WAYT MAN: HISTORY OF CONTACT IN THE CENTRAL ISLANDS

a number of women [were] being guarded by two men, 'well-built' or 'well-disposed'....One of the native guards put his bow and arrows on the ground and climbed a tree to avoid the Spaniards, and refused to come down when ordered to do so. So a soldier took the bow and fired the arrows up at the man, who surprised them all by catching each arrow in his hand...So the soldier...shot the native, who fell down lifeless to the ground...the soldiers then chose three of the youngest women and took them aboard 'for the service of the crew of the ship.

In one historical account of the voyage, the three ladies are said to have been recruited as laundresses. One of them must have been very pregnant, as she gave birth to a child six weeks later....

(Hilder 1980: 74 -75)

From at least three hundred and eighty five years ago Torres Strait Islanders began to experience intermittent contact with new sets of outsiders, above and beyond their regular associations with both Papuans and Aboriginal Australians. The Central islands and the Western islands closest to and including Thursday Island, and around the vicinity of Somerset on the tip of Cape York, were on the frontiers of European expansionism. There is a glaring gap in the written record as to the exact nature of sustained contact in these areas and the associated demise of the local populations. Snippets of information are available for tiny slices of time, followed by very little information for a substantial period of time. From the 1870s there is more material, primarily documenting how little is now left of Central Islanders' culture (see for example Haddon et al 1901; 1904; 1908; 1912; 1935). Beckett (1961b, 1961c, 1963, 1972, 1978a, 1978b, 1982, 1983, 1985, 1987a, 1987b), Moore (1979), Fitzpatrick
(Fitzpatrick-Nietschmann 1980a, 1980b, 1981), Sharp (1980a, 1980b, 1984) and Mullins (1988) each have contributed to our understanding of the processes and moments of colonial change, by their specific focuses on the South-Western, Western, Top Western and Eastern Islands. The particular focus in this chapter is on the nature of colonial impacts and change on the Central Islands of Yam and Tudu.

4.1. Early Recorded Contacts

The earliest recorded date for European contact with Torres Strait Islanders is in 1606, the year in which both the Dutch and the Spanish sailed into the area. The Dutch sailed down from near the coast of Papua and past the islands of Prince of Wales (Muralag), Badu and Moa on the western perimeter of the Strait (Haddon 1935: 3; see also Appendix 9). Jansz landed on Prince of Wales and then continued south to Cape Keerweer on the western side of Cape York (see Sutton 1978). From there they returned to Holland, presumably without realising they had sailed part of the strait separating the mainlands of Australia and Papua New Guinea. There is a strong suggestion however, that the Dutch (and the Spanish) were aware of a strait separating the two mainlands from as early as 1597, when it was marked on a Dutch map by Wytfliet (Jack 1921a: 9; Haddon 1935: 3).

Some time between July and October in 1606, two Spanish ships under the commands of Luis Vaez de Torres and del Prado arrived, and this voyage remains the first officially recorded occasion on which Europeans sailed through the strait, 1 discovering for themselves that Australia and New Guinea were not a single land mass. From the coast of New Guinea Torres sailed into the Torres Strait, naming Endeavour Strait

1. Because of colonial competition at the time, this information was kept secret from the rest of the world, until Manila was captured by the British in 1761. Spanish documents were unearthed which included letters to King Philip of Spain from the priests on board the ships, four maps by del Prado and a manuscript by Arias calling for further urgent explorations in the Pacific Ocean (Jack 1921a).
'San Pedrico Strait' (Utray 1985). The Spanish ships anchored off nine islands and dropped anchor at Zegey on 7th September. By the following morning when the crew landed, most of the population had fled to Tudu. The village was deserted except for a small unfortunate group of women and two men discovered by the rampaging crew (Hilder 1980:74). In addition to the sailors shooting a man and capturing three women, one of the crew shot and cooked a dog to eat, and other dogs were pursued across the exposed reef. Presumably the crew availed themselves of any food they found. As to what happened to the other guard and the other women on the island, no account is available. It took the ships two weeks to go from Zegey, to Yam (which Prado exaggeratedly claimed was inhabited by cannibals up to 260cm tall - Hilder 1980: 75), Mukar, Gebar, Sasi and Nagi (1980: 78-83).

These incidents on Zegey represent the first unequivocal evidence of Torres Strait Islanders being terrorised by the crew of a European ship. The impact on the Zegey Islanders being confronted by strange humans, of witnessing the power of a gun, of being unable to prevent the abduction of three young women, and of observing the crew's rampage against the dogs, would have been dramatic and of a different order than the impact of raiding parties by other Islanders or Papuans.

In 1623 and again in 1644 the Dutch were unsuccessful in their attempts to sail a passage through the Strait (Haddon 1935: 4). It was not until Cook's voyage in 1770, that as far as we know, a European since Torres traversed the area. He hoisted a British flag on Possession Island, to claim the whole of Eastern Australia for King George III (Jack 1921a: 88; Haddon 1935: 4). Interestingly, contemporary Kawrareg testimony disputes that Cook did hoist the flag (R. Wasaga, Muralag Tribal Torres Strait Islander Corporation, interviewed on ABC Radio, August 1990).

In 1789 Bligh sailed through the Strait in the Bounty en route to Timor (1935: 5), and
there were three recorded European passages through the waterway in 1791. The **Pandora** sank in August 1791 and some of her crew were speared on Mt Adolphus after they had refused water to the local people (Rhodes 1934a: 108-109). In 1792, on the orders of the English King 'to make a complete examination of Torres Strait' (Lee 1920: vii), Bligh again sailed through the Strait, this time in two armed boats (1920: vii). He gave English names to many of the Eastern, Central and Western islands, and one of the boats was challenged off Erub after the crew had refused the offer of a coconut. Lt. Tobin ordered his men to open fire after the Islanders had begun to string their bows (Bligh in Lee 1920: 175-177; Rhodes 1934a: 111). As Bligh had been sent to the Torres Strait after the wreck of the **Pandora**, no doubt he and his crew were edgy and keyed up for possible confrontation. With this kind of mind-set their recourse to weapons is explicable in terms of their preconceptions of Islanders as 'treacherous'. The following day Bligh and his party went ashore and exchanged goods, including iron, with the Erubam le (1920: 179).

Three days later when Bligh and his party anchored and went ashore at Dhamudh (see Map 3), the local people approached them and traded artefacts and 'plums' (presumably wongay) for iron (Bligh in Jack 1921a: 114). From Dhamudh they travelled to Tudu where they were subsequently attacked, hence the English name 'Warrior Island' thereafter being applied to Tudu.

The following extract from Bligh's account of the battle is from Lee (1920: 187-8). As the two ships sailed between Zegey and Tudu on 11th September, 1792, large numbers of Islanders were noticed on the beach at Zegey. The HMS **Providence** and the Assistant were approached by nine canoes each carrying between 8 and 20 men. 'The strongest party' came up to the **Providence** and indicated that water and food could be obtained at Tudu:
A word they generally use for water is 'Wabbah-Wabbah', at the same time holding up a bamboo and pointing to their throats. They expressed great astonishment at the ship, and at the men at the mastheads, and although we offered them ropes they would not come alongside but showed signs of distrust and design.

I was considering what these symptoms were, when I saw the 'Assistant' suddenly fire at some canoes, as did our cutter, and she alarmed us by the signal she made for 'assistance'. It was now seen that the canoes had made an attack, and that those around us were intending to do the same. I knew that mischief was done to our poor little companion by these wretches, and arrows were fired at us. It was not a time to trifle. My ship might be on shore in a few minutes without being carefully handled, and it was a serious point who were to be masters of the situation. I settled it by discharging two of the quarter-deck guns with round and grape. The contents of one carried destruction and brought horrible consternation to them, and they fled from their canoes into the sea and swam to windward like porpoises.

Three men on the 'Assistant' were wounded by their arrows. Great fires were now made on the Island P [Tudu], where we saw about 100 persons.

(Bligh in Lee 1920: 187-8)

Portlock, who was with Bligh, gave a further description of the battle at Tudu:

I was at the masthead for the purpose of hauling out, and at that instant saw some of the Indians in one of the canoes (that had separated from the rest) seize their bows, and without the smallest provocation on our part, discharge several arrows at the people in our cutter....I called out to the men to arm and fire on them....but their first arrows had wounded two men in the boat and one on deck......[Portlock made the signal for assistance to the Commodore].....just at that instant the savages [sic] in a large canoe under his starboard bow were observed firing a number of arrows at his ship.....When we had got some distance from the disabled canoes the remainder of the fleet came to their assistance, and through our glasses we could perceive that they were
struck with horror on looking into them. By this, I conclude, some must have been killed or wounded so much as not to be able to get up. They took the disabled canoes in tow, and went over to Traitor's Isle we may call it. I am extremely sorry to have occasion to alter my opinion of these people......In the late instance we have proof that they are not to be trusted. Their weapons are extremely dangerous and they are good marksmen.....the point of one [arrow] about an inch long remains in the loem of an Ash oar and has gone in with such force as to split the oar 2 inches on each side.

(Portlock in Lee 1920: 264-267)

Bligh's account stated that the Tudu people indicated water was available, and that they held up bamboo and pointed to their throats. In the first instance, what Bligh heard as 'Wabbah wabbah', could have been Tudu people saying 'wahta wahta', that is 'water, water'. In Kalaw Lagaw Ya, water is 'nguki'. Of great interest is the second, equally cryptic statement. Depending on how this was done, and what shape the piece of bamboo was, it could have indicated the availability of water (in bamboo tubes), or it could have been a statement of intent to behead the visitors (with a bamboo knife). There were obviously mixed messages being conveyed here, for certainly the Tudu men were as quick to string their bows as the British were to fire their guns. In a similar vein, perhaps they had said 'gabba gabba' and not 'wabba wabba', and thus had made explicit reference to their stone-headed clubs.

The likelihood of word having been sent to Tudu about the attack at Erub would have been extremely high. Given that the crew of the ship went ashore at Erub and Dhamudh, a canoe could easily have journeyed to Tudu, arriving there before the ship (see Map 5). Furthermore, if this were the case, the canoe may have departed before the exchange of goods between the Europeans and the Erub people took place after the ships' crew had fired on Erub.
If this were the case then it is appropriate to regard the attack at Tudu as provoked, in that the Kulkulgal were prepared for confrontation and ready to avenge the attack at Erub. What is more, Moresby (1876: 29) noted in 1871 that the Kulkalgal of Tudu perceived themselves as the victors in this battle, vindicated by the ship's rapid departure. It should also be remembered that the Kulkalgal had had European aggression directed against them before, such as by Torres' crew at Zegey in 1606, and probably much more frequently than the written record reveals.

The force of the new invaders was powerfully and unequivocally demonstrated when three Eastern islands were literally put to the torch by the British in 1793 (Haddon 1935: 6-7; Allen and Corris 1977: 8-9; MacFarlane 1888: 29-30). Torres Strait Islanders on the Eastern and South-Western islands had further contacts with English explorers in 1802 with Flinders' (1966 b) voyage and King's arrivals in 1819, 1820 and 1821 (Rhodes 1934b: 142; King 1827a: 239-242), and on all occasions the Islanders actively entreated the crews to engage in exchange.

The **Charles Eaton** was shipwrecked off the coast of Cape York in August 1834, in the Charles Hardy Group of islands (Haddon 1935: 8-11) 27 km north-east of Cape Grenville in Aboriginal territory belonging to the Wuthathi 2 people (Chase 1980b). Some of those on board managed to escape to Timor, and the remaining 27 or so survivors constructed two rafts. On one, all were killed with the exception of the two D'Oyley boys. Those on the other raft which drifted north were persuaded to land at Boydong Island, between Shelburne and Orford Bays, in country belonging to the Uyngaanthi or Mutjati of eastern Cape York (Thompson 1976; Tindale 1974: 182).

At Boydong Island all on the raft were killed except Sexton and a boy called John Ireland (Jack 1921a: 155). The severed heads of the others were sent to Awridh, and

2. Also known as the Otadi, or Otati (Tindale 1974: 184)
the three boys were subsequently taken there, where a number of Torres Strait Islanders were living temporarily for the duration of the fishing season. All three Europeans remained on Awridh for about two months, until the older D'Oyley boy died. It was at this point that the remaining two survivors were transferred to Murray Island (Rhodes 1934a: 269). In 1836 Captain Morgan Lewis was sent to Murray Island to search for survivors. A ransom was paid for the Europeans (Haddon 1935: 10; Allen and Corris 1977: 15; Rhodes 1934a: 284), and soon after 45 human skulls were located on Awridh, of which it was subsequently claimed some 17 were European (Allen and Corris 1977: 17; Rhodes 1934a: 285; Jack 1921a: 156-157).

The European crew attacked the whole foundation of Awridh society by destroying all the trees, burning the whole island, removing the skulls and destroying the structure in which the skulls were arranged (Haddon 1935: 89; Allen and Corris 1977: 17). There is no mention in the reports of any loss of human life on this punitive expedition, which is evidence of either a rare example of restraint or a puzzling omission of detail, although Lewis claimed all the people were absent when they visited (see Haddon 1935: 10). In August the searchers landed at Masig, and one of the survivors claimed the skulls of some of his companions had been sent to New Guinea (1977: 16).

What is of particular interest here is evidence of the communication, travel and exchange relations obtaining between specific Cape York Aboriginal people and those of the Central islands of Awridh and Masig, and the Eastern island of Mer. As already discussed, Awridh was the central trading centre to which the Meriam Ie (see Map 5) came to exchange goods. Whether the heads of the killed were used as currency in the canoe trade is inconclusive, although as pointed out elsewhere, heads were reputedly used in such a manner. Furthermore, the Eastern and Central islands were linked through the cults of Seu (Masig), Sigay-Mayaw (Yam), Bomai-Malu (Mer) and Kulka (Awridh). Presumably membership in these cults influenced the treatment and
transferral of survivors, material items and skulls. The Kulkulgal of Yam-Tudu must have been in contact with those survivors of the Charles Eaton based on Awridh, and information could have reached them about the reprisals carried out by the crew of the Isabella on Awridh in 1836, as well as the latter having landed on Masig in the same year.

The French vessels Astrolabe and Zélée carried Dumont D'Urville on an expedition through the Torres Strait in 1840. The scientists were subsequently stranded on a reef just to the north of Tudu on 1st June 1840 (Dumont D’Urville 1987: 543-548; see also Haddon 1935: 12). As they floundered, the Kulkalgal

flocked on to the reef and from afar were watching our poor corvette aground and bumping heavily. They were perhaps hoping that wreckage from her would wash up on to their shores...........

[The following day] The natives of Tudu Island wasted no time in coming to visit us. By walking along the reef they had been able to get to the point where Astrolabe was stranded, almost without getting their feet wet. By means of a rope we held out to them they soon reached her gunwales.......They showed no fear when they came on board. One of them said, with a naivety that made us laugh, that our ships were in a very awkward position there and that it would be much better to take them into the channel where they would be infinitely safer.

These savages [sic] knew a few words of English....... In our situation, we were very concerned to establish friendly relations with them for, although we had nothing to fear from their possible attacks on the camp I intended to set up on shore, we were to have enough trouble on our hands to want to avoid fighting with them; so I tried with gifts to gain the friendship of the one who appeared to be the chief, and I got him to send his canoes out fishing, by promising him a good reward if he was willing to let us share the catch.

(Dumont D’Urville 1987: 544; 546)
The leader referred to by Dumont D'Urville could well have been Kebisu. Interestingly, Tudu people already knew a few words of English, and had incorporated the use of iron into their technology (1987: 549; see also Jack 1921a: 171).

It took seven and eight days respectively before the Astrolabe and the Zéée were able to sail out of the channel and it is feasible that the military might of the French was demonstrated to the Kulkalgal during this period. As Dumont D'Urville openly wrote of his feelings of vulnerability while stranded at Tudu, the likelihood of his crew having fired rounds of ammunition or grape would be high. However, while neither he nor any of his officers wrote about specifically having done so, Dumont D'Urville (1987: 550) did comment that the Kulkalgal were frightened of their weapons. Guns and cannon had been fired by them as a matter of course at other places in the Pacific, either to call the ground parties back to the ship or as a means of intimidation (see Dumont D'Urville 1987: 359; 360).

Well before the 1840s, Torres Strait Island people were familiar enough with European ships and their crews to have established their own strategies for avoiding or launching attacks, and to have become eager participants in trade. The Central Islands were not on the direct route taken by ships during the first few decades of the 19th century (Dumont D'Urville 1987: 546) as most of the ships anchored in the lee of Murray Island (Mullins 1988: 65), however the desire of Central Islanders to engage in trade was not diminished (see Mullins 1988: 65). When the Fly anchored at Masig in March 1845, the crew were approached by a canoe carrying six males, all confident and unarmed, and very keen to trade (Jukes 1847a: 157; Haddon 1935: 90). At Dhamudh Jukes (1847a: 163) noted an iron spike already adapted for husking coconuts, and reported finding a cabin door, a quarter gun, pieces of 'Queen's line' and iron hoops. The acquisition of iron meant Islanders could attain an advantage over their peers, and increase their standing in relation to Europeans.
By the 1840s, more than two hundred years and three to four generations subsequent to the first recorded European voyage to the region, Torres Strait Islanders were actively participating as brokers with Europeans. As trade constituted such an essential component of Torres Strait Island economies, Islanders quickly embarked upon the exchange of goods with Europeans. This relatively amicable exchange of goods between Islanders and foreign sailors satisfied a market. Time and again sailors have referred to the eagerness with which trade for consumable and non-consumable articles was conducted. Thus on Tudu in 1840, Dumont D'Urville spoke of Tudu men as having'

quickly learned the times the crew had their meals; they then flocked aboard our ships to ask for pieces of hard tack that they greedily devoured. Apart from a few shellfish and other fish, they had nothing to offer us in exchange.

(1987: 549)

Little did Jukes realise the extent of prior communication between Torres Strait Islanders and Europeans when he remarked in the 1840s that the people of the South-Western islands 'appeared to have communicated with Europeans before' (1847a: 146). He described Torres Strait Island people in general as being 'cheerful' with inquiring minds, and ever ready to engage in balanced exchange for useful articles (1847b: 248). In addition to their involvement in exchange relations with Europeans, they were actively involved in more extensive cultural exchange; they were as interested in teaching outsiders about the particularities of their own culture as they were in knowing more about the culture of the outsiders (1847b: 248). In the late 1920s, W. MacFarlane (1919-1928, PMB MF 959) mentioned to Haddon that Jukes was still remembered on the islands of Yam and Darnley by the name 'Dookes'.

