Pre-marital chastity in a West Papuan city: Durkheim’s ‘ideal’ and sexual virtue.

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Produced on archival quality paper
This thesis is dedicated to Darius, Benson and Paskalina
Abstract

This thesis engages critically with Durkheim's ideas of morality in an ethnographic exploration of the reasons young women in Manokwari (West Papua, Indonesia) choose to maintain chastity prior to marriage. Based on 27 months of fieldwork with an urban, Christian, coastal community, I examine their sexual conformity through the motivating force of three emotions – love, fear and hope. Young women wanted to delay their sexual debut so as to not hurt or disappoint their beloved mothers and because they feared being beaten by kin and suffering other forms of violence that sanctioned sexual transgressions. Since pregnancy is understood to lead to school drop-out and forced marriage, hope for a future characterised by secure employment and a harmonious marriage is also a rationale for chastity. These affective logics are explored in the context of cultural constructions of sexual morality at a time of rapid socio-economic change, immoral threats and revitalised enthusiasms for being Christian, and being Papuan. My finding that sentiment structures processes of young women’s moral reasoning and chaste practice supports Durkheim's contention that ideals – moral standards that are above and beyond individuals – are emotionally based constructs of sacred power.

This ethnography thus contributes to recent anthropological discussions that conceptualise morality and ethics as a realm where actors evaluate, select and enact a range of moral options in order to fashion themselves as ethical subjects. The centrality of emotions and the social in Papuan sexual life, I argue, presents as a challenge to the cognitive and individualistic emphasis in this emergent scholarship. I will respond to these studies, many of which are often based on a critique of Durkheim as a theorist of deterministic and reproductive moral codes, by arguing for the importance of his later in life writings about morality, emotions and the sacred. Durkheim’s notion of the ideal not only offers the possibility of exploring moral agency and subjectivity, it provides a frame to understand why moral life is less, as some scholars suggest, a realm of persuasion and more a realm of constraint. As a concept that presupposes consciousness to be emergent from emotional engagement
with social life, from a Durkheimian perspective moral choice is constituted through emotions that shape, as they are shaped by, dimensions of social life considered sacrosanct. The explanatory force of moral ideals are especially apparent in the fears of negative sanctions that construct chastity as a duty and not just desire. I conclude that if reflexivity and ‘freedom’ are to find their rightful place in anthropological accounts of moral life and experience, it must be situated in an acceptance of Durkheim’s moral theory of the ideal.
Declaration

This is to certify that:

(i) the thesis comprises only my original work towards the degree of Doctor of Philosophy except where indicated in the Preface,

(ii) due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used,

(iii) the thesis is fewer than 100,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies and appendices.

Sarah Louise Richards
Prologue

Arriving In and Scoping the Field

If we visualise New Guinea as a Bird of Paradise,\(^1\) the head and neck of the bird belong to the easternmost part of the Republic of Indonesia, while the back and tail make up the independent nation of Papua New Guinea (PNG). This study is set in Manokwari, a city located near the northeast corner of the Bird’s Head (Dutch: *Vogelkop*, I: *Kepala Burung*) region of Papua/West Papua, Indonesia. Manokwari is affectionately known as Gospel Town (*Kota Injil*), homage to the western half of New Guinea’s role in hosting the first mission (see map A). Since 1963, when the transfer of sovereignty from the Netherlands to Indonesia began, this part of the world has gone by many names – West Irian (1969-1973), Irian Jaya (1973-1999), West Papua (2000), Papua (2001-2002), and, since 2003, when the territory was split in two by presidential decree,\(^2\) Papua and West Papua. While West Papua is the preferred term of nationalists and their supporters, I use this term to specify the province where Manokwari is the capital. To designate the entire region – an expanse that stretches across swamps and jungles, glacial peaks and island atolls – I borrow the local expression Tanah Papua, the land of Papua.

According to the national motto, *Bhinneka Tunggal Asa* (Unity in Diversity), the 275 language groups in Tanah Papua (Kluge 2014, p. 2) are a slab of diversity which are woven into a nation of over 230 million people living on 6000 islands (Boellstorff 2005, p. 16). From the point of view of the 1,200,000

\(^1\) Drawing New Guinea as a bird was common among Imperial cartographers and bird imagery is often evoked in discourses of this landmass. For instance, in *The Human Aviary* (Holton & Read 1971), Kenneth E. Read writes that New Guinea is ‘like a prehistoric mother bird marshalling a fledgling flock that spreads behind it to the boundary of Polynesia. Its great head points toward its Asian homeland, and in the early morning, as it stirs beneath the covers of its clouds, the air seems to be filled with its rumination on the themes of men and time. It existed long before man found protection under its rainbow plumage’ (Holton & Read 1971, p. 7).

\(^2\) A third split was planned to create Central Irian Jaya (*Irian Jaya Tenggah*), but riots forced its postponement (Jakarta Post 2003).
to 1,500,000 indigenous inhabitants of Tanah Papua (Elmslie 2009, paras 3, 5), being of Melanesian ethnicity and Christian faith is a point of incommensurability with the ethnic Malay inhabitants in a Southeast Asian nation with an 88 per cent Islamic majority (Cribb 2000, p. 44). Perceptions of racial and religious difference are a response to indigenous Papuan disappointments and sufferings since becoming part of Indonesia, and also symbolically underpin the ethno-nationalist movement that aspires to merdeka (‘freedom’ or political independence). Until 1998, the year President Suharto resigned under the weight of pro-democracy riots and the Asian Economic Crises, Papuans were included in national objectives of economic development through a blend of Java-centric programs and policies, spontaneous and official forms of in-migration from other parts of Indonesia, state censorship, and repression of local rights and cultural expression. As for other ethnic minorities within Indonesia, techniques of rule were racist and exploitative, yet any resistance risked intimidation, torture and murder by ABRI (national army and police) personnel.

The end of Suharto’s New Order, a term coined by the President to describe his ruling regime, has heralded a new era known as reformasi (reformation). Characterised by movement ‘toward open elections ... deregulation and expansion of the mass media, far greater freedom of speech and protest, decentralisation of government, and insistent calls for improved government transparency and accountability’ (Brenner 2011, p. 478), the dismantling of the authoritarian state has had paradoxical outcomes. On the one hand, democratisation has advanced human rights and civil society agendas. On the other, freedom of speech has opened space for more conservative moral

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3 The lower estimate is made by observers within Papua, including the Papuan Provincial Administration, who note the Papuan: migrant ratio has become relatively even. The higher figure, representing 68 per cent of the region’s population (where the other 32 per cent, or 708,425 inhabitants, of Tanah Papua are migrants) is based on the year 2000 national census. Elmslie disputes the validity of this data and, using his own means, extrapolates a figure that supports the Papua-based figure.

4 ABRI is an acronym for Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia, or the Indonesian Armed Forces. After the New Order, the army, navy, and airforce broke off from the police to become TNI (Tentara Nasional Indonesia, ‘National Army of Indonesia’).
agendas while decentralisation has pushed corruption and poor service delivery down to lower administrative levels. While these are the problems of a nation in Papua, ongoing military abuse frames the failures of democratisation through a particular currency. Even though *dwì fungsi* (dual function) – the New Order doctrine that invested the armed forces with the authority to protect the nation from internal as well as external threat – was abolished as part of military reform (Supriatma 2013, p. 96), in the last decade, the army has ‘approximately doubled their units and personnel’ in Tanah Papua.

If ‘the world is a pluralism’, to quote the philosopher William James, to focus on Tanah Papua as a land of military oppression and underdevelopment is an arguably one-sided, even if understandably well-documented story (Budiardjo & Liong 1988; Osborne 1985; Elmslie 2002; Saltford 2003; Leith 2003; King 2004; McGibbon 2006; Widjojo et al. 2008; Chauvel 2005, 2011; Drooglever 2009; Braithwaite et al. 2010; King, Elmslie & Webb-Gannon 2011; Kirksey 2012). In light of ongoing fears that Papuans are subject to a ‘slow-motion genocide’ (Elmslie 2010), it is a story that continues to be told, such as in recent monographs by Kirksey (2012) and Rutherford (2012) about transformations in expressions of the enduring spirit of *merdeka*. A number of articles too, in response to highly politicised views of Papua, have reinforced the picture of Papuans as victims of poor and uneven development, only this time they point to Papuan and not Indonesian bureaucrats as fatally undermining service delivery (Anderson 2012, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c, 2013d; Bachelard 2015). In Tanah Papua, where poverty rates are two times higher than the national average (United Nations Development Program Indonesia 2013, p. 13), a new tragedy is unfolding: the rising rates of HIV (Bachelard 2013; Reckinger & Lemaire 2014; Munro 2014, 2015). In Tanah Papua, the per-capita rate of infection is fifteen times higher than the national average, and an estimated seven percent of the indigenous adult population is thought to be infected (Butt 2015, pp. 109, 112).
My thesis tells another story. Based on twenty-seven months of fieldwork conducted over two periods (2003-2005 and 2011), I consider the reasons why young women choose ‘pre-marital chastity’ – a nebulous term referring to the never-settled state of striving to avoid sex before marriage. Though these women were of diverse ethnicities they all originated from islands in, and mainland areas around the Cenderawasih Bay region to the east and southeast of Manokwari (see map A). Some questions I will explore include: how is chastity socially represented and how does it become an embodied understanding with a heavy emotional load? What is the relationship between this Christian ideal and personal experience? What does it feel like to be chaste in a context of high mobility, commodity capitalism, and a thriving scene of underground sex and romance? What kinds of tensions, if any, are negotiated in order to become sexually avoidant?

Visa restrictions on foreign researchers have hampered ethnographic research in Tanah Papua, yet the importance of exploring large-scale processes of change through intimate events and experiences has never been more important. Changes to do with decentralisation – namely Special Autonomy and pemekaran (the splintering of administrative regions into smaller units) – have created more positions and funding. This has created more opportunities and greater prosperity for Papuans than at any other time in history. Yet judging by military responses to President Jokowi’s visit to Papua in May 2015, greater financial flows within Papua and between Jakarta and Papua seems not to have assuaged political tensions. Security forces announced they would protect Jowoki by organising 3,400 army and 2,600 police personnel, 12 teams of snipers, five helicopters and two warships that would be on standby in the Jayapura harbour (Van den Broek 2015). If this suggests the state, or at least the military, perceive Papuans as an ever greater threat, very little is known about how ordinary Papuans are experiencing life in the era of reform. For me, West Papua exceeds its reputation as a place of hardship and resistant nationalism. It is a place also alive with the scandals of gossip, the charms of babies, of laughter and spirited dancing, of piles of clothes needing to be washed and the smell of vii
fragrant spices in crackling oil. Following in the footsteps of anthropologists who have studied Papuan entanglements with migrants, state programs, global capitalism, media, and Christianity through geographically grounded engagement, this study of sexual moral choice shall provide insights into how a particular group of Papuans is coming to terms with the moral turmoil of social change.

* * * * * * * * *

As the plane began a weary descent, a knot of excitement built from the anticipation of fieldwork beginnings. I had been travelling for eight hours in an ice-cold cabin from Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, and now, outside the opaque and scratched oval shaped window, thick cloud parted to reveal a bright scene reminiscent of a cubist abstract painting. From above, Manokwari appeared as a series of grey stripes winding around a bright blue bay, dotted with a few luscious green islands. The land around the bay rose to rainforest-covered foothills, and, to the west, rose in undulating waves to become the grey-green peaks of the Arfak Mountains. My excitement was as much for the known as for the new. This was the beginning of my fieldwork, but I had been familiar with the area since the mid-1990s when I worked with AVA (Australian Volunteers Abroad) in the highland town of Wamena. The almost three years spent with the highland Dani, as well as a one year volunteer assignment on Bougainville Island in Papua New Guinea, shaped my enthusiastic response to my new home in a part of the city they called Old Town (Kota Lama).

Close to the port and once a hub of Dutch colonial activity, Old Town was an unplanned maze of houses and other buildings stretched along the side of Gunung Meja (Table Mountain). Shops and a main road ran along the bottom

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5 This includes Butt’s thesis about maternity, babies and health amongst the Dani (1998); Timmer’s study of Imyan cosmology (2000); Stasch’s (2001) research about Korowai witchcraft (2001); Rutherford’s work on enthusiasm for the foreign in Biak (2003); research by Munro on the pursuit of education among Dani (2009); and work on Christianity amongst Dani’s living in Jayapura by Farhadian (2005). Almost all of these anthropologists worked in the region in the 1990s, a moment in time when Rutherford speculates that state officials believed they had won over West Papua (2003, p. 8).
of the hill and, at the top, there was a tangle of rainforest where our water supply was piped and men liked to hunt snakes and possums. As a mother of three children under four years old (the youngest was six weeks when I arrived), I was embraced by neighbours who offered support and companionship while Robert, my husband, spent long days working for an NGO.\(^6\) Just as fieldwork is an ongoing stream of ‘chance and sagacity’ (Rivoal & Salazar 2013, p. 178), it was in this space of domestic containment with porous social boundaries that I came to study sex, or rather the necessity of its avoidance.

My cooking and the blue-eyed blondeness of my children were a source of curiosity and attraction for teenage girls, including several who liked to visit in the leisurely time of late afternoons and evenings. Over the two years I lived in Old Town, seven schoolgirls between 15-18 came to live with me for different lengths of time. One, a high school graduate called Nita, stayed for the entire two years.\(^7\) As is likely the case with teenage girls across the globe, these Papuan youth were preoccupied with issues of who had tried to seduce whom recently, which boys had expressed romantic interest, who was saying what about whom, and what trouble had befallen peers suspected of having secret boyfriends. We chatted about other things too: what it was like to grow up in Manokwari, the problems facing Papuans today, and the plot twists of favorite soap operas. Yet love sagas, where pre-marital relationships are frowned upon at best and violently punished at worst, consumed them the most. These conversations generated the concepts through which this thesis took shape.

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\(^6\) His project was to help small-scale Papuan cocoa farmers organically remove a borer pest from their crops.

\(^7\) This situation seemed a ‘win win’. I was pleased for the company, they were pleased to live closer to school, and their parents were pleased that their daughter was able to live with westerners which, in their minds, helped her to learn modern progressive ways of life.
In 2011 I returned to the field, this time with my youngest daughter, for three months further research. I found the scale of urban change extraordinary. In 2003, the year I first arrived, Gospel Town had been declared the capital of a new province – the province of West Papua. For the two years I lived in Manokwari, it was ablaze with preparations to grow into its newfound status. Roads and bridges were being built or upgraded, and there were forests of poles marking where administrative offices that would befit a provincial capital were to be built. Similar to the findings about ‘modernity’ and ‘development’ of several anthropologists working in different parts of Papua New Guinea, my friends saw ‘progress’ as an epoch (Hirsch 2001) and an event (McDowell 1985, p. 34; McDowell 1988, p. 124; Dwyer & Minnegal 1998, p. 36) – I was often told ‘progress is about to happen’ (kemajuan akan jadi). When I returned in 2011 for three months of follow up research, I was greeted with the news: ‘now Manokwari has progressed’ (sekarang Manokwari sudah maju).

In that visit I saw the effects of money sent from Jakarta, as well as from economic changes associated with the Special Autonomy decentralisation laws passed in 2001. The following is from my field-notes of the day of my return:

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My mouth was open in disbelief for the whole trip to Ibu Reni’s. As soon as I left the airport I came face to face with a Mesjid Raja (grand mosque) and looking to the hills beyond, could see how large swathes of forest had been cleared. One bald patch, the driver told me in a tone of pride, was going to be home to Manokwari’s first gated community ‘like in Jakarta and Freeport’. New roads carried me over unfamiliar landscape, past new mobile phone towers and government offices as palatial as any I had seen in other capital cities in Indonesia. At a busy intersection there was a giant flat screen television beaming TVRI (the government television station). The bay and mountains,
once ubiquitous in the streetscape, were amiss, hidden by the built up urban topography. Bright coloured, multi-storey shops and houses formed barriers, rows of cement and plaster built along bitumen arterials. The shopping mall is finished and is complete with a KFC and an adjoining five star hotel – another first for Manokwari. Everywhere, even off the main roads, the traffic is now thick, smelly, noisy, affronting. When I left there was one traffic light that was turned off at 10pm. Now, the driver counted, there are seven that run day and night.

July 15th 2011.

Facebook friends had warned that ‘Manokwari has changed a lot’ (Manokwari sangat berubah), yet aside from complaints about the smell, noise, and lack of breeze, people had adjusted to the hustle and throng of urban expansion. For me the experience of return was jarring and uncanny, in Freud’s (2003) sense which evokes the strange commingling of the familiar and unfamiliar, the homely and unhomely.

In my first period of fieldwork, many were cynical that ‘development’ (pembangunan) – a New Order slogan that had been repackaged as ‘progress’ (kemajuan) – would improve life for Papuans. Yet it was hard to not feel a widespread anticipation that the future would take a turn for the better. Though ‘progress’ was a term devoid of the unfulfilled promise of New Order propaganda, its referent was the same – that is, ‘a style of life associated with economic development and Western-style material betterment’ (Knauft 2002, p. 4). For some, such as friends I visited in 2011 who proudly showed off their renovated home, a car that had replaced their motorbike, or their latest model laptops or IKEA kitchenware bought on shopping sprees to Jakarta, this hope had been fulfilled. For many more, it had not.

The growing divide between rich and poor is a trend found across the world (Walby 2009, p. 330). In Papua it is etched along racial lines, where, generally
speaking, Indonesian migrants excel in private enterprise, coastal Papuans dominate the civil service and highlanders live on the fringes of town cultivating unclaimed patches of land. Yet Special Autonomy – a series of legislations offered to the troubled bookend provinces of Aceh and Papua – has given local bureaucrats a greater share of revenues generated from their natural resource sector, as well as the authority to grant forestry and mining permits and make local laws and taxes. Pemekaran, an unanticipated outcome of Special Autonomy, has been justified on the grounds of providing better service delivery. In practice, it has presented a series of opportunities for dominant tribal groups to have their own regency (kabupaten) to control revenues flowing from resource rents, government contracts and the allocation of civil servant jobs (Institute for Policy Analysis and Conflict 2013).

A friend of mine who manages a Papuan conservation NGO told me in a recent phone conversation, ‘Merdeka is dead. People only think projects [proyek].’ Projects, government contracts that bring fast cash, are a kind of craze in Papua that is metonymic of the corruption, greed, and materialism perceived to be eroding Christian and traditional values. Given that merdeka – a dream once critically identified with the guerilla struggle of the Free Papua Movement (OPM, Organisasi Papua Merdeka) – has come to mean a ‘sense of social justice, implying a gradualist rather than a millenarian approach to change’ (Kirsch 2010, p. 15), I read my friend’s quip as a veiled commentary on how the scramble for money, power and prestige was detracting from the energies required for, and actively sabotaging the possibility of Papuan prosperity and wellbeing. Transformations in socio-political life present moral conundrums on multiple fronts. ‘We need progress’ said one old friend who had done well for herself, scoring a project to build schools. ‘But we need it in ways that keep our morals intact. The need for money is making men feel stres [stress] so they are getting drunk. All the kids now, they are forgetting God, boyfriending, stealing, drinking, and running off with other women’s husbands. These things are not asli Papua [original Papuan], they learn from foreigners.’ It is in these scenes of concern with Papuan morality in a
Christian-identified city undergoing dramatic changes that I begin my story about young people who wish to avoid sexual relations.
Acknowledgements

Without the faith and unswerving support of four people, this thesis may not have come to fruition. My supervisor Martha MacIntyre, as intellectually brilliant as she is soulful and compassionate, was there from the very start. From fighting the scholarships office for not providing more than one period of parental leave (‘who are they to tell grad students how many children they can have?’), to the employment opportunities she opened, to the nuanced feedback on my dramatically changing chapters, Martha’s care was as much for me as for her commitment to ethnographic research. Brian Richards, Petra Bueskens and Carly Murphy have been my emotional pillars throughout. Near daily conversations and snacks with Petra have brought me joy and kept my sanity. Her advice that ‘a failed rite of passage casts a shadow’ became my mantra. Aware that every day was another day invested in this end product, such educated wisdoms combined with her unconditional love buoyed by spirit. Papa Brian, Dad, your willingness to sacrifice time and energy for endless banalities create a love as big as the universe. Just being there washing dishes, shopping for essentials, servicing the car, walking the dogs and running kids around lifted weight. Your painstaking editorial assistance in the eleventh hour was gravy. Carly, as the thesis became a dark tunnel your well-groomed presence became my light. Your drop-ins and offers of a walk, a meal, a vodka, a kid pickup or a loaf of bread provided sustenance.

Expressing my gratitude to people in West Papua is the most important yet, in light of the ethical decision to conceal my informants’ identities, complicated task. Makasih dosen dosen di UNIPA, Nita’ d’orang, Beti d’orang, Ibu Yuli d’orang, anak Brawijaya dan anak buah di kantor Pak Robert. Els Rika, Paula Makabory, Septre Manafandu, Lesley Butt, Michael Cookson, and Robyn Roper are special friends who share my love for Tanah Papua. Lesley, Mike and Robyn, as well as my new friend Jenny, are the bules that share a special affection for West Papua. Thanks to Robert for shedding light on gaps in understanding, for creating the map and for sharing taxonomic knowledge.
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I want to express my gratitude to Mum, James and Querida for their love and understanding. Melissa, thanks for admiring my unusual job and for the laughter you have brought by luring me to dance and sharing stories from the ‘real’ world. Lea. You, your land and your mother have inspired me all along. Thanks for the practical acts of nurture – the gifts and opportunities – you have given me lately. Jessie Szigethy-Gyula, your enthusiasm for my thesis and interest in my topic have been as big as the laughs, feasts and adventures we have had over the years. My community, a network of mothers and baristas in the country town of Daylesford, has also been indispensable. First and foremost thanks to Esterina Nasuti, my dear friend who actively raised my children in the early years. Thanks too to all the other fictive aunts and uncles that belong to gift economy – Fanjung (Jenny) Cong, Jendy Fry, Kim Wrigley, Ange Izard and Sam Thompson, Susie Verity, Karen and Dave,
Richard and Michelle, Donna and Alan. Staff from my two favourite cafes, Koukla and The Wombat, deserve thanks for their company and coffee. Their warmth helped lift my spirit day in and day out so that I could keep on writing.

Financially I could not have made this journey without an Australian Postgraduate Award, money from the Melbourne University Fieldwork Funding Scheme, a Graduate Travel In Postgraduate Award, Melbourne University Arts Department Funding, a bursary from Graduate Women Victoria and an AAS Travel Scholarships for Anthropological Theory and Ethnography Master Classes at the ANU. Thanks Patsy Ashley for a cash donation to support me presenting seminar and conference papers in five countries over six weeks in 2012. Nana, who would have liked to have done a PhD, thanks for bequeathing me the equivalent of about three guineas a week so I could keep writing when my scholarship finished.

My theoretical interest in social constraint was no doubt influenced by the challenges I faced as primary carer in economically unstable circumstances. Between 9am-3.20pm, the hours of the Australian school day, I read, wrote and contemplated conceptual connections all the while expecting to be interrupted. Acknowledging those who have given me sustenance in the arduous phase of writing up has special significance in light of the school performances, illness, athletics days, forgotten lunchboxes, nits and other things that cut into my flow. For Darius, Benson, and Pasca I hope my thesis will not be remembered as something they competed with but as a matrix through which they grew. From the table conversations my research stimulated, to the cogitations that created blank stares when they talked to me, to the soft glow of my screen and the sound of tapping as they fell asleep at night, this thesis was their world too. When she was six, Pasca brought home a picture she had drawn in a classroom exercise about what they wanted to be when they grew up. A concentric layering of a square within a rectangles and a circle beneath evoked a birds’ eye view of a person working on a laptop at a desk. At the bottom Pasca had scribbled ‘antropologis’.
Preceding presentations and publications

Sections from Chapter Five have been previously published as, ‘Hip Hop in Manokwari: pleasures, contestations and the changing face of Papuanness’, a chapter in From ‘Stone-Age’ to ‘Real-Time’: Exploring Papuan Temporalities, Mobilities and Religiosities (pp. 145-168). I thank the editors Martin Slama and Jenny Munro for their permission to include them in my thesis.

Some of the themes that emerged from my research for this thesis have appeared in papers presented at conferences and seminars. The content of Chapter Three, concerning effervescence responses to Papuan anxieties about in-migration and Islamisation, has its beginning in papers I presented in 2012 at the Melanesia Research Seminar in London and the annual meeting of the Netherlands Association for Oceanic Studies in Nijmegen, The Netherlands. A paper titled, ‘Sluts and panic in a time of genocide: a question for Moral Panics Theory’, presented in 2012 at the European Society for Oceanists (ESfO) Conference (Bergen, Norway) prefigures some of my interests in Chapter Five. In 2012 and 2013 I developed a paper on the themes of fear and freedom, concepts that are central to this thesis. These papers were presented at the University of St Andrews Centre for Pacific Studies Seminar (2012), the Anthropology and Development Studies Seminar series at The University of Nijmegen, and the Australian Anthropological Society annual conference at the Australian National University in Canberra (2013).
A note on translated materials

All translations are from Bahasa Papua, a dialect of the national *lingua franca* Bahasa Indonesia, except for where ‘B’ indicates a word translated from the indigenous language of Biak Island.
Ethical Clearance

Ethical clearance for the research conducted for this thesis was granted by the Departmental Human Ethics A Group at the University of Melbourne.
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Map 1

Manokwari city in relation to the Cenderawasih Bay and the Indonesian nation

Image created by Robert Hewat, 2016
Introduction

Chastity as Virgin Territory

Rather than aggrandising the present by excoriating our academic ancestors, it is more productive to cultivate a dialogue that combines critique with appreciative mediation of past and present authorships (Knauft 1999, p. 213).

A more careful and better-balanced assessment of the Durkheimian legacy and its contemporary implications ... is in order (Yan 2014, p. 486).

Rethinking Durkheim for the New Morality

Why do young women in Manokwari want to abstain from sex before marriage? What do their reasons tell us about human morality and, in particular, the limits of freedom in the making of the moral? These two questions guide this thesis, an ethnographic investigation into how chastity, as an ethical practice and a moral ideal, is constructed in everyday emotional life. As a moral code seen as both Christian and traditional, chastity is an expectation woven into the normative and sacred fabric of Papuan social life. For the young women in this study, chastity is felt and enacted as a moral imperative through three embodied sentiments: love for their mother, hope for the future and fear of potential violence. That sexual moral choices manifest as affective rationales, I shall argue, supports Emile Durkheim’s thesis that morality is a socially binding realm. The focus on the sentiments of love, hope, and fear in relation to the social practice of chastity supports Durkheim’s notion that Ideals – emotionally laden beliefs that trigger a range of responses that construct moral conduct as acceptable or unacceptable – are created and sustained through sentiments felt for others who embody and enforce the normative order.
The aim of this thesis, which is to advance Durkheim’s interest in the Ideal – capitalised to mark the theoretical inflection inherent in referring to sacred ideas – is timely in light of the prevailing antipathy towards Durkheim in an emergent anthropological literature on morality and ethics.\(^8\) Mores, morals, and morality have always been topics central to disciplinary enquiry.\(^9\) However, with a few exceptions (Edel & Edel 2000; Ladd 1957; Read 1955), morality has rarely been theorised as an explicit dimension of social existence. In recent years, by contrast, morality has become a ‘conceptual centre for social analysis’ (Barker 2007, p. 3) and the focus of an ‘explicit and more sophisticated research agenda’ (Zigon 2008, p. 3). The field of morality studies, possibly in response to a world awash with moral crises, has undergone a ‘multidisciplinary renaissance’ (Haidt & Kesebir 2010, p. 797). A number of anthropologists have approached the topic by calling for renewed attention to how people evaluate the good, make moral decisions, and inhabit ethical subjectivities.\(^10\) These are not standalone interests: this literature – which I gloss as the New Morality\(^11\) – is supported by a growing interest in cognate topics such as hope, wellbeing, wonder, and other currencies of value, including the inverse of goodness: the problem of evil (Csordas 2013; Yan 2014).

\(^8\) Since social scientist divergence on the meanings of these terms, I use them interchangeably, though concur they have different connotations. According to Fassin ‘philosophers traditionally affirm that morality refers to culturally bound values and ethics designates a branch of their discipline’ (2012, p. 5).

\(^9\) For a detailed list of twentieth century anthropological scholarship about morality, see Csordas (2013, pp. 523-524) and, in the context of Melanesia, Barker (2007, pp. 3-8).

\(^10\) In the last decade or so, morality has been the focal topic of several monographs (e.g. Parish 1994; Laidlaw 1995; Rydstrom 2003; Robbins 2004b; Mahmood 2005; Throop 2010; Zigon 2011), edited collections (e.g. Howell 1997; Heintz 2009; Lambek 2010), journal articles (e.g. Laidlaw, 2002; Widlok 2004; Robbins 2007a, 2007b; Zigon 2009; Cassaniti & Hickman 2013), and a 644 page companion volume (Fassin 2012). This list is suggestive, as it is not possible to give a comprehensive list of such a large literature that continues to expand.

\(^11\) Given that the ‘new’ soon becomes the ‘old,’ this term is problematic, but for the aims of a PhD thesis, it is economical and helpful for avoiding debates as to whether the emergent literature should be known as the ‘anthropology of moralities’ (Barker 2007; Howell 1997) or ‘moral anthropology’ (Fassin 2012).

2
Though theoretically and empirically diverse, scholarship on the New Morality converges in the assumption that studying how individuals navigate and negotiate ethical spheres is a conceptual improvement on Durkheim’s understandings of morality as a system of rules and codes that regulate behaviour (Laidlaw 2002; Karlstrom 2004, p. 604; Robbins 2007a). As Yan (2011, para. 1) writes, ‘specifying the anthropology of morality and moving away from Durkheim are viewed by many as inseparable parts of the same endeavour in the emerging anthropology of morality and ethics.’ James Laidlaw has provided a cogent and influential argument for why Durkheim’s theories are problematic. In his Malinowski lecture of 2001, Laidlaw (2002) notes that because Durkheim ‘so completely identifies the collective with the good… an independent understanding of ethics appears neither necessary nor possible’ (ibid., p. 312). Though Durkheim ‘did not invent the collectivist conception of society’, he argues, anthropologists have, with few exceptions, conflated morality with ‘whatever other terms we have been enthusiastically using to explain collectively sanctioned rules, beliefs, and opinions: sometimes “culture”, sometimes “ideology”, sometimes “discourse”’ (ibid., p. 312). For Laidlaw, if we want morality studies to avoid ‘constantly collapsing into general questions of social regularity and social control’, anthropologists must ‘take seriously, as something requiring ethnographic description, the possibilities of human freedom’ (ibid., p. 315). Freedom, the argument goes, is an intrinsic feature of the moral, because moral codes only suggest or persuade, and never enforce thought or action.

Laidlaw’s argument that freedom should be the key metaphysic for moral anthropology has had widespread appeal (ibid., p. 323) and in this thesis I use ‘freedom’ as shorthand, indicating the central place of moral agency and subjectivity in the New Morality. In an essay that takes stock of this literature, Robbins (2012, paras 3, 6) notes that though ‘a thousand flowers are blooming … one of the more surprising features of the anthropology of morality as it has developed to date has been a preoccupation with issues of freedom.’ This interest in freedom, albeit one that is ‘socially situated and conditioned’, has been productive in stimulating debates as well as
sophisticated accounts of how agents ethically reason and act in plural moral landscapes (Robbins, 2012, para. 7). In light of globalised changes and the spread of new moral possibilities, it is also necessary to study how people evaluate and enact a range of moral options. Even so, I am not convinced that freedom is the most productive grounds for understanding morality. Not only does this concept create the problematic space of non-freedom, exploring moral and ethical phenomena as agentic and subjective focuses on the individual at the expense of the social, and the mind at the expense of the heart.

This thesis is a sustained critique of this effort to push Durkheim aside in order to usher in these new theorisations of the moral. Departing from New Morality approaches, my research into the sexual moral decision making of young women in Manokwari supports Durkheim’s argument that moral codes have authority, configured in various combinations of duty and desire, because they have an emotional basis. This idea, captured in his concept of the Ideal, illuminates why chastity – as motivated by love, fear and hope – is less an ethic to adopt and more a binding obligation in social fields patterned as sacred. Durkheim’s concept of the Ideal refers to moral beliefs that are, as Weiss contends (2012, p. 83), not ‘formal and empty’ but ‘full of life’ and ‘capable of touching our sensibility and moving our will’. This both exposes and transcends the limits of the New Morality by highlighting how the social is a crucial component of moral frameworks that young women perceive as determining their choices and, in turn, the limits of their personal freedom. In the following chapters I will demonstrate this by exploring chastity as a Christian sacred understanding, embedded in sympathetic attachments to Papuan moral community and experienced through social emotions – social because they are productive of attachment to people who embody dominant values or Ideals.

12 I use the term ‘social’ after Fish (2005, p. 134) as a convenient gloss for an entire range of key terms in the social scientific lexicon: social structure, social relation, social class, social institution, social exchange, social interaction, and social theory.
Forbidden Love: a moral conundrum

Sitting in front of a fan on a sagging red and black couch with rips in the vinyl, I am watching a sinetron [Javanese soap opera] with half a dozen young Papuan women. A romantic scene flickers across the screen. A boy and girl, impossibly perfect with their Eurasian good looks and dressed in all white, are walking home from high school engaged in mildly flirtatious chitchat. In serious and soft tones the boy tells the girl, her eyes lowered demurely, about the difficulties in his family since his father broke both legs in a motorcycle accident. No longer able to work as a taxi driver, his mother is working extra hours as a street vendor selling jamu [herbal medicine]. Since the accident, his father has become moody, he tells the girl, oscillating between silence and angry outbursts, exacerbating household tensions. The boy pauses, turns to the girl and tells her that these are not the only worries that keep him awake at night.

The camera now frames the girls face in soft focus. Her lowered eyes lift, very slowly, until they are locked with his. The musical score changes to convey psychic tension and the camera pans in, framing only their faces. A pained kind of intimacy ensues as the camera switches from her face, to his, then back again, as the girl and boy mirror each other’s expressions. First the wistful look of eyes searching each other, then the wide-open expression of bewilderment. Now their muscles contort as if from great emotional pain and, as if unable to bear this melodramatic moment any longer, the girl turns and runs — a feminine kind of run that lacks direction. With alarm, he calls out to her — ‘Tuti!’ — and takes chase, quickly catching up. He touches her shoulder
and she turns around. Their eyes lock once more, but this time, they break into smiles, smiles that become laughter. It starts to rain. Opening identical white umbrellas, Tuti and the boy start to dance, more sway than groove, as they occasionally kick water off puddles in each other’s direction. The musical changes again to a light pop song sung by a popular Javanese singer about the sweetness of love. The song becomes louder, muting their laughter, and the episode ends with the camera pulling back and elevating, revealing two white figures in the distance, alone, on the street, moving joyfully. The credits roll.


‘That’s the same with us Papuan kids’ sixteen year old Sali burst out, her mouth full of salted pumpkin seeds. I had never seen Pauans wearing all white or dancing slowly nor had I witnessed a boy-girl pair walking home from school in a bubble of intimacy, yet I knew exactly what Sali meant. Just like their favorite sinetron protagonists, the romantic desires of young Pauans clashed with the moral expectation that they should delay what is locally referred to as berpacaran (boyfriending or girlfriending) until after high school or tertiary graduation. Not only does berpacaran – a term that encapsulates but semantically exceeds English words such as romantic courtship, dating or hooking up – reek of sexual impropriety and thus affront Christian ethical sensibility, in the context of low rates of contraceptive use (Diarsvitr et al. 2011, p. 1053)13 it creates the problem of pregnancy. The sense that sex inevitably leads to pregnancy is conveyed in local expressions such as ‘if you main [play, a euphemism for sex] it happens’ and ‘if you start a fire you get burnt’.

13 A survey of sexually active Pauans in Year 11 (across five cities, including Manokwari) found that only 0.03 per cent of respondents had used a condom (the only available contraception outside marriage) in their last sexual encounter.
Of all Tuti’s worries – the pressure to do well as school, parental conflict, the death of loved ones, her father’s cancer, and the emotional fallout from her uncle’s extra-marital affairs – my friends were most fascinated by how she navigated forbidden love. Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia and home to the Indonesia culture industries, was 4500 kilometres to the west of Manokwari. As in Christian Papua, where sex before marriage is considered a sin, in Java, this same practice is zina (Islamic law concerning unlawful sexual relations). This shared moral ground lent sinetron its appeal in Papua, where it is aired on multiple channels several times a day. ‘That is just how it is in Papua’ said Juli, Sali’s cousin. ‘In the West you can boyfriend [berpacaran] randomly. In Indonesia free sex [seks bebas] is immoral. It makes chaos.’ After a pause, Juli offered an afterthought that aroused mirth in the others. ‘But not that dancing in the rain. That is not how it is in Papua. Here, if it began to rain, kids would say ... quick, no one is looking, where is the long grass.’ This quip was as both a reference to the common practice of seeking privacy for secret sex in outdoor locations and Papuan self-stereotypes as a sexually enthusiastic people.

Tuti was portrayed as naïve and tragically vulnerable to romance. In earlier episodes she had fallen for a poor but kind-hearted young man until word got out and she was scolded by her parents. ‘You are still a child’ her father had said. ‘You must concentrate on school. Love can wait.’ These words were chilling in light of the subplot that he had, unbeknownst to Tuti, sealed a deal for her to marry his friend at the office when she turned seventeen. Focusing on school had long been a challenge for Tuti. In the last season, we were gripped by the drama when she was seduced, though not sexually, by a jagoan, a macho youth who talked sweet words. ‘Men like this, we call them a land crocodile [buaya darat],’ the girl next to me explained. ‘They talk sweet, they look good, smell good but they are not serious, they just want to play.’

Upon hearing of her affair Tuti’s mother was struck with a heart attack and sent to hospital. In a poignant moment that launched her mother’s recovery, Tuti fell on her knees beside the hospital bed and, with big, wet eyes, begged
for forgiveness. ‘It is not true what people are saying,’ she pleaded. She admitted she had been attracted, but she and the jagoan had talked, nothing more. ‘I am still a gadis,’ she pleaded, invoking a Javanese idiom for a girl of sexual innocence and purity. With wet eyes herself Juli piped up, ‘This situation, it happens here too. People say things about you that are not true, they talk [bicara, ‘gossip’], say you are nakal [naughty, ‘wanton’].’

Though sexual desire is a normal and near-inevitable urge for adolescents, gossip is one of many troubles that can befall girls who have boyfriends. In this way bodily development, as well as peer-based recognition that boyfriending is a sign of maturity and popularity, clashes with restrictive sexual moralities.

According to parents having a ‘friend’ (teman) – the euphemistic term for a pacar (boyfriend/girlfriend) – is only permitted in the strictest of circumstances. The relationship must be discreet, begin at the end or after high school or, for those who pursue further study, university graduation and take place ‘in front’ (di depan) and not ‘behind’ (di belakang) the parents. In addition, the ‘friend’ must be ‘good’ (baik), meaning sober and employed, or at least hardworking. For many, these rules are seen as onerous and impossible, and so they pursue sex and romance in secret. However, there are others who do not. It is to these others, women who do not boyfriend, that I cast my ethnographic eye. Why, at a time of sexual maturation and greater sexual incitements and freedoms, would young women not want to pursue sexual and romantic relationships? Does sexual conformity imply a denial of sexual desire and agency, or does it suggest other kinds of desires and agency? If so, how do these desires illuminate the limits of anthropological theorisations of morality in general and sexual morality in particular?

Defining Chastity and Overview of Study

Associated with Christianity and European maidens, ‘chastity’ is far from an ideal choice of key word, yet in the context of alternatives, both etic and emic, 14

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14 In local parlance, nakal is semantically akin to the English colloquial word ‘slut’. 8
it struck me as sufficiently neutral, broad yet narrow enough to capture the domain of practice I wish to explore. It was less cumbersome than ‘sexual abstinence’ and less specific than celibacy, which implies the conscious ‘removal of oneself from the larger social world’ in order to ‘alter that world’ (Sobo & Bell 2001, p. 3). In local parlance, chastity corresponds to a semantic domain, captured by the word ‘virgin’ (perawan) or the far more common ‘good girl’ (perempuan baik). The latter term was too broad – embedding sexual purity in a host of desirable feminine attributes, sentiments and virtues – but the former had the problem of being too narrow. Virginity, a concept pertaining to the state of not having had heterosexual intercourse, is a notion introduced by Christian missionaries and agents of the state. As I explore in Chapter Six, the pre-modern practice of bridewealth is interpreted through the modern value of virginity so that Papuans understand traditional morality as forbidding sex before marriage. Since bridewealth is a moral economy that places greater value on paternal legitimacy than illicit sexual activity, historical structures create disjunctures in meaning and action. Papuan youth do not guard their ‘virginity’ in the sense of engaging in alternative kinds of sex to offset vaginal penetration. Though virginity is claimed as a Christian value, it is not subject to cultural elaboration. Virginity, a concept embedded in the notion of chastity, is more a state of moral being created through impression management than a physiological threshold. Even youth who have had sex can, after asking God for forgiveness, return to a state of chastity without feelings of defilement or regret.\(^{15}\)

I have divided this study into three parts, each consisting of three chapters. The first, ‘Background’, consists of the theoretical and ethnographic background to the study, as well as an exploration of sociopolitical factors involved in Papuan moral identities and normative understandings. In Chapter One, I introduce Durkheim, outlining why his notion of Ideals as products of emotional life is important for rectifying the limits of contemporary emphasis

\(^{15}\) This experience contrasts with the regrets of ‘born-again virgins’ interviewed by Carpenter (2005).
on cognition and the individual in theories of moral making. In Chapter Two, I introduce my research participants and fieldwork settings. In Chapter Three, I explore Papuan nationalism as an experience of collective effervescence that generates and argues for the normative scaffolding where young women navigate sexual moral life. Passionate identifications as Papuans and its totemic registers of *adat* (neo-tradition) and Christianity, I suggest, are animated by a sense of Islamic-migrant threat. The urge to protect the Papuan sacred, I will argue, is formative of an emotional vitality that is reasserting the boundaries and meanings of so-called Papuan values.

In the second section, I explore chastity as a historically dynamic ideal. Enlisting Bourdieu’s notion of ‘*habitus*’ – which extends Durkheim’s ‘social fact’ by adding a historical and bodily perspective – Chapter Four examines how premarital chastity becomes a moral fact, a shared virtue both internal and external to the individual. To this end I explore gendered and sexual values of Church, State, and *Adat* everyday routines, and cultural constructions of adolescence. This material will complement sites of sexual moral construction explored in other chapters, such as in ideas of personhood as a product of the care of others (Chapters Four, Six, and Eight), the cultural salience and pain of shame (Chapters Four and Nine), the ontological power of gossip (Chapter Nine), values of age and gender appropriate deference (Chapters Four, Eight, and Nine), and imaginings of a future without economic struggle (Chapters Two and Seven). Chapter Four concludes with the argument that while Bourdieu offers a superior account of the social as a secular account of how people accumulate capital, he overlooks Durkheim’s insight that people are motivated by ‘irrationality’, meaning emotionally-driven desires.

Chapter Five explores the themes of moral change through the lens of cultural sexualisation and moral panic. By recasting the backlash to the liberalisation of sexual mores as a form of effervescence, I draw attention to how sex panics reinscribe the Papuan sacred. As a stimulus of anger and fear, sex panics are a dark manifestation of a sacred energy that is also a source of life
and community. In a Durkheimian framework, we can see that sexual change is not, as observers of Indonesia note, simply plural, in the sense that there are different claims as to what constitutes goodness. Resistant behaviours and identities are incrementally undermining hetero-normative regimes, but reactions to this, in the form of discourses of ‘panic’, are part of a project of resacralising Papuan sexual values. In Chapter Six, I explore moral divergence and slippage: that is, how ideals and practices rarely align, as well as contradictions in attitudes to sex before marriage. Older sex-positive attitudes, I suggest, create uneasy overlaps with modern sexual moralities, forming disjunctures at odds with the notion of chastity. That sexual discourses are dual creates cultural complexity but does not – as the measure of action – detract from the grip of the Ideal.

While the second section explores how chastity became a sacred and sanctioned bodily knowing, the third section examines the manifesting of the Ideal in everyday loves, fears, and dreams. In Chapter Seven, I consider how feelings of hope, tethered to visions of an economically stable future as a housewife, motivate sexual abstinence. This kind of hope, which I call ‘biographic’, is linked to fear – at best, the fear that romance will detract from the concentration needed at school, and at worst, the fear of falling pregnant. Chapter Eight traces the lines of debt and obligation that structure love for one’s mother, a love that motivates behaviours that spare a mother the pain of shame and disappointment. The last chapter examines fear, a dominant emotional rationale for avoiding sexual relations that is attached to various modes of violence: from beatings at the hands of angry kin and random attacks by jealous lovers to the consequences of gossip and supernatural dangers of the night. In the conclusion, I enquire into the generalisability of my argument as well as exploring directions for future research. I turn now to a brief overview of the subjects of my research, the state of the literature on chastity, the analytic worth of exploring sexual moral conformity, and the methods employed in this study.
Young Coastal Papuans

My thesis is based on interactions, observations and interviews with young women who saw themselves as coastal (pantai, beach) Papuans and were mostly between fifteen and nineteen years of age, though some fell by a few years on either side of this age bracket. The term ‘coastal’ (pantai) is an axis of identity created through historical encounters with ‘Mandechan’, the colloquial and slightly derogatory term for people from the Arfak Mountains.¹⁶ In Manokwari ‘coastal’ refers to anyone who originates from an area near the ocean, but in the context of this thesis it refers to the islands and mainland regions in Cenderawasih (Bird of Paradise) Bay, where almost all of my informants were from. Cenderawasih Bay is an area that straddles Papua and West Papua Province, and represents over thirty different ethno-linguistic groups.¹⁷ Though vast and diverse, this thesis represents only a few of the dominant ethnicities from this area: orang (classificatory noun for ‘person’) Waropen, orang Serui, and orang Wandamen. Most – indeed, I would estimate upwards of 80 per cent of my research participants – were orang Biak. Biak, with its adjoining islands of Numfor and Supiori, is the largest landmass in the Cenderawasih Bay and its inhabitants have long histories of travel to regions to the west. For centuries before European contact, Biaks paid homage to the North Moluccan Sultanate of Tidore, trading with and raiding coastal communities on the way to gather booty to pay tribute. Most coastalns migrated to Manokwari in the twentieth century but, because it was a

¹⁶ Mandacan (pronounced Mandatjan) is the name of one of the clans of the Meyah tribe (one of five locally classified in the Arfak Mountains). It has become the colloquial term for people in Manokwari to refer to all of the Arfak people.

