

みんなのポジトリ

国立民族学博物館学術情報リポジトリ National Museum of Ethnology

Sharing and Money in an Aboriginal Outstation

メタデータ	<p>言語: eng</p> <p>出版者:</p> <p>公開日: 2009-04-28</p> <p>キーワード (Ja):</p> <p>キーワード (En):</p> <p>作成者: 松山, 利夫</p> <p>メールアドレス:</p> <p>所属:</p>
URL	<p>https://doi.org/10.15021/00003131</p>

Sharing and Money in an Aboriginal Outstation

TOSHIO MATSUYAMA

National Museum of Ethnology

This paper looks at the impact of money in a small Aboriginal community in Arnhem Land, north Australia. It examines the extent to which there is an emergent consumer dependency as a result of an increasing involvement in the cash economy based on data collected on visits to the outstation community during 1984, 1986 and 1988.

The community of Gamardi was established as a breakaway or outstation community from the regional centre of Maningrida in the 1970s under the impact of the land rights movement. Prior to the establishment of the town of Maningrida in 1957, most of the Aboriginal inhabitants of the region lived a traditional existence in the surrounding bush. Some people, however, particularly young men, often travelled the 400 km to Darwin by foot to savour the excitements and goods of the town. Without employment or resources to support themselves they became something of a social problem so the Welfare Branch would, from time to time, round up the people from the Maningrida region and take them back to the Liverpool River by boat, only to find many of them back in Darwin months later. The Welfare Department therefore decided to establish a small trade store at the mouth of the Liverpool River from which the inhabitants of the region would be able to barter a few basic commodities such as sugar, flour, tea and tobacco. The store quickly and unexpectedly became the site of an unplanned village which was then turned into a government run Aboriginal town growing from around 300 people in 1958 to 1,000 people by 1969 [MEEHAN and JONES 1980: 131-157].

Although the development of Maningrida eased the social problems caused by visitors from the region to Darwin, the coresidence of so many people from seven different linguistic groups brought with it considerable tensions which the traditional social systems were unable to deal with. As the population grew there was a deterioration in social order and a desire on the part of many Aboriginal people to escape from the tensions (see Meehan and Jones [1980]).

The opportunity to withdraw from Maningrida back to traditional lands in the region, arose following the election of a Federal Labour government in 1972 and the initiation of a new set of policies. These emphasised the right of Aboriginal people to be able to choose the manner and style in which they lived and the rate at which they altered their way of life. With this change in policy came funds for the construction of bush tracks to ancestral lands, vehicles and the erection of simple shelters at locations chosen by the people themselves. Gamardi was one such

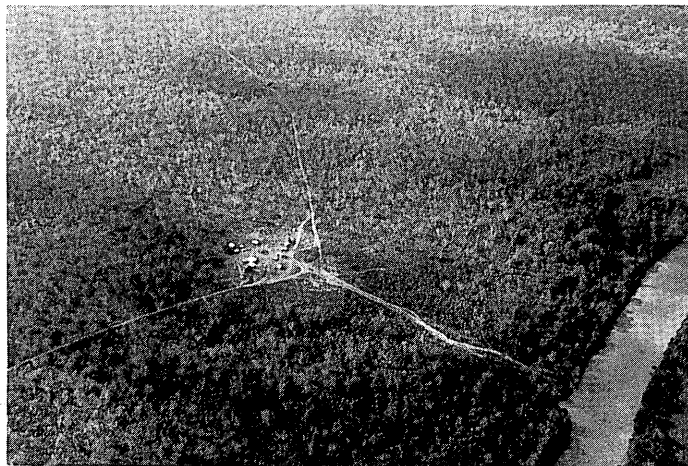


Photo. 1. An aerial view of Gamardi.

outstation established some 100 km from Maningrida on the banks of the Blyth River.

