advantage to white owners and managers of having Aboriginal people work their own country. Those who knew their own country intimately, and cared for it above all other land, contributed local knowledge and commitment which could not be matched by Aboriginal workers brought in from elsewhere, let alone white staff. They complain of managers who did not realise this advantage, and provoked conflicts to the point of losing their workforce. Topsy Wungul (Stories: 81-82) tells how the Bedford Downs workforce left the station in the latter 1970s, when the owner-manager arranged (so they believe) to have their dogs shot. (Clement, pc, says this was a common practice from the 1920s onwards.)

Until the 1950s Aboriginal people's labour was unpaid. Workers and their dependents (of which there were few, as all able bodied members of families worked) were given rations of beef, flour, tea, sugar, tobacco, clothes and blankets, including supplies to take on their holidays. These supplies varied from station to station, but compared unfavourably with the government rations supplied at Violet Valley (Ida Milbaria, pc). Bush foods, and rations exchanged for dingo scalps, eaglehawk claws (as part of an eradication program) and gold were used as supplements, particularly in holiday seasons when people had time to hunt and prospect (Bob Nyalcas, Stories: 50). Some people thought of Turkey Creek as a ration depot before rations were re-established there from 1944 to 1949, following the closure of Violet Valley as dingo scalps could be exchanged for food at the store after 1928.

In the early years of the pastoral period, the relationship between Aboriginal people and the cattle stations provided Aboriginal people with comparative refuge from the risks of remaining in the bush. It also allowed access to resources such as tobacco and convenience foods (cf McGrath 1987) while enabling people to remain on or close to their traditional country. Some, such as the outlaw Major on Texas Downs (Bob Nyalcas, in 1908, Stories: 69-72) and the Aboriginal telegraph line employees responsible for a massacre of bush Aborigines at Mistake Creek in 1915 (Bob Nyalcas, Winnie Budbaria, Stories: 73-75) made use of their access to firearms in private feuds. While some of the first Aborigines to work were coerced, and others used to work occasionally for rations, in time individuals felt status in their employment and pride in their skills and their endurance. Many developed (or have retrospectively constructed) a strong work ethic:

> We've been working we got no school before. Hard working. These days very light work.
>
> (David Turner)

Pride in stockwork skills and hard work, and stories of working times, have been added to traditional knowledge as an important aspect of contemporary Aboriginal identity. Nevertheless, the experience of coercion (see race relations section following), the feelings of powerlessness and conditioned response of outward cooperation but inward resentment (cf Shaw, 1979), have been internalised:

> Hector Chunda: We got no bomb, we got no rifle, we got no gun, nothing good. Kartiya can come over and just
>
> Jack Britten: ... just come over them.
>
> Hector Chunda: They can come while I'm sitting down they can shoot me there. I got no anything to fight back.
>
> Jack Britten: We got nothing. Might be different nother country. All them blackfellas now, New Guinea, all that countries. We here, got nothing.

Violet Valley

Violet Valley reserve, established in 1912 around a longstanding Aboriginal meeting and camping ground, provided an alternative to the stations and other white settlements. There, old people were provided with rations, and younger people worked from 1916 in the kitchen, slaughterhouse, homestead, and prepared cattle hides for further processing at Moola Bulla (Ida Milbaria, Sandy Thomas pc).

> They bring em out killer from Moola Bulla, bring em up droving, right back to Old Station (Violet Valley) ... Put em in there, kill em all that rations ... Might be two killer, might be three killer, they bin want to knock em (were killed at a time) ... They kill em killer, they skin em up nicely, roll em up, put salt longa him, take em out

> now, take em out that hide for bullock. [When it's] dry, work longa that one, scrape em, make em white, roll em up, then make em pack bag, whip might be, rope, all that... .
>
> (Ida Milbaria).

A core of mainly older people lived at Violet Valley permanently, and other Aboriginal people came from all directions to camp there in holiday periods, particularly at Christmas when foot races were held. There were some two hundred people there in mid-1911 (archives) and Phyllis Kaberry recorded 400 people there in 1935 (Biskup, 1973).

> Too many people in't it! ... This side some fella, this side some fella, and this side la rock some fella. You can see that blankets go like this (blankets used as shelters, right across the valley). Got a pretty one (blankets), like a rainbow. Green, yellow, they bin hang em up nice.
>
> (Ida Milbaria).

Mobility

Some people stayed entirely on one station (apart from holidays), their country, throughout the era of Aboriginal pastoral work. Alice Downs and Bedford Downs were occupied continually by the same group, despite killings at Bedford Downs in the mid 1920s (Bob Nyalcas, Stories: 56-58; Dotty Whatebee, Stories: 59-62).

Other people moved from time to time, coming to know a wide area of country and to form closer associations with other mobs known previously through ceremonial and holiday interactions. The strengthening of associations through work and intermarriage help to bind the people of Turkey Creek and its outstation communities today. Some of this mobility, particularly in the pre-war era, resulted from changes in station management arrangements, as homesteads were shifted, outstations opened and closed, and stations sold. One group was shifted from Frog Hollow to Tickalara in 1912 when Arthur Muggleton sold land and relocated. This group was merged with the Aboriginal people of that area. After 1929 Tickalara and Bungle Bungle were run by the same management, so people worked in both places and mingled. In 1942 Tickalara and Bungle Bungle were abandoned, and all the people and stock moved with

the owner, Billy Skuthorp, to Spring Creek station in the Northern Territory. When Spring Creek was sold to Vesteys, the people returned to the general area, separating to work on several stations.

> Billy Skuthorp ... they bin tell us 'you shift out from here now, we give it away'. Take all the horses from here (Tickalara), Spring Creek station. They bin pull em out that old house now, take em away. Shift em everybody from here now, we mob. We bin go to Spring Creek now. That Spring Creek country he not our country, but we bin go there work now, (with) my old people. Shift em nanny goat and horses, cattle ... (overland from Tickalara and Bungle Bungle to Spring Creek, a considerable exercise) ... We bin there for, oh, might be two or three years ... Skuthorp told us, 'Ah, we sell em la Vesteys now, this country. You mob if you like to go back, well, you want to work for this mob?' 'No, we go back country.' Walking foot now, back to Texas. Stop there, get a job la old Jimmy Klein.
>
> (George Mung Mung).

The Violet Valley people scattered to Mabel Downs, Texas Downs and Bow River early in 1940 when they fled from a new manager who attempted to shoot one of their number. The reserve was closed around 1943.

Particularly in the post-war era, individual mobility became more common, with single men and couples working a number of stations in turn. Managers with favourable reputations, such as Jimmy Klein of Texas Downs, attracted workers to their stations. After the mid 1970s, when most stations ceased to maintain station camps, and families from six stations made Turkey Creek their base, regular mobility of young station workers became the norm.

The effects of this mobility are most evident on group formation. Mobility seems not to have reduced attachment to land, but to have increased the number of areas some people have attachments to, and possibly to have widened the areas people refer to as 'my country'. Some people are recognised as being knowledgable about certain country, and as being entitled to join discussions about that country, on the strength of knowledge and association developed through work and residency.

Station life has also focused peoples' attachment to particular places (homestead and outstation sites) where they lived. Forced mobility has led people to pine for the places where they or their parents and grandparents lived and worked in. Several of the locations in which Aboriginal people now wish to start outstation communities are former homestead sites.

Maintenance of traditional life

Aboriginal subsistence, ceremonial and social activities were maintained throughout the cattle-working era. In the wet season 'holiday time' families walked considerable distances to hunt, to join up with other groups, and to attend ceremonies and dispute settlements. Violet Valley and Turkey Creek were major holiday gathering places. At both places people visited elderly relatives who lived there all year round. Both places provided additional subsistence - rations at Violet Valley, and the opportunity to exchange dingo scalps for food at Turkey Creek.

Race relations

The behaviour of white employers and supervisors towards Aborigines varied far more than is commonly known during the pastoral era. Instances of positive relationships are less publicised than harsh treatment. The grandparents and parents of the Turkey Creek elder generation lived through lawless times in which it was common for people to be shot - if they were rivals for a woman, if they offended their white boss, if they `made trouble'.

> They used to shoot the Aboriginal husbands for the women. We were only small kids then, we didn't know. Only one later on we knew about, a bloke at Alice Downs.
>
> (Ruby Kilinyil)

> Well that the early day, they used to do it. You know how cruel used to be early day? ... shoot anybody. They reckon this woman bin make lot a trouble running away taking the man away from work or busy. They used to shoot em down anybody just like a dog.
>
> (Queenie McKenzie).

The last recorded East Kimberley massacre, that at Forrest River, or shortly after, was in 1926. In the area of this study, probably in 1924, a number of stockmen were killed on Bedford Downs (Bob Nyalcas, Stories: 56-58; Dotty Whatebee, Stories: 59-62). While storytellers agree about the details of this massacre, and the site is plainly visible, they differ in attributing its cause to cattle killing (Bob Nyalcas, Stories: 56-58, and other versions) or to Aboriginal women two-timing white and Aboriginal men (Dotty Whatebee, Stories: 59-62). The Mistake Creek massacre (Bob Nyalcas and Paddy Rhatigan, Stories: 73-74; Winnie Budbaria, Stories: 75), which occurred on 30 March 1915, is interesting in that both a 'bad *kartiya*' and a 'good *kartiya*' were involved. The role of the first in the shootings, started by his Aboriginal workers, is unclear, but a good police constable had the 'bad *kartiya*' arrested (see Clement's notes on Mistake Creek).

Police intervention on behalf of Aboriginal people was unreliable - some shot Aboriginal prisoners themselves (Queenie McKenzie, Stories: 55), and condoned pastoralists doing so, but at least one, Constable Flinders who worked at Turkey Creek from 1914-1918 intervened to try to prevent such killings (Jack Britten, pc). (Clement has found instances both of prompt police intervention on behalf of Aborigines, and of participation in killing.)

From the earliest days of settlement there were 'good *kartiya*', people who may have been hard taskmasters, but treated Aboriginal workers in a way the workers considered fair and predictable. The earliest recalled by Aborigines were the Muggleton brothers, Sam and Arthur, who Aborigines believe encouraged people to settle at Frog Hollow as a refuge after 1905 (Terone actually began this practice and it was beneficial to the station; see Clement on Frog Hollow). Nevertheless, one speaker recalls Arthur Muggleton as a harsh boss, and he was as ready as other pastoralists to use police to hunt supposed cattle killers. Gill (1977) and Clement record one of the Muggletons among pastoralists complaining in 1901 that the pastoral industry would be ruined unless Aboriginal attacks on stock were stopped. Other accounts of 'good *kartiya*' occur about the 1930s and 40s, when Jimmy Klein, manager of Texas Downs, stood up for Aboriginal employees. In one account he saved one Aboriginal man from being shot by a white man after a fight by arguing with the white man that he had no authority to kill Aboriginal people (he was not a manager or a policeman!) and threatening to shoot him in return:

> ... They bin make arrangement, something. They were going to shoot some fellas, shoot em la dry gully. And this old man ... my boss, old Jimmy (Klein), he bin go up la all abat. He bin tell em, 'hey, what you fellas talk about? You can't do that' he bin talk. 'None of you fellas bookkeeper or manager, got no right to do that'. He's just a stockman. He bin tell em all abat, 'you fellas blue-top policeman?' ... '[If] You fellas got toshoot that young fella', he bin say, 'I'll blow you fellas got em this one'. He bin have a 45 revolver himself, this old man, whiteman.
>
> (Bob Nyalcas).

Klein is credited with saving Daylight and others after their flight from Violet Valley (Bob Nyalcas, Stories: 63), though Klein himself downplays his role (Jimmy Klein, pc). Naughton, manager of Mabel Downs in the mid 1930s, took the part of his Aboriginal workers who had been provoked into a fight by white employees, represented them successfully in court, and rebuked the white troublemakers (Madigan Thomas, Stories: 67).

The standards of 'good *kartiya*' and 'bad *kartiya*' changed over time. Positive interventions on behalf of Aborigines, which began with Frog Hollow, became more common. 'Bad *kartiya*' remained harsh kartiya but the standards of harshness declined. The turning point was perhaps the attempted shooting of Daylight at Violet Valley in 1940. Accustomed to relatively benign conditions, the Violet Valley people were terrified by the actions of a new manager.

