

A SKETCH OF YUENDUMU AND ITS OUTSTATIONS

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Environmental
Studies in the Australian National University

December 1978

DECLARATION

Except where otherwise indicated, this dissertation
is my own work.



S.L. KESTEVEN

December 1978

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ABSTRACT

Yuendumu is an Aboriginal settlement of fairly recent establishment (1946). The encroachment of white men into Warlpiri territory has brought great changes to the life-style of the people, but they have attempted at all times to fuse traditional values with those aspects of white culture that they find desirable.

The first section outlines Warlpiri-European contact, the characteristics of southern Warlpiri territory, and the structure and administration of Yuendumu.

The second section outlines the traditional economy of the Warlpiri people and characteristics of the present-day economy of Yuendumu, and shows that in spite of a great many introduced factors there is a thread of continuity based on the social system and the traditional life-style.

Lastly there follows a description of the outstations which base themselves on Yuendumu, with their aspirations and problems.

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PREFACE

I visited Yuendumu for six weeks in July - August 1978 and for a further three weeks in November. Such a period of time is too short to do justice to the Warlpiris and far too short to do justice to the complexities of their social system. Lack of time aside, what I have been able to capture is due to their patience, good humour and willingness to teach.

I would like to thank the Yuendumu Community Council, collectively and as individuals, for their great help, and all the people who spoke to me of their lives, their hopes and frustrations.

They provided me with enough material for a novel, enough excitement for a film script and enough humour for a book on Warlpiri wit and whimsy.

NOTES

In the text I use the Warlpiri English word 'European' to denote non-Aboriginal people.

The word 'camp' can mean either the area occupied by a group of people, whether consisting of makeshift shelters, Stage 1 houses, improved Stage 1 houses or a mixture of these, or it can mean the individual shelter.

The abbreviation DAA refers to the Australian Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

Double inverted commas indicate a direct quotation of verbal information.

I use the orthography employed at the Yuendumu School for the representation of Warlpiri words. See Appendix A for the phoneme inventory.

HISTORY OF WARLPIRI-EUROPEAN CONTACT

The traditional territory of the Warlpiri people was an extensive area of the central west part of the Northern Territory (see Meggitt, 1962, p.4). Today the Warlpiri people live principally at Yuendumu, Hooker Creek, Willowra and Warrabri (other tribal groups also live in these settlements). There are smaller numbers at Wave Hill, Papunya, Alice Springs, and a few work on cattle stations.

It is only in recent years that the Warlpiri people have had extensive contact with white people. A history of contact is given in Meggitt, 1962, pp.16-24 and in Petersen et al. pp.10-14. Briefly, it is this: explorers crossed the area in the latter half of last century, but it was not until this century that large numbers of Europeans entered the area. In 1910 there was a gold rush at Tanami and in 1932 another at The Granites. Pastoral leases started to encroach on Warlpiri territory from the Alice Springs area in the 1910's. People still alive relate the first time they saw white men, and the motivating factor seems to have been curiosity. By the time of the second gold rush Warlpiris were congregating at the depots established, and working on the gold fields. They were also employed at Mt. Doreen mining wolfram, and on various cattle stations. During the war years in the 1940's some men were seized by army authorities and put to work upgrading the Stuart Highway. From accounts I heard, it was not a happy time for the men concerned, far from their families and in foreign territory.

At Coniston in 1928 a number of Warlpiri were killed in retaliation for the killing of a white man, although none of those killed had been responsible for the crime. Most accounts of the incident say that the man had been killed in retaliation for refusing to share food with the Aborigines when his supplies ran low. In a recent book put out by the Yuendumu School (Japangardi & Jampijinpa) and in versions I heard from Warlpiris, the problem arose over women. The official tally for people killed by police was 35 (all Warlpiris who spoke to me of the matter told me it was more). A further 14

Warlpiri were killed for the wounding of a white man in the Lander area. These attacks by Warlpiri were probably caused by a number of factors: European encroachment on traditional land and subsequent appropriation of water for themselves and their cattle; their reluctance to share their goods, contrary to Warlpiri etiquette; and no doubt their reluctance to compensate Warlpiri men for cohabiting with their women, and also the fact that white men killed game (traditional Aboriginal food) with impunity while the blacks were punished for spearing cattle added to Warlpiri annoyance.

I do not think the retaliation by the white authorities was an isolated incident. A man who travelled extensively over Warlpiri country from 1928 on related to me acts of brutality on the part of European prospectors he accompanied. Of one man, who he said had killed many Aborigines, he commented: "It was no loss to anybody when he died" and of Europeans in general: "Men today are real gentlemen compared to those ones".

In all these accounts that I heard from Warlpiri men - some of whom had lost relatives at Coniston - there was never anger expressed, or bitterness, but much sorrow and perplexity at the reprisals ("we would have told them where the killers were"). And I was never presented with a hateful picture of people. People's virtues were acknowledged, as were their sins or stupidities. ("They brought all that trouble on themselves, by taking native women" - said of two white men killed in Western Australia.)

These incidents may in a perverse way have been beneficial to the Warlpiri by delaying extensive contact with European ways through a mistrust of them, and although the late contact with Europeans may not have ensured that it was any less brutal than in other parts of Australia a century before, it came at a time when health advances had been made and the Flying Doctor Service established, so that Aboriginal populations were not wiped out by epidemics. It has also meant that their customs have had less time to be eroded.

Petersen et al. (pp.14-24) give a history of the proposals for reserves. The Tanami Native Settlement was set up in 1945 with 117 Aborigine people, but because of problems with a lack of water and poor health the people were moved from Tanami to The Granites,

and then in 1946 to Yuendumu. Some people were later taken forcibly to Lajamanu (Hooker Creek), and again twice more as disgruntled people walked back across the Tanami to Yuendumu (Petersen et al. p.14 and Jangala et al. pp. 5-6). The reserves, when compared to the area traditionally occupied by the Warlpiri, were miniscule (Hooker Creek in fact is not traditional Warlpiri territory, although Warlpiri people now think of it as home). The account by Petersen et al. gives a horrific picture of the interests of a small number of white men and companies consistently overriding the interests of the Warlpiri people.

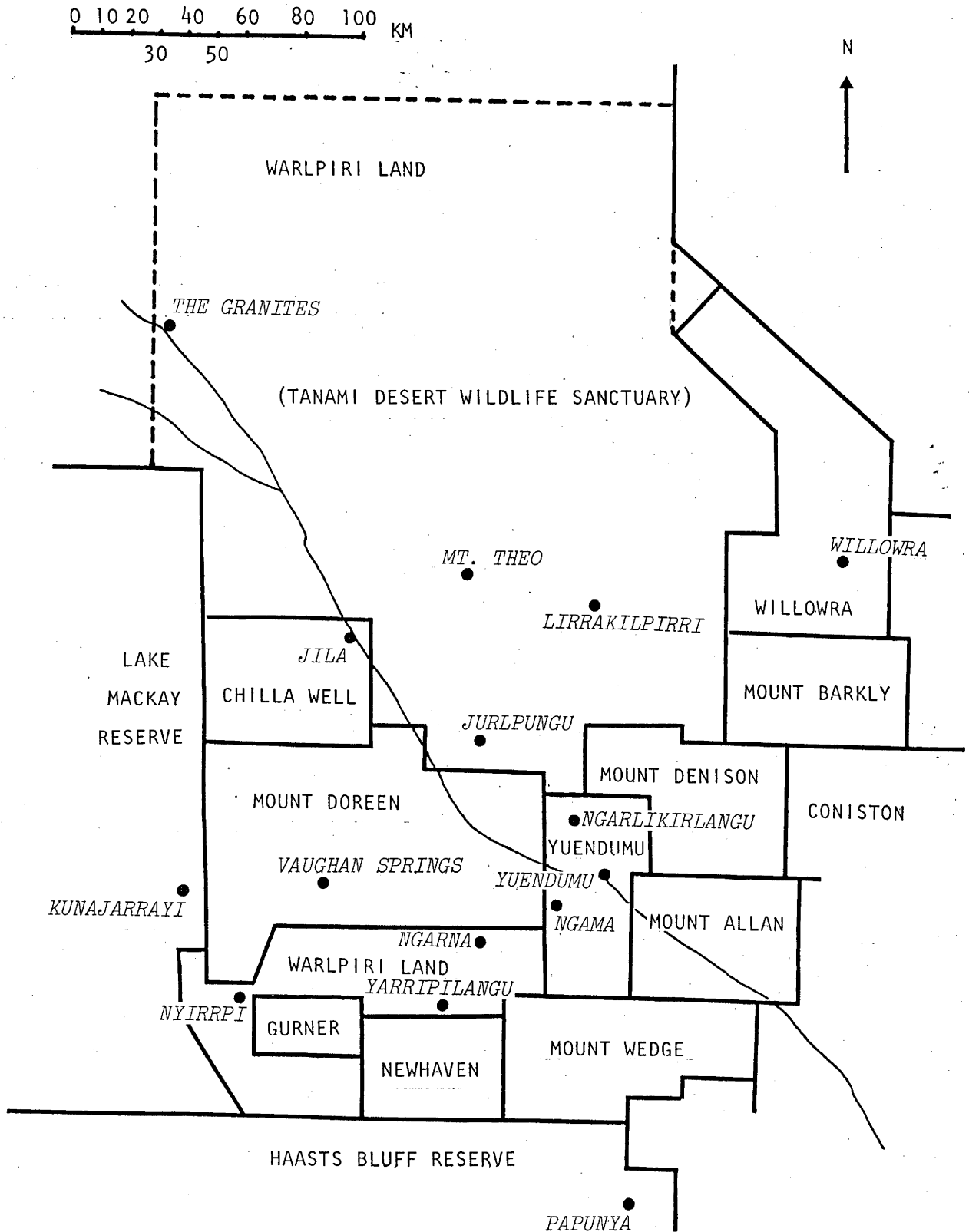
The Yuendumu reserve was not formally gazetted until 1952, six years after people had been settled there, because there were still wrangles with the owner of the adjoining Mt. Allan pastoral lease; the latter had his way and Yuendumu was made even smaller than had been intended. Very recently, redress has been made in part. The title to gazetted Aboriginal reserves in the Northern Territory was handed over to Aborigines in August 1978. This not only meant that Yuendumu was handed over to its Aboriginal residents, but also that some Pintubi people living at Yuendumu have title to their traditional lands on the Lake MacKay reserve. In September of this year, the decision of the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs on the Warlpiri land claims was announced; the Warlpiri people, with the Kartangururru-Kurintji, were granted an extensive area of the Northern Territory which had been their land (fee simple in perpetuity). This included the Tanami Wildlife Sanctuary. The southern part of Warlpiri territory, apart from Yuendumu and a small area of what had been unalienated Crown land, remains in the hands of pastoral leaseholders. The leases to Willowra, Chilla Well and Mt Allan, however, have been purchased by the DAA with a view to running cattle enterprises for the Aboriginal inhabitants. (See Map 1).

I shall be concerned mostly with Yuendumu and the out-station movement emanating from there.

YUENDUMU -
LOCATION

Yuendumu lies to the northwest of Alice Springs. Its boundaries enclose 2,201 sq km. The settlement of Yuendumu is the only population centre on the reserve; it is about 300km from Alice Springs, all but twenty of which are over

MAP 1: PASTORAL LEASES AND RESERVES IN THE YUENDUMU AREA
(All outstation locations approximate)



dirt road, from the Stuart Highway turnoff. Some patches of the road can be very bad after wet weather and use by semi-trailers, and wandering stock are another hazard. There are plans to begin sealing the road next year.

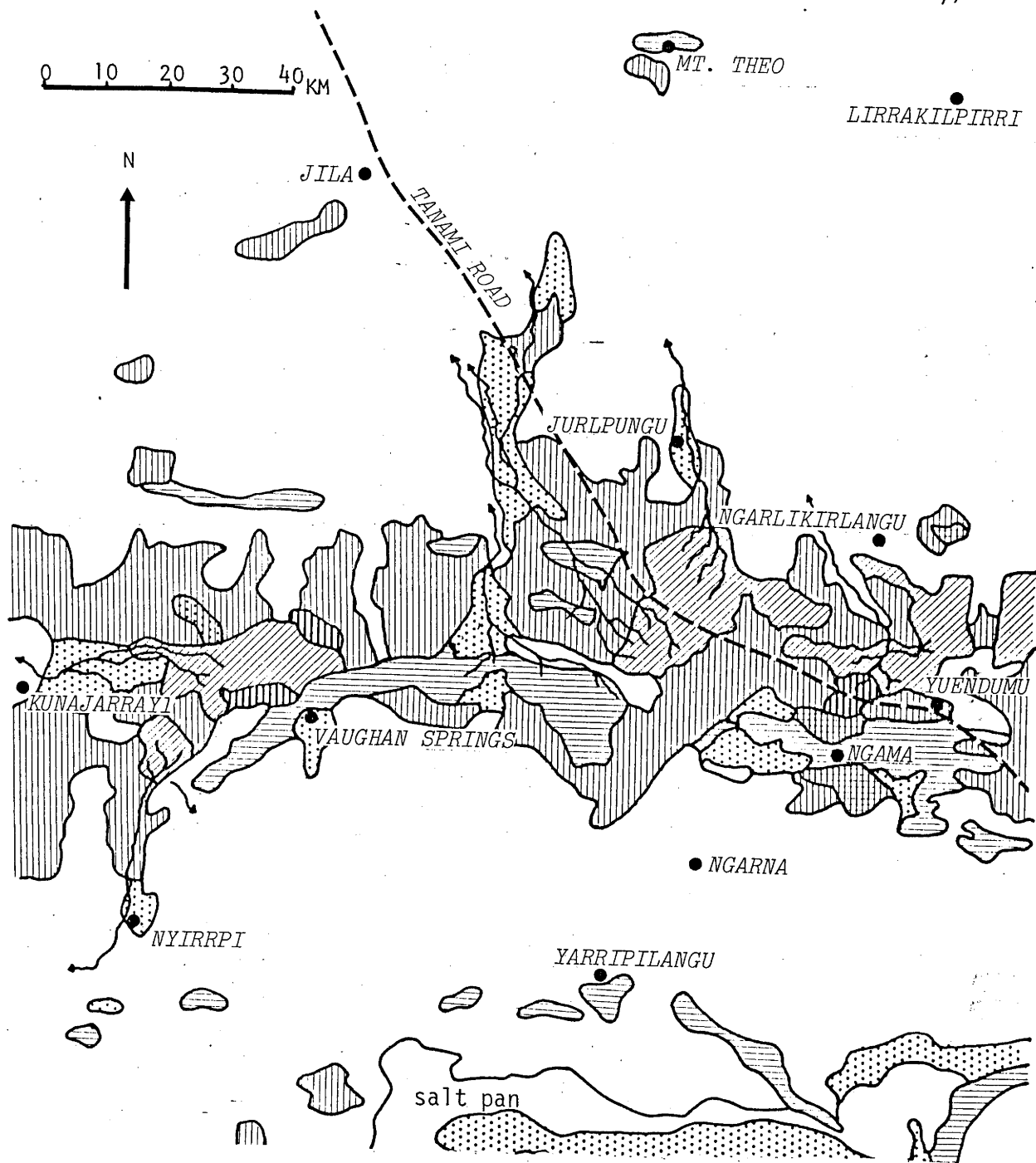
PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION
OF SOUTHERN WARLPIRI
TERRITORY
(See Map 2)








Immediately to the south of Yuendumu are the Walbiri Ranges, consisting of sandstone and quartzitic ranges. The nearest of these is Yurntumu, the honey ant dreaming site from which the settlement takes its name. Immediately to the north are granite and schist outcrops. Between these outcrops and ranges are plains of mulga. To the west of Yuendumu are the Naburula Hills and the Truer Range, also sandstone and quartzitic ranges; vegetation found here is also mostly mulga. To the north and south of this belt lie spinifex plains.

Yuendumu is on the northern edge of the Ngalia Basin, currently being explored for uranium, which has been found in two areas (neither of which the Warlpiri have title to in white law - they are within the confines of the Mount Doreen pastoral lease). The basin may be a possible source of petroleum, but it is thought not to be in commercial quantities. Other minerals found in the area are wolfram, which was once mined extensively at Mt. Doreen and still is, in small quantities, and copper, which was mined at Mt. Hardy but no longer is, as the venture was found to be uneconomic. Building stones were quarried from the ridges south of Yuendumu - some of the abandoned houses at the old government garden were made of these slabs - but they are no longer quarried, and the track to the site has not been used for a long time. Gravel is still being excavated from a pit alongside the road a short way from Yuendumu. Gold was found at Tanami and at The Granites in the early part of this century, but not in large quantities (see Madigan).

Creek beds cross the area, but they are not permanent watercourses; eucalypts grow along these sandy strips. In the west Waite Creek drains southwards, and Ethel Creek drains westwards. There are a series of creeks draining northwards from the ranges to the north of Yuendumu. These creeks are used for sub-surface water by the Warlpiri, who dig soakage wells. Other sub-surface waters have been

MAP 2: LAND SYSTEMS OF THE YUENDUMU AREA (Adapted from Perry)



-  GRANITE HILLS; SPARSE LOW TREES OVER SHORT GRASS
-  SANDSTONE AND QUARTZITIC RIDGES; SPINIFEX, SPARSE LOW TREES
-  STONY GRANITE PLAINS; OPEN OR SPARSE LOW TREES OVER SHORT GRASS
-  RED SANDY PLAINS; SPINIFEX
-  PLAINS, RED EARTHS; MULGA
-  SANDY PLAINS, FLOODPLAINS; SPARSE LOW TREES OVER SHORT GRASS
-  SANDSTONE RIDGES; SPINIFEX

(All outstation locations approximate)

tapped by bores. There are small permanent rock holes which the Warlpiri still know and use, such as those at Yarripilangu. After rain claypans fill up with ephemeral water, and dips in the creek beds may also hold water for a while.

Some of the best water has been appropriated by the pastoral leaseholders; for example, Vaughan Springs: "...of the natural springs....Vaughan Springs is probably the largest. It provides about 7.3 kilolitres per hour of excellent quality water" (Bureau of Mineral Resources, Explanatory notes to 1:250,000 Geological Series map of Mount Doreen, p.17).

Surface water is something of note for the Warlpiris, who will show it to you as a special attraction, and the children shriek with excitement when they see it. The average rainfall of the area is less than 250mm a year, but averages are meaningless since the rainfall is irregular. In July of this year Yuendumu had 102mm in three days; in addition, it had rained for two days in the previous week, and the countryside was very lush. Summer temperatures can be very high, as can evaporation rates because of heat and wind. Winds can make even sunny winter days very cold (I wore a pullover almost every day in July and August) and at night winter temperatures can reach freezing point.

(For more detail on the topography, climate and vegetation of the area, see Slatyer and Perry, Perry, the article by Perry in Hetzel and Frith, and geological maps of the area (Mt. Doreen and Mt. Theo in particular) put out by the Division of National Mapping).

YUENDUMU - POPULATION AND STRUCTURE

The Warlpiri at Yuendumu were fortunate in being moved to a settlement on traditional land, and where they constituted (almost) the only Aboriginal group. This has meant that there is no intertribal fighting on the settlement. It also meant that English did not have to be developed as a lingua franca between different tribes, so that Warlpiri is still the mother language of the people and English is at best only a second language (and this in spite of the popularity of films). Children know very little

English when they start school. One non-Warlpiri man who speaks in English to his Warlpiri wife has a two-year old son who speaks Warlpiri only. This use of their own language has helped maintain their culture to a very strong degree. The kinship system is still intact, although some taboos are disappearing (see Jangala et al., pp.3,22). The clue to much of what goes on in Warlpiri society lies in the kinship system - for a very superficial examination of this, see Appendix B. A second consequence of the language situation is that the English spoken at Yuendumu is standard English for the most part and not a pidgin or creolized form, and Warlpiris have not been stigmatized when it comes to having to speak English at meetings etc.