4.2. Shipwrecks: Trade and Conflict

Shipwrecks provided an additional avenue by which Torres Strait Islanders gained access to European material items. As the numbers of European voyages through the Torres Strait increased, so too did the number of shipwrecks. With increasing shipwrecks, Torres Strait Islanders had increased access to the desired goods of iron, sails, knives, copper bolts and guns. Given that some of the desired European materials often washed up on the beaches of islands, particular Islanders did not have to have direct access to their source to acquire some items (Q.S.A. CPS 13C/G1). Because of the trade networks criss-crossing the Strait, items acquired by Eastern Islanders were quickly incorporated within both the local inter-island and regional island-mainlands exchange systems (see Map 4).

Of all the shipwrecks that occurred in the Torres Strait, not all initial survivors were killed by Islanders when each group came in contact. According to W. MacFarlane all castaways were killed unless they called out the name of a friend from the group of Islanders encountered, or unless they were recognised. Castaways had an unpleasant appearance after having been immersed in saltwater for some time and were generally affected psychologically. The killing of castaways mitigated against possible eruptions of social discord on an island (see MacFarlane 1929 in Haddon 1888-1929). Any castaways on Tudu were immediately killed if caught below the high water mark, although their lives were spared if they managed to hide in the bush (Haddon 1935: 74).

Bani (1988c) has argued that when shipwrecked outsiders arrived at an island and the corpses of recently deceased locals were awaiting final funeral rites (Bani 1988a), the interlopers were perceived as spirits of the deceased, and their lives were spared (1988c). At these annual secondary mortuary rites (see Chapter 7), the spirit of the deceased was impersonated by his or her affines at special 'spirit dances' held on the
rising of the new moon (Bani 1988b). If castaways arrived at any other time, they were killed (1988c). How long this perception persisted is not known. Presumably as the traffic of boats substantially increased, by at least the 1840s Torres Strait Islanders would have realised they were dealing with living people, albeit people very different from and ultimately more powerful than themselves.

4.3. Surveying Voyages

Between 1842 and 1850 the Fly (under Capt. Blackwood), the Bramble (under Lt. Yule) and the Rattlesnake (under Capt. Owen Stanley) surveyed the Torres Strait, continuing the preliminary work carried out by Flinders, King, Wickham and Stokes in 1839 (Jack 1921a: 172, 178; H.R.A. Series 1 vol. 26: 459; Jukes 1847a). Jukes, Sweatman and MacGillivray were the geologists and naturalists on board the ships. Further surveys were carried out by Arthur Onslow on HMS Herald between 1857 and 1861, and in 1873 parts of the western Torres Strait were surveyed by Moresby in HMS Basilisk (Haddon 1935: 13). These later surveys were largely performed as a result of pressure placed on the British Admiralty following the shipwreck of the Charles Eaton. It was argued that a survey of the Strait's channels and information about safe anchorages was urgently required. Until the journals and reports of the surveyors became public, Europeans knew very little about the Torres Strait islands (1935: xiii).

While it would appear that the role of surveying was essentially non-aggressive, at least the Rattlesnake was armed as a Man-O-War with 28 guns, and a crew of 180 (Marshall 1976: 80). It is reasonable to assume therefore, that as ships of the British Admiralty, the remaining survey ships were similarly armed, though perhaps not as heavily staffed. As such, the sight of these ships and their crews must have had a significant impact on local Torres Strait Island people. As the impetus for the surveys came from the wreck of the Charles Eaton, the commanders of the surveying vessels would also have been ready for combat.
During this period the amount of shipping between Australia and Asia which passed through the Strait continued to increase. Eventually, despatches between Sydney and London urged the establishment of a settlement at the tip of Cape York to facilitate steam travel through the Strait (H.R.A. Series 1 vol. 26: 459). By the time the 'era of colonial occupation' proper began in the Torres Strait in 1864, Torres Strait Islanders had already witnessed the comings and goings of a vast range of outsiders for decades, if not centuries. Thus contrary to Mullins' claim (1987) of the 'remarkable' adaptation of Islanders to these 'rapidly changing circumstances', over a number of generations prior to full scale colonisation of the region they had already begun to formulate their perceptions of outsiders, their increasing presence, and an awareness of the possible benefits and dangers of associating with them on a variety of levels.

4.4. New Settlers and New Industries

As already discussed, at times Torres Strait Islanders and foreigners to the area were keen to trade, while at other times they were firmly set against each other, or maintained a safe distance. Shipwrecked crews in distress presented little resistance to Torres Strait Islanders, and presumably the crews of the surveying ships presented less of a physical and socio-economic threat to people of the Torres Strait than those who came specifically to the region to exploit its natural resources. However, the sheer size of their ships, as well as armaments on their ships, would have served as powerful reminders to local people that the establishment of friendly relations and exchange transactions was the safest strategy to pursue. Up until at least the 1870s an uneasy balance of truce and warfare existed between the two groups, and even when Central Islanders attempted trade, women and children were usually hidden from the sight of outsiders. For example, when the HMS Fly anchored off Dhamudh in March 1845, a number of men approached the crew, while the local women and children were safely hidden (Jukes 1847a: 160-161). Five years earlier, the men of Tudu openly approached
the crews of the Zélée and Astrolabe, while the women and children were whisked away:

The first time we saw these boats [Tudu canoes] loaded with women and children heading in that direction, we thought they were terror-stricken at our proximity and wanted to get away to avoid any sudden attack.

When our officers went to the village they found all the huts deserted; they had purposely removed their women and children to protect them from being pursued by Europeans.

(Dumont D'Urville 1987: 549)

How people reacted to outsiders of course related to their previous experiences. No doubt trying to lure sailors ashore with women and girls, as happened at Darnley in 1840, would have ceased quickly as the full impacts of sailors and fishermen were felt (see Chester Q.S.A. CPS 13 C/G1), and as fleets of military surveying ships came into the region.

There had also been a number of non-Islanders who established themselves on particular islands, well before the arrival of missionaries in the 1870s. The Scotswoman Barbara Thompson had lived with the Kawrareg of Muralag between 1844 and 1849 (Moore 1979; Jack 1921a: 262), and Wini was resident on Badu.

Marine Industries

Torres Strait Islanders have been involved in marine industries (as opposed to marine based subsistence activities) since at least the 1860s, and their involvement continues to be a focal point in their lives. Prior to 1871 there had been a busy traffic of ships and a rush to exploit the lucrative pearlshell and bêche-de-mer resources.
Although several authors have stated that trade in bêche-de-mer and 'tortoiseshell' was conducted between Sydney and Hong Kong vessels in the Torres Strait by the 1840s (Saville-Kent 1972; Haddon 1935: 15; Loos 1982: 118; Sweatman's journal in Allen and Corris 1977), Mullins (1988) is convincing in his argument that the bêche-de-mer industry was not carried out in the Strait until the 1860s. Because pearling came to a standstill during World Wars 1 and 2, the trochus industry became significant. This shell was predominantly collected off the east coast of Cape York, along the ribbon reefs of the Great Barrier Reef system, although a lot of Torres Strait Islanders made good money collecting the shell in the strait itself (Haddon 1935: 15).

Beckett (1963) has claimed that because people on the Central and Western islands were traditionally more involved with the sea than with the land, they became more readily involved in the bêche-de-mer, pearling and trochus industries than did Eastern Island people. He demonstrated that by 1900 Islanders in the Central and Western region had become increasingly reliant on cash and wage labour, although there is no doubt that their Eastern Island neighbours were similarly involved for some time. Indeed, there were fisheries established on key islands in the Western, Central and Eastern regions (see MacFarlane 1888: 50; Jardine to Moresby, 1872. Q.S.A. CPS 13C/G1; Prideaux 1988: 30).

Non-Torres Strait Islanders involved in the pearlshell and bêche-de-mer industries had established stations on several of the islands during the 1860s: Jimmy Samoa (James Mills) on Nagi, Captain Banner on Tudu, 'Yankee Ned' Mosby on Masig, and a Frenchman (name unknown) on Puruma. Colin Thomson had been living on Puruma perhaps prior to 1871, or from the beginning of 1871, and by 1873 at least he had shifted his operations to Gebar (Jardine to the Colonial Secretary, 1873. Q.S.A. C.P.S. 13 C/G1). In 1869 Banner established a trepang station on Tudu, and Haddon (1935: 14) has referred to the reports by Moresby (1876) of his 1871 check on the fisheries operations.
By the time Moresby (1876: 23) visited Gebar in February 1871, the island was one of the main pearlshell fishing centres in the strait. The Merriman brothers of Sydney owned the shelling stations on Tudu (Moresby 1876: 29; Jack 1921a: 355) and Mabuiag (Q.S.A. CPS 13 C/G1. Aiplin to the Colonial Secretary 1874). According to Moresby (1876: 28) the Tudu operation was the largest and 'best conducted' fishery in the region. By 1875 Thomgren had established a station on Yam, and for some time prior to the 1890s Awridh had been a shelling and turtleshell station (Myers 1899).

It is virtually impossible to evaluate Torres Strait Islander men and women's respective labour in these industries, particularly prior to the 1872 and 1884 acts regulating labour (see Appendix 11). In the written record their contributions are rarely differentiated and are typically included under references to Aborigines and/or Pacific Islanders. Nevertheless, there is no reason to presume that Torres Strait Islanders were any less prone to being victims of the outrages suffered by Aboriginal people and Pacific Islanders in these industries (see Loos 1982), and as recorded from time to time in government reports (see Jardine to the Colonial Secretary, 1872. Q.S.A. CPS 13C/G1).

In the 1870s Moresby argued that unscrupulous methods used by master pearlers and bêche-de-mer operators, such as firing at divers and detaining divers against their will, had gone unchecked because a Man-O-War had not visited some of these operations. He also mentioned fights between Islanders armed with guns and the boat masters, and that hungry imported divers had taken to making raids on local Islanders (Moresby 1876: 14).

Bêche-de-mer and Pearlshell Fisheries

Banner established the first pearling station in the Torres Strait on Tudu in 1869 after he had initially set up a bêche-de-mer industry there (Haddon 1935: 14).
bêche-de-mer industry small luggers ranging in size from 5 to 6 tons made daily sorties out from the curing station to the reefs, or to a fleet of luggers exploiting the reefs (Saville-Kent 1972: 226-228; Loos 1982: 122). In addition, there were a few larger schooners or ships fitted out as 'mother ships'. The 'fish' were generally collected during low spring tides, and when despatched to the curing station were boiled in a cauldron for 20 minutes, slit, gutted and then dried in the sun (Plate 6). Finally they were smoked in a smoke house for 24 hours, and then packed and sent to the nearest market (Saville-Kent 1972: 228; Loos 1982: 122). The work was seasonal, labour intensive, dependant on the tides, and needed a constant supply of wood, particularly the red mangrove (*Rhizophora mucronata*).

The region of Tudu had apparently been avoided by bêche-de-mer fishermen due to the fear they had stemming from Tudu Islanders resistance to Bligh in 1792, and Banner only established himself there when the trepang had been fished out in other areas of the Strait (Chester 1870, Q.S.A. COL/A151).

When Banner first arrived at Tudu on the *Bluebell*, thirteen canoes full of men, women and children fled the island, leaving behind five canoes full of people. The remaining people stayed in their camp on the south-eastern end of Tudu while he set about 'possessing' the north-western end (Chester 1870, Q.S.A. COL/A151). According to Chester, friendly relations were established and before long those Tudu people who had quickly evacuated, clearly indicated their desire to return to their island. Banner refused to allow them to return for three months, and then they had to pledge 'good behaviour'. Banner's great great granddaughter has claimed that her ancestor which point they negotiated a treaty with Kebisu (Banner *Torres News* 4/11/1988).

3. If as Mullins (1988) maintains bêche-de-mer fishing did not begin in the Torres Strait until the 1860s, the industry must have been both intensive and extensive to have 'out-fished' the region within nine years at the maximum.
PLATE 6. Three women and two men processing trepang on Tudu (from Saville-Kent 1972: Plate xxxvi).
Before long, the trepangers and shellers 'turned the minds of [the Tudu people]...from thoughts of war to those of trade for axes, tobacco, turkey red, and European food' (Moresby 1876: 28). Chester reported that many Tudu women 'married' the Pacific Islanders, and 'harmony' generally prevailed on the island (Chester to the Colonial Secretary, 1870. Q.S.A. COL/A151). This state of affairs was short-lived, for in 1879 Pennefather reported that the people of Tudu 'bitterly complain' about the way their women were treated by shellers, and had taken to burying women and girls in the sand (with only their noses exposed), whenever a new boat was sighted, and a similar avoidance strategy was adopted on Masig (MacFarlane 1919-1928 in Haddon PMB MF 959).

Frank Jardine estimated there were about 160 Pacific Islanders based at Tudu (Jardine to the Colonial Secretary, 1870. Q.S.A. COL/A151, 70/3425), but Chester said Banner had 70 such men working for him, predominantly from the New Caledonian islands of Mare, Isle of Pines, Lifou and Ware, as well as from Hawaii and from the island of Tanna in the contemporary nation of Vanuatu (Chester to the Colonial Secretary, 1870. Q.S.A. COL/ A151). Perhaps Jardine simply added the Pacific Islander population to the rest of the population, to include the Tudu Islanders, and men from other Torres Strait islands employed at the fishery.

There are no reliable figures for how many Torres Strait Islanders were involved, although Chester claimed there were about 45 Tudu men, their wives and children living on Tudu in 1870. Hence, the Kulkalgal would have numbered at least 100, particularly as Chester remarked on their 'numerous' children, and the common practice of adopting children from other islands. In addition, Aboriginal women also worked at the station 4 (see Haddon 1888-1889 in Haddon 1888-1929 PMB MF 959). In

4. When I showed some Yam Island people a photo taken by Saville-Kent (1972) in about 1892, of three women and two men drying trepang at Tudu, all remarked that the people were Aborigines and not Islanders (see Plate 6).
1872 there were 250 people on Tudu and most were involved in the pearlshell fishery (Gill 1876: 211).

In 1871, 44 Tudu people had been induced by the then station manager, Bedford, to dive for him. They worked from two boats, each under the direction of a leading Tudu man. These two crews not only competed with each other, but also competed fiercely against the Pacific Islander divers stationed at Tudu. In 1871, the local divers outstripped the Pacific Islanders in performance (Moresby 1876: 29-30). Bedford had full authority on the island; in late 1870 or early 1871 he was appointed chief by the local people, and the poorly secured storeroom located on the island was never broken into (1876: 30).

Until 1874, diving for pearlshell was predominantly done by local male and female Torres Strait Islanders (Moresby 1876: 30) who dove to depths of seven to eight fathoms (about 13m to 14m). Even boys as young as 12 dove to three to four fathoms (D'Oyley Aplin 3/3/1875 QSA TRE/ A15, Letters # 133-2550). As many divers were not recorded on the ship's articles, their deaths were not recorded and therefore were not investigated (F. Jardine 1872. Q.S.A. CPS 13C/G1).

Diving began at the beginning of the dry season when the south-easterlies prevailed. Torres Strait Islanders were usually engaged in the shelling industry for 1 to 2 years. When the crews returned home on annual furlough (of about 8 weeks) during the Wet season, they were paid up to date in goods, and often given the use of boats during this period (D'Oyley Aplin 3/3/1875 QSA TRE/ A15, Letters # 133-2550). While the Torres Strait Islander divers were paid the same amount as the Pacific Islanders (10 shillings per month with rations), they were paid in goods whereas the latter received cash (3/3/1875 QSA TRE/ A15, Letters # 133-2550).

In the late 1800s there were about 1000 people involved in the pearlshelling industry
throughout Torres Strait, with 100 licensed vessels operating from Thursday Island (Loos 1982: 120-121). Mullins (1987) estimates that about one quarter of the Torres Strait male population were engaged in the pearl fishing industry. During 1871 and again in 1873 Moresby was involved in inspecting the pearlshell fisheries. Because he did not have enough time to visit all the stations during February 1871, Moresby was determined to at least impress the Tudu people with the power of the British (1876: 31-32). He and Bedford unsuccessfully tried to induce the local men onto the boats (anchored 1.5 km offshore), with the promise of beads and food. Bedford eventually commanded almost all the young and able bodied men to accompany them. By the time the group reached the other side of the island, only twenty of the staunchest men remained, the rest having escaped in fear. The Tudu men were terrified as they stepped on board the ship. They eventually relaxed after being given a 'few trifling presents' and copious quantities of 'sweet hot tea' (1876: 32). They were particularly impressed with the size of the ship and its crew. When the crew demonstrated their fire power, the men screamed and shouted with amazement. Some stopped their ears and crouched down, but the boldest stood upright beside us, and expressed their wonder with a loud 'coo-ee' as they saw a column of spray thrown up by the shot...3000 or 4000 yards distance [between 3 and 3.5 km].

(1876: 32)

In January and February 1873 Moresby again called at Gebar and Tudu to inspect the shelling operations there. Diving had come to a standstill here, as the Pacific Islander divers were waiting for their employers to obtain licenses (Moresby 1876: 129, 135). This work stoppage was inspired by the fact that word had reached the stations in the Torres Strait of Moresby's apprehension of illegal traders off the far north Queensland coast (1876: 121). Legislation regulating the conditions of employment of both Aboriginal and Islander people in the industry was passed in 1881 (Haddon 1935: 14).
According to one of his descendants, Banner was killed in the Torres Strait (Torres News 4/11/1988), however, it is not clear whether Banner was still operating from Tudu when Edward Mosby ('Yankee Ned') went to Tudu with his wife, some time after 1873. Mosby had worked shell on Nagi for Frank Jardine, and he worked from Tudu until Kebisu was accused of trying to poison him in 1876. It was after this incident that Mosby changed both his domicile and focus of work. He moved to Masig and concentrated on bêche-de-mer fishing (see also Beckett 1963: 63; Lawrie 1983b: 4; S. Mosby and M. Mosby, video J.C.U.N.Q. 12/8/1983). Even at Masig, one of his houses was destroyed by a flaming arrow soon after his arrival (MacFarlane 1919-1928 in Haddon 1888-1929 PMB MF 959).

It is worth noting that attempts were made on the lives of at least three of the operators at Tudu. Banner may well have been killed on Tudu, Mosby was threatened there, and in 1884 Mr Louis, who was in charge of the bêche-de-mer station, was killed (Loos 1982: 230).