¹⁷ The south east coast of Cenderawasih Bay between the Mamberamo River Delta and Nabire town is dominated by extensive mangroves and sago swamps, whereas the south-west coast is characterised by narrow coastal plains and steep ridges rising up to the Arfak, Bird’s Neck and Woniboi Mountain Ranges. To the north, Cenderawasih Bay is partially enclosed by a cluster of large islands, including Biak-Supiori, Numfor, and the Padaido islands (formerly known as the Schoeten Islands), as well as Meosnum, Yapen and Kurudu.
stepping stone on the journey west, Dorey Bay (as for parts of the Raja Ampat and Halmahera) was an emigration point in pre-colonial times.\(^{18}\)

Regional differences between coastals have been attenuated by over a century of urbanisation, Christian conversation, and wage labour and few of my informants spoke any language other than Bahasa Papua, a dialect of the national lingua franca that has evolved since traders from the Moluccas introduced it to coastal areas around 130 years ago (Kluge 2014, p. 14). The young women I studied shared a cultural outlook based on such factors as high rates of school attendance, enjoyment of pop songs, heterosexual identification, and enthusiasm for Christianity. In line with the historic division of Papua into the Catholic south and Protestant north, almost all participants were committed to Protestant denominations.\(^{19}\) The girls I observed and interviewed were all enrolled in, or had graduated from, educational institutions. These included state \((negeri)\) and church-based high schools,\(^{20}\) universities and/or private \((swasta)\) vocational training colleges. Their education, where annual fees can range from a few hundred thousand to a few million rupiah \((1,000,000 \text{ rupiah} = \$70\text{USD})\), points to their middling economic status. The people I lived among were neither the richest or poorest members of town. Most relied on the income of a parent, sometimes two, who

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\(^{18}\) Dorey Bay has a large indigenous Biak population who refer to themselves as ‘orang Manokwari’ or ‘orang Dorey’. Rutherford (1997, pp. 84-85) describes Biaki pattern of movement as having come ‘from the west … between 4,000 and 5,000 years ago’ and, unlike other ‘proto-Austronesians, … turned back towards the setting sun, in a diaspora which seems to have taken them to Biak and points West’.

\(^{19}\) Most informants identified as orang GKI (Gereja Kristen Indonesia; Christian Church of Indonesia), the biggest church in town, but many were also orang GPdl (Gereja Pentekosta di Indonesia; Pentecostal Church), GBI (Gereja Bethel Indonesia; Bethany Success Family), GPKAI (Gereja Persekutuan Kristen Alkitab Indonesia; Christian Bible Church of Indonesia), Gereja Katholik (Catholic Church), GSJA (Gereja Sidang Jemaat Allah; Assemblies of God), and GKII (Gereja Kemah Injil Indonesia; KINGMI).

\(^{20}\) Following six years of elementary school \((Sekolah Dasar, SD)\), Indonesians can enter three years of junior high school \((Sekolah Menegah Pertama, SMP)\) then three years of senior high school \((Sekolah Menegah Atas, SMA)\). State schools run under the Ministry of National Education (MoNE), while Christian and Islamic schools are the responsibility of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA).
drew a wage as a civil servant, and none were wanting in the basics of food, accommodation, or healthcare.

How many youth were sexually active in Manokwari cannot be known with any certainty. Sexuality is a notoriously sensitive topic in any circumstances (Bancroft 1997; Purdam et al. 2008) and in Papua the challenge of taboo is compounded by the stigma attached to sex and the suspicion of authorities (Munro & Butt 2012). With this in mind, benchmark figures can be gleaned from a study of 1082 Year 11 students from five Papuan cities, one of which was Manokwari (Diarsvitri et al. 2011). Of the 59 per cent of Papuan respondents with a median age of 17-19 years, 45.4 per cent already had sexual experience. If we invert this figure, it suggests that more than half had not. Rates of sexual activity were slightly less in migrant groups, but the age of first intercourse was relatively consistent across ethnic groups. Of those who had had sex, 3 to 7 per cent had done so by the age of 12, 26 to 32 per cent by thirteen to fourteen, and by fifteen years of age, 57-68 per cent had experienced sexual intercourse (ibid., p. 1051). In many respects, the question of how many girls are not having sex is a red herring that distracts from two obvious, or at least intuitive, points: first, that with every year of adolescence, sexual abstinence becomes more difficult and/or less desirable; and second, that a significant proportion of teenagers are, at any age, chaste.

The Short and Thin of Malinowski’s Principle

Sexual morality, defined by Salazar (2006, p. 4) as ‘the institutions and regulations that surround human sexuality in a particular context’ is a moral domain considered to be distinctly human. Evidence of altruism, fairness, hierarchy, co-operation, and in-group mentalities has been found in the

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21 There have been several studies of sexual behaviour and attitudes in Papua. An earlier study by Butt, Numbery and Morin (2002) reported lower rates of sexual activity. Of the 192 young Papuan men and women from Merauke, Jayawijaya, Jayapura, and Sorong, 29 per cent had had sex by the age of 15. By the age of 20, the report documented that all had had sexual intercourse.
emotional reactions of higher order mammals (De Waal 2006). Yet sexual morality – concerns about physical modesty and the privacy of the sex act (Friedl 1994), and beliefs that children should be born within a socially sanctioned heterosexual union – appears uniquely human (Haidt, Graham & Joseph 2009, p. 111). The latter idea, which Malinowski (1930, p. 137) called ‘the principle of legitimacy’, is the basis of Christian sexual codes of premarital chastity, yet has more often been ethnographically explored as a rule to oppose than a limit to live within. Before I examine this bias, and its conceptual costs in terms of understanding sexual morality, I will look at what anthropologists have said, or rather not said, about youth who conform to the Malinowski principle.

According to Malinowski, in diverse cultural scenarios, sexual moral systems are guided by the following rule:

... that no child should be brought into the world without a man – and one man at that – assuming the role of sociological father ... Roughly speaking an unmarried mother is under a ban, a fatherless child is a bastard. This is by no means only a European or Christian prejudice; it is the attitude found amongst most barbarous and savage peoples as well (1930, p. 137).

This principle does indeed stand as a candidate for universality. Even though understandings of ‘marriage’, ‘paternity’, and ‘conception’ vary from place to place (Murdock 1949; Lindholm 1998; Needham 2004), and despite differential commitment ‘from one segment of the population to another’ (Goode 1960, p. 27), the expectation that family systems require a sociological father has shaped sexual moral systems in a relatively uniform mould. In societies influenced by monotheistic religions, this principle usually manifests in the prohibition of sexual intercourse for adolescent girls, but even in tribal settings where courtship houses or ritual events condoned or
permitted adolescent sexual liaisons, pregnancies were often a calamity that required containment within marriage.\(^{22}\)

The reason why female sexuality, which bears the greater reproductive burden, is so often subject to constraint has been the subject of speculation by evolutionary biologists, sociologists, feminists, and anthropologists.\(^{23}\)

These theories all have merit, but as deductive abstractions they do not approach sexual regulation as an open-ended topic of exploration. The paucity of ethnographic data on sexual moral conformity becomes more dramatic when it is compared to a large volume of literature on transgressive sexualities. Indeed, if the early decades of the twentieth century were dedicated to ‘flora-and-fauna’ (Weston 1998, p. 6) accounts of exotic sexual customs, in the last few decades the anthropology of sexuality has concentrated upon non-normative sexual identities, subjectivities, and cultures.

The life worlds of the sexually inactive are implicit, covert, and assumed, hidden in the shadows of the morally spectacular. Jennaway’s (2003) work on the life of non-sanctioned desire among Bali teens is a rare exception to this trend, as is Rydstrom’s (2006) monograph that documents the socialisation of girls into ideal feminine attributes in North Vietnam. These studies are a

\(^{22}\) That premarital pregnancy was rare in these situations is often attributed to later menarche, earlier marriage, and a phase of infertility after menarche (Schlegel 1995a, p. 21).

\(^{23}\) According to evolutionary biologists, paternal responsibility for a human child (and/or his kin), given the lengthy phase of human maturation, maximises chance of survival (Huber & Breedlove 2007, p. 197). In sociology and history, following Engels (1884), an unchaste daughter is thought to pose a danger to ‘family property by multiplying its potential claimants’ (Salazar 2006, p. 58). Engel’s insight, which hinged on the idea that private property consolidated a shift from feudalism to capitalism, was developed by second-wave feminists (Greer 2009, p. 229; Firestone 2003) in their criticism of marriage as an institution that relied on the social control of maiden virginity to ensure property rights. Anthropologists too, most famously Levi-Strauss (1969), but including others (Goody & Tambiah 1973, p. 25; Schneider 1971, p. 18; Paige 1983; Collier 1997, p. 71), have understood the control of women’s sexuality as building economic ties and accessing resources. The exchange of women, as embodiments of reproductive and productive labour, has been understood as key to building alliances and facilitating the flow of valuables.
significant contribution to an under-examined topic, yet, as one-off essays or as studies that embed chastity in broader empirical and theoretical concerns, they do not offer a sustained and systematic inquiry into the rationales and ideals that structure premarital sexual avoidance. This minimal interest in sexual abstinence among teens can be further illustrated by the marginality of this cohort in anthropological investigations into chastity and abstinence. Sexual continence has been studied in relation to commitments to monastic orders (Gutschow 2001; Southgate 2001), religious ethics or communities (Phillimore 2001; Kawanami 2001; Collins 2001; Khandelwal 2001; Caplan 2013), North American Christian abstinence programs and commitments (Gardner 2011; Carpenter 2005; De Munck 2001), prison life (Fleisher & Shaw 2001), anorexia nervosa (Bell 1985; Lester 2001), North Indian nationalism (Alter 2011, pp. 21-54), post-partum taboos (Heider 1976), and ritual periods (Duke 2001; Lu 2013; Aguilar 2001).

If the experience of teenage chastity has been of little interest to anthropologists, it is a central concern in public health research. Where ‘abstinence’ is the ‘A’ in the ABC blueprint of the global standard for HIV and STI prevention, there is a sizeable literature that explores determinants influencing the timing of ‘sexual debuts’. These studies foreground how specific variables, such as religious affiliation (Biro et al. 2001; Lammers et al. 2000; Paul et al. 2000), educational goals (Goodson, Evans & Edmundson 1997; Kraft 1991; Schvaneveldt et al. 2001; Rector & Johnson 2005; Winskell et al. 2011), and fear of the ramifications of sexual activity and especially pregnancy (Blank 2007, p. 17), are involved in fields of negotiating sex and

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24 The follows trends in sociology and history where there is a substantial literature about chastity within religious orders and ethics: for instance, in Ancient Greece (Sissa 1990) and Medieval Europe (Payer 1984, 1993). For a comprehensive list of this literature, see Blank (2007, pp. 267-270).

25 In addition, ‘asexuality’ has been recently claimed as a ‘newly enunciated sexuality’ in feminist studies (Cerankowski & Milks 2010).

26 An acronym for abstinence: be loyal, condoms. In Indonesia, this has become Anstinens, Baku setia (be loyal) and pakai Condom.

27 Tenkorang & Maticka-Tyndale (2008) and Santhya et al. (2011) provide multi-data analysis of various factors that influence the timing of sexual debuts.
romance. While illuminating the complex forces involved in creating sexual decision making, quantitative research can benefit from ethnographic approaches. Chastity is more than a sum total of causal factors. It is a total meaning system and form of sexual agency.

Why Study Chastity? Beyond repression and discourse

By putting chastity at the centre of analysis, this thesis fills a gap in the literature. After all, as Sobo and Bell (2001, p. 4) observe, mastering bodily desires can be a resource for actively engaging cultural values such as ‘social productivity’, and the ‘social good’. Yet it is only when the question of why sexual conformity has been of lesser interest to anthropologists than sexual transgression is posed, it is possible to better appreciate the theoretical importance of filling this gap. To put this in slightly different terms, if premarital sex is on the rise in Papua, Indonesia, and many other world regions\(^\text{28}\), why should we study chastity? The answer here, I suggest, lies in recognising that the lacuna of interest in sexual inactivity is based in a morally liberal bias that has shaped the research trajectory of sexual anthropology.\(^\text{29}\)

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\(^\text{28}\) This trend is correlated with earlier menarche (Herdt & Leavitt 1998, p. 6) and later marriage (Jones, Hull & Mohamed 2011, p. 6). For Papua, see Butt (2007, p. 118); Centre for Health Research (2003); Djoh (2005); Badan Pusat Statistik (2007). For Indonesian references, see Diarsviri et al. (2011, p. 1048), while Moore and Rosenthal (2006, p. 6) note this as a global trend.

\(^\text{29}\) Liberalism, a moral leaning towards care and compassion as well as fairness and equality (Haidt, Graham & Joseph 2009, p. 111), is not only the dominant moral template in academia, it is at the roots of disciplinary concerns with cultural relativity (Robbins 2013). Liberalism has been at the surface of scholarship since HIV and the sexual revolution, but is no less apparent in ‘golden age’ (Mead & Bunzel 1960) ethnographies. Couched in scientific neutrality, the diverse sexual mores peppered throughout early century monographs or as core themes of entire articles and monographs (Westermarck 1912, 1917; Landes 1940; Hogbin 1946; Berndt & Berndt 1951; Mead 1930; Benedict 1939; Malinowski 1929) unsettled Victorian moralities by positioning them as a point on a great arc of sexual diversity. The diaries of Malinowski (Young 2004) and the friendship of Mead and Benedict (Lapsley 1999) suggest that their research was guided by agendas to do with their own personal sexual struggles.
In a pioneering volume, Vance (1984) advanced the argument that the domain of female sexuality runs along a continuum of ‘pleasure and danger’. In response to second wave feminist arguments that female sexuality is objectified and controlled by patriarchy, she argues that women can act on sexual choice, but their pursuit of pleasure and autonomy takes place in patriarchal societies that present real dangers for women as sexual agents. By reclaiming sexual choice and pleasure within contexts of moral control and regulation, Vance foreshadowed the future direction of social research into sexuality since, from the 1980s and continuing into the present, anthropologists have predominantly explored the agency and subjectivity of female (as well as LGBTI) sexual expressions within contexts of patriarchal sexual moralities.

Explorations of non-normative sexual meanings and practices has been carried out in diverse fields, including international tourism (Bauer & McKercher 2003; Williams 2013), male labour migrations (Brockerhoff & Biddlecom 1999; Ondimu 2005), transactional sex work (Kempadoo & Doezema 1998; Agustin 2007; Kulick 1996), and, most notably, in LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex) scholarship (Boellstorff 2005, 2007a; Weston 1993; Blackwood & Wieringa 1999; Herdt & Boxer 1996; Gevisser & Cameron 1995; Donnan & Magowan 2012). The subterranean life of sexual and romantic expressions among heterosexual youth has also been well documented. How illicit sexual relations are negotiated in secret, or as an ‘open secret’, has been explored by anthropologists in Tanah Papua (Butt & Munro 2007; Butt 2007; Hewat 2008), Papua New Guinea (Wardlow 2006a), the Solomon Islands (Buchanan-Aruwafu 2002), Indonesia (Bennett 2005a; Sastramidjaja 2001; Utomo 2002; Situmorang 2001; Khisbiyah, Murdijana & Widyayanto 1996; Murray 2001), and other developing regions (Cole 2004; Haram 2005; Reid & Walker 2005; Smith 2000; Harrison 2008; Ellwood-Clayton 2003; Bell 2012).

There are sound ethical as well as empirical reasons for this research focus. Since HIV began to spread along the ‘fault lines’ (Farmer 1996) of global
communities, many anthropologists engaged their research to facilitate a response to sexual inequities that run along the lines of income, race and gender (Petchesky 2000; Schoepf 2001). Whether giving voice to minorities, sexual subjectivities, identities, and cultures through their writing, working with NGOs to create culturally sensitive sexual health programs, or operating as ‘militant anthropologists’ (Scheper-Hughes 1995) in sexual activism, anthropologists have promoted sexual health and tackled sexual discrimination and stigma. In general terms, transformations in affective life and culture around the world have been documented in two literatures that can be referred to as ‘modern loves’ (Hirsch & Wardlow 2006) and ‘global sex’ (Altman 2001).

Global sex is concerned with the ‘sexualisation of culture and the commodification of sexuality’ (Howe & Rigi 2009), including how sexual desire, aided by contraceptive availability and advances in reproductive technology, is being shaped and enacted in the intersection of bodies and digital connections, urbanisation, global media, mobilities, and capitalist expansions. Capitalist encompassment, the growth of celebrity culture, internet pornography and other structural and ideological forces are implicated in the changing experience and expression of desire because they are generating more explicit sexualities and, from a political-economic view, new modes of enslavement. Modern loves is a small but vibrant field that has explored how Western understandings of ‘romantic love’ – a cultural template (Illouz 1997) and universal physiological possibility (Tennov 1979; Jankowiak 2008, p. 26) – is being inscribed in non-Western settings through advertising, Hollywood movies, and Christian missionaries (Ahearn 2001; Rebhun 1999; Collier 1997; Kendall 1996, Wardlow 2006a; Argyrou 1996; Padilla et al. 2007). These interests, often overlapping, combine to create a picture of modernisation and globalisation as generating a multiplex of desires.

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30 Passionate love, the phenomenological qualities of which are well described in Tennov’s (1979) model of ‘limerence,’ is a universal possibility, though social factors are responsible for its cultural variation (Jankowiak 2008, p. 26).
that are eroding religious/traditional regulations and creating novel gendered, sexual and affective configurations.

As well as documenting the subterranean life of sexual desire, anthropologists have documented the dangers of sex outside marriage. Non-marital sex is a risky venture not only in repressive settings such as Victorian England (Nelson 2007), the contemporary Middle East (Ghanim 2015) or the ‘honour and shame’ complexes around female sexuality in Mediterranean societies (Peristiany 1974). Even in western countries, where ideologies of the sexual revolution and advances in contraceptive technologies have eroded traditional religious codes of sexual behavior, young women (and not young men) have been found to face a far greater chance of being shamed and ostracised for engaging in pre-marital sex (Valenti 2009; Witkowska & Menckel 2005). In recent years, the dangers of sexual moral systems have become more brutally punitive. The caning of adulterers in Aceh, gay ‘men being thrown from rooftops by Islamic State forces, … brutal bashings in Putin’s Russia’ and ‘considerable numbers of “corrective rapes” of women perceived to be lesbian in parts of Africa’ (Altman 2015, para. 16) suggest the desire to preserve so-called normal and natural sex has become more emotionally charged. As a Western feminist, I am sensitive to the injustices of punitive and patriarchal sexual moral systems. Yet if we are to open space for exploring different responses and attitudes to Malinowski’s Principle – orientations that are more complex than the concepts of subordination and subversion would imply – we need to entertain the possibility that duty – the duty to conform to moral dictates, can be felt as forms of desire.

The polarisation of sexual agency as ethically superior to sexual morality is nowhere more apparent than in scholarly engagements with the two dominant theorists of sexual morality in the twentieth century: Freud and Foucault. As with most great scholars, neither Freud or Foucault were politically to the left

31 These horrors speak of an urgent need to understand the logic and meaning of moral outrage and the emergence of ‘homonationalism’, Puar’s (2007) term for how a nation’s position of sexual morality has become currency in international diplomacy negotiations (see also Picq & Thiel 2015).
or right yet their respective ideas of repression and disciplinary power have been used to advance understandings of sexuality as a realm where human freedom bucks systems of moral control. Freud, the authoritative voice on sexual morality until Foucault published the three volumes of his *History of Sexuality* (1978, 1985, 1986), conceptualised sexual morality as repressive, a process necessary for the healthy development of ego and, in a later study (Freud 2016), civilisation. For Foucault, sexual morality was a discourse or ‘a set of rules for the production of statements’ (Salazar 2006, p. 34). Without a biological substrate, it could not repress, rather it controlled individuals through modern regimes of biopower – institutional discourses that disciplined the body, pleasures, sexualities, and family life. By discussing sex endlessly, Foucault proposed, modern discourses had the paradoxical effect of inciting sexuality in the process of bodily regulation. By defining the bounds of normality and abnormality, in the discourses of government inquiries, psychiatry, social work, criminal justice, and the medical and educational systems, he set the terms for reverse discourses: for instance, in subcultures of people who identified with the category of perversion.

The approach of Freud and Foucault's of sex and power could not be more different yet both have generated frameworks that have been used to analyse sexual agency as figure to the ground of sexual morality. Both men offer important perspectives on sexuality. In Manokwari, for instance, I found Papuans experienced sexual desire as a pneumatic force that can be channeled in different guises (Chapter Four), an idea which supports Freud’s hydraulic understanding of libido. Foucault’s point that sexuality is a social construction is useful for exploring culturally specific ideas about sex and desire, ideas that have been shaped by the introduction of modern disciplinary regimes. In Chapter Four we will explore this in light of how the nation-state

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32 Feelings like disgust and shame, Freud (1962, pp. 42, 47) argued, are repressed through blocking libido – his word for sexual desire and the life force. Without psychic blocks, a person is unable to achieve mature phallocentricty and is doomed to neuroses and psychosis.

33 I found no evidence that the lack of sexual release, as Jennaway (2003) found in Bali, leads to symptoms akin to hysteria.
and other modernist institutions of church and adat (as neo-tradition) structure ideas of sexual normality. The point here is not that polarising morality and desire is inaccurate, but that the emphasis on sexual norms as repressive, regulatory or else as inciting sexualities limit alternative ways of knowing sexual morality. When sexual morality is considered a normalising construct for population control or a mechanism for psychic stability, the emotional and sensory engagements with sexual moral ideals are overlooked.

To return to the question of why chastity is important to study, the first thing to note is that the importance of studying sexual enactments does not cancel out the importance of studying youth who are not pushing sexual frontiers. Indeed, the salience and significance of sexual passion in the contemporary world renders the liminal phase of chaste experience as more fascinating. Desires for the sexual moral rule cannot be reduced to the triumph of repression or an internalisation of modern disciplinary power – the kinds of self-regulations Foucault referred to as ‘governmentality’. The new morality, because it ‘has no moralising project’ (Fassin 2012, p. 3), offers more potential for shedding light on why, at the life phase characterised by sexual maturation, adolescents would not want to embrace the emergent sexual freedoms available to them. As Mahmood (2005) has argued in relation to Egyptian piety movements, moral desires that go against what liberal feminists would see as women’s ‘better interests’ are not necessarily self-denying and can be productive of other modes of self-formation. In the next chapter I will unpack the main themes and concerns of this post-millennial anthropological concern. My argument is that exploring sexual choice within local priorities and values offers an alternative for multi-dimensional experiences of Malinowski’s Principle, yet the focus on ethical reasoning and self-formation all too often overlooks the coercive effects of power altogether.
Why Durkheim?

Durkheim's social constructivism, best captured by Mauss and Fauconnet's (1901, cited in Lukes 1973, p. 14) description of social facts 'as certain ways of feeling, thinking and acting' which individuals would not have had 'if they lived in other human groups', lends him favorably to anthropological usage. Yet, with few exceptions, Durkheim has been of little interest to anthropologists, at least compared to other disciplinary ancestors. Given the 'unrelenting criticism' (Lukes 1973, p. 2) of his belief that societies were not only integrated systems but that they should be, this is not surprising. Yet it is important to recognise that Durkheim had different ideas about how societies change (Tiryakian 2009, p. 63), and popular understandings of him are one-sided representations of his rich and evolving body of work. Associations of Durkheim as a theorist of social stasis can be attributed to the legacy of A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, whose naturalistic interpretation of Durkheim did much to tarnish his reputation in the British school. We only have to look to Mauss' (1990) acclaimed work or Talcott Parson's (1968a, 1968b) 'voluntarist' reading of Durkheim on the other side of the Atlantic to appreciate that, in different hands, other Durkheimian histories could have been written.

Prior to this study, I had only encountered Durkheim as an undergraduate in a subject on the history of the discipline. At first, it struck me as common sense that his positivism and structural functionalism were useless for a study of moral freedom. It was only when I was trying to theoretically illuminate how and why some young women willingly participated in constraining sexual moral orders that I came to appreciate that the willingness to dismiss his

34 Claude Levi-Strauss, Mary Douglas, Victor Turner, and Marcel Mauss (Durkheim's nephew and collaborator) found his corpus rich and inspiring. There have been a few articles in recent years that have revisited some of his ideas for anthropology (Kelly 2014; Thomassen 2012; Robbins 2010; Throop 2003).

35 For instance, Weber (Geertz 1973; Robbins 2004b), Marx (Bloch 1983; Wolf 1982; Godelier 1977), and more recently Tarde (Candea 2010; Thomassen & Szakoczai 2011; Wydra 2011).

36 And later in American anthropology through his tenure at the University of Chicago.
legacy is short-sighted. It is clear that Durkheim could be polemical and his concepts ambiguous and based on poor evidence and faulty reasoning. Yet he was also a deep and sophisticated thinker with an abiding concern with the sacred force of moral orders. Born in 1858 in the Lorraine region of France to a Jewish family, Durkheim took up the first professorship in Sociology at Bordeaux in 1887, but it was not until 1902, when he took up a professorship at the Sorbonne (Paris), that he fostered a number of talented students and established the journal *L’année Sociologique*.

There have been sympathetic readings of Durkheim in the New Morality (Lambek 2010, p. 12; Karlstrom 2004, p. 610; Archetti 1997, pp. 101-102; Zigon 2008, pp. 32-37; Sykes 2009, p. 21). Robbins (2007a) and Yan (2011, 2014), moreover, have argued that Durkheim’s ability to account for normative codes and routine dimensions make some of his ideas about moral life worth retaining. In this thesis I go beyond their insights and explore, in greater depth, what aspects of Durkheim’s corpus can provide a more balanced and richer understanding of moral life. It is not his writings on sexual morality that I found useful – they are far too culturally particular and biased towards fin de siècle views of marriage and women (Lehmann 1994; Tiryakian 2009, p. 6). It is his meta-level concerns with emotions and the sacred, as developed in his later years in Paris that it the most valuable for conceptualising characteristics of moral life. In this fertile period of Durkheim’s intellectual

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37 Evans-Pritchard (2004 p. 12) touched on this when he wrote of ‘Durkheim’s irritating maneuver, when a fact contradicts his thesis, of asserting that its character and meaning have altered.’

38 Durkheim recognised sexual morality as an interdependent realm of social facts but his writings on this topic, as contained within a broad concern with marriage and the family, suffer too many shortcomings to be of contemporary use. As well as being overly specific – as sexual morality was discussed in terms of the rights and duties of culturally different family systems – women were ‘largely absent’ in his writings (Lehmann 1994, p. 4). When women surfaced, they were assumed to be closer to nature and so, naturally fitted to domestic work. As ‘consigned ... to the nonsocial sphere of biological reproduction’ (ibid., p. 4), it is his work on the body, social and mind that are the most fertile for examining sexual morality.

39 Lukes (1973 p. 410) argues that Durkheim’s interest in morality was of three kinds: to ‘describe and explain empirical data’, ‘to make evaluative judgments about such data’, and, ‘to provide solutions to fundamental philosophical questions’.
development, he laid out a theory for how social ideas about right and wrong can stimulate powerful collective emotions that create, maintain or decay the sacred dimensions of social life. This, which Collins (1988, p. 108) calls his ‘underground wing’, was most explicitly laid out in his magnum opus *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (Durkheim 1915), hereafter known as *The Forms*.

The main thesis of *The Forms* radically departed from his earlier work, which theorised morality as structurally related to the density of social grouping. Durkheim never gave up his faith in sociological positivism: rather, he grew increasingly fascinated with how moral orders are ‘mediated by collectivities of embodied individuals both cognitively and emotionally engaged with their social world’ (Shilling & Mellor 1998, p. 194). In this understanding of socio-moral life as emotionally constructed Durkheim proposed that moral codes were Ideals – ‘articles of faith’ that had moral authority because they were experienced in the emotional terms as sacred. As well as *The Forms*, my knowledge of Durkheim’s multi-dimensional understandings of morality have also benefitted from his book *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals* (1958); *Moral Education* (1961) and the essays: ‘The Determination of Moral Facts’ (1953), and ‘The Dualism of Human Nature and its Social Conditions’ (2005).40 As well as primary materials, I have relied on secondary sources to deepen my understanding of Durkheim’s theories and applications to contemporary issues.41

In many respects, my subject matter is more fitting of a Durkheimian frame of analysis than topics chosen by certain moral anthropologists, for instance Jain

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41 Durkheim’s biographer, Stephen Lukes (1973) has been especially useful, but so too has the revitalised sociological interest in Durkheim. Weiss’ (2012) essay on Durkheim’s ideal has been important to this study, as has the work on the body, emotion, and the sacred by Shilling and Mellor (1998, 2011), Mellor & Shilling 1997; Watts Miller 1996; Mellor 1998; Fish (2005, 2013), Mestrovic (1991), and Mellor (2001, 2004).
ascetic morality (Laidlaw 2002), Sufi flute players (Senay 2015) or football players in Argentina (Archetti 1997). It is precisely because female sexual purity is a moral domain that triggers particularly strong emotions that makes sexual morality a useful prism to speculate on human morality in general.42 Durkheim never spoke of a theory of power but his idea of the sacred – as emotionally-based power grounded in the experience of awe, fear, love and taboo in relation to certain ideas and objects – offers an explanatory frame for how certain courses of action come to be experienced as imperatives. This is of value in understanding ‘illiberal desires’ (Mahmood 2005, p. 12) such as chastity, because the very desire for harmonious relationships, stable or prosperous futures and pieties are, from a Durkhemian perspective, one and the same as that which generates moral outrage. Understanding desire for the sacred, conceptualised by the most across the world as a realm of divinity and community (Shweder et. al 1997, p. 138) is a key to address sexual backlash and many other sufferings and passions in the world.

Methodology: the serendipities of fieldwork

Ethnography, as a method and textual creation, is a process of serendipity, whereby ‘accidents’ are harnessed ‘into an evolving pattern of discovery’ (Pieke 2000, p. 130). This thesis is an outcome of a long process of making the most of opportunities, of negotiating unexpected ways of being received by people as well as reorienting my research interests to mirror those of the young women I came to care about. It is also a creation of my subject position, and I have included my reflections on how my role as a Western wife and mother functioned as matrix through which others received me in Appendix A. What I discuss here is how this role and personal initiatives

42 According to Shweder et al. (1997), the diverse moral codes found throughout the world can be mapped onto three domains: the ethics of autonomy, communuity and divinity. The latter, a cluster of virtues associated with purity, sanctity, cleanliness and holiness, is often found in moral concepts to do with sexual morality as well as food diets. Within this taxonomy, sexual morality is a key realm where the spiritual order and its maintenance is perceived.
generated the methodological framework of this thesis. First, as a mother of young children, I saw an opportunity to create a convivial home. Maintaining an open-door policy and extending invitations to neighbours and their friends and family was not simply a calculated method, it became crucial to my wellbeing.

The days passed in banter and laughter, chasing, holding, and feeding children as well as peeling, chopping, boiling, frying, washing, scrubbing, drying, and folding. The late afternoons and early evenings had a different tempo when I travelled about and sat in groups engaging in relaxed chatter. Bending to neighborhood pressure, I employed not one pembantu (home help) but four – Biak women, all distantly related, who ranged from 23-58 years of age. This national institution that links the middle and lower classes was expected of someone of my stature. So too was housing and patronising students. The young women who came to live with me were relatives of my home-helpers, and one was the daughter of our Biak landlord.

Encouraging people to come, cook, eat, chat, and sometimes stay became my key fieldwork strategy, but one household, to borrow an expression from Wardlow, ‘does not an ethnography make’ (2006b, p. 2). To expand and deepen understandings of Papuan sociality, I spent time with families in other neighbourhoods, went to endless birthday parties, joined an early morning public servant exercise class, and spent long hours talking to people in the market and on recreational beaches. I read newspapers and magazines, watched television, gossiped with stylists at the salon, and attended a beauty contest. I ran an English language class at the local university, and, though a vegetarian, I went fishing and enjoyed the smell of roasted snake with men.

43 In Papuan households, at least among the wealthy or those where the ibu rumah (housemother) worked as a public servant, a female relative often occupied the position of pembantu. My liberalism made me uncomfortable having domestic staff so I devised many strategies to ethically come to terms with this situation. Employing four was one ethical bargaining strategy, as I reasoned it would make the workload lighter and more sociable. I paid each four times the usual to bring their wage up to the average civil servant and I also worked alongside them. My relationship to these women endures, no doubt because our patronage was encompassing within the logics of kin and obligation.
who had been hunting in the forest behind our house. I also made trips to church and outside Manokwari, usually on field trips to cocoa-growing regions with my husband’s office staff. By sending each child off with a different family on a Sunday – Pasca went with a Pentecostal family, Benson a Catholic, and Darius a GKI (Protestant) family – I was able to access various places of worship without arousing suspicion of denominational disloyalty.

In 2011 I embarked on a three month period of formal research, accompanied this time only by my daughter, who was nine years old at the time. This five year gap between field visits provided a temporal vantage to explore sex and morality as dynamic and evolving constructs. After negotiating research permission within the fluid structures of a decentralised bureaucracy, I ran four focus groups, each containing around a dozen women, with the help of Deanne Pay, a third year social science student. Collaborating with Deanne on the question design, interview process, and coding and analysing data, I canvassed and generated data about peer groups, school, and social and moral change. Subjects were selected via snowball sampling, a socially sensitive way to locate subjects. In this trip I also conducted interviews with moral guardians (such as parents, pastors, moral police, adat leaders), visited my old neighbourhood, and stayed with friends in two other parts of town: near the airport and in a peri-urban village ten kilometres east.

A few words about the sensitivity of my subject matter: sex was something joked about by married women away from the ears of children but, as a topic, it could not be raised in public. Even enquiring into how a mother and father met was considered so scandalous that teens and children would be shooed out of the room. It was, however, possible to talk about sex in the company of same-sex peers, though only a curhat (acronym for curahan hati, person you confide in) could be trusted with intimate details. The personal narratives documented in the following pages were shared not in my role as researcher but as friend. Building relationships through respect, kindness, empathy, and reciprocity, in other words, have given me access to highly sensitive material. Sharing my own teenage love rebellion story was especially useful in
encouraging young women to drop their guard and opening up a space for commensurate sharing of information. Friends were well aware that I was doing anthropological research on love, sex, and social change,\(^{44}\) and consent was negotiated in the ebb and flow of conversation and, for that matter, all relevant social interactions. Friends trusted that I would protect their identities, and, for this reason, names have been changed and, in some cases, aspects of their stories. To maintain confidentiality, I have also created composite characters and events.

Like Marx, Durkheim was a man of moral conviction and political engagement\(^{45}\) who was critical of capitalism and supported socialist reforms. He did not, however, agree with Marx that the way towards a more equitable future lay in conflict and revolution. Durkheim proposed a gentler solution by proposing that a better society could be realised through moral and social reform. A devout patriot, he hoped to use the principles of sociology to engineer a program of moral education to prevent his country sliding into *anomie* – the breakdown of sociality and moral cohesion, the outcome of unchecked individualism. While often sidelined as a ‘conservative’, Durkheim’s speculations about the nature of moral life transcended the divide of left and right. His passionate interest in the ravages of liberal economics on moral values and social stability has surprising resonance with the concerns of many in the contemporary world. Indeed, Durkheim’s intuitive awareness that moral rules are surface manifestations of deeper desires for a ‘sacralised cosmos’ (Haidt & Graham 2009, p. 379) makes his moral theory particularly relevant for the study of a range of contemporary phenomena – from Papuans’ desires to delay sexual debuts to the crises of meaning and moral

\(^{44}\) Though housewives were rarely students, anthropology was a subject taught at the two universities in Tanah Papua. My particular research interest was puzzling and, thinking of anthropology as the study of discrete tribes, I received much advice on what *suku* (tribe) I should visit.

\(^{45}\) He was a supporter of the French Third Republic, a founding member of the Human Rights League, and defended Alfred Dreyfus during the Dreyfus affair.
order that underpins the myriad fundamentalisms ripping and raging across the globe today.
Chapter One

The Durkheimian Baby: the Ideal

In an essay on Pentecostal ritual, Robbins (2010) opens with an excerpt from an interview where Talcott Parsons recalls the time he first heard of Durkheim. It was during the year he spent at the London School of Economics, in a conversation with Malinowski and Ginsberg. Ginsberg, Parsons remembered, had criticised Durkheim on the basis of his vague metaphysical notion of the group mind. Then, in a reflective moment, Parsons is reported to have said, ‘that was Ginsberg’s view … I had to un-learn that’ (ibid., p. 93). Robbins uses this conversation to make the point that, like Parsons, ‘perhaps … every genuinely interesting proponent of Durkheim has at some point had to do the same’ (ibid.). My concern in this chapter is to impart some of my unlearning in order to convey why I found Durkheim’s conceptualisation of morality more useful for a study of sexual moral choice than recent approaches in the New Morality. To this end, I will explore the following: Does the moral fact truly crush the possibility of studying moral freedom? What is the significance of Durkheim’s Ideal: that is, beliefs known through an embodied sense of right as opposed to wrong? How does Durkheim’s thesis – that morality has an emotional basis – reveal and improve on recent ideas about morality as a realm of reflexive thought and practice?

As well as providing the concepts that underpin the theoretical frame in which I explore my ethnography of chastity as a sexual Ideal and virtuous striving, this chapter is a running argument against current conceptualisations of morality. At a glance, my desire to reclaim Durkheim appears paradoxical because, on the one hand, I must defend his moral theory against those who assume his determinisms allow no space for moral choice and agency – an ontological field I describe using Laidlaw’s (2002, 2013) concept of freedom as a shorthand. On the other, I need to argue why Durkheim’s interest in ‘unfreedom’ is important. One of my arguments in this chapter is that New
Moral theorists, by underappreciating how moral choices are socially constituted, unwittingly establish the binary of freedom/unfreedom as a new kind of reductionism. Though he was a theorist who relied strongly on binary oppositions, Durkheim’s assumption that morality is an emotionally constituted domain provides the grounds to transcend this binary in moral anthropology because it challenges the idea that morality is a mode of consciousness. When we take Durkheim’s ‘division of the world into two domains, the one containing all that is sacred, the other all that is profane’ (1915, p. 37) as the distinctive feature of moral life, an entirely different foundation for exploring moral choices is established. Where contemporary accounts understand morality as ‘a cultural domain in which people are highly conscious of the cultural materials they work with and the contradictions between them’ (Robbins 2004b, p. 14), Durkheim presents the idea that cognitive elements are formed through emotional participation in social life. Since his view accounts for constraint over freedom, Durkheim provides a conceptual frame that better illuminates the exploration of chastity as a Papuan Ideal and moral choice.

After introducing homo duplex, Durkheim’s answer to a theory of moral selfhood, I will explore Laidlaw’s argument for freedom and consider how his assumptions that reflective thought is the site of directing one’s freedom have emerged as general parameters for contemporary moral anthropology. After outlining the arguments for Durkheim by Yan (2011, 2014) and Robbins (2007a), I explore Durkheim’s understandings of the Ideal through his conceptualisations of emotion, the sacred, and moral constraint. At the end of the chapter, I ground my argument in a case study of a young woman who suffered acute shame after a beating from her mother for a perceived moral transgression. By foregrounding her experience of fear and shame, this example gives weight to my argument that because virtues are socially sanctioned, ethical life is a field of subtle and not so subtle coercions more so than persuasion.
Homo Duplex and Durkheim’s Dichotomies

My interest in Papuan youth who do not want to push the boundaries of Christian sexual norms raises a number of intriguing questions that Durkheim’s writings on morality, emotions, and the sacred can help answer. If processes to do with modernisation are inciting romantic aspirations, novel sexual desires, and greater individual autonomy, what aspects of modernisation are influencing the decision to avoid having a boyfriend? A related question here is this: what is the significance of sentiments that inspire moral conformity at a time when sexual regimes based on marriage and reproduction are being socially undermined? As with any study of sexuality, exploring moral conformity to normative regimes requires attention to the sociocultural frameworks that influence or serve as resources to construct moral meaning and ethical action. Yet non-sexual expression, because it entails the potential for sacrificing pleasure and gratification, requires thinking about morality in ways other than as a series of value spheres or discursive frames in which people construct and choose their sexuality (Dilger 2003; Collier 1997; Haram 2005; Bennett 2005a).

Durkheim’s (1915, 2005) idea of homo duplex offers an intriguing complement to ethnographic approaches that view sexuality as enacted through multiple moral frameworks. This theory of the ‘dual human’ refers to how people are ‘rooted in two opposing, yet interacting, aspects of their being: insatiable egoistic desires and appetites which are, in turn, constrained by socially generated normative or moral concerns’ (Fish 2013, p. 339). Faced with feelings of conflict between normative duties and egoistic and bodily desires, Durkheim speculated, people are more likely to choose the former – that is to say, behaviors that praise or benefit others over the egoistic self. For a study of chastity, the analytic value of homo duplex lies in recognising how youth can feel the pull and push of competing moral understandings: of long-standing ideas that invest sexuality in familial interests, as well as more recent ideologies of open and freely chosen sexual expression. By emphasising that the capacity to think and act in a moral way is anchored in ‘the universal
human predisposition to be social’ (ibid., p. 340), the notion of homo duplex is suggestive of why some are willing to defer gratification in romantic or sexual relationships.

For Durkheim, it is our orientation to others in collective life that makes us moral beings. In his words, ‘in so far as he belongs to society the individual transcends himself, both when he thinks and when he acts’ (Durkheim 1915, p. 16). It is possible to argue against his assumption that individualism is immoral: for instance, ideologies of personal achievement – as variously defined – have been globalised as a moral good, while self-interested aspects of big men have long been crucial to value systems in highland New Guinea (Barker 2007, p. 9). It is also the case that individualism, whether in the form of the moral underpinning of modern economies or in the activities of highland big men, is often scrutinised as contradicting the selfless ethics held to make social life possible. This theme will emerge in Chapter Five, where I discuss moral backlash against liberal sexual transformations in Manokwari.

Homo duplex is not new: the notion that the demands of society are often pitted against individual desires has a long tradition in both Eastern and Western theologies and philosophies (Haidt 2006, p. 2). Where Durkheim innovated – an idea that came to fruition in The Forms – was in his analysis of these tensions in developing a theory of moral becoming. Through this conceptual frame, by deferring sexual appetites, young women become moral beings. This experience of submission to moral imperatives was, according to Durkheim, rarely felt as constraint because ideals stir in us emotions of longing to be part of and accepted by others in a moral community. Chastity, I will demonstrate, is not ‘formal and empty ... but full of life’ (Weiss 2012, p. 83) as a moral authority willingly submitted to through intuitions and feelings that guide moral evaluations. I will scrutinise Durkheim’s understanding of the Ideal in relation to his isomorphically related concepts of the sacred, the moral fact, totems, effervescence, and emotion later in this chapter. From the outset, I will address a core conceptual difficulty of homo duplex – namely, that it is built from crude dichotomies.
Homo duplex, as with other interconnected Durkheimian concepts such as the body and soul and sacred and profane, has been accused of suffering from a top-down imposition of binary oppositions such as body/mind, society/individual and reason/emotion (Fish 2013, p. 340). Drawing on scholarship that has attempted to reinterpret homo duplex (Mestrovic 1991; Shilling & Mellor 1998, Fish 2013), it is possible to take a fresh look at this concept in for contemporary needs in moral anthropology. When read in a traditional, standard sense, the theory of the divided self is anachronistic, a misguided generalisation that promotes essentialised understandings of emotion, self, and society. Following an argument made by a number of scholars, Durkheim’s binaries should not be approached as absolute or pure, but as ‘soft’ categories that identify tensions while allowing for models of emergence (Sawyer 2002) or as conceptual parameters that guide the dynamics of social processes (Fish 2013). According to Cladis (2008, p. 91), Durkheim conceptualised ‘precise polarities in order to highlight sociohistorical events and developments’ and not observable phenomena.

When viewed as in dialogue and not as sharply divided, homo duplex can illuminate tensions in our existential condition that, in turn, can be further explored through ethnographic methods. Durkheim’s (2005, p. 38) awareness that ‘we are never completely in accord with ourselves, since we cannot follow one of our two natures without the other suffering as a result’ certainly resonates with forbidden love in Papua or, for that matter, in any textual exploration of this theme.\(^\text{46}\) A possible reason for the relevance of homo duplex in situations where sexual desire clashed with social expectations is offered by Hertz’s (1973) pioneering research into how cultural contrasts come to consciousness through bodily experience. While symbols and referents vary, this Durkheimian argued, people across the world reason

\(^{46}\) Tension between social duty and individual desire is what gives many stories pathos. For instance, the sagas of Ruru and Pramadvara in the Mahabrata, the love suicide plays of Japan’s Tokugawa period, Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet or else in soap opera characters like Tuti.
through binary opposition because socially mediated struggles are manifested in and on the body.

To sum up, homo duplex is one of Durkheim’s blunt, stab-in-the-dark theories that I believe holds deep relevance for our moral natures. As the socio-psychological foundation of his corpus, I found it helpful to understand the moral subjectivities of the Papuan women I studied. Since Durkheim recognised egoistic interest as encompassing our natural passions and as ‘an effect of modern social and economic life’ (Ramp 1998, p. 141), it is a useful frame to analyse how chastity is a virtue seen to oppose personal gratification and ideological shifts to liberal sexualities. It also suggests that chastity, more often than not, is a choice enacted not through a secular ethical smorgasbord but through felt realities of sacred constraint. As moral imposition, Durkheim would have predicted young Papuan women experience chastity as a desire for social approval and other yearnings that transcend the self.