Yuendumu is on the edge of Warlpiri territory, near Yanmajirri country, but most people at Yuendumu are Warlpiri; there are small numbers of Yanmajirri and Pintubi who have married Warlpiris. These Pintubi and all Yanmajirri are regarded as being "nearly Warlpiri" for all purposes (for example, for being eligible to own stock in the Yuendumu Mining Company). The Pintubi at Yuendumu live predominantly in the west camp, and the Yanmajirri in the east camp. This reflects their original orientation in relation to Warlpiri territory (although the housing situation and the European-style town plan for Yuendumu is altering the traditional orientation, since people are moved into houses according to their position on the application list, not according to area). The Warlpiri apparently do not orient themselves according to their original homelands. I was told that the Yanmajirri live in the east, Pintubis in the west, and the middle was "a great big mess of Warlpiris".

Yuendumu is a town of approximately 1,200 people. The exact figure is not known, although estimates vary from 1,000 people to 1,400. The 1976 census figures put the population at 875, but reports I have heard suggest that the figure might be low - the flagons had come in that day, and many people were out in the bush indulging. I am not even sure how one would undertake a census at a place such as Yuendumu. The population is very mobile, not only between centres (Yuendumu and Alice Springs, Yuendumu and Hooker Creek, Yuendumu and Willowra, for example) but also within the camps. Hospital records suggest the population is just over 1,200. The census puts Yuendumu tenth on the list of population centres in the N.T. by size, but I have

heard Yuendumu residents say that it is sixth, and the Chief Minister of the N.T. (on a visit to Yuendumu for a Cabinet Meeting) say that it was seventh. Approximately 35 per cent of the population is under 15 years of age (Young, *pers. comm.*). There are about 90 Europeans living at Yuendumu, including children.

From east to west Yuendumu measures approximately 2.5km (taking in the humpy camps) and slightly less from north to south. (See Map 3). There is a central area of town facilities (shop, school, church, workshops, clinic, powerhouse) mingled with European-style housing, some of which is lived in by Aborigines.

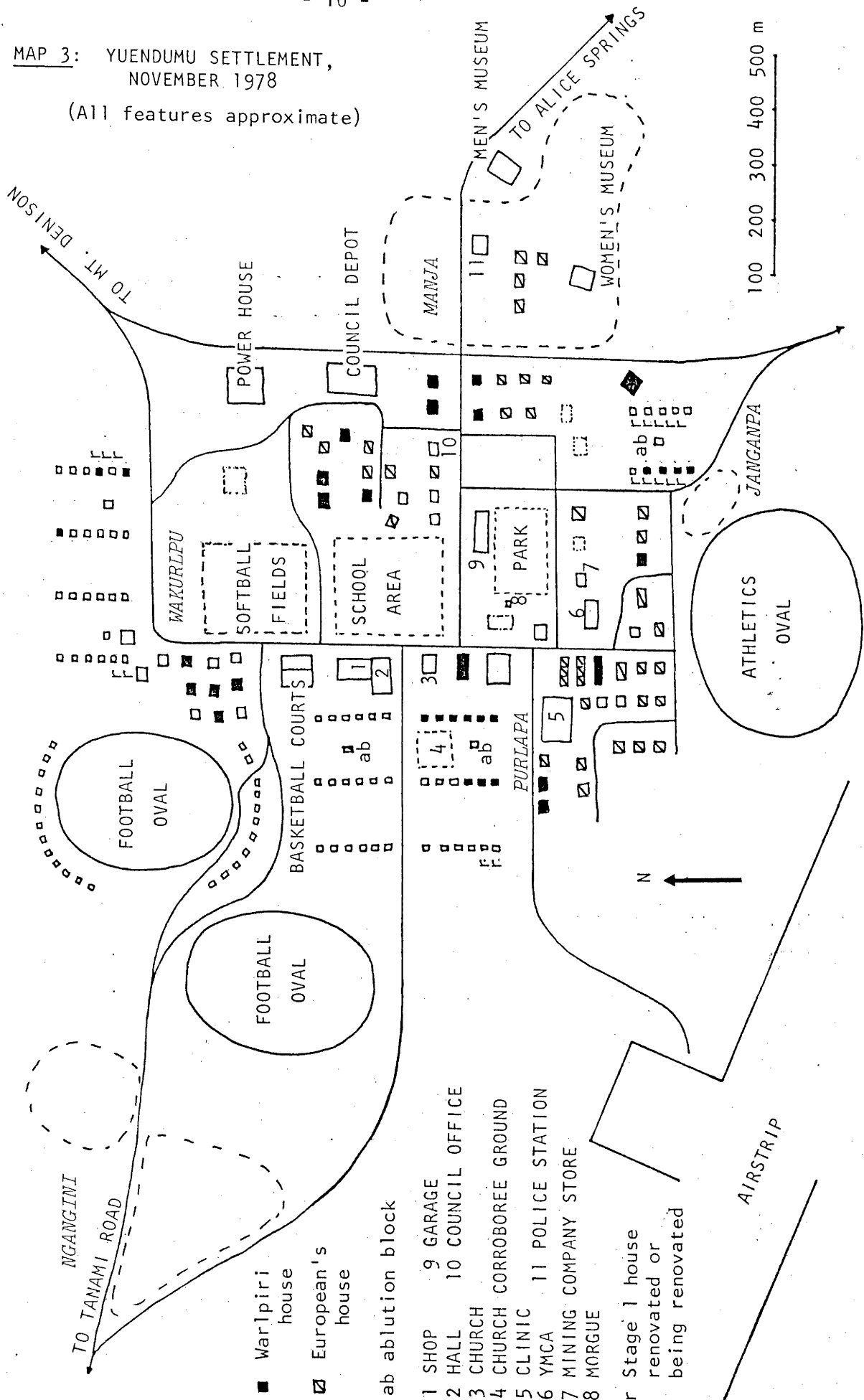
The focal point of the town area is the shop, especially around the time of morning smoko. The school break coincides with this, and children and adults alike meet up, buy a drink or snack and sit outside or go into the Social Club reading room. On days when the social security cheques come in and also on paydays there is a large crowd outside the shop, collecting money and then making purchases, and handing money to relatives who have none.

There are also secondary focal points. One is the Council Office, although people have congregated here less often since the social security office was moved to the shop area. The clinic is a focal point for women especially; they bring their babies along for progress checks, and often, unfortunately, because they are sick with diarrhoea or infections. Other focal points are the Social Club reading room adjacent to the shop, and the YMCA, especially for the young men. The reading room provides magazines, books, newspapers, and displays of photographs of newsworthy events. Reading is a morning activity and the YMCA an afternoon one. The YMCA provides pool tables, music and various craft activities, and sandwiches and soft drinks can be bought there. Two pool tables have been reserved for men and a third for women, since trouble broke out when the tables were mixed; however the women's table is used by the men until school hours are over, since young girls are meant to be at school, and married women are invariably in the camps. Young men often play football in the road next to the YMCA.

In the evenings the focal point - for those participating at least - shifts to the basketball courts, or on film nights to the house of the YMCA couple. The Assembly Hall was used in July and

MAP 3: YUENDUMU SETTLEMENT,
NOVEMBER 1978

(All features approximate)



August for films and concerts, but shortly after the Hall was condemned - ostensibly because the toilets were in an appalling state, but if that is the reason then it seems curious that the whole of Yuendumu has not been condemned. Films are now shown in the garden of the YMCA couple, and concerts are held on the basketball courts. Unfortunately, rain can cancel both events now, and the rock band cannot make money since there is no way to make people pay when the courts are open to everyone, and unless the Hall is repaired, people may be deterred from participating during the cold winter months. Basketball is played twice a week (one night for competitions and another for practice); concerts are held twice a week, volley-ball once a week. The basketball courts are adjacent to the shop, and there are plans to extend the take-away food store and install pool tables and pinball machines, so this will widen the appeal of the shop area as an evening gathering place.

At weekends the emphasis shifts; the shop closes for Saturday afternoon and Sunday, and people move down to the Mining Company Store which opens for both afternoons of the weekend. Since very few people have refrigerators, shopping must be done almost every day - besides, dogs are liable to get at any food left lying around. People also buy petrol for weekend trips.

Activity at weekends centres on the Church on Sunday morning (for the Christians) and on the corroboree ground on Saturday nights for the practice or performance of Christian corroborees.

Beyond this central area of community facilities and permanent buildings there are rows of Stage I houses to the west, north and southeast, most of which are vacant and some of which are being converted into improved housing. Around the oval to the north are Kingstrand houses, all of which have been abandoned.

Further out to the west is a humpy camp; this was previously called the Tanami camp, and was divided into two sections for the purposes of returning representatives to the Community Council. These were the Warlpiri Tanami camp and the Pintubi Tanami camp. However, during the year the administration of Yuendumu was altered, so that different sections of the town were given responsibility for

municipal services in their area. For this purpose the Tanami camp functions as one unit and has been named Ngangini after a nearby hill. I do not know if the Council elections to be held early next year will follow these new administrative divisions. In July and August all the humpies in the west camp were situated to the north of the track that leads to the Tanami road; in November all but the camps on the eastern edge of Ngangini had moved to the south side of the track, following on a death.

On the east side of the town is another humpy camp, Manja (mulga). This area is interspersed with 'dead' humpies, from which people have moved after deaths, or during a terminal illness. The Yanmajirri live principally in this area.

The humpies in the camp areas are made mostly of corrugated iron, with branches, tarpaulins and car bodies incorporated into the structures. Earth is built up around the base to prevent water running in when it rains. I have also seen plastic sheets used as lining material. The area around the camp is cleared. This is a practical consideration; it prevents the entry of snakes (for which the Warlpiri have a deep respect, if not fear) and harmful insects, and since fires are still used for cooking and for warmth, the removal of grass is essential if there is to be no fire hazard. Living is done on the ground, and since Yuendumu abounds with prickly groundcover, removal of vegetation is essential for comfort. An unobstructed view of one's surroundings is also deemed desirable, given the Warlpiri distrust of ghosts, kurdaitjas and homicidal (or at least threatening) drunks. The west camp has no shade at all; the east camp is interspersed with clumps of mulga. I am not sure how long these trees will last - the east camp has not been established as long as the west camp - in the face of a demand for firewood and building materials. These two humpy camps have only had water piped to the sites since about the end of 1977. There are no toilet or ablution facilities in the camps. I quote from the hygiene report by Rallings:

'... in Manja camp there are over 130 people, which is more than the total European population, but there are only about 10 taps. Europeans at Yuendumu have over 2 taps per head of population. If we group people by proximity to taps, we find that the situation at Manja camp is:

- tap 1: 4 adults within 20 yards
- tap 2: 4 adults and 6 children within 20 yards
- tap 3: 12 adults and 8 children between 50 and 100 yards away
- tap 4: 22 adults and 13 children between 20 and 50 yards away
- tap 5: 20 adults and 26 children between 50 and 100 yards away
- tap 6: 19 adults and 17 children within 20 yards

The nearest amenity block is over 200 yards away in Janganpa camp....'

and again:

'....in the Ngangini camp there are 49 adults and 37 children within 20 yards of one tap, and 19 adults and 17 children living over 100 yards from the nearest tap. The nearest toilet is over 200 yards away in Purlapa camp.'

There are toilet and ablution amenities interspersed among the Stage 1 houses, but the toilets are often blocked and overflowing (sometimes because there are blockages between the toilet and the septic tank), and the showers are frequently not working.

There are three further camps, based on clumps of housing. Warlpiri people have been allocated 26 houses and 6 flats, and 7 more houses are to be finished before Christmas. One such camp is to the northwest, called Wakurlpu (after a hill nearby to the north), another between the hospital and the church is called Purlapa (because it is close to the church corroboree ground), and one to the southeast, Janganpa (a possum dreaming to the southeast). The Housing Association has started extending and renovating Stage 1 houses, providing kitchens and toilet/bathrooms. Electricity is not available to all the houses yet. Living is still done at ground level and fires are still used for warmth and for cooking; people frequently sleep outside the houses, next to fires. In speaking with me, some people expressed a preference for humpies, mostly because of their warmth, especially with regard to the ground being warmer than concrete. The YMCA emphasises outdoor activities in winter because it is too cold inside their building.

The people who live in houses spend a great deal of time with their relatives who live in humpies, and vice versa - especially for purposes of using washing machines and showers. A like of company is very pronounced among the Warlpiri - for example, one

person allocated a renovated Stage 1 house in an area away from his family found it was "too lonely" and spent a great deal of his time in another camp; sometimes he persuaded his relatives to shift to his camp.

Mobility between the camps is very high. Some people have moved camps twice between August and November because of deaths. Visiting and friendship may also motivate people to spend much time away from their 'home' camp. Young unmarried men may also shift camps, living off one relative, then another. When a person runs out of money, he may move in with relatives until his financial situation improves. A man's family may move in with in-laws while the man is away from Yuendumu for any time. This shifting of camps means that by the end of the year representatives on the Yuendumu Council may no longer be living in the camp they represent.

All the town roads are dirt, potholed and in places very sandy. The Council trucks fill in holes and grade the worst spots, but this is of necessity a never-ending process. Any rain puts the roads in a terrible condition, and continual upgrading of facilities (new water pipes were being laid in July and August; new sewage pipes were being installed in November) makes attempts at permanent improvements of the roads a waste of time.

The camps are frequented by large numbers of dogs, some with appalling sores or wounds. They are not treated with much visible affection; physical and verbal abuse is often directed at them. They are allowed to wander at will - there are frequently large numbers in church. Apart from the health problem that they pose - they are frequently seen eating from the same vessel that people then eat from, with no intermediate washing, and the fact that there is no incidence of hydatids is fortunate - they are a general nuisance. There are no fat dogs at Yuendumu. No food can be left where they are likely to reach it and even meat on a fire must be attended. This does have the advantage however that there is no food rubbish left around the camps because the dogs eat it all, but the other side of this coin is that the dogs tip over the rubbish drums and scatter the non-edible rubbish in their efforts to obtain scraps. Thus even a regular emptying of the rubbish drums does not guarantee a rubbish-free settlement.



PLATE I: MANJA CAMP



PLATE II: NGAGNINI CAMP



PLATE III: NGAGNINI CAMP



PLATE IV: UNOCCUPIED STAGE 1 HOUSE: concrete floor, corrugated iron roof, cinder block walls, fireplace, 1 tap outside.



PLATE V: PURLAPA CAMP: OCCUPIED STAGE 1 HOUSE.



PLATE VI: WAKURLPU CAMP: IMPROVED STAGE 1 HOUSE:
2 bedrooms, kitchen (with facilities),
bathroom.



PLATE VII: MAIN ROAD OF YUENDUMU TWO DAYS AFTER HEAVY RAIN

Because of ghosts and other evil beings, Warlpiris fear the dark, and this is one reason for the large number of camp dogs; they are reputed to keep all these malicious night-time visitors away, or at least warn the people of their presence. And they certainly do bark and carry on when a stranger enters the camp area. When a family keeps a sick relative company in hospital overnight they immediately lock all doors once the European staff has left. This seems strange when a humpy cannot be locked at all, but it should be remembered that dogs are not allowed in the clinic.

Dogs are also useful for keeping you warm. On cold nights the dog that snuggles close to you is welcomed, but the transmission of disease from dogs worries the white authorities, and the Warlpiris acknowledge this. But they would not put the dogs down, no matter how bad their state, without white pressure, although when the dogs die they are merely thrown on the rubbish truck. After a visit by the N.T. Cabinet which expressed disapproval of the camp dogs, the Council next day ordered that the worst dogs were to be collected and taken to the dump to be shot. A small number (considering the number of dogs there are at Yuendumu) were taken off, but the person in charge of the task later expressed sorrow for what he had had to do. He could understand the reason for it, and also understood perfectly the nature of disease transmission, but the unhappiness caused to people whose dogs he had taken - especially old ladies, who cried - had distressed him.

Dogs are not taken on hunting trips, although they were an important component of hunting equipment in the past (see, for example, Cleland). There are dogs at the outstations however, and people moving out to them take their dogs along.

To the average European eye, Yuendumu is squalid, delapidated and dusty - or muddy, if there has been rain. Rubbish seems to be ubiquitous. Health seems appalling. Yet the place has a certain charm and happy quality about it. The rubbish problem seems probably worse than it actually is in the eyes of someone like me (although it does also seem to bother some Warlpiris), because what looks like a pile of rubbish to me is home and a humpy to a Warlpiri. Likewise, an old tin can is scrap to me but a useful container, or billy to a Warlpiri.

Yuendumu morale seems to be very high and the mood is cheerful; although this is a subjective impression, it is reinforced by statements from visitors from other settlements, and also when I compare Yuendumu today with the mood in 1974 on a very brief visit; the physical environment has changed little (more buildings, chiefly), but the psychic environment seems to have changed considerably.

YUENDUMU -
ADMINISTRATION

The Department of Aboriginal Affairs moved out of Yuendumu last year, and the running of the settlement has been handed over to the Yuendumu Community Council.

The Community Adviser moved out in June 1978 and the position was given to a Warlpiri. The only DAA employee left is the manager of the Cattle Project, and this is in the process of becoming an independent Warlpiri Company (The Ngarlikirlangu Cattle Company). With the responsibility of running the settlement there seems to have come to the Warlpiris great confidence in being able to manage their own affairs. Europeans often grumble about the bad side of things, but in talking to Warlpiris there is much ground for optimism. Between my two visits this year the Municipal Officer, a European, had resigned and the job of seeing that the town services continued to function was given to a Warlpiri; I heard no complaints and plenty of compliments about how the job was being carried out.

The running of Yuendumu has been modified this year to fit in with the structure of the camps. In July there was talk of dividing Yuendumu into seven camp areas, with each camp to be responsible for services to that area, namely rubbish collection, firewood collection, and maintaining the cleanliness of the site and ablution blocks (if any). This division was effected and was in operation at my return in November, although the original plan had been modified to incorporate five camp areas and a town gang. Each camp area had a tractor and trailer for taking rubbish to the dump and for bringing in firewood, with designated ganger, driver and back-up driver, and a team of camp cleaners. The system seems to be working well, and while I heard complaints during my first visit about certain camps being missed out on the firewood run, for example, I heard no such complaints during my second stay. The town gang is responsible for such things as

attempting to maintain the sewage system, repairing leaks in the water system, maintaining the air strip and bore, and so on.

WARLPIRI-EUROPEAN
ADJUSTMENTS

The Council has European employees, but they are working for the Council and have no overseer role. If these employees prove to be unsatisfactory they can be removed (and not sideways within the DAA to somewhere else).

If the Warlpiri are worthy of several theses, the Europeans at Yuendumu deserve at least one (and so does the incessant stream of visitors). Relations between Warlpiris and Europeans seem to be respectful and affectionate. If the Warlpiri way is different, it is in no way thought to be inferior, and thus accommodation is made for such things as absences because of mourning or because boys are being secluded prior to initiation. There is no sense of 'separateness'; parties (of which there were many) were mixed, as were all community activities such as sports or dances. There are aspects of the European life-style that the Warlpiris wish to adopt or adapt and profit from, and the fact that they are now able to determine strategies for themselves rather than being ignored or patronised seems to be making for a happy community. That this is so, and that Warlpiris and Europeans get along is evidenced by the amount of mutual teasing that goes on. The two spheres where one might expect conflict, from accounts of settlements elsewhere (e.g. Tonkinson 1974), are the church and the police station. At Yuendumu I heard much praise of the pastor and the policemen, and never a bad word; these people take Warlpiri customs into account and minimise culture clash. They are also learning Warlpiri.

Nevertheless, since there are few facilities to educate white people in Aboriginal ways, a European at Yuendumu has much to learn, not least of which are Warlpiri social graces. Warlpiri politeness does not help the errant white person to realise the *faux pas* he or she may have made. For example, on the first morning of the Yuendumu Sports Weekend, a large crowd of people (about 80 adults) had gathered to perform mourning rites beside the Men's Museum on the main road to Alice Springs, at a time when there was a lot of traffic entering and leaving the settlement. In the course of the rites, people crossed the road or met in the centre, embracing and kneeling. All cars driven by Aborigines approaching this area would slow down,

and when they saw what was going on they would stop and turn around to find another track to their destination. Cars driven by Europeans would drive straight through; they were not being wilful - although one could criticize some of them for driving at high speeds over gravel through a crowd of people - but they were inexcusably ignorant. Imagine if, in a place like Alice Springs, a car full of Aborigines interrupted a funeral procession. And yet the continual breaking of rules by white people must be a source of irritation, if not worse, to Aborigines. Even if white people are not expected to adhere to kinship avoidance rules, or to refrain from uttering the name of a dead person, they often place Warlpiris in positions where they are obliged to ignore taboos.