One of the many consequences of the bêche-de-mer station on Tudu was that as women and men were brought into regular work schedules, their semi-sedentary residential patterns were eventually replaced with village sedentism. What is more, under this regime, men were away from home for some time (MacGregor 1911 Q.S.A. PRE/A530), collecting wood from the nearby islands to be used in the smoking of trepang. A dramatic change occurred in both people's lives and in the micro-environments of their islands. For example, between 1874 and 1876 Masig was used as a wooding station for LMS steamers, and the locals were paid to cut and prepare the wood (Langbridge 1977: 191). Even Mosby expressed concern in his later years about the continuing deforestation of Masig (MacGregor 1911. Q.S.A. PRE/A530 folder 1916/10468). Later, Yam Islanders addressed the problem by planting exotic species of coconut, *Casuarina*, sea almond and *Calephylum* on Yam (1911. Q.S.A. PRE/A530 folder 1916/10468).
Banner extended his bêche-de-mer operations on Tudu by also exploiting pearlshell from April 1869, and for a time gave up trepang fishing to concentrate on pearlshell (Chester 1870, Q.S.A. COL/A151). Later the two industries operated in tandem, or alternated depending on the exigencies of market demand and prices. Banner had gone to Sydney with four Tudu men, and left the bêche-de-mer station in the charge of a Pacific Islander, a man about 60 years old. In their absence some of the Kulkalgal showed the Pacific Islander where they obtained pearlshell for their ornaments and ritual objects, and by the time Banner returned in April 1869, six tons of pearlshell had been collected. By mid-October they had harvested a total of 50 tons of shell. Their largest take for one week was 2500 pairs of shell, followed by 1200 pairs (Chester 1870, Q.S.A. COL/A151).

Shell was initially harvested from water as shallow as 15 cm, and within the year was being brought up from depths of 6.5 m, after the shell had been systematically worked out. Seven boats worked the reef, and another fetched wood and water 16 km away from other islands such as Yam (Chester 1870, Q.S.A. COL/A151; Chester 1871, Q.S.A. COL/A160, 10th August). The boats left Tudu at dawn every Monday, and stayed out on the reef until Saturday evening.

In September and October 1870 the Acting Police Magistrate, Chester, toured the Tudu area and the coastal villages of Papua to report on the discovery of the large shell banks, and to investigate claims that Pacific Islanders were encouraged by shellers to plunder islands and Papuan villages (Chester to the Colonial Secretary, Brisbane, 1870. Q.S.A. COL/ A151; F. Jardine, to the Colonial Secretary, 1870. Q.S.A. COL/A151, 70/3425; S. MacFarlane 1888: 48). He took red cloth, red and white beads, tomahawks, knives and tobacco to exchange for weapons and ornaments. The implications for the

5. This was almost definitely 'Tongatapu Joe', a well travelled Pacific Islander who played an important role at the station, and indeed was subsequently instrumental in the processes by which missionaries were introduced to other islands in the strait.
exchange partnerships operating between Tudu and lowland Papuan villagers must have been potentially severe. On his visit to the Papuan coast in September 1870, the Police Magistrate took two Tudu men as interpreters in two large whaleboats armed with five guns. The headman of the Papuan village of Katau, Mino, \(^6\) recognised one of the Tudu men, Kairee and the two are reported to have 'scraped hands' (Chester Report dated 20th October 1870. QSA COL/ A151).

The socio-economic, medical and political impacts of the pearlshell and bêche-de-mer industries were immense. Increasingly, Islanders were incorporated into a cash economy, as access to their traditional valuables was restricted or prohibited. The fact that one of their exchange valuables, pearlshell, was willingly shown to outsiders, and then exploited by these outsiders (with relatively minor local gain in terms of wealth), would have significantly undermined the local and regional political economy. Later, inter-island and island-Papuan raiding was controlled by both government and Christian interventions, and as such the acquisition of skulls (another crucial exchange item) was curtailed. Finally, the phenomenon of all able-bodied men being absent from their home island because of involvement in the fisheries, also served to undermine the social organisation and in particular, sexual politics on the islands. On one of his visits to Puruma, for instance, MacGregor (1911 Q.S.A. PRE/A530) counted a total population of 17, comprised of 12 women, four girls and one boy. There were four schooners at anchor, and all the men, including the local leaders and police were absent, diving for pearlshell. While many Torres Strait Islander women became sexually involved with the Pacific Islander men who were perhaps financially attractive (Mullins 1987), for many women there was not a choice.

Illness and disease also took a significant toll in Island communities when the full

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6. Kebisu would have been the leader of Tudu at this time. His 'son' (actually his sister's son) Maino was to later succeed him, and perhaps name exchanges had occurred between Maino of Tudu and Mino of Katau, thus accounting for the two men having the same name.
force of colonialism began to be felt in the Torres Strait, with smallpox, dysentery, influenza, measles and tuberculosis claiming many lives. Chalmers (1887: 318) argued that large numbers of Torres Strait Islanders and Papuans died as a result of smallpox and other epidemics during the late 1860s. Frank Jardine noted the incidence of 'rheumatic low fever, and fever and ague' in the Wet season of 1872 (Q.S.A. CPS 13C/G1, letter dated 1/4/1872). In 1875 he spoke of numerous deaths resulting from measles among the Aboriginal population of Somerset and the nearby Torres Strait islands, particularly the people of Prince of Wales (D'Oyley Aplin to the Colonial Secretary, 2/8/1875. Q.S.A. CPS 13C/ G1. 81/75) who had already suffered severe population depletion. This was the measles epidemic unwittingly brought to the region by the Rev. S. MacFarlane (see Mullins 1988). Four months earlier, Aplin referred to a 'lot of fever' on the islands of Torres Strait (Q.S.A. CPS 13C/G1. 48/75. D'Oyley Aplin to the Colonial Secretary, 15/4/1875). Much later, dysentery epidemics struck the region in 1911 and 1914 (Q.S.A. PRE/ A530, Folder 1916/10468, Letter from MacGregor 20/7/1911; Langbridge 1977: 191). The infamous Spanish Flu reached Torres Strait in early 1920. Over 96 people died and food relief was sent to Yam, Masig and Puruma (QFF 1921, vol. 2.).

4.5. The State and The Church

Under the joint mantles of church and government, considerable change was effected in the lives of Torres Strait Islanders from the 1860s. In 1859 the Colony of Queensland was proclaimed and in August 1864 the colony's most northerly base was officially established at Somerset on Cape York. With the establishment of this government outpost organised European reprisals against local resistance were swift, severe and relentless. While this was not a new phenomenon, the permanent location of a party of marines, Native Police (Goode 1977: 58) and a Government officer, totally changed the nature of the interaction, tipping the balance of power even more firmly away from
Torres Strait Islanders as their power bases and authority were further undermined.

The last Man-o-War to have patrolled Torres Strait waters had been the Rattlesnake (1846-1850). By 1869 an arrangement had been reached with the British Admiralty that a Man-o-War should visit Somerset twice a year (Q.S.A. GOV/25 Letter 58), however no visits had taken place by 1872 (Jardine to Moresby, dated 19/2/1872. Q.S.A. CPS 13C/G1). During this period the Queensland government had difficulty in keeping up communication with Somerset. Interestingly this corresponds with the burgeoning pearling industry, Frank Jardine's 'management' of the region, the arrival of a contingent of Native Police at Somerset, and Jardine's increasing personal involvement in the pearling fishery.

In his letter to the Colonial Secretary, Frank Jardine suggested the government place a small armed schooner in the area as a means by which to control the shell rush which he expected to occur once the news of the Tudu beds reached Sydney. This was a measure he saw as essential in order to protect Torres Strait Islanders and Papuans alike (F. Jardine to the Colonial Secretary, November 1st 1870. Q.S.A. COL/A151, 70/3425) while at the same time protecting his own business interests.

All the Torres Strait islands except those South-Western islands located within 5 km of the Australian mainland, remained outside the Queensland boundary, and therefore jurisdiction, until 1872 when the boundary was extended to 96 km off the coast.

7. By 1871 Frank Jardine was a pearler (Goode 1977: 93), and he was replaced as Police Magistrate in November 1873. This action was taken after complaints that government boats were being used in Jardine's private pearling activities. In 1874 and again in 1875 Charles D'Oyly Aplin was appointed Shipping Inspector for Port Albany, Cape York (Q.S.A. TRE/A15, 13/5/1875), and for part of 1875 he also served as Police Magistrate. Jardine forged close business and social links with the Samoan sheller on Nagi, James Mills, and was personally involved in the lucrative pearling operations. He and one other former Police Magistrate, Beddome, established their own joint fishing station on Nagi (Aplin, November 30th 1874. Q.S.A. CPS 13/C1 67/74). Frank Jardine was also associated with another significant fisherman in the industry, Mosby, before the latter settled on Masig.
Interestingly, these islands within Queensland's boundary were severely depopulated during the first few years of intensive contact. 8 With the 1872 annexation, the islands of Murray and Darnley remained outside government jurisdiction, and thus the Queensland government was unable to control the actions of shellers on those islands. It was not until the 1879 annexation (Queensland Coastal Islands Act) that the Eastern islands of Mer and Darnley were included (Haddon 1935: 13-14; Mullins 1988).

All the islands had been annexed by Queensland by 1879, and Papua New Guinea was annexed by the British in 1883. In 1877 Thursday Island became the administrative and commercial hub of the Cape York-Torres Strait region, and the administration of Papua New Guinea was carried out by the Government Resident on Thursday Island (Q.S.A. TRE/A43 1891; Lawrie 1983b: 8) until the British colonial administration was established at Mabaduan in Papua in 1891, and transferred to Daru in 1895 (Lawrence 1989b: xvii).

After the 1879 annexations Chester undertook a tour of duty with his skipper Captain Pennefather. On this trip he notified the Islanders they were now under Queensland jurisdiction (Beckett 1987b: 101; Mullins 1988), and fired a round of shells on Tudu to emphasise the authority and power of the government. In his discussion of the interview he conducted in the 1960s with Mareko Maino, the grandson of Kebisu, 8. Between 1868 and 1878 the people of Muralag were almost all killed, although Mullins (1988) has maintained that the exact nature of the reprisals is uncertain. Certainly there are some vague references in the official reports which do not allow the reader to assess fully the degree and frequency to which punitive action was taken, or to see against precisely whom it was directed. Around about 1870, canoes from Nagi and Three Sisters (the islands of Warraber, Bara and Guiya) assembled at Wednesday Island after hearing that the people of Muralag were reputedly 'celebrating' having killed a ship's company, that of the Sperwer (1869). A European punitive expedition cut the celebrations short (Haddon 1935: 71). The show of force was organised by Frank Jardine but implemented by his relief Police Magistrate, Chester (see Mullins 1988: 175-181). Later in 1876, Chester brought Prince of Wales men to Somerset for punishment after they had taken control of the shelling station on their island. What fate awaited them at Somerset is not detailed (Q.S.A. CPS 13C/ G1 10/75).
Beckett (1987b) sees a number of distinct historical events collapsed into a single oral history: Banner's establishment of the bêche-de-mer fishery in 1869; and Captain Pennefather's November 1879 action of firing shells on to the island, and manacleing several men in leg irons on the suspicion of having poisoned a European (1987b: 101), one Edward 'Yankee Ned' Mosby. However he neglects to add that according to the man who told the story, the visit of the man o' war constituted a reprisal organised by Banner after he had observed a ritual on Tudu which marked the killing of a Puruma man.

Captain Banner...talk to Kebisu...'I been call this man o' war to quiet you people. All time you kill. Better you come good. Better you try civilize these people. If I say yes, man o' war come wipe out all people belong Warrior Island.' So skipper tell Captain Banner, 'I'm going to leave Union Jack, first place in Torres Strait.' So that man o' war leave two-three bag of flour. That night he come ashore, they put a flag pole. 'Tell that old man come here. We'll show him we got different arrow.' They show them that rifle. They give a rope to Kebisu. 'When I tell you pull, you pull.' So old Kebisu pull that rope and Union Jack come out. 'That flag means you no more fight. If you do, this boat going to come back.' So Kebisu say, 'No more fight.'

A Yam Islander told a story in 1980 of cannon being fired at Zegey by European ships (see Appendix 13), however it is not clear what particular ship was being referred to, or whether a number of events over a lengthy period have been conflated. Whether it refers to Torres, Bligh, Dumont D'Urville, Jukes, Moresby or Chester and Pennefather's punitive visit in 1879 is impossible to establish. In the same way as Maddock (1988) has demonstrated for Aboriginal Australians, such stories represent local, generalised, metaphorical reflections on the protracted colonial experience, rather than absolute statements which allow us to reconstruct specific moments on the frontiers of expansion and consolidation. In the following account of Banner's show of strength, we can see how the pride a great granddaughter felt for her warrior ancestor, is subtly transformed
into pride in his capitulation to the greater power of the sheller and the force of government.

My [great] grandfather was a good man. He was kind hearted but when anyone broke the rules, he went for them. He was very strict. So, once, Captain Banner was anchored at Warrior Island. He went ashore to see Kebisu who was very friendly with Captain Banner. So Banner asked Kebisu to show him where he could find pearlshell, and my [great] grandfather showed him.

The first time Banner anchored at Tudu and told Kebisu he was going to hoist the first Union Jack flag on the island. And I saw that same flag. It was a red flag with a five cornered star. That flag was from Queen Victoria's time or King Edward's time.

Maino was around during the time of William MacGregor. Maino and MacGregor went to Goribari in Papua New Guinea together when a priest was killed [there]. MacGregor gave Maino a bayonet and a telescope, which Maino passed on to me when he died. The Union Jack which was hoisted at Tudu during Kebisu's lifetime was buried with Maino.

( the late Miss Abigail Bann pers. comm. 1981. see Appendix 17)

What is significant are the ways in which Abigail Bann has been able to construct Kebisu as a fierce yet good man, coupling the traditional Yam Islander emphasis on strength with a Christian emphasis on goodness. She de-emphasises any conflict, demonstrates how Maino assisted Banner and MacGregor, and informs us of her custodianship of significant British artefacts, symbols of Yam Islanders' integration into the new order.

In 1885 the Government Resident John Douglas appointed a headman (mamoos) on each island to act as chief magistrate. The mamoos were appointed for a lifetime, and were assisted by 4 Native Police who were appointed every year (Myers 1899). They were
PLATE 7. Maino and some of his family, photographed at Yam Island, 1911 (photograph: MacGregor?, in MacGregor, Q.S.A. PRE/ A530 1916 10468). To the left are two of his daughters. Gada is standing in front of the small boy, possibly Elda Mosby.
given a uniform of hat and jumper with their titles embossed on the front of their jumper, and a small honorarium (Douglas 1891: 1). The Government Resident visited the islands periodically, but any resident whites on the islands, such as teachers, served also as the government officials. By the beginning of the 20th century Councillors were elected in each community to assist the mamoos on their islands.

From 1897 to 1939 the Aboriginals Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act was in force throughout Queensland. While it signalled the beginning of a new administrative era of 'protection and segregation' of Aboriginal Australians, and paved the way for the creation of reserves, Torres Strait Islanders were not included until 1904 when the category 'Aboriginal' was officially reinterpreted to include Torres Strait Islanders (Beckett 1963: 83). The Government Resident on Thursday Island now acted as a Protector, and by 1914 he officially exerted full control throughout the region. In 1918 a full-time Protector was posted to Thursday Island (1963: 83).

By 1920 the State of Queensland had confined people to reserves (see Plates 7 to 11), and had taken over the major industries in the region, such as pearling. Because of the fisheries' requirement for a regular pool of cheap labour located in a central place with a good anchorage (Beckett 1983; 1987b), Islander populations became increasingly settled on a smaller number of islands than they had previously occupied. This was not so much a situation of forced relocation, as one of 'concentration' or 'nucleation', by which one of several owned islands in each group's land and reef estates (see Map 3) became the focus and site of a permanent settlement (1983: 202, 205; Laade 1969: 33-34).

Prior to the arrival of the London Missionary Society (LMS), the two missionaries of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, based at Somerset for a short time from 1867, must have had some religious impact on the Torres Strait (Bayton 1964-1965: 622-626). In 1884 Frs Navarre, Hartz and de Santis arrived on Thursday Island to
establish the Catholic Sacred Heart Mission within the Diocese of Micronesia and Melanesia (Torres Strait Islanders' Media Association. 4/84: 1-2). Their predominant base in the region was on Yule Island in Papua New Guinea (see Bruce 1892-1898, in Haddon 1888-1929 PMB MF 959), however unlike the LMS and later the Anglican Church, the Catholics did not establish a strong presence in the Torres Strait, except on Hammond and Thursday islands.

In 1870 the Rev. S. MacFarlane of the LMS carried out a preliminary tour of the strait (Bayton 1971: 14), and organised Christianity made its formal entry into the Torres Strait in July 1871. A variety of effects were eventually felt and the arrival of these missionaries actually facilitated the increased movement of outsiders into the region (see S. MacFarlane to Whitehouse, October 26th 1874). While the intentions and motivations of the Christians were somewhat different from the pearlashellers and traders, they were not totally contradictory, as the two industries worked closely together in the early years of establishing a mission, and indeed some of the shellers were well known to the missionaries from their work elsewhere in the Pacific (see Mullins 1988). The success of the mission was intricately connected with the shellers.

Both trader and missionary...... needed the indigenous peoples and therefore coexisted in their separate exploitation- one of the body and the other of the mind. They helped one another when possible and generally benefited from each other's presence in the Torres Strait.

(Fitzpatrick-Nietschmann 1980a: 100-101)

The LMS had been forced to leave Lifu in New Caledonia because of increasing French Catholic opposition to their activities (Murray 1876: 446; Bayton 1971: 14). On the 20th May 1871, Murray and MacFarlane left Lifu with eight teachers, their wives, four children, and servants (Murray n.d.: 12), bound for the new missionary fields of Papua New Guinea, with the Torres Strait islands to serve as their 'stepping stones' to Papua.
Contrary to popular belief, the news of the impending visit of the missionaries had preceded their actual arrival at Darnley on 1st July 1871 (Murray n.d.: 13), although there is no way in which the people could have adequately prepared themselves for this new chapter of change in their lives. The arrival of the missionaries on Darnley is still celebrated throughout the Torres Strait and mainland Islander communities, and is referred to as the 'Coming of the Light'. While the biblical associations of 'light' versus 'darkness' are obvious, the association of 'light' with Christian power may also be a strong traditional referent to the 'light' which emanated from totemic effigies (see Chapter 3).

Whether it was the Islanders themselves, or the Islanders as influenced by the shellers, who decided against accepting an evangelist teacher on Darnley, is impossible to determine. Imputing retrospective responsibility for decision-making is a risky business. Nevertheless, a compromise was enforced on the Islanders by Murray, who by the exchange of gifts and no doubt some stern posturing, insisted that two teachers and their wives be supported for 12 months, and that only after such time could the people then decide for themselves (Murray n.d.: 14). It was hoped the teachers could act as a restraining influence on groups of Pacific Islanders going on 'recreational' visits to the islands (MacFarlane 1888: 48).