Laidlaw’s Argument

As ‘the single most widely influential contribution to current discussion about ethics within anthropology’ (Robbins 2012, para. 6), a discussion on how Durkheim figures in recent debates and recent trends in anthropological scholarship should begin with James Laidlaw’s ‘For an Anthropology of Ethics and Freedom’. By placing obligation at the heart of social life, Laidlaw (2002) argues, Durkheim crushed the analytic space required for exploring morality as a domain of ethical reflection and striving. Using one of Durkheim’s analytical tactics of argument by elimination, Laidlaw (2002, p. 313) compares the Frenchman to Kant to expose the flaws of his moral determinism. For Kant, moral imperatives are arrived at through the free will of individuals. For Durkheim, moral volition is a manifestation of the collective will. That is, though both are interested in moral rules, only Kant accounts for the possibility that moral reasoning and judgments can be subject to critical appraisal.
Laidlaw (2002) relies on Kant to draw attention to Durkheim’s conflation of morality with the group, but ultimately, Kant’s categorical imperative is too narrow to account for the realities of dilemma and doubt in shaping ethical life and self. The freedom Laidlaw has in mind for moral anthropology is not that which Kant advocates, but which Foucault writes about in his studies of the techniques of self (2002, p. 324). Drawing on Greco-Roman morality and Aristotle’s theory of virtue ethics, Foucault (1985) suggests that moral being is an ongoing process of self-formation. In particular, he conceives of the socially embedded exercise of moral choice as an interaction of fourfold ethical relations that he calls ‘ethical substance’, ‘modes of subjection’, ‘ethical work’, and ‘telos’. According to Laidlaw, moral anthropologists should take a lead from Foucault and exploring ethics as ‘subjectivation’ – Foucault’s term for active reflection and care for the self – because it encourages an interest in reflective moral action while recognising the ethical practice is socially shaped. Foucault, in other words, offers a theory to illuminate how individuals can have ‘more or less freedom’ and how it ‘takes different forms, in different historical situations’ (Laidlaw 2002, p. 323), while avoiding Western ideologies of freedom as an exercise in autonomy in accordance with reason or the ‘true’ interests of individual.

I appreciate the desire to claim moral subjectivity and experience as an object of anthropological study. It is not necessary, though, to attack Durkheim in order to achieve this aim, because the moral fact is a more flexible concept than Laidlaw assumes. To be fair, it is not difficult to see how Laidlaw could interpret Durkheim as being opposed to free thought or will, insofar as Durkheim often argued for the moral fact placing too strong an emphasis on constraint. Yet, as Durkheim repeatedly insisted, social facts should not be hypostasised because social reality, including moral rules and norms, is

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47 Lukes has pointed out that his use of strong language was unnecessary, as was his style of attacking methodological individualism by claiming it’s opposite – ‘methodological socialism’ (1973, p. 20). ‘It would have been enough’, according to Lukes, ‘to have claimed that no social phenomenon, indeed few human activities, can be either identified or satisfactorily explained without reference, explicit or implicit, to social factors’ (ibid.).
created in the minds of individuals (Lukes, 1973, p. 11). In this way, the ‘externality’ of the social fact – which Durkheim defines as ‘manners of acting, thinking, and feeling external to the individual, which are invested with a coercive power by virtue of which they exercise control over him’ (1982, p. 52) – is a methodological and not an ontological argument. In addition to being implied in the struggles of homo duplex, the possibility of moral agency thus can be located in the space between the morality of the group and the individual’s way of representing this morality.

Freedom and Durkheim in the New Morality

That Laidlaw’s argument has set the conceptual parameters of the New Morality is not to imply that he is heir to a new school of thought nor that his essay is a manifesto for a new sub-discipline. Laidlaw was not the first to criticise Durkheim’s conflation of the social, moral and good (Parkin 1985, pp. 4-5), and, as is common in times of paradigm shifts, others had formulated (Faubion 2001; Lambek 2000; Howell 1997) or were formulating (Robbins 2004b; Mahmood 2005) theories to account for ethical reflection and praxis when Laidlaw gave his lecture. It is also worth noting Fassin’s (2012, p. 8) reminders that anthropologists are ‘more attentive to ... local arrangements ... than scrupulously faithful to any grand theory’, and also that many scholars ‘do not discuss or even mention Durkheim or Foucault, Kant or Aristotle’ (ibid.). Fassin’s felt need to caution against generalising what I call the New Morality can be read as a caveat, ironically supporting the existence of the pro-freedom/anti-Durkheim trend I find problematic.

Laidlaw’s essay signals, has influenced, and foregrounds a shift away from notions of morality as rules, reproduction, and control, as is evident from the thematic contours of the New Morality. This theoretically varied and empirically diverse literature has been generalised by Zigon (2009, p. 79) as having two often overlapping interests – that of moral reasoning and moral practice. Studies of the former are rooted in deontological philosophical
traditions (Fassin 2012, p. 7) and explore how people deliberate on moral decisions and select moral options. The latter, which tends to make use of Foucault’s theory of virtue ethics, involves research into ‘how persons make themselves into properly attuned moral persons’ (Zigon 2009, p. 79). There have been other efforts to define the scope of recent research into morality: for instance Csordas (2013), divides moral anthropology into four streams, and Fassin (2012, p. 8), in a highly parsimonious description, describes recent literature as to do with ‘the formation of ethical subjects, sometimes with explicit discussion of “virtues” (Widlok 2004) or, in a different perspective, of “care” (Garcia 2010).’

While enthusiasm for moral subjectivity, reasoning and experience is widespread, criticisms of Durkheim are piecemeal and often reference or echo Laidlaw’s argument (Cassaniti & Hickman 2014, p. 256; Eberhardt 2014, p. 302; Scherz 2010, p. 306; Beldo 2014, p. 265). Zigon (2010, p. 22) for instance, iterated Laidlaw’s key points when he wrote:

... in replacing Kant’s moral law with society, Durkheim ... negated morality as a particular topic of study for those who follow his assumption that morality is congruent with society (or, culture). For when morality is equated with society (or culture), it is quite difficult, if not impossible, to

48 The first, Csordas’ (2013, pp. 524-525) writes, has an epistemological bent, it discusses how and why morality should be the subject of a sub-discipline (Fassin 2008; Fassin & Rechtman 2009). The second focuses on the interplay of routine practice and moments of reflectivity and change in moral systems (Robbins 2004b, 2007a, 2007b; Zigon 2007, 2008). A third approach is interested in moral experience in Kleinman’s (1999) sense of conscious struggle against suffering within ‘local moral processes’. The last thematic cluster he identifies is that of ethics – how people develop dispositional capacities through their senses and mind to fashion ethical selves (Laidlaw 1995, 2010; Faubion 2001, 2011).

49 These are not stand alone interests, for interest in the good, either in relation to self or other, is complemented by emergent scholarship on cognate topics such as hope, wellbeing, wonder and other currencies of value, including the inverse of goodness – the problem of evil (Csordas 2013) and immorality (Yan 2014).

50 Criticisms are also implied in studies that explore Durkheimian concepts, such ‘the ought’ (Beldo 2014); ‘obligation’ (Englund 2008) or ‘the punishment of ethical behaviour’ (Stafford 2010) without acknowledging or giving credit to his pioneering work in relation to these topics.
analytically separate a moral realm for study.

In the introduction to her edited collection, Heintz (2009, p. 2) offers another example of how, by overstating Durkheim’s moral determinism, scholars ignore aspects of his work that would complicate their assertion that his ideas are antithetical to freedom. She writes that Durkheim:

... considered morality as a floating mantle over society, pervasive in all of its aspects. The very fact of living together in communion was a sacred and a moral thing; thus morality was just another name for culture, for the very thing that kept humans together.

As with Laidlaw (2002), statements like these are not so much an inaccurate rendering of Durkheim as an exaggerated claim that he was a theorist of rule-following and social reproduction. This caricature prevents New Moral theorists from engaging the dynamic relation between inner and outer moral realities and the creative force of emotion in moral life.

To be clear, recent scholarship does not necessarily dismantle the social: rather, structuring processes are subjugated for the purpose of analysing individual processes of moral reasoning and choice. The extent to which the social remains a necessary element in research varies according to research methods and theoretical approaches. As a rule of thumb, wherever moral conundrums, dilemmas, and doubts have been explored in situations of dense social interaction, there is a greater sensitivity to the workings of the social. This is exemplified in Robbins’ (2004b) work on moral clashes in changing Urapmin worlds in Papua New Guinea. In exploring the conflict between Christian and traditional moralities, Robbins argues that Dumont’s emphasis on hierarchal and integrated value spheres can be productively combined with Durkheim’s emphasis on routine and conscious moral conflict (ibid.). Virtue-based approaches are also sensitive to how the social defines the limits and possibilities of fashioning oneself as a moral person. Foucault’s point that freedom is something exercised and not achieved has, for instance, enabled Mahmood (2005) to explore a Muslim piety movement, something Western
feminists have seen as antithetical to women’s interests, as an ‘illiberal desire’ – that is, culturally opposed to the Western rhetoric of liberation.

The constraining power of moral systems is least obvious in the research where morality is seen to be best served by focusing on an individual’s moral reasoning (Howell 1997; Sykes 2009; Demmer 2015). In a few instances, the social is dissolved altogether. An example of the latter is found in Widlok’s (2009) ‘moral dilemma elicitation’, an interview technique used to study how people reflect and act on moral dilemmas and choice. Zigon (2008, p. 17) also concedes that ‘morality is a social practice’, but that it does not ‘consist of principles and rules, but instead is a bodily way of being in the world that is continually shaped and reshaped as one has new and differing life, that is, social experiences’. For Zigon (ibid.), morality is social insofar as it is experienced in groups, and he accords no weight to the subtle power of the normative. As one of the more vocal theorists of the New Morality, his insistence that morality is about being comfortable in the world illuminates the absurd endpoints of exploring how people direct their freedom. As Beldo notes, defining morality as existential comfort ‘denies the distinctive character of moral propositions’ and ‘equates moral statements with statements of preference’ (2014, p. 269).

Arguments for Durkheim and Moral Models

Running against the disciplinary grain, Robbins (2007a) and Yan (2011, 2014) have questioned the orthodoxy of understanding Durkheim as antagonistic to the study of moral freedom and their arguments can be used as a foil to

51 My argument here has many overlaps with criticisms of methodological individualism. The primacy of the individual in accounts of social life, Kapferer (2004) has pointed out, is part of a more general shift away from the social in the social sciences. Within anthropology, he notes, ‘there is often a shift away from a concern with social relational and interactive structures’ while ‘ideas such as networks seem more appropriate with their stress on radiating linkages between nodal points’ (ibid., p. 1, p. 152). The ‘powerful individualist and subjectivist turn in anthropology’, he suggests is (ironically) a social movement for it ‘cannot be easily separated from larger political processes of neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism’ (ibid., p. 2).
pinpoint the specifics of my own. According to Robbins, recent scholarship risks throwing out ‘the Durkheimian baby with the bathwater of too rigid models of cultural reproduction as the price to be paid for securing an anthropological concept of freedom’ (2007a, p. 295). While in general agreement with Laidlaw’s critique of Durkheim, Robbins argues that an emphasis on heightened moral consciousness leaves ‘little room for the kind of smooth, morality of reproduction kinds of social processes Durkheimian models lead us to imagine as at the centre of social life’ (2007a, p. 305). The ‘baby’ that needs to be retained to complement accounts of variegated freedoms, in other words, is Durkheim’s sensitivity to the routine and reproductive dimensions of moral life.

While identifying the Frenchman as more help than hindrance is important, it strikes me that Robbins (2007a) has inverted the evaluation of Durkheim while leaving the categories in which he is understood intact. It is not a surprise then that his argument that anthropological studies of moral life should account for both the ‘morality of reproduction’ and the ‘morality for freedom’ is not novel. In the last twenty years, though not all scholars link one pole of the continuum to Durkheim’s work, there has been an efflorescence of moral model-making similar to Robbins’ (2007a): for instance, Logstrup’s (1997) ‘unspoken demands’ versus ‘ethical demands’, Lambek’s (2010) ‘explicit local pronouncements’ and ‘implicit local practices and circumstances’, Fischer’s (2003) ‘moral systems’ versus ‘ethical struggle’, and Faubion’s (2011) ‘ethical autopoiësis’ and ‘themitos’. Even Zigon’s (2007) ‘morality’ versus ‘ethics’ offers a similar typology of morality as an ebb and flow between routine action and conscious reflection. Though each model is theoretically nuanced, they all share Robbins’ (2007a) belief that moral life can be bifurcated into degrees of consciousness, where higher level

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52 Similarly, Lambek locates the ethical ‘in the conjunction or movement between explicit local pronouncements and implicit local practices and circumstances’ (2010, p. 7).

53 Faubion in particular does not simply map moral action onto levels of conscious intent and release from structural constraints. For the sake of pushing theoretical frontiers I once again work at the level of abstraction.
awareness is the more significant anthropological domain because, through ethical crises, clashes, or what Zigon (2007) calls ‘moral breakdown’, social change takes place. As I see it, analytic weakness lies not in carving moral life into the more or less reflective, but in conceptualising morality as degrees of consciousness. If, as Durkheim understood, consciousness emerges from the sacred/profane distinction, routine is not simply background to freedom. By beginning with emotion, which Durkheim saw as evidence of the power of the sacred, all forms of consciousness are structured by a shared vitality that emerges from participating in the social: not as context that mediates action but as a sui generis reality.

Yan (2011, 2014) is in broad agreement with Robbins, but seeks to reclaim Durkheim’s social for moral anthropology by focusing on immorality. In his essay ‘How far away can we move from Durkheim?’ Yan (2011) notes that, more than being an aspect of habitual action, the social is a realm of moral power that most clearly manifests in incidents of immorality as a normative judgment. Since Zigon is ‘one of the most radical advocates of moving away from the Durkheimian tradition’, Yan (2011, para. 3) builds his argument by critiquing his work. According to Yan, though Zigon (2007, 2008) advances a theory of morality devoid of social constraint, in his later writings about Russians undergoing rehabilitation in Church-run programs (Zigon 2011), the social unwittingly emerges. His exploration of moral projects of rehabilitation, after all, presents a picture whereby the logics of the Orthodox Church and neo-liberal state policies are central to the remaking of the rehabilitants into new moral persons rather than, as Zigon (2011) claims, that agents are cobbling together and choosing a range of moral possibilities in the agentic work of forming their ethical self.

If the relevance of Durkheim’s social is felt in the neo-liberal ethics of individual responsibility and self-governance that have become part of the rehabilitants’ value systems, it is also felt in public reactions of emergent ‘moral breakdowns’ (Zigon 2007) in China. In a later article, Yan (2014) develops this point by analysing collective anger and anxiety in China towards
the emerging problems of toxins in store-bought foods and the extortion of people who come to the aid of those in need. The relevance of Durkheim’s social, he points out, emerges from the fact that when notions of what counts as good and right are violated, they stir strong emotional reactions. Not only does Yan support Robbins’ (2007a) argument that morality is not always a plurality to choose from but a domain that is shared, he suggests that it is emotion that binds individuals in common belief. Though Yan only links his observation to Durkheim’s interest in emotion in the last few sentence of his article, by identifying why anger is often the response to moral violation, he pinpoints why the sacred should be at the core of moral analysis.

Morality and Emotion

If we map the New Morality onto the classic psychological triumvirate of ‘cognition, behaviour and emotion’ (Myers 1989), it is clear that moral reasoning (deontological) approaches correspond to the former; Foucaultian approaches (virtue ethics) to the second; while emotion, the third dimension involved in psychological creations, is a woefully undertheorised aspect of moral life. Some anthropologists explore the play of emotion in moral life (Cassaniti 2014), and the experience of empathy has been the topic of a number of studies (Halpern 2001; Hollan 2008; Hollan & Throop 2011; Throop 2012) as has the affective engagement with ‘the life of the other’ (Das 2010).54 This research, through significant and having generated interesting debates on issues such as the opacity of minds (Robbins & Rumsey 2008), does not exhaust the scope of how emotions create moral life. The focus on first-person affective attunements and bodily senses of being-for-the-other, after all, serves epistemological concerns in relation to intersubjectivity.

54 Hollan and Throop define empathy as ‘a type of reasoning in which a person emotionally resonates with the experience of another while simultaneously attempting to imaginatively view a situation from that other person’s perspective’ (2011, p. 2).
The lacuna of interest in emotion in moral anthropology overlooks two significant points. One, as I will discuss in Chapter Three, moral life is structured beyond I-thou relations: it extends to meta-level desires – for instance, God, cultural heritage, and the ethnos. Two, emotions guide moral reasoning. A growing body of research in moral and cognitive psychology – studies that are augmented by neuroscience and evolutionary theories (Damasio 2003; Luo et al. 2006) – supports Durkheim’s insistence that ‘humans are ruled by feelings, desires, and irrational forces of which they are scarcely or imperfectly aware, that lead them to behaviors and motives which they rationalise afterwards’ (Mestrovic 1991, p. 78). Theories of emotional primacy (Prinz 2007; Haidt 2007) point to a need for moral anthropologists to better engage how moral intuitions – snap-fast evaluations of person or actions – precede and frame processes of moral reasoning (Haidt 2001; Sanfey et al. 2003; Wheatley & Haidt 2005; Cushman, Young & Hauser 2006).

Durkheim had very little to say about emotion. He considered it a bodily force too fluid and obscure to understand. Yet his argument, as outlined in *Primitive Classification* (Durkheim & Mauss 1963), presents a thesis that categories of thought – whether in hunter-gatherer tribes or scientific communities – are based in emotive forces. This proposition did not diminish the importance of cognitive factors: rather, he understood ideas, beliefs, and symbolic life as created and shaped by collective emotive forces. Collective effervescence, according to Durkheim, is the affective dynamism of a moral community – it creates the mood of a society, generates changes in moral values, and structures the social into the sacred and profane.

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55 A picture has emerged that humans are continuously processing their environments with intuitions and feelings that, in some cases, are brought to consciousness by the relatively slower cognitive system (Hauser 2006). Even then, we almost always evaluate people and situations in ways that support our initial intuitive reactions often with ad hoc rationalisations (Haidt 2007, p. 998).

56 He hopes its physiological specifics might be identified in the future within the new discipline of psychology.

57 In doing so Durkheim continued a philosophical line that began with Hume and can be traced through Schopenhauer and Comte.
Effervescence, by which he meant emotional energies stimulated by ‘socially situated bodily movements and relationships contained within human gatherings and the heightened individual and collective dynamism associated with them’ (Fish 2005, p. 21), was coherently formulated in *The Forms*. Drawing on examples such as the French revolution and Spencer and Gillen’s (1904) ethnographies of indigenous Australians, Durkheim proposed that emotions, when stimulated by totemic symbols in dense gatherings, recharged the values and identity of a group. Though developed in relation to ritual gathering, the vitalism of effervescence could be experienced in less dramatic times, such as in sentiments stirred by totems – that is, objects such as flags, bodily decorations, and uniforms that personify a community and symbolically condense its core values.

My topic has required acknowledging Durkheim’s belief that socio-moral constructions have an emotive basis. My research participants were diversely divided along age, class, ethnicity, gender, and other intersectional axes, but they had strong emotional attachment to being Papuan. Being Papuan, in the context of perceived difference to and threat of Indonesia, was a moral community with effervescent attachments to *adat* (tradition, customary heritage) and Christianity. These twin totemic representations of a geographically grounded collective, as I will explore in Chapter Three, are the basis of a self-recognised ethical framework. Chastity, for one, is perceived as a Christian and traditional moral code. As grounded in the bio-psychological possibility of homo duplex, effervescence can be abstracted as the emotional force that generates sympathies for others and so makes ethical life possible. It is the case that morality is a sphere where ‘emotion is fickle in more subtle ways, because contradictory emotions, or at least different emotions that lead to different forms of action, can operate at the same moment, or in comparable contexts’ (Besnier 2009, p. 194). Yet Papuan sexual morality bears out Durkheim’s assertion that ‘the qualification “moral” has never been given to an act which has individual interests, or the perfection of the individual from a purely egoistic point of view’ (1953, p. 37).
Before I elaborate on the sacred, I must first address this question: are Durkheim’s ideas about emotion, since they followed the evolutionary wisdom of the day, too dated for contemporary usage? By way of a quick answer, I wish to point out that, because he was not interested in emotion, the ways that cultures ‘hypocognise’ or ‘hypercognise’ emotions across societies (Levy 1984) can be explored within his constructivist frame of the social fact. At the same time, his understanding of emotion as a bodily experience offers a break against approaches that, in the effort to break down the Cartesian divide, go to the other extreme of assuming culture is the prime constructor of emotion (Geertz 1966).  

My last three chapters will follow approaches that understand emotion as an inner reality – as passions subject to impression management that ensure any feelings that could be taken as anti-social are kept in check (Wikan 1990; Briggs 1987; Hochschild 1979, 2003). This approach is consistent with and extends Durkheim’s idea that sentiments, which vary from place to place, are the building blocks of moral life.

Morality and the Sacred

For Durkheim all beliefs where strong emotions were a ‘natural’ reaction to their violation were aspects of the sacred. I do not wish to digress into a discussion of the problems with Durkheim’s sacred; nor do I wish to elaborate on the contradictions and complexities of its relations with the mundane, religion, or society. In this thesis, I use the sacred in his loose sense of embodied understandings that some objects, individuals, and beliefs (and not others) are beautiful, beloved and inviolable. As a heuristic, this dimension of social reality, more a pole of a continuum with the mundane than its categorical opposite (Allen 2013, p. 110), offers an antidote to individualist

58 This tradition of locating emotions not in bodies but culture has been carried forth by Ahmed’s (2014) widely cited theory of emotions as moving across the surfaces of bodies, carried by the ‘stickiness’ of signs.

59 The relation between religion and society, an issue where Durkheim demonstrated ‘fundamental inconsistencies’ (Lukes 1973, p. 524).
models where ‘culture comes to be so fluid and ever-changing, so open to the impress of invention and resourceful use, that it seems to cease to have any properties of its own or any power to shape action’ (Robbins 2007a, p. 295). This is because, even when an act is freely chosen, what differentiates the Ideal from a virtue – ‘an act [done] for its own sake’ (Widllok 2004, p. 61) – is the emotional response to its violation. As a psychological mode of religious thought and feeling, Durkheim recognised that the sacred could be attached to secular phenomenon. Since over 80 per cent of people in the world adhere to folk or world religions (Farhadian 2015, p. 94), the sacred is usually conceived through religious experience. Yet, as work of Douglas (2003) and Rappaport (1999) highlights, as well as cultural sociological research on the re-enchantment of secularising worlds (Lynch 2012), the concept is useful for understanding individual desires to feel diminished in light of something greater. Whether in the fields of shopping (Carroll 2008), nationalism (Maffesoli 1996), or romantic love (Illouz 1997, p. 173), the desire to submit to ideas of surpassing beauty appears to be, as Durkheim understood, an aspect of our social psychology. In Allen’s words, ‘the sacred [can] take refuge in any values regarded as ultimate – in human rights, nature, the nation, revolution, the constitution, science, truth, or whatever’ (2013, p. 112).

Chastity, when approached from Durkheim’s perspective, constrains by virtue of its incarnation as an Ideal. Constraint is a concept anathema to the assumption that morality is a realm of persuasion, and is one of Durkheim’s more ambiguous concepts. As central to his idea of social and moral facts, over the years he deployed it in different ways and often without the awareness that each one raised a distinct set of questions (Lukes 1973, p. 12). From around 1885 onwards, the year Durkheim identified his shift from being a structural theorist to taking an idealist position, his understanding of constraint changed. As a rule of thumb, his earlier writings conceptualised constraint in terms of social sanctions and, towards the end of his life, he saw social representations as imposed on individuals through collective emotions. Though the end point was the same – to affirm the dominant values of a group – his increasing preoccupation with pro-social sympathies for the good
through attachments to community led him to abandon the idea of constraint altogether (Lukes 1973 p. 244). In this thesis I utilise his older and newer understandings of constraint, as, as it will become clear, chastity is both sanctioned and – as a dominant or sacred virtue of the habitus – an idea that touches the senses and moves the young out of concern for others.

Bourdieu’s notion of habitus, as I will explore in Chapter Four, extends Durkheim’s notion of the moral fact as a kind of social reality both internal and external to the individual because it emphasises the complexity and plurality of social milieus through which chastity becomes a symbolic representation with a heavy emotional load. Sexual norms mediate action, I shall explore, because they are shaped by institutional representations of gender and marriage, socialised through sanctioned interactions with parents, teachers, pastors and adat leaders. Since it supports Durkheim’s idea that society, as a manifestation of psychic or ideational reality, is a gestalt-like sum of individual imaginings, Bourdieu’s habitus can embellish a Durkheimian social for the anthropology of morality. Yet, since he paid little attention to morality and emotion in his exposition of embodiment in everyday (mundane) life, the habitus can be productively cross-fertilised with Durkheim’s sacred.

My own view is that the sacred provides the centrepiece for apprehending how people, more often than not, live within the limits of normative structures, as well as how moral issues can be an impetus for social change. Since I will discuss the former point in light of the following case study, I end this subsection with a few words on how Durkheim’s understanding of social change is useful for understanding the dynamism and conflict in the Papuan sexual moral habitus. Against popular ideas that he was a theorist of stasis Durkheim had at least two more latent explicit theories of socio-moral change. In his first monograph *The Division of Labour*, Durkheim (1984) presented a theory of social change as the morphological outcome of population increase as well as new communication and transportation technologies. He speculated that these shifts, from ‘mechanical to ‘organic solidarity’, produced a change in kind and degree of social interactions, what he called moral
density. In his last monograph he turned this idea upside down to suggest that moral transformation did not only occur through structural *differentiation* but by effervescent processes of *de-differentiation* (Tiryakian 2009, p. 65).

In *The Forms*, Durkheim suggested that, during intense social interaction, social groups are thrown into processes of de-structuring which leads to changes in social consciousness. Driven by a yearning to transcend ego and fuse with something greater, in moments of de-differentiation the sacred can be affirmed or else transformed but at the core, the emotions stimulated nourish dignity and generate social renewal. Durkheim was aware heightened affect could, in certain historic circumstances, be expressed in a negative guise. The ambivalence towards the sacred, which I have found useful in my exploration of the anxieties and angers of Papuan nationalism (Chapter Three) and sex panics (Chapter Five), was described by Durkheim as a passion that can move with ‘such an intensity that [it] cannot be satisfied except by violent and unrestrained actions, actions of superhuman heroism or bloody barbarism’ (Durkheim 1915, p. 211). I have also found Durkheim’s theory of change as a renovation of collective solidarity useful in Chapter Six, where I explore how threads from older sexual moralities – moral economies based in bridewealth and compensation – have become woven into modern sexual moralities. Though an imperfect fit, the old and the new have braided through the habitus to generate a sense that sex before marriage is a violation of the Papuans’ sacred. An important corollary, also explored in Chapter Six, is that even through norms do not always align with practice and compete with other moral understandings – such as that sex is positive and pleasurable – ideals are important because they are benchmarks through which action is evaluated and sanctioned.

**Moral failure: Suri’s story**

Sometimes the best way to highlight the value of a particular perspective is to ground its abstractions in the social world. The importance of approaching
chastity as an Ideal – a belief imbued with sacred constraint – can be illuminated through a story about Suri. Suri was my neighbour, a girl of seventeen who was born and raised in Manokwari and referred to herself as orang Biak. She was in her final year of high school and lived in a humble house with her mother, a civil servant, an older brother, and a younger sister. Her father had died when she was young. Suri was devoutly Christian and went to the nearby GKI (Christian Church of Indonesia) every Sunday with her family. She also expressed her faith on her Facebook wall, which was plastered with pious memes and personal reflections on her love for Jesus and God. Suri’s other passion was pop culture, especially the music of American hip-hop artists Beyoncé and Usher. She watched at least three hours of television a day. Her favourite channel was MTV and she also enjoyed the Javanese sinetron called The Swapped Daughter (Putri yang Ditukar).

The neighbourhood held Suri and her family in high esteem. As a working woman, Suri’s mother often left her children alone in the house, but her absence was not exploited by her children. The older ones cared for the younger and did most of the shopping, cooking, and cleaning. Suri and her siblings did not travel much beyond school, church and for the occasional family outing. Their mother was described as ‘berdisciplin’ (disciplined), meaning she kept a tight rein on her children. She did not like them to ‘ikut pengaruh luar’ (follow outside influences) with inappropriate dress or dance styles. Though she listened to foreign pop music, Suri dressed modestly and was not tempted to boyfriend. Having developed rapport in our frequent interactions in the leisurely time of the late afternoon, Suri once told me how grateful she was for her mother, as well as her father’s younger brother (bapak adik), who had continued to pay her school fees: ‘After dad died, his adik [younger sibling] did not forget us, he helps mum to pay for us and, God willing, I will jadi [turn out; ‘become a public servant’].’ Suri’s hope in this respect was fortified by her older brother’s recent success in securing a civil service position the year before.
One evening when the sky was heavy with cloud, I asked her if she had ever had a lover. Suri responded ‘yes’ but it was just ‘tipu tipu’ (joking about), a local expression that implies an immature and non-sexual love. She continued to share a memory of a time in early adolescence when she had been thrown by an awakened desire:

When I was in second year SMP there was this boy in my class. I started to notice him. Strange – he had been in my class for the last few years but now, I saw his through the eyes of a gadis [maiden, virgin]. Every day I saw him and every night I thought of him. This thinking never stopped, desire was a 'strong pull', my strength disappeared. He was seeing me too. One day he gave me some money – this kind of gift is the start, it says ‘I like you, we are friends.’ I was so excited and scared, I could feel myself slipping to sin so I pulled myself back to God. It was very difficult. I remember staring at my schoolbooks, trying to concentrate and could only feel the desire to run away in the night. I turned my thoughts to God, confessed my feelings and asked Him for strength. God told me that to resist feelings of flesh I needed to make my mind pure, my heart pure, and then I could be strong against desire. Until now, I am scared to have a boyfriend. In Papua if girls have boyfriends they get hit.

Suri had experienced desire as a sudden and overwhelming bodily force that threatened her commitments to family and study. She responded with a reflective resolve to develop a closer relationship to God to help create the mental and spiritual conditions that would fortify her ability to resist temptation.

One afternoon Suri’s younger sister – thirteen-year-old Gerda – paid me a visit to share news that Suri had been beaten by their mother earlier that day for not coming home that night. I was confused, based on my understanding of her repeated evocations of the importance of obeying parents, but also suspended judgment. According to Gerda:

Suri did not come home last night. Mama waited, she sat in the kitchen all night with the sapu lidi [palm frond broom] in her hand. When Suri arrived at dawn, mama jumped up and hit her hard. Suri fell down, on the floor,
quiet. She received the beating. Me and kakak [older sibling] watched from the room, terrified. I have never seen mama so angry. Maybe she has heard some words? You should go and see her ma, she is not saying anything but I think she would like to see you.

As a private affair I was not sure whether I should visit Suri at this moment of crisis. Taking her sister’s words as encouragement, I decided to venture across the road later that day.

When I spotted her mother leaving the house, leather-bound bible in hand, I took this as my cue to make a beeline. Gerda was at the back, preparing condiments for a spice blend, and Suri was inside, with her back to the door, cleaning rice. Greeting Gerda and reading her smile as tacit invitation, I entered the kitchen. Suri did not to register my presence. With heavy posture, doubled over, she continued to absentmindedly pick the rice from a shallow bamboo bowl. As I was wondering how to leave while saving face, Suri turned around. With a bowed head and bloodshot eyes, she lifted her sarong above her knees and twisted her legs to show me the welts and cuts at the back. Muttering some words of consolation, I was overwhelmed with sadness at this sight, a mess of purple, blue, and red. Though I would have liked to ask her mother why she did what she did, the sensitivity of the topic precluded me from ever raising the topic of this incident.

Later that night Suri, in a tiny monotone voice, told me her side of the story:

I was scared to come home. Scared that mum would hit me. She really loves me, wants me to do well like my brother. I am in the last year now, so near graduation. Suri would never do that, Suri is not nakal [naughty, ‘wanton’]. I was at a friend’s house, I told mama I had gone to Amban to do a school project with my friend. Then the rain came, all the drivers went home. The network was disturbed, I could not connect a call to mama. You see my legs, these wounds, this blood. Suri does not feel this. I only feel my heart breaking from shame – I have disappointed mama. This is the worst thing for us ... Suri will stay inside for a long time now, stay away from people, saya malas tahu [‘I am lazy to know; ‘I don’t
want to hear gossip], just stay inside and work hard so I don't become deaf from all the talk.

Taking a cue from the New Morality, Suri’s navigation of her ethical pathways can be considered a creative process of drawing from a range of discourses and desires. Sexual abstinence could be framed as a technique to construct her ethical self, and questions could be asked as to why she chose one particular virtue sphere over the other, and, in particular, the role of Christianity in her decision-making. How do education, popular culture, and family values figure in her self-making? Is Christianity a kind of master frame in her ethical self-formation? What are the tensions and overlaps between these discursive threads and how do they present as conundrums that requires specific tactics to work through? These questions could be anchored in a careful analysis of her narrative about sexual temptation in early adolescence. This narrative, after all, lends itself well to approaches to the New Morality that are interested in conflict between ‘value-spheres’ (Robbins 2007a, p. 299) and ‘moral breakdown’ (Zigon 2007, 2009). These are worthy questions, yet if analysis begins and ends with the subjective and inter-subjective, we forego an opportunity to interrogate the broader field of moral constraint.

If we take Durkheim’s sacred as our starting point, an analysis might begin by noticing the violent rage Suri’s mother felt in relation to her daughter not coming home. It would also take note of the fear Suri felt when thinking about the implications of not making it home that night. Yet fear and anger, common emotions in moral life, point to the importance of Durkheim’s theory that Ideals exert their power to constrain action by virtue of their ability to stir strong emotions. That emotion is prior to moral consciousness is supported by how her mother reached a conclusion without searching for information or weighing evidence to the contrary. Emotional primacy is also apparent in the felt sympathy for her mother’s motives and Suri’s embodied receptiveness to the beating.
That emotion is a basis of social constraint is perhaps nowhere clearer than in Suri’s experience of malu. Malu, a Malay/Indonesian word that encompasses feelings of shame, embarrassment, humility, and shyness (Bennett 2005b, p, 25; Goddard 1996), has been described as Durkheim’s ‘premier social emotion’ (Scheff 2000), even though he had little to say about it. This is because shame, as a punitive sensation triggered from social judgement of a moral breach, is a somatic inscription of the normative order. Being malu, according to friends, was a kind of heaviness (keberatan) or a death of feeling (mati rasa), a pain (kesakitan) that made one lose their appetite (terada nafsu makan). That Suri’s pain was amplified by the feeling she had shamed her mother highlights how shame is configured through local ideas of personhood and family life (Chapter Six). Shame, in this sense, is a social sanction as well as a demure feminine embodiment (Chapter Four) and restorative resource: Suri dealt with shame by acting with shame.

Chastity, as patterned through social life and relationships, can evoke varied emotions that Durkheim associated with the sacred, including fear, love, awe, respect, and reverence. It is in the interplay of a sense of duty – that one should do the right thing – and desire – that one wants to do the right thing – that I will explore how young Papuans can experience sexual morality. In the story of Suri, it is clear that the power of the sacred can manifest through extra-social attachments to divinity, and in later chapters I will recount other instances where allegiance to God is a mode that helps young women resist sexual temptation. Yet more often, as I will elaborate in Chapters Seven, Eight, and Nine, chastity becomes compelling in the micro-interactions and desire of daily life. As with Suri, young Papuan women make moral choices not through a priori concepts but through intuitive reasoning about the consequences of their actions on the emotional wellbeing of their mother, the risk of violence, and their chances of getting a job and securing a good man in the future. These consequences, what Durkheim called sanctions, could be positive or negative or diffusely or formally organised. While interlinked – negative sanctions are often the flipside of positive ones – only negative sanctions reveal the social realities of what Durkheim called the sacred. As a
highly punitive realm where the most intimate of behaviors can trigger rage, disgust, and violence, sexual morality is well positioned to foreground the ongoing importance of this concept.

Conclusion

Durkheim’s thesis on the emotional construction of morality is a critical theoretical resource in light of current anthropological conceptualisations of morality. From the perspective of the New Moral Anthropology, Durkheim’s reduction of choice, praxis, and meaning to vague concepts of society, sentiment, and the sacred would appear highly objectionable. These concepts are nebulous and problematically lead to several, even contradictory, interpretations, but without entertaining Durkheim’s moral psychology of immersion and emotivism, the New Morality is at risk of flat renderings of moral making. As I see it, Durkheim’s moral theory does not oppose Laidlaw’s program for anthropology of ethical freedom: instead, it can reform it. This is because his concept of the sacred – an emotionally binding constellation of values – allows us to move beyond questions of morality as the structural exercise of control or the individual exercise of will. People can embrace, engage, resist, reject, or modify ethical choices, but freedom is a misnomer, because this range of possibilities is structured by fields of emotional constraint: what Durkheim took as evidence of the sacred. How social frameworks of choice are co-constructed through emotional responses to social imperatives – imperatives backed by sanctions – will be explored in the following two sections. In the remainder of this section I shall provide some ethnographic background for this study and consider how Papuan effervescences, generated from desire to defend or expel threats to the ethnus, might generate the symbolic and structural scaffolding of sociosexual moral life.
Chapter Two
(-Coastal) Papuans in the Gospel Town

For weeks, Manokwari had been buzzing with anticipation and frenzied activity as people built huts and festooned the streets with lights. It was the fifth of February, one hundred and fifty years to the day since Lutheran missionaries had first set foot in Papua. This anniversary has been celebrated for several decades, but in the last had burgeoned from a modest to a major religious celebration. In 2005, my friend Dora and I stood by the side of Jalan Merdeka, a main road where a thin line of people had gathered to watch the main event – the Gospel Landing Day Town Parade. At least a thousand Christians from all over Papua and Indonesia and even overseas sashayed past in a cacophony of song and drum. Dora, a young woman from Serui (Yapen Island) who was a student in my English language course, introduced the passers-by, using the major ethnic categories in town,60 describing them as ‘migrant’ (pendatang), ‘mountain’ (Mandechar) or ‘coastal’ (orang pantai).

‘Here come the mountain people,’ she said as a stream of people, generally shorter and with more pronounced Melanesian features including darker skin and tighter kinked hair than the coastal people from my immediate neighbourhood, came into view. First she announced the ‘orang Arfak’ – a mixed cultural group from the mountainous interior of Manokwari – symbolised by women in armpit-to-calf *kain Timor* (Timorese ikat cloth wraps) and adorned with string bags (*noken*) on their backs and/or yellow and red beads criss-crossed over their chests.61 The men in this group wore red

60 There were other types of orang (people): orang Cina (Chinese), who were said to be Buddhist and clever at business; a few Koreans said to run a plywood sawmill out of town; and a handful of Westerners. But mountain Papuans and pendetangs (immigrants from elsewhere in Indonesian), as the dominant groups, are central for the self-other understandings of my subjects.

61 Arfak – a Biak word meaning the mountains of the interior – is a term which refers to the ethno-linguistic groups of Hattam, Moile, Meyah, Soughb and Moskona.
loincloths, some carried bows or spears, and others carried string bags. After
a few other groups passed by, of mixed ethnicity in sharply designed uniforms
behind a *spanduk* (banner) proclaiming their affiliation to a particular church,
office or NGO, I spied about a dozen Dani, their bird claw motifs painted on
their torso and limbs. The men wore shorts and the women – a modest spin
on tradition that I had never seen in the years I lived in Wamena – shirts and
skirts sewn from string-bag material. After these iconic highland groups,
another three groups appeared, in the traditional dress of Ambon, Manado
(Sulawesi), and Lake Toba (Sumatra) respectively. In more refined fabric and
with gracious and gentle movements of the head, hands, and feet, they were
a striking contrast to the strong moves of Papuans to the beat of the drums.

Dora’s gaze was now fixed on a mass of young and old men and women,
their skin shaded from gold to brown, their hair variegated textures of frizzy to
straight. The first danced the *yospan*, a portmanteau of two regional dances
that were ‘joined by edict in Jayapura in the early 1980s at a seminar
convened to select the province’s official welcome dance’ (Rutherford 2003, p.
100). Blending the tight-stepped *yosim* and the high-powered sways, circles,
and leaps of the *pancar*, this team of slickly choreographed dancers could
well have been entries in state sponsored competitions. The shiny and bright
trousers and shirts of this *yospan* group were followed by a high energy dozen
people in more traditional attire. Also introduced as *orang Biak*, the women
leapt and jumped in faux bark cloth skirts, painted with white and hot pink
swirls and bordered with hot pink feather trim. Men danced in a
complementary outfit – a loincloth wrap in fake-bark brown with the same
coloured swirls and feathers. The limbs and bodies of both were painted with
the same motifs on barkcloth brown fabric. On their heads they wore a *burung
kuning* (yellow bird), the lesser bird of paradise (Lat: *Paradisaea minor*).

In this chapter, I adopt Dora’s role as guide, introducing the people and the
place of this study. Who are the coastal Papuans and how do they see

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62 This medium-sized species has yellow, brown and white feathers and is endemic
to forests in the mainland and Yapen and Misool islands.
themselves? Though what historic dynamics have they become encompassed within colonial and postcolonial ideologies and institutions? Why and when did they come to Manokwari and what does their home city, the Gospel Town, look like? Why do they wear birds on their heads and what does this custom tell us about their relationship to community and history? Since chastity is, as I describe later in this chapter, considered a Christian and traditional value, participation in the parade communicates an impassioned relationship to these fields. Before I explore this theme, a topic of the next chapter, it is necessary to provide some ethnographic background to navigate this thesis.

After discussing their identity as ‘coastal’ and describing the appearance of Manokwari, I give an overview of pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial histories. This task involves considering some anthropological meanings of modernity and evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of Rutherford’s (2003) theory of Biak Modernity as foreign raiding. In the latter parts of this chapter I will sketch some aspects of economic, familial, and religious life and, in my final subsection, position my own view of Papuan modernity as a moral mediation of the non-local or ‘foreign’ Indonesian.

Identity: coastal people

When I asked informants ‘where are you from?’ (kau orang apa), the answer was invariably ‘I am orang x’ or ‘orang x-y’ where ‘x’ stood for their father’s tempat asal (place of origin) and ‘y’ their mother’s. These answers reflect variation in local patterns of descent and settlement. While predominantly patrilineal, Cenderawasih Bay Papuans value social balance and can trace kinship ambilineally which creates bilateral relations to ancestral place. As with other Oceanic communities (Hermann, Kempf & Van Meijl 2014, p. 1), place-making and cultural identities in this region are created through ‘ongoing dialogues between formations of place, community, identity and self within a framework of mobility and global connectivity.’ The relationship to one’s ancestral homeland, described using the terms of government administrative boundaries, is contingent on personal circumstance. For some,
‘homeland’ is a nostalgic imagining, while for others it is known from catching water taxis or cargo and passenger ships to visit relatives in the village for school holidays or special events, such as funerals or the delivering of bridewealth. The relationship to one’s tempat asal often depends on how many generations have lived in Dorey. While most have arrived the last fifty years, a smattering of coastals arrived earlier as urban drift built on older patterns of travel and migration.63

Coastal identity is negotiated through historically specific encounters of raiding, trading and intermarriage with communities in the Arfak Mountains. Prior to pacification, Cenderawasih Bay Papuans were trade friends or war enemies64 with mountain people, and by the mid-twentieth century, they dominated as evangelisers, teachers, and bureaucrats across Papua. These positions – collectively described as that of penyuluhan (enlightener, from the root word ‘torch’) – enabled the progressive mapping of colonial tropes of primitive/civilised along a mountain-coastal divide (Slama & Munro 2015, p. 9). As Torgovnick (1991, p. 3) noted, the category of the primitive has different resonances that can shift in relation to context and audience. In the frame of ethno-nationalism, coastals praise highlanders for being industrious and fierce defenders of their customs (adat), land and group identity. When the moral optic of modernity is invoked, the traditional highlander is less inflected with the noble and more with the savage. Even through most Arfak are Christian and many have achieved notable success in politics and business, stereotypes prevail that they are pagan, backwards and trapped in a cycle of black magic and pay-back killing.

As the legally recognised owners of urban land, many coastals live in fear of a highlander arriving and demanding rent money.65 There are formal channels

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63 Biaks who arrived prior to the twentieth century call themselves ‘orang Dorey’ or ‘orang Manokwari’.

64 The highland/coast binary is found in identity construction across Melanesia (Foster 1995 p. 76).

65 To be specific, Dorey Bay Papuans are the customary owners of the coastal strip of land around Dorey Bay and the nearby islands and most of the land on which
for securing tenancy rights, but, because of supposed Mandechan greed and ignorance, this fear is hardly assuaged. Though I never witnessed such an incident, I came to understand this attitude the day a highlander arrived asking an exorbitant amount for a pumpkin. His presence brought everyone in the house together, huddled in the kitchen. ‘Beware [hati hati],’ said one of my home helpers, then outlined her strategy:

I will give him food and a cup of tea and you call Mr Robert. We must wait for him to come home and organise this problem. You see orang Mandacan\textsuperscript{66} don’t yet know, they have big eyes for money but do not know the price of things, if you upset them they can become furious.

I did as they advised. Even after Rob purchased his pumpkin at a reduced rate without any histrionics, this visit initiated a later conversation about the difference between coastal and mountain Papuans.

‘What do they do when they become furious?’ I asked my housemates later that night.

Anabel, a seventeen-year old Biak woman, explained:

Mandacan get so angry. Around Christmas this is a big problem. They come to your door and ask and ask and ask and if you don’t give, they just chop you, burn down your house ... They use sorcery [suangj] too. They have the strongest black magic [ilmu hitam]. We coastal already know. When there are problems we act differently, we will come together and listen and talk ... we talk until the problem is resolved.

As this explanation reveals, the coastal/Mandechan distinction is a moral one. By framing the Mandechan as violent, primitive and superstitious, coastal can see themselves as peaceful, modern and enlightened. Another site where

\textsuperscript{66} Within quoted material I use the Papuan spelling ‘Mandacan’. In the text I spell Mandechan phonetically.
inferior/superior emotional styles are registered is in tensions around the recent system of direct elections.\(^{67}\) In 2011, on the eve of an election where a highland and coastal candidate were pitted against each other, my home helper Nita warned me of the words of a woman who worked at the office of the Bupati (regent):

She said to prepare and stay inside for the election. Buy rice, kerosene, oil, spices, everything. If the Bupati [Regency Head] is not re-elected, he will organise to have all the coastal peoples killed. It will be like 1962 again.