CHANGES IN WARLPIRI LIFE-STYLE

There have been many changes in the Warlpiri life-style. (I am not inferring that there were none prior to European contact). The greatest change is that the Warlpiri are no longer nomadic, though they are still hunters; people are still skilled in finding food and enjoy hunting trips immensely. Previously, they would have moved from area to area, waterhole to waterhole, as the necessity or occasion arose. The current sedentary life-style means that the game around Yuendumu is depleted. It also means that more people are gathered in one area than was usual in nomadic times, other than when ceremonies were being performed. Previously, groups of 10 to 40 would have constituted the basic hunting group; the population of Yuendumu today is approximately 1,200.

With the crowding have come other problems. The most noticeable is that of disease and infection. Almost all children have sores on their bodies and have runny noses. Scabies and lice are prevalent. An eye treatment program is being implemented.

With an increased, sedentary population have also come psychological problems. There is cause for tension in not being able to identify with a basic unit. "Yuendumu is too big" is a comment heard frequently when talking about outstations. Illicit love affairs are also possible. When asking the cause of a fight, the invariable reply was "boyfriend trouble" or "girlfriends".

ALCOHOL

With the tension comes alcohol and fights ensue in the camps, although Yuendumu is officially dry. A permit is required to bring alcohol on to the settlement; this was administered previously by the DAA, but is now dealt with by the Council. (In all the comments that follow a certain perspective must be kept in mind. Alcohol is probably just as big a problem in a European community when one takes into account road accidents, loss of working hours, battered wives and children, loss of self-respect...) The women come off worst in the camp fights. A Warlpiri man (who drank himself) said that drink was a problem because the women suffer. Women can move to the widows' camp to avoid drunken husbands, or they can move in with relatives. Complaints were also made to me by people who did not suffer directly from drunken fights, but said that they and their children could not sleep because of the noise. Among the teetotal group tension is plainly visible when there are drunks around. People in general censured drunkenness, although I am not sure if it was for my benefit or not. Several men told me that they once drank ("I was brought up that way") but had given it up; at least two of these men I later saw drunk. The police told me that as many men as women will be up at the station complaining about the behaviour of a drunk, but the next night it is quite possible for one of those very men to get drunk and be the source of complaints.

Few women drink. The lowest number given was four; generally the figure was half a dozen to ten. Twenty was the highest number (these figures were obtained from Warlpiris).

Although drink is seen as the biggest problem in the settlement (by Warlpiris at least - Europeans tend to couple drink with the lack of employment opportunities as major problems), drunks are not very visible, and the ones I saw were in no way threatening, but on the contrary often apologised for their state and explained that they had been "too worried". With others a certain frustration became evident after they had become mildly drunk, and these people tended to express anger at various facets of life at Yuendumu, usually expressed against a department of the government, but sometimes against European individuals. Response to ribbing was not increased anger (for sometimes the assertions made were absurd), but a turning of the

situation into a bitter joke. For example, a man who was annoyed with the Department of Education, in some ways justifiably and in others not, assumed the character of a professor and delivered a lecture on the evils of the Department, while his brother interrupted the 'broadcast' with advertisements for beer. If the frustrations well up after mild drinking, I am not surprised that drinking continues until they are forgotten; some of those who are put in positions of responsibility with attendant pressure from all sides told me they drank to help make them feel they could cope. A couple of people even said they thought they were getting ulcers from the pressure of work.

There is currently a debate about whether Yuendumu should have a wet canteen, with a limited number of beers per individual per day. Those in favour seem to want to promote drinking as a social phenomenon, where eating and drinking go on together. Those against point to the fact that the police station was built in 1974 as a direct community response to violence which had broken out as a result of heavy drinking sprees. In the meantime, moves are made to make sure that drunks do not cause disturbance in the camps; to this end, the Council waits by the boundary gate and stops cars coming in at weekends. The drunks are made to get out and sober up before continuing to the settlement, although cynics say (perhaps jealously) that the Council members are doing this to get their share of grog.

In contrast, there is no petrol sniffing at Yuendumu. Petrol sniffing is universally thought to be a bad thing. The practice was reportedly once introduced from Papunya, but adults took a very strong stand and prevented the habit from taking hold. This shows that adults, and in particular the Council, clearly have authority that can affect community behaviour.

II

ECONOMY

The township of Yuendumu exists because in 1946 it was convenient that the Aborigines who had congregated at The Granites should be moved there. There is no economic reason for it to exist and virtually nothing to establish European-style industries for cash income. Those very factors which made the Warlpiri fortunate in that there was really nothing in their country that the white man might want to exploit, other than minerals - and hence the Warlpiri continued into this century with their culture intact - now makes it difficult for them to enter the white economy on 'respectable' terms. And yet, the Warlpiri are now firmly enmeshed in the white economy and do not wish to remove themselves from it, for they see certain aspects of white material goods (almost certainly few of their psychic goods) as desirable.

The Warlpiris' circumstances have also changed so that a nomadic existence is impossible in some cases (their land has been turned over to pastoral leases) or undesirable (because, for example, they wish to have their children educated). I am sure that if they had to return to a nomadic existence they could still survive (the younger generation perhaps with a little help from their elders), as long as hunting trips continue to be a source of pleasure, and hence as frequent as they can make possible.

TRADITIONAL ECONOMY

In their traditional system the basic productive unit was the family. The man was responsible for procuring large game (kangaroos, emus etc.), and his wife or wives for the daily procurement of vegetable foods. Both men and women hunt for such items as goannas. The women were the dependable sources of food; men may or may not have returned from a hunt with game, depending on their luck. Accumulation of food or other goods did not occur; the former would perish, and the latter were an encumbrance to the traveller. The less one had to carry the freer one was to move in search of food, and this point will also serve to explain a preference for a multi-purpose tool over a collection of

specialised ones (see Tonkinson 1978, pp.31-33). Thus, in their terms, minimising energy expenditure in the search for food was their goal, and so when it came to carrying materials, a 'good' is something you need less of, rather than more.

Other requirements were for materials for shelter, and firewood. A camping site would be chosen where both would be available. In this case a 'good' is a place where there is plenty of wood - the more such places there were, the freer the Warlpiri was to travel. The same applied to food and water, in the sense of availability, though not in the sense of personal accumulation. This is exactly opposite to the Western view where personal possession of large resource deposits is desirable - from the individual's point of view - because through that ownership one can have what one wants. Or alternatively, one can say that under the traditional system, the satisfaction/saturation point is reached very quickly. Social discount and interest rates are difficult to determine anyway, but are even more so as a point of saturation is quickly reached and what one forgoes now rots and cannot be used in the future, i.e. the social discount rate is necessarily 100 per cent when there is no possibility of giving things up. But if you are quickly satiated, you are not giving up anything by allowing others to have what is left over. This may have implications for time orientation, since one might conclude that in certain circumstances the Warlpiris are present-orientated.

'Goods' were not something that had to be worked for, except in a ritual sense. Food and water were provided by the land, and that the land did so depended on certain increase rituals being performed, and not in physical input. Physical exertion was required only in removing these things from the land. The performance of the rituals was/is not regarded as a burden; rather, it forms part of the rich associations between man and nature and the Dreamtime.

Land is the ultimate resource, providing all material goods and psychic goods as well. Provision of goods is almost instant, though some foods require preparation in grinding and/or cooking, and tools have to be fashioned. Land is in this sense also a source of capital - what it provides can be invested in securing social bonds so that in times of shortage in one's own area one can call on those to whom one has previously given. The land and Warlpiri society together

are the embodiment of the Law, reflecting events and directions originating in the Dreamtime. The land has to be cared for, and for this purpose it is "owned". Land ownership is determined patrilineally, as was determined in the Dreamtime, and thus it cannot be transferred, sold or otherwise negotiated. Even land acquired by a pastoral leaseholder is still 'owned' by the various groupings although they may be prevented from visiting and caring for their land. For example, Pikilyi (Vaughan Springs) is still definitely owned by Japangardi/Japanangka. In one demonstration of hostility to Europeans, one young man expressed dislike for a certain pastoralist "because he won't share the land with us". But note the verb chosen, and the lack of an 'either-or' proposed ownership.

In the event of a clan dying out, there are procedures for the 'inheritance' of that tract of land by closely linked people.

In spite of this 'ownership' the land is not viewed as being exclusive property. Firstly, entry must be granted to the guardians (from the opposite patrimoiety to the owners - See Appendix B) who are supposed to see that the land is in fact cared for - they are the "bosses" of the land - and the sacred sites well-maintained. Because females also own the land and may wish to live there, or at least visit, then their spouses will accompany them. Sociability will allow for visits of others - forging bonds of friendship is essential, for if times are bad then one can count on the hospitality of those having better times.

In the traditional economy there is no problem with a supply of labour: each adult is self-sufficient. Children may not be, but they are an investment. Old people wielded power in that they were the repository of ritual wealth, and in addition ties of affection ensured that no old person went without. Reciprocity between man and wife in the collection of food stuffs led to a specialisation of sorts, though each could survive independently if need be (male children accompany their mothers and learn about seeds, grubs etc. and how to procure them - elderly men join their wives in hunting for witchetty grubs sometimes - and women frequently procure lizards as a meat source. Specialisation had led to an efficient combination of types of food procurement, but not so far that one half could not exist without the other. Men might sometimes cooperate in hunting, generally

through friendship ties.

In the original economic system there were evidently forms of exchange. Young men caught game and fed older men in return for ritual knowledge. A young man similarly caught game and fed his parents-in-law for having a daughter bestowed on him. A daughter was bestowed on a young man by his circumciser in compensation for having killed him ritually. In this sense, custom, the legal system, and economics are intertwined. Other factors also derive from this system: for example, since there are few material goods in this society, recompense to offended persons cannot be material, but is usually gained by causing injury (or death) to the offender.

A consequence of a preference for mobility is that there is little trade carried out with other people. Ochre was traded, as were pitjuri and dentalium shells, but the major exchange was in ceremonies, and this still continues today. A nomadic existence did not make for a continued exploitation of a resource, nor for the development and transport of many goods. Multi-purpose articles of easy manufacture, at whatever locality one happened to be at, means a low-profile technology and no market.

Security thus had two bases in traditional society:

(a) maintaining social bonds for security when there were hard times, and (b) caring for the land and performing increase ceremonies to ensure plentiful food and water. Accumulation of goods and/or land, and control over a labour source had no place in the traditional economy. The individual acquired ritual knowledge, and, of course, hunting techniques, as he or she grew to adulthood.

ECONOMIC
CHARACTERISTICS
OF YUENDUMU

In my view few of the traditional economic characteristics have changed, although the Warlpiri are now firmly enmeshed in the white economy. Security is still seen to lie in social networks. Relatives can be relied upon to provide food when it is needed, as well as other goods. The delay in receiving social security payments (pensions, unemployment benefits, child endowment) can be so long that when the first cheque comes it can be for as much as \$1,500. This delay would be

deemed scandalous in our society. How is the individual to survive while he waits for his money? The Warlpiri view this as a problem, but it is less pressing, as one can count on relatives, even if one has to put them under duress. Incidents and casual conversations revealed countless examples of people asking relatives to help them out. After an unsuccessful hunt, for example, a family called in on the husband's family for food; a woman whose husband was away was supported by her brother-in-law.

The purchasable goods which are most desired by Warlpiris are: cars and trucks, food (especially flour, sugar and tea), clothing, rifles, tents and housing, showers, washing machines, mattresses, blankets and pillows, billycans, playing cards, tobacco, cassette players and cassettes; and certain sectors have individual needs, for example the rock band wants instruments, the sportsmen want sporting equipment, some women want sewing machines, and some (ex)stockmen want horses, saddles, fencing equipment and possibly chainsaws.

Lest people should believe that the Warlpiri are succumbing to western goods and all that that entails, I would like to comment on the use Warlpiris put these goods to:

FOOD. The Warlpiri still enjoy hunting trips, and, with the exception of a few goods I am sure that hunting produce would be their preferred diet. (Some sophisticates like Worcestershire sauce on their kangaroo). Meat is bought in large quantities, as are flour, sugar, and tea. Vegetables (potatoes, onions, cauliflower, cabbage...) and fruit find a ready market, but these foodstuffs are mostly eaten in traditional fashion or in modified forms of western cuisine.

Flour is mixed with water and cooked as damper in the ashes of a fire. Warlpiri women used to grind seeds and mix this flour to make a paste which was then cooked in the same way, baked in the ashes. Biscuits and bread are also popular, and might count as 'instant damper'.

Meat is thrown on a fire and grilled in the ashes. A branch is used to turn it over.

Vegetables are boiled in a billycan over the fire (yams are similarly cooked), or alternatively they may be cooked in the

ashes, the traditional method.

Stews are popular, (as is tinned Irish stew). The recipe: fill a large billycan with water, add peeled onions and potatoes and chunks of frozen meat (chopped up with an axe). Tip in the contents of two packets of instant onion soup packets. Eat with damper, wash down with tea.

Other foods which are popular are fizzy drinks, sweets and chips - but children seem to buy bananas or apples just as readily. Sometimes people who came visiting would refuse cake with tea or coffee on the grounds that it was "too sweet".

It will be seen then that food preference is not too far removed from traditional patterns. The method of preparation is generally traditional - fire is the cooking medium; I once had pointed out to me a damper which had been cooked in an oven - this was obviously thought to be noteworthy.

IMPLEMENTS. Billycans are used not only for cooking, as outlined above, but also as scoops when digging and as general containers, for example for grubs when hunting - in other words, they are 'coolamons'. Similarly, crowbars are used instead of digging sticks in some cases. Axes bought in the store are more efficient than stone axes, and in addition they involve no manufacturing time. They are used for chopping down trees for boomerangs, as wedges, for peeling bark off trees, and for chopping up frozen meat. Rifles have taken the place of spears; they are supposed to be more efficient, but having seen them in use, I sometimes wonder.

Although some people have expressed worries that a use of modern weapons may upset the ecosystem, I believe that this is less likely than disturbances caused by cattle. The Warlpiri do not shoot for 'sport', they kill for food, and even then they mix sorrow with the joy of a catch (as two men were killing a pirementi (a large Goanna), a third approached me with shakes of the head and said "poor bugger"). For a list of game procured from my vehicle, see Table 1.

HOUSING. Houses are used as shelter from the rain and wind (the latter cold or dusty), for storage of belongings, and for security at night. Otherwise houses are used in a 'Warlpiri' way, with most living

Abbreviations: m - adult male, f - adult female, ch - children

DATE 1978	DIRECTION	MILEAGE	WARLPIRIS PRESENT	FOOD BROUGHT	RIFLES	SEEN	GAME	SHOT	OTHER ITEMS PROCURED	PRIMARILY A HUNTING TRIP?
5/7	North Mission Creek, south along Yuendumu boundary; back along beef road.	58km	1m 1f 4ch	-	[1]	4 kangaroos	-	-	-	Yes **
12/7	Down Vaughan Springs turnoff and back	63km	7f 4ch	tea, sugar, damper, fizzy drinks, biscuits, butter, sardines	-	5 kangaroos	-	-	3 goannas 2 cans witchetties	Yes
13/7	Yarripilangu along Vaughan Springs Road, south to New Haven Homestead, east to range, north to pitjuri caves and back	285km	3m 6f 5ch	biscuits, fizzy drinks, damper, tinned corned beef	1	2 kangaroos	-	-	2 bags pitjuri 1 dozen yams	No
15/7	West	c. 12km	2m	-	-	-	-	-	firewood	[firewood trip]
16/7	Mt. Denison road and back	24km	6f 5ch	bread, cooked kangaroo	-	-	-	-	c. 4 doz. witchetties c. 8 doz. honey ants	Yes
17/7	4-mile bore and back	16km	2m 3ch	-	-	-	-	-	firewood	[firewood trip]
18/7	Nyirpi and back, via Vaughan Springs	280km	[2]	-	[3]	2 kangaroos	1 kangaroo	-	-	No **
22/7	South to Kinki's Cave then north to Wakuripu and back	72km	1m	-	-	-	-	-	-	[Sightseeing trip]
24/7	Marimanu	144km	[4]	[5]	1	1 emu 1 bush turkey 5 kangaroos	-	-	-	No **
26/7	Chilla Well, then NW past Wildcat Bore and return	c. 300km	1m	-	1	-	-	-	-	No **
27/7	Marimanu	124km	2m	-	[6]	5 kangaroos 1 euro	-	-	-	No **
29/7	S.E.	75km	5m 7f 2ch	damper, fizzy drinks	1	-	-	-	7-8 doz. witchetties 13 doz. honey ants 3 goannas wood for 2 boomerangs bush bananas	Yes
30/7	Towards Ngarlikirangu and back	70km	4m	bread, cooked meat, raw meat, fruit, fizzy drinks	1	2 kangaroos 1 euro	-	-	-	No **

JOURNEYS OUT OF YUENDUMU

TABLE 1.

DATE 1978	DIRECTION	MILEAGE	WARRIPIRI'S PRESENT	FOOD BROUGHT	RIFLES	SEEN	GAME	SHOT	OTHER ITEMS PROCURED	PRIMARILY A HUNTING TRIP?
6/11	Marimanu	148km	8m		1	7 kangaroos 1 pirenti			2 goannas wood for boomerangs (12 trees) acacia sp. beans, (2 headscarfs full) 1 witchetty grub	No
7/11	Keridi bore & back	54km	1m 7f 3ch		-	-			1 blanketful of acacia sp. beans	Trip specifically to gather beans
8/11	Yulumu cave & back	69km	3m		2	8 kangaroos 4 rabbits	2 kangaroos + joey 1 rabbit		-	Yes **
11/11	Yarripilangu, south from Wanapi, back via Central Mt. Wedge	235km	4m 3f [7] 3ch	Tea, biscuits, tinned corn beef, bread, fizzy drinks [8]	2	10 kangaroos 1 bush turkey	2 kangaroos		2 goannas	No
12/11	Keridi bore & back	48km	1m		1	-			-	No **
13/11	Keridi bore & back	48km	1m		1	-			-	No **
13/11	N.E.	31km	6f 7ch		-	-			few witchetty grubs 1 goanna few bush tomatoes 2 bush bananas	Yes
14/11	East to boundary fence	c. 40km	4f 2ch		-	-			1 goanna 3 doz. honey ants 2 witchetty grubs	Yes
15/11	Juripungu	183km	1m 7f 7ch	Bread, fruit and fruit drinks [9]	-	1 bush turkey			[9]	No
16/11	S.E.	94km	3m 4f 3ch		1	1 kangaroo			-	Yes
17-18/11	Nyirripi via Vaughan Springs, back via Mt. Doreen	311km	2m 3f 7ch	Tea, sugar and Worcestershire Sauce, tinned Irish stew	2	1 kangaroo 1 bush turkey	1 bush turkey		3 pigeons	No
19/11	Keridi bore & back	50km	10f 13ch	Tea, sugar & bread	-	-			3 goannas 2 frogs	Yes

NOTES:

[1] but only small number of bullets.
 [2] 1 man on outward journey; 12 adults, 6 children on return journey, more people in second car.
 [3] shared between 2 vehicles.
 [4] 8 men on outward journey, 4 on return.
 [5] food taken for people left behind.

[6] rifle on return journey only; (6 kangaroos seen on outward journey).
 [7] 1 man and 1 woman remained at Yarripilangu.
 [8] plus food supplies for those left behind.
 [9] Cooked bullock and damper were brought back to Yuendumu from Juripungu.
 ** All hunting done from vehicle.

JOURNEYS OUT OF YUENDUMU
TABLE 1 (cont'd).

still being done outside - people build fires outside and sometimes sleep on the ground. One type of housing consists of two sheltered areas with a courtyard between; most living is done in this courtyard with a windbreak erected and a fire going constantly. Tarpaulins are used for extra shelter, thrown over the framework of a humpy.