Drinking by white managers and stockworkers was a factor in some conflicts, such as when a manager returning drunk and late from town abused Aboriginal workers for helping themselves to food (Hector Barratt, pc).

Immigrant Aborigines and Afghans

The race relations picture was complicated by the arrival, from earliest times of Aborigines from Queensland and the Northern Territory (eg Turkey at Frog Hollow from 1903). Some of them, such as Bob Nyalcas' father, integrated without incident but in some causes there was trouble. The Turkey Creek people killed one immigrant Aborigine and buried him behind a nearby hill there - his boss missed him but assumed that he'd run away (Winnie Budbaria, Stories: 68).

Afghans travelled through the region from 1886 onwards. They were popular, especially at Mabel Downs where some became involved with Aboriginal women.

> Good people. They used to make johnny cake for us, give us rice, flour. They bin like baby piccaninny (small Aboriginal children), they used to call us ... Oh, all the good people, that lot ... That was no trucks. Just lately trucks bin cart, when we bin big now (in the 1920s). They was making this road now, through Halls Creek, when we bin big kids, working.
>
> (Judy Turner)

Sexual relationships

The violent consequences of white men's jealousy over Aboriginal women were spoken of often, but little was said in the course of the study about the actual nature of relationships between white men and Aboriginal women. The people who spoke about such relationships accepted them as unremarkable; some of the women, or their mothers, had been in stable relationships with white men. Dotty Whatebee's account of the Bedford Downs massacre (Stories: 59-62 blames Aboriginal women for two-timing white and Aboriginal men, not specifically for living with white men.

The reaction of Aboriginal men and women to the earliest associations of Aboriginal women with white men has not been passed on, but it was suggested that Aboriginal men were likely to accept it - apparently a survival tactic, considering the number who were shot:

> I wouldn't know (what the Aboriginal men thought). They might be think something else, but you understand Aboriginal got no arms to do that. He got no help to do that. You can see that all the way along, to right [to] this time of day. I got no rifle to shoot em, nothing.
>
> (Hector Chunda)

While white men on stations might sometimes acknowledge their relationships with Aboriginal women, some who might have liked to do so were said to be afraid (cf McGrath 1987). One young policeman is said to have left Turkey Creek as soon as his Aboriginal baby was born, afraid of his senior officers finding out (Hector Chunda, pc).

One story teller thinks that sexual relationships between white men and Aboriginal women began after the establishment of Moola Bulla and Violet Valley, because the government's intervention enabled Aboriginal and white people to be friends. He said that Aboriginal men didn't mind these relationships. Bolton (1953) and Clement however, note that such relationships were prevalent prior to the 1905 Roth Royal Commission.

Children of mixed descent

The treatment of the offspring of sexual relationships, is an impact remembered with concern. The people say the earliest born were left with their parents, but by Queenie McKenzie's childhood (the 1920s) they were being taken away by government officers to Beagle Bay, Forrest River from the 1920s, then from 1929 to Moola Bulla. (Clement has found archival record of police being used to take East Kimberley Aboriginal children away after 1909; Biskup, 1973, says this policy was most active in the 1930s and 1940s). In some instances fathers took children as far as Wyndham for admission to Forrest River at the insistence of the Protector of Aborigines; where possible they were made to contribute to their children's keep (Clement, pc). Queenie's mother Dinah showed great spirit in arguing to keep her (Queenie McKenzie, pc). Many of the children were never heard of again, and are still mourned by their families, including younger members regretting the absence of relatives they never got to know:

> Oh really proper old days *kartiya*, that's the one bin making it bad. Young woman, take it away, married with it, all that. Half-castes everywhere. When the half-caste girls bin breed up here now, they bin take it away long nother school. Darwin or somewhere, Beagle Bay. Well, they didn't know the country where they come from.
>
> (Jack Britten)

Ida Milbaria's sister Connie was one of the children taken away.

> Eileen Bray: I think *kartiya* used to ... take her away. We don't know where she is ... We never see her again, nothing. Like that, they take her la school, I think ... They was a long time they used to take lot of kids. Half-caste and *kartiya* kids, Aboriginal women have, they used to take them ...
>
> Ida Milbaria: They bin take her la Moola Bulla, now, little fella time (when she was small) my sister. They say that government he didn't allow for him. Asking all that questions. Not this time now. Black woman married to white man. Not before, hard.
>
> Eileen Bray: They never see our auntie. We never see her again.
>
> Helen Ross: Were people sorry about that?
>
> Eileen Bray: Yeh. They can't find out where she is. All the family always ask, but they don't know where she is.
>
> Ida Milbaria: Hard for the olden days people, for half-caste kids. Hard to keep em long time la camp.
>
> Helen Ross: What happened?
>
> Ida Milbaria: Well government ... Government just take em away ... Take it away, might be little, poor bugger. Take it away. They can't keep em long time longa camp. Not like this time, we keep em all the way. Something policeman, government, come round and pick em up.

It should have been possible to trace the children who remained at Moola Bulla or Oombulgurri eventually. Many however, were sent to Perth as domestics and never returned (former Moola Bulla residents, personal accounts 1983 and 1984). It was policy in the 1920s to put girls into domestic service or other work following their schooling at Moore River or at missions. Parents', including white fathers' wishes to

have them return to their families were disregarded on the grounds that half-caste children were wards of the Chief Protector. The chief concern, apart from avoiding wasting the resources put into their education, was to prevent them being absorbed back into Aboriginal communities and, in particular, bearing the children of Aboriginal men (Clement, pc).

In the few years prior to the Second World War, the manager of Moola Bulla, Tom Woodland, used to travel through the area collecting Aboriginal children for schooling at Moola Bulla. Hector Chunda and his age mates evaded him by running away to hide on a hill just east of Turkey Creek.

> We were supposed to go schooling in Moola Bulla. Some fellas bin go ... they bin grab em them, policeman, take em to Moola Bulla. Me, Henry (Wombin), Left Hand (George Dingmary), we bin run away. Climb up alonga hill ... Kawariny ..., Ngarrkuruny hill, policeman never blow wind up me all abat ... We bin sort of work our head (think) very quick, run away from the bad people like that, you know.
>
> (Hector Chunda)

Others, including Hector Barratt, Raymond Wallaby and Sam Butters attended until the school closed just after the war.

Leprosy

Another influence in this period, which caused people to be removed temporarily or permanently from their places of origin, was leprosy. Patients were sent to Derby Leprosarium. Some Turkey Creek people now see this as having been an important educational opportunity:

> They bin do em good. When they bin young, yeh, they used to do em school there. Some bin going school good, big mob from Kalumburu side all around from that way. All went schooling there, they're really top class now.
>
> (Bob Nyalcas)

The leprosarium enabled people from all over the Kimberley to meet. Early medical treatment was considered a killer, as people were observed to die after receiving

injections, but medical advances which brought leprosy under control were appreciated:

> When man bin have leprosy, and before this medicine bin come, but first one they got a big needle there for kill em (pierce) lot of people ... Poke a man this way la backside, and after that they always stop for a few days, get sick and die. Next time when me fellas we bin have em tablets now, you know, medicine. Just drinking that medicine, and small needle. Lot of fellas bin saved now by that. Big mob bin died from that big needle.
>
> (Bob Nyalcas)

Other illnesses were not mentioned to me in this study. A major flu epidemic which wiped out much of the Kimberley Aboriginal population in the 1920s, was mentioned to me by Halls Creek people in 1980. Venereal disease caused social disruption, as people were sent to Wyndham and Bernier Island for treatment initially; later they were treated at Turkey Creek (Clement, pc).

Citizenship and award wages

Aboriginal people are conscious of two significant legislative changes having effects on them in the early 1970s. Goodall (nd) points out that the Aboriginal political movements for civil rights and award wages were linked nationally with Aborigines from south-eastern Australia being active in both campaigns. From 1944 to 1971, under the *Natives (Citizens) Rights) Act 1944*, Aboriginal people had been denied the status of Australian citizens unless they applied for a certificate of citizenship, a document which resembled a passport. These certificates enabled Aboriginal people, among other things, to associate with non-Aborigines and to drink alcohol. Aboriginal people - and many non-Aborigines - in the region, refer to the repeal of the Act actually as conferring citizenship. The major impact of the reppeal, access to accohol, was delayed until Aboriginal people left the stations in mid-1970s and gained social security income and access to supplies.

The introduction of compulsory award wages in 1969 is believed by many Aboriginal people (and many non-Aboriginal people as well) to have been responsible for the major social impact of ending the Aboriginal role as a pastoral workforce, and hence Aboriginal people's ability to live on their lands. This explanation appears simplistic. There was an unexplained delay between the introduction of compulsory award wages to Australian citizens in 1967 (through the federal *Pastoral Industry Act, 1965*) union members and then all Aboriginal

pastoral employees at the end of 1968 (Williams and Kirkby, forthcoming) and the rash of evictions and voluntary withdrawals from East Kimberley stations in the mid-1970s). Other factors which may have intervened include structural change, a price slump in international markets, and changing Aboriginal attitudes towards wage employment (see Altman and Nieuwenhausen, 1979; Bolton, 1981). As Williams and Kirkby point out, by 1969 the majority of male Aboriginal station workers at least in the Kununurra area, were in fact receiving award wages owing to competition for labour, so working women stood to be the main beneficiaries.

Impacts

Many of the effects of station life on Aboriginal society were subtle.

Holidays provided opportunity for the maintenance of Aboriginal religious life, social ties, and hunting and gathering, though opportunities for hunting declined as native fauna became progresively more scarce. As Edmunds (1988) observes, this was a central part of Aboriginal life which remained independent of European influence and control.

Transmission of detailed knowledge of land and mythology was also not as impeded in the days people worked all over stations on foot and horseback as it was later (though Bolger, 1985, points out that womens' domestic duties left them little time for teaching younger people). Attachment to land changed subtly, however, with homestead sites being added to the places to which people felt strong ties, and with knowledge of land gained through work being added to the traditional bases of attachment to land through descent, conception and birth places (though the homesteads also became important as places where many were born and died). English and Kriol were added to the languages spoken, but the people do not believe these languages competed with Kija and Miriwung.

Kinship and group formation were recognisably affected by the changes in mobility patterns resulting from station life. Over time, groups were broken up and new ones formed, creating a wide network of ties. Marriages among people who lived and worked together for long periods have created links among all of the former station groups. For example, the five camps at Turkey Creek are roughly station-based as well as country-based in that they hold members who worked together most recently. At the same time, marriage and sibling relationships among the camps are many and influential.

It was in lifestyles and social values that station life had most impact. People acquired tastes for food and tobacco (the latter replacing a bush stimulant which was similarly chewed with fine white ashes) which continue to influence their dietary habits. They acquired a work ethic which they now regret that their children and grandchildren do not share. Their experience with race relations on the stations seems to have conditioned their response to non-Aboriginal people today.

Many government activities directed to Aborigines during this era can be viewed as impacts rather than mitigations. Police work, on the whole, supported the pastoralists' need to keep Aboriginal people on the stations and compliant, and to remove those Aborigines prominent in killing stock. Some employers, however, were refused permits to employ Aborigines and some were prosecuted for employing Aborigines without permits. The removal of children of mixed descent in assimilation programs upset and divided Aboriginal families, some of whom have never managed to trace their lost relatives. Attempts to educate children, again being based on forcible removal to Moola Bulla, added to the experience of domination by non-Aborigines. Not surprisingly, few of the older people who have remained in the region are literate or numerate. It is ironic that a few people attribute the most successful attempt to educate them in non-Aboriginal subject matter to a leprosy program! Even this involved serious dislocation of people: some Warmun people speak of the Derby leprosarium as an opportunity for schooling and to meet others, but Halls Creek people who lost spouses in their absence at the leprosarium are less positive on the subject (personal accounts, 1980).