Referring to the time, which actually occurred in 1965 when the resistance of two Arfak brothers and a Dorey Bay Papuan was violently crushed by the Indonesian army, these words highlight how, whether through land disputes, elections, or, historically, a fear of a headhunting attack, fractious relations with Mandechan attests to a felt coastal superiority.\(^{68}\)

One important aspect of this historically constructed moral identity is the fact that missionaries chose to bring the Gospel to Dorey Bay years before evangelising elsewhere in Papua. This is often seen as evidence that God had a special plan for coastals. Sitting on a bench at the base of a tree alight with the glow of fireflies, I asked Daniel, a trainee pastor, whether coastals make better Christians than highlanders. After a long pause, he explained their divine destiny thus:

This is an interesting question iibu. I have thought about this for a long

\(^{67}\) Election campaigns are ‘driven by success teams constituting anyone who can provide funds, and are often made up of contractors, old-school political party operators, and, yes, security actors’ (Anderson, 2014, para. 26).

\(^{68}\) Lodwik and Barent Manadacan, and ex-Dutch police sergeant Ferry Awom who was a Dorey Bay Papuan originating from Biak, led this armed resistance to the incorporation of Papua into Indonesia. This uprising was violently suppressed by the Indonesian army, and the leaders were subsequently co-opted by the state. A cultural bias is evident in the way this history is presented. Whilst the Mandacan brothers are often cast as sadistic highlanders with little or no political vision, who brought death and destruction on the people of Manokwari, Ferry Awom is often portrayed a divinely inspired freedom fighter who ultimately could not achieve his goals and was forced to surrender.
time and these is my thoughts. Ottow and Geissler planted the Gospel on Mansinam because God chose coastal Papuans to be his humble servants and spread the Gospel throughout Papua. That is why we make a big festival on 5th February, the day Ottow and Geissler came, to praise the Lord for bringing us for a state of nakedness into his light. Our ancestors were Christian but they did not yet know this, they worshipped carvings with the skulls of their dead inside. When missionaries went into the mountains in the 1950s, they were killed in Andai because Orang Arfak had stone hearts. We know now that these deaths were stepping stones for the Lord to move into the mountains. We are not better Christians, but our hearts are more open. So God used coastal people to help unlock the hearts of Mandacan so his light could enter all of Papua.

This exegesis emphasises the closed hearts of Mande chan in contrast to the open hearts of coastals. This emotional disposition, combined with being God’s chosen people in Papua, makes evangelising in the interior a kind of divine duty. It also bestows on coastals a sense of importance that I found was often expressed as ethnic pride and moral righteousness, qualities that are implied in the name ‘Gospel Town’.

Gospel Town: population and topography

Manokwari is the name of a city as well a kabupaten (regency) that, together with eleven other kabupaten (regencies) and one kotamadya (municipality), makes up the 77,000 km² landmass known as West Papua Province. In 2010, it had a population of around 138,000 people, but in 2014 the figure had

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69 Manokwari is named after a village in Dorey Bay. In 1876, the explorer Archille Raffray mentioned that Dorey is the collective name for three small villages (Kouve, Raoudi, and Monoukouari/Manokwari) located on the shores of Dorey (Whittaker et al. 1975, p. 238). An older informant told me it came from the Biak word Mnukwar, meaning the ‘old village’ or ‘ancestors’ bones’.

70 Kota Sorong is the municipality, and the other regencies are Kaimana, Fak Fak, Teluk Bintuni, Teluk Wondama, Manokwari, Manokwari Selatan, Pegunungan Arfak, Sorong, Sorong Selatan, Raja Ampat, Tambrauw, and Maybrat.
reached about 150,000.\textsuperscript{71} Extrapolating from census data, Kluge (2014, p. 6) estimates that 53 per cent of the population in West Papua province is Papuan and 47 per cent non-Papuan.\textsuperscript{72} Though rates of population growth per annum are high, West Papua is considerably less populated than Papua. The larger, parent province has 2,833,381 inhabitants while West Papua has approximately 760,422. Having sketched some geographic and demographic information, I shall describe the appearance of the town, or at least the two-kilometre stretch between my house and the Old Market (Pasar Lama), the setting for much of my fieldwork. Stepping off the verandah – that quintessential methodological move – I begin my descent from the slopes of Gunung Meja (Table Mountain):

Crossing Kasiepo Road and following a steep path down the hill flanked with elephant grass, the cool shade of ancient mango trees provides a brief respite from the rising heat of day. Reaching the road below, I am assaulted by car horns, two-stroke engines and vehicles with smoky exhausts driving on cracked bitumen framed by deep, black-and-white striped gutters. Papuans and pendatang [immigrants] pass by on foot; in privately-owned cars and on motorbikes (and, if female, motor scooters); on otjek [motorbike taxi] or in taksi – colourful minibuses that blare tinny pop and, though with ten seats, carry up to twenty people. Embodying a variety of combined Malay, Chinese and Melanesian appearances, there is homogeneity in this bustle for everyone is freshly washed, women have their hair pulled back and if male, their hair is

\textsuperscript{71} Census data is taken from the website of West Papua’s Central Bureau of Statistics office (Badan Pusat Statistik) <http://papua.bps.go.id>.

\textsuperscript{72} A Papuan is defined, following Bidang Neraca Wilayah dan Analisis Statistik usage, as ‘someone who has at least one Papuan parent, is married to a Papuan, has been adopted into a Papuan family, or has been living in Papua for 35 years’ (Kluge 2014, p. 5).
clipped short. Most are in uniform, the beige or Batik Papua of civil servant suits. Children are wearing crisp white shirts and the primary colours of school uniform.

I pass by a photocopy shop, a travel agent and a trade store then turn left past a military base. Inside the compound, an asphalt expanse surrounded by a dozen buildings, a few listless soldiers are smoking under the shade of tree. Further up the road, I pass the lapangan bola [ball field], a vast field of hand cut grass that will, later in the day, fill with leisure-seeking youth. The next part of town is Borasi, a neighbourhood where a friend lives in a government-housing complex. The whole area is modeled in this style, with rows of small, whitewashed concrete duplex houses with louvre windows and rusted tin roofs. As with the rest of the town, my walk takes me through ethnically diverse neighbourhoods73 with potted palms and begonias growing in recycled tin cans and paint buckets on small front porches. The houses of richer families keep orchids, as well as floor tiles, tinted windows, security fences, gaudy furniture and crystal trinkets as decorations. Since the aesthetics of status cross the ethnic reach, one cannot be sure if a Papuan or migrant is living behind an elaborately carved hardwood door or, on the other hand, the makeshift door of a shack.

Inching towards the tidal mudflats fringing the bay, I spy little houses, miniature versions of the fibrocement houses seen on the journey, built on

73 The names of neighbourhoods such as kampung Ambon (Ambon village) and kampung Toraja (Toraja village), for instance, capture past histories of migration more than an ethnic concentration.
streets so narrow a car can barely squeeze through. In this smaller scale, children not at school approach in a crowd, silent when I face them and giggling when I turn my back. Denser living seems to inspire boldness for until now only curious eyes followed with the odd familiar calling out in greeting. These children, though poorer, look well fed with eyes as bright, hair as well groomed and clothes as clean as children from any other part of town. The last leg of my journey takes me through a shanty with wooden planks serving as paths that lead, higgledy-piggledy over black swamp and effluent. Some planks branch to lean-tos, cobbled skew-whiff from rusted tin and roughly hewn timber. Large families, some Papuan, some pendatang, spill out the front or lean through their gaps-for windows. With big smiles they watch me pass. “Good morning” I call out. They smile huge smiles.

The mud underfoot becomes the mud at the back of the market. A blind coastal Papuan is grating coconut with a very noisy machine to sell in clear plastic bags sealed tight. Next to his is a fish stall swarming with flies that the traders are trying to fan away. To the side is a two-story concrete slab of a betel-stained building—a warren of pendatang traders. To the left of the building, on a faded bitumen expanse, Papuan women trade fresh produce. Coastals sit on a line of seats—with fruit, spices, betel and leafy greens atop wooden tables. Mountain Papuans spread out their cool climate vegetables on hessian sacks spread out on the ground. Goods traders spill out of the building into small shops annexed to the side. Under

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74 As well as in the lowest point in town, economic homogeneity was found in the other geographic extreme. Above the port in the highest part of town, one can find the house of the Bupati (Regent) and other heads of industry and higher ranking civil servants.
their thick blue tarpaulins they hawk their wares: clothes, cooking pots, bridewealth bowls, toys and other commodities imported from China or other parts of Indonesia.

September 14th, 2004.

This snapshot of the city captures the flow of life in a city that, save for more troops, trees, and churches, resembles the appearance of many provincial cities in Indonesia of comparable size. In light of understandings of West Papuans as, to quote the title of one book, a people who live ‘under the gun’ (Elmslie 2002), this description foregrounds that for some, life also ticks by in routine rhythms.

The Pre-colonial Era

How have my research participants become urban moderns? Before I explore some possible answers to this question, a few words on some understandings of modernity that have been influential in anthropology. ‘Modernity’ – as opposed to ‘modernisation’, which pertains to its technical and ideological inputs – is one of the most discussed and debated analytics in the social scientific literatures (Habermas 1987; Touraine 1995; Eisenstadt & Schluter 1998; Elliot & Turner 2012; Giddens 1990, 1991). Anthropology, ironically after interest in postmodernism, joined this conservation in the 1990s by stressing that modernity is ‘regional, multiple, vernacular, or “other” in character’ (Knauf 2002, p. 1). This undermining of sociological and historical notions of modernity as a development from lesser to greater degrees of civilisation has proceeded along two, often overlapping, lines of analysis. Influenced by Berman’s definition of modernity as the way people ‘become subjects as well as objects, [that is] to get a grip on the modern world and make themselves at home in it’ (1988, p. 5), a number of scholars have explored modernity as a cultural and subjective engagement with national and global-level ideologies and institutions (Ahearn 2001; Kearney 2004; Abu-
Lughod 1985; Besnier 2011). As well as approaching modernity as an orientation and not an event, another strand, influenced by Wallerstein’s world systems theory (1974), focuses on power and domination in order to understand the unequal and often exploitative outcomes of modernisation (Walby 2009; James 1997).

Recognition that the global peripheries have, since the dawn of imperialism, supplied the core (i.e. the West) with resources for material affluence opens conceptual space to see that people classically positioned as outside modernity have always occupied a shared temporality with those seen as modern. Though analytically neat, modernity did not begin when Manokwari was established as an administrative post in 1898. Prior to this, Dorey Bay was a tent city, a trading outpost where Arab, Malay, Chinese, and Europeans bartered manufactured goods in exchange for beche-de-mer, damar pitch, massoy and lawing bark, mother-of-pearl, turtle-shells, sago and, above all, the plumes and pelts of birds of paradise and other avifauna (Swadling 1996 p. 17). The ‘plume boom’, fuelled by Euro-American demand for birds of paradise as millinery fashion and as naturalist curios, lasted from the 1860s until the 1920s, when the Dutch introduced a moratorium to prevent their over-exploitation (Moore 2003, p. 114). One sketch by a European artist who visited Dorey depicts two Biak men, tall and strong with large, soft crowns of hair, working bellows to forge iron. The image is favourable – suggestive of good health, willingness to adopt new technologies, and industriousness.

In a classic case of ‘co-evalness’ (Fabian 2002) in modern times, Papuans first met Europeans en route to the Moluccas, an ancient route where they had learned forging skills and that linked them into the economies of Seram and Halmahera (Kamma & Kooijman 1973). The first documented European sighting of Papuans was made in 1524 by Inigo de Retes, a Spanish captain who sailed to Tidore via South America and the Philippines in search of

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75 As well as Manokwari, ports were also built around this time in Fak Fak, Merauke, and Hollandia.
nutmeg, mace and cloves. In his diary, he describes ‘black pirates’ aboard high beaked and ornamentally carved canoes. This was likely a reference to war canoes (Wai Mansusu: B) paddled by Biaki warriors who had a fierce reputation for raiding coastal communities, typically at night, in the rain while high on palm wine (Andaya 1993, p. 220) to amass booty on their journey to pay tribute to the Sultans of Tidore. Led by their unpredictable war leaders (B: mambri), these warriors were rewarded with esteem for having done the heroic journey, as well value from the exchange of valuables they brought home. The history of these attacks – where women, children and anything else of value (Kamma 1972, p. 215) were grabbed – have a cultural legacy in the institution of adoptive children as well as, as I touch on in chapter seven, stereotypes of Biaks as wild drunkards.

The Sultan of Tidore, who only ever ruled coastal Bird’s Head communities nominally, became increasingly threatened by the trade voyages made to New Guinea by the Dutch as well as his vassals’ growing interest in this rising foreign power in the region. From the 1840s to the 1890s, partly as a last

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76 These spices were *Myristica fragrans*, a species endemic to Bacaan, Ternate, Tidore, and Halmahera in North Maluku which produces nutmeg and mace; *Syzigium aromaticum* which produces cloves and is endemic to the Banda Islands in Central Maluku; and *Myristica argentea*, the long or Papuan Nutmeg. De Retes would go on to reach New Guinea (Moore 2003) and name the landmass ‘Nueva Guinea’ meaning ‘New Land of Wealth’. It was the Portuguese governor of Ternate Jorge de Menezes, however, who in 1526 became the first European to set foot on New Guinea.

77 *Mambri* were rewarded with honors (in some cases formal Malukuan titles such as Mayor, Sengaji, Kapitan and Dimara, which were subsequently converted into Biaki clan names), material wealth and supernatural powers.

78 Though from the 17th century there were reports of occasional Tidorese tax collecting expeditions to Dorey Bay and Roon Island, the Sultan’s power was premised on beliefs that he was purveyor of earthly and supernatural power and the desire of Biaks to pay homage. In the nineteenth century, the Sultan intensified efforts to rule by bestowing titles, flags, and official dress to certain *mambri* (Ellen 2003, p. 125).

79 From the seventeenth century European naturalists, itinerant traders, and adventurers had visited the Birds Head on occasion. In 1755, a British settlement known as Fort Coronation was built, though it was aborted within two years, at Dorey Bay (Timmer 2015, p. 97).
ditch attempt at regaining control over his trade monopolies, the Sultan launched *hongi* (*hong*, Tidorese for ‘war’) along the coast of Papua so as to exert his territorial claims. The terror of *hongi* – fleets often powered by Biak oarsmen who attacked coastal communities by burning, looting, and uprooting crops.– may have prompted the Numforese families living on Mansinam to invite the Utrech Mission Society in Ambon. Since it would be almost fifty years before missionaries had their first convert, Papuans had clearly invited CW Ottow, JC Geissler, and the less historically celebrated figure Mrs Geissler for reasons other than their spiritual message. And it was here, in this scene of trading frenzy, hongi attack, growing demand for slaves to meet labour requirements for ships and plantations, and spiritual competition in the form of competing prophets (including missionaries), that the ancestors of my informants began to engage with the capitalist and Christian influences that would make them distinctively modern.

Colonialism

Colonial encounters were uneven, myriad and contradictory, but overall, coastalts were willing and eager collaborators in modern projects. In the first two decades of the twentieth century, many took up vocations as teachers, health workers and missionaries with the same gusto they took to ocean-going travel, trade and service in the Sultan’s navy. According to Kamma (1972), the rapid adoption of Christianity in the first two decades of the twentieth century can be attributed to two key factors. First, there was a tight hermeneutic fit between the Bible and temporal-mythic elements of the belief in *Kanken Koreri* (gateway to eternal life: B) and the myth of *Mansar*

78 The hongi wars were a complex and protracted struggle that also received Dutch naval support. As regional trade competition intensified and other European states began making territorial claims to the eastern half of New Guinea, the Dutch joined forces with the Sultan of Tidore to conduct a series of raids or hongi along the coast of Papua, so as to exert the territorial claims of the Sultan, and by extensions his overlords the Dutch.

81 In the 1850s Dorey Bay had become the centre of trade in North New Guinea after Roon Island, the previous commercial hub, was decimated by hongi.
*Manamakeri* (the scabious old man) – a culture-hero myth from Biak that I discuss in Chapter Six. Second, the flexibility and richness of the Bible presented new moral predicaments for Papuans to make sense of this time of dramatic social change.

As a relatively late arrival in the colonial era, Dutch control involved relatively little violence, but this is not to say colonisation was not troubling. In a thinly stretched and a centrally focused administration, the running of colonial affairs, such as imposing taxes, regulating urban movements, and jailing troublemakers, was left to Ambonese and, less often, Javanese bureaucrats. Papuans were frustrated by the arbitrary powers of ethnic Malay administrators appointed by the Dutch, as well as the inability, for those who were educated, to access employment other than as labourers. Like other communities in New Guinea, the indigenous struggled with the problem of amity (Knauft 2007, p. 72), and between the 1920s and 1940s some addressed its lack through participating in often dramatic cargo cults (Kamma 1972).

I am tempted to call the 1950s the era of a Papuan high modernity, as limited access to skilled and white-collar employment gave way to large-scale training, education, and employment opportunities. Within an international climate of decolonisation in this decade, the Netherlands were entrusted with ‘developing’ the Papuans and preparing them for self-governance, much as the Australians were doing on the other side of the border. Dutch propaganda material from the time depicts images of Papuans in crisp uniforms and short hair, sitting attentively in sparse classrooms or working as teachers, nurses, administrators, carpenters, electricians, and plumbers. Those who remember this decade, a time when scores of Dutch migrants arrived in the cities of what was its last remaining territory, describe it as a time of vibrant theology

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82 Including the symbolic elements of a virgin birth, eternal life, and second coming of a messiah.

83 European and Indo-Europeans were exiled after the Indonesian revolution that secured the East Indies, save for New Guinea, as a nation in 1947.
schools, characterised by learning how to clean, bake, and decorate a home, and a phase when the cinema brought terror and excitement as towering cowboys shot dark-skinned people on a silver screen.

For many, especially the small group of educated Papuans who formed the New Guinea Council (Nieuw-Guinea Raad) – a body established in 1961 to steer the anticipated Papuan nation to independence – the 1950s was a time of hope.\textsuperscript{84} Ultimately, hopes of Papuan independence were dashed after the success of President Sukarno’s political and military campaign to return West New Guinea to what he argued was its rightful place in the ancient Majapahit Kingdom, the land upon which the modern nation of Indonesia was imaginatively mapped. After granting Indonesia interim rule in 1962, UNTEA\textsuperscript{85} gave the young nation full sovereignty in 1969. This victory, an ideological cornerstone of the nation’s ongoing battle with colonialism (as neo-colonialism), was based on a carefully managed plebiscite known as the Act of Free Choice (Penentuan Pendapat Rakyat, PEPERA). This act, dubbed the Act of No Choice by Papuan activists and their supporters since it entailed 1020 hand-picked Papuans voting unanimously for integration with Indonesia, consolidated the shift from what is remembered as zaman Belanda (the Dutch era) to zaman Indonesia (the Indonesian era).

Papuan Modernity

When modernity is explored as contested engagements, an interchange of thoughts and novel connections with ‘global flows’ (Appadurai 1996), becoming modern is a process and not a destination. When using the idea that modernity is vernacular, care should be taken to differentiate varied ways

\textsuperscript{84} Some parts of the population in Biak, Yapen and other areas along Papua’s north coast supported integration with Indonesia, including a group who formed the Partai Kemerdekaan Indonesia-Irian (the Indonesia-Irian Freedom Party) (Lundry, 2009, p. 166).

\textsuperscript{85} UNTEA stands for United Nations Temporary Executive Authority. It administered West New Guinea from 1/10/62 to 1/5/63.
in which the term is used: for instance, modernity has been seen as a carving of time into epochs (Hirsch 2001), of demographic transitions (Johnson-Hanks 2008), and as an imaginary that uphold some and not others as rational and superior (Trouillot 1991; Torgovnick 1991). To explore Papuan modernity in the Indonesian era, I shall make an etic/emic distinction that relies on viewing modernity through my gaze as an anthropologist and, at the end of this chapter, on how it is perceived through local moral categories of ‘Papuan’ and ‘Indonesian’. After more than fifty years of patriotic indoctrination at schools, working for the government, and consuming Indonesian goods and media products, Papuan modernity in Manokwari is fashioned in an Indonesian guise. Since it illuminates cultural spaces where the chaste resist passion, I elaborate this point through describing cultural configurations of love, sex and beauty.

That Papuans share aesthetics and outlooks with others in the nation is prominent in the effeminate Papuan men who have become *banci* – an Indonesian third-sex identity – in the Miss Papua beauty contests – a recent addition to the national beauty pageant circuit, and in housewife involvement in *Dharma Wanita* (the wives of civil servants association). Where pale skin and straight hair sit at the apex of the national beauty hierarchy (Prasetyaningsih 2007), the influence of Indonesia is also apparent in the pleasures friends take in straightening their hair using products or chemicals, and making their face paler with creams and powder.

The Indonesianisation of Papuan culture is nowhere more apparent than in what, to borrow a term from Illouz (1997) might be called the Papuan ‘romantic utopia’. Media and commercial imaginaries of love in Papua are painted in the same pastel shades and melodramatic tones as the national romantic utopia. This can be heard in the love songs by Papuan artists, local ‘agony aunt’ talkback radio programs, and, in recent years, Papuan novels

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86 One event saw a neighbour teach remote Papuans how to cook *supermie* (two minute noodles). In another, a Biak friend married to a man from the Mayor’s (*Bupati*) office wore a hot pink suit uniform with other wives from *Dharma Wanita* to greet dignitaries at the airport.
and films in the genre of *secinta semati* (love until death). As with emotional expressions in *sinetron* and other national film and television, these texts construct love as sweet (*manis*) or, if unrequited or rejected, a heartache (*sakit hati*). I return to my position in the muddy marketplace to describe the commodified appearance of love and sex in Manokwari.

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Crossing the main road and entering a trade store, I notice shelves full of romantic trinkets: lace covered photo albums embossed with gold love hearts where photos can be slotted; jewelry with heart-shaped pendants; perspex balls with ‘I love you’ scrawled beneath glitter snow; figurines of Caucasian boys and girls sitting on a rock, the boy fishing and girl tilting her head towards him in coy interest. Around Valentine’s Day, stores like this will burst pink at the seams with fake roses, balloons, cards and teddy bears. These products contrast with items for sale, sometimes in recesses or under the counter, in smaller shops in the marketplace: medicines that grow penis size, sustain erections or attract lovers; push up bras and lacy G-string underpants; posters of bikini-clad western and Asian women on motorbikes; and pirated pornographic video discs.

*September 14th*, 2004.

These commodities are evidence that Papuans are deeply entwined in capitalist institutions and impositions, and in Chapter Five, I will elaborate on sexual entanglements within social transformations. Judging by the participation of Papuans in national regimes of gender and beauty, Papuan modernity is made through desires and satisfactions with national connections (Moore 2011). Yet, precisely because Papuans fashion modernity in an Indonesian guise, there are vocal debates about the moral damage of foreign cultural elements. Before I position my argument in this respect, it is
necessary to attend to Rutherford’s regionally-specific account of becoming modern.

Rutherford’s Raiders

In her fieldwork on Biak in the 1990s, Rutherford was puzzled by an apparent contradiction whereby Papuan were both staunch opponents of the nation and enthusiastic participants in its projects. This paradox became developed into a theory where, she proposed, embracing and rejecting the nation were not separate orientations but flip sides of the same logic towards the foreign – a logic she called ‘domestication’ (Rutherford 2003, pp. 15, 40). In an article that foreshadowed a later argument, Rutherford (1996) responds to a question that she stumbled across in an article by Mike Hitchcock of the London Museum. Was it true, Hitchcock wanted to know, that the Waropen – as he had seen in a booklet series on the cultures of Indonesia – did indeed wear whole birds on their heads? Feeling the question was for her, since she had recently returned from fieldwork with the Waropens’ neighbours and had witnessed this custom, she speculated on how this might have come about. In one possible scenario, she imagined Papuans flicking through Dutch magazines and, pausing at the fashion section, mimicking a millinery style.

The answer, she surmises, is far more complicated, and involves recognising the power of pre-colonial histories to set in motion the logics through which Biaks have engaged people, objects, and ideas from lands to the west. In Raiding the Land of the Foreigners, Rutherford (2003) develops the idea that the pre-colonial institution of tribute – which held foreign lands as places of dangers and desires – put into circulation an externally-derived power that structures local epistemologies, materialities, kinship, and personhood. The symbolic power of the West, harnessed through trade items including porcelain plates, silver bracelets, beads, slaves, and imported cloth foreign goods, circulated through exchange relations along the gendered lines of kin. In particular, understandings that created and sustained the vitality of local
authority and culture were generated from the generosity of brothers towards sisters, as well a mother’s ability to conserve the objects that circulated as patrilineal wealth (*harta*).

At first glance, it would seem that Rutherford’s account of Biak eagerness to embrace, master, and accommodate the foreign is a version of the local modernities genre. In this light, she offers a frame for apprehending what she, I, and other Europeans have noticed about Papuans in this region, either with disdain or admiration. That is, whether penning letters to missionaries, riding aboard hongi, disrupting colonial peace through cargo cults, or becoming civil servants or *banci* (third sex gender), Papuans in this region have encompassed the foreign on local terms. Yet her idea that the foreign is a critical resource for knowing local selves, Rutherford continues, is not simply an outcome of deploying pre-colonial cultural templates. The foreign, by her reckoning, is not so much a power to mediate as something already local because the foreign remains just that: foreign. This convoluted logic is based on her supposition that objects that bring distant encounters and lands to mind replenish local temporalities, cultures, and selves by their capacity to shock. Shock, as the vitality that keeps the foreign at bay while generating a power to create the local, is traced in varied arenas of social action, from the discursive styles of *wor* poetry, interpretations of Koreri and the Bible, the speeches and authority of big men, and relations with far-flung kin as well as desire for state bureaucracy. In her characteristically enigmatic style, Rutherford describes the logic of shock as a ‘beast’ sleeping by the hearth that ‘began and ended as something wild’ (2003, p. 40).

There is much to be admired in Rutherford’s scholarship. Her notion of the ‘foreign’, as synonymous with terms like ‘alien’ and ‘strange’, is admittedly vague, but by locating meanings in the circulation of domesticated value, Rutherford accomplishes the important task of unsettling the dominant narrative of life in Papua as a Machiavellian struggle of domination and resistance. I found her ideas particularly useful for explaining the potency of Biak agency in navigating foreign discourses, bodies, and materialities. The
limits of her approach are located in the same basis as its strength – by framing social processes as a symbolic economy, Rutherford overlooks affective attitudes and public contestations towards things described as ‘foreign’ (dari luar).\(^{87}\)

**Economy**

For these urban dwellers, the Indonesian rupiah is the material basis of life, and, in the context of no state welfare provision and high unemployment, an ongoing preoccupation. In Manokwari, as elsewhere in the Pacific (Busse 2012), open air marketplaces, in the form of large fixed structures, spontaneous gatherings in a neighbourhood clearing, or table set up by the roadside, are central to life and livelihoods. Here many urban Papuans, as growers or as middlemen, trade seafoods, fruit, coconut, spices, and betel nut. Income is also generated through other means, such as piecemeal work in cottage industries like sewing, making cakes, or weaving baskets, or in contract labour. Papuan men work for transport or construction companies and women in commercial kitchens or as domestic help.

Though the informal economy is vibrant and diverse, nothing is thought to beat employment as a civil servant (pegawai negeri). I first realised this in early weeks of research when I conducted a survey into local ‘work’ (pekerjaan) arrangements. When I asked people what kind of work they did, most answered, in tones conveying shame, ‘No ibu I do not work.’ In an attempt to alleviate this response, I tried to ‘help’ interviewees by listing, wherever I knew, the kinds of work they did. The futility of my effort became apparent when I learned that the category ‘work’ was reserved for positions with government services. Any jabatan (waged position) was valued, but likely because of its greater probability and security, work with the government.

\(^{87}\) In her PhD, Rutherford admitted that her research likely ‘understated the transformations that have swept this coastal world and the degree to which its inhabitants have adopted modern viewpoints’ (1997, p. 81).
was more highly valued than with the Church or in the private sector. In this thesis I refer to all jobs where employees draw a wage from the state – including member of parliament (Anggota Dewan), university lecturer (dosen), teacher (guru), nurse/paramedic (perawat/mantri), police officer (polisi), soldier (tentara) or civil servant (pegawai negeri, henceforth known as ‘pegawai’) using the latter term since they can all be described as a being a servant to the state. Being a pegawai was considered a ‘blessing’ (berkat) yet only five per cent of the adult population in West Papua had government employment (Badan Pusat Statistik 2014, p. 55). ‘It is a blessing to work for the government’ said sixteen-year-old Lily. ‘Every month, money goes straight to your bank account. You can buy food, help your family and buy things – perhaps a couch or a television. When you are old, you get a pension. When you die, money still comes to your husband or wife.’

The status and value of being a pegawai is grounded in the insecurity of economic environments, as well as beliefs that you ‘half-die’ (setengah mati, exert great effort) doing manual labour. All ‘work’ that lies outside the physical ease, hourly flexibility, and economic security of white-collar employment is referred to as mencari uang – searching for money. This expression captures the sense that securing basic needs and occasional wants is an endless struggle. Like Sisyphus pushing the rock uphill only for it to roll down, ‘searching for money’ involves the connected problem of keeping money. There is a rich lexicon in Manokwari to convey this desire and frustration: money is said to be ‘difficult’ (susah), ‘slippery’ (licin), something that ‘enters the left hand and exits from the right’ (masuk ke tangan kiri, keluar ke tangan

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88 Since migrants have long dominated jobs in the private sector, Papuans tend to perceive working for banks and companies as beyond their reach. Since the mid 2000s this mindset is slowly changing and it is possible to find Papuans working in private enterprise, such as owning small contracting firms (CVs).
The dependence, desire, and frustrations of money are pivotal in understanding motivations for chastity. For as well as magic (such as the use of talismans, herbal concoctions, and oils to attract fortune) and prayer, coastals employ practical means to secure money. Though resource intensive, long term, and with insecure results, educating children is a prime strategy and remaining chaste, in turn, is a strategy for getting an education. Where pregnancy is said to lead to school drop out, a high school graduation certificate, diploma or degree entitles one to apply for and seek advancement within the civil service. Civil servants are ambivalent moral figures, seen as corrupt and willing to spend their money on vice. Yet, as nodes in networks of patronage, having a wage weaves families across generations in relations of obligation and debt. To ‘wear the uniform’ was said to bring pride (bangga) to self and family and the wage of a civil servant supported people within and between households, especially for paying for the school fees of nieces and nephews.

To avoid the risk of exaggerating pragmatic and strategic considerations, becoming a pegawai has numerous social rewards. Described as ‘big people’ (orang besar), civil servants, as with others of high standing, are expected to

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89 These descriptions are reflected in understandings of the workings of the Papuan economy. One NGO leader was fond of describing the Papuan economy as come-and-go (ekonomi tiba-berangkat), another as a ‘revolving door’ (pintu berputar).

90 One friend recounted the time a trader sold her a bottle of oil that specifically helped with retaining money, an act that attests to how financial insecurity is a nation-wide problem and a niche market for profit. The trader had noticed my friend had moles on each side of her neck. ‘According to his adat,’ she told me, ‘if you have a mole on the left side of your head it means money comes to you easily. If there is a mole on the right, it means it leaves you easily. This is so true for me. I get money easily, and then it quickly disappears.’

91 The hope for a wage informs the equal education of girls and boys. Asking a sixty-two year old fisherman if girls had always been educated to the same levels as boys, he answered, ‘not always, we used to like all children to go to school but only boys went to high school and university. Then we realised that if girls graduate, there is two times the chance of having a public servant in the family.’
give trickle down support to ‘little people’ (orang kecil) or the rakyat (citizenry, masses). This social division highlights how wealth and concomitant status and prestige are accepted as facts of life. Social status is created and communicated in the hierarchal registers of Bahasa, in gestures such as keeping physical distance or, when near, bowing one’s head and torso, and the structuring of social space. In any formal event, the front row of couches marks the VIP area, where Westerners, pastors, and senior civil servants are to sit. ‘Big people’ also express their good fortune through the shine in their shoes, the finesses of cloth, their fresh-from-the-salon look, and matching ibu-bapak suits, often tailored from gold-flecked Irian Batik. Big people, more often than not, also convey privilege and wealth in their corpulence, shaped by a sedentary lifestyle and consumption of excessively fatty foods.

Family

As a meeting point of multiple histories, cultures, and geographies, configurations of family and ideas as to what makes a family are diverse and fluid. Descent in this region is ‘officially’ patrilineal and residence patrilocal, but the exception is the norm. Relatedness is traced bilaterally and varies from person to person, depending on factors such as the contingency of proximity, assistance, memories, and other factors salient in the forging of affections. For the sake of clarity, I will introduce family through three heuristic forms: ‘nuclear’, ‘extended’, and ‘clan’. Since the family, as Durkheim understood, is a social institution where moral duty and normative desires are most intimately felt, the interweaving of these levels and combinations of affection and obligation influence sexual moral decisions and experiences.

Durkheim’s understanding of the family, as an ‘emotional refuge, a seat of affections and locus of happiness’ (Lamanna 2002, p. 117) was a romantic, nuclear model that has transmitted to coastals through Christianity and the media. In the last century, a cluster of ideals that supported social changes in the European Industrial Revolution – including individual choice in spouse,
romantic relationships prior to marriage, sexual monogamy, preference for the company of one’s spouse, nuclear family households, and verbal expressions of attachment (Wardlow & Hirsch 2006, p. 5) – have shaped local values of the marital dyad and their offspring, both biological and adoptive. If financially viable, Papuans prefer to live in nuclear families. There is an explicit cultural emphasis on intimacy, trust, and mutual respect between partners and parents and children.

Though a feature of ‘modern loves’ (Wardlow & Hirsch 2006, p. 5), care should be taken to recognise that romantic love is a universal possibility (Jankowiak 2008) and not overstate this as a modern discourse. The organisation of the rumsom, the canoe shaped dwelling inhabited by members of a Biak patriclan, suggests nuclear units have long been the locus of emotional investment.92 Residual structures of the habitus can be found in contemporary living arrangements where, in many houses, nuclear families are contained in respective rooms. The influence of older sentiments of structure can also be found in the ubiquity of anak piara (adopted child, ‘look after’ child) – children treated no different to anak kandung (biological child, ‘womb child’). In years gone by, children were kidnapped in raids to trade as slaves, to boost the size of the clan, and as lower status helpers. Today, it is not acceptable to snatch children from their homes yet still, they circulate freely between households and are emotionally embraced as ‘blessings’ (berkat). Children-in-excess arrive as gifts to the infertile or, more often, come after parental death, divorce, or incessant conflict in their natal homes. Though no longer seized as budak (slaves), the day a Mandechan boy appeared in my neighbour’s home I sensed historical continuities in their reasoning. Introduced as the new anak piara, the mother of the house explained that her husband had met Matteus at the market on a day trip to Maruni. After ‘talking’ to his parents, they decided it was a good idea that he

92 Rutherford describes the rumsom as follows: ‘Raised on poles over the tidal flats ... the rumsom ... was split down the centre by a hallway ... [which] opened on both sides onto five or more small apartments, where each married couple had a hearth, a sleeping mat, and a trunk or basket for valued possessions’ (2003, p. 40).
live in the city and get an education. In an echo to a time when slaves from distant locales were integrated into families, Matteus’ new mother added, ‘he will help Bapak and me.’

The nuclear family is a basic and autonomous unit, but not always self-sufficient. The precariousness of economic existence integrates households, at least ideally, as co-operative units. This ideal is appealed to when coastals build house foundations as a communicative gesture to encourage kin to contribute resources to complete the project. In any household, the couple with the greatest earning power ascend as the bapak dan mama rumah (Master and Mistress of the house). Those less able to contribute to the costs of running the household are expected to reciprocate, depending on access, opportunities, and circumstances, in the form of cost-saving measures. For women, this often entails working as a pembantu (domestic worker), doing domestic labour, and childcare in exchange for keep and occasional gifts of cash. My use of the word ‘gift’ is a reference to Mauss’ (1990) seminal ideas about economic forms that, tangible or intangible, can build, repair, or sever social relations. Though firmly enmeshed in cash economies, the ‘gift’ – a concept that has inspired rigorous scholarship on a range of anthropological topics (Polanyi 1944; Weiner 1992; Sahlins 1972; Gregory 1982; Strathern 1988; Sykes 2005) – is supported by the giving, receiving, and returning of things such as food, school sponsorship, acts of nurture, or other kindnesses that create and sustain social ties.

For many (in my observation, more men than women), the clan – patrilineal descent groups that informants referred to as ‘marga’ or ‘fam’93 – was a vital connection within and between generations past, present, and future. The clan, synonymous with its name, features as one’s surname on national identity cards and tends to be kept by women after marriage. Mas kawin (bridewealth), a quintessentially Melanesian mode of transacting marriage, secures clan rights to a woman’s productive and reproductive capacity and so

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93 I did not hear them referred to as ‘keret’, as Rutherford (2003, p. 37) did on Biak.
is the means to replenish the clan (Chapter Six). As well as coming together to raise bridewealth, the clan’s importance is believed to lie in guiding other relationships of obligation, such as taboo observance and the division of inheritance. Since social and economic negotiations are in practice fluid and variable, it struck me that the clan role was largely symbolic and emotional.

Christianity and the Supernatural

As for other Pacific societies, Christianity is central to Papuan epistemological categories of space and time as well as social hierarchies, activities, and interactions (Tomlinson & McDougall 2013, p. 2). Religious networks and institutions, often linked and supported by national and transnational fellowships, play a key role in social organisation and delivering health and education services, emotional comfort, and spiritual guidance to local communities. Being Christian extends beyond faith and identity – it is a social experience. Churches arrange extra-service events and denominational members often hold ‘afternoon prayer’ (sembayang sore). Bible study prayer groups which are held, with endless supplies of sweet tea and cakes, on a rotating basis in the houses of members of a congregation. As well as church attendance, daily Bible readings, and afternoon prayer meetings, Papuans today express their faith through watching televangelism programs and posting Christian affirmations on Facebook and other social media. Most in this study belong to the Christian Church of Indonesia (Gereja Kristen Indonesia, GKI), but Catholics, Adventists, and other Protestant groups are represented in the mix.⁹⁴

In Suharto’s regime, adhering to world religions was compulsory and foreign missionaries were encouraged in Irian Jaya to support conversion, air

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⁹⁴ Including orang GPdI (Gereja Pentekosta di Indonesia; Pentecostal Church), GBI (Gereja Bethel Indonesia; Bethany Success Family), GPKAI (Gereja Persekutuan Kristen Alkitab Indonesia; Christian Bible Church of Indonesia), Gereja Katholik (Catholic Church), GSJA (Gereja Sidang Jemaat Allah; Assemblies of God), and GKII (Gereja Kemah Injil Indonesia; KINGMI).
transport links, and the provision of services. In the reform era, church leadership has been indigenised and, under the umbrella of national and international denominations, ‘religious authorities act as opinion makers and enjoy public confidence’ (Warta 2010, p. 2).\textsuperscript{95} Consistent with worldwide trends (Robbins 2004a; Deininger 2014, p. 2; Miller & Yamamori 2007, p. 1), Christian fundamentalism is on the rise in Tanah Papua, especially evangelical and Pentecostal denominations (Slama & Munro 2015 p. 22; Warta 2010, p. 3). These trends towards greater conservatism and more literal readings of the Bible parallel national trends where, often influenced by more dogmatic Arabian models (and more recently ISIS), rigid and severe strains of Islam have gained traction (Sidel 2006).\textsuperscript{96} Radicalism is a minority with the secular nation and Islam is mostly a middle-class piety movement that intersects with consumer culture (Heryanto 2011; Rudnyckyj 2009; Brenner 2011).

Christianity is deeply enmeshed in local culture and subjectivities, but faith in God co-exists with belief and fear of a supernatural realm. The term ‘supernatural’ is problematically a modernist category that assumes ‘nature’ as the boundary of the real, rational, and normal. I use the term as a catch-all to describe, as Long observed for the Riau Islands in eastern Indonesia, ‘a multiplicity of cosmologies’ that became ‘meaningful through being embedded in the diverse affective experiences of multicultural living’ (2010, p. 874). Life in the city was shared with numerous agents who possessed the power of human fortune and misfortune, including Christian demons (setan), ghosts and spirits (barang halus, maklum), ancestors (nenek moyang), and the black magic of sorcerers (ilmu, magik hitam). These entities, when combined with the fear of migrants who are seen to be trying to kill Papuans (Chapter Five), appeared as a swirl of mostly malicious agents that take an interest in, and

\textsuperscript{95} Partly because foreign (mostly American) missionaries were denied continuing visas.

\textsuperscript{96} Conservative organisations such as the National Ulama Council, (MUI), Prosperous Justice Party (PKP), and Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) are gaining popular support. While theologically diverse, they share the common ground of opposition to so-called Westernisation through Qur’an based codes of conduct.

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sometimes interfere with, Papuans' lives. Fear of supernatural powers was a knowledge-practice that motivated chastity (Chapter Eight), yet it created psychic discomfort for my friends and shame when admitting to it. God, it was well known, was the supreme power and so fear became evidence of a lesser faith.

Indonesian Pollution: the immoral nation

Rutherford has likely overstated the extent to which the foreign is a fetish. Where she sees tropes of shock and surprise as foundational to the regenerative power of the foreign, Papuans I knew considered the foreign – synonymous with ‘Indonesia’ – as the root cause of the erosion of local values, potencies, and authorities. That the foreign was a shock in the literal sense of an unpleasant stimulus that threatens stability was illuminated one evening while watching a gyrating Javanese pop star on the television. The mood in the room was already sour. The pop star’s performance was part of a controversial concert, funded and organised by the national government as a gift to celebrate the first birthday of West Papua province. After a Hercules plane from Jakarta brought in a production crew and performing artists, a full-scale professional stadium of the like never seen before in Manokwari was set up overnight in the city’s soccer field. For weeks prior to the event, friends and newspaper columnists criticised the event, rumoured to have cost trillions of rupiah – hundreds of millions of American dollars – as well as the lack of Papuan input and artists.

Preferring to avoid crowds, especially potentially hostile ones, I watched the live screening of the concert at the house of Mama and Bapak Juan, my neighbours. The concert, also beamed on large screens on either side of the stage, was televised with pre-recorded speeches from the Governor and other highly ranked bureaucrats. Those in the room clearly enjoyed a Papuan pop group and sang along to an Ambonese crooner who wore a large crucifix pendant on a gold chain. When the Javanese dangdut dancer appeared in a
tight yellow latex mini-dress, smiles turned to scowls. I was mesmerised by the vigour with which she thrust her hips and marveled at how *dangdut* – a genre characterised by ‘a four-beat groove with an accent on beats 4 and 1’ (Weintraub 2010, p. 10) – was Indonesia’s most popular music form (ibid., p. 16). Her wild bellydance-inspired jiggles were typical of a genre that was associated with sexual innuendo and erotic dance, in clear contravention of the national sexual codes of piety and decorum.

It was not the paradox of her sexy popularity in a Muslim-strong country that came to the minds of my friends, but how her sexy dance and disco beats signified a sinister moral influence. Hugo, a middle-aged neighbour piped up, his brow crinkled and his voice a mixture of a high note and a hiss:

This kind of thing, there is no place for this in Papua. Leave her in Java. Don’t bring her to Papuan land. This is pollution. It’s the same on the television, same with the migrants, Papuan kids, they follow Indonesia, they forget Papuan culture. At school they learn about endangered species. Kids need to learn it is not only animals that are endangered. Papuans are endangered too, every day when they follow outside Papuan culture is weakened.

Hugo’s sentiment, judging by the low hum of ‘boo’ that rose up from the crowd, was likely shared by many. Squinting at the screen, I noticed small things being thrown over the rows of VIP seats in the direction of the singer. ‘What are they throwing?’ I asked no-one in particular.

‘Vegetables’ answered Hugo. ‘Tomatoes, I think.’

As a rule of thumb, things brought to Manokwari in the last century that have become beneficial – especially government employment and Christianity – are described as ‘Papuan’ and things as ‘from outside’ (dari luar, ‘foreign’) as ‘not-Papuan’. Javanese pop dancers, practices of corruption, and sex outside marriage, as symbolically associated with Indonesianisation, are foreign symbols in a cultural war to protect the sanctity of so-called ‘Papuan values’ (nilai nilai Papua). This finding contains lessons for the criticisms of some
scholars about the problems of anthropological reliance on binaries such as ‘local/ global’, ‘western/ non-western’, ‘tradition/ modern’, ‘macro/micro’ and so on (Dirlik 2000; Tsing 2005; Friedman & Friedman 2008). Moore, for instance, has argued that globalisation is a ‘partial condition that has no teleology of completion and cannot do so’ (2011, p. 4) and Friedman and Friedman suggest that the category of local/global ‘flattens out a more complex articulation of different kinds of relations that coexist but are nevertheless of different orders’ (2008, p. 10).

The response of Hugo to the dancer should be taken as a reminder that globalisation, or other abstractions of the ‘non-local’, is not simply a anthropological heuristic, it is a symbolic reality for many in the contemporary world. Any exploration of modernity as the longings, fantasies, and aspirations of individuals can benefit from sensitivity to how the ‘directions, pulses, propensities and outcomes’ (Moore 2011, p. 4) of social change are often schematised within polar logics such as of good and bad, and the local and foreign. In other words, when considering the role of the imagination in the creation of novel cultural meanings, processual analysis of modernity should not lose sight of how moral emotions, in this case Papuan outrage towards Indonesian ‘pollution’, highlight how modernity is an experience of boundary fortification as much as cultural flows.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented a people with long histories of travel, trade, and migration who acculturated themselves and incorporated new ideas within the projects of Dutch and now an Indonesian modernity. Their status as urban Christians who rely on money, are integrated into multi-level kin relations, and who value civil service employment is important for

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97 Tsing too points out that, ‘We know the dichotomy between the local blob and local detail isn’t helping us. We long to find cultural specificity and contingency within the blob, but we can’t figure out how to find it without, once again, picking out locality’ (2005, p. 58).
understanding the social power of chastity. In this chapter I also critically evaluated Rutherford’s (2003, p. xix) dismissal of the ‘truth’ behind the ‘appearance’ of Biak’s integration into the nation by suggesting that the foreign is not only mediated by pre-colonial raiding practices. Rather than being a valued surplus that creates a shock which keep alien orders at bay, my research participants saw the foreign as a moral threat. This idea is my point of departure for the next chapter, an exploration of the moral implications of the politicised dimensions of the people and place of my study. Consideration of the foreign as a threat, I will demonstrate, leads to the recognition that the desiccated avifauna whose beady eyes bobbed with the beat of the dance is not only metonymic of a local modernity, it is a totem that brings coastals closer to Tanah Papua as a sacred land of beauty and abundance.
Chapter Three

Being Papuan: the effervescent ethnos

A society can neither create itself nor recreate itself without at the same time creating an ideal. The ideal society is not outside of the real society; it is a part of it ... we cannot hold to one without holding to the other. For a society is not made up merely of the mass of individuals who compose it ... above all [it] is the idea which it forms of itself (Durkheim 1915, p. 422).