CLOTHING. Non-traditional, but sex distinctions are made. One man showed consternation when an Indian cheese-cloth shirt he was wearing was labelled women's clothing. Women always wear skirts, never trousers. Even the women's basketball team wore knee-length skirts, not shorts.

Blankets are the all-purpose garment. They are used instead of coats when the weather is cold, they are pulled over the head to keep off the rain, children are wrapped in them, sleeping children can be placed on them, they are used as cushions for rides in the back of trucks over bumpy roads, they are used for holding goods, and, as a cover for sleeping...

TOBACCO. The incidence of smoking seems to be fairly high among men (very few women appear to smoke), though they seem to be able to go without for fairly long periods if they have none and have no money. Native tobacco is still extensively used, especially among women, and cigarettes are often dismembered because the tobacco is frequently chewed rather than smoked. (The wad is held behind the ear when not being chewed).

From the above samples it can be seen that although there are changes, Warlpiris use western goods as extensions of their traditional behaviour. In these comments I do not wish to suggest that traditional habits are so ingrained that the Warlpiris are stuck in an attitudinal rut; rather, I am pointing out a continuity of behaviour which has persisted in spite of or even because of modern pressures. There still seems to be a marked preference for multi-use utensils, e.g. blankets, billycans, axes.... Such a preference may not only be reflecting traditional multi-purpose objects, but may also reflect the current shortage of money in circulation. If you can only afford one implement, it might as well be one which can serve in several ways.

The use of these objects is probably also traditional:



PLATE VIII: WOMEN'S
HUNTING IMPLEMENTS:
Billycan & crowbar.

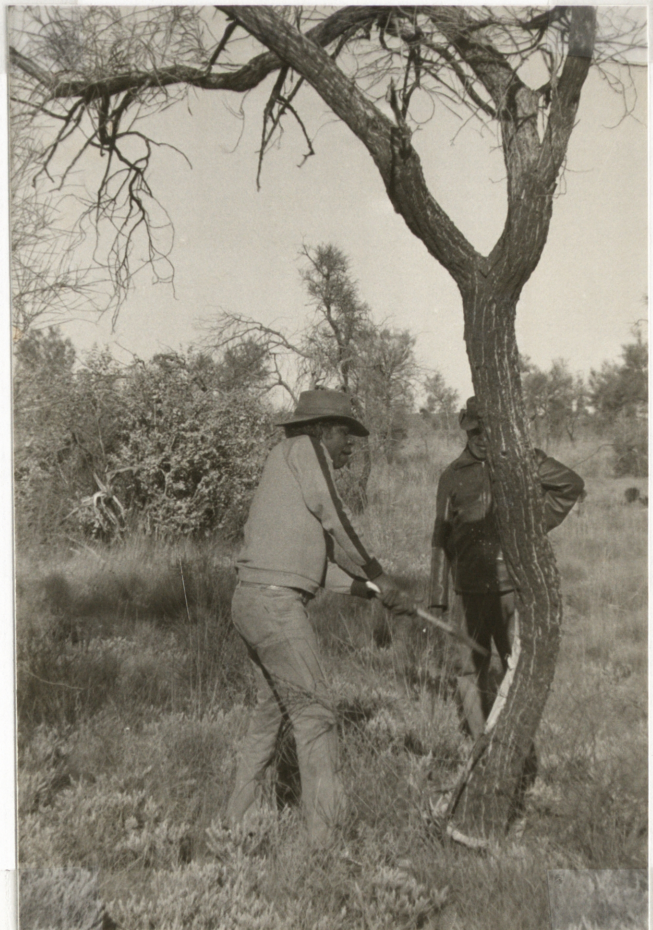


PLATE IX: CHOPPING
TREE FOR BOOMERANGS

there seems to be little accumulation of goods; they are used until worn out, then thrown away. This is often to the despair of Europeans, who care for their material goods in such a way as to make them last. A Warlpiri uses his goods, partly because of non-conservative attitudes, and also because through using it he is reinforcing his social bonds where his security is seen to be. This is most evident in the matter of cars. These are used to visit relatives, especially ones in hospital and away from family, for hunting trips, and of course, for flagon runs. The mechanic at Yuendumu estimates that the average life span of a private car owned by Warlpiris at Yuendumu is about 8 weeks (bought second-hand I might add, and bought for between \$700 and \$1000 after freight costs from Adelaide). Of ten cars the mechanic brought up from Adelaide in late August, only one was still working in November.

The punishing treatment of cars is coupled with the most ingenious mechanical know-how, and this appears to be part of a great capacity for lateral thinking. This may derive from a tradition of multi-use objects, so that the lack of a particular specialised tool does not thwart the desired end; for example, if you have a flat tyre and a broken jack, dig a hole under the wheel to change it.

This disregard for material goods in the sense of maintenance is often seen by Europeans as a block to the entry of Yuendumu to a western economy; this block in European-Warlpiri interaction generally arises when it comes to money matters. A frequent complaint I heard from Warlpiris was the Europeans are too concerned with money; when I once asked a friend who went on a drinking spree to Rabbit Flat with no money if he had been able to borrow money from others, he indignantly replied that Aborigines do not owe money - to other Aborigines, that is. Every penny I have ever lent to Aborigines has always been repaid to me, and at the earliest opportunity available.

All the western goods the Warlpiri deem desirable must be procured from Alice Springs, if not further, e.g. Adelaide. There is almost nothing to generate money at Yuendumu itself, and so there is a great 'balance of payments' problem (this may be the Northern Territory economy in microcosm). The two concerns which might bring money into Yuendumu are the Yuendumu Mining Company and the Ngalikirlangu Cattle Company. The former makes money by the sale of leases and doing

contractual work for exploration companies, for example; bulldozing road to the mining campsites. The Company is heavily dependent upon DAA grants, and is currently in debt. The only vehicle they have working at the moment is the bulldozer - their tip truck tipped over, and the frontend loader gave up. Some money still comes in through the sale of wolfram, and another money spinner is gravel, but the hopes held for copper mining turned out to be without an economic base (amongst other things, the cost of transport of sulphuric acid to Yuendumu put the price up too high).

The Mining Company is keeping itself solvent by operating a store, in the face of opposition from the DAA. The store sells food, petrol, tobacco and spare parts for cars (the latter are not sold at the Social Club store). It has recently started a tyre-repair service. The two stores are not in competition; the Mining Company store provides a complementary service to the Social Club. In addition to selling and repairing cars, the store itself opens only when the Social Club store is closed. The need for it can be judged by the number who use it, and it should also be remembered that since few people have refrigerators, and distances between store and camp can be a kilometre (and hence large quantities are difficult to carry, especially if you are already carrying a baby), a gap in shopping hours from Saturday morning to Monday morning can be rather long for Warlpiri households. Such considerations however are not taken into account by the DAA, who hold that a Mining Company should not be a store if it is getting taxpayers' money. (In any case, if there was no store, there would be no Mining Company).

The Cattle Company is in limbo. In July it was waiting to hear the result of an application to the DAA for \$120,000; when I returned in November they were still waiting. In the meantime the title to Yuendumu had been transferred to the Warlpiri people but no decision was made on whether the cattle, previously owned by DAA under the cattle project, should also be handed over to the Warlpiris, or be moved off and sold, or whether the Cattle Company should buy the cattle (funds???) Pending clarification of ownership branding had been delayed, and there were threats of charging the government agistment fees.

SOURCES OF INCOME

Apart from these two 'independent' companies, the DAA also funds salaries and equipment for the Yuendumu Community Council, which is much like a local government council. (Last year it allotted c.\$165,000). The DAA also funds the Housing Association and the YMCA. Additional money comes in from other Government departments such as Education and Health for the facilities they run at Yuendumu, and money also comes in from the Department of Social Security - this pays individuals, not associations, through pensions (old age, invalid's, widow's), the supporting mother's benefits, unemployment benefits and child endowment. For a list of Social Security payments, see Table 2.

All these payments are monies that anybody in Australia is entitled to under the same conditions; they are not payments that only Aborigines are entitled to.

The Warlpiris produce no articles for the European (white) market other than artifacts or paintings, and thus they could only procure an income by being a labour force. The Yuendumu accountant told me that between \$5,000 and \$10,000 a year comes into the community through the sale of artifacts. (When asked about this three months later, he first denied having told me that at all, and when he finally conceded that he probably had and I asked him on what basis he would have made that estimate, his reply was "blowed if I know" - and that is the way research at Yuendumu often goes.)

EMPLOYMENT. As far as labour goes, the employment opportunities on the settlement are few, and the other places one could find work are on cattle stations or at Alice Springs. A N.T. Teachers' Federation Report states that no school-leaver from Yuendumu has found employment in the last two years. (Northern Territory Newsletter, July 1978).

A history of Aboriginal employment on cattle stations is given in Rowley 1978. Cattle stations, through a combination of award wages and a downturn in the cattle industry, have all but dried up as a source of employment for Aborigines. In the 1960's Central Australian Aboriginal labour was used on a seasonal basis in picking fruit in the Riverina. Alice Springs does not appear to be a popular place to live and work; there is certainly no mass migration there. The

SOCIAL SECURITY PAYMENTS TO YUENDUMU, NOVEMBER 1978

	NO.		
Old Age Pension	45	\$4,554.40	
Widow's Pension	15	1,462.80	
Invalid Pension	18	1,877.10	per fortnight
Supporting Mother's Benefit	7	1,013.30	
Unemployment Benefit	62	*	
Child Endowment	93	6,881.00	- per month
Other	10	824.00	- per fortnight

FORTNIGHTLY INCOME: \$13,172.10 ^[1] + U.B.

* Marital status and age of recipients not known. Unemployment benefit for married people: \$171.60 per fortnight; for single people over 18 years: \$102.90 per fortnight; for single people under 18 years: \$72.00 per fortnight. Maximum amount coming into Yuendumu in unemployment benefits (i.e. if all recipients were married) would be \$10,639.20 each fortnight.

[1] adding in half the monthly amount for child endowment.

TABLE 2.

'pulling' factors of Yuendumu may be reinforced by negative feelings about Alice Springs (although there are three more-or-less permanent Warlpiri camps at Alice Springs), since the mood of the town is hostile to Aborigines - they and their camps are seen as a blight on the tourist potential of the area. Those who have travelled widely and have worked elsewhere say they definitely prefer to be at Yuendumu, though that is not to say that they do not want to travel some more.

The number of people employed at Yuendumu in November 1978 is given in Table 3. All but one of the women employed by the Council work as town cleaners; the exception is a typist. The men employed by the Council are either drivers or are in administrative positions. The Yuendumu: Book of the Community of 1977 states that Yuendumu had an estimated workforce of 528, of which 160 were employed.

The amount of money coming into Yuendumu each fortnight in wages and social security payments is calculated to be approximately \$55,000 (Young, *pers.comm.*), though the 'bank' manager at Yuendumu estimated that only between \$20,000 and \$25,000 comes into the bank each fortnight. Taking the population of Yuendumu to be 1,200, the per capita fortnightly income is just under \$48.

A range of possible purchases, with their prices, is given in Table 4. That game is important as a supplement to diet is evidenced by the disappointment shown after unsuccessful hunting trips.

Money always seems to be short. Some people dream vaguely of a miracle that will bring in the cash they wish for - the government is too slow, and too stingy. Gold or oil seem to be the two favourites; no-one mentioned uranium, although the Warlpiris are aware that it has been found in the vicinity. Attitudes to mining and uranium are hard to ascertain; people generally say they don't know anything about it. One person expressed no worries, since "the mining people ask the Warlpiris if it's OK" - I believe he was confusing miners in general with the AFMECO Company which has entered into a partnership with the Yuendumu Mining Company, and indeed one of the clauses in the agreement is that the exploration company should ask whether mining in any area is OK before they start. Another person said mining would be OK if care was taken, and a third said he was very worried about what mining would do to the country (these three opinions were in descending order

PEOPLE EMPLOYED AT YUENDUMU, NOVEMBER 1978

	<u>WARLPIRI</u>		<u>EUROPEAN</u>
	Male	Female	
COUNCIL ^[1]	30	34	4
SCHOOL teachers, bilingual workers	4 F/t 2 P/t 5 cleaners	9 F/t	17
HOUSING ASSOCIATION	12	-	4
SOCIAL CLUB	2	6 (+1) ^[2]	5
HOSPITAL	1 F/t 2 P/t	4 Health Workers ^[3] 1 Cleaner	3
CATTLE COMPANY	12 stockmen	-	1
MINING COMPANY	(2) ^[2]	(2 P/t) ^[2]	2
YMCA	1	1 cleaner	2
POLICE	1 tracker	-	2 ^[4]
OTHER	-	1	2
	<hr/> 68 (+2)	<hr/> 56 (+2)	<hr/> 42
	129 (+4)		

- Notes: [1] Vacancies exist for a mechanic and a plumber.
 [2] People employed, but have not been attending work.
 [3] One further health worker to be appointed.
 [4] Soon to be three.
 F/t Full time.
 P/t Part time.

TABLE 3.

SAMPLE OF
PRICES AT YUENDUMU SOCIAL CLUB STORE

	<u>Nov. 1978</u>	<u>July 1978</u>
Loaf of bread	90c	75c
10 kg. flour	\$4.90	
1 kg. plain flour	63c	62c
1 kg. S.R. flour	65c	62c
1 kg. powdered milk	\$2.90	(300 gr.) 90c
300 gr. tin corn beef	1.10	
250 gr. tea	1.00	
2½ kg. potatoes	1.52	\$1.30
Small can fizzy drink	40c	35c
410 gr. evaporated milk	48-50c	40-42c
425 gr. tinned peaches	55c	53c
meat, rough cuts, per kg.	\$1.60	
orange/apple/banana, ea.	20c	20c
half cauliflower		\$1.90
Billycan	\$4.55	
Enamel mugs, ea.	\$1.20	
Petrol, per litre	26c (30c at Mining Co. store)	25c

Rent: \$20-30 per fortnight (depending on whether electricity connected)

Film Show: \$1 adults, 50c children.

Whole bullock - \$50

TABLE 4.

of age). A fourth said that he probably would be very worried if he knew more about it.

If very little money is generated at Yuendumu, not very much of it circulates either. Money can be distributed to one's relatives as a semi-bound duty, or one can scatter it through gambling-card-playing is the only form that I am aware of, although children play a game called holey which is a variation of marbles, played with coins. The Social Club manages to keep some money at Yuendumu; it runs the store on the profits from the sale of goods. After payment of salaries and other necessities, the money is invested in the community in the form of film projectors, band equipment and so on. It has also funded the Yuendumu Sports Weekend, and it pays for services such as the mail plane which comes in once a week, unless the airstrip is out, and it employs two people to run the bank and the 'post office'.

Otherwise all the money coming in goes straight back into the white economy - paying for the manufacture of goods, the person who delivers them to Yuendumu, and the petrol to get them there. I am sure that a great deal of money is spent each weekend at Alice Springs, Aileron, Rabbit Flat and Glen Helen on the flagon runs, but probably the only way to find out would be to join in these nefarious activities. If a big cheque comes in, perhaps because of a backlog of social security payments owing, then it usually goes straight back to Alice Springs in payment for a car.

Thus it will be seen that all money coming into Yuendumu is from the Government, and it is economically (in our terms) an extremely inefficient community.

I am unable to be very constructive about remedies for the balance of payments problem. A vegetable garden, for example, could at least remove the need for importation of fresh fruit and vegetables into Yuendumu. But a scheme like this would first have to remove the obstacles outlined below, and one would have to be sure that it had solid support from the Warlpiris, otherwise the scheme is doomed. But it could be doomed anyway, if southern suppliers demanded an all-or-nothing contract; they may not wish to bother supplying Yuendumu with smaller (or varying) amounts on a seasonal basis. (An inability to

make sudden contingency plans is reflected in the fact that at the Sports Weekend the Social Club store was unable to meet the demands of the influx of visitors, and ran out of bread and petrol. Fortunately the Mining Company store still had some.)

One mechanism may be to establish industries on the sorts of things that the Warlpiris enjoy doing anyway. The jobs that are popular at Yuendumu are the jobs that give the employee access to a vehicle, those that are involved in things Warlpiri such as the bilingual program, and those that give status. From this it might be possible to establish an 'exclusive' tourist industry; this could include a camping trip, a visit to an interesting place along with stories of its origin or dreaming, and perhaps with food provided in part by hunting. Such a program should involve only small numbers of tourists, not only to prevent spoiling by commercialisation but also to ensure that each tourist is accompanied by a Warlpiri to spot and perhaps procure food. The merit of this scheme is that it would involve a wide age-range; a young person to drive, an old person as boss of the site etc., and men and women would both have to be present for hunting. Different families could be involved for trips to different parts of their country. The disadvantage would be that an organization of this type would have to operate from Alice Springs, given Yuendumu's lack of communication facilities, and would most probably need to be organized by a European (at least for its initial period). It would also have to be extremely well prepared if disgruntled visitors are not to become a problem, and the vehicle would have to be treated in a European way, i.e. kept clean and moderately comfortable and in good running order.

Some Europeans express irritation at the Warlpiris' seeming inability to do things for themselves or their lack of enthusiasm for dealing with problems such as the accumulation of rubbish, or of setting up enterprises. Those who are placed in positions of official authority are often pressured to assume responsibility for extraneous matters which they cannot do completely, for they cannot assume responsibility for certain categories of kin, and in the event that they did undertake to do so, they would develop ulcers within weeks because they cannot devise strategies to shift blame for a lack of success. The Europeans can; as I have said, they can blame the lack

of results on Aboriginal laziness etc. and furthermore, they can always leave Yuendumu. Warlpiri men in positions of responsibility, when drunk, frequently assert that they are going to resign.

The past 'institutional' pattern of Yuendumu is also to blame; for thirty years the Warlpiri have had no real responsibility for the running of their lives. Apathy is an understandable consequence. Before one can plan, one must develop the confidence that the future can be controlled; development strategies did not figure in the past, but these questions become crucial in such matters as establishing markets before one starts production. Since Yuendumu is dependent upon government goodwill, and government allocations are made on a yearly basis, long-term planning becomes difficult and uncertain given a string of broken promises, rejected applications, and long delays in processing applications.

European-style work patterns are a strain for some Warlpiri, either because of fixed hours, or because they bring Warlpiri tenets into conflict with the aims of the white-dominated employment structures. For example, it may bring people together who are not supposed to speak to each other. Or it may be more general than that, and simply make men and women work together when the preference is for a division of labour to be maintained to avoid any suspicion of extra-marital affairs.

A Council member spoke to me openly about finding that role too much on top of the job he had already, and said he would not be standing for the Council next year. I visited an outstation in his company, and away from Yuendumu his tenseness and taciturnity vanished, and he talked animatedly about the country, how he walked over it as a child, his plans for the outstation; other times when he talked animatedly were when he spoke of his plans for the coming Christmas holidays. I am sure that it is no accident that there is no turnover amongst the stockmen; a stockman's way of life is more congenial to the traditional life style than an 8:30 to 4:30 job. People like having a purpose, and are happy with jobs that provide one, but not if it constrains them too much or prevents them doing the kinds of things they like; in these cases they may prefer to employ a European to do what they consider to be tedious jobs. The

young men with no jobs and only a peripheral interest in sport or rock music were the unhappiest individuals I came across at Yuendumu. For example, one youth who was unemployed during my first visit but employed during the second had changed from being gloomy to cheerful, and in the place of apathy was a teasing aggressiveness.

There also seems to be a marked preference for non-specialization; the range of jobs which some people have had is remarkable - one man, still in his twenties, has caught camels in the Western Desert, picked asparagus in Gundagai, worked on various cattle stations, done a mechanics' course, written and illustrated books for the school, made and painted artifacts, done a course in linguistics, accompanied Friends of the Earth on a survey of the Tanami and its wildlife, and in addition, does all the things a Warlpiri man does such as hunting, partaking in ceremonial life, and so on; and he does not seem to be particularly exceptional in this range of experiences.

Specialization, rather than having several people who can do a job, can also lead to other problems; there is one social security officer at Yuendumu only, and his 'mothers-in-law' cannot approach him directly if they have problems with their pensions being delayed.

A factor which makes it difficult to be productive within Yuendumu is the small market, which means that capital-intensive industries make little return on their money. Take for example a mechanical workshop; equipment can be expensive, and because there is only so much that it can be used for it will lie idle most of the time, even if it proves to be very useful when it is used.