The two major legislative changes, introduction of compulsory award wages and general extension of citizenship rights, can be viewed as national attempts to mitigate inequalities in treatment of Aboriginal people. Both had delayed effects, which are perceived simplistically by Aboriginal and many non-Aboriginal people. The introduction of award wages and the eviction of Aboriginal people from stations are mainly linked by pastoralists' use of award wages as their reason when asking Aboriginal people to leave - the five-year interval between these events remains unexplained. The extension of citizenship rights should have meant much more to Aboriginal people in remote areas than the freedom to drink alcohol, but this is still what it represents to the majority in the East Kimberley. A few Aboriginal people regret the granting of citizenship rights for this reason. Other likely factors in alcohol abuse, such as access to money, towns and transport after people left the stations, are not mentioned, though some people see stress as a facet of individual cases of alcoholism.

Aboriginal actions and responses

During the pastoral phase, Aboriginal people apparently continued their policy of survival through submission and outward co-operation. While some rebelled, many kept feelings of resentment about violent treatment to themselves and those close to them (cf Shaw, 1979). Older people alive today know the sense of powerlessness suffered by their elders, and have internalised habits of humouring whites developed by two generations of their forebears. The mode of surface acquiescence so developed, which Shaw (1979) points out is 'more often than not a realistic demeanour towards individuals and/or agencies representative of a society holding the political aces' now helps to perpetuate the paternalistic views some local whites hold of Aboriginal people, and puts Aborigines at a disadvantage in some of their dealings. This is not to imply that Aboriginal compliance was complete. A number of children managed to evade those trying to take them away from their families for `education'. There were occasions when Aboriginal people stood up to station managers, such as when the Bedford Downs people left the station for a time after the massacre there (Dotty Whatebee, Stories: 59-62) and much later when people left the same station after their dogs were shot (Topsy Wungul, p81-82).

The successful retention of Aboriginal knowledge and values is probably owed to the tendency of any society to resist change when it feels threatened (Shaw, 1979) as well as to some favourable circumstances. Kin groups remained together and on their land, the pastoral timetable allowed time for travel, subsistence and religious activities, and attempts to socialise Aboriginal people into non-Aboriginal ways remained haphazard and inept.

Many of the older people, who remember the hard work with pride, and social and cultural activities with pleasure, give a rosy view of pastoral and holiday life. Rowse (1988a and b) reviews and analyses apparent contradictions between Aboriginal recollections of the pastoral era prior to the 1940s as 'a golden age' (in McGrath 1987) and non-Aboriginal research (eg Berndt and Berndt, 1987) documenting harsh conditions and treatment. Among the reasons for the discrepancy he suggests differing ideologies, and the likelihood of 'golden age' stories having a special, nostalgic significance nowadays. The accounts given in this study have supported both points of view, the nostalgic and the hard times.

Mitigation

Aboriginal people recall very little intervention to mitigate impacts during the pastoral phase, except for the occasional actions of individuals. They are unaware of any action to avert the worst abuses, but are very conscious of collusion between police and pastoralists. One version of the Bedford Downs massacre says that people were returned from court in Wyndham, with a note from the police to the pastoralist saying:

> 'all up to you, you can do what you like, kill them fellas'.
>
> (Bob Nyalcas, Stories: 56-58)

Collusion was not universal, however: one account credits one policeman with attempting to avert the Mistake Creek massacre (archives suggest that police learnt of it afterwards), despite his white neighbour being implicated (Bob Nyalcas and Paddy Rhatigan Stories: 73; Winnie Budbaria, Stories: 75).

Until the 1950s government interventions on behalf of Aboriginal people were somewhat limited, though perhaps more effective than is sometimes recognised. Protection activities included the provision of travelling inspectors, and the enforcement of the 1905 Aborigines Act by protectors and police. Aboriginal accounts indicate that employers had considerable freedom in their treatment of Aboriginal workers, but some cases of ill-treatment of Aboriginal workers came before the courts and resulted in fines. The Government opposed the granting of a liquor licence at Turkey Creek between 1921 and 1933 on protection grounds (Clement, pc).

Provision of relief began with rationing instigated by the postmaster at Turkey Creek in 1901, followed by the maintenance of ration depots at Moola Bulla and Violet Valley. The ration depots also dispensed medicines. Clement has found evidence of considerate government employees (policemen, postmasters) and station people dispensing medicines of their own for coughs and colds, and applying to the Chief Protector for more of these, venereal disease medications and blankets for distribution. Other major government interventions were in health, with the leprosy and venereal disease campaigns, the assimilation policy (applied principally through the removal of children of mixed descent) and education.

In some respects these activities were helpful to Aborigines, in others they were ineffective or damaging.

Jack Britten and others acknowledge protection efforts (Stories 29), but many other accounts indicate abuses continuing into the 1920s, perhaps beyond. The negative effects of assimilation, education and health programs on Aboriginal people have been described.

When legislative and administrative action was taken in the late 1960s and early 1970s to rectify the anomalies in citizens rights and payment of wages, their effects were so profound as to become major impacts in themselves. Such major decisions needed careful analysis and planning, but the possible side-effects were neglected despite the warnings of some observers.

More generally, the long pastoral era enabled Aboriginal people to stabilise again after the period of widespread killing, and to maintain their relationships with land, their knowledge, and opportunities to socialise most of their children themselves. They widened their social groupings and ties to land, but were upset repeatedly by harsh discipline and removal of some of their children. It was a period of gradual social change in which some of the values of white people concerning work and discipline were added to land-based aboriginal values, and a subservient and cautious demeanour towards whites was developed.

STRUCTURAL CHANGE

Leaving stations

The phase of Aboriginal residence on pastoral stations, and thus on their traditional land, ended quite abruptly, with the eviction and voluntary withdrawal of Aboriginal groups from all of the stations in the study area between 1974 and 1976. Station managers argued at the time of evicting the people from 1974 to 1976 that they could no longer afford to maintain Aboriginal labour, particularly when also providing food for the extended families of stock workers. Rowley (1971) demonstrates that this was not the case except that bringing Aboriginal people under the pastoral award would oblige stations to increase the level of accommodation and food provided.

Other avenues of employment for Aboriginal people in the area had already closed. The boarding house at Turkey Creek had ceased to operate after 1937 and the police station closed in 1955. One Aboriginal assistant (Raymond Wallaby) remained, working with the telephone linesman.

A number of old people had been camped on Crown land at Turkey Creek for many years, receiving rations from the Post Office building. They were joined in 1973 or 1974 by a number from Texas Downs, who did not wish to remain on the station after their boss, Jimmy Klein, retired and a new manager took over.

> Young Macnamara: They didn't like to stop (and) work la him when Jimmy Klein bin leave that place. They didn't like to stop there. Only me, oh, couple of people, we bin stop. All the stock boys. But old people all bin leave.
>
> (Queenie McKenzie re Texas Downs)

Jimmy Klein was camping at Turkey Creek with his Aboriginal wife, whose relatives were among the first to join them. Several of this group, including Bob Nyalcas, Hector Chunda and Winnie Budbaria, were descended from the first generation of Aboriginal workers at Turkey Creek.

Shortly afterwards, the families at Lissadell, Mabel Downs, Bow River and Alice Downs were told to leave those stations.

> *Kartiya* bin come along there now, that *kartiya* got award wages, tell us off. *Kartiya* bin tell em we off 'well, no money for you fellas. You fellas will have to go somewhere work, DAA (Department of Aboriginal Affairs) or I don't know where, main roads'. Well I went to Wyndham, work around la Shire. They bin give me job.
>
> (Jack Britten, re Bow River)

Some workers were given the choice of remaining to work, but most opted to leave with their families. Some of the Mabel Downs people established Guda Guda camp outside Wyndham, and boarded Turkey Creek children who attended school in Wyndham. Some Alice Downs people went to Halls Creek and some to Turkey Creek, the latter joining their relative, Raymond Wallaby.

> ... the manager didn't want everybody to stay out la station so we all move in here, find this place up here.
>
> (Shirley Drill, re Alice Downs)

> We got pushed out from station, they didn't like Aboriginal people hanging out there, too much trouble.
>
> (Joe Thomas, re Bow River)

> Vesteys sold that country ... Everybody didn't want to stay now. Different company. Different owners.
>
> (David Turner, re Turner station)

Bedford Downs was the last station in the area to retain a resident Aboriginal community. Its members left about two years after the other groups had settled at Turkey Creek, angry because the manager had arranged for their dogs to be shot.

> We bin pull out from dogs. Manager bin put a police la me all abat. Bla dogs. (It was over the dogs, and the manager, who put the police onto us.)
>
> (Topsy Wungul)

A dwindling number of mainly younger people have continued in pastoral employment, with those remaining gradually giving up stock work as a result of fights with managers, illness and injury, and the desire to have their children educated. Seasonal recruitment from the residential bases at Turkey Creek and Halls Creek became the norm, with

workers switching stations frequently. The availability of jobs for Aborigines on the stations owned by non-Aborigines has declined rapidly since about 1980, but a small amount of work is available there. (There are now several Aboriginal-owned stations, but these lack the finance for substantial paid employment - see Young, 1988.)

The station owners had been warned by some non-Aborigines that Aboriginal families would not bear separation, and that the workers would leave with their families. This proved correct, leaving the stations with a labour problem.

The evictions came as a great surprise to many Aboriginal people. They went to the few places where they could camp - the outskirts and town reserves of Halls Creek, the outskirts of Wyndham to form Guda Guda camp, and to Turkey Creek. Had Turkey Creek not been available, and permission to remain, land tenure, supply lines and services not been arranged through the cooperation of local and state government officers, the consequences for the people and the nearby towns could have been far worse. Guda Guda enabled the people to be near a school and supplies, Turkey Creek enabled them to be near their country. Turkey Creek was chosen because so many people had associations with it, and because of its availability, being Crown land:

> ... This was a stop place, and [we] live here till job ready and go back. That's what [this] used to be, this Turkey Creek. See - Mabel Downs, Alice Downs, Lissadell, Bow River, all come here. This is the holidays camp, might as well say. Stop here till manager pick you up and take you back for job. Every year used to be that. Now [its] really [a] reserve now, eh? Mission or something now!
>
> (Queenie McKenzie)

Impacts

Aboriginal people's livelihoods, social groupings and lifestyles were so bound up with the pastoral industry that their removal from it proved traumatic for many. Socially and economically, they are still in the process of adjusting, and are likely to feel the consequences for a long time to come. Leaving stations had two sets of consequences, those stemming from loss of access to country and livelihood, and those stemming from a large group being confined in a relatively small area.

Whereas the advent of the pastoral industry had technically dispossessed Aboriginal people of their lands, as long as they remained on it many were only aware that they were no longer the sole controllers of the land. In practical terms, they did not lose control and access until they moved away from the stations. In leaving the stations, they also lost their vocation, which provided them with a necessary if subservient niche in the economy of the region, pride, and full-time occupation. Their livelihood was replaced by unemployment benefits and pensions, through which they gained financial independence, but they became people with nowhere they were able to go and little to do. Their pride, at least, was renewed quite quickly with the excitement and challenges of establishing Turkey Creek, then fighting the establishment of the Argyle Diamond Mine.

People miss their country, and miss regular access to it. Those who find it difficult to obtain permission to visit the stations are galled that managers who are relatively new to the Kimberley deny access to traditional owners who worked those stations for a lifetime.

The congregation of many extended families and former station groups in Turkey Creek has favoured, in local power relations, those who can claim and exercise a traditional power base there. The claims of those who were born at Turkey Creek or whose parents and grandparents lived there take precedence over others, such as those with rights in the 'country' on which Turkey Creek lies. People who would have been leaders in their own country, and people who feel that their political and statesmanlike skills should receive more recognition, are obliged to defer to the acknowledged owners of Turkey Creek. This creates an additional incentive to establish outstation communities. The congregation of large numbers (about 300 people) also exacerbates social strife, including drunkenness, and makes it difficult for people to avoid disturbance. (Attempts to ban drinking have been unsuccessful). Lastly, in recent years there has been comparatively little for people to do. Older people are kept busy with political activities and other community business, and were probably even more so in the days when obtaining supplies, land tenure, the school, housing, and fighting Argyle diamond mine kept them constantly in discussions. As few young people now work on stations or elsewhere, and alternate activities are limited, they tend to be underoccupied.