The remaining contingent then sailed to Tudu where they enlisted the support of Banner (Langbridge 1977: 190). Banner recommended suitable islands, gave the missionaries the use of a large open boat, and the services of his leading hand, the Tongan known as Joseph John (Murray n.d.: 17) or 'Tongatapu Joe'. The following day, the LMS left their ship and crew at Tudu and headed for Dauan, with four

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9. See Clark's (1985) discussion of the concept 'taim tudak' used in the Southern Highlands of Papua New Guinea. This parallels the Torres Strait Islander phrase referring to their pre-Christian existence as 'daknes taym'.
missionary teachers, their wives, the Tongan, and at least one Tudu man. 10 When they reached Dauan, it was the Tudu man who successfully cleared the way for the missionaries (Murray n.d.: 17).

On the 7th July, the remaining party returned to Tudu after having visited and left teachers on Saibai. They sailed to Somerset on the 10th, reassured of the safety of the teachers by the frequent trips of Jardine and Chester around the islands. However, within days of their having been left on Dauan, the teachers and their wives fled to Tudu, after being falsely accused of stealing garden crops (Murray n.d.: 18). Within a few days the teachers were returned to Dauan, and a well travelled, authoritative Tudu man was based there with them for one month (see MacFarlane 1873).

The role of Tudu people was critical in the establishment of the New Guinea mission, as the relationship the Kulkalgal had with the lowland Papuans was recognised by the LMS (see Murray n.d.; MacFarlane 1888: 48), and the island was perceived as 'healthy'. The relationship between MacFarlane and Banner, two key players in the beginnings of the LMS work in the Torres Strait, was sealed by their having known each other on Lifu in New Caledonia (Murray 1876: 452).

The missionary work on Tudu began some time after it began on the other islands. By 1872 there was only one teacher on Tudu, Tepeso, and he succumbed to fever in the same year (see also Appendix 1 in Crocombe et al 1982: 131). From November 1872 Tudu was without a teacher. In 1873 Kebisu requested a teacher to stay on the island (S. MacFarlane 1874a) and promised Murray they would refrain from raids against other islands (Murray to Whitehouse, April 6th 1874), and would move to Yam Island which had plentiful water and good soil. From April 1873 to March 1876 the Loyalty

10. The reports of Murray (n.d.) and MacFarlane (1888) are contradictory on this point.
Island missionary-teacher, Gutacene of Mare, was based there,\textsuperscript{11} despite the absence of 'good drinking water' (Gill 1874: 248).

On the 20th and 21st October 1874, MacFarlane met with Kebisu and some 20 other people at the teacher's house, and observed that neither a chapel nor a school had been built on Tudu (S. MacFarlane 1874a); in his opinion little progress had been made. Just six months earlier Tudu had been visited by the Rev. Murray. Murray undertook a tour of duty of the islands and Papua New Guinea in March-April 1874 and reported substantial populations of Eastern Islanders and a number of Europeans based on Tudu. According to Murray, Kebisu was a 'staunch friend' of the teacher, he and others observed the Sabbath, and to 'some extent' attended other services. The people were learning to read, and they shared with the missionary any fish they caught and food obtained from other islands (Murray to Whitehouse, April 6th 1874).

During the October visit supplies were delivered to the teacher, and MacFarlane spoke of the significance of Tudu Islanders throughout the strait. He regarded the missionaries as offering protection to the Tudu Islanders from the excesses and controls of the shellers (S. MacFarlane 1874a). All the men on Tudu were involved in shelling and Captain Ware provided for the men's families. What had passed between the months of April and October 1874 is not spelled out by MacFarlane. However, he was no doubt referring obliquely to a suspected raiding party intercepted at Murray Island in 1874. The missionary there challenged eleven Tudu canoes anchored off Murray, although the Kulkalgal insisted they had travelled there to trade for food. Murray suspected it was a raid orchestrated by Kebisu. In his meeting with Kebisu, MacFarlane threatened to remove the teacher unless attendances at his services

\textsuperscript{11} There are problems with specific dates here, which relate to the differences in reports written by MacFarlane (1874a) and Murray (n.d.) in which their respective dates vary by one year. In this particular instance, I have chosen April 1873 as opposed to April 1874 as it correlates more closely with other material I have used.
improved. Kebisu asserted that they required the teacher, and to this MacFarlane replied

that the teacher had work to do, and that, like the shellers who left a place where there were no shells, so they must go elsewhere if people did not attend their services and send their children to school. The chief seemed very anxious to retain the teacher, and promised to get his people to attend to his instruction. It is a poor place. Fish is about the only food to be got. The teacher has to be constantly supplied with European food, without much prospect of doing much good amongst the people. There are several stations like this in the Torres Strait....the chief and people, like those on the other islands, seem anxious to retain the teacher. They all see and feel the advantage. They said ...if the teacher left there would be plenty of fighting again....

(S. MacFarlane 1874a)

Although Kebisu had earlier placated MacFarlane by promising to move to Yam Island, the plentiful supplies of seafood at Tudu swayed them from moving. In 1876 Gutacene was removed to Moa at which point MacFarlane remarked that the Kulkalgal 'seem indifferent as to whether he stops or goes' (MacFarlane 1874b: 5). This may refer to the incident of which Yam Islanders spoke to me in 1980, in which the missionary is regarded as having 'cursed' the island, by shaking off every last grain of sand from his feet as he stepped into the boat. In the narrative, the importance of fishing on the correct tide conflicted with the church requirement to observe the Sabbath. The missionary, said to have been disgusted with the reluctance of Tudu people to ignore the association between tides, weather, fishing and survival, is stated to have cursed the island, bringing sickness and death to the island after he departed. 12 There was in fact a severe measles epidemic which raged through the

12. This is interesting given that in 1874 MacFarlane mentioned Stephen Island people wanting to fish on Sunday, and of him giving them permission to do so (S. MacFarlane 1874a).
PLATE 8. A number of Yam Island women, children and men, photographed at Yam Island, 1911 (Photographer: MacGregor?; in Macgregor, Q. S. A.
PRE/ A530 1916 10468).
PLATE 10. Yam Islanders congregated outside the church, St. John the Divine (formerly Siloam), Yam Island circa 1920 (courtesy of the John Oxley Library, Brisbane).
strait in 1875, so the two events and their respective chronologies may have been slightly altered in people’s minds. Nevertheless, the moral of the story remains clear (see also Appendix 8).

Maino had given his undertaking to Murray that they would cease headhunting, and his father Kebisu had initially agreed because he professed to be a Christian (Murray 1873: 11-12). It took another twenty years or so, and the physical and political decline of Kebisu, before the LMS eventually succeeded in applying enough pressure on Maino to shift permanently to Yam Island around 1892 (see Chapter 3; see also Haddon 1889 in Haddon 1888-1929, PMB MF 959; MacGregor Q.S.A. PRE/A530 1916/10468). Initially Maino acted as evangelist (Chalmers in LMS 1897) and within ten years of their move from Tudu, the first church, Siloam, was built under the direction of Lui Getano Lifu (see Appendix 8; see also Teske and Lui 1987: 23), who Maino knew from Mawatta and specifically requested for Yam.

By the close of the 19th century the LMS was facing extreme difficulties in keeping their Torres Strait mission going, and eventually the work was taken on board by the Anglican Church, who had established a mission on Moa in 1908. Since 1915 the financial costs of Protestant missionary activity in the Torres Strait were shouldered by the Australian Board of Missions (Bayton 1971: 4). With Anglicanism came an increased number of European missionaries and a focus on ritual and religious vestments (Haddon 1935: 17). Initially Bishop White appointed two priests, Done and Lupscome, to oversee the Torres Strait mission, and eventually W. H. MacFarlane became its Director (Bayton 1971: 24). While the LMS communion had consisted of coconut water and damper or yam, the Church of England introduced wine and bread (Done 1987: vii). Whereas under the LMS ‘public humiliation’ was practised among the congregation, under the Church of England ‘sacrament and private penance’ was emphasised (Beckett 1963: 81). The first significant change in approach and
PLATE 11. Men assisting the missionary with his luggage, outside the mission house, Yam Island, circa 1925. Note the woven coconut leaf and split bamboo structure (courtesy of the John Oxley Library, Brisbane).
administration was that local LMS Church officials, the deacons, became Church Wardens who were permitted to conduct services in the absence of a priest (Done 1987: vii). The Anglicans were committed to missionary work in the Torres Strait itself, and unlike their predecessors, actively encouraged Islander ways of doing things (see W. H. MacFarlane 1919-1928). Christianity was practised with 'Islander embellishments' (Fitzpatrick-Nietschmann 1980a: 272): Islander drums were played in the churches (Done 1987: 100), hymns were sung in language, and religious days of importance were celebrated with feasts and dancing (Beckett 1987b: 81). By being allowed, indeed encouraged to express their convictions to Christianity within a customary idiom, Islanders were able to embrace and 'domesticate' Anglicanism (1987b). In 1919 the first Torres Strait Islander clergy were ordained. Churches were renamed: on Yam Island Siloam became St John the Divine (see Plates 10 and 11).

In a general cosmological sense many Christian values were readily grafted on to the traditional religious and social base (see Haddon 1904; Myers 1899; Bayton 1969: 16). Certainly Haddon drew attention to the similarity of values inculcated during men's initiation into their respective cults and those values associated with the practice of Christianity, particularly concerning people's behaviour toward each other (1904: 273). Myers (1899) made a strikingly similar observation, stating that the people of Mer embraced Christianity because it was a demonstrably more powerful zogo.

When the old men first saw our Bishop, wearing his vestments, with the Cape and appendage on the back known as the Hood, they were very excited and said....'All same zogo-le before.' When they were being taught the Creed and Commandments, they exclaimed.....'This the word just like Malu before.'

(W. MacFarlane to Haddon 1929, in Haddon 1888-1929, PMB MF 959)

The first missionaries had burned all the sacred images, and sickness had also
accompanies the arrival of the missionaries. The sickness was attributed to the power of the new religion, which is interesting given that the horrific measles epidemic was in fact carried (albeit unwittingly) throughout the strait and into Papua in 1875 by the Rev. S. MacFarlane. Despite their conversion, the more traditional belief system and practices remained salient (Bruce in Myers 1899). In 1898 Haddon observed that prayers were being said on Yam Island which began with reference to the very powerful cult heroes and totems, Sigay and Mayaw: 'O Awgadh Sigay and Awgadh Mayaw' (1904: 154). In 1959 the late Mr Dan Kelly remarked that not only may the ceremonial consumption of coconut flesh and water in the kod be regarded as equivalent to the communion of the Anglican Church, but that perhaps Sigay and Mayaw had been sent by God before he sent the missionaries. These understandings of the relationship between the war cult of Sigay and Mayaw and the Christian cult of God were echoed in similar statements made to me twenty five years later (the late Mrs. S. Bann pers.comm. 1986).

That power from Sigay. They take out that [coconut] meat. Cut all that meat small like communion bread. (Might be God send those people first). That dry shell water drop into shell like the wine.

(Mr Dan Kelly to Beckett, pers. comm. 1959)

Thus not only was Christianity perceived as an equivalently if not more powerful belief system, but it was also regarded as potentially efficacious as the traditional religious system. Certainly in the 1980s on Yam Island, the two belief systems were not generally seen as being mutually exclusive, and local priests continue to experience role conflict and role strain on those occasions in which the boundaries are blurred.

4.6. Conclusions

Increasingly since the 1860s Islanders had gained access to firearms. There may have
been an intensification of warfare associated with the introduction of iron in the first instance, which could be sharpened and used in the modification of old weapons, and then with Islanders' acquisition of firearms. During the first few decades of intensive contact with outsiders, traditional power bases were dramatically altered, particularly as to whether or not leaders were able to tap into the power of the new invaders, and thus gain access to these very powerful weapons. No doubt the strength of Kebisu at this time was increased because of the alliance he struck with Eed of Mer.

Until the late 1860s there was an uneasy balance of truce and warfare between the Kulkalgal of Tudu and the interlopers. The establishment of a fishing station on Tudu fundamentally changed the nature of the interactions, with Kebisu and his population having to agree to the terms established by Banner. Nevertheless, despite the co-ordination of shelling, missionary and government endeavour in the region, Kebisu had not fully capitulated to their authority until at least 1879. He was insightful enough to request a missionary be stationed on his island, but appears to have changed his mind about wanting a missionary when the terms were not agreeable. Unlike his successor Maino who availed himself of the new systems of authority, Kebisu oscillated between appearing to accept the compounding authority of the shellers, government and missionaries, and resorting to direct violence or subterfuge.

Through the fishing industries major changes occurred in people's lives: their social organisation was undermined, and the micro-environments of their islands were dramatically altered. Increasingly men, women and children were forced into work schedules which not only interrupted the traditional schedules, but meant they had to work for a master.

The Central Islands had already been brought under a good deal of control by the use of colonial and individual force on the frontier, and the Islanders' lifestyles had been
sufficiently undermined or changed by the time missionaries approached it. The LMS
personnel were involved in banning particular cultural practices, the destruction of sites
of significance, regulating social life, introducing new material goods, training clergy,
creating new positions of leadership/influence, the introduction of new ideas and
seemingly new rituals both secular and sacred. 13

Maino adjusted to the altered political climate when the locus of power shifted from
the possession of physical strength (might) to the ability to tap into the supernatural
realm (religion) of the missionaries and government officials. In his early career Maino
aligned himself with Banner, then with Sir William MacGregor, Administrator of
British New Guinea, and he was instrumental in establishing a permanent population
base on Yam Island. His traditional power base was reinforced and validated through
his alliances and liaison with pearlers, missionaries and government officials, and his
performance of both government and religious duties.

Throughout the islands alteration to the traditional mode and means of production, the
creation of permanent and single settlements, and the cessation of inter-island
hostilities, had significant effects in each island’s economic, political, religious and
kinship systems (Fitzpatrick-Nietschmann 1980a: 213, 218, 265-266). Because of the
severe depopulation experienced by many groups, these new population centres became
decreasingly viable and increasingly incorporated into the new secular and religious
regimes. The people of Tudu were pressured for two decades to shift to Yam, an island
more suitable to the requirements of the colonial state. In so doing, they were
eventually transformed from Tudu Islanders to Yam Islanders, from warriors to
Christians.

13. In fact Fitzpatrick (Fitzpatrick-Nietschmann 1980a: 278-279; 325) has
demonstrated that on Mabuiag it was the banning of all rituals and the encouragement
of funerals which resulted in the intensification of death rituals on the island.
What has resulted from this colonial experience for the Kulkalgal of Tudu-Yam is a culture, an identity, known locally as wey blo mipla (our way). On Yam this signifies their lives as Yam Islanders, in which bipo taym, the recent past and the present radiate out to connect people with each other and with Yam Island and its territories. Central to this sense of self as Yam Islanders is their recognition of the long term processes of colonialism by acknowledgement of their descent from the fierce Tudu men, a variety of Pacific Islander, South East Asian and Carribean men, men and women from other Torres Strait islands, and men and women from certain Papuan villages. These great-grandparents connect the Yam Islanders of the 1980s to particular times and phases of the colonial process, and their children and grandchildren connect them to the recent past, present, and future. Through knowing their ancestors they are able to reflect upon the past by imagining people’s lives during that time, by narrating stories about specific events in which a particular individual played a central role in both managing the religious and secular authorities, and the socio-political changes associated with the frontiers of colonialism. Through knowing from where they have come, and observing their children and grandchildren, they can contemplate the changes which they as a people will confront in the continuing dynamic between wayt man and themselves.
Maino with his whole tribe have for nearly twenty years practically abandoned Warrior Island because a greater part of it has been washed away by the sea, but they go thither from time to time to fish. He has had many improvements carried out on Yarna Island, where they have planted over 3,000 cocoanut trees. There is an abundance of good soil on Yarna, but Maino and his people have started cocoanut plantations on some of the neighbouring islands, over all of which Maino's father, who was a renowned warrior, had authority and control. This tribe seems remarkably healthy.

(MacGregor 1911, QSA PRE/1530)

In this chapter I focus on the contemporary political and economic components of Yam Island society. The ways in which the major political and socio-economic events in the region have affected Yam Island people since the turn of the century, and more especially since the 1930s, provide some of the predominant themes of discussion. However, most of the discussion addresses the social, economic and political climate of the 1980s and 1990, in which the reality of a depressed economy and regular population movement is a key factor. The role of subsistence fishing, hunting and gathering, gardening and Papuan exchange relations is discussed. The chapter concludes with a look at the contemporary political system as it intersects with customary Yam Island society, and briefly comments on the role strain experienced by some Islanders who return home.

5.1. The Recent Historical Past

The 1930s and 1940s in particular constituted decades of significant social change for
Yam Islanders. It was a period during which they confronted external forces with an increased level of 'muscle flexing', in which they expressed their confidence in their ability to have their rights increasingly recognised and their wills duly enforced. Communication with the outside world, albeit through the channels of the Department of Native Affairs (D.N.A.) had increased in the 1930s with the establishment of radio communication on each of the islands. The successes of the 1936 maritime strike against the Company Boats and the state government monopoly of the pearling industry (Beckett 1963, 1982, 1987b; Fitzpatrick-Nietschmann 1980a: 121; Sharp 1980a, 1980b; 1984), and the increased local authority of Islander leaders in general which resulted from changes to the legislation subsequent to the 1937 Councillors' Conference on Masig, meant that Islanders felt increasingly confident in their dealings with Anglo and Celtic Australians.

During this period the Islanders' demands to be recognised separately from Aboriginal Queenslanders were officially met. Under the provisions of the 1939 Torres Strait Islanders Act each island reserve became a locally governed unit under the control of the newly established D.N.A. The Chief Protector became the Director of Native Affairs and controlled the expression of local government on each inhabited island. The Act provided for the appointment of councillors and local police officers. Each Council, as a legally established body, was now able to elect its own representatives (Beckett 1963, 1982, 1987b; Sharp 1980b). The power and authority of the Teacher-Supervisors was removed, which meant that each Council experienced increased political flexibility in the absence of a resident European government official. Nevertheless, with this increased locally based authority, Islanders (through their councils) became increasingly dependent on and incorporated within the colonial order (Beckett 1987b), although the degree of dependence and incorporation varied (Fitzpatrick pers. comm.).
PLATE 12. A studio portrait of Pryce Silbador Harry (on the left) and Iona John Kepa snr, photographed before either were married; at the time Mr Harry was working as crew at Sinclair's beche-de-mer station on Tudu, and Mr Kepa was working at the trochus station owned by Farquhar (photograph: Mr Watson, Thursday Island, circa 1931; courtesy of a family album, Yam Island).
The first school on Yam was established at Sazilmud (see Map 2), and the first European teacher was Mr Longford (Teske & Lui 19880. The requirement for children to attend school presented the community with a major problem, viz. because children were needed to assist adults in subsistence related activities, their attendance at school became problematic. This meant that they became either less involved in subsistence activities, and thereby placed more stress on food supplies, or they missed school and went with their relatives. Those children who did attend school were quite often hungry. Most of the time people were involved in catching fish, hunting turtle and dugong, gardening and gathering wild yams and fruits. Although there were Aboriginal Industries Board stores on every inhabited island by 1933, when Getano Lui (snr) was appointed Head Teacher to Yam Island school in 1936 he initiated a number of changes in the community. Arrangements were made with the Protector on Thursday Island that the school be issued with flour, rice, tea and sugar, so that the children could be given lunch (Getano Lui snr pers. comm. 1980). This alleviated some of the burden on parents to find extra food for their children.