It is not enough to know that young women understand chastity to be a Christian and traditional (adat; ‘customary’) value. A Durkheimian perspective necessitates asking how chastity becomes an Ideal, in the sense of a shared and disinterested form of respect for moral rules. Inquiring into the origin of Ideals, Weiss writes that the answer is not immediately apparent and requires ‘digging around in Durkheimian texts to find pieces that allow us to reconstruct his thinking on the subject’ (2012, p. 86). His writings on collective effervescence, she suggests, provide answers for understanding how Ideals emerge, as well as how they are maintained and change over time. Effervescence refers to a collective state of emotional arousal, when the interaction of minds and bodies ‘creates something new, uplifting and more elevated that ordinary life’ (ibid., p. 90). It is in this creation – namely, the sacred/profane patterning of socio-moral representations – that gives rational ideas and moral values their emotive force. Following this frame of analysis, to understand the importance of chastity in everyday life requires first understanding how the Papuan social is produced by collective emotional engagements that invest norms with sacred character.

Since the end of Suharto’s New Order, Christianity and adat have been subject to revitalisation, in Wallace’s sense of a ‘deliberate, organised, conscious effort by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture’(1956, p. 265). Though they are distinct phenomena, in this chapter I
will explore the growing passions for Christianity and adat – moral templates
where chastity is situated – as totems of a Papuan moral community. Papuan
identity – which weaves disparate ethnicities into an imagined collective – has
to date been interpreted as a political ideal (Chauvel 2005) or a form of
psychological healing (Giay 2000; Munro 2009) from an oppressive, racist,
and violent nation. Since sexual morality is embedded in the moral authority of
society, it is useful to explore Papuan identity as a moral community, in
Durkheim’s sense of a subjectively defined social group bound by feelings of
mutual sympathy and common values. How does the Papuan ethnos – the
imagined Papuan nation – constitute an ideal moral community? What is the
role of effervescence in its formation and what kinds of moral functions does it
incorporate?

After exploring how young women perceive chastity as a religious and
traditional moral code, I explain and defend Durkheim’s theory of
effervescence against two criticisms and argue for its relevance for
understanding the Papuan social as a moral community. In the middle
sections, I describe sympathetic affections for being Papuan as well as
impassioned relationships to adat and Christianity, including a discussion of
attempted legislation of Christian moral codes. Later in this chapter, I argue
that, to a far greater extent that Durkheim could ever have imagined, Ideals
are an argument as much as an aspect of unconscious normative life.
Negative perceptions of Islamisation, in-migration, and the perceived rise in
immorality are generating greater objectifications about Papuans and their
moral codes. In the conclusion, I argue that even though effervescence is not
without conceptual difficulty, it is useful for understanding how chastity and
other moral understandings, as constituted in collective vitality, are
compelling. It also has explanatory power for understanding how the love for
the group and its values has the potential for sympathy or savagery.
Chastity: a Christian and traditional ideal

Since Christianity is a culturally salient sacred institution, marriage transforms sex from a bodily profane to a socially sacred act. Religious meaning, Engelke and Tomlinson argue, is a ‘process and potential fraught with uncertainty and contestation’ (2006, p. 2). Christian theology is, in the hands of different people and mediums, a hermeneutics open to interpretation, but it is also the case that some understandings are more uniform and taken for granted than others. In Papua, the proper place and timing of sexual relations is one such understanding. Whether in the dry tones of Catholic scripture or the often lively sermons by Protestant preachers, the nexus of sex and sin is articulated clearly, a moral absolute embedded in God’s plan for humanity.

Beyond the church, televangelism and Christian literature also promotes the message that sex before or outside of marriage is a sin (dosa) – a transgression of God’s law (hukum Tuhan) – and in some cases, these media dispense counsel for techniques of self-discipline. For instance, on the shelf in the middle room on one household I visited, I found a book entitled Ketika Laki Bertemu Gadis (When Boy Meets Girl), given to the parents of the house by Australian Baptists when the father was a teen living in the highlands. An Indonesian translation of an American Christian courtship manual, the book contained advice for resisting temptation while developing intimacy with a potential spouse.

A conversation with Diana, a 22 year-old Biak woman, illuminated how for Papuans premarital chastity is, above all, a Christian virtue:

Sarah: How do you know that having sex with someone before you are married is wrong?

Diana: It says so in the Bible.

Sarah: Where does it say that in the Bible?

Diana: I’m not sure. It is one of the Ten Commandments. God gave these rules to Moses, that you must not have an affair with your
neighbour, that you must obey your parents. God, he wants men and women to come together in marriage and raise Christian children. Sex is a blessing, it is a good thing that gives pleasure. God wants this pleasure to bring husbands and wives close. When mama and bapak are happy and united, their children feel no stress, they can be healthy and smart at school. Kids that have sexual relations before marriage, they oppose God. This is sin [dosa]. God wants us to know, I think it is written in Proverbs, that he will strike us down with a disease that will eat our body if we have sex before we are married. This disease, it has come. Its name is ha-i-vi [HIV].

It is significant that Diana, as with all Papuans I met, appraised sex in positive terms yet saw the ‘blessing’ of erotic pleasure as a gift God gives to further what is seen as His plan to reproduce harmonious Christian families. Outside marriage, sex is a sin that many understand God is tackling by sending HIV/AIDS, a disease-syndrome known by local populations to be deadly (Richards 2004).

Though thin in theological complexity, Diana’s understanding of premarital chastity as a Christian virtue is grounded in her interpretation of the Bible. Taken as the literal Word of God, the Bible is a sacred text and so is a cherished item that many protect with special covers and decorate with Christian stickers. Often the only book owned and read in a household, it provides guidance for everyday and larger ethical conundrums. Rubbing her hands over her Bible, which was wrapped in a sparkly faux leather cover with a hot pink tassel bookmark, fourteen year old Mary told me:

If I am confused, if I am sad, if I have a worry, I turn to His book to search for what He wants me to do. All the answers are there. Sometimes you have to read carefully, and think about the stories but my Bible is easy for finding advice. At the back there is a list of problems with the page number. Big problems, small problems, God understands everything and can help us. How to be a good child, good at school, what to do if a trader takes your change … it’s all in His book.
West Papuan Christianity has increasingly become of interest to anthropologists who have explored how the Bible is interpreted to provide support for millenarian dreams (Rutherford 2006, Timmer 2015, p. 108) or histories of mission organisation and contemporary faith practices (Farhadian 2005, Aritonang & Steenbrink 2008). Mary’s words illustrate a less appreciated point about religiosity in West Papua: that the Bible is often read as providing a template for ethical choice and action.

As is common throughout the Pacific, moral logics of bridewealth configure premarital pregnancy and not premarital sex as the problem (chapter 6). This fine distinction has become encompassed within the Christian value of virginity so that Papuans understand prohibition of sex before marriage as customary. ‘It is traditional law [hukum adat]. You can’t just take, you must pay for a wife, give her family plates.’ After Sali shared this explanation, she confessed to knowing nothing more. This did not surprise me, since adat is a body of law and lore, knowledge of which varies by age and gender. Women could be adat specialists, but usually their knowledge pertained to healing, fishing, and gardening. In matters of visual art traditions as well as legal concerns, it is men who hold the authority. In negotiation with the families who provide a fee for their services, adat leaders are also invested with sanctioning power in the form of issuing fines (denda) and compensation (ganti rugi).

Wanting to help an anthropologist, Sali offered to take me to her family’s adat leader to learn more about traditional sexual morality. ‘Pak Seweru is a good man’ she said. ‘If there are any problems with adat or we need to know how things were done, we go to him.’ Pak Seweru was a senior member in the civil service who had learned adat from his father and represented the Serui community. His demeanour gave the impression of someone who had enjoyed relative privilege and the respect of many. One evening under a single fluorescent tube, I sat around with a few men and women sipping cups of sweet black tea in his guest room. Knowing the purpose of my visit, he
explained why and how Papuans have always waited to be married before they have sex:

Sexual relations with your wife or husband is not only a Christian rule, before the missionaries came we also had this rule. We were naked but we had brideprice. We were not yet Christians, but we had a Christian spirit ready to ignite. Before, people married young, not like today. When my father was a child, my parents gave wealth to my mother’s family. We call this *to minang* [betrothed, engaged]. They never looked at each other in all those year they were so shy. When they *jadi umur* [came of age], they got married.

In this account, ancestral nakedness communicates the primitive status of the ancestors rather than immorality. Pak Seweru articulates a common belief that Papuans were incipient Christians because their forebears were hard working and family orientated people.

Placing my glass on a lace doily on the tinted glass coffee table, I continued slapping mosquitoes as Pak Seweru changed the topic from his parents to his own courtship:

I met my wife in Manokwari. I came to the city to go to school and met her at church; she was so pretty. My parents were furious, they had betrothed [berminang] me and were so disappointed. They had to *ganti rugi* [replace the ruin] of the girl’s family, paying shame money. The rules of marriage have changed, before parents choose the *jodoh* [mate, ‘well-matched partner’], now there is *suka sama suka* [consensual] marriage. Weddings too, before they were many days long but they were simple, now they are short and extravagant. Before the bride wore a *sarong* [wrap around cloth skirt form Java] and white blouse, now women wear a white dress. But the values are the same, girls and boys cannot run around until the proper payments have been made – this is not a purchase, like in a shop, it is a statement of respect – respect for the girl, her family, the man’s clan, for Papua.
Pak Serewu plots the relationship of change and continuity in moral terms. His defensive framing of the meaning of bridewealth, that it is ‘not a purchase’, foreshadows my discussion in Chapter Six to do with how meanings of bridewealth have changed in response to economy and history. The point here is that though the basis for marriage has changed, the principle has not. This, the notion that then, as now, bridewealth must be paid before sex to show menghargai (respect, value) and the intention of marriage upholds both traditional and Christian chastity, and so also upholds an elementary form of Papuan moral community.

**Effervescence and Papianness**

In Durkheim’s scheme, moral communities – social groupings with more or less unified beliefs and practices – are made possible by an impersonal social force that exists in each individual. Not one person owns this force – which can be described as the distinctive consciousness of the Ideal that exists over and above the individual – but all create it through social participation. Effervescence, an emotional state derived from the nineteenth century idea of *dynamogénique* (dynamogenic), is key to understanding how Ideals become a sacred reality. In *The Forms*, effervescence is explained as an energy that arises when bodies, stimulated by totems and assembled in groups, merge in sympathetic unity. Though classically associated with ritual, as intoxication (with or without the use of drugs) is especially potent when bodies are ritually marked and stimulated by music and rhythmic movement, effervescence can also be felt in mundane, ordinary times. This is because, as a dynamism revitalised at ritual times, the sacred spills over as an ‘economy of energy’ that can ‘circle in and out of social life in various forms and with varying degrees of emotional impact’ (Fish 2005, p. 22).

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98 This was a fashionable *fin de siècle* idea that referred to a physiological force with effects opposite to those that produced inhibition (Watts Miller 2005, cited in Weiss 2012, p. 91).
Though Durkheim’s sacred/profane dichotomy prefigured the structuralism of the 1950s and the work of Mary Douglas (2003), few anthropologists have drawn on Durkheim’s theory of effervescence. One exception to this skepticism is Victor Turner (2008). His theory of communitas as an undifferentiated and unstructured gathering of socially-marked equals captures the essence of collective effervescence, as does his understanding that the synergy of participants allows them to transcend their individual selves to merge with something greater. While Turner furthered Durkheim’s vision, Malinowski argued that grounding religion in crowd behaviour appeared ‘to narrow down extremely both the forms of social influence upon religion, and the sources from which man can draw his religious inspiration’ (Malinowski 1913, p. 531). Evans-Pritchard too was suspicious of the mystical dimensions of the idea. ‘No amount of juggling with words like “intensity” and “effervescence”’ he wrote, ‘can hide the fact that Durkheim’s theory really just boils down to “a sort of crowd hysteria”’ (Evans-Pritchard 1965, cited in Fish 2005, p. 22). By observing that Durkheim did not use the word foule (crowd) but rather rassemblement or assemble, Pickering (1984) offers a rebuttal to these anthropological critiques. While I appreciate their desire to avoid the obfuscation of individual meaning and agency, Durkheim was seeking to overturn nineteenth century theories of the ‘crowd’ as pathological, lacking rationality and control.\footnote{Le Bonn, for instance, argued that the mob has a ‘debased consciousness’ (Lindholm 1993, p. 43).} Rassemblement or assembleé has ‘a much stronger sense of “we”’ (ibid., p. 397) than that implied by a mob. He contends that far from being outright pathological, social groupings were ambivalent – they had the potential to be either beneficial or destructive. As Fish explains, as an economy of energy, the sacred ‘can pass from a benevolent to a malevolent form without changing its essential nature’ (2005, p. 28).

A potentially more serious accusation is that collective effervescence presupposes harmony and unity at the expense of power and conflict. I will return to the first criticism later and here address the latter, which is highly pertinent
to my argument that being Papuan is to be in effervescent relation to moral community. Ethno-nationalist identities, after all, are a cacophony, a complex and even contradictory creation of voices from academia, journalism, the bureaucracy and representatives of churches, and adat communities. At the same time, emotional attachment to being Papuan, to cultural heritage, and Christianity are very different experiences, with different meanings and aspirations. Being Papuan is not, or not always, as Durkheim understood, an unconscious habitual relation to society – it is a highly conscious creation and even a resource manipulated by big people (orang besar) in the competition for cash, status, and natural resources. Traditional and religious identities, I will later describe, can be sources of conflict and claims to power, money, or competing ideas of the good. At the time of writing, it seemed that intra-Papuan conflicts, especially between mountain and coastal groups and between dominant and marginal tribal groupings, were on the rise.

Notwithstanding all this complexity, it is also the case that perceived difference and threat from a Malay Muslim Other has created the conditions for inter-ethnic identifications as Papuan. Identity is ‘fluid and heterogeneous’ since ‘individuals have multiple selves each enacted in the context of a different set of relationships and different cultural models’ (Brison 2007, p. 5). Depending on context, my friends saw themselves as a student, daughter, niece, friend, neighbor, a fan of a celebrity, or as coastal. Yet when self-understanding was contextualised within the religious-ethnic breakdown of the city, friends saw themselves as Papuans. Mrs Waratanoi, an elderly Wandamen woman, elaborated on popular understandings of Papuanness as an overarching ethnic identity that runs in parallel to localised identifications:

    If you count adat they are different. Biak likes plates, Serui like bracelets.... If you think pantai [coast, beach] they are the same, know how to swim, how to catch fish... Anyway, they all intermarry. We are all
Papuans, we have adat. We are Christians together.\textsuperscript{100}

While most people I spoke with would describe variations in coastal ethnicities as ‘different adat’, Mrs Waratanoi answer appealed to their similarities as Papuans. Christianity as well as adat is framed as a symbol of being Papuan, even though 31 per cent of non-Papuans in West Papua province are estimated to be Christian (Kluge 2014, p. 9)\textsuperscript{101} and Indonesia is a secular and not a religious state. The Gospel Town parade reveals how Christianity can be a source of unity between Papuans and settler communities: sharing schools, neighbourhoods, and workplaces as well as pews can foster inter-ethnic friendships and attractions. Yet in the search for certainty and security, Papuans invoke stereotypes of Islamic rambut lurus (straight-haireds) as a foil for self-presentation as Papuan and Christian.

This understanding is not new. In the colonial era, ‘Papuan’ was a slightly derogatory term for the indigenous population (Chauvel 2005, p. 56), and even in pre-colonial times was implicit in relations with Malay traders (Rizzo 2004, p. 152). Since the fall of Suharto, the meaning of Papuan has shifted from being associated with ‘anti-government, anti-Indonesian and anti-military’ (Farhadian 2005, p. 156) to a celebration of an ethnic diversity.\textsuperscript{102} The

\textsuperscript{100} My finding that Papuans use the first-person plural ‘we’ in the context of nationalist identity contradicts Rutherford’s (2008, 2012) argument that Papuan nationalism is created in the third person (i.e. ‘he/she’ [dia], ‘they’ and even ‘it’). Rutherford writes that Papuans ‘adopt the voice of outside commentators to describe their people’s legitimate and legitimating desires’ (2012, p. 177).

\textsuperscript{101} Thirteen per cent of Papuans in West Papua province are estimated to be Muslim (Kluge 2014, p. 9). Most of these live in the ‘balcony of Mecca’ (Serambi Mekkah) – a term for areas around Fakfak, the Raja Ampat Islands, and Kaimana in the southwestern Birds Head – after Imams converted Papuans in the seventeenth century or earlier (Warta 2010, p. 2)

\textsuperscript{102} In the first two years, a time known as the ‘Papua Spring’ (Van den Broek & Szalay 2001, p. 91) vitalised expression of Papuan pride and ‘civilian political expression in Papua flourished’ (Ballard 2002, p. 467). Euphoric with the hope for change, Papuans flew the banned Morning Star (independence) flag and pushed their grievances and aspirations to the fore. The Papuan congress of May-June 2000, a gathering of 20,000 West Papuans including high profile adat and OPM leaders, was notable in this respect. Organised by the Papua Presidium, the congress tabled the need to ‘rectify history’ and voted to reject the 1969 decision to incorporate Papua into Indonesia. Though the Papuan Spring was short lived, ending
relaxation of political censorship laws in reformasi opened space for Papuans to express their dissatisfaction with the state and their sense of themselves as a distinct race with hope for merdeka (freedom, ‘political independence’). While meanings of merdeka have been detached from the singular aim of political independence and have become a ‘messianic multiple’ (Kirksey 2012, p. xvii), the joy of ethnic expression is relatively uniform, likely because of the shared need to respond to histories of racism and cultural denigration. Even through Papuan adat is being transformed (Warta 2012; Butt 2015, p. 114) into an aesthetic appearing in orange drink commercials (Swarati 2012) and Indonesian beauty pageants (Butt 2015, p. 116), at one time or another, my friends had all felt the weight of the ‘Papua bodoh’ (stupid, ignorant) stereotype. The primitivising gaze, (Stasch 2015) has found, does not automatically lead to tensions and struggle but, as Munro observes of the highland Dani, coastals were also motivated to subvert the ‘humiliation and a sense of inferiority’ (2013, p. 27). By bracketing the political and focusing on the emotional content of Papuan pride, to follow an a line of reasoning by Fish (2005, p. 23), the widespread appeal of Papuanness and its totems can be considered a critical mass, a kind of ‘emotional coalition’ that cancels out, without flattening, group differences.

Despite the ongoing threat of military reprisals, Papuans today risk expressing their identity through new technologies and spaces of freedoms. The urban landscape is awash with symbols of affection for the ethnos – the words ‘I love Papua’, as well as other symbols, such as the Papuan ‘Morning Star’ flag and the Star of David, appeared on stickers and posters, as mobile phones or laptop wallpaper, and woven into string bags (see also Farhadian 2005, p. xii; Myrrtinen 2015, p. 126). This grassroots enthusiasm, in light of studies that have explore how and why Papuan communities express cultural and ethnic

with military gunfire in Biak in July 1998 (Rutherford 1999), it opened a Pandora’s box. At the time of the Biak shootings, tanks rolled down the empty streets of Manokwari – which inhabitants took as a silent and clear statement that freedom would only ever be limited in this part of the nation.

Kirksey describes this as a spirit that moves about like ‘liquid mercury, moving in different directions, and coalescing around multiple future events’ (2012, p. xvii).

103 Kirksey describes this as a spirit that moves about like ‘liquid mercury, moving in different directions, and coalescing around multiple future events’ (2012, p. xvii).
pride, is a response to Papuan histories of racial denigration and cultural suppression (Smythe 2013; Giay 2000; Munro 2009; Glazebrook 2004). As Fanon (1986) once argued for the colonial order in Algeria, Indonesia can be seen to have created a sense of dependency and inadequacy in Papua through the use of derogatory language and images. As well as casting Papuans as backwards, savage, and undeveloped in national imaginaries (Slama & Munro 2015, p. 3; Cookson 2008, p. 124; Munro 2013, p. 46), the state promotes and sometimes coerces the population to adopt the cultural representations of the (post)colonisers and denies people the ‘freedom to express their culture’ (Bertrand 2004, p. 152; Gietzelt 1989).

Sympathy for the Ethnos

To argue that local moral values arise from Papuan effervescences requires that I first identify instances of greater or lesser moments of sympathetic relation to the ethnos. For Durkheim, sympathy was the emotion central to both the experience of effervescence and moral life in general. ‘When one loves one’s country or humanity’, he wrote, ‘one cannot see one’s fellows suffer without suffering oneself and without feeling a desire to help them’ (Durkheim 1953, p. 53). The Gospel Town parade, as a ritual celebration of Christian identity, is exemplary of a more classic instance of collective effervescence. Marks of Papuan membership are symbolised by the Christian crucifix and other symbols, such as pictures of the founding missionaries. Traditional dress, made from grass, bark, teeth, feathers and other natural materials, is also a symbol that represents Papuans to themselves. Styles of dance – more rambunctious and physically demanding than the styles of migrants – and music, dominated by tifa drumbeat, reveal social membership, while the ‘rhythmic and regular’ movement Durkheim (1915, p. 216) arouses heightened emotions. Bodily inscriptions that signify the sacred can also be observed in a range of phenomena; from self-consciously darker skin and
frizzier hair than Indonesians to Batik Papua, a fabric ubiquitous in the parade as well as in everyday life. This material, ‘worn with pride’ (Cookson 2008, p. 332) and used for office and school uniforms, special occasion clothes, and tablecloths and curtains, gives support to Durkheim’s idea that utilitarian material objects can carry symbolic significance.

The bright icons on Batik Papua – of tifa drums and motifs from art traditions in Biak, Asmat, and Sentani – are everyday symbols that generate ‘warmth of fellow feeling’. Low-intensity affections for Papuan community are also generated by speaking Bahasa Papua, using idioms of kinship with Papuan non-kin, and consuming local forms of media that instils pride in collective spirit. This includes local television programs, social media, regional newspapers, and radio stations. This kind of media played a powerful role in creating a collective consciousness through shared symbolic life. News reports on AIDS victims or those suffering natural disasters in other parts of Papua invoked greater sympathy among my friends than tragedies that hit elsewhere. The media creates a feeling of pan-Papuan belonging that is found in a genre of music that eulogises a love for the land and its people. For instance, a popular song from 2012 titled ‘Papua in Love’ is a catchy tune rapped by Pay (featuring Soa Soa) to sharp reggae beats. In the music video, Pay dances in modern dress while young men and women dance in the

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104 Beginning in the 1990s as a Freeport (a gold and cooper mine) sponsored income-generating project, the popularity of the cloth made from Javanese dyeing techniques has exploded.

105 Bahasa Papua, as a dialect of Indonesian, more than constructs a shared social reality – it is a reflexive tool to make Papuan unity and mark Indonesian difference. My friends took obvious relish in translating a Papuan dialect and especially lyrics by popular Papuan artists. These translations were often offered by explaining how these words would be said in other parts of Indonesia, turns of phrase that were accompanied by different intonation and bodily comportment.

106 The linguistic norm of greeting all Papuans, and rarely settlers, in kinship idioms gave substance to the belief that Christians are family. In the company of taxi drivers, market sellers, or neighbours, I became accustomed to friends using kin terms.

107 Even music videos that moralising voices define as foreign, notably hip hop, are interpreted by fans to affirm the sense that ‘orang hitam’ (black people) can be attractive, stylish, strong, and affluent (Richards 2015).

108 This clip can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8zNvfB3wG-s>
background in traditional dress. The lyrics, which include the words 'you and I are the same – the same love – love for our, my Papua' is inflected with the heavy slang of Bahasa Papua.

As an internal reality, sympathy for moral community is not easy to gauge, yet a sense of commiseration and affinity with Papuans from distant locales was detected in the responses of friends to a film called Denias: Senandung di atas awan (2006) about a Dani schoolboy. In 2011, several friends voiced their enthusiasm for this film, one of several that have been shot in Papua and focus on relationships between Papuans and Indonesians. Raised in a remote part of the Papuan highlands, Denias encounters the outside world through school, a basic structure without walls on a grassy slope. The first teacher in the story, a shrill and bespectacled Javanese man, educates through punitive techniques: in one scene, he lines up the raggedy bunch of students and hits them with a stick. When this teacher is replaced by a benevolent soldier-cum-teacher, Denias becomes curious about his place in the nation and dreams of expanding his opportunities through education.

Denias' thirst for learning takes him to Wamena – the capital of his mountain province. As is typical of Dani schoolchildren in his situation (Munro 2013), Denias suffers hunger, violence, and racism, but it is precisely these trials that make him an object of sympathy. This sympathy, I often found, extended beyond Denias to all of Papua, an abstraction he stood for. Explaining why Denias was her 'favourite film' my friend Katerina said:

This movie was big in Papua ma. When I saw it I cried and cried. Poor Denias, dia setengah mati di sekolah (he half died at school, 'had a really hard time at school'). The other kids hit him, he didn't have money, his mother died, his village was far away. But he had a dream (pause) to learn and progress. It is like that here, Papuan kids want to change their thinking, become modern people, but money is difficult and without

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109 This translates as 'Denias: Singing on the Cloud'.
110 For instance Cinta dari Wamena (Love in Wamena) (2013), Lost in Papua (2011), and Melody Kota Rusa (Deer Town Melody) (2010).
education they stay the same.

I responded very differently. I found the film offensive, packed with images of *Papua bodoh* and very white Indonesians as rational bearers of development, whereas she only felt sympathy for his hope and his suffering. These feelings – conveyed in the sad tones of the word *sayang* (love, pity, fondness) – captured a spectrum of sentiment Durkheim felt as the force which compelled homo duplex to sacrifice selfish desires and drives in order to become a social being.

Adat

If political conditions and technological advances have promoted sympathetic attachment to Papuanness, the question remains: how might this enthusiasm generate a normative framework? According to Durkheim, effervescence enhances the dignity of its members. Dignity, Toscano (2011) maintains, is the highest moral status. As well as raising ‘the sentiments which [a person] has for himself’ so that once, ‘in moral harmony with his comrades, he has more confidence, courage and boldness in action’ (Durkheim 1915, p. 211), Durkheim imagined effervescence to promote commitment by individuals to the Ideals of a group. By commitment, Durkheim was not denying that consciousness and agency will always direct moral choice. Instead, he was pointing out collective forces render norms as ‘alive and active in collective thought’ (Weiss 2012, p. 86). Since Papuans perceive that their moral values (*nilai nilai moril*) are based in the ethical templates of *adat* and Christianity, to

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111 This, at least is the goal of the *harga diri* (self-value, self, esteem) movement, a widespread effort to promote belief in the goodness of a Papuans as the psychic pre-condition for overcoming obstacles to progress (Timmer 2005, p. 5). *Harga diri* is a catch phrase that circulates in blogs, persuasive texts, and speeches to raise awareness of collective worth. For instance, I often heard it in the explanations of *adat* leaders for why Papuans need to revive or practice particular traditions, and in 2011, a coastal Papuan group described it as the goal for why they were campaigning to build tables for ‘mama Arfak’ (highland women traders) at the main market. In a national daily newspaper (Media Papua 2011), the head of the initiative is quoted as saying that, ‘lifting mama Arfak off ground and onto chairs is important to their *harga diri*’. 

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consider how these fields gain moral power requires a closer investigation of sentiments and practices within these social domains. Relationships to these totems of Papuan moral community – in the sense of a sacred sign/symbol that represents the tribe to itself and that is implicated in stimulating body markings and hyper-excitement among participants (Shilling & Mellor 2011, p. 20) – are personal and idiosyncratic. I will now demonstrate how they are also socially generated and ordered through emotional arousal associated with their sensory pleasures.

I was often invited to ‘come and watch adat’. Such invitations, offered in the spirit of helping an anthropologist learn about asli (real, authentic, original) culture, led me to many colorful events. Regardless of what rite was being performed – perhaps I would be at the ‘first haircut’, or ‘putting the roof on a house’, or ‘ear piercing’ – adat events tended to be guided by an adat leader (pemimpin adat) and involved speeches, prayers, and abundant fried noodles and rice dishes. Though their formality and aesthetics of cultural abstraction had a decidedly New Order feel, these rites were appreciated for linking people to their past, the land, and their ancestors. As an ethical template, adat has been strongly shaped by New Order programs and ideologies that abstracted national traditions to create a uniform standard, such as in ‘gotong-royong or “mutual aid,” musyawarah dan mufakat or “consultation and consensus,” and the asas kekeluargaan or “family principle”’ (Henley and Davidson 2008, p. 826). For my friends, adat stood for Papuan, and so was fused with Christian values, such as respect for elders and the environment and the willingness for communal care and co-operation.

At one event, a family had decided to host a ‘putting the roof on the house’ ceremony. As the men were hammering down the corrugated iron sheets and women and children were happily buzzing about full from food and prayer, the pastor explained:

112 Given its ‘connotations of sedate order and consensus’ it is ironic, Henley and Davidson note, that adat is being used for ‘activism, mobilisation, protest, and violent conflict’ (2008, p. 817)
We had almost forgotten this tradition. The older people remembered and
told us – this is our *adat*. Our ancestors had so many rituals, so many for
all times of life but in the modern era we were too busy and we forgot.
When we come together, eat, pray and work together we remember our
ancestors and respect who we are – Papuan people. This house will be
blessed and so will the family who live there.

Notwithstanding the structured format and somber tone of prayer in this ritual I
attended in October 2004, effervescence was palpable in the energy, joy, and
humour of feasting and hammering the iron sheets on the roof frame.

Similarly, when a new GKI Church was built in the neighbourhood of Reremi,
the Church committee decided their congregation should stage traditional
Biak fire-walking at the opening ceremony. After the wood had burnt down,
leaving an area of hot stones, the men and women dressed in red loincloths
began squabbling about the correct temperature for the coals and who would
go first. The arguing, exposing the guess work and trepidation in this first-time
traditional performance, brought contagious giggles that soon erupted into
riotous laughter. As with the pastor at the roof ritual, the prayer before we ate
after the fire walking was peppered with references to the value of
remembering forgotten customs in order to render coherent a shared past,
present, and future. The use of *adat* to ritualise the opening of a church
highlights the easy suasion between two realms that, contrasting with
ethnographic observations from Papua New Guinea, could be fractious. It is
only because of the easy relation between tradition and Christianity that, I
believe, they can operate as totemic forces.

Food is an especially potent site of emotional investment in a traditional
identity. One overcast and still afternoon, I sat next to a mother tipping sago

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113 This ceremony has its origins in remembering the time Manakameri, a mythic
figure from Biak, was reborn in fire.

114 Tradition and Christianity are domains in conflict in the research of Keesing
(1992); Foster (1995); Lindstrom (1993) and more recently, Eves et al. 2014).
cakes that had been cooked in a mould over a small fire. One of her female relatives sitting beside her told me this:

Our family sent this sago from the village where we are from. It is 100% authentic [seratus persen asli]. When we cook this, all together, in same methods our ancestors did, we think of them, think of the village. When we eat the cakes we fill up, with sago we fill up with the love of family, land, God’s love.

Piles of food, so central to any rite, are a site of multiple meanings, including that Tanah Papua is blessed with fertile abundance. Food, then, is more than important for generating memories and love between people in ways that commemorate a shared ethnicity: it is a discourse of why Papuans have a strong physicality in contrast to Indonesians. ‘Our food is satisfying, clean, full of nutrition it makes you strong’ said one woman. ‘In Java there is not much food, they eat rice with nothing, sometimes with sambal [a chilli-spice condiment]. The food there is full of poison.’

Though Papuans represent adat with the same aesthetics as during the New Order regime, it has become the affective grounds of a revitalised Papuan identity in opposition to the past, when adat was reduced to ‘spectacle’ (Acciaioli 1985). Before reform, adat was a visual representation of national cultural diversity co-opted at the national level to promote tourism and development objectives of order, co-operation, and unity. Since the end of the New Order, heavily influenced by global discourses of indigenous rights (Henley & Davidson 2008, p. 819), adat is being claimed as an organising principle for new forms of village governance, in struggles for human rights and access to land and natural resources (Li 2000; Acciaioli 2001; Henley & Davidson 2008).115 This is a point of contrast between Papuanness and other

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115 Special autonomy laws have stipulated the formation of the MRP (Majelis Rakyat Papua, Papuan Peoples Assembly) to represent adat (and religious and women’s) interests. There has also been a proliferation of lembaga adat (customary organisations) and adat has been enlisted in volatile battles with mining giant Freeport to obtain recognition of their obligations for using adat land (International Crisis Group 2002).
reflexive Pacific discourses, such as *The Melanesian Way* (Narakobi 1980), *The Pacific Way* (Crocombe 1976), and *The Ocean in us* (Hau'ofa 1998). While it is also an expansive identity that reconfigures attachment to a localised place, being Papuan is a more politicised construct that, as for *adat* communities elsewhere in Indonesia, provides 'a normative base for a local political community independent of the state' (Bowen 2003, p. 255).

**Christianity.**

The colourful weave of traditionally adorned bodies dancing in celebration of mission arrivals is an expanding mass. In the 1990s, the Gospel Landing Parade rallied a few hundred people, mostly members of GKI (Gereja Kristen Indonesia, the Christian Church of Indonesia), the denomination with a direct line to the founding mission. In 2011, the parade comprised over 10,000 Christians from all denominations across Papua, from Ambon, Toraja and Manado, and, some proudly claimed, from Europe, Australia, and America. The parade has grown so substantially that the GKI have handed over the logistics, planning, and sponsorship of the event to the Department of Tourism and Culture. In 2014, this same government body erected a thirty-meter high statue of Jesus Christ on Mansinam Island that was opened in an official ceremony by none other than President Yudhoyono (Kompas 2014). Greenpeace too have used the Christian history of the region as an entry point to make an environmental message. In 2011, workers installed a blue neon-tubed border around a memorial crucifix on Mansinam, powered by a solar-wind hybrid energy system (Greenpeace 2011). Faith in God is a private matter, but if the increased visibility of Christianity in material and symbolic culture is any guide, faith as an experience that is enhancing a collective identity is arguably intensifying.

One only has to open a Papuan newspaper to see advertisements for visiting evangelists, mass Christian services in large Indonesian cities, the services of ‘healing pastors’, and also travel packages to the Holy Land (Israel). This
allows one to recognise that Christianity has, like I have noted for Islam, become more deeply embedded in consumer capitalism. Pilgrims to Israel, a popular way for newly rich Papuans to express their piety, points to the growing identifications of Papua with Israel. As Myrttinen (2015, p. 140) explains, the history of Israel – a nation with no diplomatic interest in Papua – is increasingly embedded in discourses that construct Tanah Papua as both the ‘Holy Land’ and a ‘beleaguered Jewish/Christian nation-state’. While this reconfiguration of Christianity in a post-missionary landscape is taking place across Papua, at least in its urban centres, to talk about the intensification of Christian identity in a place they call the Gospel Town necessitates recognising that perceptions of the urban landscape are increasingly seen as profane or impure.

The intensity of religious effervescence in my research setting refracts through experiences of in-migration, which has symbolic overlaps with Islamisation, as a rapacious encroachment. Before I discuss this, it should be noted that responses to migrants and Islam are mixed. Some actively endeavour to cultivate non-biased and respectful relations with Muslim neighbours, while others are reacting hatefully. Fear of Islamisation is embroiled in the vividness of national episodes of religious-based violence, including terrorism bombings, sectarian violence, and attacks on churches that have taken place in various parts of the archipelago since the end of the New Order. It is also fanned by global religious tensions where Papuans tend to identify with the Christian West. Within this context, it was often said that

116 Migration to Papua has come in three forms: the official trans-migration program, offering positions in government posts, and the majority form – ‘spontaneous’ migration. The latter are often supported by cultural traditions of merantau (economic and ideally circular migration), while pressured by structural reforms and neo-liberal market logics (Lindquist 2009, p. 35).

117 For instance, I have friends who visit Muslim friends at Ramadan and even those in opposition to mosque building are careful to communicate the fine point that they are not anti-Islam but pro-keeping the Christian heritage of the Gospel Town. The desire for peace manifested in surprising ways – such as the time a mini-bus with Christian and Muslim passengers pulled up near the front of my house. I observed them tumbling out, assuming postures of prayer and sharing words of hope that Papua would stay peaceful.
Manokwari has *banjir pendaratang* (flooded with migrants), an evocative expression to capture the demographic tide flowing from the west. One old man told me, ‘When I hear the ship horn, my body shakes. In one ship, one ship only 10,000 migrants get off and only 5,000 get back on again.’ Academics have discussed in-migration as a problem for Papuans in terms of racism, discrimination, and economic disadvantage within racially tiered economies, as well as its role in fuelling fears of a slow genocide (Upton 2009; McGibbon 2004; Ondawame 2006). For my friends in the Gospel Town, in-migration is all of these problems, but above all, it is a violation of religious and moral bounds.

Dewi, a 31 year-old mother of two, shared her opinion of in-migration from the vantage of new arrivals in her peri-urban village:

It happens here again and again. Migrants come to your house and ask if they can stay a while [*numpang*]. They rent a small section of land, month by month. Their children are rude, but we can see they are poor people but we are Christians so we feel pity.... They open a small kiosk at the front of their house. After some time they come and ask if they can buy the patch of land. The land is sold, the kiosk becomes a house. The house grows, they build on top, they build out the back. The dirt floor become white tiles, more family moves in. One day they sell it all, take the money and go home to build a big house. Indonesia grows big and Papua *tetap* [stays the same].

For Dewi, initial feelings of pity turn to regret after, through their persistence and industriousness, arrivals become wealthy. This understanding of wealth is a racialised zero-sum game of winners and losers. The wealth of migrants, Dewi says, articulating a common Papuan sentiment, is leeched from Papua to improve the quality of life in distant locales.

As well as an amorphous mass that creeps off ships, migrants often take the symbolic guise of the shape-shifter, in the sense that first appearances can be deceiving. Increasing density of city living is giving rise to the long-standing fear that Papuans are experiencing a slow genocide, not only because of the
sliding ethnic ratio in Papuan cities. Crowds, such as those that form in the market on Saturday night and at the beach on Sunday afternoons, are thought to hide assassins. As well as *kopassus* (Special Forces Secret Agents), Papuans also feared jihadists and vigilantes who were also believed to poison and ‘disappear’ Papuans. ‘Why do they want to kill? Who are they working for?’ Typical answers to these question were along the lines of, ‘who knows, maybe the army, maybe they are migrants who hate Papuans, maybe they want to kill Christians, maybe they are just jahat [evil].’

The building of mosques, a significant form of Muslim piety, has become a focal concern for this anxiety. The desire to keep the Gospel Town Christian has manifested in public protests against the construction of Grand Mosques,\(^{118}\) and even community destruction of the foundations of mosques planning on being built. In this light, the giant statue of Jesus beside the Greenpeace monument, the thirty or so painted panels along a wall at the side of the market that depict the arrival and meanings of Christianity in the region, and the signs placed at the edges of the city in 2011 that read ‘Welcome to the Gospel Town. God Bless’ are all ammunition in a symbolic war to remind new arrivals that they are living in a land that is Christian sacred.

**Christian *syariah* (sharia)**

If coastalts understand God as having chosen them as the first to receive His Word because they had the right kind of heart to evangelise Papua, today a new divine duty beckons. That is, to honour the town’s special religious history and preserve Christian ways of life in the face of a rash of immoralities. In Chapter Five, I pursue this theme in respect to moral panics concerning premarital sex. Here, I will describe the attempted passing of a series of

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\(^{118}\) Grand Mosques (*Mesjid Raya*) planned for Andai which, alongside Kwawi, is home to nineteenth century missions, have especially been the target of demonstrations.
Christian-based legislations known as the Gospel Town Bill. First developed in 2007 by members of the district government and district House of Representatives, this highly intrusive effort to impose Christian moral standards on the town’s population took the form of a number of articles including: that Christian symbols adorn government offices and buildings; public holidays and public prayers be Christian-only; mosque construction near churches be prohibited; and that certain Islamic practices, such as the call to prayer and wearing of Islamic head coverings, be restricted. Redrafted and petitioned in 2008 at the regional then national parliament (DPR-D), this later draft, entitled the ‘regulations designed to protect Christian values and traditions’, was rejected by national parliament based on the argument that it contradicted the secular foundations of the Indonesian constitution (Kompasiana 2012).

By Pacific standards, where Christianity and politics are entwined in ever more novel and potent configurations (Tomlinson &. McDougall 2013), this effort to create what is in effect a form of Christian syariah appears extreme. Yet the moralising leaders who proposed this legislation were following the lead of other districts, municipalities, and provinces where, within the devolution of legislative authority, hundreds of religious-based laws have been passed. Indeed, the fight to pass the Gospel Town Bill would have likely been encouraged by the successful passing in 2008 of a bill outlawing the production, sale, and consumption of alcohol in Manokwari. These bills, known as perda (peraturan deareh; local regulations), signal the increasing objectification of morality in the public sphere and highlight the paradoxical effects of constitutional reform and civil freedoms (Bush 2008, pp. 174-175). In light of Aceh being granted partial syariah, the rejection of the bill has further exacerbated beliefs that Christian Papua was persecuted by the state.
Effervescence and Sexual Norms

Durkheim surmised that minority groups that felt persecuted would be motivated to experience stronger forms of effervescence, but he could not have foreseen how communal identifications and moral understanding could be so reflexive. One of the more concerning features of responses to the power vacuum left from the decentralisation of state rule is the state regulation of morality, enacted through outlawing certain behaviours. One of the more concerning features of the Papuan pride movement has been the increasingly objectification of being Papuan (Chauvel 2005, p. 52). After all, essentialising ethnicity is a pre-condition for xenophobia (Giy & Ballard 2003). Ottow, a forty two year old fisherman and father of three, uses the story of Moses and the Israelites to described Papuans as a special race:

When God made the world, he divided the nations by race [ras]. In Papua he put pigs in the mountains and fish in the ocean, he gave the Papuan black skin, frizzy hair and gave himself as their God. Indonesians were given another God, Allah, their skin is pale, they are a different ras. God loves Papua, we know because he has blessed us with abundance, gold in the mountains and nutritious food. You see how we eat … we are never hungry. The food in Java not clean, it is poisoned from the pollution. In Papua the soil and air is fresh, that is why we are bigger and stronger.

This narrative is a familiar clarification of the religious basis of the theft of sacred land and the God-given health and (imminent) wealth of Papuans (Giay 2001, para. 3). At a time when anthropologists distance themselves from the term, ‘race’ is a comforting myth that confirms that ethnic difference is a case of racial incommensurability and charts a history from persecution to liberation.

In my understanding, Durkheim’s theory of effervescence holds two insights for understanding the moral power of chastity. Affective embodied engagement with the symbols of society create the ‘dispositional potential for
normative patterns of mutual recognition and inter/action’ (Shilling and Mellor (2011., p. 22). When premarital chastity is understood as becoming normalised in the effervescent currents of group, moral choice cannot, as Robbins (2012, para. 6) notes for discussion in moral anthropology, be ‘grounded ... in the distinction between the free and the constrained.’ This is because – since Ideals are moral facts that have the same basis as the sacred – when people act from their own:

free will, this coercion is not felt or felt hardly at all, since it is unnecessary. None the less it is intrinsically a characteristic of these facts; the proof of this is that it asserts itself as soon as I try to resist. If I attempt to violate the rules of law they react against me so as to forestall my action, if there is still time (Durkheim 1982, p. 51).

As I mentioned in Chapter One, by the time Durkheim wrote The Forms, he had shifted his understanding of constraint from this socially mechanistic account to one that prioritised individual desires for the Ideal. Yet these words, penned in The Rules of Sociological Method, add an important perspective for understanding the workings of sanctions in moral life.

As well as reinforcing the scaffolding of normative orders, effervescence can provide an analytic frame to understand how chastity is constituted as a moral argument. Across the nation, Brenner observes, ‘there has been a strong concern with establishing moral ascendancy over the perceived immorality of the previous regime and with building a new moral order as the foundation of the nation’ (2011, p. 478). Transforming moral visions and regulations are decidedly anti-Jakarta and, outside Java, anti-Javanese. Given Papuan feelings of opposition and oppression, the desire to reclaim the moral worth of Papuans is particularly potent, and has been inscribed in desires to rewrite as well as to celebrate Papuan history (Chauvel 2005, p. ix). On the one hand, there have been efforts to document histories of military abuse (Komnas Perempuan 2010) and ‘suffering’ (Van den Broek et al. 2001). On the other, adat – a reflexive interpretation of history – has become a sensory and narrative strategy for Papuan self-understanding (Farhadian 2011, p. 186).
What has been less documented is how morality, including ideas about sex and gender, is becoming a key arena in which battles over competing views about *merdeka* – whether in political terms of secession or moral terms of wellbeing – are waged.