Meanwhile, in Warmun as in many other countries, people are struggling with the effects of alcohol abuse, and consequent violence, malnutrition and road accidents. Although some Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people attribute the abuse of alcohol to the 'granting' of citizenship rights, it was not until Aborigines had independent income from pensions and

unemployment benefits, were independent of station managements, and either living in towns or had transport to reach towns, that alcohol abuse became widespread and threatening to the many non-drinking Aborigines. Drinking symbolised the freedoms of citizenship, but it is debatable whether the pattern would have been very different if citizenship rights had never been denied Aborigines. The conjunction of a powerless and largely demoralised people, accustomed to being treated paternalistically, with new-found freedom and money but no occupation, provided the conditions for alcohol abuse to spread rapidly. White suppliers were, on the whole, quick to take advantage of this market while joining those decrying the results. Sam Butters (Stories: 121-122) suggests that Aboriginal people have not developed a physiological tolerance for alcohol. Non-drinkers have had difficulty dealing with the abuses, as customary means of social discipline often do not deal effectively with this type of behaviour, and as social control has become more difficult to maintain since extended family groups have been combined into far larger settlements, and individual expectations about discipline and freedom have changed.

Alcohol contributes to the notoriously high Aboriginal imprisonment rate, as well as to poor race relations.

> Drinking in turn gets people into other trouble. After they taste alcohol they think it's something good, make you very happy, they don't want to go back to work any more. Some of them want to go back, [but] first thing they're back in town. Spend all their money, coupla hours, they get into trouble. Lot of drunks don't know when they're breaking the law ...
>
> (Sam Butters)

Establishing new communities

On leaving the cattle stations, there were very few places potentially available for Aboriginal people to move to. The Aboriginal reserves and pockets of Crown Land in and around Halls Creek, Wyndham and Kununurra, and the Crown Land at Turkey Creek, were among the few options, and all were quickly occupied. Had Crown Land not been available at Turkey Creek, or had the Halls Creek Shire Council and Western Australian Government opposed development there, the Warmun people would have had to move much further from their country, to add to the population pressures and social friction developing in the towns (see Ross 1983, 1987).

The availability of Turkey Creek can be seen as a mitigating influence in the impact of the peoples' removal from the stations, and the peoples' use of the opportunity to build a new community there helped them to develop a sense of independence and self-confidence in their new context. While for many it was a poor substitute for being on their own land, it was at least a place with which they had long associations. Many saw, and still see, Turkey Creek as an interim stopping place, the best option available until some way can be found of returning to their own land. Others, including those with traditional rights to Turkey Creek itself, saw its development as an end itself, as the place in which they wished to settle.

The early development of Warmun as an Aboriginal community helped to strengthen cooperation and positive spirit as the residents worked together to become established and achieve collective aims. While establishing the community they developed high morale and confidence from gaining tenure over the land (they have a 99-year lease from the Western Australian Aboriginal Land Trust), resisting efforts to evict them, starting a 'chuck-in' to pool their newly achieved social security income, managing their funds, growing their own food, and starting a school. The accounts (Stories: 86-94) I recorded during 1986-87 show that the people still have pride in these achievements. Conflicts over the school and Argyle are now glossed over in the telling (Mike Dillon, pc, Warmun files).

Turkey Creek residents received help from many quarters. The Halls Creek Shire Council, which in the mid-1970s had a majority sympathetic to Aboriginal people, supported their staying at Turkey Creek (a former Councillor, pc). The telephone linesman based at Turkey Creek intervened when another non-Aborigine (living at Turkey Creek with an Aboriginal wife, and perhaps acting on behalf of the gymkana club) cut off the nearby gymkana ground water supply the people had been using and by intimidation, forced most of them to move across the river (Queenie McKenzie, Stories: 96-99); the linesman also supported the people's early efforts to become established, encouraged by Raymond Wallaby. A shopkeeper from Wyndham arranged food supplies (Shirley Drill, Stories: 86) until the Turkey Creek roadhouse was established to take advantage of their business. Officers of the State Department for Community Welfare and the Federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs went to great lengths to give advice, assist people to obtain pensions and unemployment benefits and help them to obtain secure land tenure over the Turkey Creek area and initial funding. Mike Dillon and Tom Stevens provided bookkeeping and advisory service from Kununurra, until Dillon moved to Warmun in 1979 to become the community's first full-time bookkeeper-adviser.

In the towns, self-help organisations (which later evolved into resource agencies) were formed and used to look after Aboriginal interests. Membership of these organisations gave confidence and pride, and started new cooperative bonds, as David Turner's story about his time with Ngoonjuwah Council (Stories: 95) shows. By working to acquire funds for housing and staff they learnt that resources could be gained and some choice exercised.

In the process of using government funding to develop Turkey Creek, and in the resolution of other difficulties, people fostered relationships with non-Aborigines in a position to help them. Paid advisers and other coopted volunteers such as the telephone linesman at Turkey Creek were used for writing letters, as spokesmen in dealing with other non-Aborigines, and as escorts through unfamiliar political and government channels (Queenie McKenzie, Stories: 96-99). This important role has often been misconstrued by outsiders as a manipulative relationship, to the annoyance of community advisers performing their duties, and the Aboriginal people who are thus represented as being unable to think for themselves. In situations of cooperation or conflict, people at Turkey Creek prefer doing business in a personal way, making the establishment of a personal relationship an integral part of their transactions. Relationships with Government personnel such as Ted Beard of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Jessie Burridge of the Department for Community Welfare were cultivated, and they responded by being particularly helpful towards the community.

Argyle Diamond Mine

The pastoral industry was only one of the sectors of the Kimberley economy undergoing structural change in the 1970s and 80s. In the late 1970s a mineral exploration boom was underway, with strong State and Federal Government support. The Warmun community was preoccupied with the implications of the discovery in June 1979 that sites had been damaged without their knowledge by the Argyle Joint Venture (AJV), exploring for diamonds (Paddy Jumungee, Stories: 100-101; Queenie McKenzie, Stories: 102-104). AJV was acting in contravention of legislation intended to protect Aboriginal sites, but received tacit State Government support for its actions, and skilfully outmanoeuvred the Aboriginal community in its efforts to prevent mining. The events are documented by Dillon and Dixon (forthcoming). For a year, the senior members of the community were united in their opposition, fearful of the consequences of sites being desecrated, and of the consequences of a large mining town being built in the vicinity. They attempted unsuccessfully to invoke Western Australia's Aboriginal Heritage Act, and then to obtain funding for a social impact study of the possible consequences of mining. By

mid 1980, a consensus no longer existed concerning tactics. Some considered that the mine was unstoppable and that their best option was to seek whatever concessions they could. Without the knowledge of other interested Aborigines, the company flew a small group of traditional owners to Perth, where they signed an agreement that the company would provide resources to establish their much sought after outstation at Mandangala (Glen Hill), on the understanding that the Aboriginal owners would no longer oppose the company's mining activities. The content of the 'Glen Hill Agreement' has never been made public, nor has a copy been provided to the Aboriginal signatories; there is considerable doubt that the signatories understood its terms (Dixon, pc).

Other members of the Warmun community were also attempting to influence company officials on a person-to-person basis, by making relationship establishing minor requests in customary fashion. After the signing of the Glen Hill Agreement and the failure of the attempts to prosecute the company for its breaches of legislation, the Warmun community's tactics included securing resources similar to those provided to the Mandangala group. This they achieved, though the company maintains it was always its policy to extend the benefits of the agreement to specified other groups. (Queenie McKenzie, Stories: 102-104; Paddy Jumungee, Stories: 100-101). Woolah (Doon Doon) community was also included in the resource distribution, which became known as Argyle Diamond Mines' 'Good Neighbour Program' (see Ross and Johnson, forthcoming).

Impacts

White supporters at the time considered the Aborigines to have 'lost' their cause to have been manipulated by the company and to have been abandoned by the government and other bodies in a position to assist. Prominent community members however now prefer to take credit for successes. While still upset and fearful about the desecration of the *Tayiwul* (barramundi) site, and appalled by the pressure they were put under and the lack of government and Western Australian Museum support, they pride themselves on having made significant gains through their strong resistance. Further damage to major sites other than *Tayiwul* was prevented, and the Good Neighbour Program was extended to include the Warmun (Turkey Creek)and Doon Doon (Dunham River) communities (Paddy Jumungee, Stories: 100-101; Queenie McKenzie, Stories: 102-104). While the financial benefits are poorer than many would like, and their distribution causes new friction within the community, people generally accept the current arrangements as a political reality, appreciate what they receive, and favour maintaining a good relationship with the company.

The company commissioned its own assessment of the social impact on the Aboriginal people of the affected area, but only a summary has been made available (Dames and Moore, 1982). As a result of this study and its own cost-benefit analysis, the company opted not to build a town in favour of flying in its workforce for fortnight-long shifts and basing its senior staff in Kununurra and Perth. This prevented some of the worst consequences the Aboriginal people had feared. The company also took steps to prevent Aboriginal people gaining alcohol from the mine site, though with only partial success. One of the main impacts of the mining has been the Good Neighbour Program, the program by which Argyle Diamond Mines distributes assets to three communities. On the positive side (though on a scale of financing way beneath the levels of Northern Territory mining agreements, see Ross and Johnson, forthcoming) this has provided buildings and vehicles, but on the negative side it has created internal friction over the allocation of these resources and led to paternalistic influence of mining company personnel in community affairs (Dixon and Dillon, forthcoming; Dixon et al, 1984; Young, 1988). This friction was predicted by the company's impact assessment (Dames and Moore, 1982). Vehicles have assisted those establishing outstations and generally increased mobility and independence from non-Aboriginal community staff and friends (formerly the only sources of transport), but in doing so have increased access to towns and the minesite to purchase alcohol, and thereby the death and injury rate from accidents. The violence connected with drinking in camp has been very disruptive to Warmun families, and has accelerated the desires of many extended families to escape to smaller communities on their own lands.

Tourism and National Parks

Structural change continues in the East Kimberley, with tourism now being looked upon (along with mining) as the new hope for the economy. Aboriginal people are contemplating the effects that increased tourism in the region may have on them, and ways in which they might derive some benefits. Warmun community, being on the highway and convenient to both Argyle and Purnululu (Bungle Bungle) National Park, is particularly interested in anticipating and controlling the potential effects. After years of difficulty with the proprietors of the nearby roadhouse business, whose owners posed threats to the community by actively seeking a liquor licence, and whose tour business into the Bungle Bungle was causing considerable concern because of damage to sites, the community has bought the roadhouse (see Altman, 1987, for details). While the extent of financial benefits are still a matter of conjecture, the purchase of the roadhouse has been a strategic move in terms of controlling activities on Warmun's doorstep.

The 'discovery' by non-Aborigines and opening up of the Purnululu (Bungle Bungle) area as a national park has pre-occupied all of those who have traditional associations with that area. As with Argyle, the people are concerned about the protection of the area and its sites, and concerned about the influx of park visitors whose presence may interfere with their own plans for living in and visiting the area. Again they find themselves negotiating with a powerful organisation (the state government represented principally by the Department of Conservation and Land Management), but this time they have the organised support of their own association, the Purnululu Aboriginal Corporation, with State Government funding. Some people are examining the economic potential of the national park, with a view to establishing businesses and having their members employed as rangers (a ranger training program is underway). Aboriginal responses to tourism and the national park and their activities towards obtaining a favourable outcome, are described in detail in Kirkby and Williams (in preparation). Tourism and national park planning are still in formative stages, but so far Aboriginal people are having considerable success in their strategy to have their interests recognised and to participate in planning. For once, Aboriginal people have the opportunity and the organisation to respond in a way which can influence the nature of developments, rather than having to adapt after the event.

Aboriginal actions and responses

Aboriginal people's adaptations and responses to their eviction from the pastoral stations, the threats posed by the Argyle Diamond Mine, and the continuing structural changes represented most recently by the growth of the tourism industry have already been described. Together, they reveal considerable initiative on the part of Warmun and its outstation communities, and growing confidence about pursuing their aims. While individuals are generally fearful of standing up to any authority (with exceptions such as Queenie McKenzie on her trip to Perth to resolve a dispute over the location of her camp, Stories: 96-99), as a community they have shown considerable confidence and initiative, and growing sophistication in the timing and skill of their interventions. They are justifiably proud of their political skills, but regret the need for confrontation.