A HISTORY OF GAMARDI

Although the first moves to establish an outstation at Gamardi were made in 1968 it was not until after the new policy that things really took off. The leader of the outstation was Umb¹⁾ who was related to the country through his mother. His own clan is Murrungun and his paternal estate lies close to the sea-shore 40 km north-northeast of Gamardi. According to Umb the Murrungun people no longer speak their proper dialect and had switched to their mother's language Wullakki, a dialect of Djinang. This had influenced him to take up residence on his mother's estate and to look after it for his mother's clan.

By 1975 there were four simple shelters completed at Gamardi and it became officially recognised by the Maningrida Town Council making the community eligible for support and grants. The houses were for four Djinang speaking families. Umb and his family occupied one shelter, his elder brother's family another, Umb's son's family the third and his matrilineal cross-cousin's family the fourth. In 1976 the outstation borrowed a tractor from the Maningrida Council to complete the construction of an airstrip for emergency health evacuations, first begun by hand clearing in 1976. In that year the population reached a maximum of 22, with close kin of the founder moving from Maningrida and the nearby town of Ramingining, 40 km to the east. A small shop was constructed which stocked a modest range of non-perishable food stuffs and other goods and was supplied from the store at Maningrida. By 1977 there was a solar/car battery powered radio at

1) In order to protect the privacy of the people involved I have disguised their names.

the outstation and it had a boat bought with funds provided by the Maningrida Council.

In 1980 Umb's elder brother died leading to the closing of the shop and to many of the residents eventually moving away from the outstation in 1984. Umb and his elder sister's family remained. In 1986 a windmill pump was fitted to a bore to provide a convenient supply of water in the outstation.

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

In the research period Umb's family was composed of four people: himself, his two Burarra speaking wives and one child around 7. Often the elder of the two wives would spend a month or more visiting her relatives at Maningrida. His eldest son Min usually lived with his wife's people at Djimarda outstation 30 km to the north of Gamardi. Umb's elder sister's household was made up of herself, her Djinba speaking husband, Nhu, and their son who had recently been circumcised and was living with his mother's kin in Maningrida. Umb's younger sister's household included only her husband Oen who belongs to Djinang speaking clan. They left in 1984 and returned in 1986. The household of the matrilineal cross-cousin, Ang and his family included his Djinang speaking wife and three children, but they spent much of their time in Maningrida with their eldest daughter's family.

There was great and continuous fluctuation in the number of residents at Gamardi. During the field work periods the numbers at Gamardi ranged between 7 and 19 people because of visits to and from Maningrida and other outstations for a wide variety of reasons.

Only Umb and his family remained at Gamardi the whole time. The families of his elder and younger sister remained there continuously during the dry seasons but usually went to Maningrida or Ramingining in the wet seasons. Together these dry season residents provided the core population of eight people. Umb's son's family and that of his matrilineal cross-cousin lived at Djimarda outstation or Maningrida but were regular visitors during the dry season staying for anything from a week to a month. Numbers were sometimes swollen by between 3-8 visitors from neighbouring outstations and when a Maradjiri exchange ceremony was being held in the two weeks from the 26th September 1986 twenty-two additional people arrived.

SHARING OF WILD FOOD

Approximately 50% of daily dietary intake was obtained from wild foods, the rest being purchased. The gathering of vegetable foods has been almost completely abandoned for purchased carbohydrates, especially flour but hunting remains vitally important [MATSUYAMA 1988: 626-627]. Hunting was carried on throughout the year except for a short period between the end of the dry and the beginning of the wet season. The main game foods were: magpie goose (*Anseranas*

semipalmata), agile wallaby (*Macropus agilis*), long neck turtle (*Chelodina rugosa*), fish of several species and the introduced buffalo (*Bubalus bubalis*). Figure 1 shows the location of hunting activity by the residents of Gamardi over all three study periods. All the locations used fell within an area of 280 square km almost all of which belonged to the Wullakki clan estate although occasionally the people crossed the Blyth River, which formed its western boundary, to exploit the swamp. The swamp was claimed as company country held jointly with the adjacent Burarra speaking Gunadpa people.