The ‘Papuan problem’ (Marthinus 2011), a phrase that condenses complex ideas about the social, political, and economic challenges Papuans face today, is stimulating ideas and arguments about what kinds of ethical dispositions and action are required for Papua to advance. Discourses of intellectuals, newspapers, church sermons, and *adat* speeches promote the idea that Papuans need to know the truth of their colonial and neo-colonial histories, and once the veil of Indonesian propaganda is lifted, they can face the task of building a Papua where Papuans economically thrive and, given the demographic onslaught, survive. Arguments about morality circulate in the discursive space of rebuilding Papua: for instance, a Papuan-authored genre of books, often promotional material for political candidates, fuse development rhetoric with Christian metaphysics and add a neo-liberal dash of ‘positive thinking’ psychology to explain how Papuans came to be and how they could be. The ethical content of Papuan ethnonationalism is an interesting development that I hope will be studied in the future. What is worth noting is how the proscriptive ethics in this discourse – religious piety, obedience to parents, respect for kin, and diligence in education – are the same as those seen to promote chastity. If symbolic representations are manipulated by differently positioned actors for different purposes, effervescence can be less spontaneous and organic that Durkheim assumed. Yet the point remains that ‘Papuan morality’, even when explicitly rather than implicitly rendered, is a high stakes field with a high emotional load.

**Moral Stereotypes**

In this last section, I will give some examples of the intersections of identity, community, and Christian-traditional dictates in the form of moral stereotypes.
If other ethnic groups, especially highlanders, saw coastals as arrogant and power-hungry, friends believed that by virtue of being Papuan they had a special moral character. The day my daughter returned to school in Australia, her teacher asked her what she had learned during her time in West Papua. Pasca paused, her classmates looking on, then answered carefully, ‘In Papua I learnt that if you give away all your money it comes back to you.’ Pasca was thinking of a time a friend, Mrs. Amsram, took her shopping to buy anything her heart desired. The next day Mrs Amsram arrived and told us, as if to prove her point, that earlier in the day a friend from her office had arrived and handed her one million rupiah (approx. USD$82.00). She then crouched low and looked Pasca in the eyes. ‘You see nona,’ she said:

in Papua there is a thinking that money comes and money goes but we are never hungry because when we have money, we share. This is the Christian behaviour and the way of our ancestors. We share with our brothers and sisters, this brings praise to the Lord. We get, we give. We give, we get. We pray and money goes around. God is good.

By disembedding reciprocity from its socio-economic life in her civil service department, Mrs Amsram elevated the exchange of wealth to a supreme Papuan virtue. The ability to give, because it requires faith in a return, is proof of the giver’s strength of faith, while the act of giving, as with other generosities and kindnesses, is considered evidence of a communal Christian character.

There are many examples of how this belief in innate Papuan virtue manifests. I will offer only a few. ‘When I was in hospital,’ middle-age Trevor boasted, ‘many family members visited. Papua is like that, if you are sick, family come from everywhere, they bring food, sleep on the floor, ramai ramai [very convivial].’ The frequently uttered phrase, ‘Papuans cannot be poor because they are rich in family’ is not out of place in the Pacific, where islanders in different regions frequently invoke identities based on the value of communal care (Brison 2007; Morton 1996). As in Papua, these essentialisms are presented as evidence and outcomes of a superior Christian and
traditional morality. In keeping with the dialectics of self-other relation, Papuan moral character is defined through evaluations of moral lack in the lands migrants are from. Twenty-five year old Daniel shared his opinions of Javanese morality:

My sister lives in Java. She told me that people are always busy there, they do not think of other people, they just think of money so they can do the Haj. Their eyes for money stops them from seeing their own family. In Papua, if a person has problems, the family comes together to help. This is Christian behaviour. In Java, if a brother is hungry next door, they will starve.

A teenage girl called Berta shared a tale that illuminated how moral difference between Java and Papua can lead to macabre outcomes:

My cousin lived in Java for a while. In her neighbourhood a woman died and no-one knew. This woman, she had lived alone and they found her corpse after a bad smell filled the neighbourhood. In Papua that is not possible. (laughs) … Everyone knows what their neighbours are up to.

This grim tale, an urban myth that portrays the dystopian shadows of modernity, was shared with others beside a small fire on the side of the road one night. As with other tales in this genre, such as the ones I heard about how in Java the corpses of people who oppose development are built into the foundations of high-rise apartments, bridges, and freeways, such stories reinforce ideas about how excessive greed and individualism lead to moral bankruptcy. These stories are colloquial and descriptive, but with a shift in perspective, it can be argued that notions of how Papuans are is an implicit argument for how they ought to be.

Discussion

Effervescence is vaguely defined, relying on industrial metaphors such as ‘charge’ and ‘force’ to explain the social and drawing on late nineteenth
century scholarship about nervous energy production. The long-term effects of emotionally engaged participation in group life remains something of a mystery, yet support for effervescence is found in a number of studies, including anthropological research on raves (Olaveson 2001), altered states of consciousness (Buehler 2012), and in neurophysiology (Hammond 2003, p. 360; Konvalinka et al. 2011; Turner & Stets 2005, p. 7) and moral psychology. Haidt’s (2000) ‘discovery’ of ‘elevation’ – a moral emotion that in English folk terminology is described as being ‘touched’, ‘moved’, or ‘inspired’ – is suggestive in this respect. This sentiment, which motivates the desire for people to connect and open up and out to others, involves raised levels of oxytocin\(^{119}\) and feelings of warmth and expansion of the chest, and is elicited in experiments that exposed subjects to acts, images, and speeches seen as morally beautiful (Haidt 2003; Algoe & Haidt 2009; Aquino, McFerran & Laven 2011; Schnall, Roper & Fessler 2010).\(^{120}\)

Though clumsy and outdated, without such a concept, studies of moral life risk overlooking the physical and psychological transformations in individuals when they emotionally connect with others in socially stimulating environments. At the same time, the sacred is not always an operative distinction – Papuanness is both a community created by God and a currency to manipulate in political competition – but it helps link moral experience to social structures and binary modes of thinking (Allen 2013). Effervescence accounts for social psychology – or how people act and think differently in group life – and captures how collective dynamism can be directed towards dignity and moral affirmation, or manifest in outbursts of anger, violence, and annihilation. Anger towards the dangdut singer – who symbolised the threat of a feeble Indonesian culture and morality influencing young Papuans – attests to the ambivalence of the sacred. Since the sacred can find expression feelings of love and hostility, the desire to defend and promote an authentic

\(^{119}\) Oxytoxin is the hormone involved in social recognition and pair bonding of mammals (Silvers & Haidt 2008).

\(^{120}\) Research supports the idea that elevation, when accounting for differences in how moral beauty is evaluated, spans cultural context (Haidt 2001).
Papuan Christian morality as an answer to social ills has the potential for violence.121

Conclusion

In the last chapter, I explored the people and place of this study. In this chapter, I have examined how the politicisation of the people and places of this study is charging moral life with distinct emotional currents. In Manokwari, I sensed the intangible quality of what Durkheim called the sacred in a certain gap between the cheerful flow of daily life and an intangible, yet palpable, disease that ran barely beneath the social surface. An example comes from the time I was pulled over by police who had set up a barricade to check licenses. Remembering I did not have my license on me, my travelling companion offered the following advice. ‘Say you are organising religion [mengurus agama], they are scared of that.’ True to her words, no sooner had these words left my mouth than the policeman took a step back and ushered me away. Fear of religion, as manifest in the willingness to not engage a westerner, to move me along, suggests something of a pervasive force that circulates in social life and inscribes lines in socio-moral domains as to acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. In this way, chastity, as a moral good, is a belief that becomes a value by being recharged and sustained by an effervescent vitality that infuses a ‘range of different forces, which are not only emotive, but also physical, imaginative, aesthetic and intellectual’ (Fish 2005, p. 21). As an Ideal, chastity is a personal choice that cannot be extracted, even when it is not consciously processed in ethno-nationalist terms, from the moral scaffolding where the ‘right’ thing to do is directly linked to outcomes for Papuan futures. It is to this scaffolding – the construction, contestation and slippages of the sexual Ideal – that I now turn.

121 One reactionary pastor told me, an American conspiracy book translated to Indonesian in his lap, ‘Islam is a dark religion, full of fear. They are afraid of djins and their God tells them to kill Christians. Their moral code is murder.’
Chapter Four

Sexual Moral Habitus

Young women may know that sex out of marriage is a sin, but how do they come to feel this moral rule as an article of faith? To put this in slightly different terms, how does their chastity become a collective construction with a high emotional load? Within the frame of homo duplex, the answers to this lie in the fields through which they become social or – in anthropological terms – socialised. As a ‘bold and adventurous theory-builder’ (Lukes 1973, p. 34), Durkheim has little to say about the finer details in which people become socio-moral beings, so for this purpose, I will use Bourdieu’s theory of habitus. Though Bourdieu was not interested in morality or emotions, the analytic value of what he understood as a ‘durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations’ (1990, p. 57) lies in its extension of Durkheim’s core framing of the social. While providing closer attention to how culture and the body creates individuals as members of social groups, habitus retains Durkheim’s idea of the social as a matrix of subjective and objective dimensions structured internally by bodily and cognitive processes, as well as externally by phenomena (such as language, socially distributed resources, cultural representations, and institutions).

This chapter, the first of three to explore chastity as an historically and culturally dynamic Ideal, asks how it becomes a shared reality both external and internal to Papuan girls. I first explore moral regulation in the patterning of the everyday, considering how habitus advances Durkheim’s ideas that morality, conceptualised as pro-social action, is mediated in and through the body. I then describe how gender and sexuality are encoded in the fields of state, adat and, using a middle-class wedding to illustrate my point, Christianity. Shifting from the institutional to the ontological, in the latter parts of the chapter I consider how chastity becomes habitus in ontological fields of moral development, physical health, and puberty as a threat to sound moral
judgments. In particular, ideas of adolescence as a ‘not yet’ life-phase and physiological challenge, parent-child obligations, and the emotion of shame are social facts that create the pre-conditions that support chastity as a moral reality and expectation. At the end of the chapter, I confirm the value of Durkheim’s Ideal by addressing the limits of Bourdieu’s understandings as to how people come to embody their dominant culture. As a secular rendering of the social, habitus could be productively developed, I argue, by Durkheim’s recognition that some ideas become attractive not only because they gain capital but because they are felt as taboo and sacred.

A Day in the Life

Ethnographies of childhood often stress the process of socialisation as one of learning culture and values through the intimate spheres of interaction and routine in daily life (Mead 1930; Briggs 1970; Schieffelin 1990; Morton 1996). In Manokwari bodies, feelings and relationships are brought into alignment with social ideals in five segments over a twenty-four hour day:

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The sun casts golden light, at once soft and strong, on the thick green foliage outside my louvre windows. I wake to the sound of soft chatter, the crackle of oil heating up and the rhythmic sweeping of palm frond brooms. Men sit around drinking tea while children scramble into school uniforms, waiting for doughy cakes and plantain bananas to finish frying. Older girls help their mothers, perhaps boil water to fill up drinking jugs or else: polish shoes; aid younger siblings to get ready for kindergarten or school; buy produce from the door to door vegetable trader; hand wash clothes and hang them out to dry or prepare rice for rice cookers or condiments for spice blends. After last minute details; exam revisions; tucking in
shirts; straightening ties, pulling a brush through stubborn hair and light chit chat, people with somewhere to go stream out of houses and onto the streets. Housewives, young children and school children allocated the afternoon slot in an education system that runs in two shifts to accommodate the large population, stay behind. They sit around or play near the mothers who keep cooking until the table is covered with food, placed under a domed net, which members of the household help themselves to during the course of the day.

Late sleeping is believed to make the body lemah – a state of physical and mental sluggishness – so people rise at subuh (daybreak) or pagi pagi (the first hour or two after daybreak). Almost an hour after sunrise, a time referred to as pagi (morning), is a cool and industrious phase of the day. With the air still fresh, women do domestic chores while men and children go to work and school. In cases where women work, female relatives are the ones who stay at home to do the domestic work.

Around 11am, when the sun begins to sting, pagi gives way to siang and the pace of the day slows down:

When the sun is high in the sky and the muezzin calls the Dhuhr prayers, shops shut, traffic slows to a dribble and weary students and workers come home to rest. As the heavy air pulls people to slumber, the less fortunate students tread off to school. Around 3pm the muezzin calls the Asr prayer from multiple minarets, rousing sleepyheads at marking the beginning of sore (late afternoon). The pace picks up as shops reopen, second shift students return home and the sound of splashing water can be heard from people
taking a mandi. Sore is a time when a breeze might be felt and light domestic work is done. Women and older girls sweeping leaves and debris away from the yard, top up the food table, and fold dry washing. Sore is, above all, a time for leisure. Clean, refreshed and fragrant, people like to gather and talk at home, at friend’s houses or on mats, verandahs or benches erected under trees. These gatherings involve pinang (betel nut); snacks described as ‘mouth play’ (main main mulut); or else meatball soup (bakso) or other treats bought from kaki lima (five-legs, the carts used by street vendors) pushed along the road by migrants who emit a distinctive honk, toot or ding to communicate what they are selling.

Children dash to clearings where they can kick a ball or push toddlers in prams or else, to the kios to buy sweets. These one-room shops, attached to migrant houses or else as free-standing structures, are sprinkled along the roadsides of any Indonesian street and sell small and single item goods including loose cigarettes, fried snacks and phone credit. Sore is also a time people like to go shopping, to afternoon prayer groups or else jalan jalan, a word that means travel about aimlessly or with vaguely structured purpose. Men and older boys can be found, at this time, keeping busy: burning rubbish, cutting grass, fixing motorbikes or killing and preparing animals to cook: fish, chickens and less often, dog. As the shadows grow long and the sun sets, all this activity continues but by around nine o’clock, most are home reading bibles, watching television and chatting softly until sleep overcomes. In the darkness now there are only lovers, drunks, spirits, dark magic

122 A mandi is a traditional Indonesian way of bathing. It involves scooping water from a bak (a tub that stores water) and splashing it over oneself.
and, judging by the occasional shot in the rainforest, young men hunting mammals, birds or reptiles with their air rifles.

November 18th 2003.

In the rhythm of domestic work, schoolwork, cleanliness, and sociality, morality becomes an emotional capacity, a disposition. These are not the only temporalities that generate embodied understandings of right and wrong. Prayer and rest on the weekly day of Sabbath, school holidays which often involve trips to see distant relatives, Saturday night when going jalan jalan is something of a youth institution, and ritual times of funerals, wedding, and adat ceremonies all inscribe normative morality through what Musharbash calls the ‘physicality, ... feel, and ... emotional valencies’ of temporal intervals (2007, p. 313).

Habitus: the body and moral socialisation

The recognition that cultural ideas are ‘made flesh’ as quotidian bodily ‘techniques’ was first proposed by Mauss (1979). Building on an argument he had made with his uncle about the emotional basis of rationality (Durkheim & Mauss 1963), Mauss suggested that social facts act on the physical body though belonging to and being in habitus. Habitus is a term with a long philosophical history123 which Mauss adopted to refer to the social as a realm of habit and practical reasoning. More than half a century later, French social philosopher Pierre Bourdieu (1990) refined Mauss’ habitus, blending it with strains of other theories124 to further insights into interaction between class reproduction and acquired cultural competencies. While taking care to avoid

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123 Habitus is a concept that predates Mauss. Versions of the idea are found in the work of Aristotle (in his idea of hexis), as well as that of Aquinas, Hegel, Weber, and Husserl (Ignatow 2009, p. 101).

124 Including Heidegger’s ideas of the body, Marx’s critique of inequality, Piaget’s psychological genetic structuralism, Freudian psychoanalytic theory, and Goffman’s view of personal strategizing.
the reductive possibilities of ‘deducing Bourdieu from Durkheim’ or ‘projecting back the theses dear to Bourdieu into Durkheim’s work’ (Wacquant 2001, p. 105), I believe the habitus can extend Durkheim’s social fact and so is a useful concept for understanding how chastity becomes a taken-for-granted norm among coastal.

Durkheim and Bourdieu share certain intellectual ‘pillars’, including the assumption that norms, beliefs, and institutional representations constrain individual thought and action as they are created by the actions of collectives. For studies of social life, Bourdieu’s habitus is the more productive because it places a greater emphasis on day-to-day navigations of the world. In an oft-cited and highly opaque definition, Bourdieu (1990, p. 53) defined habitus as:

... systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organise practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them.

The habitus theorises power as located in symbols and culture, which become normalised through the interplay of agency and structure. Where Durkheim developed his ideas of bodily learning largely in relation to ritual life, Bourdieu locates embodied individuals in a broad number of ‘fields’ – his term for cultural milieux or spaces with distinct rules. From a Bourdieusian perspective, Papuan beliefs about chastity are generated in interactions with others in fields such as education, church, government programs, adat, and

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125 The genealogy from Durkheim, via Mauss, to Bourdieu is not direct, since Bourdieu’s ‘thinking and career was affected by the consequences of Durkheim’s influence rather more than by the substance of his writing’ (Robbins, D 2003, p. 23).

126 Wacquant (2001, p. 105) identifies that both theorists have a ‘fierce attachment to rationalism, the refusal of pure theory and the stubborn defense of the undividedness of social science, the relation to the historical dimension and to the discipline of history, and lastly the recourse to ethnology as a privileged device for “indirect experimentation”’. 

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weddings. Common sense understandings of chastity are also guided by ideas of the person – for instance, understandings of health and the moral will, as well as puberty and adolescence.

Bourdieu’s habitus has been criticised as ‘a notoriously difficult notion to pin down’ (Van den Berg 1998, p. 214) and as casting too broad a conceptual net. This charge, it can be argued, could be directed at any generalised theory of culture or society. To my mind, its lack of precision is its key strength. After all, it is only when group realities are seen as assembled via multiple subjective, bodily, and objective layers that the social can be apprehended with flexibility and holistic integrity. At the same time as recognising why chastity can culturally endure, the agency-structure dialect provides space for exploring how the sexual morality habitus can change over time.

The habitus supports Durkheim’s social as a gestalt-like emergence between the individual – her habits, beliefs, values, and actions – and social relations, institutional formations, and other kinds of interactive structures. The premise here – that social ideas, because they become deposited in the individual as trained sensibilities, exist prior to individual reasoning – is important for anthropological investigations into moral life. Though his explicit rendering of how culture becomes embodied makes him a durable foundation for Durkheimian-inspired explorations of moral life, Bourdieu paid little to no attention to morality and emotions in social life (Ignatow 2009; Sayer 2005). Bourdieu was a theorist of a ‘highly pragmatic and irreversible history of status rivalries, honour gained and lost, and strategic deployment of economic and political capital’ Knauft (1996, p. 117). This in turn points to differences in their understandings of human nature. Where Durkheim understood society as an outcome of people emotionally engaged with sacred realms of power, Bourdieu explored the social through self-interested agents who pursue (or deny) capital in fields of power and competition. Though my primary concern with habitus is to consider chastity as constructed through the sexual moral patterning of collective representations, I will, later in the thesis, consider the
value of challenging Bourdieu’s secular rational outlook by fusing habitus with Durkheim’s sacred.

State

‘It was easy to conduct research on marriage in New Order Biak’, Rutherford (2003, p. 34) observed, for ‘this was where Biak’s official culture lived.’ In Manokwari too, marriage was a highly valued institution and – as the normative place for sex – a key site for learning the moral distinction between sex that is socially productive and unproductive. Though seen as Christian and also traditional, state promotion of marriage as the bedrock of social stability is also an important feature of Papuan sexual morality. As was common in post-colonial nations, such as neighboring Malaysia (Stivens 1998), maternity has become manipulated as a resource for national unity and development. In the masculinist fantasy of state ideology – where the President was the father of nation and the army, the structural support (Sears 1996; Blackburn 2004; Wieringa 2002; Boellstorff 2005) – women have an essence as nurturer that destines them to care for and support men and children. This essence, enshrined in the Javanese doctrine of kodrat, was developed in ‘State Ibuism’, Suryakusuma’s (1996) term for dominant middle class ideologies of women as ibu – a word that means both wife and mother.

State ideology jostles with plural sexual values among a national population (Parker 2008, para. 3) who are, overall, tolerant of hypocrisy and even desirous of sexual scandal (Aspinall 2014). Informally sex is amusing but formally, which is to say in polite company, it is coded through silence and taboo as well as proper social roles. In a playful twist on Foucault’s expression ‘deployment of sex’, Blackwood (2007, p. 294) argues that in Indonesia, dominant sexual morality is constructed through the ‘deployment of

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127 Aspinall (2014, para. 4) notes Indonesia’s public ‘thirst for titillation’ by noting public responses to recent leaking of sex tapes purportedly made by high profile celebrities and politicians.
gender. It is through their participation as civil servants, students, and as patrons of health programs that Papuans come to learn of sex through constructions of gender. From kindergarten to the last year of school in an education system that has had enormous outreach success, children learn ‘National Principles and Citizenship Education’ (Pendidikan Pancasila dan Kewarganegaraan or PPKn), a subject based on the Pancasila or five principles of nation. Pedagogical instruction in state virtues, such as obedience to parents, industriousness, and the importance of religious faith, is reinforced by the moral surveillance of teachers (Chapter Eight) and the ideological content of health services.

Free or cheap programs, such as family welfare guidance (Pendidikan Kesejahteraan Keluarga or PKK), the wives of civil servants association (Dharma Wanita), and national family planning (Badan Koordinasi Keluarga Berencana Nasional or BKKBN), are also fields where national ideologies fashion moral subjectivities. Though family planning is controversial in Papua (Butt 2001), all married women I knew frequented these clinics because they valued the opportunity to determine their reproduction. As a service only offered to married women – and, at least formally, only with the permission of her husband – family planning is an important medium for constructing chastity. Attending a clinic one day, it occurred to me that state ideologies of the nona – the unmarried girl – are embedded in images that promote state-ibuism. A poster on the wall, under the slogan ‘healthy and prosperous families’, depicted an older girl – who could be a teenager – and her brother sitting demurely in front of and beneath their parents. The dutiful silence of the boy and girl and their positioning below their parents communicates asexuality.

128 These are: i) Belief in the one and only God (Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa); ii) A just and civilized humanity (Kemanusiaan Yang Adil dan Beradab); iii) The unity of Indonesia (Persatuan Indonesia); iv) Democracy guided by the inner wisdom in the unanimity arising out of deliberations amongst representatives (Kerakyatan Yang Dipimpin oleh Hikmat Kebijaksanaan, Dalam Permusyawaratan dan Perwakilan); v) Social justice for all of the people of Indonesia (Keadilan Sosial bagi seluruh Rakyat Indonesia).
through suggesting virtues of *kehormatan* (respect) and *kepatuhan* (obedience).

In a later essay, ‘Is state ibuism still relevant?’, Suryakusuma (2012) questions if the devolution of centrist power and democratic freedoms has generated challenges to ideas of women’s natural destiny as ibu. Though she recognises strides in gender policy and women’s political representation, her conclusion is clear: ‘don’t be fooled,’ she writes, ‘the mechanisms and outcomes of governmental control are still strikingly similar.’ However, she notes, ‘the dominant social construction has become a predominantly Islamic one – or at any rate, the version of Islam that conservatives would like us to believe requires subordinate, compliant women’ (ibid., para. 5, see also Robinson 2015). She refers to emergent intersections between religion and the state in the passing of moral laws known as *perda* (*peraturan daerah*, local regulations). A surprising outcome of democratisation has been the legislative passing of hundreds of bills based on Islamic moral codes that target prostitution and other illicit sexualities, as well as female dress and movement.

Despite anti-alcohol laws and the attempts to institute Christian-based regulations in Manokwari, Papuans have been spared the kinds of shariahisation unfolding in other parts of Indonesia but, as it shares an imaginary projected by the media, is on the receiving end of these Islamic gender essentialisms. This, a point I will take up in Chapter Six, is paralleled by more explicit discussions about sex and morality. In terms of deploying gender, in Papua, state ibusim is being reproduced and even intensified in the media. Sexual morality is reinforced in reports on the rape and murder of girls who were not at home, on police busts on local pornographic film making, and in the ‘reporting on sex scandals and framing exposure of “sexual deviance” as entertainment’ (Davies & Bennett 2015, p. 8). The ghost of government slogans is present in *sine*tron (soap opera) binaries of good and bad women, advertisements of white-teethed mothers administering cough medicine to children or smiling as they serve up a hot bowl of instant noodles. As Davies
and Bennett note, the media has ‘facilitated expressions of sexual freedom’, but overall, continues to be ‘implicated in the social surveillance of sexuality’ (ibid.).

Adat

To understanding how adat, as a reflexive reconstruction of history, creates sexual ideals, it is essential to consider its power to sanction. I happened to witness the emotional turbulence of an adat dispute around illicit love at Pak Seweru’s house between the families of Hana and Abel. Hana was the daughter of a 42-year-old Serui woman, a friend who lived down the road and had invited me to come to support her case. Her daughter had become pregnant to a soldier who, though from a different adat community, had agreed to settle the problem according to their adat. I would be forgiven for assuming my friend would be mildly pleased with this course of events. Hana was not young: she was already 23, and Abel seemed a mild-mannered man who, most importantly, had a jabatan (a paid position). Hana herself had been unsuccessful in her attempts to get a public service position since she graduated four years earlier and had taken a poorly paid job packing shelves at the local supermarket. I did not know how she met Abel, who was in his late twenties: perhaps he was a customer, perhaps she had met him on the street somewhere or, it was rumoured, in the kind of notorious drinking and gambling party that soldiers held.

The dispute lasted four days and brought together around a dozen men and women representing Hana and around five, including the family’s priest, in defense of Abel. The young couple sat shamefaced at the back of the room on opposite sides. Hana’s mother, clearly grieved, was silent at first as an older man, the brother of her late husband, expressed his disappointment in the seduction of his niece. He had been flown in from Java, where he worked as a senior civil servant, and his prestige gave moral weight to the ‘girl’s side’
(pihak perempuan) of the dispute, as did my presence. After a few hours, Hana’s mother furiously interjected:

This is no good. We don’t care if he has a wage, soldiers are no good people – everyone knows they drink, gamble and play with many women. Money is not important, what Hana’s father would have wanted is that his daughter be with a good man. I don’t know this man but if his behaviour so far is any indication, he is a liar. My daughter tells me Abel is not like this, so we pray this is not his character. He has made this big problem now.

As emotion can be managed or at least regulated according to cultural structures, it is not clear if this outburst was a straightforward rendering of the truth of her inner state. Hana’s mother was visibly upset, yet the attack she launched could not be separated from her desire for strategies that would strengthen her bargaining position.

A comment later in the day suggested something of the deeper reasons why she was upset and why she wanted, as it turned out, to reject Abel’s offer to bertanggung jawab (take responsibility), a shorthand phase for an offer of marriage. ‘Soldiers get posted everywhere,’ she had said. ‘My sister has not seen her daughter since she got married to a soldier. First she was in Sorong, then Timika, then Java. She has never seen her grandchildren, she is heartsick.’ Over the next few days, there were many rants, laments, and accusations of this kind to emphasise the degree to which Hana’s family had been made ‘heavy with shame’ by the daughter’s seduction. This shame was framed as a kind of loss, of wasted investment in raising Hana. At one point an aunt cried, ‘my breasts hurt, ooh my breasts hurt.’ Breasts (buah dada, susu), literally ‘fruit of the chest’ (buah dada), or ‘milk’ (susu), is the ultimate symbol of maternal nurture, where ‘maternity’ is a concept diffused through co-feeding practices. Whether or not the aunt’s words referred to her having breastfed Hana, this outcry was metaphoric of the pain of helping raise a child and so a veiled demand for compensation.
Abel’s family had a different response but sought to argue for the boy’s inherent moral worth by acting with appropriate sorrow for the situation that had transpired. ‘He was a good boy,’ one woman who I took to be his mother claimed. ‘He was raised in a good family but since his wife left the world he has changed. Her sudden death created such stres [stress] his way of thinking has been confused and now we are here with a pregnant girl.’ Though their overall approach was apologetic and conciliatory, at one point a man stepped forward, launching an attempted counter-offensive against Hana’s reputation. ‘This woman is no gadis [maiden, ‘virgin’],’ the man exclaimed. ‘She is not young and she has already had many boyfriends before.’ Hana’s mother flew into a rage, screaming such vitriol I could barely catch her words. Calmed by an aunt who encouraged her to take a seat, Hana collapsed, appearing to faint on the couch.

In this posture of defeat, the big man from Java stepped forward and took over the negotiations. ‘Marriage is God’s law and bridewealth is Papuan law. It is time for this man to tanggung jawab [take responsibility]. It is time to menghormati [respect] her parents.’ In the last day, until late at night, all talk was on how this reckless act could be redeemed by proper timing of payments and marriage. As a concession to the mother’s feelings, she was offered the largest portion of the compensation payment and it was decided her daughter would remain a member of their church and not, as has traditionally been protocol, follow her husband into his religion. Kompensasi (compensation), more commonly referred to by the terms denda (fine, an idiom of bureaucracy) or ganti rugi (literally ‘to replace the ruin’), constructs it as rectifying a loss, whether it be measured in terms of material wealth, reproductive capacity, or social status. To be sure, premarital pregnancy often presents a strategy that can be employed to coerce parents into agreeing to a less than desirable union (Schlegel 1995b, p. 7; Wardlow 2006a, p. 52). Irrespective of the intent or desires of Abel and/or Hana, chastity is constructed and regulated through emotional and financial costs of adat dispute resolutions. If shared negative emotions create chastity as culturally
embodied, so too do collective emotions that celebrate the time and place for sexual relations. To illustrate this, I now describe a Christian wedding.

Christianity

Sitting by the road with friends eating fried bananas one evening, a car pulled up and a man handed me a pink and perfumed invitation, announcing that my neighbour Febe was to be married to Yofan, a policeman fifteen years her senior:

My eyes are drawn to the flowered border framing two doves, their beaks clasping a ribbon that suspends a love heart inscribed with initials of the bride and groom. Under the doves is a verse from the Book of Mathias (19:6) citing that what God has united cannot be broken by man. There are more Christian passages inside the invitation as well as the full names of the bride and groom, the details of the event and, under the subheading VIP, a list of the most important families invited.

Of Biak origin, Febe was a tall and striking 24-year-old whose late term pregnancy announced she had been in a relationship. Office romance is always scandalous, especially when there is a large age gap in age and hierarchical status between the couple. The quality of the invitation, though, with its thickness of card, the list of VIPs that had been invited, and its Christian imagery communicated the moral worth of the match.

Marriage, an institution that transforms a nona (unmarried female; 'girl') to an ibu (married woman/mother), is the grounds on which sexual morality rests. As the end-point of chastity, regardless of the sexual status of the bride, a wedding ritually sanctions a sexual union. The sacralisation of sexual norms is
apparent in the Christian framing, as I discovered when I attended the wedding five days after receiving the invitation:

I am sitting with Febe’s family and friends from church, work and the neighbourhood under a tarpaulin that forms the roof of a makeshift bamboo frame on the side of her natal house. Yofan steps out of a car, ribbons stream from roof to bonnet and ending in a large bouquet of bright plastic flowers. Dressed in an outdated model suit and tie with a single plastic flower in his pocket, his face is powder pale. In his white gloves he holds a bouquet of flowers, which complements the stem in his breast pocket and the bunch on the car, which he presents to the bride in the front room. I peer as casually as I can through the window and see Febe in a dazzling mock-pearl embroidered gown standing next to her mother, father, Yofan’s parents and her family pastor. As the photographer snaps away, Febe’s eyes focus demurely on the flowers then close and the pastor leads them in prayer. When they open their eyes, Yofan steps towards his bride, raises her white lace veil and plants a kiss on her forehead before gently placing the veil over her face again. The group inch towards the front door, dropping their heads in prayer once again before passing through the door to join others who were waiting outside. An older woman sitting next to me comment on how ‘pretty’ (cantik) Febe looks even though her face is concealed under a thick layer of bright makeup. We are all invited to pray and as with heads dropped the pastor asks God to bless the couple with good health, marital harmony and children. The long prayer ends and after they board the wedding car we follow them to Church in a long convoy of undecorated vehicles.
To my eyes, the flowers, clothing, wedding car, and photographer were a hackneyed product of entwinements with globalised romance and mass commercialism. Conspicuous consumption is undoubtedly a platform to demonstrate the social and moral success of a child and their family but, from the vantage of informants, weddings are, above all, a Christian rite. Even less lavish weddings, such as one I went to a few weeks earlier where the bride wore a simple white gown, had a one-layered cake, and where the guests feasted on noodles, fish and sago (*pappeda*), have the same moral value.

As can be seen from the phrasing of the invitation, the prayer that punctuated the event, the only-a-step-away pastor, and the marriage-training course undertaken by the couple at Febe’s church the weeks leading up to the wedding, the event was a deeply religious affair:

Entering the crowded GKI church, the bridal couple is seated on white plastic chairs facing the pulpit. In a service that runs for over two hours we are told, in many different and drawn out ways, that marriage is a sacred union ‘In God’s name couples are united to create and raise Christian children.’ And that marriage ‘praises God’ (*memuji Tuhan*) and ‘brings Him Glory.’ I feel hot, sluggish and bored by the time the couple (and photographer) stand, vows and wedding rings are exchanged and the pastor declares them husband and wife. This time the kiss, a demure peck on the bride’s forehead, comes after the veil is not just lifted, but completely pulled off revealing a large, black bun attached to the top of her straightened and tightly tied hair. Soft chatter and movement ripple through the church as the freshly blessed couple glides down the aisle to where two civil registry officers have set up a table, flocked with mock, green velvet and burgundy mat insert. I hover close to hear the more senior looking of the men uttering words about marriage as a legal entity under the Government
of Indonesia. The other man, shorter and stockier, is silent but wielding a legal hammer relishes in invoking the spectacle of state by a tapping it after his co-worker finishes his speech. The couples sign a wad of papers, signature after signature that gives me déjà vu of the onerous red tape registering my own wedding in Wamena six years earlier. A certificate is handed to the couple and on cue they turn, poker faced, to the photographer. Flash. Others join them, ‘big people’ and family members in an endless stream of relational groupings to photograph. The rest wait in cars that have formed as a convoy. I breathe relief when the air con hits my face and my overtired baby falls asleep in my arms. With the wedding car at the front, our driver in a stream of cars that patiently edge their way out with emergency lights flashing and car horns beeping. On the way to the reception hall we meander past the housing complex where the newlyweds will live, by the houses of several orang besar (big people, ‘high status’) then to Febe’s house where we wait for the couple to run in for an adat clothes change.

The vast resources invested in the planning and execution of this wedding communicates esteem for a Christian institution that contains sexual activity. As well as symbolising sexual morality, weddings are a means for people to become emotionally attached to the moral order. This was especially apparent at the reception, where costume, flowers, music, dance, and food engaged the senses:

Entering the restaurant we sign the guest book, collect our ‘gratitude gift’ (a small bottle opener decorated with the names of the newlyweds) and drop our gift – an unmarked envelope with cash – into a gold box. Muzac is blasting and I pass a stage where the bride and groom sit on high backed gold thrones. Febe
is wearing a brown and gold petticoat-hooped ball gown and Yofan in a matching suit version. Her dress is adorned with gold stencils of feathers and foliage sewed above the hem. A thin belt, with dangles of dog teeth and beads, adorns her waist and five different colored rhinestones are sewn on the torso. This dress, she told me later than night, was her own design, inspired by a World Wildlife Fund (WWF) project that is repopulating a particular bird of paradise threatened with extinction. The wall behind them sets off their dramatic outfits. It is lined with cloth, is sewn with sunflowers, pink and red roses, Timorese cloth (a bridewealth object from the Arfak interior) and Dani spears and string bags. The room is full of large vases of flowers, white clothed tables and dramatic floor to ceiling drapery in red, pink and gold. My own makeup no longer hides my weariness yet the bride, just as she was this morning and thanks to the beautician who has been one step behind the couple all day, remains freshly painted, her hair without a hint of frizz.

The pastor blesses the couple and tells them to ‘let the love between you grow in God’s light. Let this love flow to your children and out to your families.’ There are more speeches, prayers, and a cutting of the cake ceremony. This involved one layer, the non-fake layer of a three-tiered cake, being cut by the bride and groom respectively and fed to their parents as a symbol of their ongoing commitment to care. Before we join the long queue waiting to serve food from the buffet, around 150 guests queue to shake the hands with the bride and groom who have, by now, stepped off the stage area. As with Febe’s bun, the stage seating, the cake ceremony and general aesthetics of the reception, this handshake takes a Javanese form of
brushing right hand fingers then tapping the chest. As the feasting begins, the singer and keyboardist launch into passionate renditions of love songs from Papua, Ambon, Java and ‘the West’. These songs, of which I recognise Celine Dion’s theme to Titanic and Whitney Houston’s theme to The Bodyguard, were later sent to guests as a soundtrack to a PowerPoint slide show of the bride and groom in romantic poses on a CD as a memento of the wedding.

May 29th 2004.

The rest of the evening involved more speeches, eating, and slow couple dancing. Febe’s mother’s brother told a glib story about how the couple became close. Couched in cliché, this story said nothing of the scandal of secrecy, only the nobility of love growing in the ‘mutual understanding [baku mengerti]’ of life in the same line of work. The uncle concluded with ebullience, ‘everything is beautiful love [segala galanya ada cinta yang indah].’ Weddings, as with the agendas of the state and adat leaders, construct chastity as an Ideal by guiding emotional recognition of the value of marriage. Now that I have examined how sexual morality is organised through gender and marriage, I turn to how understandings of the teen-child confer chastity with normative force.

The Adolescent ‘Child’: respect and obedience

As coastals have become encompassed by education, mass media, and other modern institutions and ideologies, ideas and experiences about adolescence – a life-phase characterised by ‘changes in physical maturation, psychological adjustment, and social relations’ (Herdt & Leavitt 1998, p. 6) have altered. Cenderawasih Bay maidens no longer experience sexual maturation as a time of various ritual acknowledgements and degrees of sexual freedom129 prior to

129 Evidence of pre-colonial sexual freedoms can be found in Kamma (1972, p. 89), Held (1957, pp. 129, 188), and Ottow & Geissler (1857, p. 24)
marriage, which usually occurred around fifteen years of age. Delaying the age of marriage, largely as a result of valuing education, has prolonged the time between menarche and marriage, while the category of ‘youth’ has emerged from global ideologies of adolescence as a time of ‘non-production, leisure, play, fun and consumption’ (Sukarieh & Tannock 2015, p. 42). This ideology, a confluence of popular western psychology and market forces, has exerted pressure on Papuan beliefs about the lifespan. As a category of horizontal identification, the young enjoy peer friendships and crafting their sense of self through market-based tastes and styles. Just as modernisation is culturally mediated, the category of youth is contested and shaped by local spheres of value. In this subsection, I shall outline constructions of teenagers as children. The following subsections will, in respective order, consider how chastity is normalised as a value through ideas about the biochemistry of puberty and adolescence as a phase of the ‘not yet’.

Bahasa Indonesia has many gendered pairing for adolescence as a distinct phase of life: remaja/ remaji; pemuda/ pemudi; cowok/ cewek; dewasa/ dewasi; putera/puteri; nyong/nona. The last four pairings are especially common in Pauans, but, above all, teenagers are addressed as anak (child). Insofar as one is born and stays a nona (girl child/female unmarried) or a cowok (boy child/ male unmarried) until marriage, this expression is technically correct, and within ethno-nationalist frames, this term is enfolded within the kinship lexicons Pauans use to address one other. When analysed in moral terms, collapsing adolescence into the category of child can be seen as a statement about the normative promotion of sex, gender, and family (Markowitz 2000).

From my cultural perspective, where adolescence is a time of developing maturity and autonomy, I was unsettled when I heard a sexually maturing individual called or calling herself a ‘child’. Over time, I came to understand this as a claim to, or else an argument about, moral virtue. In their status as dependent, teenagers are obliged to demonstrate the same virtues as younger children: respect and obedience. Sunta, a forty-one year old mother
of a fourteen-year old girl and a fifteen-year old boy, was typical in her expectations of her children:

It is better that children come straight home after school. My children have always followed me, they come straight home, do their homework, cook rice, fold washing, read the Bible. If they do go out, I ask ‘where are you going, who are you with?’ It is the responsibility of parents to know and children show respect when they are home before dark. Children that don’t know shame, they are those who are talked about... When I see children at the market just standing around, mixing with the opposite sex I think, do their parents know where they are? This is becoming a problem now, since Manokwari developed there are so many children not at school, on the streets without purpose...

In this passage, respect and obedience are mutually inclusive, behaviors defined and that find completion in relation to each other. While shame is the defining feature of well-internalised morality, respect is its external recognition. Respect exceeds doing what is expected: it can manifest in comportments such as falling silent when an adult approaches or bowing down when passing an adult in the room. I am interested here in respect as the effort to obey, since obedience is the springboard of chastity.

In Church sermons and moral education classes, the importance of obeying parents is expressed in the strong sense of wajib (‘duty’ or law), but in casual speech it is described as ikut (following). Children are socialised to follow – that is, to show obedience and respect – out of love for parents as much as a sense of obligation (Chapter Nine). The value of obedience is socialised through moments of gentle cajoling more than severe reprimand, which highlights how etiquettes and morality are internalised early. I illustrate the common acceptance that children should obey – what Durkheim would see as an immaterial social fact – through the response of a friend to a video clip on MTV. On this particular evening, some friends and I had watched a few shaggy haired men singing on a street crowded with hip-hop dancers as cars crashed and piled up all around them. In the next clip, a blonde American girl
with darkened eyes and pale lips sang as she swaggered from room to room. At one point, after passing through the kitchen, she knocked a tray of home cooked biscuits from her mother’s hand and headed out the door. We then see her in a Californian mansion by the sea alive with sexy dancers where she, to use a chorus line, is committed to ‘party all night’.

Maria, one of the girls in the room, found that the kitchen scene in this clip grated on her moral sensibility. During the advertisement break she hissed:

That kind of thing could never happen in Papua. We respect our mothers, it is God’s law in the ten commandments, He said children must obey their mother and father. That poor mother, baking cakes and having her child throw them. Astaga (gosh, unbelievable). That child has no shame. ...... Anyhow, our parents would murder us if our dancing caused car accidents.

Others in the room found this later comment amusing and, as if to break the moralising ice, it brought laughter to the room. Yet her outrage, from a Durkheimian angle, suggests the workings of the sacred. Maria’s critical stance towards hedonistic ideologies of the teen years demonstrated a deeply held conviction that respecting parents – a virtue normatively entwined with chastity – is right, true, and good.

Moral Will: self-control and the teen body.

The notion of ‘following’, a term Hugo used when expressing his anger towards the dangdut singer, raises the question of the construction of moral will. Papuans consider the will, in the sense of the power to control individual action, as created by nurture and discipline, and though it strengthens over the course of a child’s development, it is never complete. Prior to the age of about five or six, the will is so weak a child is not held accountable for their conduct. Whenever I tried to enact what I saw as age-appropriate discipline to my poorly behaved preschooler, I would be the one reprimanded. ‘Leave him,'
women would say in front of my smug toddler. ‘Poor thing, he does not yet know.’ After they start school, a child is said to ‘sudah tahu’ (already know): that is, the will is seen to be strong enough for them to be verbally or corporeally punished for perceived misbehavior, though in practice this is rare. The strength of sound moral judgment is contingent upon family inputs of nutritious food, loving discipline, religious instruction, and the marital harmony in the home. Since morality is embodied by the quality of nurture, the actions of teenagers reflect badly on their parents – a learning that socialised early. For instance, if a child makes an error of judgment, such as not finishing a meal or handing a toy to a younger child, a mother often snaps, ‘Where did you learn that? I never taught you that.’

Though the cultural construction of the will suggests an importation of the classic Melanesian notion of the person as a composite creation of the efforts of others (Strathern 1988), the finding that an entire family will suffer shame if a young women is caught having sex is common to other Indonesian societies (Davies 2015, p. 33). In Papua this, what Davies calls ‘kinship of shame’ (ibid.), implies that pro-social moral judgments depend on the inputs of others which, in turn, suggests a permeable self that is vulnerable to external influences. In the space between one’s will and the social environment, a person can be swayed. Being swayed is not inherently a moral problem, for a child can just as easily ‘follow’ a parent as a dangdut singer, an immoral friend, or someone seductive. Its possibility, however, is a moral conundrum that places an onus on parents and teens to guard against bad influences.

Daily routines are valued for their benefits to health, which encompasses moral fortitude, as much as keeping a daughter away from physical

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130 Continuing a Dutch rule, Papuans enter their child in school when they can stretch their arm over their head and touch their ear.

131 In the first two years of fieldwork, I only heard a child cry from a beating twice – once a girl who did not take her midday nap, and the other time from a boy who climbed onto his house roof when he was told not to.
temptations. If desire can overwhelm a person, the strength to resist is promoted by good health. Building on anthropological analysis of the body as a universal and materially constructed entity (Mascia-Lees 2011), Lock (2001) has suggested the experiences of the body are co-produced in biology and culture. In Manokwari, health \textit{(kesehatan)} is discussed in modern idioms such as ‘exercise’ \textit{(olahraga)}; ‘nutrition’ \textit{(gizi)}, and avoiding ‘stress’ \textit{(stres)}, through what these words signified were highly syncretic versions of their globalised forms. In the cosmopolitan spaces of the city, local biologies – Lock’s (2001, p. 478) term for locally specific constructions of the body – vary, but, as is common in most parts of the national archipelago, coastals have humoral-based understandings. They shared the belief, for instance, in the Malay-wide cultural syndrome (Hay 2001, p. 203) of \textit{masuk angin} – literally, the ‘entered winds’\textsuperscript{132}. They also shared a national view that bodies are finite in energy\textsuperscript{133}. Not running around with boys, a logic applied to other fickle desires such as rap dancing, is seen to preserve one’s quota of energy for the important tasks of daytime studies, chores, and pieties. ‘I do not prohibit my daughters from having a friend’ said Ibu Salawasi, using the polite reference for boyfriend. ‘I just say, if you have a friend now you will be too tired to catch the learning.’\textsuperscript{134}

One implication of local biologies is that chastity is not only proved in enacting daily virtues and routine, it is thought achievable in the doing. One friend deflected her sexual desire through embodiments of desire based on the notion that bodies have limited amounts of mental and physical energy:

\textbf{When I think of him ma, I felt so itchy I just grab a broom, and sweep,}

\textsuperscript{132} This term covers a broad spectrum of complaints which appeared to be, from my view, cold, flu, malaria, gastro etc.

\textsuperscript{133} This view extends beyond school to the workforce. Lindquist (2009, pp. 56-57) notes that in factories on Batam, managers express concerns or pass rules that forbid employee dating because they see the energy used as lowering worker productivity.