Mitigation

As in each of the previous phases of the East Kimberley's development history, official efforts towards mitigation have been minimal. When the people were forced off the stations, there was limited intervention at the local level and this was

after the event, with a few Commonwealth and State officers assisting Aboriginal people in their efforts to obtain provisions and income, land and services. Subsequent assistance has been available under Commonwealth Government programs for improvement of physical standards of living and management of the community, but such questions as where the people would prefer to live, and how they are to protect their cultural interests, have been relatively neglected. While non-government - and some government - development proponents actively promote an ideology based on excluding Aboriginal people (Dillon and Dixon, forthcoming) government's tendency to concentrate on physical needs unwittingly reinforces this exclusion.

State and local governments have taken a strong interest in the processes of structural change in the East Kimberley, but largely in a way which overlooks and marginalises Aboriginal interests. Of the government inquiries into the pastoral industry and development of the region, only the most recent has paid more than lip service to the Aboriginal role in the region's economy and social life (Kimberley Regional Planning Study 1987). Aboriginal people received no support from the state government when concerned about Argyle. Even the legislation under which sacred sites could be protected was not invoked (Dillon and Dixon, forthcoming). Aboriginal people have now, as a result of their own striving for recognition, been included in planning for the Purnululu (Bungle Bungle) National Park (albeit in a way which reduces their status to that of an 'interest group' alongside tourist operators, local government and pastoralists). It is therefore significant that Aboriginal people are taking initiative themselves - their experience has convinced them that they cannot rely on the industries or government to look after their interests.

NEW DIRECTIONS

The people's aspirations for the future are closely related to their perceptions of past impacts: indeed, they can be seen as attempts to recover from the impacts of the past and to take the initiative in setting future directions. New communities on traditional country (so-called 'outstations'), for example, are a way of re-establishing daily contact with traditional land, which was lost when groups were obliged to leave cattle stations. They are also a way of escaping population pressures in larger settlements, strengthening extended family control over behaviour, and reasserting traditional values. Secure land tenure is sought to regain control over land which was effectively lost shortly after white settlement of the area. Renewed efforts towards the promotion and transmission of culture and language can be seen as a drive to strengthen Aboriginal identity and socialisation; these have been disrupted repeatedly by non-Aborigines, particularly through past policies such as removal of Aboriginal children from their families for separate education and overt discouragement of use of Aboriginal languages, and present policies of education solely in English language and curricula. Ideas for a new approach to regional development and land use show the pattern of mutual cooperation Aborigines would like to establish with non-Aborigines, a pattern which would place Aborigines in a better position to meet their religious obligations towards land, and provide them with an income unrelated to their poverty status (most of their income currently comes from government, and depends on their status as disadvantaged people). Some leaders also have development plans of their own, for participation in the pastoral industry (Young, 1988), tourism ventures and national park management (Williams and Kirkby, forthcoming) and subsistence cattle and gardening enterprises.

Return to country

East Kimberley Aboriginal people are pursuing two main ends to redress their legal and physical dispossession from land. The first is to obtain legally recognised tenure to areas of land favourably located (from both spiritual and practical points of view) on their traditional lands, areas which are large enough to use for subsistence as well as to live on. Tenure is sought through cattle stations being purchased on their behalf (such as Doon Doon and Bow River), reserves being handed over to Aboriginal control (such as Turkey Creek and Violet Valley) and smaller areas of land excised from cattle leases. Currently, the maximum tenure permitted for excisions is a 99-year lease over the latter, and standard pastoral lease conditions over cattle properties. Inalienable freehold title is not available; the Western Australian Government is promoting land options open under existing legislation. The second end is to

attain stronger and unambiguous rights to enter alienated land such as cattle properties, to visit, camp and hunt - the *Western Australian Land Act 1933* gives access rights to unenclosed and unimproved land, but enclosed and 'improved' land must usually be crossed to reach it. Many cattle station managers treat Aboriginal entry to properties as a matter for their own discretion.

Land tenure

Land matters are constantly on the Aboriginal agenda, but their sensitivity to non-Aborigines is such that the people are careful about how they push for their aims when the political and race relations climates are unfavourable. As political and social realists, the people pursue the options realisable at a particular time but maintain their long-term aims in the hope of more favourable times.

The people of the East Kimberley participated in Western Australia's Aboriginal Land Inquiry in 1983 and 1984 with great energy, having been led to believe that land rights were at last to be obtained; the terms of reference of this inquiry concerned *how* Aboriginal rights over land should be granted, not whether they should. Aborigines were devastated when their efforts came to nought owing to a failure of political will in the terms offered and defeat of the draft legislation in Western Australia's Upper House. (The Western Australian Government's failure of political will was extended to the federal sphere owing to persuasion exerted on the Prime Minister by the Premier of Western Australia). Aboriginal participation in political activities generally suffered for some years from this blow, but by the time of the East Kimberley Impact Assessment Project's Conference on Aborigines and Development (Kununurra, May 1987) East Kimberley people were beginning to talk again about regional and national issues. In the interim, local issues and family-group aspirations prevailed.

The people of the area continue to prefer inalienable freehold title to land, as enjoyed by their Aboriginal neighbours in the Northern Territory. They accept leases as a politically realisable compromise, however, on the argument that something is better than nothing, and most accept the government's explanation that leases and excisions are the best option possible under existing legislation. Nevertheless, they fail to see why a government willing to grant a 99-year lease, which will expire generations hence, is not willing to grant permanent tenure. They point out that this will make no practical difference to opponents alive today:

> '99 years, we'll be nothing left' (we'll all be gone).
>
> (Hector Chunda)

> Land should stop there, not 99 year lease. We want to keep it going for young people. We're not going to leave. We belong to that place. When we finish, we pensioner, we let them young fellas take over. We stop in the house. They belong to land.

> When we working longa *kartiya* place he didn't like us. He kick us out. We make him millionaire. We want to be independent.
>
> (Joe Thomas and Tim Timms).

As a high proportion of Kimberley land is alienated, most of those seeking land have to rely on the prospect of excisions from pastoral leases and Crown Land. This entails excising sections from pastoral leases or Crown Land, usually just large enough for a few houses to be built. Consultation with the existing leaseholder is a prerequisite. Many such applications are hotly contested by pastoralists, and few have been granted so far. Aboriginal people would prefer larger areas than are currently available under the excisions program. Excisions seldom provide additional space for expansion, hunting, keeping a few cattle, or other economic and self-sufficiency projects. Those who have had cattle stations purchased for them enjoy ample space, but risk forfeiture of the leases as they have difficulty obtaining the finance necessary to meet upkeep conditions (Young, 1988).

Access to alienated land

The question of access to alienated land has often been overlooked in the 'land rights' debate. Outright ownership of small areas, however important in itself, does not replace or compensate for exclusion from other areas which people are traditionally obligated to visit, and from which they derive spiritual, social and material benefits. What is required is ownership rights *and* access rights, not ownership instead of access. Very few groups are able to obtain ownership over much as pockets of their country. Without access provisi those whose country remains entirely alienated have no mea maintaining spiritual obligations, and it is no consolat them that others do have land.

Hector Chunda: *Kartiya* can't let us (onto land). We locked up here, look. We can't able to walk over there. Just like a we in jailhouse. That's the way.

Jack Britten: *kartiya* got we all over, in't it. You can see that. *Kartiya* town that side, nother town this way, nother town that way.

Hector Chunda: They ought to let us walk up there.

Jack Britten: Stations, anywhere, but they can't let us.

Hector Chunda: They only give us here. Don't go nowhere.

Jack Britten: They don't want we to go longa - that we bin walking about early days, walk around all over the country, [getting] porcupine and kangaroo. They don't want we to go there.

The people accept that most of the land alienated long ago for the cattle industry will continue under that usage, and continue to hold the cattle industry in high regard. What the older people do not accept is the total lack of public recognition of their dispossession, and their lack of rights of access to the alienated land. Some are incensed when station owners or manager prevent them from entering the land they own traditionally, and which they, their parents and grandparents worked for the benefit of previous pastoralists. They consider it most unjust that such people, who are highly transient, can prevent their obtaining land altogether by opposing their applications for excisions.

New communities

Many extended family groups currently living on land which is not their own are striving to establish communities on their traditional country.

The term 'outstations' misrepresents the nature of these homeland centres. In terms of access to services and population movements, these small settlements do relate to and share the resources of larger centres, but in Aboriginal terms they represent a return to the main places of peoples' spiritual existence, as centres in their own rights.

> Well they're here now, trying to come back ...Well they bin get think about for their country. You know, 'poor country bla we, what we leave em bat' they reckon. Me, I go back to my country. I can stay there, and my sister say the same word.
>
> (Jack Britten)

> My mother born there, la creek. Bush way you know, they never have em hospital. After that, when old Sam Muggleton bin die here (Frog Hollow in 1910) we went to Tickalara. Stop round there now. Till we bin grow up. Well, that's the country belong to whole lot of us... Well my mother used to told me, 'that Frog Hollow, anytime, you want to get em that country' (you should get that country). We *tawam* (countrymen, owners) really for the country.
>
> (Jack Britten)

> That's why I like to come back to my country. I'd like to keep this place... My wife, we bin married down there (at Tickalara). Me and him bin young boy and young girl here ... That's why my wife didn't want to go anywhere. Just like she got to go back here, me and my wife. Me, and my father, Charlie Mung Mung, we bin roaming that country, all around Bungle Bungle, and we bin grow (look after) that country, right round go back to Jarlarlu again ... Then me and my wife bin married ... Down la big shady tree, everytime we sneak away just like the *kartiya* do.
>
> (George Mung Mung)

> We bin born and raised there (Alice Downs - Panton area). We can't get out from that place. When we get out from there we lose the country. If we lose that country, we'll be nothing. When we got a country back, we'll be right.
>
> (Kenny Bray).

There is a very powerful drive to establish new communities and re-establish former ones. While leaders are strongly concerned with living on their country, having convenient access to all of their country, and being in a position to protect sacred sites, the limited political and administrative options for achieving these aims channel attention towards obtaining tenure over very limited areas. Even the option of excisions has only recently become a political reality. Some groups have been seeking a way to return to live on their land for fifteen years or more, and many old people have died while waiting. These people have shown extraordinary perseverance and patience.

> David Turner: From that time we're talking about block of land, from '72. I bin get no answer. But I got a little bit of answer. I think they might give me little bit of block on Turner.

> More ideas if we got a block (of land). We'll work on our block, get your house, tank, pump, work, pipe. Pipe in each places, fencing, might have a little bit of a school, little bit of medicine, clinic. [We'll be] in the bush. Gotta have an airstrip too. They used to have one there - that old Vestey airstrip.

> Helen Ross: Do you want to say why it's important for you?

> Really, I mightn't say something straight out, in one part of word - sacred sites. It's important places. Got to be there, so what is damaged can be (ie can't be damaged). So mining people, they can dig everywhere but you don't know sacred site places. Bad places. If the mining listen to Aboriginal ... he could mine the country tomorrow, outside of the fence (of our land). We could find em together (cooperate) but sacred sites is our life. We've got some places there, [they] can drown the country too ... If they dig around there, the dreamtime sun, they'll cover that sun (it will disappear) we'll be in dark. We still alive, but we got travelling with a long tail. Sun would be covered. Yeh, that dreamtime live there, from history. That's true. But *kartiya* got to listen blackfella. You know. Mining all right ... but he (miners) do what he (they) like. He (they) can come visit with mining inside, that's all right, but certain places is important. Even the women, woman could say that himself too (women would say the same) ... We got eggs for ocean, dreamtime, rain, flooded. You know Jesus told Moses to build a boat? Well the same thing they left for Aboriginal tribal law. That's the important places.
>
> (David Turner)

Aboriginal 'outstation' communities have a spiritual, social, political and economic rationale. By returning to live in their country acquired through descent and/or long family residence, people are in a position to protect and visit their sacred sites, and gain a general feeling of well-being through contact with their country. Living on traditional country, older people are able to bring up children under a stronger spiritual influence, and are in a far better position to teach them about their country. It is difficult at a distance to teach children about sites, stories or hunting methods.