An attempt was made during the three periods of fieldwork to record all sharing of animal protein among both residents and visitors to the outstation. The following sharing was observed:

1984: during 40 days from 1st August to 11th September meat was shared on 29 occasions over 23 days

1986: during 16 days from 26th September to 11th October, when the Maradjiri ceremony was being held, meat was shared on 10 occasions over 8 days

1987-8: during 61 days from 23rd October to 6th January, meat was shared on 60 occasions over 32 days

During the 1984 dry season fieldwork, geese were hunted almost every other day by the men, supplemented by four geese hunting trips with women making four trips for long neck turtles. At that time there were only two families in residence, that of Umb and his elder sister. They shared geese with each other. Of the ten geese that Umb shot 5 were kept for his family, 2 given to his elder sister and 3 to kinsmen at the neighbouring outstations of Wredje and Gatji. The elder sister's husband, Nhu, went hunting much more frequently and of the 30 geese that he shot he kept 15, gave 10 to Umb and 5 to relations in Maningrida and Ramingining.

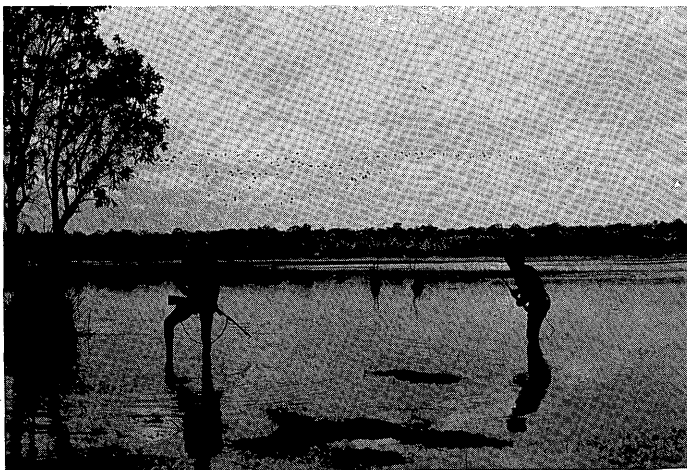


Photo. 2. Goose hunting at Nenekeri swamp.