For many decades the highest grade in school that a Torres Strait Islander could attain was Grade 4. Upon completion of this grade many boys left to work on pearlshelling and trochus boats, and the girls stayed on the island, gardening and doing domestic based work (Getano Lui snr pers. comm. 1980). Some boys and girls obtained work in the schools, ranging from Class Monitor (£1 per month), Class Teacher (£2 per month), Assistant Teacher (£2 10/- per month) to Head Teacher (£4 per month) in 1936.

World War II was a watershed for people on the islands, and marked the emergence of a consciousness of Islanders as Australians. Older Yam Islanders’ discussions about this period typically focus on the local impacts of the war, particularly the men enlisting in the Torres Strait Light Infantry Brigade (T.S.L.I.B), and the influx of new goods and ideas into the area with the American and Australian presence. These goods and ideas
included new clothes, hairstyles, alcohol, equal pay, equal rights and being considered Australian. Discussions about this period also centre around the straffing of islands and the movement of people into bush houses. The village was deserted except for the weekly visits Yam Islanders made to the Church and store. The placement of lookout stations on some islands, plane crashes, the evacuation of Thursday Island (T.I.), and the internment of the Thursday Island based population of Japanese are also topics discussed in World War II stories.

In 1941 when the War raged in the Pacific, the Torres Strait was put under military control. By May 1941 clear directives were being made concerning the planned recruitment of Torres Strait Islander men into the Australian Armed Forces. The men were to be enlisted for the duration of the war in addition to a further 12 months service on its completion, they were to receive five to six months training, and be awarded 18 days leave per year (Meredith to D.N.A., 30/5/1941. QSA A/4218. 253/69/2). Actual recruiting began in June 1941. Initially in this recruitment drive 111 men were enlisted, from almost all the islands, and it occurred in two stages given that almost half this number were already signed on boats and wanted to finish the shelling season (O'Leary to the Dept. Health & Home Affairs, 4/7/1941. QSA A/4218 41/564). At this time, Torres Strait Islanders comprised 20% of those involved in the pearlshell industry.

Seven hundred Torres Strait Island men enlisted in the T.S.L.I.B. and people classified as 'T.I. half-castes' were evacuated to Cairns, Innisfail and Port Douglas in 1942 (Beckett 1987a; Osborne 1990; Torres Strait Islander Media Association 4/84: 12). The army uniforms consisted of shirt, shorts and a giggle hat, however the Islanders were not permitted to wear a slouch hat, and on O'Leary's advice were not supplied with boots (O'Leary to D.N.A, 24/10/1941. QSA A/4218; Hall 1989). Military rations were

1. From 1928 trochus boats worked the Barrier Reef south to Cairns (OPP 1928 vol.1), and in the 1930s the industry ran second to pearling (Haddon 1935: 15).
supplemented with fish, dugong and fruits gathered and hunted by the men. During the war many Islander men were taught a trade (Hall 1989), and the Islander carpenters such as the Samuel brothers on Yam Island are testimony to the carpentry skills they acquired during this time. Some men such as the late Mr Maino Kelly of Yam, served in the American Forces.

Mines had been laid throughout the Torres Strait just prior to the outbreak of the Pacific chapter of the war, and it was from a station on Muralag that ships were guided through mined areas (P. Wilson 1988). War Signal stations, radar stations, Defence Units for the Army, R.A.A.F, Navy, U.S. Army and Air Corps, and field Hospitals were established in various combinations on the tip of Cape York and on the south-western islands of Hammond, Wednesday, Thursday, Horn, Muralag, Goode and Badu (P. Wilson 1988).

Torres Strait Islanders in the T.S.L.I.B. were underpaid at one-tenth of a European's wage during the War (Tonkin in Torres News Jan 19-25 1990: 2). Eventually the soldiers struck for better wages and were successful in having their wages increased to 2/3 of what other Australian soldiers were receiving. In 1983 the Federal Government began to address the issue of compensation to these ex-servicemen. An Islander Eligibility Review Committee was established, however there was a groundswell of Torres Strait Islander disaffection with the initial payments which totalled $7 million. In 1990 the Government established a working party to address fully the issue of compensation. Legal representations on the behalf of the Islanders involved and their families were still being made to the Government in 1990 (see S. Panuel's letter, Torres News Feb 23-March 1, 1990).

Pagarr Uruyi, on the south-south-eastern point of Tudu (see Map 3), marks the place at which a United States aeroplane crash-landed during the war, and Yam Islanders
have a number of humorous versions of the event in which a Japanese plane strafed the island during the war. This must have occurred some time during 1942, as the Pacific chapter of the war began in December 1941, and between March and July 1942 there were numerous Japanese planes engaged in air raids over Horn Island (P. Wilson 1988). For example, the following account of the strafing incident by Kathy Nathanielu is typical of the Yam Islander accounts.

I always liked to hear my mother tell me about the old days when the war was on. One particular episode that had me rolling about on the floor concerned my great uncle. Since the villagers were all hiding in the bush, and water was scarce, my uncle decided to climb a coconut tree. Anyway, while he was there, a Japanese plane spotted him and dived towards the tree. At the time he was wearing a red lap lap, and the Japanese plane spotted him a mile off.

The coconut tree was a long one, but I tell you, my uncle didn't climb down backwards, No! he jumped...and as soon as he hit the ground he took off.

(Nathanielu in Kruger 1988: 7)

During the war Yam Islanders moved out from the village and onto family plots of land in the interior, and the only trips they made to the village were to attend Church or to obtain store goods. This was a period during which the strict schedules of work and Church which had been adhered to on the islands prior to the outbreak of war, were suspended (Fitzpatrick-Nietschmann 1980a: 127). It was also a period in which they obtained another view of white people based on their new interactions (Beckett 1965: 155; Fitzpatrick-Nietschmann 1980a: 123). According to Mrs Tapau (nee Kelly) store goods came regularly to Yam after six Australian soldiers were stationed there (T.I.S.H.S. 1987: 36). Kampani is the high point on Yam Island at which these troops were stationed during World War II, although there is no official record of their
having been based there. Interestingly, one Yam Island woman has accounted for their presence there as a consequence of the straffing of the island (see Tapau in T.I.S.H.S. 1987: 36). Older women in their 60s speak happily about the fun times they had as young girls when the soldiers were stationed at Kampani lookout, and how their job of going to Ngurunguki to fetch water was made more pleasant when the soldiers were there.

The war had far-reaching, multiple consequences for Torres Strait people (see also Beckett 1987b; Fitzpatrick-Nietschmann 1980a: 117, 335). One of the most obvious effects was that the region became more unified. For example, in 1949 local island government delegates were elected to a regional Council, for the first time operating as a unit. What is more, as people became increasingly mobile, and as they experienced increased contact with a new set of outsiders, they were influenced by new and different values and began to hold heightened expectations for themselves and their children (Fitzpatrick-Nietschmann 1980a: 335).

After the war the avenues for Islander incorporation into Queensland and Australian society at large were opened: men were permitted to work as helmet divers and carpenters, women began working on Thursday Island as domestics and nurses. From 1945 Islanders became eligible for Social Services, increased supplies of rice and flour found their way to the local stores which in turn affected gardening practice (Tapau in T.I.S.H.S. 1987: 37), and the then Department of Native Affairs sent cane-cutting gangs to North Queensland (Beckett 1987a). This was a period during which the 'moral economy of work' (Beckett 1987b) played a critical role in Islanders' self-perceptions and management of their lives; viz, they believed that citizenship would be achieved through being both good workers and good Christians (Beckett 1987b).

In 1949 a significant portion of the Saibailgal were moved to Cape York, marking the
PLATE 14. Standing left to right: Martha Kepa, Luisa Kebisu, Ella Fod (Ford), Dorothy Kebisu, Louisa Samuel; seated: Ma1etha Maino (mother of Luisa and Dorothy Kebisu, grandmother of Martha Kepa and Louisa Samuel), Yam Island, circa 1947 (photographer unknown, courtesy of a family album, Yam Island).
beginning of movement to the mainland by Torres Strait Islanders. They were originally given land near Seisia by the Aboriginal owners, and eventually the community of Bamaga was established (Greer & Fuary 1987). During the 1950s and the 1960s Torres Strait Islanders began moving in large numbers to the mainland, moving as it were, from an 'underdeveloped' to a 'developed' country (Beckett 1987a). Teams of railway gangers comprised totally of Torres Strait Islander men worked in the construction of many lines throughout Queensland and Western Australia. Some of these gangers were ex-skippers (Beckett 1987a). By 1962 over 1000 men were settled on the mainland, working as far away as Victoria and the Northern Territory (Native Affairs- Annual Report for the year ended 30th June 1960). People were also drawn to Thursday Island (Kehoe-Forutan 1988: 14), and in about 1958 the gazetted suburb of Tamwoy (Tamway Town) was established for Torres Strait Islanders resident on Thursday Island. Its own council was established in 1965 and incorporated in 1988 (Kehoe-Forutan 1988: 13).

On the home front, some island-based involvement in the trochus industry was further developed with men and women working in dinghies off the home islands. On Yam the men dived while the women sailed the bondwood dinghies. In 1960 there were 200 dinghy workers in the Torres Strait (Native Affairs- Annual Report for the year ended 30th June 1960: 5). The pearling industry was in decline, and by 1962 had collapsed.

It was also during the late 1950s and early 1960s that further inroads were made in opening up communication channels on the islands. On Yam Island the Kebisu Theatre, 16 mm film projection room and an engine room were constructed in 1960 (Native Affairs - Annual Report for the Year ended 30th June 1960. Appendix 10: 34) and a similar theatre was opened on Masig.

An amendment to the Commonwealth Electoral Act in 1962 enfranchised Aborigines and
Torres Strait Islanders in the Federal sphere (Native Affairs-Annual Report for the Year ended 30th June 1963) and it was during the same year that they were deemed Australian Citizens. In Queensland an amendment to the state electoral act was enacted in September 1965 which enabled Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders to vote in State elections (Dawn May pers. comm. 1991). It was also in this year that a new act was introduced in which Islanders and Aborigines came under the same legislation, the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders Affairs Act 1965. Queensland was well and truly in the era of assimilation, and this policy was not to change until 1984.

During the 1970s, the Act of 1965 was revoked, and yet again Islanders were considered separately from Aboriginal people under the provisions of the Torres Strait Islanders Act 1971 - 1975 and its later amendments. A new system of government management of the Torres Strait was ushered in, which Jeremy Beckett (1987b) has labelled 'welfare colonialism'. According to Beckett (1987b) and Kehoe-Forutan (1988) the 1970s saw the development of a volatile relationship between the State and Federal Governments, which the Islanders quickly learned to manipulate via the politics of embarrassment. This was particularly the case after the establishment of the Federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs (D.A.A.) office on Thursday Island in 1973, and again later when Islanders became disillusioned with the Federal Government over the Border dispute. It was not until 1972 that a Labor Government was elected to power at the Federal level. Prior to this time there had been a unified political front at the State and Federal levels. However, as one of the Whitlam Government's major policies was to pursue land rights and allow Aboriginal and Islander communities to become self-determining, an immediate and bitter conflict arose with the entrenched National Party Government in Queensland, which was heavily committed to assimilationist policies. During this period State control over the islands increased (Beckett 1987b: 172), which they administered by radio-phone schedules (Kehoe-Forutan 1988: 10-11). On Yam Island these twice daily schedules continued to be the major form of
communication with the world outside the island until telephone communication networks were established and improved from 1980 on.

In 1973 a number of Torres Strait leaders travelled to Canberra to meet with the government to express their concerns over the proposed changes to the Australian and Papua New Guinean border to come into effect with Papua New Guinea's attainment of independence from Australia in 1975 (see Beckett 1987b). White (1981) contains a useful history of the Border dispute, especially detailing the annexation of the Torres Strait islands and its associated history. A Sub-Committee on Territorial Boundaries visited the Torres Strait in July 1978 (Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence 1979). Fisheries, quarantine and illegal immigration are some of the main issues covered within the Treaty. A chronology of the treaty negotiations can be found in Chapter 1 of the Torres Strait Treaty. Chapter 2 of the book details the terms of the Treaty (Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence 1979). Lyon and Smith (1981) present an excellent coverage of the background, ratification, jurisdiction, details on the Protected Zone, fisheries, navigation and overflight, consultative and liaison arrangements, maps and a summary of the 10 main points of the Treaty. The reader is referred to Appendix 12 for Mr Getano Lui's (snr) recollection of his role in the negotiations.

5.2. Contemporary Social Conditions: The 1980s to 1991

Technically the islands of Torres Strait ceased to be Reserves in 1984, with the Land Act (Aboriginal and Islander Land Grants) Amendments Act 1982 and the Community Services (Torres Strait) Act 1984 being enacted, and the introduction of the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (Land Holding) Act in 1985. With the change of State government in 1989 new legislation was introduced in the form of the Torres Strait Islander Land Act of 1991. Currently, groups of Islanders are working to establish their rights under this act.
By the late 1980s the overwhelming majority of outer island communities had accepted the provisions of the Deeds of Grant in Trust, whereby their communities became Trust Areas as opposed to Reserve Islands. The Deeds of Grant in Trust do not give Island people inalienable freehold title to their islands which they publicly requested in 1981 (Mills 1982), but merely 50 year leases. Murray Island people however, have steadfastly refused to deny their traditional and prior ownership of their islands. Their claim was sent to the High Court in the early 1980s, then heard in the Supreme Court in 1989, before going back to the High Court. On the 23rd May 1989 an historic sitting of the Supreme Court took place on Murray Island itself, with Justice Moynihan presiding (see also the 1990 A.B.C. T.V. production Land Bilong Islanders). Moynihan has yet to bring down his finding in the case.

During the 1980s there has been what Kehoe-Forutan (1988: 11) has referred to as an accelerated emergence of leadership professionals. Beckett (1985, 1987b) has accounted for these new leaders by arguing that Islanders have long realised the increasing need for leaders to be able to talk the same political and economic language as Anglo and Celtic Australian bureaucrats and politicians. Islander voices were represented in 1991 at the local level via Community Councillors, at the regional Island Co-ordinating Council and at the Federal level on the new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (A.T.S.I.C.). Although greater decision making responsibilities have been given to the Island Co-ordinating Council in particular, Torres Strait people in general have yet to achieve real autonomy.

A.T.S.I.C. came into effect on March 5th 1990, thereby replacing a number of Federal Government bodies and commissions, including the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Aboriginal Development Commission. The new Commission is headed by a board of 20 Commissioners, 17 of whom have been elected by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The remaining three Commissioners (including the
Chairperson) are appointed by the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. A system of 60 Regional Councils established throughout the length and breadth of Australia are responsible for determining local priorities.

The establishment of A.T.S.I.C. was publicly slammed by both the Aboriginal Co-ordinating Council and the Island Co-ordinating Council, the two state bodies representing remote Aboriginal and Islander Trust Area communities (Torres News Jan 19-25 1990: 1). During the 1990 Federal Election campaign, the issue of A.T.S.I.C. became incorporated into the conservative election campaign, with promises being made of their revoking the legislation, or at the very least dramatically amending it should they be elected (see Warwick Smith in Torres News Feb 23- March 1 1990: 12).

In September 1990 it was announced that Torres Strait Islander representatives would be drawn automatically from within the state representative body, the Island Co-ordinating Council. This announcement was decried by the Torres United Party as being discriminatory in that people in the region were not able to vote for their representatives on A.T.S.I.C. as they did elsewhere in Australia.

From the late 1980s there has been an increasing use of political factions in local Torres Strait politics. The Torres United Party (T.U.P.) which emerged as a significant political alternative during the Border Dispute of the 1970s, re-emerged as a force in local Torres Strait politics in 1988, particularly when they established a permanent base on Thursday Island and Mr Jim Akee became vocal. In January 1989 the T.U.P. staged a demonstration on Thursday Island for better housing. It continued its aim to be regarded as a serious political option by becoming a registered political party in January 1990. This was well timed in relation to the forthcoming Federal as well as the A.T.S.I.C. elections, and Akee stated that T.U.P. would also stand members for election in future Island Community Council elections (Akee in Torres News February 9-15 1990: 7). In the Queensland Local Government elections of March 1991, Akee stood for election
as Chairman of the Torres Shire Council on Thursday Island, but again was unsuccessful in attaining office (Torres News 29th March-4th April 1991).

Whilst material and social conditions on the Torres Strait islands have changed, employment opportunities in the 1980s were extremely poor in such a depressed economy. During these particular years Yam Islanders were involved in a limited cash economy, deriving their incomes from a variety of sources: employment in government related or community service agencies; community improvement projects; exploitation of crayfish and fish (and trochus and pearlshell to a marginal extent); Social Security payments (Aged, Invalid, Unemployment, Supporting Parent, War Service and Repatriation); some installments from close kin working and living elsewhere; and by community and individual fund-raising activities (Fuary In Press c).

Now that local communities have been given instructions to become increasingly economically viable, the need for an economic management plan for the region is critical. This is so that projects involving the establishment of such ill fated development companies as the Keriba Lagau Development Company of the 1980s could instead be properly planned and managed. In 1989 the Island Co-ordinating Council commissioned Bill Arthur to assess regional development strategies (Arthur and McGrath 1990). His work has highlighted the real constraints on economic development and improved employment opportunities in the region (see Arthur 1991).