Because of the prevailing pattern of relying on kin for mutual aid, there is no scope for establishing small cottage industries. For example, a person who baked bread in large quantities would simply distribute the loaves to relatives, and not sell them. For any enterprise to enter a cash system it must be made into an impersonal company, but there are no traditional guidelines for establishing such bodies, and being unused to a cash economy, often there is no knowledge about how to go about securing loans etc. for equipment. People I spoke to were often very vague about grants of money (this applied to Europeans as well as Warlpiri) and some have very little comprehension about cash other than it being the means by which goods can be procured from the store. Some people ask for a pension cheque every day from

the Social Security Officer. Others abuse him when there is a delay, for being too lazy to make the cheques.

The isolation of Yuendumu is another factor. The settlement is 300 kilometres from Alice Springs over a dirt road. If there is bad weather both the road and the airstrip are out - and the rain need not be local, but 300 kilometres away, to put the road out. There is one radio telephone link which serves other areas as well; one can wait quite a while before the line is clear. Telegrams can only be sent or received while the council offices are open. The Cattle Company has the old DAA radio equipment, and recently the church acquired a radio so that now urgent messages can be sent at weekends. To receive Radio Australia at Yuendumu, one needs a very powerful radio. Yuendumu has no official Post Office; the Social Club arranges to have stamps bought and sent out, but while I was there the Post Office ran out of some stamps; one could either pay more, or have the recipient pay for the letter. There is a weekly mail plane providing the weather is good, and the store truck also brings in mail sometimes. The truck used to come in weekly, but now it is fortnightly, and its journey can be fraught with hazards. Once it caught on fire, and this was put out with the store's supply of milk; another time the trailer axle broke just as rain began to fall.

Given all these factors, running a business in Yuendumu can be difficult. Access to information is limited: for example, information on the state of markets, and rapid decisions cannot be taken (or if they are, they are made in Alice Springs with little regard to circumstances at Yuendumu). A trip into Alice Springs is often the best way to deal with a matter even if this means forfeiting a day or two of work. Another consequence of this isolation is the feeling that real control of the settlement lies elsewhere - namely Alice Springs, Darwin, or Canberra - and this is indeed the fact, since those places are the sources of money which Yuendumu so badly needs.

Enterprises such as the Mining Company suffer also, because government departments do not coordinate their functions, and the situation will no doubt get worse with the gradual transference of powers to the new Northern Territory government, although the Warlpiris are fortunate in that their traditional territory does

not spread over several states. For example, one of the aims of the DAA is to encourage Aboriginal business ventures. The Yuendumu Mining Company (whose shareholders have to be Warlpiri) could provide gravel for the sealing of the Alice-Springs-Yuendumu road, and thus employ local labour and bring money into Yuendumu. But if the company is to provide the amounts of gravel required it will have to start mining operations now, otherwise it will not be able to fulfil the contract with its limited equipment. Unless tenders are called for immediately by the road building authority it will not be worth the while of the Company putting in a bid. As another example, the Cattle Company requested a certain piece of equipment from the DAA; it took eight months to come, and then it was discovered that for the last four months the Housing Association had had that piece of equipment, ordered through a different department. And to illustrate further the disadvantages of a distant centre of control: the manager of the Cattle Company submitted a report to the DAA stating there were too many cattle on the reserve and suggesting that some should be turned off. The Department took nine months to act on the submission, by which time there were too few cattle on the reserve, but nevertheless it was insistent that the suggestions in the report be implemented.

The turnover of staff in positions in administration adds to a sense of uncertainty. At Yuendumu itself between August and November this year, there was a change in the store manager and all European staff in the shop; of the rest of the local European staff, there was a new employee at the Mining Company, the YMCA staff changed, two sisters at the clinic were replaced, the Municipal Officer resigned (to be replaced by a Warlpiri), the plumber and mechanic left and are yet to be replaced, a team of pipe layers has come and gone, and sewage trench diggers have arrived. The accountant has resigned. A new teacher arrived in July; six teachers will be leaving at the end of the year. As well as visits from friends, DAA officials etc., and a large number of people over the Yuendumu Sports Weekend, Yuendumu, between August and November, has been visited by three university research workers, two student doctors, a health delegation, the Northern Territory Cabinet....

As a final point, it should not be forgotten that all the Europeans employed at Yuendumu depend either upon government money, or on Aborigines having cash income, and that people who work for bodies such as the DAA or university anthropology departments depend upon the very existence of Aborigines to earn their own livelihoods.

III

THE OUTSTATIONS

Decentralization trends at Yuendumu are closely linked to traditional ties with the land. All outstations, whether established or desired, are closely associated with dreaming tracks. A desire to care for the country and the tracks is the primary reason given by men for wanting to join or set up an outstation. 'Ownership' of the land is not the only criterion applicable here however, since the 'guardians' (kurdungurlu) of the sites are also required to be on hand. The 'owners' (kirda) of a dreaming site or track are father-son pairs, together with their female siblings. (see Appendix B). For abbreviation's sake, I list only the male forms when citing owners.

The guardians come from the opposite patrimoiety to the owners, and the principal bosses are in cross-cousin relation to one of the male owner pair and nephew to the other. Thus:

Owners		Bosses
Jampijinpa	Jangala	Japaljarri - Japanangka
Nampijinpa	Nangala	
Jupurrula	Jakamarra	Japangardi - Jungarrayi
Napurrula	Nakamarra	
Jungarrayi	Japaljarri	Jampijinpa - Jupurrula
Nungarraya	Napaljarri	
Japanangka	Japangardi	Jakamarra - Jangala
Napanangka	Napangardi	

The guardians are as important as the owners for the maintenance of a sacred site. I heard a complaint that not enough had been made of the guardians' role vis-a-vis traditional land during the Warlpiri land claim hearing. (This is probably because the guardians do not figure in the essentially white legislation. That ownership was seen to be vested in individuals and not in a clan, and that the guardians are presumably (in white terms) not to go into land they do not own, is clear from a reading of the Land Commissioner's report). Guardians always were present at outstations, and were always present when outstations sites were being inspected or when an outstation was being set up.

Since women own land as much as the men do, it is not

infrequent that they choose to be on their land with their fathers and mothers, at least for visits, and their husbands will probably accompany them. Thus one can have a mixture of 'skins' at any one place. For example, of the people wishing to live at Yarripilangu, one is a Jakamarra (i.e. kurdungurlu) who will be in his wife's country. The presence of his mother-in-law does not preclude him visiting, although it makes for constraints in his movements - he has to stay away from the main camp. His own country is the Yarla (Yam) track, not far away to the west, but the soakage points are on the Mt. Doreen and Newhaven pastoral leases, and he had thus adopted Yarripilangu as his outstation.

In July Yuendumu had two established outstations and several more planned; by November three more had been established. These had all been made into incorporated bodies, ostensibly to facilitate DAA funding. While the outstations are a link with tradition, they are not a return to a pre-contact way of life; conditions have changed so that it is both subjectively and objectively impossible to do so. The outstations reflect a sedentary way of life and not a nomadic one; hunting forays are undertaken, but the return is always to the one permanent site, and there is not a moving around to different camping sites.

The central Australian Aborigines were probably more nomadic than those of the coastal or riverine regions (see Meggitt 1966), since their land supported fewer people at a time and the ecosystem was more fragile. A restriction of movement is a restriction of lifestyle, and prevents a return to traditional foraging for all nutritional requirements. This accounts in part for the dependence of the outstations on Yuendumu for provisions and may account partly for there being fewer outstations in the desert than, say, in Arnhem Land.

Water is one problem. In the southern part of Warlpiri territory, pastoral leases have taken over the best watering holes. I have also been told that the sinking of bores has resulted in a lowering of the water table, but I do not know if this is correct. Thus it is no longer possible to follow the old pattern of moving from less dependable sources of water to dependable ones as water

dried up after rain, nor indeed is it possible in many cases to move from one dependable source to another. The older Warlpiris' knowledge of where small water holes are to be found is still intact, as is their knowledge of soakage places; hence they would have no trouble supporting small groups for short periods, but if permanent residence is to be taken up in traditional country then a dependable water source is an absolute necessity, especially as most of the outstation groups plan to set up market gardens to support themselves. Thus all the groups stress the importance of a bore before permanent large-scale settlement can be taken up at a site.

A brief description of the outstations follows. For their locations in relation to Yuendumu, see Maps 1 and 2.

(The dreamings that I mention are only the more important ones. (There are also secret ones). For a more detailed list of the owners and dreaming tracks, see Petersen et al. The Warlpiri Claim Book was not available when I began my work; thus I elicited the dreamings of the various sites independently of the compilers of the claim data, and can vouch for their claim that the information is 'duplicable' and belies the attitude of one DAA employee I met who suggested that land claim information (not necessarily that of the Warlpiri) might be "shonky".)

NYIRRPI
(Waite Creek)

Waite Creek itself is the track for the Marlujarra (Two Kangaroos) dreaming (see Meggitt 1966) which at the site for the outstation is owned by Jakamarra/Jupurrula.

Close to the outstation site this track is crossed by two other important ones, Yankirri (Emu) and Ngapa (Water) both of which belong to Jampijinpa/Jangala. The former track extends eastwards and crosses the Blue-tongue Lizard and Watijarra (Two Men) dreaming near the site of the Ngarna outstation. A short way to the south of Nyirrpi is Karrku (Mt. Stanley), where red ochre is quarried.

Nyirrpi is the longest-established outstation (see Petersen et al p.81f), having been almost continuously occupied for four years; people moved back to Yuendumu only when a drought ended water supplies. A bore and small houses had been provided to the

community. In July the bore windmill was broken down and had been for some months, and the houses had been blown down by strong winds. (Having experienced a storm at Nyirrpi with very strong winds, I suspect gales from the west are not uncommon). People were camping ten kilometres north of the bore where there was soakage water in the creek bed.

At this site the area had been cleared of vegetation. Thirteen humpies had been built in inverted V shape, from wood and brush. A few were further covered with tarpaulins. Windbreaks had also been built, sometimes attached to humpies, sometimes free. Since this was winter, all windbreaks were open to the north to allow the sun to shine on the people. The usual collection of blankets, pillows, mattresses, billycans and other utensils were to be seen, but there was little rubbish. The camp itself was about 30 metres from the creek bed, which two weeks after heavy rain still had water in it, although not running water.

The windmill at the desired site was to have been mended but the wrong spare parts had been sent out. In anticipation of the bore working the people had moved south on to this site where the houses had been, and they were there in November. (They left the humpies still standing at the old site). There were eight humpies at the new site - some were made of wood and brush, some had pieces of the blown down houses incorporated into their structure. Tarpaulins were stretched over the brushwood. I sheltered in one of the latter during a violent thunderstorm and can attest to their snugness. There were also four bough shelters of square construction, and these let rain water in, as I can also attest.

People were digging into the creek bed for water. At this time the hole was about six feet deep and the water a further foot below this in a perforated drum. The water was clear and sweet apart from a few insects floating on top. This camp area was closer to the creek bed than the former site, and had also been cleared, with evidence of trees recently chopped down. Again there was very little rubbish. Dogs were in evidence at both camps, and barked ferociously at night when a stranger (myself) moved around.

Nyirrpi is a fair distance from Yuendumu, approximately

150 kilometres, the last 50 or so over a narrow road with some bad patches. The community has one small Nissan truck, old and unreliable. It is certainly not large enough to carry all the Nyirrpi people at once, and many of them missed out on Sports Weekend - the one time of the year when relatives and visitors from all over the Northern Territory get together - because the truck could not carry everyone and no-one from Yuendumu went out to pick them up. The person in charge of the vehicles had expressed worries about this truck, and by November it had broken down and sat abandoned on the track about 29 kilometres north of the outstation.

In July there were 40 people at Nyirrpi - thirteen men and eighteen women, (either wives or 'owners') and nine children. There were no people aged between 5 and about 25 at Nyirrpi, with the exception of a couple of young wives; this absence of school-age children confirms the importance people place on schooling.

In November there were fewer residents, but this was because there was initiation 'business' at Hooker Creek, and many people from the Yuendumu area had gone there. In fact, I was to have taken two old Nampijinpas to Nyirrpi with me, but they declined because they were to stay at Yuendumu for 'business'. Also, since the Nyirrpi car had broken down, usual movements between Nyirrpi and Yuendumu may have been inhibited; the Jurlpungu vehicle driver was persuaded to take some people to Nyirrpi.

In November there were:

1 Japaljarri	1 Nampijinpa
2 Japanangkas	1 Napurrula
2 Jampijinpas	1 Nakamarra
1 Jakamarra	1 Napaljarri
1 Jupurrula	1 Napanangka
	1 Napangardi

and six children.

For a map of their camp sites, see Map 4.

Only one child has been born at Nyirrpi, because the women prefer to have their children at the clinic at Yuendumu. The people would like to have visits from health workers. At present medicines are sent out on request and administered by a community member.

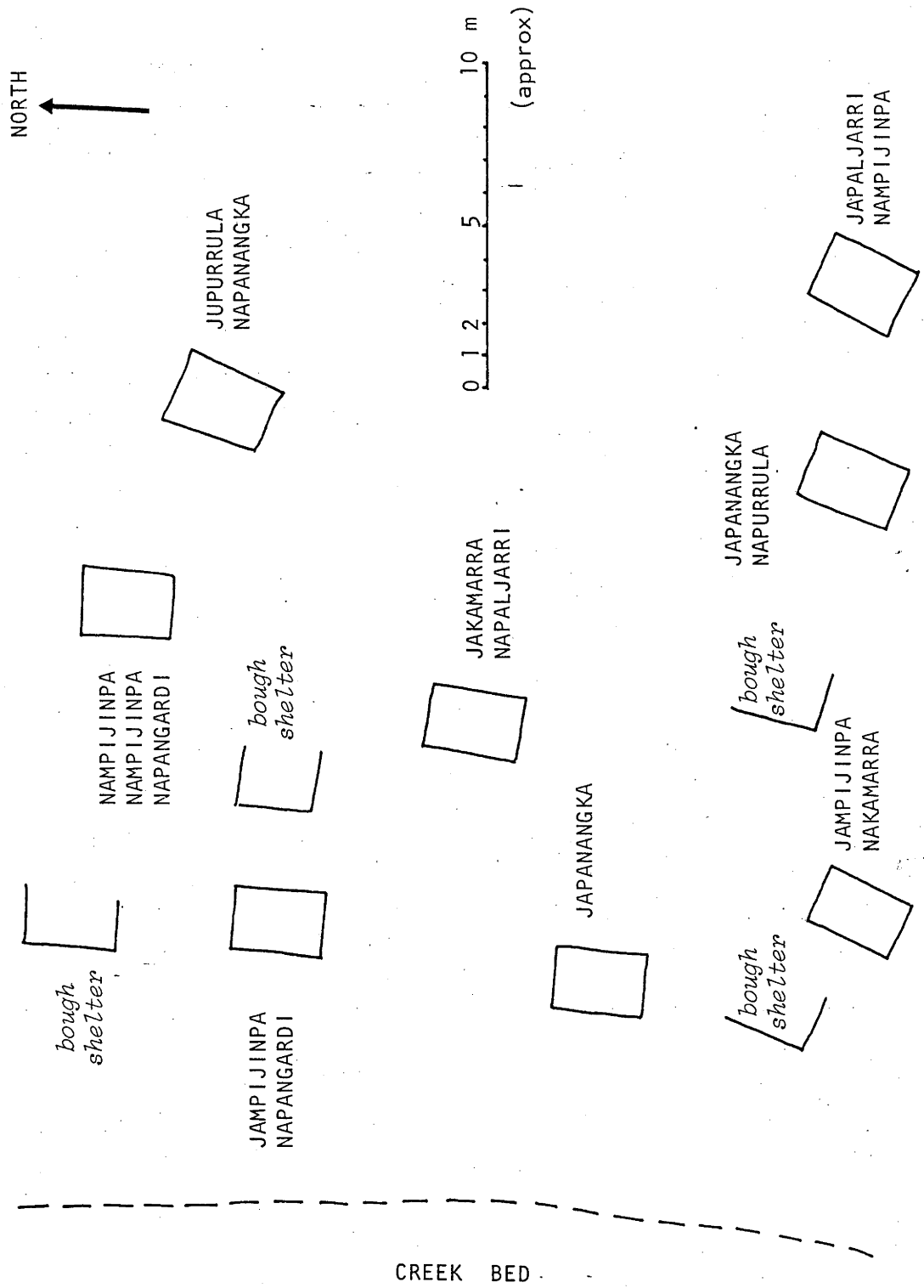


PLATES X AND XI: NYIRRPI, JULY 1978

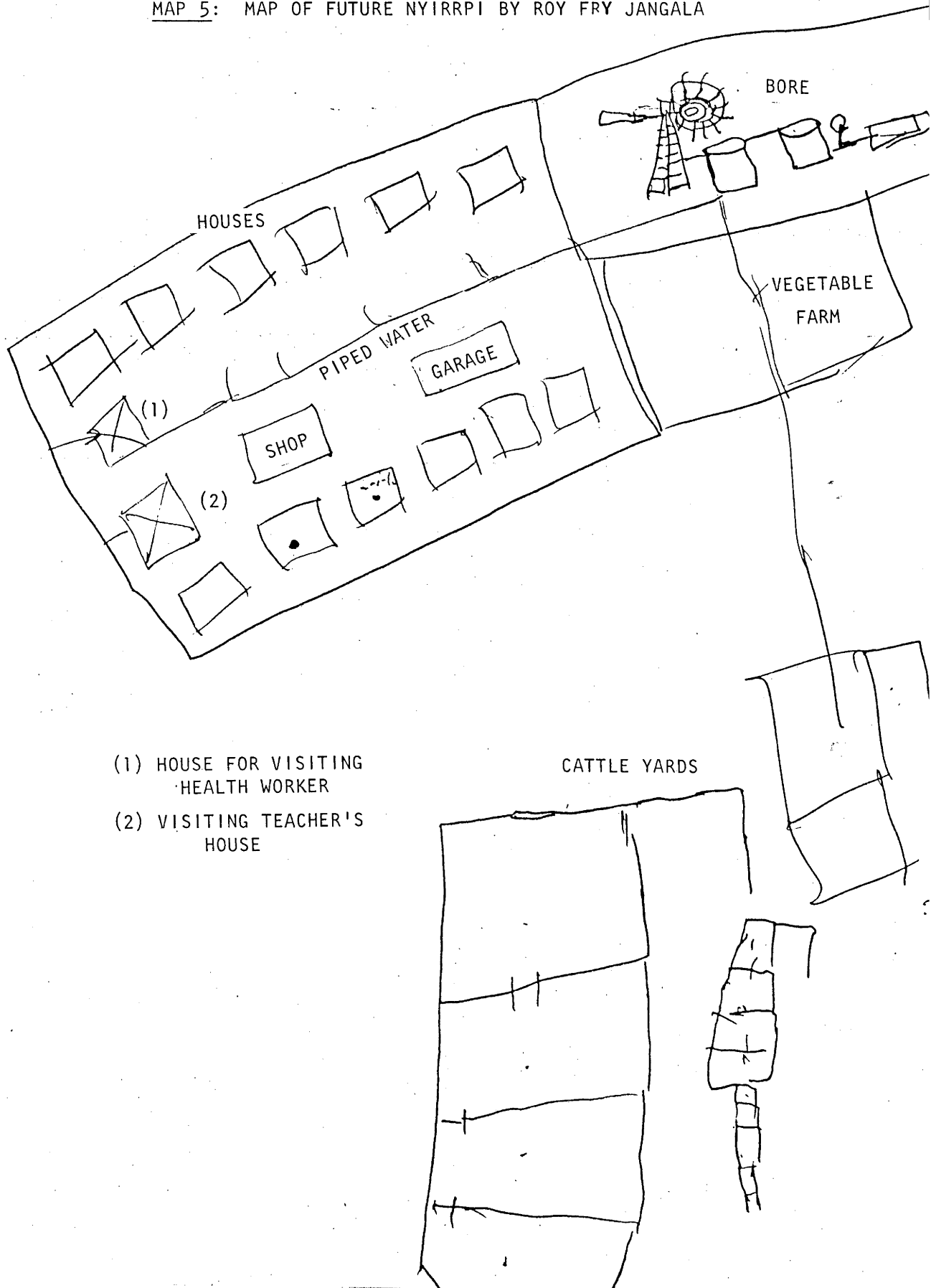


MAP 4: NYIRRPI, NOVEMBER 1978

(All positions approximate)



MAP 5: MAP OF FUTURE NYIRRPI BY ROY FRY JANGALA



A vegetable garden has been established, though I do not know how this is faring with the lack of bore water. Besides the vegetable garden, people would like to set up cattle yards and possibly also a small timber industry. (I include a map of a future Nyirrpi as drawn by Roy Fry Jangala).