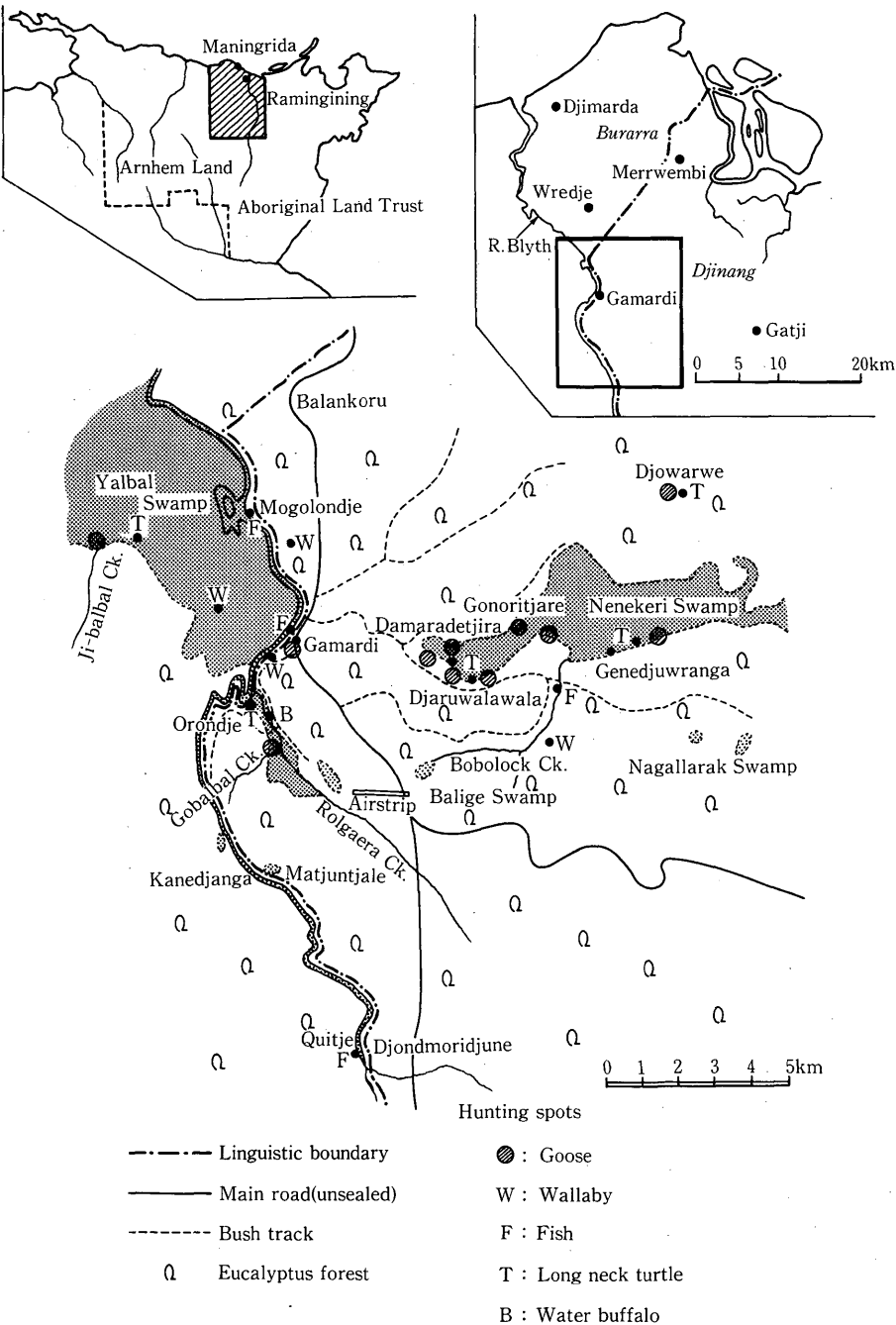


Figure 1. Land used by residents of Gamardi.

This imbalance of eight geese and three turtles in the exchange between Umb and Nhu reflects the latter's affinal status.

Umb's elder sister hunted turtles on four occasions in conjunction with men's goose hunting trips. At that time she spent two hours and half to almost seven hours to get between 3 and 7 turtles which she distributed as follows: on the first trip she collected 5, kept 3 for her family and gave 2 to Umb's family; on the second trip she got 7, kept 6 and gave Umb 1; on the third trip she got 6, gave 3 to relations at Maningrida and kept the other 3; on the last trip she kept the 3 turtles for her own family.

At the time of the Maradjiri ceremony held in the dry season of 1986, the population at Gamardi tripled to 40 people. The visitors each established their own shelter close to one of the three resident households according to kinship ties. During the period of the ceremony Umb shot 29 geese, kept 15, gave 8 to Nhu and 6 to his matrilineal cross-cousin Ang. Nhu shot 23 geese, kept 12, gave 3 to Umb and 8 to Ang. Ang kept the 5 geese that he shot for consumption by his family and associated visitors. As a result of these exchanges Umb's household cluster of 11 people consumed 18 geese, Nhu's cluster of 11 people ate 20 and Ang's cluster of 18 people, 19 geese. This pattern of distribution shows a conscious attempt to even out the distribution in relation to the number of people in each cluster, and Umb's obligations as the organiser of the ceremony to see people were fed. It also reflects his dependence on his two brothers-in-law for the organising of the ceremony. Ang as an elderly but important man who did not hunt was always looked after by his coresidents. No sharing of food with other outstations took place during this period.