When commercial gold mining began on Horn Island in the 1980s, new employment opportunities and training became available to a number of local Torres Strait Islander men and women but by December 1989 the closed its operations, leaving 180 of its workers unemployed. Nevertheless, Torres Strait Gold Pty Ltd has a continued interest in mining on Horn Island. In January 1990 it publicly posted ten further mining claims on the island (Torres News 19-25 January 1990).
During 1989 Torres Strait Islanders expressed grave concern over the long-term effects of heavy metals flowing down the Fly River and into the Torres Strait, as a result of a collapsed tailings dam at the Ok Tedi gold mine in Papua New Guinea. They called for the immediate rebuilding of the tailings dam as a means of mitigating the contamination of fish in the area (Torres News 2nd-8th February 1990). In November 1989, researchers from Sydney University reported high levels of heavy metals (particularly copper) in prawns caught in Torres Strait waters. Blame was laid on the Ok Tedi mining operations. At about the same time, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority began to advertise for scientists to engage in the long-term monitoring and management of heavy metals pollution in the Torres Strait. In January 1990 the Federal Government announced its four year monitoring of metals and sediments, and management programme, and in February the National Party organised for a meeting to be held between the management of the Ok Tedi mine, and the Island Co-ordinating Council to discuss pollution (Torres News 16th-22nd February 1990: 2). In November 1990, a conference organised by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (G.B.R.M.P.A.) was held in Cairns, drawing together all concerned parties: Islanders, Papuans and scientists. The conference, entitled 'Sustainable Development for Traditional Inhabitants of the Torres Strait Region', focused on the long term economic and environmental effects of development, and in particular the issue of development impacts on the human, physical and biological environments.

In the 1980s, the trochus shell industry was relatively marginal, but by 1990 it was increasing in potential. Prices paid for shell remain low and at least one Islander has threatened to sell direct to the overseas market through tender (Gutchen in Torres News 16th-22nd February 1990: 3). The issue of Islanders competing with Aboriginal people for trochus shell along the eastern coast of Cape York was raised as an election issue by the A.L.P. during the 1990 Federal election campaign (see Torres News 23 February- 1 March 1990:1). In October 1990 incensed Torres Strait Islanders reacted
against the closure of the trocchus season, as the allowable annual quota had been exceeded.

While some Island communities had elected to have 'work for the dole' schemes, or Community Development Employment Projects (C.D.E.P.) operating in their communities from as early as 1980, these employment schemes were increasingly adopted on the islands from the mid to late 1980s. Under this system, unemployment benefits are paid directly to the Community Council, which then pays the monies to the recipients in exchange for a number of hours work on community-based projects. Since C.D.E.P. was introduced on Yam Island in 1988, there have been a number of community improvement projects carried out.

There have been numerous problems with the C.D.E.P. scheme throughout Aboriginal and Islander communities in Australia, particularly with the administration of funds and associated social problems. In November 1989 particular community disaffection with the administration of the scheme erupted on the island of Darnley, when a protest march was staged in opposition to the Council. By February 1990, workers were still on strike, and after having met with the new State Minister in Brisbane and the Federal Minister in Canberra, some resolution occurred. The scheme was stopped on Darnley until community divisions had been settled. One of the speakers for the striking C.D.E.P. workers called upon other Island people to publicly speak out against the abuse of funds if it was occurring in their communities (Pensio reported in the Torres News 16-22 February 1990: 1,14). In a later edition of the Torres News (Gela in Torres News 23 February- 1 March 1990: 2), the Deputy Chairman of Darnley maintained that the problem on Erub had never been C.D.E.P., but that C.D.E.P. had merely provided a convenient front masking what he referred to as 'the struggle for supremacy and power by a religious sect of obscure origin.' 2

2. If this is indeed the case, it nicely corroborates Beckett's (1987b) analysis of politics and religion on the neighbouring island of Mer.
The pressures to engage in tourism based enterprises have increased dramatically in the area since changes in state legislation concerning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs in 1984. In April 1989 the Torres Shire Council agreed in principal to the construction of a multi-storey motel complex to be located on Thursday Island, with the proviso that the complex supply its own water needs. In October 1990 the State Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Anne Warner, announced that Thursday Island would obtain a new water supply system connected to a new dam on Horn Island.

Communication and transport within islands and between the islands and the Australian mainland has improved dramatically since the 1970s. Torres Strait Islanders had directly raised the matter of poor and inadequate communications in their meeting with the Prime Minister of Australia in 1976 when negotiating the Border issue (Mr Getano Lui snr, pers. comm. 1980). The first major improvements were receiving ABC radio broadcasts from 1980, and the opening of the Torres Strait Telephone Network in September 1980. The electronic media has had a continuing impact on Torres Strait Islanders' lives, particularly with the establishment of the Torres Strait Media Association (T.S.I.M.A.) in 1983, and the adoption of the B.R.A.C.s multi-media transmission units on the islands since the late 1980s. This has coincided with television transmission to the islands and the advent of video. Telephone accessibility has also improved since 1989 when individual householders throughout the region became eligible to have the phone connected. Prior to this most island communities relied on the operation of one public telephone booth.

The incidence of cars on the outer islands has increased markedly in the 1980s, with Council, C.D.E.P. and individually owned vehicles. In the early 1980s on Yam Island the only vehicles were two tractors, and for a limited period of time, a three wheeled motor bike. Planes and helicopters travel regularly between the islands, and indeed direct flights from Cairns to the outer islands are now common. In the last 15 years for
example, the situation on Yam Island has changed from total reliance on irregular
government boats and a twice weekly plane service, to a situation in which several
small planes arrive on and depart the island daily.

Small vessel travel has also increased since the 1970s with individuals purchasing
their own aluminium dinghies and outboard motors. Since the late 1980s however there
have been increased government regulations and enforcement concerning the mandatory
carrying of safety equipment, requiring dinghy registration and licences, and limiting
the number of passengers carried and the positions they may occupy in the dinghy.
Thus the standard mode of dinghy travel in which a young male stands at the
bow of the vessel holding on to a rope is technically prohibited. Given that several
boats go missing every year in the strait, and very expensive search parties must be
mounted to locate them, the regulations about carrying safety equipment are
understandable albeit unworkable. These regulations not only produce a hefty
additional cost factor to dinghy travel, but they impinge on the sociality factor of
dinghy use in the region. Nevertheless, the regulations are working; in April 1991 the
occupants of a dinghy en route to Warraber were safely picked out of the sea— they were
all wearing life vests.

While there is a reticulated water supply system, and electricity on Thursday Island,
few of the outer islands enjoy such a service. Wind towers were installed on Thursday
Island by the Far North Queensland Electricity Board (F.N.Q.E.B.) in January 1989, as
a first step in investigating the use of wind energy in electricity generation. Generated
electricity became a reality on Horn Island in June 1989 with the installation of two 418
kilowatt generators on the island. In September of the same year the Queensland
National Party Government announced the allocation of $2.5 million for the
construction of a dam on Loggy Creek, Horn Island to supply water for Thursday Island
and Wasaga village, Horn Island. In January 1990 the new Premier, Wayne Goss,
promised an additional $1.43 million to the Torres Shire for the construction of the dam, targetted for completion in December 1990 (Goss in the *Torres News* 2-8 February 1990: 1).

Torres Strait Islanders' lives are closely articulated with the seasonal availability of water. Because of the problems associated with maintaining a consistent and 'bottomless' water supply, water usage on Yam Island during the early 1980s was strictly differentiated and graded, corresponding to the two main water sources and water qualities: rain water and well water. It was only during the Wet season in which water was so abundant that Yam Island people bathed, and washed their clothes in precious rain water. In all other seasons well water was used for these purposes. Tempers flared and anger was privately expressed against some families known to be using rainwater from the public tanks for these purposes.

Tanks, wells and 44 gallon drums provide water storage on the smaller islands, and power is generated by portable diesel generators. Not all people have access to such generators, and those who own generators are regularly faced with breakdown of equipment, unavailability of fuel or excessive costs. Gas stoves, kerosene lights, freezers and stoves still form the mainstay of cooking, lighting and cooling processes on the outer islands at least. On Puruma a solar experimentation scheme has operated since the mid-1980s, and in December 1989 the Queensland Government announced a diesel and solar powered electricity scheme for the Torres Strait.

There are high morbidity and mortality rates in the region which have essentially resulted from the introduction of exotic diseases and changes in diet and lifestyle. Hypertension, heart disease, diabetes mellitus, respiratory disorders and sexually transmitted diseases (S.T.Ds) are all prevalent and over-represented in Torres Strait Islander communities. Consequently illness and death are ever-present on these small
Australian islands (see also Chapter 7).

AIDS became a concern in the islands during the mid-1980s. More recently local Islander AIDS Project Officers visited the Western islands of Mabuiag, Moa and Badu in February 1990 as part of their AIDS education programme. As part of the Federal Government's unified strategy on AIDS, Aboriginal and Islander people are being encouraged to apply for specific grants to implement innovative and effective schemes (Torres News 2-8 February 1990), and positions for specialist AIDS workers were advertised late in 1990 (Torres News 30th November-6th December 1990).

In terms of the strategies people employ to deal with illness and death, Yam Islanders during the early 1980s were generally choosing between four options: to obtain self-help within the immediate family; to consult an 'Island Doctor'; to consult the M.A.P. 'nurse'; or to consult a practitioner of Western biomedicine. Often all four strategies were employed as a means to effect the restoration of health, although there is no doubt that the strength and power of traditional healers is still perceived to be far stronger than that of conventional medical doctors.

When illness strikes, Yam Island people opt first for treatment by a traditional doctor before presenting, if at all, as patients of wayt man meresin (literally, 'white man's medicine'). Yam Islanders advocate consulting an aylan dokta ('island doctor') first before seeing a conventional doctor. This is regarded as critical in the determination of cause of illness. If an illness is particularly debilitating or severe a traditional doctor is consulted, and if he or she cannot effect a cure the patient is given the go-ahead to consult a medical doctor. In other words, a conventional medico may well be unable to effect a cure unless the social causes of illness have been recognised, and any foreign objects which may be lodged in the body of the patient have been first removed or defused by an aylan dokta.
'Island Doctor' is a general term used to refer to traditional curers, who may be Islanders or Papuans. In the case of Yam Island between 1980 and 1982, the overwhelming majority of locally recognised, resident curers were of Papuan descent. Because of the historically close trading and other links between Yam and some of the villages of the Papuan coast, such as Tureture, Mabadian and Mawatta (see also Chapter 3), each Islander family on Yam has its own classificatory kinship links with Papuan curers, as well as others from these villages. When trading canoes visit, Papuan doctors are kept busy with the business of checking their friends and giving protective amulets which are worn around the client's neck. In the case of very severe illness, when all other curing avenues have been exhausted, a dinghy may be despatched to Papua to fetch a 'family' doctor. All such consultations are paid for either in goods or in cash.

Yam Island has a new Medical Aid Post (M.A.P.) built in 1986 and managed by a local 'nurse'. M.A.P.s are used rather than traditional curers for the application of band-aids, dressings, administration of vitamin and mineral supplements to children, cleaning of wounds, innoculations, strapping of limbs and the acquisition of analgesics. Visits of doctors to the island are irregular and of short duration. While the ideal is for a doctor to travel from Thursday Island once per month to hold a local clinic, this does not always occur (Lui Torres News 9th-15th February 1990: 2). The 1950s saw the introduction of regular visits to all inhabited islands by the Medical Officer based at Thursday Island. Each island was visited about every two months by the doctor, who normally arrived with and departed on the cargo boat (Native Affairs - Annual Report of the Director of Native Affairs for the Year ended 30th June 1961). This was in conjunction with the already established radio medical service and the M.A.P.s.

Thus the M.A.P. provides basic health care facilities for the community, and when emergencies arise the 'nurse' telephones the doctors at Thursday Island Hospital.
While the doctors usually talk the 'nurse' through the problem, in other instances the patient is airlifted from the island when major emergencies arise. This airlifting of patients is a very recent occurrence, having its origins in a request made of the Prime Minister of Australia in 1976 by Torres Strait Islander leaders that a helicopter be made available for medical evacuations (Getano Lui snr pers. comm. 1980). When specialist medical attention is required, the usual practice, however, is for a patient to fly to Thursday Island on a regular scheduled flight. Depending on the severity of the illness, patients may be required to travel to Thursday Island, Cairns, Townsville or Brisbane hospitals, either to be admitted or to attend as outpatients.

As diabetes mellitus is endemic, and heart disease, cancer and infectious diseases are prevalent (Mills 1989: 27), health educators such as Philip Mills have been motivated to call for a complete change in the delivery of health care and associated services in the region. There is a need he says, to move away from the pathogenic, hospital based concept of health, to a holistic approach in which health issues are approached creatively. Medical Aid Post 'nurses' need more recognition, and nutrition, prevention, community motivation and environmental health are all critical issues which need to be addressed by health professionals (1989: 28-29).

Until now the role of the health workers has been limited to being an extension of hospital services, providing after care treatment, early detection of disease, intervention programs and communicable diseases monitoring...Health workers must be given more say in the development and application of programs to improve the health of the Torres Strait Islanders.

It was not until 1986 that the State Education Department assumed responsibility for schools in the outer islands of the Torres Strait. Prior to this change, education on these islands was administered by the Queensland Department of Aboriginal and Islanders'
Advancement. The Islander 'principals' were replaced with trained teachers, and a career path was opened up for local aides and assistants to upgrade their qualifications. New buildings in the form of classrooms as well as modern houses for principals were constructed throughout the region. A new primary school, kindergarten and principal's house were built on Yam Island in 1987.

5.3. The Torres Strait Islander Population

Estimating the population of the islands in the 1860s is impossible, despite the valiant attempts of Beckett (1963) to do so. His estimates of population a century later are far more useful— in 1960 he estimated that there were 6000 to 7000 Islanders living on 20 of the islands, with probably no more than 400 residing on Thursday Island and the mainland respectively (Beckett 1963: 44). Since this time however, there has been an enormous migration of Islanders to the south (see Cromwell 1980; Beckett 1987a, 1987b), and to a lesser extent to Thursday Island. In 1991 there were major populations of Islanders on thirteen islands (with two separate populations on the island of Moa); in the four gazetted areas of Aplin, Waiben, Tamwoy and Abednego on Thursday Island; and in the Northern Peninsula Area (NPA) communities of which Bamaga is the most populated. In these particular areas of Thursday Island and the NPA the realities of reserve life on the outer islands has been recreated and is mirrored in household arrangement and composition, and in social interaction.

There are enormous problems in estimating the population for the region, not least of which may be people's reluctance to be counted in formal censuses, the mobility of people both within households on their 'home' islands, as well as movement between islands and the mainland, and problems associated with some members of the population (such as Papua New Guineans and Pacific Islanders) falsely identifying as Aboriginal or Islander people in the larger scale Australian national census. Thus in
some cases the numbers are underestimates, and in yet others the figures may be inflated. The following figures should be regarded as estimates only, although there is an excellent correlation between the estimates of the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Community Profile of the Torres Strait-Northern Peninsula Area compiled by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in the same year.

Australian Bureau of Statistics Census 1981

In 1981 there were 2139 Islanders living on the outer island reserve communities of Badu, Mabuiag, Moa (St Pauls and Kubin), Boigu, Dauan, Saibai, Yam, Puruma, Masig, Warraber, Murray, Darnley and Stephen islands. In addition there was a small population on the Catholic Mission of Hammond Island. Another 562 Islanders were registered as living at Bamaga. Thus the total Islander population for the Torres Strait-Northern Peninsula Area was recorded as 4330. In contrast, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs Community Profile for 1981 estimated a population of 2114 people living on the outer islands and including Hammond Island, 1183 resident on Thursday Island, and 1113 in the five communities of the NPA. This gives a total of 4410 as opposed to 4330 from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics census, 49% of all Islanders residing in this area of Queensland were living on Reserve islands. However, this represented a mere 14% of the total Australian population of Torres Strait Islanders, or 21% of the Queensland population of Islanders. While it was estimated that 70% of all Islanders lived in the state of Queensland, only 42% of this number were living in the Torres Strait-Northern Peninsula Area (Australian Bureau of Statistics. see Figure 8), and only 29% of the total Islander population was living in the Torres Strait area in 1981.

3. I have only included 1981 Census statistics here as this period most closely relates to the period of my extended fieldwork.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA</th>
<th>POPULATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  NSW</td>
<td>1955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  NT</td>
<td>406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  VIC</td>
<td>776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  ACT</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  SA</td>
<td>349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6  WA</td>
<td>602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7  TAS</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8  QLD (exc. TORRES STRAIT)</td>
<td>6092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9  TORRES STRAIT - T.I.</td>
<td>1629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 TORRES STRAIT - NPA</td>
<td>562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 TORRES STRAIT - RESERVE ISLANDS</td>
<td>2139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 9. Sex Composition and Age Distribution of Yam Island Population (September 1980).
Thus the trend which was becoming obvious in the 1970s, viz that the majority of Torres Strait Islanders were living on the Australian mainland (Fisk et al 1974), was continuing in the early 1980s. However, now this may be beginning to reverse somewhat with changing conditions on the islands since 1984. 4

5.3.1. Yam Island Population

On Yam Island descendants of the Kulkalgal and others live in one village located near the north-western point of the island (see Map 2). For obvious reasons the eastern half of the village is referred to as Sunrise, and the western side is known as Sunset. Since 1911 the village has been dissected by a number of stone-lined roads (MacGregor 1916 QSA PRE/ A530: 9-10). Still other Yam Islanders live on a number of islands in the Strait, on Thursday Island, and in various villages, towns and cities on the mainland. Only a very small number are resident in the Northern Peninsula Area, although more substantial pockets of Yam Island people may be found in the Cairns, Mackay, Townsville, Rockhampton and Darwin districts.

During the last 10 to 15 years, the population has fluctuated from between 150 to just over 200 people. Hatake (1983) states that the population has reached 300, although during his brief visit in 1977 the population was 131. In September 1980 the total population of Yam Island was 156, of which 76 were female and the remaining 80 were male (see Figure 9). More than half the population (80) was under the age of 21, and 35 of these people were under the age of 5. Whereas there were 22 males as opposed to 13 females in the 0-5 years age bracket, females outnumbered the males in the 31-35

4. This is an impression which has yet to be validated. Certainly if one compares Kehoe-Forutan's (1988; see also Appendix 13) figure for the population of Yam in 1986 with my table for Yam Island in 1980, there are no statistically significant differences. However, reliance on a population estimate for one day is not necessarily a reliable indicator of population or demographic change.
years, 36-40 years and 46-50 years age cohorts. Quite a number of men in these age ranges were working away from the island.

By using the age of 16 years as the demarcation line between adults and children, there were only 39 adult males, as 7 others were away regularly working on boats. Some 19 of the 39 adult males were over the age of 40 and 10 of them were over 60 years old. Of these adult males, 26 were married, 12 were single and the other was widowed. For the same period in 1980, there were 49 adult females on Yam Island, of whom 19 were over the age of 40. Of these adult females 25 were married, 19 were single and the remaining 5 were widowed.