> That way, you can see that big hill? You see em that big gap through there? Well all them animals bin travelling that way, go back to river. That's where the turtle bin just get up there. And another one, we call em Nyapanany, Wulunguriny, and Purruwul, *Tayiwul*. That mean that *Tayiwul*, big barramundi laying there, top of this country now, Han Spring. Dreaming, he laying down. And that rock cod, he's standing up like that. Straight up. That's for our old grandpa country. And grandpa

> mother, Krakala, that him (that's her) country. Well all this lately people (those alive today), mefellas (our group), we gotta have that country. We call em (it) *nawarji*, sister-in-law.
>
> (Jack Britten)

Socially, these small settlements enable kin-linked groups to live among the people of their choice, with whom they share a common spiritual, kinship, language and residential background. They permit groups of a controllable and companionable size to be maintained, with members who will cooperate and observe the authority of the leading individuals. While not entirely trouble-free, such groups are a marked contrast to settlements with imposed social compositions, where people have been brought together by circumstance rather than desire. (Examples are the town 'reserves' formerly provided by the State Government in towns, and to an extent Turkey Creek, which gathered an unusually large population in the absence of any other unalienated camping land in a 160 kilometre radius.) The desire to escape unharmonious and socially uncontrollable environments, prone to alcoholic disturbances and other conflicts, adds to the strength of desire for new communities, and boosts membership among established ones.

Politically, outstation communities put the leaders of extended families in a position of authority on their own land, instead of having to defer to the authority of other Aboriginal landowners in other settlements. In Warmun community, family leaders with political skills to offer sometimes feel thwarted and frustrated by having to suppress their own political judgement in deference to Aboriginal political requirements.

> We don't agree with the way the community running, so we [move] out to make it lighter, but come in if there's any meeting, ceremony. That's [why] we come in for meetings, so we can figure out problems.

The history of white land use which has determined the pockets of land left over for Aboriginal occupation have had a profound effect over the Aboriginal political regime of the area, though the traditional owners of the Turkey Creek area have used their authority benevolently in political respects - coordinating actions requiring strength of numbers, such as resistance to Argyle, and supporting and assisting in the development of new communities which will ultimately deplete their own power base. Perhaps the frustration of non-owner family leaders stems from lack of control over the allocation of resources, such as community vehicles, as much as from considerations of general community decision making. Again in

contrast to unwieldy, artificially constituted settlements, outstation communities allow a kin group to consolidate. Through the struggle for land, then resources, and the development of small ventures, people develop a sense of purpose and pride in their aspirations and achievements (cf Bowles, 1981; Corbett, 1986). They also achieve prestige with many non-Aborigines and other Aborigines for their ideas and efforts. Settlements which were built entirely *for* Aboriginal people by governments (eg the former town reserves, such as Yardgee in Halls Creek), and settlements which have nearly completed their building programs (eg Lundja in Halls Creek; Warmun) offer fewer opportunities for Aboriginal initiative, morale-building and group-consolidating activities. The schools at Lundja (in Halls Creek) and Warmun, both established through Aboriginal initiative, provide opportunities for many community members to contribute meaningfully to community life. Otherwise, there is little else by way of politically and financially achievable options in the large communities for people to strive towards, little attractive and meaningful employment (prior to the Community Development Employment Program, which this area joined in mid-1987), little access to the bush, and thus little to maintain people's interest.

Economically, living on country offers significant opportunities to reduce financial overheads - or at least eat better - through access to bush foods, and where there is enough land to run cattle, as at Violet Valley, beef. With modest housing and services, other overheads can be kept low, but the communities pay a correspondingly high price in fuel and vehicle maintenance to reach the base where they receive mail, shop, seek education and health services, and participate in regional affairs. Yarrunga (Chinaman's Garden) people travel 120-200 kilometres (depending on seasonal road conditions) at least weekly to Halls Creek, and Wurreranginy (Frog Hollow) people travel 70 kilometres on their daily round trip to Turkey Creek.

For all their spiritual, social and political attractions, new communities are not sustainable without certain essentials. Basic subsistence requirements include individual income through social security and other sources, and a food supply delivered or reached with community transport. Vehicle transport is thus essential to reach mail-points, cash cheques and shop. A vehicle serves for transport and communication, but telephones and radios (where available and functioning) are also necessary for communication. An improved radio network between outstations and resource agencies could reduce the number of costly trips to town by outstation community groups, as messages could be relayed and meetings announced without people needing to come in so often in case they miss an important meeting.

Following these essentials, further living comforts and conveniences are sought progressively, though many communities have been patient with very slow rates of acquisition. Even if the people have somehow managed to camp on their land without holding some secure form of title, they need title before becoming eligible for any form of State or Federal Government funding for built amenities. Waiting for land tenure can take years, even after agreement between Aboriginal applicants and non-Aboriginal leaseholders has been reached. After a vehicle, most outstation communities seek a clean water supply, ablution facilities, practical but not necessarily elaborate housing, and a power supply. They are also unwilling to forego what they see as essential collective services, so vehicles are relied upon to provide access to regional centres for shopping, health care, and education for children. Some communities eventually seek their own store, though this creates administrative and sometimes financial problems.

Medical emergencies are a constant fear for groups isolated from main roads, and airstrips and radios are considered necessary by many such groups. A network of visiting health services, similar to the mobile pre-schools once operated to station communities, would help decentralised communities with routine health care. Small community schools are desired by many groups, which value education highly and have trouble maintaining a balanced age-structure without providing schooling. (Thies, 1987, documents the strength of this desire.) Again, a network model, with trained teachers visiting camp classrooms (as in Yipirinya school, Alice Springs), could work very well.

A dilemma for outstation communities is the risk of uncontrolled growth. Unless other communities have comparable attractions, amenities and services such as housing and a school can attract a large population, fuelling further demand for amenities, and eventually leading to the creation of a town with sufficient amenities, but weakened social cohesion. This appears to have happened at Warmun, which attracted a number of people away from Wyndham (previously the preferred option for those needing a school) and from stations where some workers remained after the general exodus in the mid-1970s. This risk is exacerbated by centralised delivery of services by government and other authorities. As an education and health centre, Turkey Creek is only one step decentralised from the towns of Wyndham, Kununurra and Halls Creek. A truly decentralised system would link the smaller settlements and concentrate on mobile services, not expect people to find their own way to the centre.

Given that most extended family groups have some discretion as to which traditional 'country' to choose (allowing that much land is alienated), and which sites to be

near on their country, they have some flexibility to seek bases which will be practical for transport and access. It is no coincidence that a number of sites have been chosen on or near existing roads, but such site choices are not based solely on these practicalities. Some people perceive sacred sites near main roads to be at greater risk than those in isolated back-country, and strategically chosen side-road positions allow oversight of incursions into back-country.

Outstation communities are not seen as an isolationist tactic in terms of regional development. While they do insulate Aboriginal groups from many undesired contacts, these communities see themselves as providing a valuable service to pastoral neighbours. Many Aboriginal leaders argue that their communities will provide a pool of employees who know the country well and have a powerful interest in looking after it, and are positioned to allow constant surveillance of cattle and equipment in back-country which cannot possibly be controlled from the station homesteads. Similarly, Aboriginal residence in Purnululu (Bungle Bungle) National Park will permit protection of parts of the park. Outstation people foresee a symbiotic relationship with cattle stations and national parks and conservation areas, one in which they provide a service to non-Aboriginal managers, and in turn are able to live where they choose. The Thunpi group (seeking land on Bedford Downs station, which has no resident management) wishes to provide labour and is offering to keep an eye on the property. Members of the Kawarra community living in Purnululu (Bungle Bungle) will help to prevent damage to the ecologically fragile park, and intend to run tours. This potential seems to have been missed by cattle station and regeneration area managers who oppose the excision program.

Larger tracts of land, the Bow River and Doon Doon cattle stations and the former Violet Valley Reserve, enable their owners to combine their religious and social interests in land with pursuit of economic and subsistence enterprises, which provide occupation and at times paid employment for some people. These properties allow religious control over substantial areas, but place them under a serious burden of leasehold conditions to maintain the property without adequate resources to do so. Both Doon Doon and Bow River currently fear loss of their leases if they fail to fulfil lease conditions owing to inadequate funding (Young, 1988). The communities established at the homesteads share the characteristics of the 'outstation' communities, with the difference that cattle raising and maintenance of the station as a going concern are added to the other motivations for belonging to such a community.

Promotion of cultural knowledge, language and values

The current generation of active older people, who grew up on cattle stations with all the opportunity they required to get to know their country, have no concerns about retaining their own culture and language. They are confident in their knowledge, and enjoy the freedom to accept new material culture such as vehicles without fearing disruption to their existing knowledge, values and language ability. Some are conscious, however, of knowledge that was lost when previous generations were unable to transmit knowledge because of massacres:

> Old people bin die. You can't get much story from this place. All the Warrmany (people from Turkey Creek area) old man finished, they bin get shot.
> (Hector Chunda)

They are conscious that Aboriginal values have changed in certain ways since white settlement, and see these value changes as beneficial on the whole. No one regrets the cessation of inter-group killings, which is attributed to the need to ensure survival during and after the massacre period.

The current generation of active old people remain proud of their work ethic, and wish it was shared by the younger generations who are growing up without regular employment.

> Young people round this country can't get much understanding, see. They like to live on the reserve with old people, don't want to leave old people, go and work somewhere else in cattle station, they just don't like to do that job you see. Mefellas never bin hang around like that before, with them white people from Queensland. They used to tell us to get out of old people, go and do your job ... All that idea, see the old white people bin learn us.
> (Frank Budbaria)

The older peole also fear that young people are growing up without sufficient regard for Aboriginal social values, without opportunity and dedication to acquire the extent of knowledge of their elders, and without true fluency in their languages. To some extent they exaggerate - the stereotype the old use in referring to the young obviously does not apply to the many who work regularly in the community school and on some cattle stations. Young people know many of the stories told

regularly by the older people, but without living on their country have little hope of learning more stories and the places they relate to, let alone the myriad of place names and walking routes known to their parents and grandparents.

> In early days in the blackfellas way they used to teach em when they bin young girls, you know, cut em sugarbag, got (with) a stone axe, look about goanna, kill em. Bring em up, make em there and cook em, that's the teaching in my way. And looking for *taluny, minyjiwarrany* (bush fruits) ... Tell em to get em them, make a fire, *yurnkurr,* cook em in the hole. That's the way they bin do em early days. This time I can't see no school children do that, never.
>
> (Hector Chunda)

The older generation considers the cultural and linguistic future of the young one of the most pressing problems facing them.

> You got kid in school, we happy for it. Whatever class, grade they want to go more high, they'll have to sit down and work to see how people do it, like that job, before we're dead and gone. If we can't get those straightened out, young people, when we're gone, six foot underground, where they gotta be? They'll be lost.
>
> (David Turner)

They tackle their concern for culture and language in two main ways, by promoting the teaching of cultural knowledge and language (Kija, but not Miriwoong) in the community school, devoting much of their time to this teaching themselves; and through encouraging young people to join or visit outstations. The grandparents active in the school also try to educate at home and on bush trips, but are only able to influence their own extended families in this way. They also have the advantage of plenty of access to the young grandchildren; cultural norms give grandparents much of the role of bringing up children.

Alcohol and lack of interest are seen as the enemies of cultural education - young adults are alleged to spend too much of their time chasing grog, and they can only be given cultural education if they have the interest and devote the time to it.

The older people have an extraordinary faith in their ability to rectify the loss of cultural education through the school - trusting that under an hour a day in the school and occasional trips can make up for the type of exposure once received continuously. While it is vital that Aboriginal knowledge be given at least equal status with the non-Aboriginal curriculum, through this 'two-way' approach to education, school teaching is a weak substitute for teaching within the extended family.