The third visit took place at the end of the dry in late 1987 to early 1988. At that time the population varied between 5 and 11 people made up of Umb's family, Nhu's family and Oen's family. Fishing was the main source of animal protein from trips made every other day using a net owned by Umb. Every third day somebody would go wallaby hunting. There was no goose hunting as the swamp had dried up towards the end of the dry season. During the sixty days of observation Nhu shot 26 wallabies of which he kept 12 for his immediate household use, gave 5 to Oen and 9 to relations outside of the outstation. Umb did not go hunting for wallaby because he was under a taboo following the death of his elder brother in 1980 whose clan totem was wallaby. Because he could neither hunt nor eat wallaby he relied on fish which was usually supplied to him by Nhu and Oen. Oen was an ineffective hunter and caught nothing from five trips although he did catch 4 fish, 3 of which he gave to Umb. Umb himself caught 12 fish and gave 3 to Nhu and 4 to residents of other outstations. Nhu caught 46 fish of which he gave 13 to Umb and 2 to Oen. In this third period when no ceremony was being held the situation between Umb and Nhu reverted to the earlier one where Nhu had to meet his affinal obligations, especially because of the food taboo Umb was under. It is not clear why Nhu was so generous to Ang.

Thus sharing of wild foods was affected by a number of factors: most

important were kinship obligations. In ceremonial periods the direction of flow of food was from Umb to his brothers-in-law because of their crucial role in staging the Maradjiri ceremony. Outside ceremonial periods the direction of flow of foods was in Umb's favour as his two brothers-in-law met their affinal obligation. In the third period this flow was further emphasised because of the food taboo Umb was under. Although there is no absolute obligation to provide some of the catch to a person from whom one borrows a hunting implement, people generally do give the weapon owner a part of the kill, if it is of any size. Similarly most visitors who hunted in the Gamardi area did give a part of their kill to the residents via gifts to Umb.

Women hunted for turtles on seven occasions during this wet season period. On the first trip Umb's elder wife and his younger sister, Oen's wife, spent eight hours to obtain 4 turtles and gave them all to Umb's elder brother who lived in Merrwembi outstation. The next day Umb's wife and his elder sister each got 4 turtles of which they each kept 2 and sent 2 to Ang's family in Maningrida. The third trip was two days later when Nhu's wife and Oen's wife collected 3 turtles between them which they kept for their own use. On the fourth trip the same women collected 5 and 7 turtles respectively and again kept them all. On the fifth trip three weeks later Oen's wife got 5 and gave 3 to Umb's family and 1 to Nhu's family, leaving her with 1. Forty-three days after the fifth trip Umb's younger wife caught 3 which she kept for her own family.

MARKET FOODS

An analysis was made of the market goods purchased during the 1987-1988 period. People usually purchased food every ten days either via the visiting mobile shop that came each fortnight or during shopping trips to Maningrida, or



Photo. 3. The mobile shop at Gamardi.

Table 1. Purchasing frequency of market goods.

Item	Umb		Nhu		Oen	
	A	B	A	B	A	B
Tea	0.57	2.3 pk	0.29	2.5 pk	—	—
Tobacco	0.43	2 tin	0.43	5 tin	0.29	3 tin
Canned food	0.43	4 tin	0.14	5 tin	—	—
Bread	0.43	3 loaf	0.14	3 loaf	—	—
Detergent	0.43	1 pk	0.29	1 pk	0.14	1 pk
Flour	0.29	12 kg	0.43	12 kg	0.14	12 kg
Suger	0.29	12 kg	0.43	12 kg	—	—
Powdered milk	0.29	1 can	0.14	1 can	0.14	1 can
Biscuit	0.29	1.5 pk	0.14	1 pk	—	—
Soft drinks	0.29	6 tin	0.29	15 tin	—	—
Soap	0.14	2 bar	—	—	—	—
Matches	0.14	1 box	0.14	1 box	0.14	1 box
Batteries	0.14	4	—	—	—	—
Kerosene	—	—	0.14	3 ℓ	—	—

A: frequency $\frac{\text{buying times}}{\text{buying chances}}$

B: average volumes bought goods

Ramingining.