There are four rifles at Nyirrpi (from time to time at least) but these are said to be 'not much good'. Not much game was seen on the way down, and the community has been inquiring about purchasing coarse salt for preserving meat - they would then buy a slaughter bullock from Mt. Doreen (Young, *pers.comm.*), since they are short of meat.

Shortly before I left in November, six tents were reported to have arrived for the Nyirrpi people.

KUNAJARRAYI
(Ethel Creek/
Mt. Nicker)

This site is situated far to the west of Yuendumu on the Lake McKay Reserve, in Pintubi country. The country belongs to Jungarrayi/Japaljarri and the dreamings of importance in the area are: Mamupurrumpa (Barking Spider), Wakulyarri (Wallaby), Warlu (Fire), and Ngarrka (Initiated Man). People connected with the Pintubi group at Yuendumu are intent upon setting up an outstation there. There has been an intention for some time, and the group was given a vehicle. Unfortunately there have been problems locating permanent water, and the current plan is to try to set up a site at Mt. Nicker. This community is at the greatest disadvantage in terms of distance from Yuendumu. In November, plans were still being made to visit the area to select a site for attempts at boring. Regrettably, the petrol capacity of my vehicle would not make the trip a worry-free one, although it became embarrassing having to turn down requests to visit the site.

The community is also handicapped by their vehicle having been used as a 'flagon wagon', which has brought the group into disfavour as well as knocking the truck about.

One member of the community, the husband of an owner, is eager to break in wild camels. He has had a lot of experience in this field and still has camel saddles, but evidently needs a sum of money

for horses, saddles, ropes and wire - he believes he can make the fence posts for himself at the site. He envisages either selling the camels in Alice Springs, or taking tourists for treks around the country.

JILA This is a pastoral property of 2,613 square
(Chilla Well) kilometres, acquired by the DAA in March 1978.
 It lies to the northwest of Yuendumu on the
 main road, hence access is not difficult, at
least not while the weather is dry. It is approximately 150 kilometres from Yuendumu to the Chilla Well homestead. The country there is flat, and the vegetation mostly spinifex, although there is a small stand of mulga to the west which I was told was the last for a long while. The spring (jila) is in Jungarrayi/Japaljarri country and lies on the track of Mala (Rat Kangaroo).

The property itself is in bad repair; fencing is dilapidated, the bore windmills need repairing, and there was no stock. Indeed, the area is profuse with 'caustic bush' which poisons ruminants i.e. camels as well as cattle. The 'homestead' is tin shacks. There the nucleus of the community resides. In contrast to other outstations, the two humpies there were made of man-made materials - mostly corrugated iron - presumably left over from the homestead. There was also one smallish tent. Other man-made materials also litter the area which had been cleared of grass.

The closest bore (working) is about two kilometres away from the camp, and water is carried from there in 44-gallon drums; naturally a vehicle is required for this. By the bore a vegetable garden has been established and carefully fenced. A short way north off the main road is the airstrip, which also appears to be carefully maintained; it had been graded recently, and I was shown it with great pride. It still requires a windsock.

For the periods I was in the Yuendumu area, there were not many people at Jila; again, there were no school-age children there. In July their community leader was ill and had returned to Yuendumu. the impending Sports Weekend had also drawn people into Yuendumu - as Jila is on the main track between Hooker Creek and Yuendumu and is also on the route from Balgo in Western Australia, it is not too

difficult to get lifts. In November much of the community had gone to Hooker Creek for initiation 'business'. Again, because it is on the main road, it is easy for people to participate. Unfortunately it also means that liquor can be readily purchased at the roadhouse at Rabbit Flat since the community has a vehicle.

The obvious financial base for Jila is to 'restore' itself as a pastoral property. The DAA made a grant of \$7,700 as a provision for setting up a herd, but this seems a small amount if fences have to be built and windmills repaired, as well as having to purchase cattle, horses and saddlery etc. Some of this money had already been misused and wasted, and I was told the accountant for the community had frozen its assets to prevent any more frittering, although I could not get confirmation of this.

YARRIPILANGU

This site is to the southwest of Yuendumu, not so far as the crow flies, but a long way by road. The dreaming is Pilja (Goanna), owned by Jungarrayi/Japaljarri. On the southwest side of the range are pitjuri caves, and on the flat, good yam country. To get to Yarripilangu one had to drive west along the Vaughan Springs road to the main road to the Newhaven homestead, then south past Newhaven and east to the Yarripilangu range, then north again. People expressed a desire for a shorter road, and by November the community had made a more direct road (by driving three cars along the track over and over) so that one first went west from Yuendumu, then almost directly south to the chosen site.

There is no bore at Yarripilangu, though it is next on the list for a bore. The site chosen is near permanent water (a small rockhole), but it is about a mile away over very stony ground. Drums of water are therefore delivered to the site whenever possible.

The community has no vehicle, although it has occasional access to the YMCA Toyota (one of its members works for the YMCA).

Large numbers of people visit the site at weekends, but few are permanent residents, since many work at Yuendumu and do not wish to give up their jobs. Many were planning to go there for their Christmas holidays. The community would like to see Yarripilangu

develop as a small 'town', and I was told proudly of the resources it had: a plumber, mechanic and teachers among them.

So far four humpies had been built, and two bough shelters.

NGARNA

This is a site near the crossing of two tracks: Yankirri (Emu) with Lungkarda (Blue-tongue Lizard)/Watijarra (Two Men), both of which belong to Jampijinpa/Jangala.

The site is approximately 60 kilometres from Yuendumu, but there is no direct road. The easiest way to get there is to meander south-west via Keridi bore then follow the Mt. Doreen boundary to a point where a track (established by exploration companies) goes south; the barbed wire fence is laid flat on the ground and driven over, and the track is followed south for a while then one doubles back. The first time I went there a route was attempted from the Yuendumu boundary fence but there were problems with soggy ground; another route tried later involved going to the Vaughan Springs turnoff, then proceeding almost due south to the exploration company road.

This outstation was established while I was at Yuendumu. A body corporate had been established but no funds had yet been allocated to it. This community does not have a vehicle. The pastor and I were asked if we would help, and a group of a dozen men came with us to inspect the site. This trip was a very moving experience; one of my passengers was an old man, and all the way down he talked about his country, how his father and grandfather were there, and now he would be there too. When we got to the site and found the claypan full of water he was so overcome to find that conditions were ideal that he kept giggling and giggling.

Four men from our party remained at the site - two owners, a Jangala and a Jampjinpa, and two guardians, a Japanangka and a Japaljarri. They had with them food (bread, flour, tinned food, tea, sugar), blankets and pillows, shovel, axes and chisels. A small area on a rise overlooking the claypan was immediately cleared, and a rough windbreak made.

When we returned four days later no further additions had



PLATE XII: CLAYPAN AT NGARNA, JULY 1978



PLATE XIII: FIRST CAMP AT NGARNA, JULY 1978

been made to the camp. All the food brought from Yuendumu had been eaten. The four men had by then made seven dozen boomerangs and two shields, and had hunted goannas. Emus and kangaroos had come to the claypan for water, but having no rifle these could not be shot for food. The men expressed themselves happy with the site. They were going to return to Yuendumu to consult with relatives with a view to persuading them to move out, and they themselves planned to return after the Sports Weekend.

However, by the time of my return to Yuendumu in November, the claypan had dried up, and availability of water had become a big problem. The DAA made an unsuccessful attempt to locate an old well sunk by an exploration company in the vicinity. I was prevailed upon again to use my vehicle to continue the search and the well was found a few kilometres away, but it turned out to be filled in with dirt. The site of the well was also found to be undesirable for an outstation site (among other things, the original site had better views all around, and structures had already been built there). Two solutions were proposed: either to work on the well, and pipe the water to the desired site, or sink another bore much closer. In the meantime people have to persuade others to go to Ngarna to pick up empty 44-gallon drums, fill them at Yuendumu and return them, since they themselves have no vehicle.

Two large humpies had been built at Ngarna, one a triangular structure, the other rectangular, made of wood and brush and covered with tarpaulins. There were also two bough shelters. Evidence of previous occupation was also there: tins, coolamons, blankets, drums, axes, shovel, crowbars, buckets... There was also a large roll of wire, for fencing in a garden.

There were almost daily requests to ferry people and water to Ngarna. By the time I left there were there:

1 Jangala	1 Nungarrayi
1 Jampijinpa	2 Napangardi
1 Japanangka	1 young Nampijinpa,
and two dogs.	

People from Papunya were also interested in the site, and there were reports that some Mt. Allen people were going to visit the site.

NGAMA

This is a site within the Yuendumu boundary, fairly close to Yuendumu settlement and on one of the tracks to Ngarna. It is an important snake dreaming site belonging to Jakamarra/Jupurrula. The site itself is fenced off, and warning signs have been erected to the effect that it is an Aboriginal sacred site. People whose country it is told me that they would like to set up an outstation, but that Ngama is "too near" Yuendumu; they were going to negotiate with the people at Ngarna about joining their outstation.

NGARLIKIRLANGU

This is a site to the north of Yuendumu and is also within the Yuendumu boundary. The country is emu dreaming (though a different one from that at Ngarna) and belongs to Jampijinpa/Jangala. A road still has to be provided to the area, and bores sunk.

This site is interesting in that it is the proposed site for the Cattle Company camp. It is not to consist of stockyards only, but is to be a proper outstation, since people not connected with the Company are also involved. The Cattle Company already has vehicles and the tacit support of the DAA, so this outstation seems to be in a fairly favourable position, but while the status of the Company is still undetermined no work has been done at Ngarlikirlangu, although a new holding yard has been built south of Yuendumu.

JURLPUNGU

Jurlpungu is Jungarrayi/Japaljarri country, and the dreaming is Marnikiji (Conkerberry), but there are also other dreamings in the vicinity in which other clans have interests. Some of these dreamings however are on the Mt. Doreen pastoral lease, and owners of those - most notably the dreaming at Mt. Doreen, Yarrungkanyi (Wallaby), belonging to Japanangka/Japangardi - consider Jurlpungu to be their outstation.

In mid-August there were plans afoot to move out to Jurlpungu, but because of a misunderstanding the plans for that day fell through; the Council was not authorised to fund outstations for provisions, and so funding had to be reorganised by the people

concerned; however by November Jurlpungu was a thriving outstation. Although it had not been allocated a vehicle, one of the people who own the land is in charge of a Council truck, and this makes movements between Yuendumu and Jurlpungu relatively easy. The site is on Atlee Creek, and at the time I visited it was about 1 kilometre south of the government bore. The bore itself needed repairs, as did the tank, and the pipe between the windmill and tank needed reconnecting. There were also plans to clear and grade an area close to the site for use as an airstrip.

One way to get to Jurlpungu is to go up the Tanami road to the old Mt. Doreen homestead (burnt down in the 1960's), then turn north over a middling road. The site is just on Warlpiri land, recently granted, and there is no boundary fence separating it from the Mt. Doreen lease, which means that cattle have been disturbing the area around the bore. An alternate route was precluded because two men had recently been buried near its path.

People were camping in the creek bed. The only two substantial structures were two bough shelters erected on the bank, and there were two cars of a dilapidated nature which seemed to be used as stores. Rough windbreaks had been erected about the trees in the creek. Water was being drawn from a soakage well about 3 to 4 feet deep. There were 24 people at the site.

Jurlpungu is seen as a jumping-off point for other outstations, chiefly for one at Mt. Theo, which belongs to Japangardi/Jananangka and is the site of Pilja (Goanna) dreaming, continuing up from Yarripilangu. There is no road yet to Mt. Theo, and there is no provision for water there. Separate vehicles have been requested for the Jurlpungu people and the Mt. Theo people, but since Mt. Theo is spoken of as being a "dangerous" place for women and children, I am unsure whether people want to set up an outstation there, or whether they wish to base themselves at Jurlpungu and visit their land only. Not far from Jurlpungu, to the east, is a continuation of the Snake dreaming which comes up from Yuendumu, and which belongs to Jakamarra/Jupurrula, and a group of these people is already present at Jurlpungu.

LIRRAKILPIRRI

Jurlpungu may also be a staging post of Lirrakilpirri, a site to the east of

Mt Patricia, with Ngurlu (Seed) and Yankirri (Emu) dreamings. This site belongs to Jangala/Jampijinpa, and they at first thought to base themselves at Ngarlikirlangu (also Jangala/Jampijinpa), but it is easier to build a road to Lirrakilpirri from Jurlpungu, branching off the Mt. Theo road, because of the direction of the sand dunes. There is no provision for water there yet, and because of the distance from Yuendumu, Lirrakilpirra is still in the planning stages.

VEHICLES AND ACCESS ROADS

Thus it can be seen that, after water, cars are the next most necessary item for an outstation community. Since the Warlpiri find certain material articles of white culture desirable (mattresses, blankets, billycans, rifles, foodstuffs etc.) they cannot move backwards and forwards between Yuendumu and the outstation (or indeed, get to the outstation at all) and carry these articles with them without some form of transport. Contact with Yuendumu is deemed desirable mainly to keep in touch with friends and relatives. Yuendumu is the nearest point where articles (other than alcohol) can be purchased, it is the point where cheques are sent to, and it is the only place where there is a school and a clinic. Many people who have jobs at Yuendumu do not want to forfeit them, and would like to 'commute' to the outstations, mostly at weekends, taking their school-age children with them. Similarly, some women who have school-age children stay at Yuendumu in order to be with their children; they too would like to visit their husbands and their land at weekends. Hence it is not only cars that are necessary, but also better roads and shorter routes in order to cut down on travelling time.

The availability of vehicles is crucial to the establishment of outstations. It is hard to estimate the number of private Warlpiri vehicles at Yuendumu, though it is suggested there may be about twelve. There are many car carcasses lying around, but very few are in working order. The number of registrations at the Yuendumu Police Station does not help since most of the cars break down before re-registration falls due. They are usually in poor condition when bought, and road conditions are rough. When asking for the number of cars an organisation has, the invariable retort is: "Do you mean how many vehicles do we have, or how many vehicles do we have working?" The

life span of a government vehicle on a settlement is probably no more than two years.

Besides six tractors, the Council has 2 large trucks, 2 small trucks, 2 Toyota landcruiser trucks, and two utilities, though not all may be in working order at the one time; Nyirrpi, Kunujarrayi and Jila have one Nissan truck each, none of which seem to be working.

The December 1978 issue of Junga Yimi reports that the men working for the Council have all put \$20 from their pay packets towards buying a truck to service the outstations, to do runs for pensioners on the day the cheques come in, and to ferry people to ceremonies.

(There are about half a dozen Warlpiri women learning to drive, and in an interesting move the Women's Museum, with the help of an Aboriginal Arts Board grant, has purchased a Ford F.100, which is only allowed to carry women. This ban on men extends also to the driver. The women learning to drive take the car around the settlement, but for longer trips female school teachers are generally called on to be chauffeur. The Men's Museum is naturally jealous, but the women have shown initiative, and already they have decided that the truck is too small and they are saving up for another).

A road passing only through Warlpiri land is planned to connect all the outstations southwest of Yuendumu. This has only become possible since the decision of the Land Commissioner, but the plans have existed for some time and in fact trees were cleared from the proposed route some time ago - unless the grading is done soon, there will be many saplings to clear.

Whenever circumstances permitted, men always preferred to go to a site by one route (generally the shortest) and return by another, thus doing a 'tour of inspection', and similarly a circular route was preferred for hunting trips.

HOUSES

While stressing that humpies are 'good', all outstation groups expressed a desire for houses. These may be for protecting flour, mattresses, blankets and other articles from the weather, dogs, and any other damaging agents. In

the meantime they would like tents, or tarpaulins which they can stretch over the humpies. Requests for tents were repeatedly made to me.

There are plans to demolish the Kingstrand houses at Yuendumu and use the materials recovered for shelters at the outstations.

SUPPLIES FROM
YUENDUMU

A new store manager took over in September, and he has begun runs to Nyirrpi and Jurlpungu. This involves coordination with the Social Security Office, through which cheques pass. The Social Security Officer (a Warlpiri) is efficient in keeping in touch with people's movements and ensuring that the right cheques are taken to the outstation. The store manager takes these cheques, some money, and the goods out; there the cheques are exchanged for goods (cash is of no use when there is nothing you can buy). The Social Security Office listing for Jurlpungu showed seven people on child endowment benefits which amounted to \$266 a month, two people on old age pensions, three on widow's pensions, and four on unemployment benefits. Nyirrpi had six people receiving child endowments totalling \$292, three people on old age pensions, one invalid pensioner, and nine people on unemployment benefits. These outstations would have no other income, since there are no 'employment' opportunities there, but that is not to say they do nothing; a great deal of the time is spent hunting. The outstations all rely on hunting for some of their food supply, and this is brought out in general conversation about the outstation when people list the game found in the area, and plant and other products available.

Pooling of money by members of an outstation community is very frequent; from this pool they buy food, and if they have a vehicle, pay for the running costs and repairs.

Relatives often supplement the food supplies of outstation groups, as well as helping to support the children who are attending school at Yuendumu while their parents are on the outstation.

SCHOOLING
AND HEALTH

Ideally, Warlpiri people would like to be responsible for a 'school' at their outstations, with a regular (say, weekly) visit from a teacher to help plan the week's programme. This is quite possible, and there is a (European) teacher at Yuendumu quite eager to undertake such work. Similarly with health. At present there are no visits to the outstations by health employees, but medicines and bandages are sent out on request.

RADIOS

Another wish expressed to me was for radio equipment to maintain contact with Yuendumu. If roads are out or the vehicle broken down, then the outstation is truly isolated. In the traditional life-style the scattering of population required by desert environments probably ensured that no one group was too far from any other (more than a day's walk perhaps). This is no longer the case. Moves have been made for the purchase of radio equipment for Nyirpi, but there was a slight hitch while it was decided which frequency was to be allotted to the Warlpiris.

AIRSTRIPS

If they did not have one built already, the outstations each planned to prepare an airstrip, which, together with radio contact with Yuendumu, would be used for emergencies.

OUTSTATIONS
AND
BUREAUCRACY

People are extremely ambitious for their outstations. The communities differ in their plans, but they each want their outstation to be a model community where rules are observed, both for social and religious purposes. They seem to be prepared to work for this, but they are constantly coming up against bureaucratic fiddles which they do not comprehend and so they cannot anticipate them, let alone deal with the resultant hassle.

With the outstations there are often, though not always, two tiers of authority. Old men are the undisputed authorities for the sites, whether owners or bosses, and the location of the outstation (or indeed, whether it exists at all) depends upon them.

However in cases where these authorities speak little English, or do not drive, it is a group of younger men who have to take care of all the administrative details such as putting in applications for cars, tents, radios etc., and who have to negotiate with pastoral leaseholders for use of airstrips and so on. While the older men depend upon these younger ones for the viability of the outstation, the younger men do not usurp any of their traditional authority.

Nearly all the communities have plans for some money-making schemes (see below), but these involve injections of money to get the business started, e.g. wire for fencing, horses and saddles, tractors etc.

Money is also required to get an outstation started, especially if the chosen site needs a bore. With all the outstations there is a 'critical point' at which they can function adequately; this entails a certain number of people so that it is worthwhile for the store to make runs out there, etc., but to achieve this number a sure water supply is required, and mobility also (i.e. transport). However unless a sufficient number of people demonstrate that they are willing to stay at a site, then water and vehicles and tents etc. are not provided. Thus a vicious circle can be established, unless the critical point can be reached quickly through fortuitous circumstances. Jurlpungu is fortunate in this sense; a mechanically sound community truck was available, with a reliable driver, and a bore was already established at the site, even if there is no pipe to the tank at present. Ngarna is unfortunate in this respect; there is no permanent water there, and the community does not have access to a vehicle, so that they have to repeatedly ask people for lifts and to deliver water drums. The frustration of this group was evident.