Few of the older people speak of alienation from land as a direct and major factor in the weakened transmission of cultural knowledge, yet that appears to be the case. Though place-related stories can be told at Turkey Creek, they are more usually told on the country and at the places concerned, so unless places are visited few of the stories are told. The most common method of teaching used by older people (outside the school) is demonstrating a technique, telling a story, or using Aboriginal vocabulary as the occasion arises. This means young people need to be at the side of older people for long periods, doing various activities, and to travel with them as much as possible. Living in outstation communities and accompanying adults on bush trips probably offers more intensive and varied learning opportunities than is possible in a town or large settlement, opportunities related more specifically to the country of each family.

In parallel with language and cultural knowledge, the older people wish the young to become skilled in the essential knowledge of the non-Aboriginal system, especially literacy and numeracy, through their concept of 'two-way' or bicultural education.

> We can talk English, and we got language for us too. We talk one another when we talking to *kartiya*, till we come back to camp we talk our own language. We don't forget our own language.
>
> And this lot of better people that going to school, we try to teach em two ways - like us now, some can do that, some can't. He go him way, *kartiya* way. He got that language for *kartiya*. Whole lot of people now bin writing down listening them. That's the way government make em they talk their languages and English, two-way you know. That's what we bin fighting long a languages all the time. But make em two-way school, here now.
>
> (Hector Chunda)

> These days we have a bit of idea now, we have school for language, *kartiya* school. And they gotta learn (Aboriginal) culture. And work. We've been working we got no school before. Hard working. These days get very light work. Not too many young fellas working on job ... They might turn on (become) clinic sisters, work on doctors, or some of the place work on big office. That's the thing to see ...
>
> That's why I'm asking, I want em my block of land. They'll (young people) take over, work on that job. Work on the *kartiya* side, or they could run their own business, same as *kartiya*. Make it the same class, equal in white man way.
>
> (David Turner)

They want to see young people trained to perform important social services currently performed by non-Aborigines, such as health care:

> [We want them to learn] ... Bookkeeping, teaching, like a white lady teaching their own school. I was in Perth in the schoolhouse, Sydney, I seen lot of white girls teaching their white children. What about black lady can't do that?
>
> (Hector Chunda)

They want to use young people to liaise with non-Aborigines and their institutions, to advise on dealing with administrative and political systems, and to write letters. They accept the need for many children and young adults to train outside the community, but would prefer secondary education to be available closer than Broome where the children attend a Catholic College in preference to State schools in the East Kimberley. While wishing their young people to become highly educated, senior people hope the majority will return to live in their communities. Many young people share the desire to return to their communities, but are currently un- or under-employed when they do so because there are insufficient jobs to use their skills.

Helen Ross: What makes you worried abat for kids?

David Turner: How they're going to work, schooling. If they get married and things where they gotta be. What job they'll do. What they gotta be? Sisters? Officers? Or pilot, carpenter, or whatever. Work on mining, all the big machines job and all that sort of thing?

Kartiya give us all the idea, we got everything. Well the school people could get it, there's no trouble. We just look at what we want, what we need, we can't hang out any more for this, long as we looking at what we want.

(David Turner)

The older people are not entirely clear about the amount of education required in order to become a nursing teacher or a sister. Some imagine that only brief training is required after high schooling. While higher and higher professional standards and qualifications are demanded in these professions, few Aboriginal people of the region are likely to gain the qualifications required in the foreseeable future. Perhaps the older people should be pushing for a system designed to use the skills currently available, and to build up local skills gradually through locally based training. This would surely be preferable to relying indefinitely on white professionally qualified but cross-culturally inexperienced staff, entailing high turnover, staff burnout, and often long vacancies in positions.

Regional development and land use

In the area of Warmun community and its outstations, people appear to be pursuing their own social and economic strategies, while keeping a watchful eye on non-Aboriginal plans for economic development of the region and changes in land use. Non-Aboriginal economic development brings potential threats to social and religious life, and potential economic opportunities. Protection of sacred sites is paramount:

> If they smash this turtle, we will have nowhere to live (belong). If we find it smashed, we don't know what we'll do. ... This is the special one. That's his country (hills to the east), Mungarrtapany. Those two small hills over there, there's a cave there. That's his (the turtle's) country, he's looking out. We'll put a signboard there, little bit of a yard, too (a sign and fence to protect the site) ... I tell them *kartiya* 'if I show you that place don't touch em, please' I say.
>
> (George Mung Mung, translated by Eileen Bray.)

Development is negotiable provided sites are respected:

> We watching out all that every country all around. We see any miners come, well they gotta come and see us. If they find anything, we gotta go and tell em what to do. Might be good thing in there, well we might be want to say longa him, 'we want em half'. Half-half (a share). We don't want to be get greedy, we go half-half.
>
> (Jack Britten)

Aboriginal people's willingness to cooperate with mining is not simply a matter of accepting the inevitable. Some Aboriginal people feel loyalty towards non-Aborigines, and wish to foster relationships of reciprocity:

> *Kartiya* he bin learn me to talk English, he bin learn me to go this way, that a way, hard working this way, back that way. That's why I can't, you know. I might as well agree to *kartiya* too, you know, meself. *Kartiya*, well he might help me too.
>
> (George Mung Mung)

Willingness to cooperate with non-Aborigines accords with a desire to be partners in the development process, and to negotiate development through a bargaining process (cf Corbett, 1986). Given the lack of proceeds available to them from the non-Aboriginal pastoral industry, new mining and tourism developments represent the only non-government source of resources available to Aboriginal people; a source some leaders consider worth cultivating (see Dixon et al, 1984).

Community leaders wish to be consulted about major developments, so that they can seek modification to any which seem damaging, but they state clearly that they do not intend to stand in the way of development. Their wish is that their prior ownership and custodianship of the land be acknowledged, and that they be given a financial share in the proceeds of each development. They view non-Aboriginal businesses and government as making money from the resources of the land, and consider that they should receive a proportion both as landowners and permission givers, and under the traditional principal of '*winan*'. *Winan* is the Aboriginal system of trading, in which goods are exchanged among a wide network of trading partners extending throughout the Kimberley and into other regions of Western Australia and the Northern Territory (see Akerman, 1979; Dixon, forthcoming).

Though mining royalty equivalents are not payable to Aborigines under Western Australian law as they are in the Northern Territory when mining takes place on Aboriginal land, Aboriginal people of the East Kimberley point to precedents which demonstrate the arrangement they seek. Small prospectors in the Alice Downs area, non-Aboriginal and town Aboriginal alike, have been in the habit of making gifts of food, money and fuel to the senior members of the nearby Yarrunga (Chinaman's Garden) community. These they interpret as being an acknowledgment of their proprietary interests in the land and a share of the proceeds of mining, though the non-Aboriginal miners may view the transactions merely as a friendly gesture.

Argyle Diamond Mines' Good Neighbour Program, by which three communities receive capital goods annually worth a specified and indexed amount, is viewed by Aborigines as correct behaviour in accordance with their custom of *winan* (cf Dixon, forthcoming), whereas the company views it as a goodwill gesture. Under *winan*, it is customary to share an abundance of any good with trading partners, relatives and associates. The *winan* interpretation of the Company's distributions fits with the facts of the proceeds of mining being shared with those living nearby, and not specifically with traditional owners (who would in any case be expected to distribute goods further). *Winan* is expected to be a two-way exchange, though not so direct as barter; in the Argyle case the company is interpreted as making rightful gifts in return for making use of Aborigines' land and for having damaged a site. It thus incorporates a strong element of both compensation and royalty.

The people are not happy at the prospect of just being pushed aside for development, particularly if the destruction of sites and use of land leaves them unable to pursue their own religious, social and economic aims. They see a continuing risk of this:

Hector Chunda: They can come here digging around here, we can't stop em digging for gold here.

Jack Britten: They might be can get diamonds here, we can't tell em ...

Hector Chunda: Nobody help us.

Jack Britten: Nobody behind we, see.

Hector Chunda: When we bin fighting for that *tayiwul* (barramundi site destroyed by Argyle diamond mine) everywhere - every Aborigines, we don't want dreamtime to get knocked down. They wouldn't listen. [We said] 'you can have a dig one side', we bin tell em in the court, every time. No, they didn't believe us. They dig, come over, come over, all the way. Nothing bin help. We didn't have no help. We had to let them, and they might be able to help us [with] housing, like that.

They are aware of the difference that land rights legislation - which incorporates provisions enabling Aborigines to have substantial control over mining - has made in the Northern Territory, and are aware of their powerlessness without effective legislation and without the financial resources to pursue the legal rights they have to protect sacred sites:

Northern Territory has stronger law too, but here they can't believe. Northern Territory has strong communities and strong councils too, they have to come and see him before they touch that hill. They say, 'pay $100 and come in'. Here *kartiya* just pull up blackfellas.

(Jack Britten)

> In the past we fought politicians. We had lawyers, legal aid, to fight the mine. We fought government and the mine in the past and they're the biggest. They had money and people coming from all over the State. We didn't have money to pay lawyers... We had to fight for the things we've gained... We had to fight Canberra, Perth, big mining company and the government people. We want to get level and stop there. Then we'll be right. They've got money, surely to Christ. Government has money, they could look after Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people bin lost in the past. We got to put something in writing, and it all go away (will be solved).
>
> (Joe Thomas)

The proceeds of mining and other development, such as tourism, are seen as a potential resource for use in pursuing other Aboriginal ends. Some are seeing potential in investment as a means of increasing income and preserving the value of capital.

> The Roadhouse (see below) is just the simplest thing. People need that. If you got enough money to buy that place, and can borrow money, as long as you know money's coming, you can get money back. Simplest thing, just like buying motor car. We're happy for that, men and women.
>
> (Joe Thomas)

Most, however, see investment more for opportunities to control developments which might affect them than for immediate financial gains. The Turkey Creek roadhouse, for example, was bought by the Warmun Community with a combination of funds and loans (initially without using Argyle Diamond Mines' Good Neighbour Program allocation owing to the Company's resistance), as a means of controlling the activities of that business, as well as for investment purposes.

Though they value the alternative sources of income possible from non-Aboriginal development, the people of the area are wary of becoming dependent on mining companies. Those who have experienced Argyle Diamond Mines helping them to manage Good Neighbour Program resources have been frustrated by the company's powerful role in deciding what the money may be spent on, in selecting suppliers and making the purchases, in finding reason to visit the communities frequently, and in

becoming intimately involved with the affairs of some of the communities through provision of free extra services such as bookkeeping and advising (see Young, 1988). They want to be independent, the funds theirs to control.

A Basis for cooperation

Aboriginal people are thus trying to establish themselves on new terms within the East Kimberley region. They feel positive towards race relations:

> Argument finished now. Aboriginal people and *kartiya*, doesn't matter what colour, [we] all work together.
>
> (Joe Thomas)

but lament that this goodwill is shared by relatively few non-Aboriginal people. An antagonistic non-Aboriginal majority, within the region and elsewhere, wields enough political influence to dictate many of the terms of Aboriginal existence, especially in rights to land.

Underlying Aboriginal aspirations to land, new communities, promotion of cultural knowledge and values, and new terms for development in the region, is the desire to share the country on terms which give Aboriginal people more influence over how the region changes and what happens to Aboriginal people, and a more equitable economic and social role within Kimberley society. Community leaders regret that changes they see as beneficial for non-Aborigines as well as themselves are so hard won:

> You have to push government hard. If you don't talk hard, he can't listen. Same thing as [with the] Seaman Inquiry (the Aboriginal Land Inquiry). He (the government) threw it out the window.
>
> (Joe Thomas)

Local leaders would rather work cooperatively with non-Aborigines. In the contemporary race relations climate consideration of Aboriginal interests, let alone Aboriginal participation in regional or development decision making, is

uncommon. Discussion of mutually satisfactory solutions is desperately needed, and most likely to occur if Aboriginal people have legally supported rights to participate in decisions about their future and that of the region.