Table 1 shows the nature and frequency of purchases. Umb and Nhu purchased nearly equal quantities of the same items but Oen's purchases were confined to flour and tobacco because he only bought from the visiting shop. These foods were not usually shared but when tea and tobacco became scarce in a particular household people would ask one or other of their relatives for some. The one occasion on which flour and canned goods were shared by Umb with Nhu and Oen was when the latter participated in a Kunapiipi ceremony. At that time Umb gave each man three packets of sugar and three of flour and then five days later he sent one carton of sugar, flour and tea each to both men. Thus the evidence is that the people do not share market foods bought with cash with anything like the frequency that they share wild foods.

MONEY

There were two sources of income for the people at Gamardi: social security payments and income from the sale of bark paintings. The women only occasionally produced a mat or basket. Unemployment benefit was the main source of income running at \$A 180 a fortnight or \$A 8,700 a year for a married couple. Income from bark paintings varied widely. For the year June 1985 to August 1986 Umb received \$A 5,200 for 11 bark paintings at an average price of \$A 470 per piece; Nhu \$A 5,000 for 18 paintings at an average price of \$A 280; and Oen \$A 2,130 for 11 art works including both bark paintings and wood carvings at

Table 2. Accounts with Craft Centre.

Umb

Volumes and Values of Production			
1985	8	Bark paintings	\$A 3,450.-
86	4		2,300.-
87	2		6,850.-
88	2		1,500.-
Debt from Arts and Crafts Centre			
Month	Purpose		Value
	Owing from previous ledger		\$A 260.70
7. 1987	Grant from Aboriginal Arts Board		1,210.-
8.	Cash		80.-
9.	Cash		2,360.-
	Food		300.-
10.	—		—
11.	Cash		60.-
12.	Cash		300.-
1. 1988	Cash		600.-
2.	Cash		500.-
3.	—		—
4.	Cash		373.-
	Fuel for truck		55.32
5.	—		—
6.	—		—
7.	Repairs to video		180.-
	Cash		530.20
8.	Engine Oil for truck		120.-
	Cash		600.-
9.	Cash		640.-
	Fuel for truck		24.-
10.	Repairs to truck		3,000.-
	Cash		450.-
	Repairs to radio		350.-
	Grant from Aboriginal Arts Board		9,520.-
Total: Debit	10,729.29	Credit	10,730.-
Balance	0.71		

Nhu

Volumes and Values of Production			
1985	9	Bark paintings	\$A 3,160.-
86	12		2,500.-
87	15		3,870.-
88	—		—
Debt from Arts and Crafts Centre			
Month	Purpose		Value
	Owing from previous ledger		\$A 2,468.06
7. 1988	Cash		150.-
8.	Cash		400.-
	(Data not available on following period)		
Total: Debit	3,018.06	Credit	—
Balance	3,018.06		

Oen

Volumes and Values of Production			
1986	7	Bark paintings	\$A 1,340.-
	4	Carvings	795.-
87	1	Carvings	25.-
Debt from Arts and Crafts Centre			
Month	Purpose		Value
	Owing from previous ledger		\$A 00.0
10. 1986	File		30.-
1. 87	Brush		9.50
Total: Debit	39.50	Credit	—
Balance	39.50		

(Source: Artist Ledger and Selling Book, Maningrida Arts and Crafts Centre)

an average price of \$A 190. The differences in average price accurately reflects their relative standing as artists.