The "official" view as stated to me in a letter from the then Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Ian Viner, was that the DAA was doing all it could to help the outstations get started. The information I gleaned from visiting officials was somewhat pessimistic. They want people to prove that they want to live at a site before they will go to the expense of providing bores, vehicles, tents etc., yet not having these facilities can make things very difficult for a community. After experiences elsewhere where expensive equipment has been abandoned,

and since some of the vehicles provided to Yuendumu outstations have been used as "flagon wagons", the DAA is sceptical about requests for assistance, even to putting down requests for teaching aides at outstations as a ploy to generate more money for the group. A modicum of knowledge about Yuendumu and its people - and not the cursory glance that the settlement gets every now and then - would give an individual a pretty good idea about the seriousness of requests and who the 'responsible' people are. On one occasion when I was talking to an outstation leader another elderly man began to lecture him, in English as well as Warlpiri so that I would be able to get the message, about the evils of drink, and how they had better start to go about the matter of setting up an outstation seriously.

As it is, outstations have had to endure procrastination and disappointment because they cannot understand the bureaucratic mind and the time and effort it takes to get projects approved. Also for people who are not vested with a written tradition at best and who are illiterate or unable to speak English at worst, the actual machinery for applying for money is tedious in the extreme. To myself, literate, English-speaking, used to government bureaucracy, the picture was entirely unclear. The activities of the Aborigines Benefit Trust Account (?) had been suspended as far as I could make out, and no applications for money were being processed; when activities resumed, new applications would have to be made. (This picture is as was understood by the Yuendumu Community Council). Unless one was clear about this, if in fact this is the picture, then one could sit around for years waiting for an obsolete application to be processed.

Warlpiris are incapable of couching applications in jargon to bamboozle the department, although they are beginning to learn European ways. Hence in applications for vehicles etc., the purpose of the outstation is said to be to help Aboriginal people return to a more traditional way of life, and to establish market gardens to provide Yuendumu with fresh fruit and vegetables. The first proposition might be viewed as being questionable by the DAA given the sorts of material goods that they are asking for, and the second is laughable. Yuendumu used to have a garden run by the government, which was closed down in 1975, and although some people have spoken about re-establishing it, so far this has not happened. Even this aside, when one considers

the distances to the outstations and the price of petrol it is obviously uneconomic to ferry the produce to Yuendumu. From the Warlpiri point of view however, the cost of petrol is immaterial, and people take off for long trips at the drop of a hat, so that stating the intention of establishing a vegetable garden (two have already been established and one more is to be) seems to be a reasonable precursor to requesting the drilling or repair of a bore, and the garden will at least be supplementing the diet at the outstation itself, a point not to be missed. However I do feel that the real reason for including vegetable gardens in applications for funding is that Aborigines have received the impression that white authorities want outstations to have an economic base.

Some jealousies are growing up between the outstations. At present they are vying mostly in ambitions and in proposing model communities ('no drinking rubbish'), but there are some material bones of contention. Some stations have access to vehicles, others do not, either because they have not been allocated funds for one, or have no relatives with access to a car. A Ngarna spokesman was indignant that Yarripilangu was head of the list for a bore, because Yarripilangu has permanent water (albeit a not very large rockhole a mile away over very stony ground), while Ngarna is relying on 44-gallon drums brought from Yuendumu.

TIES WITH YUENDUMU

Another factor which may account for the 'slow start' of the outstations from Yuendumu is that the settlement is basically monolingual, being populated by members of a single tribe (unlike, for example, Papunya). This means that there are no inter-tribal fights to motivate people to move away to where there is no trouble and where they can recover their tribal identity. On the contrary, an example of a reverse situation to that described above occurred during my second stay at Yuendumu; there had been some drinking among a group of young men, which was quite evident at the concert. A fight ensued - (the versions of what caused it varied depending on whom you were talking to, but it seemed to boil down to a fight over an unfaithful wife), and someone drove a car into a pylon, which effectively stopped the fight at least for the

night. The next day the families of the youths concerned - especially the women - got involved, and there was a great fight in the middle of the main street. Things calmed down after a while, but there was something simmering all the rest of the week. There was no exodus to outstations to get away from the trouble; on the contrary, when the relatives of one of the families involved who were on an outstation heard about the trouble, they insisted on returning to Yuendumu to help sort matters out.

There does not seem to be any difference in interest in outstations between people living in humpies at Yuendumu and those living in houses; however, because of the reverse means test on houses (you have to have an income to pay for the rent), the occupants are the ones who have jobs and are tied to Yuendumu for the weekdays. Women seem slightly less enthusiastic than men about moving out, especially younger women and those who have jobs. They are very eager to visit sites however, and say they would move out if their husbands went. Since women are generally (but not always) with their husbands and hence not on their own land, and since they are not responsible for maintaining sites or taking part in the sacred life of the men, 'social' reasons are often invoked for wanting to move to an outstation. These are reasons such as "quiet, no noise", "no drinking", "one happy group" or because they are mourning. Men also give these reasons for wanting to move away from Yuendumu.

The Council certainly had no policy on drink with respect to the outstations; each community was to decide for itself. Some were adamant that there was to be no drinking whatsoever, others said that it would be all right if the drinkers went out into the bush.

Not many young people are active in the outstation movement, probably because they are not yet at an age when traditionally they would be given much responsibility. Their range of interests is also dependent upon Yuendumu - chiefly sports and rock music. There are enough musicians at Yuendumu to form about three bands, and concerts are held twice a week. Basketball is popular; there is a local competition and also a team plays in Alice Springs once a week - the only Aboriginal team represented in the A grade competition. Football is played in winter, and volleyball in summer. At the Yuendumu Sports Weekend, the

same group of young men provided manpower for two football teams, two basketball teams, athletics, and in addition, if they didn't play in the bands, they danced three nights away. Even if they are unemployed, young men seem to prefer to stay at Yuendumu, but visit the outstations.

Ties with the church also draw people back to Yuendumu. In recent years corroborees have been devised to recount episodes in the life of Christ. Other than the nature of the story, and the fact that no one clan owns this 'dreaming', the style of dancing and singing, and the body decorations, are all in traditional vein. These corroborees are very popular, and have been performed at other settlements, as well as Darwin, but to attain the degree of perfection desired requires much rehearsing.

In addition to these newer factors, the usual requirements for initiation ceremonies etc. mean that people are travelling between points a great deal of the time.

Because of the above ties with Yuendumu, numbers at outstations can vary a lot. I have already mentioned the high mobility of people at Yuendumu. The desire for mobility exceeds the facilities available, and hence my visits to places around Yuendumu entailed carrying as many people as possible from one place to another. A visit to an outstation could thus increase or decrease the resident population substantially. It also entailed providing services which would not normally be available, e.g. delivering medicines. This ad hoc delivery of services is a substantial part of the scene, and people could happily have employed me as a taxi driver every day, if this had been possible. Since Europeans have access to vehicles more readily than Warlpiris, they are frequently asked to provide transport. At least one of the outstations (Ngarna) has been viable only because of help from Europeans; I heard one of the prime movers of Ngarna berating a Council member (partly in English, for my benefit) about how he was only getting help from whitefellows, and that it was about time that the Council provided some help.

With an increase in political activity necessitated by consulative government and bodies such as the Central Lands Council, movement will increase further. If people on outstations are to be

kept in the picture and are to make their wishes known at meetings, their dependence on vehicles and radios will soon become apparent. This 'keeping in touch' for political purposes will reinforce the social aspects of keeping in touch; when one first arrives at an outstation, all the initial talk is catching up on news.

All outstations are now on Warlpiri land. Before the land claim decision was made some were on the vacant Crown land under claim. This was not merely a temporary ploy to win them the land by being seen to occupy it; on the contrary, decentralisation trends have increased since they were awarded title to the land, as has Yuendumu Council activity to help them.

CONCLUSION

The equilibrium which characterised the life-style of the Warlpiri people for thousands of years was upset by the arrival of Europeans in all facets: social, economic, legal, technological and material.

The Warlpiri have endeavoured at all times to maintain their sense of identity and a continuity with the past, while at the same time accomodating new codes and material goods.

In the face of much interference they are attempting to establish a life-style congenial to them, blending traditional and introduced factors.

They deserve to succeed.

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ORTHOGRAPHY EMPLOYED AT THE YUENDUMU SCHOOL FOR
THE REPRESENTATION OF WARLPIRI PHONEMES

Consonants:

	LABIALS	DENTALS	RETROFLEXES	PALATALS	VELARS
STOPS	p	t	rt	j	k
NASALS	m	n	rn	ny	ng
LATERALS		l	rl	ly	
FLAPS		rr	rd		
GLIDES	w	r		y	

Notes: (i) The symbols t, n, l, represent retroflex sounds word-initially. Dental sounds do not occur in this position.

(ii) As is usual in Australian Languages, there is no opposition between voiced and voiceless stops. The Warlpiri stops are unvoiced.

Vowels:

	SHORT	LONG
HIGH FRONT	i	ii
HIGH BACK	u	uu
LOW CENTRAL	a	aa

WARLPIRI KINSHIP

For a proper understanding of Warlpiri society, a knowledge of the kinship system is essential. What follows is the merest outline of a very complex topic. For further information, see Meggitt.

The basic Warlpiri social group is the family: that is, a man, his wife or wives and their uninitiated sons and unmarried daughters. Such groups come together to form larger camps, usually because of friendship bonds. Any grouping also has a widows' camp and a single men's camp.

The basic educational and socializing unit is the extended family. Parents are responsible for looking after a child and instructing it, although this is chiefly the mother's responsibility while it is young. A mother takes charge of training her daughters. Boys are initiated at puberty and their instruction is then in the hands of the men of the tribe.

The basis for the order in Warlpiri society lies in the kinship system. Roles played by different kin are fairly well defined. For example:

Older siblings are responsible for younger ones.

If a woman shirks her duties, her mother, father, elder brother or mother's brother may reprimand her. A man who shirks his familial duties may also be reprimanded by his affines.

A father's father (and his brothers) are important to a youth since he is frequently head of the patriline into which the young man will be initiated. Since he is also in the same subsection (see ahead) as the boy, he is equivalent to an elder brother.

A mother's mother is thought of as a lenient mother; she shows the same affection to her grandchildren as the mother would, but much less of the discipline (although Warlpiri children seem fairly unconstrained by discipline).

A mother's male relatives are extremely important in the matter of a girl's betrothal and a youth's initiation. Mother's brother and mother's mother's brother are concerned in finding a husband for a girl; they are also responsible for defending her rights in marriage. A mother's brother consults with a youth's father in

determining who is to perform his circumcision; this is choosing a bride for him, for the circumciser then gives the initiated youth a daughter as a wife. The wife's father is accorded respect by a man, and is compensated for parting with a daughter.

Strict avoidance is respected between a man and his mother-in-law (indeed all classificatory mothers-in-law). They may not even look at one another, let alone speak - in many Australian languages there are special 'Mother-in-law languages' which must be used in the presence of taboo relatives.

A brother-in-law is of ritual and social significance to a youth. He is the youth's guardian throughout the ceremonies and the intermediary through which the youth's mother and father send him food while he is in seclusion.

Between members of the extended Warlpiri family then there are bonds of affection, duty, dependence, dependability and support.

But in addition to this social network, the Warlpiri community is divided into eight subsections. Every member belongs to one of these 'skins'. Marriage rules operate in terms of the subsections and offspring are assigned a subsection in accordance with their parents'. Thus, if I am a Napaljarri, I must marry a Jakamarra. My daughters are Napurrula and my sons are Jupurrula. My mother is Nangala, and my mother's brother is Jangala. My father is Jungarrayi and my father's sister is Nungarrayi. Same-sex siblings are not differentiated and so my mother's sisters are also Nangala and my father's brothers are Jungarrayi; my own sisters are Napaljarri and my brothers are Japaljarri. (See the accompanying charts.)

This means that all Japaljarri and Napaljarri can be viewed as my 'brothers and sisters', all Jakamarra are my 'husbands', all Nakamarra are my 'sisters-in-law', all Jupurrula are my 'sons', all Napurrula are my 'daughters', all Nangala are my 'mothers', all Jungarrayi are my 'fathers', and so on.

Thus every member of the community is a classificatory kinsman, and social bonds that apply between actual members of an individual's family also apply (though not necessarily as strongly) to all people classified in a similar way. In the absence of an actual kinsman a close classificatory kinsman is bound to perform

his duty.

These eight subsections are divided into halves by three principles (see Chart V)

- a. patrimoiety
- b. matrimoiety
- c. generation level.

Patrimoieties are concerned with ritual affairs, the matrimoieties with secular matters, especially marriage arrangements and death ceremony organisation.

The sections of the patrimoieties have associated totems, which belong to ancestors who 'dreamt' those totems and formed the landscape in their dreamtime wanderings. Hence the land is 'owned' by the owners of the totems who are responsible for the sacred sites there, and who are responsible for performing the appropriate ceremonies. The opposite moiety provides the 'bosses', who are responsible for painting the dancers, clearing the ground, and seeing that the land is in fact cared for properly.

Members of a matrimoiety share a common spirit. This is the spirit which leaves the body and wanders during dreams; the dreamer is the owner of any designs so discovered. These designs are important in women's rituals (yawalyu), which are concerned with procreation, the growth of children and food, the curing of illnesses and the promotion of happiness.

Moiety division by generation level is less important than the previous two. It seems to have some bearing on which of the two central incisors is avulsed.

The implications of the social network set out above are plain: the distinction between primary and secondary bonds is hard to make much of the time, roles are clearly defined, and the system is obviously not hierarchical, but circular. There is no necessity for ad hoc plans since the norms of kinship and religion apply. Individuals may acquire reputations as wise men and so their advice may be sought, but there is no over-riding authority vested in such people. There is no tribal chief, nor is there a separate legal system.

Settlement life is changing these factors a little. Europeans require community leaders to act as spokesmen; the usual criterion

is a good knowledge of English. Wages are weakening the basis of traditional economic exchange. Job specialisation is bringing people together who normally would avoid each other; a man who literally goes out of his way to avoid 'mothers-in-law' has made an adjustment for the classroom - 'mothers-in-law' who are his pupils are 'too young' to worry about. I also wonder whether some European institutions are being adopted for their own sake: for example, all sources on Warlpiri ethnography say that in the case of an alternate marriage (i.e. a person of appropriate 'skin' is not available), the child took his 'skin' from the mother's, but today children of such unions are said to be of 'mixed skin', taking his 'skin' from both mother and father; perhaps because of the practice of taking the father's surname, the skin is also being taken.

In the charts which follow, it should be remembered that same-sex siblings are not differentiated. Therefore:

Father and Fa Brother are both called kirdana

Mother and Mo Sister are ngati

FaFa and FaFaBr are warringiyi

etc.

A difference is made only with respect to age:

papardi - older Br

kukurnu - younger Br

kapirdi - older Si

ngawuru - younger Si

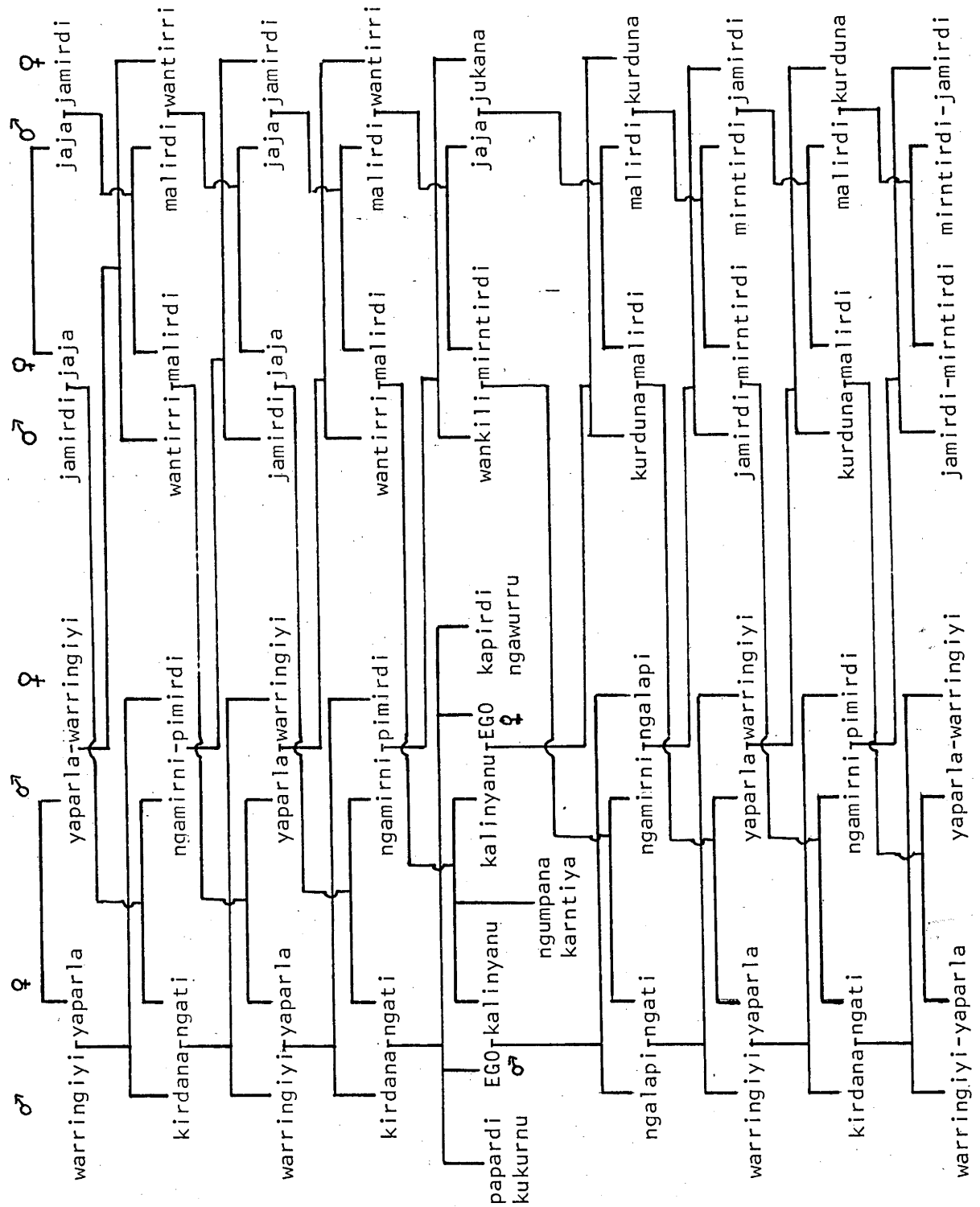
ngumpana - senior Br-in-law

karntiya - junior Br-in-law

Chart 1: Female EGO, kapirdi, ngawurru are interchangeable for purposes of tracing geneologies, as are male Ego, papardi, kukurnu, and as are kalinyanu, ngumpana, karntiya.

Charts V, VI, VII: The relationships between the eight subsections are shown; the names given are absolute names, not relative terms. 'Skins' beginning with N- are female terms, those beginning with J- are male terms.