Legislation is needed to establish and confirm Aboriginal rights in ways which ensure that negotiation takes place on relevant issues, and that Aboriginal people participate on an equal footing. True negotiation of interests, in contrast to mere consultation, will rely on Aboriginal people having resources as well as ideas to trade: this in turn will require certain powers to be guaranteed. Land rights legislation is a way of providing sets of powers which can give Aboriginal people control over certain matters and resources, and ensure that others interested in those resources must negotiate with Aboriginal people in order to achieve their aims. The effect of land rights legislation, however, is limited to certain types of land-related issues and to the lands actually granted to Aboriginal people. It has no effect over other land. More encompassing packages of powers could be achieved in other ways, with or without a land-owning basis. An example is regional agreements, along the lines of some of those negotiated between Indian Inuit and Meti people and the government of Canada (see Task Force to Review Comprehensive Claims Policy, 1985). While the Canadian agreements have their deficiencies, the principle of an agreement which encompasses such matters as citizen's rights, land, participative decision making and arbitration systems, impact assessment arrangements, land use and land management arrangements, wildlife harvesting and management, economic measures and social programs (as covered by Canada's Inuvialuit Agreement (the Western Arctic Land Claim, 1984) seems promising.

Agreements, however, do not obviate the need for continuing negotiation as new issues arise, particularly if the terms of an agreement are later found to be unsatisfactory. With or without regional agreements or other legislation giving mandates for negotiation, there is a need for the future development of any region, and of the Aboriginal communities within it, to be the subject of a bargaining process. Agreements should be drawn broadly enough to cover political, social and cultural matters. This has certainly been recognised in Canada, and negotiations are continuing to take place on these issues. Corbett (1986) describes the function of social impact assessment in such a bargaining process as promoting dialogue, conflict management, negotiation and understanding. This collaborative process places communities in the position of 'partner' in the development process. This describes well the relationship East Kimberley Aboriginal leaders seek.

CONCLUSIONS

The subject matter of Social Impact Assessment

A variety of events have had substantial social impacts on the people of the study area over the past century:

- a gold rush, and more particularly the road, telegraph line and servicing infrastructure which grew out of the gold rush and remained to service the pastoral industry;
- the pastoral industry, the form in which it incorporated Aboriginal labour, and the Aboriginal reserves created originally to discourage Aboriginal interference with the pastoral industry;
- legislative and administrative changes including the extension of citizenship rights to Aborigines, the introduction of compulsory award wages, and the progressive extension of social security incomes to Aboriginal people;
- the decline of the pastoral industry, and the rise of mining and tourism as new industries.

In all of these, the particular form of impacts depended not just on which developments took place, but the particular form they took, and the practices adopted by those involved in the developments.

Impact assessment legislation, had it existed over the past century, would have missed many of the types of impacts which Aborigines perceive as having been significant. Mining, and probably pastoral development, would certainly have been eligible, though the extent of infrastructure effects, and the specific nature of practices (in this case massacres) might not have been considered. Legislative and administrative changes, which were particularly influential in the late 1960's and early 1970's, would not have been required under EIA legislation to undergo impact assessment, though similar deliberations could have taken place through inquiries or governmental consideration. (The Roth Royal Commission of 1905, which investigated aspects of maltreatment of Aborigines in Western Australia, could now be seen as including aspects of social impact assessment). Lastly, the decline of an industry on which people have become dependent, such as the pastoral industry, is seldom the subject of impact assessment, especially when it happens gradually. Recent inquiries into the pastoral industry in the Kimberley and Western Australia generally (Jennings et al 1979; Kimberley Pastoral Industry

Inquiry, 1985; Pastoral Tenure Study Group 1986), have been oriented towards support of the industry, not of those formerly dependent on it. This study has shown practices and policies to be as much in need of social impact assessment as the consequences of new resource developments.

Cumulative social impact assessment

The study has also demonstrated the value of a 'cumulative' view of impacts: the state of people and places at the time of each new development includes the effects of changes wrought by previous events. Many impacts arise from combinations of events. For instance, Aboriginal people trace alcohol abuse to the removal of restrictions on citizenship rights, although abuse did not become widespread until people left the stations (owing to award wages, the decline of the pastoral industry, and changing expectations of the employment relationship) and acquired cash income through social security payments. One can imagine many scenarios at each stage of the East Kimberley's history: what if early settlers of the region had not resorted to massacres, or there had been effective government controls against abuse of Aborigines? What if the pastoral industry had had no need for Aboriginal labour? What if Aborigines had always enjoyed full citizenship rights, and always been paid award wages? What if land had not been usurped from Aboriginal people? A different result at any point would have led to a different situation being the 'baseline' for subsequent developments.

The regional view, like the historical view, enables linkages between events to be observed. In this case, the study region was smaller than desirable; the towns of Halls Creek, which was the original focus of the 1886 gold rush, and Kununurra, which has experienced the effects of the Argyle diamond mine and growing tourism (in both cases through sudden growth and involvement of new personnel in town affairs) are relevant to this study, but were beyond the capacity of a single researcher in the time available. The important point is that effects are not isolated, and areas beyond the immediate location of a new development are frequently affected (Kesteven 1986).

Intervention

The Aboriginal accounts reveal the relevance of mitigating action in the past, and the important role of government as mitigating agent, despite government intervention on many occasions being tardy and, to contemporary eyes, insufficient government intervention is given credit for stopping the

massacres, despite the time lag between the first recorded massacres (1888) and the first interventions (1901), and the recurrence of killings into the 1920s. It was the combination of the nature of the colonising agents (or at least the most ruthless ones) and the untrammelled nature of their activities, which proved so devastating for Aborigines in the early years. The particular course of events - including the successful suppression of information about many of them - resulted from the nature of both interacting societies, as well as numerous economic circumstances and political decisions.

Individual mitigating actions by sympathetic non-Aborigines - station managers who did not resort to shootings and offered protection to those under threat, and later the welfare officers and others who helped Aborigines to re-establish themselves at Warmun community after leaving the cattle stations - are seen as very important by Aborigines.

Aboriginal interpretations

The focus on Aboriginal people's interpretation of events and impacts has been valuable from two points of view. There is still no comprehensive published history of the East Kimberley, and many of the sources available disguise what happened to Aborigines. Police records, for example, understate the occurrence of massacres. Specialised histories, such as Bolton (1953, 1954, 1981), Biskup (1973), Gill (1977) and Marchant (1981), and histories from a non-Aboriginal perspective such as Durack (1979, 1983), while very valuable, are not in a position to relate the way Aboriginal people have felt about events in the East Kimberley. Aboriginal people are in a position to retell events which were irrelevant to, distorted by, or omitted from written records, and to tell them from their point of view. More importantly for the practice of social impact assessment, experience *is* a matter of interpretation. Non-Aboriginal experts may make a contribution by deducing likely impacts, but only Aboriginal people are able to say how they actually experienced events - allowing for the reinterpretations of hindsight. Community and individual values are integral to the nature of historical experience. Experts might overlook events which Aborigines consider important, or present a different view of them, and Aborigines may disagree as to the extent or nature of the impacts experts consider important. Incorrect or simplistic attributions may nevertheless be made by Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal people, such as the emphasis laid on 'citizenship' and 'award wages', but this does not alter the intensity of Aboriginal people's experience. Both perceptual and 'expert' types of analysis have their place; used together they can prove very fruitful.

A difficulty of the approach used in this study is the limited sample of people involved - necessarily confined to those who remain in the area - and also limitation of the sample of events to those which have been retained in local memory. Many other events are likely to have been forgotten. In this case, members of one extended family commented on the removal of a child from them, but none of the children removed were available to tell their side of the story.

The study was guided by the hypothesis that what Aboriginal people mentioned would be largely what is significant to them. This appears to have been the case, with the proviso that some impacts may have been underrepresented. Fewer women than men participated, and many speakers placed priority on describing the earliest influences of non-Aborigines. It would take a detailed study of the pastoral era, such as McGrath's *Born in the Cattle* (1987) to elicit comprehensive Aboriginal information about this period. Participants in the study included many other stories of importance to them, which have not been included in this report, but contributed to the social and cultural material in which has guided this analysis of impact. This material includes *ngarrangkani* (dreaming) stories, place names, stories of successful and unsuccessful hunts, cultural information, and family anecdotes.

Participants attempted causal attributions where they were aware of related events, but they were unable to do so in relation to many of the earliest events. Only the Yarrunga (Chinaman's Garden) people made a connection between certain massacres and gold mining, the road and the telegraph line. Most of the stories emphasise that as far as Aboriginal people were concerned, the massacres occurred out of the blue. Some people blame their ancestors for killing a few non-Aborigines, inviting retribution, and some connect cattle killing with massacres by pastoralists. Gold mining and the pastoral industry are nevertheless a hazy background; in the Aboriginal interpretations the focus is on the massacres and incorporation of their grandparents into the workforce.

Inclusion of aspirations

History does not stop the day one decides to write it, nor do impacts. Aboriginal people see their current aspirations as continuous with past events; indeed their rationale to achieve change is strongly based in the impacts of the past. They want to regain land, on the terms open to them, because it was taken from them. They want access to alienated land, because they require it for cultural reasons, their present access rights being limited and not easily exercised. They want to educate children 'two-ways', to strengthen Aboriginal language skills

and cultural knowledge which are hard to maintain in settlement environment, away from traditional land, and they want their children to have non-Aboriginal literacy and occupational skills.

It is very common for Aboriginal people to relate their past and their whole agenda for change before inquiries, social impact researchers and even casual visitors. Shrewd developers have incorporated these agendas (or at least aspects of them), in their development plans and mitigation activities. Argyle Diamond Mines' Glen Hill Agreement is significant because it provided the Mandangala (Glen Hill) community with the capital resources it required to establish residence there. In the Northern Territory the Department of Defence intervened with other Commonwealth, Northern Territory and local government bodies to help Aboriginal people achieve their desired changes - most of which were outside the Department of Defence's powers - in its efforts to gain acquiesence and start mitigation of potential impacts of the Tindal air base (Milbourne, 1987).

If people's aspirations could be included in all SIAs, and especially if they are combined with a cumulative rather than a project-specific view of impacts, the development scenario of whole regions could change. Instead of ad hoc development arising from additive single-development and specific mitigation activities, occasionally influenced by government planning interventions, people's interests and regional planning could come to the fore. Developments could be planned to serve the social and economic needs of the people of a region, rather than people being expected to adjust to conjunctions of developments which are less than optimal for them.

Victims or protagonists?

It is easy in impact assessment to portray people as passive, as 'acted upon'. In fact, people's anticipations and reactions do a great deal to influence the courses of events. The stories presented in this study (East Kimberley Working Paper No.28) demonstrate this point. Despite being powerless to prevent all shootings, people evaded white influence in many ways. Some evaded massacres through bravado and wit, yet chose to settle at safer places. Early workers at the small non-Aboriginal settlements kept Aboriginal knowledge and traditions alive. Station people associated with bush people well into this century. Children ran away from the man trying to take them away for schooling at Moola Bulla. Warmun community people chose to develop their own place rather than become fringe-campers around the towns. They tried to resist the development of Argyle Diamond Mine, then made their own accommodations to it. They worked hard to obtain the political

support and funding necessary to buy Bow River station. They successfully contested the granting of a liquor licence at Turkey Creek roadhouse in the 1980s (also an issue from 1921 to 1933), eventually buying the business themselves. Other community groups are now manoeuvering to acquire land, and to seek joint management over Purnululu (Bungle Bungle) National Park.

Participation in this study has been another Aboriginal strategy towards managing change: in this case by trying to inform non-Aborigines in a position to assist or obstruct the pursuit of their aspirations. Corbett (1986) argues that from a community development perspective, the aim of social impact assessment is to influence the 'interests' that guide development decisions by making community interests visible and powerful.

> Hector Chunda: We are friend up for white people, well they should friend up for us.
>
> Jack Britten: But *kartiya* (white people) don't want a man to friend up, it looks like.
>
> Hector Chunda: He like [to] make a war.
>
> Jack Britten: What can we do here? We can't make a war from here! We're just nothing, poor buggers. Well you (Helen Ross) go back to [your] country now, make that report that way. They [might] say 'no, leave em poor things round that country, they haven't got nothing, they haven't got nothing'. [That's what] they might be say [when] you put that report through to government.

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