All three men had access to credit from the Arts and Crafts Centre at Maningrida which would advanced them money against future production. As Table 2 shows the system of advances was generous and not tied to production where the producer had a good reputation. On some occasions the men would sell artwork for immediate payment rather than using it to reduce their outstanding debt. This was possible because the craft adviser did not pay the men the full value of the best paintings, mainly because of the limited working capital available to the Centre, but was secure in the knowledge that when he made sales it would realise considerable sums. In the meantime he would provide advances of cash from time to time. Just how benign this system was, is shown in Table 2. Umb's account is particularly interesting because it reveals the extent of state intervention in the economy. The advances were made on top of regular fortnightly income from unemployment benefit. The Craft Centre sustained a debt for over fourteen months that ultimately ran to over \$A 10,000 before being cancelled through a grant paid to Umb from the Aboriginal Arts Board which he passed on to the Craft Centre. The exact reasons for the payment by the Board are not known. It can be seen that Umb's production was declining and he himself commented in 1988 that he was becoming too tired to paint much. Umb used most of the cash advances to run a truck and to repair a video set.

Nhu's advances from the Craft Centre were nothing like as generous as those to Umb but nevertheless the Centre carried a debt of over \$A 3,000 for a considerable period. Like Umb, Nhu spent most of his cash advances on running and maintaining a vehicle. His production seems to have been increasing but in 1988 family problems led to a suspension of production altogether.

It is clear from Table 2 that the advances to Oen are simply expenses to keep him producing and of a different nature from those to the other two men.

Money was never seen to be shared during any of the study periods.

Table 3. List of personal property: Nhu.

	1984	86 (Newly introduced)	88 (Newly introduced)
Hunting gear	Rifle 1, Shotgun 1, Shotgun bullets 1, Hatchet 1, Knife 2, Axe 1, *Iron stick 2, Fishing line 3, Dog 1		
Wild foods	Turtle 5		
Market foods	Flour 1, Canned corn beef 3, Salt 1, Powdered milk 2, Sugar 4, Tea 2, Tobacco 4		
Clothes	T-shirts, Pants, Underpants, Dresses, Skirts, Brassieres, Panties, and others, Hat 2		
Durable goods	Radio-cassette deck 1	Refrigerator 1, Electric fan 1, Generator (broken) 1, Tv-video set 1	4WD Truck (broken) 1, Radio-cassette deck 2
Small items	Cap 4, **Billycan 4, Saucepan 1, Aluminium tray 1, Water tank 3, Macassan pipe 1, Torch 2, Lamp 1, Washbasin 2, Laundry basket 1, Detergent 1, Soap 4, Tooth brush 1, A piece of mirror 1, Mosquito coils 1, Repellent 1, Canvas shoes 2, Rubber sandals 1, Bag 3, Suits case 4, Handbag 1, Cassette tape 13, Saw 1, Car battery 8, Nylon sheet 2, Mat 2, Blanket 4, Sheet 5, Pillow 3, Mosquito net 3, Leather mat 1		
Housing	Corrugated galvanised iron house 2, Nylon tent 1		
Ceremonial gear	Boomerang 2, Maradjiri pole 2, Didjeridoo (Wooden trumpet) 1, Bag for rites 2		
Tools/Materials for art and claft	Bark 8, Ochres, Grinding stone 3, Brush 8, Glue 2, Knife 2, File 1		

All items except bark, ochre, grinding stone and ceremonial gear were purchased.

* Iron stick: to probe for turtles in mud.

**Billycan: tin kettle.

Table 4. List of personal property: Umb and Oen.