Simplified Warlpiri Kinship Chart



Source: K. Hale

Chart 1

Warlpiri relative terms
(to be used with Chart VI)

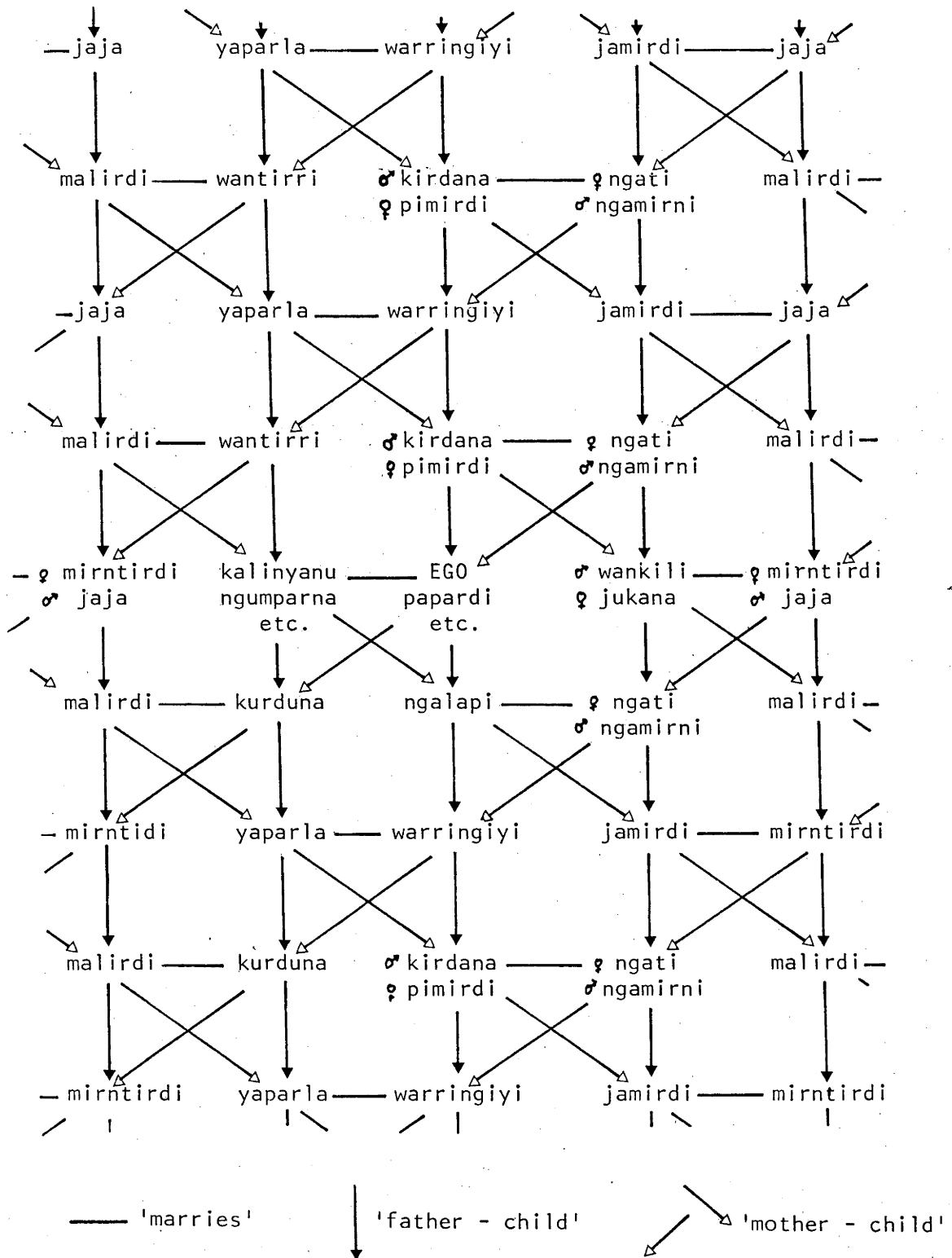
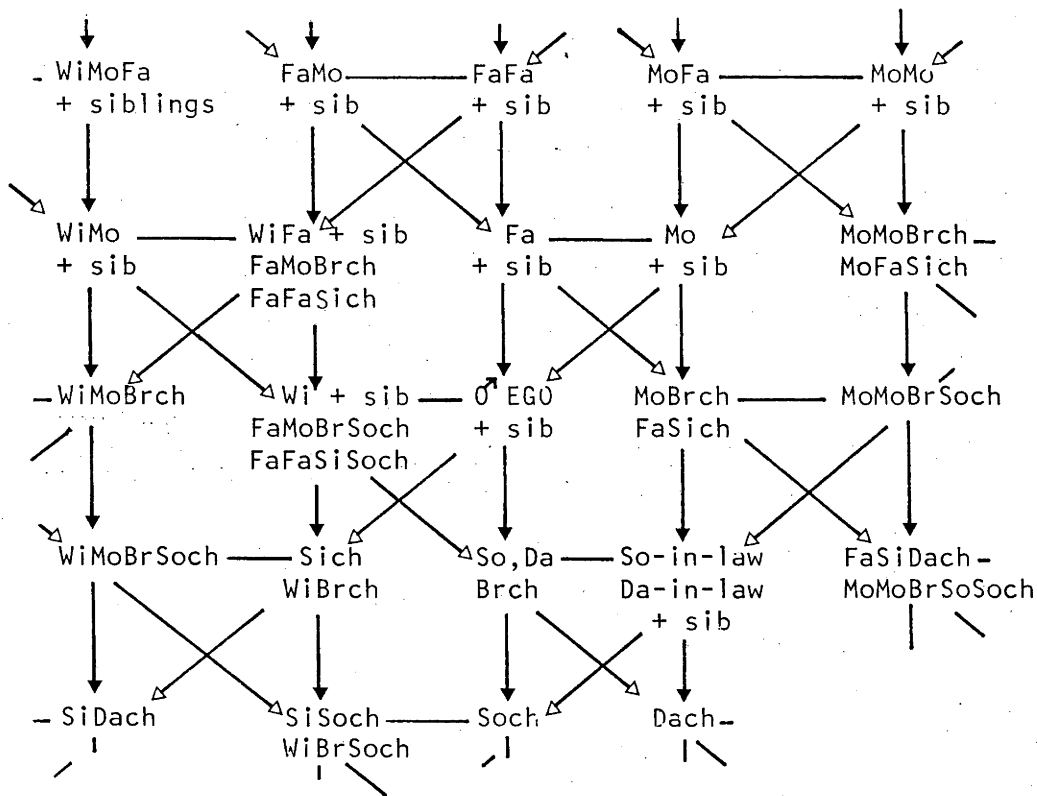


Chart II

English relative terms for MALE ego, same schema as in

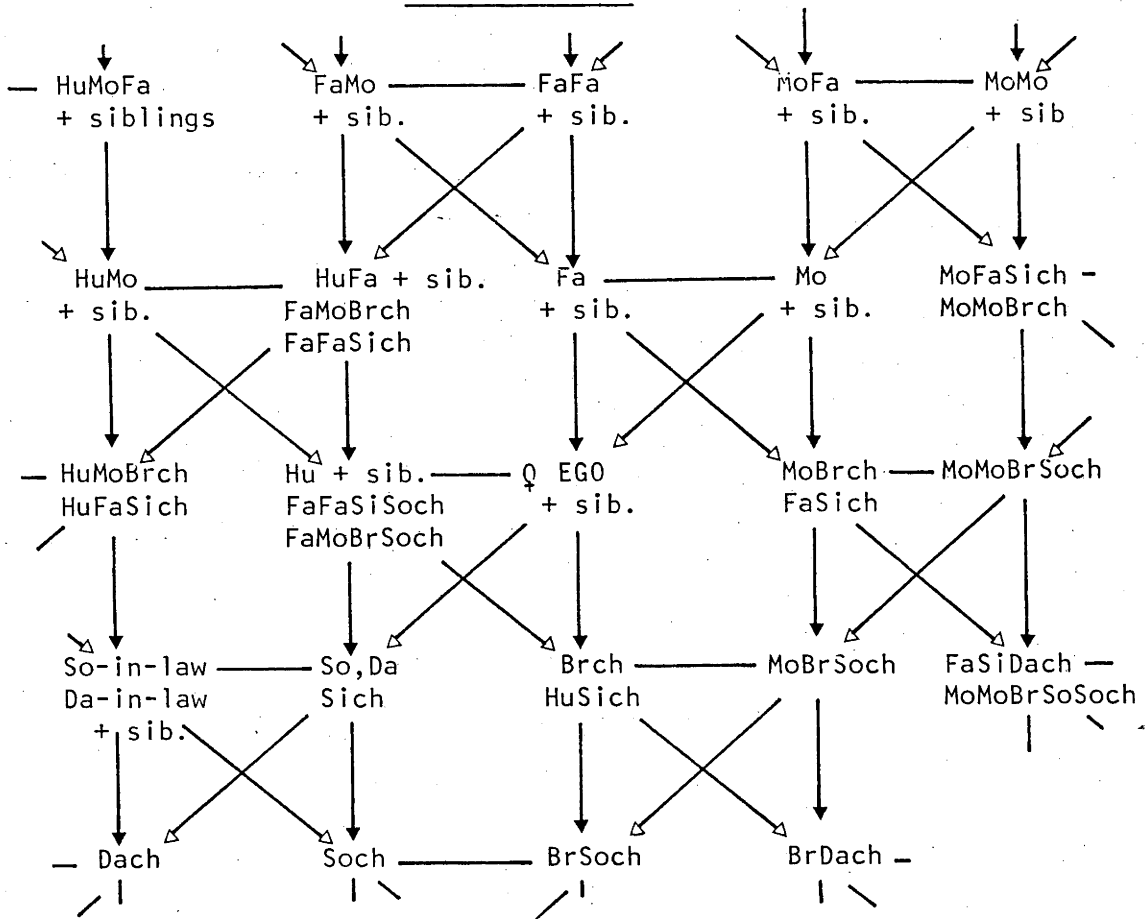
Chart II



Only some of the more important English equivalents have been listed; English equivalents are, in fact, inexhaustable because of the Warlpiri system of denoting same-sex siblings by one term. Hence your FaBr's children and your MoSi's children are your 'brothers and sisters', as are your FaFaBrSo's children, your FaFaFaBrSoSo's children, your MoMoSiDa's children, your MoMoMoSiDaDa's children, etc. etc. ad nauseam.

CHART III

English relative terms for FEMALE ego, same schema
as in Chart II



N.B. Same note applies as for Chart III.

Chart IV

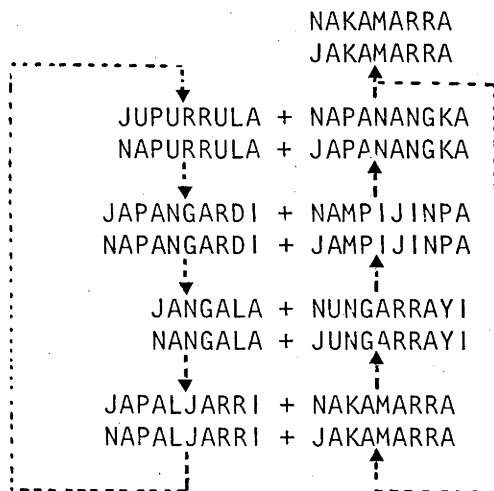
Division of Warlpiri sub-sections (absolute terms into:

A. Patrimoieties



The patrimoieties are labelled by the relative terms kirda (EGO'S) and kurdungurlu (opposite patri-moiety to EGO).

B. Matrimeoieties



The matrimeoieties are labelled by the relative terms makurntawangu (EGO'S) and makurnta (opposite to EGO'S).

+ 'marries'

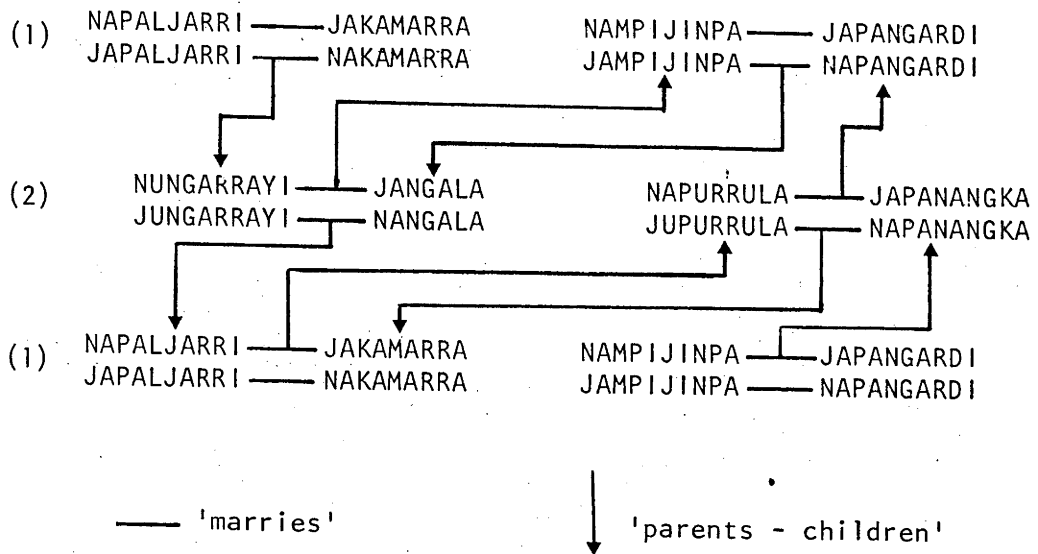
'father - child'

'mother - child'

Chart V

Division of Warlpiri sub-sections (absolute terms) into:

C. Generation levels



The generation levels are labelled by the relative terms yarlpurrujinta (EGO'S) and kuyukari (opposite to EGO'S).

The patrimoieties and matrimoieties are exogamous, while the moieties based on generation levels are endogamous.

Chart V (cont'd)

Warlpiri sub-section terms
('skin names')

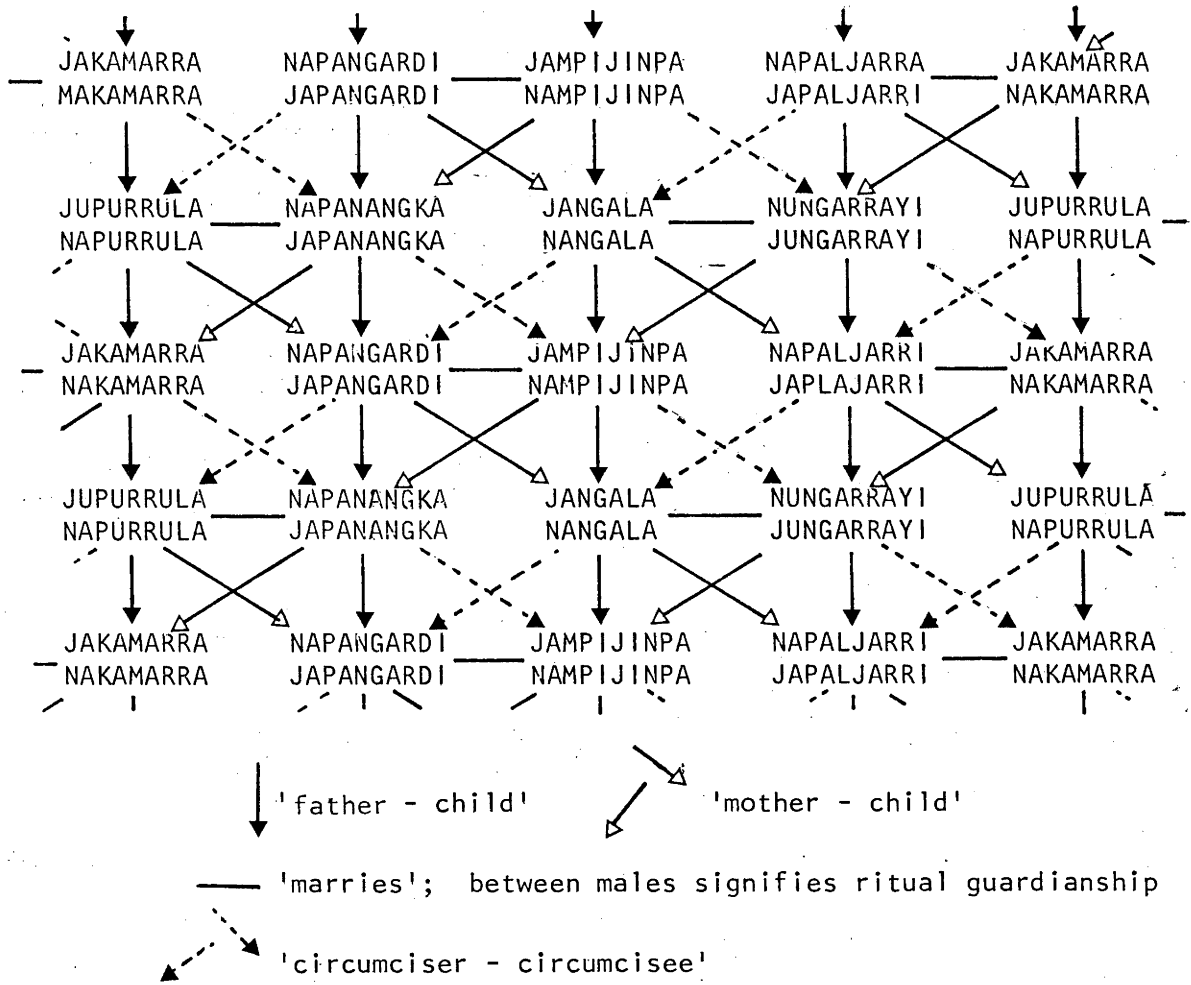
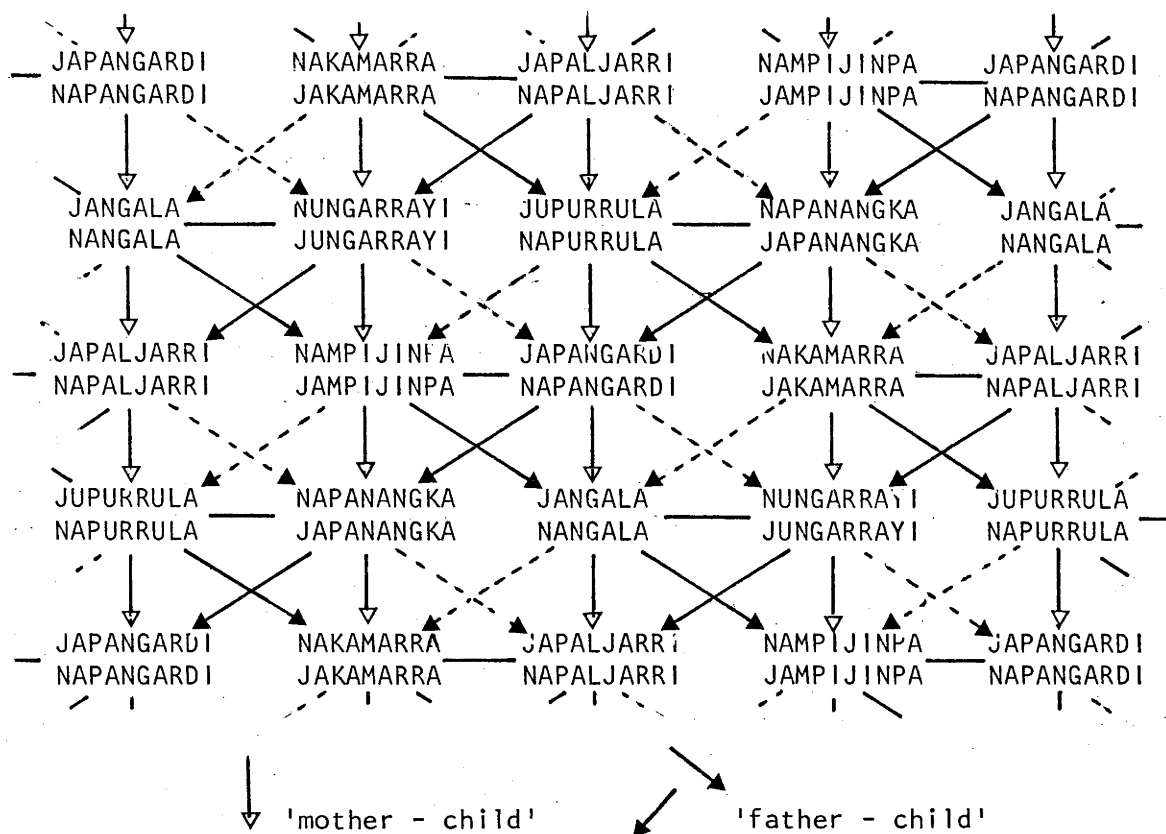


Chart VI

Warlpiri sub-section terms

('skin names')



— 'marries'; between males signifies ritual guardianship

↔ Signifies taboo relation between people who are reciprocally mother-in-law - son-in-law

Chart VII

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