Of the adult males consistently resident on Yam Island during 1980, 11 out of the 39 were themselves either born in the Western Province of Papua New Guinea or had both their parents born there. Likewise, 13 of the 49 adult females could be classified in 1980 as being from dawdhay (i.e. Papua New Guinea).

As discussed in Chapter 3 and section 5.4.1 of this chapter, Yam Islanders have long-standing and currently recognised and expressed traditional links with the coastal Papuan people of Mabaduan and Tureture, and a substantial Papuan component of the Yam Island population is indicative of this. Yam is sometimes jokingly referred to as Small Mabaduan; i.e. the outstation, as it were, of Mabaduan village in Papua.

The question of numbers or percentages of Pauans resident on Yam Island is a complicated issue. Not least of the complications is the important fact that marriages have occurred between Yam Island people and Papuans for hundreds of years. For example, in 1916 MacGregor commented on the frequency of these marriages (QSA PRE/A530):
I found that the wife of Maino, the chief, was a sister of the man I had made chief of the Meawatta tribe of New Guinea more than twenty years ago. It appears that intermarriage between the western coast tribes of New Guinea and of those Islands in the Straits was formerly very common. These intermarriages will be less frequent now on account of the restrictions imposed on communication.

Most extended families on the island contain at least one member who had a Papuan parent, grandparent or great-grandparent, a Papuan spouse, or a child to a Papuan. However this does not mean that such families may be considered Papuan. In fact, they adamantly identify as Yam Island people. On the other hand, there is a significant, distinct floating population and long-term residential population of Papuans on Yam Island. One family in particular has had a long term association with the island spanning four generations. Relatives of that family have gradually taken up residency on Yam, and a number have become Australian citizens or obtained permanent residency status since 1970s. All heads of these families had been adopted into Island families. In 1980 there were five core Papuan households on Yam Island, and by the late 1980s there were at least 10 distinctly Papuan households. This rise in the number of Papuan households represents an exponential increase in the population of the early 1980s through reproduction and through younger members having established their own households on reaching adulthood and becoming married. Some new residents have attached themselves to the more established Papuan households, attracted by the more affluent lifestyle of Yam Island compared to village life in the coastal areas of Papua, and by the better prices paid for crayfish by the fishing industry. Another significant contributing factor which needs to be taken into account is that during the 1980s, there has been an overall increase in the number of new households established, due to additional housing being built on the island.
5.4. The Subsistence Sector

On Yam Island subsistence fishing, the gathering of yams and fruits to which one has rights, and making gardens in the bush or close to one's house, provide supplements to the more regular refined foods of white rice, white flour, sugar, tea, powdered milk, tinned meats and vegetables, biscuits, lollies and softdrinks. Fresh animal protein and fresh vegetables and fruit are preferred to the tinned varieties of such food found in the local village store. When gardens are planted, cassava, watermelon, pumpkin, sweet potato, corn, bananas, sugarcane and occasionally yams, are most commonly grown.

Subsistence fishing, shell-fishing, egg collection and marine hunting remain important regular activities, although the cultural material associated with these activities has changed dramatically during the past 150 years. Aluminium dinghies powered by outboard motors have replaced the canoes, cutters, luggers and bondwood sailing dinghies of yesteryear. The heavy wooden dugong harpoon is still used, but it has been modified with an iron harpoon point (Fuary In Press a). In exploiting their physical environment Yam Island people utilise a number of cues, predominantly derived from generations of cultural knowledge. Flora, fauna, winds and tides are classified and used in association with their interpretations of cloud formations, constellations of stars and phases of the moon, as indicators to what foods are currently available in their region (see Fuary 1991).

The bush and reefs of Yam itself and of the islands owned by Yam are perceived as the source of most good things, particularly favoured foods. They also represent places for individuals to escape from the claustrophobia of village life, either to enjoy the 'fresh air', or to temporarily evade obligations to others. Through the correct management of and approach to these areas, they cease to be potentially dangerous places.

The home reef and its lagoons are exploited daily for numerous varieties of fish,
shellfish, octopus and crayfish (Panulirus ornatus [Fabricius]). In addition, the reefs of
nearby islands are regularly searched not only for the above subsistence foods, but also
for the very important 'meat' obtained from hunting green turtle and dugong.
Thulutidhayn and Ngazi (or Mourilyan Reef) south of Gebar, Small Reef (south of
Mukar), Iki and Awbayn to the north-east of Gebar, Polin and Tekey to the south-west
of Gebar, Thidiyu and Bigayn (Dungeness Reef) to the south of Zegey, and the Warrior
Reefs are regularly visited by Yam Island people engaging in marine hunting, collecting
and fishing (see Map 3; see also Fuary 1991). The domains exploited and their
proximity to Yam Island relate to the sea resources being sought, and to other activities
in which fishing or hunting is complementary; such as instances in which people are
travelling from one populated island to another on a social visit, to trade or to
participate in a ceremony.

Yam Islanders' use of the seascape is broad-spectrum. Harvesting the sea's resources
involves people of both sexes and of all ages employing a wide variety of fishing,
hunting and collecting techniques. These techniques vary by gender and age, span the 24
hours in the day and extend throughout all seasons of the year. Early morning risers
may often catch a glimpse of a child or adult returning from hunting at dawn on the
exposed home reef, with fresh octopus to be steamed or boiled for breakfast.
Conversely, from sunset until the early hours of the morning, women and girls fish the
incoming tide for Yellow Tailed Perch or venture to the reef (with or without male
companions) in search of crayfish or octopus.

Typically women, girls and children fish with lines, while men and boys walk on the
edge of the reef or through the lagoon shallows, spearing fish as they proceed. Males
also engage in underwater spearfishing in deeper water, or cast lines into deep water
from anchored dinghies. Aluminium dinghies powered by outboard motors play an
integral role in the hunting of seafood. They are generally driven by men or boys and
provide transport to nearby reefs and islands.
Marine foods are usually consumed soon after they have been harvested or received as a gift (refer also to Chapter 6). The advent of kerosene deep freezers on Yam Island in the last eleven years, however, has had a marked effect on this practice. Nevertheless, a strong ethic remains that any food harvested from the sea must be redistributed and not sold to one's relatives. Very occasionally this folkway is broken when fish are sold on the island, however to the best of my knowledge, turtle and dugong were not sold on Yam Island during the period in which I resided there. The regular redistribution of marine products helps facilitate and maintain the ideal of harmonious group interrelations (see again Chapter 6).

Marine resources satisfy more than just the physical needs of Yam Island people. Food everywhere for human beings goes beyond the mere provision of physical relief from hunger. As Farb and Armelagos (1980: 95, 109) state:

> Because of values that go far beyond filling the stomach, eating becomes associated, if only at the unconscious level, with deep-rooted sentiments and assumptions about oneself and the world one lives in...... Eating is symbolically associated with the most deeply felt human experiences, and thus expresses things that are sometimes difficult to articulate in everyday language.

The multiplicity of ways throughout the world in which specific foods are imbued with meaning above and beyond their nutritional values, and how these values can be appreciated and understood only within their respective cultural contexts have been addressed by Manderson (1986), Farb and Armelagos (1980) and Kuper (1977). The identity of Yam Island people is *inter alia* connected with the seascape. The particular species harvested, the ways in which they are treated and prepared, and the ways in which they are perceived as good food (*namba wan kaikai*) or real food (*prapa kaikai*), constitute an enduring connection for Yam Island people with their past and their traditions, in much the same way as 'traditional' foods serve to signify
PLATE 15. A man seated on a dugong, Yam Island, circa 1926 (photograph: Mr Hudson. In QSA A/15993 1927/30808, letter from Hudson to McKenna).
Aboriginality among the Yolgnu of Arnhem Land (see Reid 1986: 51).

From the most mundane, everyday marine foods to the more esteemed, irregular supplies of turtle and dugong, Yam Island people maintain a connection with the past, not only in terms of the fishing, hunting, collection and preparation of marine foods, but also through the ways in which these foods may be redistributed (see Chapter 6). At the more spectacular and public level of contemporary rites of passage, no respectable feast in commemoration of a tombstone opening (unveiling) or wedding can be staged without either turtle or dugong meat being on the table (Fuary 1991).

As elsewhere in the Torres Strait, turtle and dugong hunting among Yam Island people is considered the ultimate physical and cultural experience for males. So significant has the dugong been that Haddon notes it is the only mammal to be frequently represented in Torres Strait art (1912: 358). Turtle and dugong are in many ways considered the physical and cultural lifeblood of Yam Islanders, and success in the hunt never goes unnoticed. Prowess in hunting is recognised as a significant male achievement; through bringing back 'meat', men and boys not only provide for the needs of their immediate family, but for those of extended kin, friends and the community as a whole (see Chapter 6). The event of a young man spearing his first turtle or dugong calls for an island-wide celebration of his attainment of masculinity.

Today men hunt dugong at Tudu and Zegey (see Map 3) and their meat provides a welcome, albeit irregular change to the diet. When the successful hunters return, the mammal is left to swell on the beach for a couple of hours prior to being butchered. Usually on occasions other than the celebration of a young man’s first success at hunting, both turtle and dugong are cut on the front beach of Yam Island, and word is sent to female representatives of each household to go to the beach to receive their share of the meat (see Chapter 6).
Dugong are accorded a respect by Yam Island people unmatched by that demonstrated toward any other animal. These mammals are regarded as bearing strong similarities to humans, and despite their being considered the providers of superior food and medicinal oil, wistful regret is often expressed at their capture. It is said that they are 'like a man', and conversely someone spotted lazing around the village may be jokingly referred to as being 'like a dugong', or a person with good hearing may be called 'dugong thalinga' (ears).

Yam Islanders have probably always hunted more green turtle than dugong; on average only about 10 dugong per year are killed, as against an estimated 100 green turtle. Green turtle eggs constitute an important food. During salwal (see Chapter 2), female turtle with unladen eggs may be caught on the home reef, and these eggs are redistributed with the meat. Current research by the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service on turtle numbers in the Torres Strait shows that their populations are stable (Reimer in *Torres News* 23 February-1 March 1990: 17).

During the late 1960s, the dugong was declared an endangered species, and from the 1970s government attempts have been made to conserve their numbers and manage the hunting of these mammals in Australian waters. One of the major impacts on dugong numbers in northern Australian waters had been the commercial dugong oil industry, originally established by the 1850s in southern Queensland. Dugong oil was manufactured commercially and exported to Europe as a substitute for cod-liver oil (Finger in *The Sunday Mail* 31 August 1986: 23), and a similar industry operated intermittently in the Torres Strait from the 1930s. This was during the period in which Government Medical Officers were recommending regular doses of the oil as a means of increasing Islanders' stamina and resistance to the annual epidemics of tuberculosis, whooping cough and flu (*QPP* 1936, 1937, 1939).
In Torres Strait itself the same population of dugong are hunted by both Torres Strait Islanders and the Kiwai of lowland Papua. Since the 1980s in Papua, Hudson (1983; Hudson and Marsh 1986) has been involved in studying dugong biology, monitoring hunting frequency and establishing community-based education programmes. In the Torres Strait the Dugong Protection Kit was launched in March 1989, and in the same year marine biologists suggested there were many more dugong inhabiting the Great Barrier Reef region than they had originally claimed several years ago prior to completing extensive surveys of their populations (Cairns Post 16/5/1989; Marsh et al 1984).

Other marine resources are also regularly exploited. Fish drives (saker), are carefully orchestrated events taking place on neap tides regularly throughout the year, using partially movable stone weirs, garaz (see Fuary 1991). The two major stone weirs which were used on Yam Island from 1980 to 1982 are situated on the northern and north-western sides of the island (see Map 2). Because of the changing nature of the shoreline and lagoon depths, there were at least another eight stone weirs on Yam which were no longer being used at this time (see again Fuary 1991). At the conclusion of the drive thanks are spoken for the fish, and ideally all the fish are shared equally between participants, irrespective of individual spearing performance.

There are a multitude of beliefs surrounding the staging of saker, and many prescribed behaviours must be observed in order to ensure its success. The group and co-operative nature of the event is reinforced by the belief that all participants must go to the weir together. Pregnant women cannot participate in a fish drive because it is said no fish would be speared if they were to be involved. People not engaging in the drive are also

5. See Appendix 6. MacFarlane's observations on the use of fish traps on Murray and Darnley islands nicely corroborate the Yam Island practices and beliefs: a person could not arrive late for a fish drive, a pregnant woman could not enter the enclosure, nor could the husband of a pregnant woman be involved in repairing the walls (MacFarlane 1948: 22).
required to observe certain regulations: if one of them decides to go fishing while a saker is underway, he or she must head off in the opposite direction to where it is being held. All other villagers should theoretically remain in the village, taking care not to visit a grave and/or a cemetery for the duration of the fish drive.

A variety of species of gastropods and bivalves are collected on the home reef. Limited numbers of giant clam, and numerous trochus, kirith kirith (*Strombus (Conomurex) lubanus*), spider shell (ithay), akul (*Geloina coaxans*), mudu (*Gafrarium sp.*), silel (*Mesodesma striata*), baler shell (*Melo sp.*) and mangrove whelks (*Telescopium telescopium*) are all distributed in varying proportions in the lagoons of Yam Island. In addition to collecting shellfish on the home reef, women and girls also engage in shellfishing when *en route* to other islands, and when on specific foraging expeditions to the nearby islands of Tudu, Gebar and Mukar. Often when there are mixed-sex fishing parties, the women and girls scan the reef edge and lagoon shallows for shellfish, while their male companions swim along the edge of the reef, spearing fish as they go.

Mud crabs (*Scylla serrata*), are sought by men and women among the mangrove zones especially during spring low tides, however they are not eaten as regularly as any of the molluscs or crayfish. In June, July and August, when the leaves of the kem tree (*species unidentified*) in the mangroves turn red, people understand that these crabs are gravid.

Because of the continuing cultural and dietary significance of turtle and dugong, there are a number of behavioural restrictions currently associated with their hunting. Villagers may not run, make a lot of noise, or dance while a hunt is underway on the home reef at Tura or Zagwan (see Map 3). Turtle or dugong should not be mentioned or discussed while a hunt is in progress. The prey will elude the hunter if these things are
done. The hunter will also be unsuccessful if his sexual partner is pregnant. In such a case, it is said the turtle will dive at the dinghy’s approach; for a man in this state to spear a turtle or dugong 'is like a poison' (Peter Bob pers. comm. 1980).

Haddon (1935: 158) provides an interesting historical perspective to this, in citing MacFarlane's observation that it was a general Torres Strait belief that a turtle could not be caught if it saw a pregnant woman or her partner:

when the husband of a pregnant woman is on a boat he must go down below when a turtle is sighted.

Pregnancy is also deemed to have an affect on fishing. If a pregnant woman goes fishing alone she will return with enormous amounts of fish. Should she walk near others who are fishing, however, they will have difficulty catching anything. Likewise should her lover or husband go spear-fishing with a group and spear the first fish, his companions will miss everything at which they subsequently take aim. As far as I am aware there are no other restrictions on a pregnant woman's fishing activities other than her exclusion from fish drives.

I once heard the classificatory mother of a young woman advise her against eating a certain species of fish and to stick to eating common fish, such as the blue parrot fish and the yellow tailed perch. Interestingly, as discussed in Chapter 8, these are the two fish with which Yam Islanders self-identify, as they are the fish most regularly caught in Yam Island waters.

There is a belief that the consumption of turtle eggs from about the month of September until the end of the mango season on Yam Island (between January and March), results in mango trees prematurely dropping their fruit. Given that the nesting period of the green turtle occurs during this period, there are regular complaints in the village that
the mango crop is being spoiled through some ignorant person eating turtle eggs.

Although sea birds are not often eaten, their eggs and feathers are collected. Attempts (usually unsuccessful) may be made to shoot frigate birds (womer) when they appear about August, and pot shots are taken at pelicans as they swarm over Yam Island in the hundreds each year. During September pelicans nest on Tudu, and also during this month several hundreds of tern eggs may be collected from nests in the long grass on Mukar's sandspit. Sometimes chicks are taken home for children to raise as pets. The feathers of the reef heron in its white phase (karbay) are used in the construction of dancing headdresses and other dancing paraphernalia, although currently chicken feathers may also be used as a substitute (see Chapters 6 and 8). Torres Strait pigeons (geynaw) are shot and eaten occasionally, and they may also be raised as pets. In 1872 Gill (1876) noted that the Kulkalgal of Tudu went out to sea to kill these pigeons with sticks and stone missiles, during their biannual migrations between New Guinea and North Queensland, and he commented on the subsequent effect such hunting had on the birds' flight paths.

The tides, the phases of the moon, the condition of the water and the weather all constitute clearly visible phenomena. Through the use of multiple environmental cues, the seasons are better understood, and as such rendered more predictable. The observation and reading of these signs provides a continuous focus and discussion point for members of the community. Harvesting of the sea is keyed into these factors which influence and set obvious limits on what, how and when something is caught, speared or gathered (see also Chapter 2).

Success at fishing is multi-faceted. While individual specialist knowledge of fish behaviour and skill at fishing (such as knowing what fish are present by observing a stretch of water and the effect movements of swimming fish have upon it), is given due
recognition, other factors are also seen to play a significant contributing role. Successful fishing is not merely up to the individual, but it is also social in the sense that it is fundamentally intertwined with the actions of others. A continuing occupation of Yam Island and utilisation of its waters give Yam Island people an intimate understanding of this environment and the symbiotic nature of their association with it. This inextricable link between the social and physical environments is explored more fully in Chapter 8.

Outsiders regularly comment on the relative lack of gardening on the Central islands, using it as an index of 'loss of culture' vis-a-vis other Torres Strait islands. We may regard the absence of intensive gardening as not so much an index of cultural degradation, but rather as an indicator of continuing tradition. While it is important not to push this point to the extreme, we can reasonably state that while Central Island people used horticulture as one of their subsistence strategies, it was never a dominant strategy (see Chapter 3). In the 1980s and 1990, horticulture on Yam Island remains a secondary subsistence strategy to traditional fishing, marine hunting and gathering.

In February 1845, the naturalist-geologist on board the surveying ship the Bramble, put ashore at Yam and described it thus:

On Turtle-backed Island we found a few small groves of cocoa-nut trees ......with a little thicket of bamboo; and near the centre of the island, following a little path through a matted wood, rendered impervious by creepers, we came one day on the first symptoms of cultivation of the ground we had ever seen among the aborigines of this part of the world. This was a little circular plot of ground, not more than four or five yards in diameter; but it had evidently been dug, though in a rude manner, and in it were set several young plantain-trees, one or two other plants, and two trailing plants, somewhat like French beans in appearance, which we afterwards found were a kind of yam....