\textsuperscript{134} Understandings that sexual desire can be channeled for socially beneficial purposes brings to mind Freud’s theory of libido as a life-force that requires damming for healthy development.
sweep, sweep the whole house and yard right up to the road and back to the forest. If the desire has not left I scrub, scrub clothes, the kamar mandi (bathing room) until the itch has disappeared.

As well as being made possible by channeling energy into socially beneficial activities, chastity is more likely when in good health. Being maintained through regular and moderate routines that stabilise temperatures and winds, good health is coterminal with good morality. Keeping the body in balance through the correct amounts and combinations of food, sleep, and study enhances mental alertness in ethical life. This is especially the case in light of Papuan beliefs about blood.

Blood is a nebulous concept that some attribute, often through recourse to the science of genetika (genetics), as carrying characteristics of parents, usually the father. Hot tempers, for instance, are often thought as more common in certain families, and so transmitted through the bloodline. Blood also mediates moral action by virtue of its constitution. Papuans see blood as made up of red and white elements that must be kept in balance for sound moral judgment (Richards 2004). Irregularities in sleep or eating and even shocks to the system caused by being exposed to strong stimuli or extremes in temperatures, tastes, and emotions can destabilise levels of white blood – a substance linked to mental and so moral alertness. To conclude this section, I turn to an example of how ideas of the moral will, humoral health, and white blood mediate beliefs about puberty.

While I was enjoying an afternoon breeze on a bench with Diana, an adoptive aunt of two high school girls and a high school teacher herself, she explained why there was a need to keep a close eye on teenagers:

When they start puberty the chemicals go around and around their bodies and into their brains. These chemicals are strong, they make more white blood cells. This troubles their thinking. These chemicals make them weak, so they are easy influenced [dipengaruhi]. Therefore we must be especially careful with our teenagers. We must be sure they eat teratur [with order], sleep with order, pray with order. Look at who they
are bergaul [associating] with? You don’t want your children to have too many friends.

The science of ‘hormones’ – locally referred to as ‘kemika’ (chemicals) – is learned in year ten biology classes and as infotainment, such as in pop psychology articles in magazines as well as via programs on television. In Diana’s reckoning, the biochemical flux of puberty does not, as it does in popular Western interpretations, trigger mood swings, introspection, and rebellion.† Rather, sexual maturation involves inner processes believed to raise white blood levels, so leaving teenagers vulnerable to poor judgment and ‘influence’.

**Adolescence: the ‘Not Yet’**

Unlike Western countries, where marriage is optional, or in places of severe economic decline, where marriage can be unachievable (Cole 2005, p. 892) coastal Papuans perceive marriage as inevitable. It is God’s will that girls become wives, people say, and only the orang gila (crazy), the bencong (third-sex), or the profoundly sakit hati (liver pain, heartache, ‘lovelorn’) were believed to not marry. Co-habitation (baku kubo) is stigmatised and poverty affords no excuse, since local churches sporadically hold group-weddings to ensure this Christian dignity can be had by even the poorest of the poor. Some girls had spinster aunts who dedicated their life to supporting family and/or their church or in occupations such as nurses or teacher, but they were exceptions to the rule. Even those who had bigger dreams – some shared their hopes to be famous singers, to travel to Holland, or work as a missionary in the interior – saw these dreams as in addition to, and never in place of, marriage.

To appreciate the power of hetero-linear temporality to define the moral demands of adolescence, it is essential to appreciate the point that life unfolds...

† In recent years, the notion of inevitable adolescent recklessness is supported by research into cortical underdevelopment (Crews, He & Hodge 2007).
temporally as Boellstorff’s (2007) ‘straight time’. This is because marriage, as an ingrained expectation, shaped the awareness that action in the now can affect the shape of a future to come. It is the case that most societies recognise adolescence as a critical period for the emergence of adult forms of social competence (Herdt & Leavitt 1998, p. 6). Yet beliefs that having a boyfriend, because it risks pregnancy and takes focus from study, can damages adult wellbeing were especially strong amongst the chaste. As well as ‘child’, the young often described themselves as ‘not yet graduated’ (belum tamat), ‘not yet waged’ (belum dapat gaji), or ‘not yet married’ (belum nikah).

By conveying this sense of incipient adulthood, the ‘not yet’ inscribed adolescence as a time of becoming. The path to adulthood could be treacherous: parents might run short of money to pay school fees, tongues were poised to attack with gossip, teachers might extort money for exam results, and sexual desire might overpower a girl’s will. In light of potential rewards for staying on the path, a topic I explore in Chapter Seven through the experience of hope, the space of becoming was a high stakes field. In this sense, I came to think of the ‘not yet’ as configuring chastity as a vanishing point. As with the metaphor of graphic perspective, virginity was a tacit expectation that, when plotted well, could align a well-proportioned future.

Shame

In the case of Suri, malu (shame) appeared multifaceted: a feeling that brought suffering and a way of speaking, moving, and dressing that conveys sexual purity. That Suri drew on this body knowledge to restore relations with her mother and deflect would-be gossips highlights how shame is both something learned and used in negotiating reputation. Shame, which implies sexual purity, is attributed to acts such as dressing modestly, sitting side-saddle on motorbikes, and not mingling (bergaul) with the opposite sex. It is also demonstrated in comportment, such as lowering one’s eyes, speaking softly, and appearing demure. The sound of your voice could communicate to an unknown person on the phone if you were married or not. When I brought
a Papuan friend to Australia, she was amazed at how unmarried women clattered dishes and clicked their heels as they walked. ‘In Papua you would be hit for this’ she told me. ‘People would say, “she is ‘sombong’ (conceited, to have airs), she does not know shame”.

Men can also know shame but, as for the rest of Indonesia, it ‘is visited on and through the bodies of women far more than men’ (Davies 2015, p. 33).

Malu is socialised as a bodily comportment, for instance small girls are cajoled to ‘sit politely’ (*duduk dengan sopan*) when they absentmindedly loosen their closed leg position. It especially needs cultivation after menarche, a time that signifies girls’ ‘sexual availability and vulnerability, their heterosexuality and their physical maturity’ (Bennett 2005b, p. 33). A preeminent moral emotion, shame is arguably the deepest level on which chastity is socially inscribed. The pain and turbulence it can generate, which I will touch in on Chapter Eight, constitutes shame as the somatic manifestation of the sexual moral habitus.

Discussion

As a theory of how the taken-for-granted emerges in the everyday, I have suggested that the habitus is useful for illuminating how chastity ascends to a dominant value. I have also suggested that Bourdieu’s habitus, because it draws attention to the social as sustained by bodies engaged in multiple interacting fields, can further Durkheim’s vision of society as a gestalt-like sum of forces that are both objective and subjective, both corporeal and cognitive. In one significant way, however, Durkheim’s social is superior to and can productively enhance Bourdieu’s theory: namely, it situates emotion and morality at its core. It is possible to find glimpses of recognition that morality is of social importance in his work, but in general, Bourdieu’s interest in the social reproduction of culture and inequality led him to rely on economic
categories to the exclusion of moral forms of value. Bourdieu gave ‘no autonomy to moral discourse’ (Lamont 1992, p. 184), and because of his interest in class cleavages, he ‘implicitly conceives ... (morality as) ... necessarily subordinated to other principles of hierarchalisation’ (see also Sayer 2005; Ignatow 2009).

It is tempting to suggest that morality can be accommodated in his work through his investigative framework of capital. ‘Capital’ – like ‘field’ and ‘habitus’ – was another of Bourdieu’s (1986) main ideas: it referred to how value can take varied forms and be accumulated or transferred between fields. When in surplus, capital – either economic, social, symbolic, or cultural – can bring power and recognition and so has clear use value for exploring moral fields of judgement and practice. The productive possibilities of Bourdieu were developed by Ortner (1984) and other practice theorists of the 1980s and 1990s who drew on his ‘structural constructivism’ (Ignatow 2009, p. 100) to propose dynamic models of agency within constraints of socio-economic milieux. In relation to sexual moral socialisation and navigation, the value of Bourdieu is apparent in ethnographies by Bennett (2005a) about Mataram maidens and Rydstrom’s (2003) study of young Thai women. Since Bourdieu had a ‘narrow and insufficient appreciation of human motivation’ (Knauft 1996, p. 126), it is important to cross-fertilise his insights about mundane social life with Durkheim’s awareness that some things – because they symbolise deeply held truths and beauty – can rile or otherwise move people. The habitus, in other words, is not incompatible with the kind of moral anthropological analysis I have in mind. While Bourdieu offers the frame for exploring how norms becomes less a ‘state of mind’ than a ‘state of the body’ (Bourdieu 1990, p. 68), Durkheim’s embellishes how some collective representations, because they are backed with the power of God and sanctioning, are more socially forceful.

136 For instance, in Distinction (1984, p. 78) he writes ‘the family and the school function as ... markets which, by their positive or negative sanctions, evaluate performance, reinforcing what is acceptable, discouraging what is not, condemning valueless dispositions to extinction’. I thank Geoffrey Mead for drawing my attention to this point.
Conclusion

Chastity before marriage is a value constructed in the dynamic interplay of psychological and social elements, structures and individuals, and bodies and minds. To this extent, chastity is a norm based in Christian doctrine, learned and achieved in daily rhythms and structured through diverse cultural architecture. Emotional engagements with this architecture, through rites and relations with agents of social institutions, as well as bodily experiences of health and personhood, create the Ideal as a coercive power. As a moral code, chastity becomes ‘full of life’ (Weiss 2012, p. 83) through cultural understandings of family roles, moral development, local biologies, and in feelings of desire to respect parents and avoid shame. The directional force of chastity, then, is not based on the allure of capital but in fears and desires orientated to parents, peers, and others, as well as extra-social beings, including God. As a snapshot in time, my description of the sexual moral habitus is problematically ahistorical and overlooks how, in the contemporary moment, sexual freedom is a new form of sacred. If the habitus is a dynamic and changing construct the question that then arises is as follows: does moral plurality diminish the conceptual integrity of chastity as a sexual moral Ideal?
Chapter Five

Sexualisation and Panic

Hana was twenty-one, identified as *orang Wandamen*, and was the first cousin of a young woman who resided at my house. Two years earlier, she had graduated from a Seventh Day Adventist high school and after several failed attempts to secure work with the public service, she had taken up work as a ‘room service’ girl at Hotel Mutiara, Manokwari’s oldest and largest hotel. She enjoyed her job, especially the foreigners she met and the uneaten cakes she was allowed to bring home for her family. At the same time she maintained faith that God would one day ‘open a path’ for her to the civil service. One evening, Hana shared the story of an unexpected find while cleaning a hotel room:

One time I was organising [membereskan] one of the rooms where some westerners had been staying, I grabbed a towel and a plastic penis fell out. I was confused. It looked real, it was white and pink and bent like that (motions with finger), there were veins too. I was so confused I rang Lena (her older sister who lived in Jakarta). She said that lots of women have these now. Fake penis. They use them to satisfy their *nafsu* [sexual desire]. She also said that men buy balloon women with plastic vaginas. This made me more confused. I don’t understand how you can have *nafsu* all alone, just doing this (she mimicked a dildo going in and out). I started to think, how do they do it? ‘Goodnight,’ a man would say to his family then go to his room and *tiup tiup* [blow blow, she mimics the sharp fast breath of blowing up a balloon].

While masturbation is undoubtedly not novel in Papua – in the 1990s, friends in Jayapura considered *kocok diri* (lit. ‘shaking the self’, masturbation) both amusing and repulsive – Hana’s discovery alerted her to the fact that it was possible to buy an object that could be used for solitary sexual gratification.
This she found confusing, as it contradicted her relational understanding of nafsu as arousal that necessarily entailed intimacy with another person.

If social representations, institutions, and embodiments inscribe and iterate sexual restraint as a key virtue, this story indicates how competing ideas about sex and desire circulate in the moral habitus. As a one off find in a hotel room, a sex toy tells us little about sexualisation, a rather clumsy term I use to describe how sex, as a topic, practice, and identity, is increasingly explicit at the level of cultural representation. Yet as a paradigmatic icon of sexual liberalism and commercialism, finding a dildo suggests that outside influences are reshaping sexual cultures and practice.

This chapter is an inquiry into the theoretical strength of Durkheim’s notion of the Ideal in the context of cultural sexualisation. The sexual revolution never reached the shores of Dorey, and yet many of its after effects – what sociologists have variously described as ‘striptease culture’ (McNair 2002), ‘raunch culture’ (Levy 2006), or ‘pornification’ (Paasonen, Nikunen & Saarenmaa 2007) – have washed up. There are no supermarket-sized sex shops or pole dancing classes in Manokwari, but I observed that certain images and styles once reserved for hardcore and softcore pornographic genres had entered mainstream youth culture. I explore changing sexual expressions through engagements with music video and online pornography but also note that that these changes, which might undermine a girl’s resolve for chastity, are built on long-standing subterranean sexual landscapes. I am also interested here in discourses of backlash that I describe as sex panics, employing Cohen’s (2011) theory of moral panics as used to explain public anger towards sexual phenomena (Weeks 1981; Rubin 1984; Watney 1996; Herdt 2009). Taking a cue from those who have described, but not analysed, panics as ‘effervescent’ (Thompson 1998, p. 14; Goode & Ben-Yehuda 2009, p. 90; Carrabine 2014, p. 402), I bring panics into conversation with this concept I introduced in Chapter Three to excavate alternative hermeneutics and intents.
To explore the sexualisation of youth culture on the one hand and sex panics on the other, I will first offer some introductory material on changes in sexual norms and debates at a national level, then consider local acceptance of internet porn and the pornographic form of hip hop. Following this, I describe how sexual change has gained traction in vibrant scenes of illicit sexuality and document some firsthand accounts of young women who are striving for chastity in landscapes of greater sexual temptation. The latter parts of this chapter contain narratives generative of sex panics: their ‘overhead narrative’ of fear of ethnic extermination and an analysis that, building on ideas from Chapter Three, analyses sex panics as an effervescent phenomenon. I argue that concern with moral decline and anger towards *perempuan nakal* (naughty, ‘wanton’) is the flipside of a love for the ethnos at a time of felt vulnerability. I conclude with a discussion of panics as attempts to re-sacralise traditional Christian morality. What appears as change undermining dominant sexual morality is, from another angle, emotional momentum strengthening the premarital Ideal.

**Sexual Change, Sex Panics**

Relying on Norbert Elias’ (1978) dictum that social change can be measured by subjective shifts in the threshold of shame, it seemed as if some kind of sexual revolution had taken place in the five years I was away. In my first period of fieldwork, all young women, save for those said to be *nakal* (naughty, ‘wanton’), *sombre* (arrogant), or *yang tidak tahu malu* (do not know shame), wore loose-fitting and well-concealing jeans (or skirts well below the knee) and t-shirts (or button-up shirts). Makeup was for church, jewellery was limited to little more than a necklace with a small crucifix, and hair was short or tied and slicked back to look neat and straight. By 2011, most young women still dressed like this, in what some started to call ‘Papuan style’ (*gaya Papua*) – but this term only became possible because so many no longer conformed. Especially in the late afternoons, evenings, and Saturday night, times when youth like to dress up and *jalan jalan* (travel about without
clear purpose), it is increasingly common to see girls wearing makeup, skinny jeans, short skirts, and singlet tops that reveal shoulders.

Asking why youth were dressing in more flesh revealing clothes, as well as being willing to go about in hetero-social groups and travel on motorbikes in open-legged sitting positions (some today even hugged the driver), responses were varied. Most suggested it had a lot to do with the city getting bigger, because expansion made it easier to hide, to feel desirous of money, and created more forms of ‘influence’ (pengaruh). The sources of influence have grown, as well as desires for money. Mobile phones and increasing amounts of time spent on the internet and watching television were all implicated in sexual change. One thing was clear: sexier dress and more public displays of affection between unmarrieds was a sign of more premarital sexual activity.

Some accepted cultural change as inevitable, a fait accompli in the context of globalization, but there was also a vocal minority agitating for youth to demonstrate modesty by returning to traditional and Christian values. These people, described as Kristen fanatik (Christian fanatics), were said to impose regimes of purity at home, forbidding their children from being exposed to friends (who might be a negative form of influence), peers of the opposite sex, and foreign media. Even those who saw themselves as more liberal when it came to accepting sociosexual change were often the same people who shared their concerns that rising rates of sin were undermining the Christian moral strength of the Gospel Town. Before I consider two fields where sexualisation is taking place, it is important to recognise that the seismic shifts in dress code in the Gospel Town are playing out in the shadows of national trends. Across Indonesia, many have claimed the right to articulate and express sexuality and desire in a variety of forms: from figure-hugging presentations to sexually objectified media images and, in large Indonesian cities, gay pride movements.

While many celebrate the ethos of greater sexual openness, other voices have been critical of what is seen as moral corruption as a result of the
globalisation of a permissive Western sexuality (Davies and Bennett 2015, p. 8; Barker 2015, p. 255; Harding 2008). Hardline Islamic groups as well as Christian and pro-family organisations have protested the apparent breakdown of rules that kept the obscene at bay, attributed to western media.\textsuperscript{137} To appease concerns about declining moral standards, in 2008 an anti-Pornography Bill was passed through Parliament. This bill, a more moderate version of an earlier bill tabled in 2006, was and remains highly controversial, partly because of how ill-defined ‘pornography’ is (Pausacker 2008, para. 8). In 2012, a taskforce was developed to support a law that, as outlined in article one, outlaws ‘performances in public’ that contain ‘obscenity or sexual exploitation which violates the moral norms in society’ (ibid.).

In an essay that reviews the state of sexual control in Indonesia, Davies (2015, p. 41) suggests that though GLBTI communities are increasingly targeted for punitive treatment, it is premarital sex that is receiving the greatest public animosity in mainstream Indonesia. In Mataram (Lombok), for instance, police have taken to raiding hotels to check that couples have a marriage certificate; and in South Sumatra, a law has been proposed for forced virginity testing of high school girls in order to tackle the perceived problem of teen promiscuity (Idrus 2013). Though young women are more likely to suffer the blow to reputation after a sexual breach, the demonisation of premarital sex can surpass gender. The widely publicised trial and subsequent incarceration of Ariel, a mega-pop star who had a private sex tape taken from his home, is a case in point. Ariel, the first person tried in the public court system as a result of he anti-pornografi law, was convicted and sentenced to imprisonment.

In Manokwari, men run the risk of being fined in adat proceedings for seduction, but at the level of public discourse and threat to reputation, it is

\textsuperscript{137} For instance, there has been a sustained moral campaign against the magazine Popular for featuring a photo of a naked model (Barker 2015, p. 255); a Lady Gaga concert in Jakarta has been boycotted (Schaefer 2013); and in 2010 the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) Asia conference was closed down (Poore 2010, cited in Davies 2015, p. 43).
young women who are most at danger. In the Gospel Town, what is more, collective hostility to sexual immorality is targeted at premarital and not same-sex relationships. Sex panics, an aspect of the increasing explicitness and public fascination with sex (Attwood 2006, p. 80), have grown in scale and severity as Papuans have come to recognise that threats to collective wellbeing, harmony and survival lie within as well as outside the Papuan/Indonesian symbolic boundary.

Moral panic theory (Cohen 2011) refers to the collective outpouring of excessive affect that can be manipulated by ‘moral entrepreneurs’ and directed at ‘folk devils’. The media, because it is ‘a main source of information about the normative contours of a society’ (ibid., p. 11) is seen as a key vehicle for manipulating the fear and anger that creates collective panic. Negative collective emotions are seen to reinscribe moral boundaries (Ajzenstadt 2009, p. 71; Critcher 2008, p. 1133).

If the themes of hostility to deviancy and impulse to normative stasis reveal Durkheimian roots, what are the implications of dialectics of sexualisation and panic for his concept of moral ideals? Most New Moral anthropologists would suggest that as Papuan youth have become increasingly encompassed within spheres of alternative values, sexual options have multiplied. Oetomo and Boellstorff echo this view when they suggest that post New Order sexualities are ‘like a steaming pot with the lid lifted off and the steam goes every which way’ (2015, p. 312). They continue by contending that sexual attitudes are a cacophony that make it ‘hard to discern a “push forward” since the voices from the left and right have both “gotten stronger”. From a Durkheimian perspective, to emphasise ‘plurality’ all too often speaks a language of neutrality that fails to appreciate that some beliefs and not others have social power. The question, which I take up in the conclusion, is not one of social progress or even moral plurality, but one which asks where, when, and how the sacred is being re-affirmed or altered.
'Pornification' in Papua

An obvious starting point for describing sexualisation is the arrival and influence of online pornography, a heterogeneous category of diverse economic productions and fetishistic categories (Attwood 2010, p. 237). A growing number of studies, set in postcolonial settings, have found that even in places with high rates of poverty and poor technological infrastructure, pornography (and the industrial webs of its industry) has become a prominent feature of social life (Day 2014; Njue, Voeten & Remes 2011; Ramlagun 2012; Kinsman, Nyanzi & Pool 2000; Martin 2010). This is the case in Manokwari where, despite being illegal, pirated ‘blue films’ (pilem biru) from Japan, America, Eastern Europe, and elsewhere have, for decades, been available as ‘under the counter’ purchases from video rental shops. The introduction of online pornography, available 24/7 from any mobile phone, computer, laptop, or tablet, represents a radical break from these earlier forms. No longer requiring a disc player and the boldness of fronting a seller to purchase (or a friend to borrow) pornographic discs, any man, woman, or child with a computer or device that connects to the Internet is able to access pornography.

In Manokwari, increased access to money and more reliable electricity has enabled many to stream or download sexually explicit material on smartphones. The following conversation with sixteen-year-old Dewi indicates the reach and influence of this trend:

_Dewi_: Porno is everywhere, all the kids are watching it, kids in primary school too.

_Sarah_: Do you watch it?

_Dewi_: I have seen it a few times, I was curious, I wanted to learn, but then I realised why it is no good. Shit, it raises desire [Aduh, nafsunya naik].

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138 The pervasiveness of porn in the social landscape is partly due to the size and growth of the global porn industry that, in 2010 alone, was expected to make $3.5 billion in profit (Juniper Research Company, cited in Dines 2010, p. 48).
Sarah: Who watches porno?

Dewi: Boys watch it, girls too, even primary school children. My little sister is in class four and some boys showed it to her on their phone. This is no good… Mostly boys that watch it together when they play cards, or at dance parties. In the hotel too, they watch blue films with naughty girls, sometimes they film the sex. One girl at my school was expelled from school for this – poor thing she didn’t know they were going to put it on the Internet.

The effect of pornography on sexual behaviour is a widely discussed and debated topic (Day 2014, p. 178) subject to numerous methodological and conceptual barriers (Boyle 2005, p. 29). Dewi’s experience of its direct relation to sexual arousal is suggestive of positive correlations between sexually arousing material and more sexual activity (Paul 2006; Dines 2010).

The etching of textual representations on sexual life was nowhere more evident than in new regimes of managing body hair. In 2011, I noticed that many young women were, in a way they were not in the mid-2000s, shaving their underarms and legs and plucking their eyebrows. Extrapolating from this trend, I hazarded a guess and asked if pubic hair was today subject to new treatment. ‘Yes,’ I was told. ‘Many girls now shave their memet’ (slang for vulva/vagina). One friend elaborated, ‘I shave my memet.’ Laughed another friend, ‘my boyfriend, he likes me to style like the women in porno.’ The introduction of the Brazilian, a trend in ‘pornification’ (Paul 2006, p. 139; Regnerus & Uecker 2011, p. 99), foregrounds the need for further research that I would hope explores not only the reach of pornography in everyday life, but whether this presents as an expression of sexual empowerment (Taormino et al. 2013) or a new mode of gendered enslavement (Jensen 2007, p. 184; Dines 2010).
Hip Hop and Sexualisation

‘Free sex’, as premarital sexuality is described in national moral campaigns,\(^{139}\) is premised on the contemporary sexual sensibility that, many fear, is being promoted by sexually alluring contemporary styles of dress. Panic over youth sexuality frequently targets inappropriate advertising and content in music videos, such as that of Lady Gaga, who has come to stand for a Western permissive sexuality (Davies & Bennett 2015, p. 8). In Papua, black American hip hop,\(^{140}\) a genre of music, fashion, and dance that may well be ‘the cultural form most widely appropriated into new contexts around the world’ (Bucholtz 2002, p. 543) has become highly popular (Richards 2015). Friends listened to hip hop on the local radio, on national music video programs, on the Internet and, for those with access to digital televisions, MTV. Hip hop was enjoyed not because of the lyrics, which they could barely understand, but because of the melody and beat. ‘Rap music makes Papuan kids spirited,’ said one friend, ‘they hear it and they want to dance.’ Women especially stressed the value of the genre in terms of the beauty of its black-skinned singers and both sexes enjoyed the attractiveness and style of the artists.

One Thursday night, watching the hip hop program on MTV Asia with friends, I was struck by how sexually provocative the appearance and dance styles of some singers were.

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Bacchanalian scenes of MTV Asia flicker across the screen. Hypnotic beats fill the room; our gaze is

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\(^{139}\) For instance, flipping through a friend’s Femina magazine, I found an article on an ‘anti-free sex’ (anti seks bebas) campaign in the mid-2000s, where the magazine, in conjunction with the Department of Health, sponsored the distribution of pamphlets and talks in shopping malls in large Indonesian cities.

\(^{140}\) Hip hop emerged in the 1970s as a resistant expression to white American hegemony and urban hardships. It is characterised by four elements: rapping, DJing, breakdancing, and graffiti art (Chang 2005, p. xi). In the last two decades it has become a corporate complex that inscribes image and lifestyle through commodities, verbal and body language, and attitude (Kitwana 2008).

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turned on toned black and golden skin. In the first clip, young women dance in red sequined bras and matching shorts that reveal their leg line. The young men in the clip, paired with the girls, have hairless and glistening chests; they wear sunglasses, tight low-cut denim shorts and puffy, expensive sneakers. I miss the name of this artist but take note that the next clip is by Jay Z and Kanye West, who maintain a cool masculinity while modifying a car and racing it. In the next clip, Rihanna sings in mesmerised union with a man. Sexual longing is fetishised with camera shots of her long, orange-nailed hands entwined with his fingers, their faces often poised to kiss, her long legs ending in stilettos and entwined around him. This clip, racy by public Papuan standards, is tame relative to the next, by Nicki Minaj. With a doll-like face plastered in makeup and pulling contorted expressions, the singer moves her body in hyper-sexualised moves. At the beginning, she dances with half a dozen lookalikes in denim shorts and singlet tops revealing the bra and midriff. At the end of the clip the lookalikes are in white leotards, glowing under ultraviolet light, performing lap dances on buffed men sitting on chairs. The audience is expressionless as all eyes are fixed on the show. When my friend’s mother arrives home with her younger sibling, the channel is switched to a less confronting Javanese soap.

July 14th 2011.

Changing the channel when a parent arrived suggests awareness that these pop pleasures are likely too sexually charged for family viewing. This is not surprising, since the twerking, grinding, and other dance styles in hip hop are well recognised as simulating sexual intercourse (Munoz-Laboy, Weinstein & Parker 2007; Paul 2006, p. 6; Paasonen, Nikunen & Saarenmaa 2007, p. 44).
The attractions and mimicry of hip hop in Manokwari are multiple and complex but the degree to which this genre has influenced youth subjectivities is suggested by how Papuan youth are styling for sexual allure. Clearly inspired by this ‘global black aesthetic’ (Stemmler 2013), girls have in recent years started to style their hair in relatively outlandish ways, dying their locks blonde or other bright colours and wearing their hair loose or straightened, crimped or extended. Teenage boys too, who only a few years earlier lacked elaborate grooming or body adornment, now dye their hair, often just a patch of colour, and, as with hip hop artists, shave zigzags and other patterns to reveal their scalp. As well as wearing t-shirts with images of their favourite artists, girls enjoy wearing ‘bling’ (bold metal jewellery) and short skirts or shorts. Boys favour baggy trousers that reveal the top of their undershorts, heavy chain jewellery, sunglasses, sneakers, and baseball caps worn backwards.

Cenderawasih Bay Papuans have always altered their physical appearance and adorned their bodies to express personal and familial identities but contemporary forms of youth culture are re-inscribing femininity, and, to a lesser extent, masculinity, with the values of attractiveness. Pre-colonial practices of adolescent grooming, such as cultivating a large mop of frizz, of coloring skin with tattoos, and decorating a nose perforation, were no doubt also motivated by the desire to enhance sexual attractiveness, but today, for instance, in the aesthetics of hip hop, sexual allure intersects with market consumerism as an aspect of new kinds of feminine worth (Edmonds 2008, p. 156). Investments of time and money in shaving, plucking, and applying makeup, hair dyes, and straightening chemicals are subordinating Papuans to the enormous economic machine fed by the beauty industry. Whether in the form of Miss Papua competitions, a recent addition to the national beauty pageant scene (Butt 2015), or the chemicals some purchase from the market to inject into breasts or buttocks so that they swell, sexual attractiveness becomes an attribute of self and criterion for the free choice of a mate (Illouz
2012, p. 54).\textsuperscript{141} This valorisation of sexiness, I will now consider, has only gained traction because of the vibrancy of pre-existing sexualities.

The Romantic Underground

‘Although it is dangerous to generalize,’ Butt (2015, p. 113) observes, ‘Papuan sexual culture is perhaps less restrictive overall than in many other parts of Indonesia.’ This proposition, though problematic for feeding fantasies of a licentious frontier – a fantasy held by many who come to Papua for the possibilities of sexual pleasure (ibid.) – finds support in the general configuration of sexual relations. In contrast to other parts of Indonesia and in ways similar to that found in Africa, sexual relations are patterned as ‘nets’ of multiple partners and not the ‘chains’ of serial monogamists (Pisani 2008, p. 145). This, an idea that contributes to understanding why HIV is fifteen times higher in Tanah Papua than the national average (UNICEF Indonesia 2012), seemed plausible in light of my observation that young women lived as if in a near permanent state of seduction in a world that I have elsewhere called ‘the romantic underground’ (Hewat 2008). This subterranean space of sexual networks was, from the sober light of day, not accessible to a housebound mother like myself. Yet at times, without my children and when I wore blue jeans, two markers of the unmarried, I was privy to its edges.

Such was a time one afternoon when I walked down the street with three young friends. Approaching a \textit{benkel} (garage), I noticed a man crouched low twisting at the wheel of a motorbike while another six stood by, their golden brown skin shiny with sweat. My hackles rose as I felt the weight of their stares. ‘Where are you going?’ one man called out in standard Indonesian greeting.

\textsuperscript{141} The imperative of feminine beauty extends into marriage. In 2011 many spoke of an emergent problem whereby Papuan civil servants were leaving their Papuan wives and children for what was seen as duplicitous and predatory migrant women. In the words of one, ‘nowadays bapak bapak [husbands/fathers] are forgetting their children, only thinking of white thighs.’
‘To the market, older brother’ responded the girl next to me.

‘Can I please follow?’ This comeback elicited mirth among the men who chorus a rising ‘whooo’ then break down in fits of laughter. As we inched further away from the *benkel*, laughter and wolf whistling continued.

In the spirit of participant observation I assumed the polite and mute embodiment of my friends. When I turned the corner I let rip. ‘Why didn’t you tell them shut up idiot, to go far, say they are pig-dogs?’ I asked, suggesting local terms of insult.

Sali, one of the girls in the group, looked puzzled. ‘Is that what you do in Australia? Then how do Australian women meet men?’

I had clearly misjudged the situation. These leering, jeering men were not, to those I was with, misogynists with a false sense of entitlement to our attention. Where I saw a violation of boundaries and respect, my friends saw a legitimate mode of scoring a romantic partner. When I brought up the incident later that night, in a tone of curiosity, Sali explained, ‘When men call out like that we know that they like us, that they are looking for a girlfriend. If we like what we see we might walk back later that day, and the next day too. We play eyes then, we have a boyfriend.’

One way of analysing this incident is as a form of courtship ritual, yet because such incidents were so common, I came to understand this event less as part of a ritual and more as an aspect of a large and hidden space of secret passion. This space is a cultural form, insofar as lovers have their own acronyms, expressions, etiquette, and other knowledge (such as places to have sex), but it is not a subculture in the sense that it is not a group with a shared identity formed in opposition to the mainstream. The underground is more a mass of youth, and also civil servant ‘sugar daddies’ in pursuit of love and sex without a collective consciousness that might inspire political organisation, health activism, or even a moral reality alternative to the normative. Since this thesis is about the chaste, I only wish to speak of the
contours and textures of the underground to illuminate the abyss of temptation that lies beneath the balancing act of everyday life.

Sexual cultures in Papua are characterised by mobility, drinking, early sexual debuts, multiple sex partners, and ‘sex with friends or acquaintances in an opportunistic manner’ (Butt, Numbery & Morin 2002, p. 3). In my view, it was the opportunism of sex, strongly enhanced by the ubiquity of the mobile phone, which was most striking. Mobile phones, because they allow for invisible flirtations and arrangements of secret sexual liaisons, have been studied as a technology of reforming sexual possibilities (Ellwood-Clayton 2003; Byrne and Findlay 2004, p. 51; Kasesniemi & Rautiainen 2002). This literature notes that phone use facilitates the exploration of sexual and romantic desires with greater boldness, yet the kinds of boldness I witnessed or heard about in Papua seemed of an entirely different kind.

Deane was a seventeen-year-old who, like so many of her peers, struggled to keep her Nokia topped up with credit.¹⁴² She valued her phone for its potential to maintain connection with others, acknowledging that unsolicited sexual advances were a nuisance:

Deane: It is better to not have a boyfriend but it is hard because we know sex is fun and we can have sex any time.

Sarah: Who with?

Deane: Kids at school, kids on the street, people we don’t know.

Sarah: People you don’t know? How is that?

Deane: An example ma. My friend, who I sit next to at school, she has been getting this SMS all week from a man. She did not know… First he asked her how she was, questions all polite… Then he asked if she likes to eat nasi bungkus [wrapped rice, takeaway rice with assortment of condiments]. He said they could eat some at the port.

¹⁴² Since phone networks were installed in 1998, upgrades have ensured even in peri-urban villages that people could call each other and relatives in distant lands. A number of phone companies operated in the region, but Telkomsel was the favourite provider because of reach of coverage and competitive rates.
Sarah: Does your friend like this man?

Deane: She doesn’t know who it is (laughter).

Sarah: How does he know her? How did he get her number?

Deane: People steal phone numbers. Maybe he tapped her friend’s contact list or her number was sold.

Sarah: What if your friend, just say she decides to go to the port with this man, and he turns out to be really old, really ugly. What if he is her uncle?

Deane: That really happens bu (laughter). Sometimes these men are related, they don’t know, or they be very ugly….

Like wolf whistling, I viewed stealing, selling, or purchasing the phone numbers of young women a form of sexual harassment or at least an invasion of privacy.¹⁴³ For young women, it was annoying but also accepted as part of the hit and miss game of sexual scoring.

Debriefing about her trip home from school, Ami told me, ‘a dark car [mobil gelap, implying tinted windows] passed then threw pieces of paper out. Every piece had a phone number.’ Before mobile phones democratized the masses, landline phones were, as suggested by a wrong number call made to our house phone, also likely used to solicit young women for sex. Picked up by one of the girls who lived with me, the call went like this:

Yani: Sorry Uncle, Bapak Aroy is not here (she hangs up, the phone rings two times, she picks up the handset) ... ya ... ya ... (giggles) ... thank you uncle.

Sarah: Who was that?

Yani: I don’t know.

¹⁴³ In 2011 I was told that I should be careful not to leave my Bluetooth on for it would leave me at risk of men who tap into your data and take phone numbers from your contact list.
Sarah: What did he say?

Yani: He wants to meet me tonight, near the rockpool at White Sand Beach.

Sarah: Why were you so polite? Why didn’t you say no? He might think you want to meet him.

Yani: Yes it’s true ma but you know it would be rude say no. We cannot speak to our elders that way.

Tales of Chastity

Moral hazards, it might be said, lure young women on every step of their journey to becoming ibu. As Durkheim would have predicted, young women are not always torn between their desire for the social good and bodily desire: very often, there is not antagonism with our dual nature. Mary offers one such example of the experience of chastity as a decided lack of struggle.

Why don’t I have a boyfriend? Because I’m ugly [muka jelek] ….bwaaaaa. I joke. The reason is ... because I love my family, I love God. This is true love, all the love a child needs. My mother and I are so close, she is my curhat [curahan hati, outpouring of the heart, best friend]. I do not need a boyfriend ma, everything I need is at home and up high. When I come home, I talk to my mother while we cook and clean – this is love.

Mary, aged 17, Wandamen-Biak.

Mary confesses that her emotional needs are met from her spiritual and home life and, so satisfied, she does not want to search for love elsewhere. This experience gives force to cultural understandings that those from a loving and harmonious home will have no desire to seek other, less pure, forms of love.

In the next example, I describe the story of a girl who experienced chastity with various degrees of ease and struggle. After years of being chaste, twenty-year-old Julie, a mother of a plump baby, recounted a memory from adolescence when she was struck by a romantic stirring that soon became all-
When I was a *gadis* [maiden, virgin] my mum rubbed my body with a kind of oil every morning to stop boys seducing me (laughter from pleasure at the memory). I don’t know what that oil was, some kind of *adat* [tradition]. It must have worked – I was *malu* [shame, shy] and did not know *natsu* [sexual desire] until my last year at senior high school. That year I met Beben. I had taken a job as a *pembantu* [domestic helper] at the military base. I was in the laundry room when I saw him, he delivered the clothes one day. He smiled at me. I noticed him always after that, it’s like God make him light up and I kept seeing him. When he was smoking with friends he was the only one who did not call out. I knew he liked me, the way he looked at me made my mind weak so when we went out, my body was weak. I was tired from all my duties, and then I was always thinking of him, I nearly failed school that year.

After years of asexual embodiment, Julie was thrown by her attraction to a soldier that became so obsessive it threatened the quality of her schoolwork. The following words describe Julie’s experience of when and how she crossed the threshold of chastity:

After a few months my desire made me bold [*berani*, brave] and I started to see him in the evenings. I still like the smell of exhaust fumes, it makes me remember those times when we first played *eyes*. We would buy *nasi bungkus* [rice and condiments, a popular form of takeaway wrapped in thick greaseproof paper] and drove on his motorbike to the beach. When the sun went down we played [*bermain*, a euphemism for sexual intercourse]…. And now he is my husband have never stopped (laughter….). I was afraid when my period stopped, but thanked god it was the day after my last exam. I will not go to university but every day I praise the Lord for sending me a good man late in high school. People say *tentara* [army, soldiers] are *jahat* [bad, evil] and it’s true but not Beben. He is polite, not *kasar* [coarse, violent].

Despite ideologies that divide women into good and *nakal* (naughty, ‘wanton’), it can be noted that it is not purity but pragmatics that were at stake for Julie.
Beben was a good man in her eyes and she was near the end of her schooling. There is a certain resignation in this tale, a sense that her relationship was fated insofar as desire, once it hits, takes over personal willpower.

The final vignette portrays Cinta, a fifteen-year-old who was the cousin of a friend in my neighbourhood. Cinta had a loud voice and a certain swagger that left her vulnerable to being called ‘rude’ (tidak sopan), yet I only ever found her to be cheerful and with a good sense of fun:

Sometimes after school my friends and I go to the market. Often, while standing there, a mobil gelap [dark car, car with tinted windows] slows down or stops, the windows open and a man asks if we’d like to jalan jalan [travel around]. When this happened I am scared but polite. I tell the man my uncle is waiting for me. One time this happened and my friends got in, the next day at school they were laughing, telling me all the things that happened, what they ate, what they did ... So the next time a man called to me I got in with my friends. They were in the front of the car and I was in the back. I was quiet, just listened to them, looked out the window, enjoyed the music, the cool asi [AC, air conditioning]. I became drowsy then, as the car turned, a majalah blu [blue magazine, ‘porno’] slid towards me. I looked at it. Aduh bahaya [exclamation of danger]. Staring at those pictures made be feel itchy and so I closed the magazine. I don’t get in cars now, I try to not think about boys, but I don’t think I can tahan [hold out]. I want to make no trouble, dad works hard selling honey so that I can get an education ... but I keep seeing those pictures. kita hanya daging toh [we are only flesh yeah?]

If Mary’s chastity is habitual and Julie’s chastity was lost when she met an attractive other, Cinta’s tenuous hold on her virginal status best illustrates chastity as a form of striving. Though she wants to steer clear of amorous relations in order to honour her dad’s work sacrifices for her education, she has great sexual curiosity. I was not surprised, given she was teetering on edge of the underground when we spoke, to find out that only a few months later Cinta had satiated her sexual longings. ‘Her style is male,’ whispered her
cousin, ‘she boyfriends, breaks up, boyfriends, breaks up.’ By seventeen years of age Cinta had become a mother and moved to Biak where, I was told, she sold betel nut and fried bananas by the roadside.

Sexual Change: reasons and evaluations

In 2011 I visited Ros, a teenage girl once my neighbour, and found her at home with a friend. In the mid-2000s such quietness would be unheard of: there were always at least a dozen crammed into her tiny house in the forest above my own. Ros’ eyes grew big when she saw me, a combination of surprise and joy. Her demeanor quickly became shy and pensive: ‘Sorry, Dad is not here.’

‘No problem,’ I replied. ‘I will just be your guest while I wait for him.’

Squatting on the dirt floor of her front room under the dim wattage of a light bulb, I became aware of how Ros and her family represented those bypassed by the recent prosperity. Ros had been gangly and mute when I had left; now she was a strikingly beautiful girl of fourteen years of age. This passed through my mind as I looked up at her, straddling a plank of wood raised on wooden stumps.

With her friend seated behind her, weaving hair extensions into her dyed pink and straightened locks, Ros and I chatted about old friends and changes in the Gospel Town. I then asked her point blank why young people are now ‘brave to go about in style’ (berberani jalan jalan dengan bergaya). After a long pause, she answered:

Ros: Don’t know ... This is how it is now ... Manokwari has developed.
We are in zaman globalisi [era of globalisation], Papuans kids are just like kids in any big city. What do you think ibu?

Sarah: I’m less than sure but everything has changed a lot. When I was your neighbour, girls were too shy to dye their hair and wear make-up. They wanted to, but they told me they felt scared, if they did then people
would talk, call them caka didi [showing off, seeking attention]. I remember talking to your father, he said to me that is why he moved from Sorong to raise you and your siblings here. He said in Sorong too many kids were in sexy style, so many that he didn't want to leave the house anymore. So he moved here. What does he say about you going around so stylish?

Ros: He doesn't say anything. He just knows that is how it is now, how kids want to look, because we have progressed. All parents know this, only the fanatik [fanatics] oppose it. Kids now, the watch selebriti [celebrity] on television, they want to follow. It is just fashion. We are still good kids. That's it. It's an influence from the television. All these shows from Java, like the migrants, Papuan kids follow.

Sarah: Do you think it also has to do with the otsus [special autonomy] funds?

Ros: Certainly! Girls like to have money – especially for buying mobile phones and phone credit. More people need money now, poor things, everything has become so expensive kids now sell themselves, so they can have food for their family ... But so many, they style pretty so that they boyfriends will buy them phones and other things ... jewelry, restaurant food, good shoes. It is because Manokwari has developed, we are big city. In Makasar, Surabaya, Jakarta, it's the same ... children are no longer malu.

Ros echoes common understandings that youth culture has changed as a result of urban expansion, media consumption, and the influence of consumer capitalism.

Money has long been recognised as a motivation for sex, but the rising cost in living and a shift towards consumerist values is seen to have heightened both the desire and need for money. This perception reflects worldwide trends whereby transactional sex has been found to be motivated not only by the need for subsistence but the wants of luxury goods (Leclerc-Madlala 2003; Stoebenau et al. 2013). Mobile phones, seen as both a luxury item and basic necessity, were paramount in anxieties about increasing rates of sexual
activity. Echoing national discourses that blame mobile phones for premarital sexuality (Oetemo & Boellstorff 2015, p. 315), Papuan parents were concerned that phones were being used as tools for flirtation and sexual scoring, and that they were objects that motivate sex in order to buy kredit (mobile phone credit) and latest model handsets. In 2005, I was familiar with the term ayam kampus (campus chicken) – that is, women who exchanged sex to pay for their education – but in 2011, people were also talking about cewek hp (mobile phone girls).144

‘The commodification of sex, and the extension of sexual consumerism’ (McNair 2002, p. 87) is creating general unease about the moral health of the younger generation. By claiming that sexy looks are ‘just fashion’, that ‘we are still good kids’, Ros is grappling to reclaim moral worth in the face of neo-liberal encroachments that bring sexuality into closer relations with local economies. Her later comment that youth style sexy to attract boyfriends out of economic need undermines this earlier point and suggests the dominance of the belief that youth are sliding down a slope to moral decay. This concern, in light of the high rates of HIV infection and fears that Papuans are becoming a minority in their own land, is being ‘displaced across different panics’ Watney (1996, p. 41). Though I focus on premarital sex, it is important to keep in mind that theft, greed, drunkenness, rape, and murder are also emotive issues attributed to diminishing the vitality of the Papuan population.

**Sex Panics**

On the 4th of January 2009, an earthquake measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale opened the earth beneath Hotel Mutiara, dropping the place Hana had worked nearly a quarter of the way into the ground. When the aftershocks subsided, people began to talk not of why the earthquake had struck, to invoke a classic

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144 ‘Before we sent letters,’ said one woman with obvious glee from the memory, ‘it took months to arrive. Now,’ she said, her face turning to a scowl, ‘kids just send a text. In an instant they have arranged the place and time to meet their boyfriend.’
anthropological puzzle, but of why it had struck at this time, in this place, and only hurt these kind of people, because Mutiara, located three kilometers east of the epicentre, was the only building to have been destroyed in the quake. Details of how the destruction unfolded, such as what time the hotel collapsed, what eminent characters were inside at the time, and how many whales – an imminent sign of earthquake – had been seen in Dorey Bay in the days before the strike varied in the retelling. Moral rationales of the event did not. The quake was a message from God – a violent reminder about his displeasure with the moral rot that was setting in to his beloved home in Papua.