	Umb		Oen	
	1986	88 (Newly introduced)	1986	88 (Newly introduced)
Hunting gear	Shotgun 1, Fishing net 1, Fish spear 1, Hachet 1, Knife 1, Axe 1, Dog 4			
Wild foods	Goose 1		Turtle 37	
Market foods	Flour 5, Powdered milk 1, Tea 1, Canned foods 5, Sugar 3		Flour 1, Sugar 1, Tea 1	
Clothes	T-shirts, Pants, Underpants, Dresses, Skirts, Brassieres, Panties, and others		T-shirts, Pants, Underpants, Dresses, Skirts, Brassieres, Panties, and others	
Durable goods	4WD-Truck 1, Radio-cassette deck 1, Radio phone 1	4WD-Truck 1, Bicycle 2, Tricycle 2, Tv-antenna 1, Tv-video set 1, Portable generator 1		
Small items	Cap 3, Billycan 2, Water tank 2, Pipe 1, lamp 1, Detergent 1, Soap 2, Mosquito coils 1, Repellent 2, Canvas shoes 1, Rubber sandals 2, Suits case 1, Car battery 5, *Card 1, Nylon sheet 1, Mat 3, Blanket 3, Sheet 3, Pillow 1, Mosquito net 2	Electric cord 2, Video cassette tape 15, Portable cooler 1, Petrol tank 3, Bed 1	Cap 2, Billycan 1, Water tank 1, Pipe 1, Torch 1, Lamp 1, Detergent 1, Rubber sandals 2, Saw 1, Mat 1, Blanket 2, Sheet 2, Pillow 1	Nylon sheet 1
Housing	Corrugated galvanised iron house 2		Nylon tent 1,	
Ceremonial gear	Bag for rites 1, Spear 3			
Tools/ Materials for art and craft	Ochres, Grinding stone 1, Brush 3, Glue 1, Knife 2		Brush 5, Knife 3, File 2, Sandpaper 1	

*Card: playing cards. Umb prohibited gambling at Gamardi.

OWNERSHIP OF PERSONAL PROPERTY

A census was taken of personal property on each visit and the results are shown in Table 3 and 4. The main differences between the three households relate to durable goods such as trucks, refrigerators, radio-cassette recorders and Tv-video machines. Nhu has the largest amount of personal property running to 130 items of 67 different types, the larger items of which include an electric fan, a video-tv, and a refrigerator (a largely symbolic non-functional item, as the portable generator off which all the large electric goods ran was not working most of the time).

Umb possessed about 80 pieces of material culture of 55 different types. As a result of high earnings in 1986, in which his household's total income was \$A 14,300, he purchased a video-tv, a fourwheel drive car and two bicycles. Oen only had 45 pieces of 34 different types and no major consumer durables.

CONCLUSION

Despite the small population at Gamardi its economy is complex because it lies at the intersection of two sets of social relations, those deriving from a pre-colonial Aboriginal way of life and those from the contemporary welfare state. Wild food still seems to circulate on the basis of an Aboriginal logic in which affinal obligations loom large and the importance of the successful staging of ceremonies can galvanise a recipient of food in non-ceremonial periods into an effective hunter.

Money and the goods it buys are not shared in the same way or anything like as freely. This must be in part because it is such a small group of people relatively well supplied with the highly valued possessions such as transport and video-tv. Although in comparison to the population at large the people possess little it is evident from the levels of income and the way in which they run up credit when available to them that the capacity to consume is large. Yet there is no dependency created on the agency lending credit as the decline and halt in production by Umb and Nhu indicates. This would appear to be because the art income is additional to that from the state in the form of transfer payments which provide an assured income. So while the people have not yet fallen into a consumer dependency it is clear that the productive work they do is for the purchase and maintenance of consumer goods. Only time will provide the answer as to when the threshold will be crossed and a permanent dependency established that leads them into either selling their labour or feeling deprived.

REFERENCES

MATSUYAMA, T. (松山 利夫)

- 1988 「アーネムランド・アボリジニ, ジナン族の狩猟と食物規制」『国立民族学博物館研究報告』12(3): 613-646. (Hunting Strategy and Food Regulation among the Djinang in Arnhem Land. *Bulletin of the National Museum of Ethnology* 12(3):

613-646.)

MEEHAN, B. and R. JONES

- 1980 The Outstation Movement and Hints of a White Backlash. In R. Jones (ed.), *Northern Australia: Options and Implications*. Canberra: Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University. pp. 131-157.