(Jukes 1847a: 155-7)
PLATE 16. Papuan canoes riding at anchor, Sidha, Yam Island, 1980. The mangrove island of Madhakal can be seen in the middle background (photograph: M. Fuary).
PLATE 17. Processed sago (bisi) is a favoured item obtained by Yam Islanders from their Papuan exchange partners (photograph: M. Fuary).
PLATE 18. Mrs Luisa Samuel (nee Kebisu) preparing the ground prior to planting cassava (manyot / manyota) cuttings (neg), Kadhaw, Yam Island, December 1980. Note the old cassava plants in the background, some of which were later cut and used as neg (photograph: M. Fuary).
Vast old fallow gardens (geuzag) are located on the stony slopes within the bush and are demarcated by stone boundaries. While these gardens were not being actively gardened from 1980 to 1982, they were regularly exploited by those having rights to use them, in the digging of three varieties of yam, and the use of coconut trees and their fruit. Yams are classified into 'wild' yams (kog, kuthay and mursilbuwa) and yams which are cultivated. This is in stark contrast to the inaccurate suppositions made by Thorne (1989: 48) that Yam Island is 'named [sic] because of the fondness of the inhabitants for a type of small, sweet yam, which the women grow in gardens. The Australian tribes in Cape York and Arnhem Land gathered the same yam but never planted it.' The yam Thorne is referring to is kuthay, which is never cultivated on Yam but is gathered as a 'wild' yam, as it is elsewhere in Australia.

During 1980-1982 the outer periphery of the bush was being actively used in bush gardening, with cassava (Manihot esculenta), sweet potato (Ipomoea batatas), watermelon, sugarcane (Saccharum officinarium) and corn (Zea mays) being typically cultivated, supplemented with small plots of banana and pumpkin. Cassava was introduced into the Torres Strait in about 1908 or 1909 (MacGregor 1911 QSA PRE A/530 1916/ 10468: 23), and within a couple of years was being 'grown on a considerable scale' throughout the region.

Gardening land is owned and rights to use other people's land or trees must be negotiated. Land is owned by a family or by individuals within a family (Beckett 1983: 206), and outsider's rights to its use may be acquired through marriage or by the bonds of friendship. Prior to marriage a man and a woman garden their own respective land, however subsequent to their marriage a woman cultivates her husband's land. In gardening, technically the man breaks the hard ground and the woman turns it.

The bush is not only visited as part of gardening activity. People also go bush to dig
wild yams, knock down coconuts, collect mangoes, collect water or firewood, or simply for pleasure. The activities of fishing, gathering, and gardening cannot be regarded solely as a means by which people respond to a need to procure fresh food. Quite often these activities are undertaken by a small family group or clique of friends in the context of a carefree, holiday atmosphere. These 'picnics' occur primarily on weekends and during public holiday periods, and they invariably involve the activities of fishing, shellfishing, roasting and eating freshly caught fish, dozing in the shade and yarning. People feel the need for regular temporary respite from the dynamics and constraints of village life. These outings in the 'fresh air', and the ambience within which they occur, are enthusiastically sought by Yam Island people.

5.4.1. The Papuan Connection: Trading Relations with Papuan Villages

Exchange relations between lowland Papuan villages and Yam Island have a long, well established history. For example, Kiwai legends account for the origin of canoe exchange in which the culture hero Naga is attributed with finding a toy Papuan dugout canoe at Yam Island. In order to discover its origins, Naga travelled to Daru on the customary Torres Strait log canoe and there purchased a dugout. From there the canoe traffic began in earnest (Landtman 1927: 208). According to Lawrence (1989b: 213), the beginnings of the marine resources - food exchange relations between Torres Strait Islanders and certain lowland Papuan villages began with Saika of Yam Island. He wished to visit his relatives in Papua and carried a gift of marine goods with him. He returned with garden foods, thus establishing an exchange network between the peoples of Yam, Masig, Puruma, Boigu and the Masingara of Papua. Lawrence (1989b) has demonstrated that European pacification and the establishment of the regional administrative centres of Mabaduan and Daru in the 1890s had a major impact on the focus, intensity and nature of exchange relations across the strait.
Despite early 20th century government attempts to prevent the traditional trade, and quarantine restrictions imposed with the Torres Strait Treaty, trading relations between Yam Islanders and their Papuan neighbours are still maintained. While the goods and the frequency with which they are exchanged may have changed since European colonisation of the region, the trading relations are still staunchly maintained and defended. Canoes from Mabaduan (and to a lesser extent Tureture) regularly visit Yam Island (see Plate 16). In addition to this, some short trips are made to Daru by the resident Papuan population on Yam Island. Warraber and Puruma people occasionally make dinghy trips to Yam when canoes are in port. Masig is usually visited by Papuans from Parem (Parama). In contrast however with the island of Saibai, which immigration officials have estimated is visited by some 200 Papuans per month (Torres News 12-18 January 1990), the frequency of visits and the numbers of people involved are far less on Yam Island.

Yam Island people stress that the highly esteemed bush foods of taro, yams and bananas have always been important exchange items in the trade between Torres Strait and Papua, and that these foods have sustained them for generations. On 23rd March 1893, Sir William MacGregor noted that the bulk of Tudu people's food came from Papua (White 1981). In the 1980s prior to the ratification of the Torres Strait Treaty, there was a generalised fear within the Yam Island community that the traditional exchange of such items would be curtailed. Both Islanders and Papuans alike feared administrative reprisals in the form of Quarantine officers burning food and mats. Consequently, during most of the trading activities witnessed in 1982, there was a degree of expressed anxiety.

Official understandings were arrived at in the 1980s between local Torres Strait Island communities and the government departments responsible for immigration, defence and quarantine. Currently local people advise the respective departments of breaches of
the various regulations as they occur. So crucial is this community role, that in December 1989 the Island Co-ordinating Council advocated non-compliance with Commonwealth departments as a protest against the formation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission. A report appeared in the *Torres News* (12th-18th January 1990) claiming the arrival of hundreds of Papuan shoppers on the island of Saibai. It was stated that their purchases of flour, rice and other foodstuffs put excessive pressure on local requirements. Meanwhile, Immigration officials based on Thursday Island maintained that there had not been a dramatic increase in the numbers of people involved in these visits, as they had not been notified of an increase. However given that Torres Strait Islanders were boycotting their surveillance and monitoring it is obvious that had there been an increase in visitor numbers, immigration officials would not have been notified.

In the *Cairns Post* of 17th January 1990, a photograph appeared of a Papuan trading canoe arriving at Saibai, with a story in which Getano Lui (jnr), Chairman of both Yam Island and the Island Co-ordinating Council, drew public attention to the implications of the Islander boycott in not officially monitoring these visits. In February 1990 it was announced by Australia's Minister for Resources that the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (A.Q.I.S.) and Papua New Guinea's Department of Agriculture and Livestock would undertake a two year project in animal disease surveillance by regularly monitoring animals in the Torres Strait (*Torres News* 2nd-8th Feb 1990). Due to government and primary industry anxiety about the possible influx of specific plant and animal diseases from Papua New Guinea into North Queensland, Islander politicians are able to use the trading visits as a form of cultural and political capital with which to apply pressure at the State and Federal levels when the need arises.

6. In 1991 the Department of Primary Industries plans to evaluate the effectiveness of their quarantine education materials produced especially for the region and distributed widely throughout it (Mr Kerry Trapnell pers. comm. 1990).
When canoes arrive on Yam the exchange is both formal and informal, material and non-material (Fuary In Press a). The non-material cultural interchange is comprised of dancing displays, healing practices, adoption, the consolidation of old relationships and the establishment of new ones. Because of the long-standing historical nature of these visits, many exchange transactions between Papuans and Yam Islanders do not occur as reciprocal trade per se. Most families on Yam have established, recognised links of friendship and trade with specific Papuan individuals, and gifts of food, mats, baskets and drums are often made (Plate 17). In exchange, the Yam Island family provides meals, cigarettes and material goods such as aluminium cooking pots, kerosene pressure lamps, clothes, crochet-edged sarongs, bags of rice, tins of flour, baking powder and packets of sugar and tea. The Papuans are then despatched to work in the gardens, especially in clearing, or in erecting fences to keep pigs away from the crops.

Where formal trading occurs on Yam Island all the Papuan goods are displayed in an open area at a specified time. The major items displayed are highly valued Pandanus mats, coconut leaf baskets, multi-coloured plastic beads, music cassettes, plastic woven bags (kiapa), coconut brooms, herbal-scented coconut oil and food. The latter may include a variety of bananas, taro, pineapple and a plant used in stupefying fish (sp. unidentified; see Fuary 1991). The most commonly requested goods in exchange for these items in 1982 were saucepans, mosquito nets, bedsheets, Islander sarongs, kerosene pressure lamps, clothing, flour and rice.

Both Yam Islanders and Papuans rely on the reciprocal and market exchange transactions which occur when Papuans arrive on their trading canoes. The canoes bring many of the items which are considered customary Islander goods and services. In exchange Islanders provide their Papuan exchange partners with material items which range from things which make their lives a little easier either in terms of lighting or quickly prepared foods, to items which can be used to raise school fees for
their children's education. What is more the visits are a means by which the interconnectedness between Papuans and Yam Islanders are reaffirmed and publicly recognised.

5.5. Travel away from Yam

Prior to 1946 no Islander was permitted by the Queensland Government to live on Thursday Island (refer to section 5.1. of this chapter). That is not to say, however, that prior to the passing of legislation in Queensland which attempted to control totally the movement, location and action of Torres Strait Island people, local people did not travel far and wide, particularly during the early to mid 19th century.

Some of the major reasons for the enormous population shift of the 1970s and 1980s included people seeking employment and better formal education opportunities, a desire to acquire a certain level of material possessions and perceived better standard of living, the fear of sorcery, and a desire to escape from conditions prevailing on State Government controlled Reserves (Fitzpatrick-Nietschmann 1980a; Beckett 1987a; Fuary In Press c). To this must be added the additional desire of second wave migrants to be living close to some of their relatives, especially their children.

Movement between the home island and other centres is very common, and for simplicity I have divided trips up on the basis of prime motivations. Of course, many trips are made in which a combination of these motivations are present so that expenses are offset by maximum use of the opportunity at hand. In visiting friends and relatives, a person may also shop, engage in rituals, while at the same time having an enjoyable holiday away from her or his home island. When people visit other places they are careful to observe appropriate behaviour. This is because they feel anxious that if they fail to act in a dignified yet humble way, people who are not their kinfolk may
express anger at them.

Perhaps the major reason individuals leave the island for long periods of time is to take advantage of formal educational training on Thursday Island and the mainland. This migration for education has affected the Torres Strait since the 1960s (Fitzpatrick-Nietschmann 1980a: 268-269; 320). Sometimes families move for a number of years, or else individual students leave home to attend high school (at Thursday Island, Bamaga, Cairns, Townsville, Herberton, Charters Towers or Rockhampton), or to enrol in pre-Tertiary and Tertiary studies at institutions in Cairns, Townsville, Brisbane or even further afield. Many students board at school, or at hostels if available, or they stay with relatives. Secondary education really only became accessible to Torres Strait Islander students in 1973 with the establishment of the D.A.I.A. run residential college at Bamaga (Finch 1977: 58-59).

Expanded education opportunities became available for Torres Strait Island people in January 1989 with the opening of a branch of the Cairns TAFE on Thursday Island at the site of the old High School. In February 1990 a number of TAFE courses were introduced, ranging from 3 to 8 weeks in length and called Options. These included: Computer Awareness, Drawing, Jewellery Making, Sewing, Introduction to Video, Signing, Marine Radio and Advanced Computers (Torres News 16-22 February 1990). In addition to these, TAFE offered a Business Planners' Course (organised by the Aboriginal Development Commission under the Aboriginal Enterprise Incentive Scheme) aimed at schooling prospective small business operators in the basics of running a business. Other TAFE courses operating in 1990 were the Office Studies Course and the Master Class 5 course. The latter qualifies people to operate fishing or trading vessels up to 20 m long (Torres News 2-8 February 1990). The TAFE has also linked into subjects offered at the Thursday Island High School.
While there are a number of Torres Strait Islander students who have graduated from southern tertiary institutions in Brisbane, Sydney and Canberra, most Islanders undertake university study in Townsville.\(^7\) There have also been more recent developments of decentralised education for the Torres Strait region with the Remote Area Teacher Education Programme (RATEP) coming on stream in 1990. In 1988 Greg Miller (Department of Social and Cultural Studies, J.C.U.N.Q.) investigated remote Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal needs and expectations concerning teacher education. The results of the feasibility study clearly showed that Island people desired a 'proper' teacher education programme which equipped them with an accredited teaching diploma or degree. They strongly preferred that the programme be based on Thursday Island, and in addition to the normal curriculum for teacher training, they requested that any such course be 'augmented with bicultural perspectives, on and off-campus periods of instruction, some 'mainstream' school experience and appropriate tutorial support' (J.C.U.N.Q. Annual Report 1988: 28). On the basis of Miller's report, RATEP was introduced in 1990 as a pilot scheme on the islands of Masig and Badu, and it was structured around computer-based learning with a resident tutor.

People also leave their islands to take up work opportunities. This includes women and men being employed as teachers and store managers on other islands, as well as men in particular travelling to the mainland for work. While there are still men working on the railways especially in North Queensland, young men do furloughs in the Northern Territory and Western Australian pearling ventures. Young men also sign on to crayfishing boats, while others work from home using dinghies.

People also travel away from home in order to visit relatives, to participate in rituals, to have a holiday, to partake in sporting or religious activities, or to shop. Visits to

\(^7\) See Loos and Miller (1989) for an historical overview and analysis of the first 10 years of the Aboriginal and Islander Teacher Education Programme (AITEP) in Townsville.
Thursday Island are regularly made as part of shopping trips. Shopping may range from the purchase of foodstuffs, drinks and clothes, to household items ranging from 'ghetto-blasters' and videos to kerosene deep freezers, or buying an aluminium dinghy and/or new outboard motor. Occasionally Cairns may be visited. Shopping trips may also be made to other islands perceived to have a more comprehensive range and variety of goods in their stores than on Yam Island. For example during 1980-1981 the treasured goods brought back from T.I. included baked chicken, alcohol and chocolate.

For many years now, pregnant women have been required to travel to Thursday Island several months prior to the expected date of delivery. This represents something of a double-edged sword for the women and families involved. While on the one hand some may welcome the change of scene, it is nevertheless unsettling and involves added expenses. What is more if a woman goes into Thursday Island in her seventh month of pregnancy, it could be three months before she returns home. During my fieldwork, all babies born to Yam Island women were born at the Thursday Island Hospital, as at that time there were no locally recognised mid-wives. Since my fieldwork however, there have been a few babies born on Yam Island (Lizzie Lui pers. comm. 1990).

Between 1980 and 1982 most pregnant Yam Island women stayed at the state government hostel (The Cottage) established specifically for the purpose. Unless a woman opts to stay in one of the hostels on Thursday Island, she must find accommodation with a relative on the island. Overcrowding is a major problem on Thursday Island, and even though she will be welcomed, it may put extra stress on all involved. When a woman already has other children, the situation is exacerbated; does she bring all her children into Thursday Island with her, or does she arrange for someone to mind them

8. This has since been replaced with the larger, more comfortable Abigail Bann Hostel. Named after a Yam Island woman, the hostel is locally referred to as 'Abigail'. 
for her while she prepares for the birth? If her other children are of school age she is likely to leave them on Yam Island with close relatives such as her mother, her sister, her brother and his family, or her parents-in-law.

Being admitted to hospital is never a pleasant experience, and for those patients who have to travel further south for treatment, the process may be very frightening. On Thursday Island there are many Torres Strait Island staff at the hospital, so communication and loss of confidence do not present the major problems they inevitably do in the southern hospitals. For many the experience of being unable to be heard and understood is extremely alienating.

5.5.1. Returning Home

Yam Islanders who have been residing elsewhere for some time are motivated to return home for a number of reasons which range from their having attained old age, to engaging in death related rituals, participating in weddings or activating their rights in land. For those who really come home to stay, it constitutes a significant step in which they return to 'aylan wey' (Yam Island traditions) after having lived and worked according to 'wayt man weyt' (white people's traditions). For the short-term returnees, coming home represents a means by which they may charge their cultural batteries. Some find the social and economic conditions on the island distressing and look forward to their return to the mainland. Often these individuals are burdened by unrealistic, inflated expectations and perceptions others hold of their capabilities. When these Islanders return home, they come with new values (see also Fitzpatrick-Nietschmann 1980a: 320), which often sit in direct contradiction to the dominant values held on the island. This results in role strain and role conflict for all the parties involved, which is ameliorated when the visitor returns to the mainland.
5.6. Conclusions

Governments and their advisors have come and gone since the 1870s but fundamentally very little has changed. The political conditions on island communities are still basically imposed from the outside, despite the plethora of departmental name changes, supposed policy changes and the introduction of various short-lived economic and political programmes. While Torres Strait Islanders have earned a reputation for their skill in negotiating the maze of reefs and islands in the region, they have also been honing up their skills in negotiating their interests through the maze of government departments, representatives, policies and ministers at both the State and Federal levels. For example, within the arena of formal politics there is a recognised requirement for community and extra-community leaders to have the ability to communicate effectively, negotiate and mediate between powerful others (non-Islander policy-makers and funding bodies) and Islanders. While gaining strength from tradition, people are well aware of the need to operate in the modern world of political representation (Beckett 1985, 1987b), within which either traditionalist values or symbols are not necessarily useful.

At the same time the stress resulting between such local political leaders and the general Island population pivots on the very point that they may not be as cognisant of tradition and the proper Island way (big passin), as are critical others from whom they draw approval, support, criticism and disapproval. Thus the in-built structural stress in the position of leader as cultural broker manifests itself at the personal level, in which the leader as an individual may be criticised on purely personal grounds. Obviously, as in many human societies, the gap between community leaders and other members is often glaringly wide, and at other occasions it fuses into a temporary yet integrated whole. Out of respect and for reasons stated earlier, this aspect of unity and disunity, and the role strain and role conflict experienced by leaders has not been
significantly addressed in this thesis. Nevertheless, both Beckett (1963, 1982, 1985, 1987b) and Fitzpatrick (Fitzpatrick-Nietschmann 1980a) have addressed the impacts of increased individualism and the emergence of stratification in the islands.

In a similar vein the individualism vs. community orientation of some people may also present an arena of conflict for particular Yam Islanders. Those who have lived elsewhere for a long period of time are drawn to the island, yet for some the situation is difficult when they return. There are still others who have been absent for some years who settle in without major trauma, and in particular those who have come home to retire can relax into the customary components of Yam Island society without having to worry about their own employment or education opportunities for their children. For them, their return represents the full turning of the circle, a return to their foundations, to their island.