I was told that God selected the hotel because of its infamy as a place where *om senang* (happy uncles, ‘sugar daddies’) and *perempuan nakal* rented rooms by the hour and where white powder drugs and alcohol were bought and consumed in abundance. The timing of the earthquake was also an auspicious sign of an eschatological message. One friend explained:

... there had been too much money spent on firecrackers that New Year and people were spending so much money on Christmas trees, decorations and presents. Remember *toh* [yeah] before Manokwari advanced we just gave praise to God, not presents to people. Just thinking of *barang* [stuff, cargo, goods] in December, a month that is sacred, made God angry. When it was quiet, he sent us a shock to show his love for Papua. He opened the earth, dropped Mutiara closer to hell, to remind us that we must all be ready. We must not forget his plan for us, we must clean our hearts and be good in preparation for Judgement Day.

This fusion of an Old and a New Testament God – that is a God of wrath, albeit one that unleashes fury in order to express His love – is the sacred framing of a pervasive discourse that sin (*dosa*) has set in and God will continue to smite sinners in order to ‘wake’ people to his moral plan for Papua.
Notwithstanding the attempt to introduce the Gospel Town Bill, which included a stipulation for a so-called ‘Christian dress code’, attempts to control women’s sexuality in Manokwari are less extreme than initiatives elsewhere. Unlike the rest of Indonesia, Papuans blamed sexualisation on a small ‘w’ west less than a supposed relentless flood of Western pornographic material. In Manokwari, anger at perempuan nakal is discursively expressed and constructed through everyday talk and the media. To limit my ethnographic range, I avoid a discussion of media and turn to local narratives that fit the description of talk that generates sex panics.

Ibu Rumsram, a cherub faced Biak mother of six and grandmother to twenty-two, was well loved for her dedication to God and family. One evening she shared her opinion about changes in the town:

God sent Ottow and Geissler to Mansinam so we could spread Christianity to the whole of Papua. Now look – sin everywhere. Thieves, adulterers, drunks, naughty girls, rapists, murderers, even children are being raped... What does He see when looks down? Mosques and sinners, pollution in the Gospel Town. Jesus is near, first HIV then the earthquake ... the future is written in the Bible. I am ready, I tell the young, we must all washed of sin, be ready for the end.

The battle for hearts in the Papuan interior has been replaced with a new divine duty: the battle to keep Dorey Bay Christian sacred. This duty begins with the individual, for when each and every Christian is pure for the second coming, moral corrosion in Gospel Town can be addressed.

145 For instance, politicians in Aceh have legislated for the caning of adulterers (Wahyuningroem 2014) and the banning of women straddling motorbikes (The Guardian 2013).

146 In Papua, as with Indonesia in general, since the abandonment of New Order censorship laws, the media has ‘facilitated expressions of sexual freedom’. Yet overall, as mentioned in relation to gender ideologies in the last chapter, the media is ‘implicated in the social surveillance of sexuality, frequently reporting on sex scandals and framing exposure of “sexual deviance” as entertainment’ (Davies & Bennett 2015, p. 8).
Where Ibu Rumsram felt a sense of comfort from her righteous preparedness for the end time, Pak Nawawi, a senior public servant and adat leader from Biak, conveyed only anger when he spoke of the problem of premarital sex. One evening, among a few people who lingered after prayer group, he told me:

This music the children dance to, it is not polite. You see them at the market on Saturday night, the music loud, boys and girls mingling, girls in clothes that are not polite. This is not Papuan behaviour. Girls and boys, so *asyik* [infatuated, absorbed passionate]. They forget their duties – they don’t cook, don’t study, this is no good. They need to think of the future. The music is the problem, it makes them *semangat* [enthusiastic], they dance, they drink, they have sexual relations. Girls get pregnant, leave school, there are many children now who do not know their father.

By invoking the slippery slope, a classic trope of moral panics (Herdt 2009, p. 8), Pak Nawawi links consuming pop music to the destruction of the family. In this chain of events leads to moral decline, alcohol and dance are seen to lower inhibition and incite sexual desire.

Strong language – another attribute of moral panics – and the slippery slope also appear in Josep’s opinions. He, a forty-two-year-old trader who sold coconuts he grated fresh for customers at a peri-urban market, was another ‘right-thinking’ (Cohen 2011, p. 1) person. Self-fashioned as an *orang adat* – traditional person – he was a father of four whose youngest was having her ninth birthday party they day we spoke:

*Perempuan nakal* make problems for us. There are girls, Papuan girls, who forget God. They go about like dogs, making heartache for their families. They follow the television, follow *selebriti* [celebrities], act sexy, attract friends and *main* [play, have sex] *sembarang* [randomly]. These girls break up marriages, destroy families, have babies to men who don’t take responsibility. They have to leave school, this makes their family *rugi* [ruined], they have babies who don’t know their father. If they marry, they are too young, they have no money, they fight, they are still young and
In seducing husbands, naughty girls are a menace because they ‘destroy’ families – others and their own. Likening girls to ‘dogs’, in a society where to be likened to an animal is the height of insult, is an example of the kinds of strong language that build panics. Likewise, the term ‘sembarang, the binary opposite of the valued state of tertib (orderly), is an evocative expression that translates loosely as wherever, whenever, and whoever. In this narrative, random, anonymous, and frenzied coupling presents a dystopian scene destructive of social order. The metaphor of the steaming pot with the lid lifted off, I suggest, does not capture how the dynamics of moral liberalisation and conservatives are, in Papua, playing out on emotionally uneven grounds. Sexual freedom is still something to hide and sex, within widespread fears that Papuans are a race under threat, is symbolically linked to death.

Sex and Death

If good Christian conduct respects the name of the Gospel Town and, as I suggested in Chapter Three, is necessary for helping Papuans progress along the path to prosperity, sexual immorality more than blocks these goals: it can prove deadly. The fear that premarital sex can kill Papuans exists at a metaphoric level – whereby social ruin enfeebles a race who are already the target of murder – but is most potent in its association with HIV. While academics debate if the number and patterning of deaths in West Papua technically counts as state genocide (Upton 2009; Elmslie 2009; Chauvel 2009; Banivanua-Mar 2008), I found that friends felt ‘a pervasive sense the Papuan nation as a whole is under threat and references to “genocide” are not uncommon’ Myrttinen (2015, p, 129). HIV, widely believed as having been introduced to Papua in order to eliminate indigenous people (Butt 2005), is an instance of how fears ‘reflect and reproduce the political violence that defines the margins of the Indonesian state’ (Kirsch 2002, p. 57). Travelling on the
back of my friend’s motor-scooter to the university, I was stopped by what my friend described as an ‘anti-HIV’ demonstration. A few dozen university students crossed the road in eerie quietness, head to toe in black robes, placards, crucifixes, and popular symbols of death. One student wore a gas mask, another carried a scythe and mask of the grim reaper, another still had a painted a skeleton on her robe. Hand painted placards bore slogans in Indonesian, such as: ‘Do not get on top of anyone, anywhere, anytime’, ‘anti-free sex’, and ‘sex = death’.

Mortality rates are high in Papua, where health is challenged by poverty, contagious disease, and poor health service delivery, including limited access to anti-retroviral medications. Yet everyone who had died between my field visits were said to have been killed by poison as a result of the desire of outsiders to pick Papuans off one by one. The household well, a highly vulnerable receptacle for poison, was now either closed off with a mass of metal and wood or, for those who could afford it, was built in the middle of houses. Though a most New Order style of civilian murder, poisoning was not necessarily a state sanctioned assault, as the swelling migrant masses harboured varied agents of terror.

Already vulnerable, the slippery slope to moral ruin is steep indeed. Links between youth immorality and death are especially pronounced in the context of an HIV epidemic. In 2011, the Reverend Dr. Mawene articulated this in his Gospel Town Day address. After the colourful clusters from the parade had sauntered and marched by for well over an hour through the town and arrived at Elim Kwawi church, the GKI pastor was reported as saying that he had:

... concerns over a number of issues such as the environmental degradation and the rapid spread of HIV AIDS in West Papua. He said that parents must control their youth so that they will not be trapped in free sex lifestyle otherwise the whole next generation of Christians in Papua will die and no one will take care of this land anymore. Youth must adhere to alcoholic and sex abstinence. He also urged Christians especially the women to wear proper dress in their daily activities to
protect themselves from becoming victim of rape, or sexual harassment or abuse (Roring 2011).

The pastor’s demand that parents take a special interest in controlling their young, especially because men, in the face of visual temptation, cannot control their urges, is an example of language that provokes panic. His argument that the survival of the Papuan race depends on taking action against environmental as well as moral destruction points to a local rationality – what Watney (1996, p. 41) calls the ‘overhead narrative’ of panic.

Moral Panics: love as a dark effervescence

Moral panic theory has been scrutinised in light of its relative strengths and weaknesses (Krinsky 2013, p. 1). McRobbie and Thornton (1995), for instance, suggest that the media may be a less hegemonic force than Cohen accounted for, since new platforms have provided representational possibilities from ‘folk devils’ themselves. Hall (2012, pp. 132-139) has asked if the word complacency, rather than panic, is more apt given such phenomena are often more comforting than anxiety-producing. One aspect of the theory, which has been revised and strengthening by engaging these critiques (Goode & Ben-Yehuda 2009, p. 86; Cohen 2011), that has rarely been questioned is the validity of the assumption that responses to deviancy are in excess of actual harm (Cornwell & Linders 2002, p. 314). This, what Goode and Ben-Yahuda (2009, p. 59) refer to as ‘disproportionality’, is clearly a criterion that emerges from the left-wing leanings of Birmingham School sociology. As a liberal feminist, as I stated in the introductory chapter, I agree with Herdt (2009, p. 2) that the demonisation of sexually active youth is abhorrent, an infringement of sexual rights, and damaging to sexual health. However, I would like to ask: what latent meanings and alternative functions of sex panics can be excavated by approaching the phenomena from the view of Papuans?
‘Papuans’, of course, are a diversity of interests and opinions and, as I have noted by the rising perceptions that only some Christians are ‘fanatik’, not all are hostile to sociosexual changes. At the same time, the gravity of what Weeks calls the ‘political moment’ of sex (2014, p. 19) is productive of a pervasive anxiety that links a decline in Christian moral standards, especially that sex is for marriage, to the demise of Papuan culture and even ethnic extinction. The latter is not a direct concern, more a symbolic relationship than links good personal morality to racial robustness. Perhaps because of the gravity of the ethos of fear for cultural and demographic threat, I even found girls, whose sexual activity could classify them as ‘folk devils’, who expressed concern with the rising rates of premarital sex. I have not had the space to include them here but there was a diversity of discourses of panic: not all expressed anger. Some expressed their concern with sexually active youth, not with tropes that demonised, but with a language of compassion and hope. Another discourse, common among politically active youth, was critical of sexualisation on the basis that it detracts from the ability of the youth to recognise the truth of their poverty and so to have the will to improve Papua’s future. The rational deliberation involved in the argument that youthful preoccupation with looks and pleasure is a kind of ‘false consciousness’ suggests that moral panics theory requires a more thorough examination.

Though Durkheim did not use the term ‘panics’, he recognised that ‘transitory outbreaks’ of popular opinion can occur when ‘in an assembly of people, great movements of enthusiasm, of indignation or of pity are generated’ (Lukes 1973, p. 10). Though published fifteen years before The Forms, this observation prefigured his later development of the theory of effervescence. Though ‘moral panics’ on the one hand and ‘effervescence’ on the other are distinct social analytics, bringing them into contact, I believe, opens space to interrogate the deeper social reality of these external expressions. Cultural anger towards people who threaten to diminish the vitality of the Papuan population, when emic notions of harm are structured by the perceived threats to a Papuan collective, can be recognised as the flipside of social attachment.
and love for the group. Reframing panics as effervescence, in other words, attunes us to how moral campaigns – the monitoring, shaming, legislating, and other forms of violence committed – are dark manifestations of a sacred that is simultaneously the source of sympathy, love, solidarity, and hope for moral community.

Conclusion: the intensification of the Ideal

Are ideologies of sexual hedonism and passionate love, as celebrated in the interstices of capitalism and the media, weakening the hold of chastity as an Ideal? As I see it, there are two possible ways to approach this question. When focusing on the sexual agency of individuals with non-normative desires, the Ideal can be viewed as coming under attack as the social fragments, splintering into multiple value systems. Yet, as the word non-normative implies, care should be taken to not confuse plurality for relativity. Traditional Christian value systems continue to determine the social rewards and costs of different choices, and, in the era of reform, there has been a push to criminalise a range of sexual practices across the nation. The uneven terrain of the sex wars in Indonesia is supported by Blackwood’s (2007) observation that sexual freedoms have, ironically, been diminished in Indonesia as a result of national and international sexual rights activism. In the New Order, third-sex identities were incorporated into social life and tolerance to same-sex desires manifested in a ‘don’t see, don’t tell’ attitude. Since the millennium, pressures to support sexual rights, same-sex marriage, and representation of non-normative sexualities in the mainstream media have initiated explicit objections to sex outside marriage by politicians and religious leaders. This shift in discourse represents an objectification of sexual

147 The ambivalence of the sacred finds support in Ahmed’s (2004) argument that racial hatred is rooted in love for the Aryan nation. Durkheim sees emotion as working in and through bodies and not, as Ahmed suggests, through signs on the surface of bodies.
moral codes and heightened threats, ostracism, and abuse towards sexual minorities.

Taking sex panics as a form of effervescence, it is possible to arrive at the opposite conclusion. That is, sexual liberalism, by virtue of catalysing the emotions invigorating the sacred grounds of sexual value, can be argued to be strengthening the grip of Ideals. It could be argued that the liberalisation of sexual culture is a new sacred, and I do not doubt that its power will generate long-term social change in urban Papua. Since ‘innovations ... are always a sort of violence done to the established ways of thinking’ (Durkheim 1915, p. 433), sex panics appeared as a counter-attack – one backed by the sacred force of God, a love for the ethnos, and a power and willingness to sanction violations. My argument that the Ideal is becoming energised in outrage was prefigured by the Durkheimian Robert Hertz (1960), who made the distinction between ‘a deviant and threatening left sacred associated with death and malevolent forces’ and ‘a consecrated right sacred aligned with power and order’ (Shilling & Mellor 1998, p. 203 [original emphasis]).
At least since Malinowski urged us to ‘step off the verandah’ to follow everyday life from the subject’s point of view, a key strength of long duration fieldwork has been the ability to see contradictions between what is said to be good, right, and true and socio-moral experience itself. These contradictions, the *raison d’être* of the ethnographic enterprise, are perhaps nowhere more apparent than in sexual life (Flandrin 1991, p. 188). ‘Try before you buy’ was a favorite expression of one fifteen-year-old girl, said in proud English whenever she talked about her boyfriends. Another, a 23-year-old virgin, told me that she thought it was good to have premarital sex: ‘If you are naughty now, later in marriage you will be calm yeah ma?’ As well the belief that sexual exploration will enhance later fidelity, some thought sexual experience could improve erotic skills for marriage. As nineteen-year-old Jofan explained: ‘I want my wife to have [sexual] experience. I don’t want a girl who is shy, I want her to already know [i.e. have knowledge].’ In the last chapter I suggested that chastity, as an Ideal, is intensified under conditions of sexual plurality. In this chapter, I question the theoretical integrity of the Ideal in light of the discrepancy between Ideals and practice.

The habitus, I have established, both structures chastity as a dominant value and is transforming in ways that create greater tension between the Ideal and practice. In this chapter, I explore the habitus as a field of discursive plurality and inconsistency of practice. Pregnancy before marriage, for example, is extremely common and after initial upset, hardly a calamity. Virginity too is said to be important but is not a culturally elaborated value, and sex, though a public taboo, is overall considered positive and pleasure enhancing. At one level, the gap between the ‘is’ and ‘ought’ is self-evident, a pervasive feature of human life and, in most societies, there is a great deal of latitude given for the divergence from moral ideals. Yet diverse understandings and attitudes to
sex, especially those that compete with righteous Christian codes, suggest cultural understandings in support of moral variation. In the last chapter I considered how modern influences generated sexual incitement, yet a well-rounded examination of sexual morality requires speculating on the role of residual meanings of sex and personhood from a cultural past.

To examine moral slippage and plurality, I proceed as follows. After a story about a young unmarried friend who became pregnant, I offer some functionalist, existential, and cultural readings that explain the discrepancy between sexual expectations and realities. I then consider the possibility that contemporary sexual beliefs are influenced by sexual cultural elements and pubescent dispositions from pre-colonial times. In particular I suggest that bridewealth, as a contested yet valued cultural practice, create disjunctures in contemporary understandings of sexuality as autonomised and individualised. Economic logics of bridewealth, I will argue, minimise the value of virginity yet this should not be confused with the notion that virginity is not a moral obligation. At the end of the chapter I look more closely at the meanings of sexual desire, noting that attitudes take elements of pre-modern and modern moral regimes while being reducible to neither. I also consider how sexual history has been selectively interpreted within a Christian moral frame. In the conclusion I return to the question of the Ideal. By drawing attention to his typology of behaviour – ‘those that are entirely appropriate and those that should be different from what they are’ (Durkheim 1982, p. 85) I suggest that anthropological analysis should focus on ordinary moral thought and action, but only with close attention to the social power of Ideals.

Moral Slippage

A story told to me by fifteen-year-old Yunitha about the circumstances that led to and the social processes that morally contained her pregnancy foreground some of the themes and issues that present when thinking about chastity as a moral expectation. When I left Manokwari in 2005, Yunitha was ten, and upon
my return, was a very pregnant fifteen-year-old. Teenage pregnancy is common enough and so I was hardly shocked by this development. What did surprise me was that of all the girls in my neighbourhood in the two years I lived in Old Town, I thought Yunitha the least likely to be a teenage mother. Yunitha’s family had invested in her schooling since she was five years old and so she had a lot to lose in starting motherhood early. Even more so, her character and family background indicated, all those years earlier, future graduation and a middle class marriage. As a child Yunitha was a serious and studious girl whose future as a civil servant was almost certain given her father’s senior ranking in the Department of Transmigration. Her father was not only well connected – yet another reason for why I saw her as an unlikely candidate for a teen mother – he was a lay preacher with the GKI (Gereja Kristen Indonesia). If the word ‘fanatik’ had have been in circulation in the mid-2000s, he would no doubt have been described as such. He was certainly a ‘strict’ (berdisiplin) father and had once told me this was necessary, because any misconduct by his children could be taken, if his congregation or the church committee so intended, as grounds for his dismissal.

One rainy night, a popular time for me to interview girls since the downpour on the iron roof enhanced the privacy of our conversation, Yunitha shared the story of the circumstances of her protruding belly:

Do you remember that boy Silas, who lived behind Ibu Rumaropen’s house near Orsid [i.e. the name of supermarket]? Remember he was good friends with Jon, and played here with us Yos Sudarso kids? When my breasts started to grow he too changed. Every time I saw him he was looking more and more handsome. He started to send me text messages, asking me how I was, we would lie in our beds all night, just sending messages to each other, hiding our phones under the sheet so no one knew. One day his cousin came and gave me presents from Silas – a bracelet, then a t-shirt, then money…. It was easy for us to become ‘friends’ because we were childhood friends so no one suspected. This is an easy way to hide boyfriends, we call it ‘neighbourhood boyfriending’. Even when he was at my house every day mum and dad did not know,
they were not suspicious.

Yunitha’s understood her romance with Jon as unfolding in the contexts of familiarity, proximity, and sexual maturity, and felt it as more or less inevitable.

In the next part of the story, Yunitha attributes the sexual desire of both she and Silas with causal agency.

Spending every day together, it was going to happen (she points to my belly). You know what they say ma, ‘it you play it happens.’ I was full of kemauan [desire] when he was near. When he touched me I became gatal [itchy] and my thinking disappeared. My friend at school told me of this method where you can avoid pregnancy by only having sex some days of the month, maybe it is not true? Maybe I need to improve my comprehension … Just last month ma, it was so terrible. Dad was furious. But it’s already good. [we have] already organised the problem with our adat leader and prayed with our pastor…

Sexual desire is a force to manage, but few Papuans would hold the extreme Christian interpretation that, outside marriage, it is a sin to battle. This is consistent with research that has found that, across Papua, desire is an ‘invisible but potent transformation that takes place within the body and that causes individuals to engage in sexual relations’ (Butt, Numbery & Morin 2002, p. 24). Yunitha’s description of desire as ‘itchy’ conveys an energy with its own momentum where resistance becomes increasingly difficult. That sexual desire is an outcome of dyadic interactions more than an inner possession is precisely why parents can insist that their children avoid hetero-social gatherings. Where attraction leads to desire and desire to sex, the most effective way to avoid sex is to avoid situations of temptation.

Once Yunitha was pregnant, fear set in:

I was so scared to tell Dad. I told Mum and she was also scared of Dad, you know how he can become ganas [furious]. Mum took me to a bidan [midwife/abortionist]. It was so expensive. Before Manokwari developed it cost 250,000 rupiah (USD$42.50) for every month of pregnancy to wash
your womb but now the costs is 1,000,000 (USD$170) per month. Rugi besar [big financial ruin]. The bidan left bits inside, I knew this because I felt the baby move, this made me more scared. What if the baby was cacat [disabled]. After that we prayed a lot and God told me he had sent a blessing. Mum took me to an adat woman who gave me a very bitter tea and massaged my stomach. The tea was hard to drink and the massage hurt, I felt pain in my stomach and more blood came out. We are praying for the health of the baby now.... One thing I know – God wants this baby, wants me to be a mother now ... Why else would this baby still be inside me?

Abortion, locally known as cuci kandung (washing the womb), is illegal\textsuperscript{148} in Indonesia, and within Papuan Christian understanding, a sin. For many, the undesirability of pregnancy often outweighs moral and legal considerations, so abortion is a highly desirable for many faced with an unplanned pregnancy.

A study by Diarsvitri et al. (2011, p. 1053) found that 32 per cent of Papuan students in Year 11 who reported sexual activity had experienced pregnancy. Of these, 84 per cent had initiated an unsafe abortion. This figure not only gives numerical grounds to the pronounced fear of pregnancy among the young, it highlights the ubiquity of abortion practices. In this study, from five urban centres including Manokwari, 74.4 per cent of those who had abortions said they had tried to self-terminate, 14 per cent sought the help of health professionals, and 12 per cent went to a traditional healer. Notwithstanding Yunitha’s medical complications, in Manokwari the bidan – government employed midwives who may practice abortion to augment their incomes – were seen as the most effective. Those who could not afford her services had the option of purchasing herbal, biomedical, and other concoctions believed to induce strong uterine contradiction or enduring violent massage in the abdominal region. The relative painlessness of the bidan was one reason for her popularity: ‘one injection, that’s all,’ said one friend, ‘and then some

\textsuperscript{148} Abortion is only permitted where pregnancy is a result of rape, is life-threatening, or where the baby has a severe genetic disorder or congenital anomaly. This is stipulated in Indonesia Law No. 36/2009, section six, article 75.
medicine to drink at home and after a week you go back, she inspects your womb, sees that it is clean, and scrapes it if it is dirty.’

Faced with an unsuccessful abortion, a protruding belly, and the newfound conviction that her baby was God’s will, it was time for Yunitha to tell her father:

I rang Dad to tell him the news. Mama and me went to mama adik [mother’s younger sister]. I wanted to be far, so he couldn’t hurt me, I didn’t say anything about the father. I did not want him to hurt Silas. Dad was silent, then yelled, he was so angry. I told him I had made peace with God but he could only think angry. He yelled, ‘Where are you? Where are you?’ I did not speak.... ‘sorry Dad,’ then I hung up. Dad started to drink, then drove to Silas’ house. I had also sent Silas a text message telling him to hide. His phone battery had finished so he did not receive the message. When he heard Dad’s motor arrive he knew there was trouble so he ran. He ran out the back door and down the road but Dad saw him and chased him and ran him over with his motorbike. Dad broke his leg.

News of pregnancy often brought about violent eruptions, not from fathers in particular, but from anyone either side of the couple’s family said to be ‘stone headed’ (kepala batu, stubborn, prone to extreme anger). In Yunitha’s case her father’s drunken fury sought a target – her suspected lover.

Silas was an unacceptable match for Yunitha’s parents: ‘He did not have a job.’ Her parents refused his clan’s offer of bridewealth and instead demanded ten million rupiah (AUD$965) as ganti rugi (compensation). By local standards, this was a high amount and they were pleased Silas’ clan agreed, but Yunitha saw it as a reasonable demand. Ganti rugi, literally to ‘replace the ruin,’ she explained, is not to ‘punish Silas ma, it is not a fine [denda].’ She continued:

It buys their shame. My parents were afflicted with shame when they heard the news. The money gives respect. It takes away their shame and
tells them, we know what it takes to make a child big. Trips to the hospital, the fees for birth, baby porridge, nappies, medicine, mother’s milk, mother’s tiredness.

Once processed in the adat court, Yunitha told me ‘Dad’s anger was finished.’ After a long pause she added, ‘it’s strange ma, Papuans say once a family is paid a girls belly pops out. This is true.’ The day I visited them, her belly was protruding and it was hard to believe all that turmoil had occurred only weeks before. Yunitha’s mother enthusiastically told me of her plans to sew clothes for the baby in the style I once dressed my daughter Pasca. Her dad also gushed, telling me that he would build a walking frame like the one he had made for Pasca ‘that made her legs strong’ when she was small. All talk was on how they would care for her child so Yunitha could go back to school. ‘She wants to become a kindergarten teacher’ her mother said earnestly.

There is much to be made of this story, not the least that the beeline her father’s made to Silas’ house, even without her disclosure of paternity, suggested prior knowledge of the relationship. Violent retributions against ill-fated lovers always horrified me, especially so in light of the hunch I often had that such relationships were condoned by pretending to not see. What interests me is that despite her strict Christian upbringing and her commitment to piety and study, Yunitha so easily and readily became involved in a sexual relationship. I was also intrigued by the power of traditional forms of justice to transform anger to calm and the fact that despite threats of school expulsion serving as an incentive to being a ‘good girl’, this to-be unwed mother was to return to school. Dissonance between moral standards and practices is not unusual, but in light of a satisfactory traditional judicial system could there be, I came to wonder, structural and ideological supports for such disconnect? Clues to this question rely on looking closer at the contemporary meanings of traditional economies. First, what factors require consideration when analysing the space between chastity as an ideal and the realities of judgement and practice?
Theorising Moral Disconnect

I have mentioned that moral beliefs and practical circumstances have a dynamic relationship so that the former is a poor indication of the latter. All societies accept this distinction and, because it can lead to pregnancy, mechanisms are often available to redress sex before wedlock without – key to a Durkheimian perspective – throwing into question the system at large. Until the 1960s, it was customary for Catholics in Western countries to house late term pregnancies in convents and to facilitate births in disease wards followed by forced adoption so that women categorised as unfit for motherhood could be integrated back into society (Fessler 2006). In the Czech Republic, some hospitals are fitted with baby boxes, slots in the wall where burdened mothers can leave their infants (Tait 2012). In light of Malinowski’s Principle, where ‘illegitimate births are untidy, random events which threaten the proper order of things’ (Riviere 2004, p. 61), coastal Papuans have multiple options to manage the problem. They can seek abortion or – the more socially acceptable route – demand compensation and bride wealth, and give the child away as an anak piara (fostered, ‘look after’ children). The high value of children in Papuan society and the related ease and fluidity of adoption offer significant support for socially accommodating illegitimacy.

Moral discrepancy can be approached from a functionalist angle, but there is a compelling existential element at play – namely, people tend to demonstrate high levels of tolerance of human frailty. Many parents, it is well recognised, pay no attention to their children’s affairs, they malas tahu (lazy to know, ‘don’t care’ or ‘turn a blind eye’) while others are willing to dismiss youthful fallibility with quips such as ‘they are just flesh.’ It is, however, also the case that the game of romance is not a level playing field: different people have different chances of and costs associated with getting caught. The word hipokrit (hypocrite) is part of the Indonesian lexicon to describe orang besar (big people) who are notorious for preaching virtue while pursuing vice. If the wealth of big people protects them from moral accountability, young women
are subject to far greater regulations and sanctions through gossip, stigma, and exclusion. To err is human, but social power affords varied degrees of moral space to differentially positioned individuals.

Young women, it is also worth recognising, are not evaluated according to transcendent moral standards, as judgement is contingent on circumstance. Premarital sex is understood as a sin, but most neighbours I spoke with professed sympathy for Yunitha, who they assumed had fallen into a relationship with Silas because of her turbulent household. Her father, though a pastor, was well known to take to alcohol from time to time, and when he did, he became cruel, randomly hitting Yunitha and her mother. If moral judgment is intersectional, it can also be contradictory. A brief story illustrates this point. One day, a pregnant Muslim youth from Sulawesi arrived on the doorstep of Ibu and Bapak Rumsaram, requesting that their son ‘take responsibility’. Based on earlier interactions, such as the time she snubbed a Chinese-Javanese Christian friend of mine for her immodest dress, I would have expected her to turn the girls away. Yet she did not: to the contrary, she brought the vulnerable girl in, fed her, and bought her all the things she needed to stay healthy in pregnancy and to prepare for a baby. I was only taken aback by this quiet care and kindness because Ibu Rumsaram was a particularly righteous Christian in our neighborhood. For example, once, when a friend of mine had stayed at my home, she kept her distance. After I returned from farewelling my visitor at the airport, Ibu Rumsaram justified her avoidance thus: ‘I could not see you this week, that friend, what she wears is not polite. We do not like to see girls in tali satu [one string, ‘singlet top’]. It is not the morality of Papuan people.’

Presented with a young woman carrying her grandchild, Ibu Rumsaram’s higher moral ground eroded. The girl’s immorality did not matter and neither, so it seemed, her non-Christian status. Ibu Rumsaram was not visibly bothered by the fact that her son had ‘gone behind her back’ when he was at university in Manado, a strongly Christian town in North Sulawesi. She expressed no shame that he had been involved a clandestine relationship
with the girl while they had been paying good money for him to stay focused on his study. ‘Poor thing’ Ibu Rumsaram had cooed without a hint of awareness that her position was inconsistent with earlier judgments. ‘Her parents have kicked her out, she has no money, nowhere to go.’ As if it was an opportunity to praise the virtues of her people, she added, ‘We can see she is Muslim but we are Papuans and it is Christian to care.’ As a son and not a daughter, gender may have played a role in her inconsistent evaluation of premarital sex. But it is likely that her vested interest, her love and desire to help her own child, overrode any commitment to religious principles.

Pre-modern Sexuality

Pre-colonial sexual morality looked very different. A tantalising glimpse of older attitudes can be found in an ethnography about one coastal group – the mangrove-dwelling Waropen. During his research in the 1920s, Held (1957, p. 88) describes a full moon night of fun and flirtation among a rowdy group of adolescents:

... it is the young men’s delight to pursue the boating girls with loud shouts, or to push their prahu [canoe] over; then the girls give telling blows. Another pleasantry is often to give a rather rough pull on the dancing tufts of hair of an unsuspecting firuma who is permitted to give her tormentor a resounding punch or knock on the back amidst shouts of laughter. At the dances such pleasantry go even further. Then the firuma, often egged on by the older spectators, will inflict bloody scratches with the sharp leg of a crab, or even with the wicked tip of the sword of the sword fish [kasura]. Sometimes such scratches go home and give rise to painful wounds; often, especially among girls, they swell to considerable scarifications. Such scarifications demonstrate one’s popularity among the other sex and so they are signs of which one is proud.

From a colonial perspective, this lack of inhibition was taken as a sign Papuans had no sexual morality. In one section of the founding missionaries
report for headquarters, Ottow and Geissler (1857, p. 24) speak with repulsion about a custom whereby men, both married and unmarried, stuck a yellow leaf in their hair to mark a sexual conquest. Opinions of pre-colonial Pacific sexualities, it is well recognised (Nelson 2007, p. 20; Wallace 2003), speak more about the desires and anxieties of Europeans than of the actual absence of sexual morality. ‘Premarital pregnancy rarely occurs,’ Held wrote, ‘and in any case it is condemned’ (1957, p. 90).

This scene of ribald fun and violent eroticism could not be more different from the expectation that contemporary youth stay clear of spaces where they could be overwhelmed by the force of sexual desire. Yet one particular passage in the Waropen struck me as familiar: ‘Nocturnal love-making is, in fact, not officially permitted by the parents and they put on a show of great indignation when their daughter has been “deceived” [jokofari, he deceives her]’ (ibid.). By following Durkheim’s understanding of morality as a field of sacred energy, social change is rarely characterised by rupture for ideas tend to diverge, merge or ‘engage in open warfare’ (Weiss 2012, p. 89). The rethinking and reworking of institutionalised ideas about sexual morality is a current that moves ahead of bodily change – where the threads of habitus are most resistant. When I read Held’s words that ‘nobody expects of the Waropen girl that she will behave towards a man like a shy virgin who has to be introduced into this [courtship] field all confused and blushing’ (1957, p. 87), his use of European maidens for purposes of comparison was discomforting. Yet he captures an intangible quality in pubescent girls that is difficult to put into words but pertains to a culturally ingrained socialisation of bodily and emotional styles and competences.

Young women were expected to demonstrate malu, but this should not be confused with an internalised sense that their body and desires were shameful. Sexual openness and attitudes depended on family culture and other variables, but puberty was a time of ease with physical maturation and curiosity about sex. Girls entered puberty with different levels of
preparedness, and many knew about dietary restrictions and other customs that should be observed when menstruating, yet the monthly bleeds was not associated with the need for segregation or other taboos. What I observed as a boldness in ‘maiden’ comportment is politicised: that is, young women resisted being called gadis (maiden, virgin) preferring the word nona. ‘Gadis is in Java mama’ said one friend, ‘it means you are all halus halus [refined, civilised]. Papuan girls are kasar [coarse, rude].

Bridewealth: the moral logics of a contemporary tradition

As forms of ‘residual culture’ (Williams 1980), how and what kinds of meanings do compensation and bridewealth carry from moral economies that antedate contact? In this region, mas kawin (bridewealth, lit. ‘marriage gold’)—a payment from the groom to the bride’s family found across Melanesia (Knauf 1999, p. 51)—is a bi-directional series of transactions that are staged, usually with additional payments being offered so that every child born to the couple can be received into the patriclan. Consistent with Schlegel’s (1991) survey of bridewealth versus dowry paying societies, coastals evaluate premarital sex as a problem of not honoring exchange obligations rather than a problem of purity.

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149 Some claimed no prior knowledge of menstruation and were distressed to discover their first bleed. Others expected their periods and were prepared. ‘When we folded the washing,’ one informant told me, ‘my aunt would explain what the small cloths were for. She told us to carry one to school in case it began.’

150 Biak girls told me one should never pick siri (betel pepper) if you have your period lest the vine wither and die.

151 Kasar has connotations of blackness, oafishness, and a lack of emotional restraint and, as used to stereotype Papuans, is being reclaimed in this context. It derives meaning from its binary opposite—halus—an aesthetic and comportment associated with the refined cultures of Javanese courts and aristocratic class of priyayi (Retsikas 2012, p. 58).
The work of Wardlow (2006b) on sexuality among the Huli of highland PNG is illuminating in this respect. For Huli, she writes, bridewealth constitutes sexuality as ‘something properly reproductive and embedded in kinship, rather than an individually possessed, erotic behaviour’ (ibid., p. 100). Her analysis – that bridewealth structures understandings of young women, and by extension their sexuality, as a product of kin relations – is premised on what has been described as a Melanesian way of conceptualising the person. The ‘dividual’, a term associated with the New Melanesian Ethnography, especially the work Marilyn Strathern (1988), contrasts with Western ideals of the person as an autonomous, bounded individual. The concept of the dividual, a psychological counterpart to Mauss’ (1990) theory of ‘the gift’, assumes persons as ‘constructed as the plural and composite site of the relationships that produced them’ (Strathern 1988, p. 13). Just as the give and take of goods can create webs of social relations – food, care, and other inputs infuse a child with the spirit of the parents and others who have been involved in a child’s upbringing.

When evaluating the potency of bridewealth to transmit understandings fractious with Christian ideals of virginity, it is important to recognise two things. One, meanings are not ‘logic’ in the sense of immutable and transposable values and beliefs; they alter and dissipate in shifting contexts of encompassment. Contrasting with the Huli, bridewealth is not a ‘totalising discourse’ (Wardlow 2006b, p. 101) – rather, it is optional and contested among coastals. Over the last century, Protestant admonishments that ‘buying’ women was antithetical to godly dictates of marital love have eroded its hegemony. Juli’s uncle, at her bridewealth ceremony, explained why he never paid bridewealth:

I never asked for bridewealth, not for any of my daughters. Before they got married I spoke to their fiancées [calon]. ‘I will not ask for bridewealth’ I said. ‘My daughter is not a cow that can be bought or sold. She is a child of God. She does not belong to me, she does not belong to her mother or anyone. She belongs to the Almighty. As a Christian man I ask
one thing of you. I ask that you love and care for her as your wife just as we have loved and cared for her as our daughter. We never hit her, never spoke hard words. God wants us to respect each other. My parents too, they did not want bridewealth. They were progressive [maju], they went against adat to do this.

This explanation, an instance of how religion can be pitted against tradition, resonates with research in other Melanesian settings where capitalist encroachments have inscribed bridewealth with metaphors of private property and the possessive individual (Jorgensen 1993; Wardlow 2006b, p. 150). 152

In the context of rising numbers of Pentecostal converts, a denomination where Christian rebirth is dependent on rupture with the vestiges of tradition (Robbins 2004a, pp. 127-128), anti-bridewealth sentiments have likely grown stronger. 153 At the same time, the resurgences of pride in Papuan traditions have also strengthened the popularity of a rite that adat leaders are endeavouring to reinscribe with Christian meaning. Juli’s adat leader, an elderly Biak man who negotiated her bridewealth amount and presided over her ceremony, uttered the following as part of his pre-meal speech:

If families want a big bridewealth I tell them, ‘we are not mountain people, we are coastal people and coastal people do not tuntut [demand]. If you tuntut there will be problems. Kalau [if/when] the bridewealth is not paid people fight. What is important is that something is paid – even a small amount shows respect. This is the purpose. Giving bridewealth is not to

152 Likely because Christian commitments have diminished the hegemony of this practice, there is no stigma in not carrying the name of your father’s clan and I occasionally found children who did have the name of their patriclan even though their father has not paid bridewealth.

153 Anecdotal evidence comes from the late-in-marriage initiative of my neighbours to pay bridewealth. Mr and Mrs Wamarop were Seventh Day Adventists who did not pay bridewealth when they married twenty-three years earlier. Only now, with three older children, they had rethought their decision. Mr Wamarop explained, ‘before we didn’t think, we were taught by missionaries that bridewealth was against God’s will. But now we know that keeping our culture is good, God is pleased when we keep a heritage that makes marriage strong’. In 2013 I spoke to Mr Wamarop on Skype and he told me that he had paid 15,000,000 rupiah ($USD1190) to his wife’s father and uncles. ‘5,000,000 for each child,’ he said.
make profit – it is to make Christian marriage. When we give to her father we are saying, ‘we also love your daughter, we will respect her and treat her as you have. We pay to show – we Papuans are a Christian people, we value [menhargai] women.

As a discourse, bridewealth is clearly a source of debate in the Papuan culture wars over what makes for Christian marriage. As a habitus, residual ontologies are transmitted through its structural power to claim new members for the clan. Values are also reaffirmed in the emotional joy of the rite itself, a highly inclusive and upbeat affair.

Bridewealth Effervescence

In 2005 I attended the bridewealth ceremony of Juli, nineteen, and Juan, twenty-four. Though the right age for marriage, Juli’s parents had been very upset by their daughter’s pregnancy because Juan had been in and out of work as a contract labourer on building projects and they had hoped their daughter could do better. Her pregnancy had lowered their bargaining power and reluctantly, they accepted the match. She was from Biak and he was from Kai, an island near the Moluccas. As a matter of respect, he had agreed to ‘follow her adat’ and raise funds for her bridewealth. From my notes, a description of this ritual enactment:

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With the sun high in the sky, I descend from the bemo [minibus taxi] with a huge bunch of betel nut and half a dozen other twinkle-eyed people carrying gifts of food and porcelain. I find Juli in the room where she has slept for most of her life with her mother, father and other siblings. She is silent and straight-faced, seemingly tired and forlorn. Her mothers’ three sisters, as well as other maternal relatives I had never met, are buzzing about in identical suits cut
from the same fabric, tailor-made to identify them as the *pihak perempuan* [side of the girl, girl’s close family]. One aunt cooed, “oooo Juli pretty pretty” [cantik cantik], as she pins rupiah notes on her white blouse and gold threaded Irian Batik dress. Though with Papuan motifs, wearing batik is one of many Javanese aesthetics that feature in this traditional Papuan event. From Juli’s poker face, to her lace *kemeja* [blouse], the large fake black bun attached to the nape of her neck, her straightened hair and makeup – red lipstick on a face so powder-white and eyelashes, thick and black spidery – the influence of Indonesia is apparent..

This ceremony, variously known as ‘delivering the plates’ or ‘knocking at the door’, is one of a series of transactions that make up what Biak and other coastal community refer to as *mas kawin* [gold marriage, brideprice]. This delivery, the largest portion of the payment, is a happy affair that is unparalleled by any other family, traditional, or religious event in the ritual calendar. Other payments, such as ‘the part that returns’ – the section of the wealth given on this day that flows back to the groom’s family – or smaller amounts when a child is born will follow this day. But this, in the give and take of bridewealth, is the main event:

In the distance, now becoming louder, I hear the groom’s party singing, drumming and playing guitar. I race outside to see a convoy of cars, motorbikes and even a truck full of people in a big yellow truck singing and playing drums and string instruments. A crowd of curious neighbours gather on the peripheries as the merrymakers, including Juli’s uncle, descend in riotous cacophony, some wearing the ‘uniform’ of the *pihak laki laki* ['side of the man’, groom’s family]. I spot Jofan close to the front of the sea of bodies, dancing the *yospan* – that state-sanctioned dance of
Biak – a snaking line weaving and stomping between from the street to the house. Someone is holding an Indonesian flag, others are holding sago cakes, bracelets, a fat envelope, silver bracelets, bunches of betel nut, one women is dancing with a fishing net but it is the white porcelain plates and vases, held high in the air, that hold pride of place. Porcelain with blue painted images of Papuan icons, a tifa, a fish, a Bird of Paradise are made in ceramic workshops outside Papua and valued as ‘authentic tradition’. Those carrying musical instruments gather on a side of the yard, continuing their pretty melodies and lively tempo, as the bearers of gifts queue at the front of the door. I lose sight of the front of the queue but am told the groom’s side is now “knocking at the door”.

As with all social events, there was a VIP section, but this was largely empty, as if testament to the spirit of equality that pervaded the joyful event. Rich and poor, fanatik and biasa [usual, moderate Christian], male and female, young and old, hetero and banci (Indonesian third sex category), all danced together.

The Dionysian energy was fuelled by the consumption of alcohol by men and old women. Hundreds of bottles of Bintang beer had been bought for the event,154 the only time I saw alcohol integrated into a mainstream social gathering.

The door opens and the groom’s family enters, one by one, placing their gifts around the perimeter of the guest room that has been cleared of furniture. Juli’s parents, a few other clan members and their adat

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154 In an adat ceremony I attended in 2011 after alcohol had been outlawed, there was no beer on offer. Many men were, however, drinking palm wine hidden in the shadowy recesses of the event.
leader are inside, inspecting the goods. One man takes notes on a clipboard. After the gift givers relinquish their goods they exit the room, picking up pace as they join a group of shiny-browed dancers, leaping and jumping in an open area. To the side are rows of chairs and a long table covered with a white cloth and piles of plates, spoons and forks.

I walk to the back of the house. Children and mangey orange dogs with protruding ribs mill about as around a dozen women with pounding, chop, wash and stir. It is loud from the stone on stone grinding of spice, the hiss of kerosene burners, crackle of oil and shouting. Judging by the concrete floor — covered in areca skin, fish guts, vegetable peelings, garlic skins, peanut and coconut shells and brown-bottomed rice scraped from saucepans — they had been busy all day. In this happy chaos two babies in mittens and socks are asleep on small mattress in the corner. I follow some women as they leave, heads high and feet steady, carrying bowls of steaming bounty. Soon the table is full with piles of meat, vegetables and spices made into curries, stir fries and soups. There are roasted seafoods, sambal [spicy side dish], yellow rice, boiled taro and papeda [sago congee]. As if on cue the pastor, parents, and adat leader come to the front of the house and deliver speeches and prayers until, after the final and longest prayer, we line up after the few VIPs to eat.

September 18th 2005.

I left around midnight, but the talking, laughter, and dancing, I was told, continued until sunrise.

Visiting Juli’s house the next day, her father beamed:
Ten vases, thirty plates, three fishing nets, one outboard motor and four million rupiah. This is good, they have respected us. At first we were less than certain but now we are sure, this is a match from God. We also have shown respect, all that food makes think, what a great clan we have married.

Juli was not enthusiastic but she was content, unlike the day before. In a private moment I asked her why she had looked strained, even forlorn. Had she been tired? She responded:

Tired, no. I felt embarrassed [malu]. All my aunties talking like that, all that attention, then pinning me with money. I did not like walking out in front of all those people, covered in money. I felt like I was being sold.

‘Why did you do it then?’ I asked point blank.

‘For mama,’ she said with great tenderness. ‘Mama loves brideprice.’

Individual Individuals: disjunctures of sexual meaning

Bridewealth is reflexively interpreted to uphold Christian values of women as esteemed wives and mothers and yet, in the sensory pleasures of full-bellied and full-bodied participation, alter-modern meanings circulate. In Chapter Two I mentioned that though highly dependent on cash, ‘gift’ economies operate coterminously with capitalism. A corollary to this is that coastals are partly individual. Papuan selves inhabit a physical body, strive to do well in exams, and participate in commodity capitalism through forms of consumption that express individual tastes and styles. Yet partible aspects of personhood are expressed in other ways, such as in understandings that fines ‘buy shame’. Since sex is sanctioned throughout Indonesia in ‘kinships of shame’, further research could explore cultural particulars of this moral emotion. I would suggest that in Manokwari shame is generated less from perceptions that a child is inherently bad and more from evaluations that a child has been reckless, and so has denied respect, which is a comment on a parents care-
giving practices. Just as dishonour is socially generated, it can be socially repaired through the circulation of exchange values. In contrast to other parts of Indonesia, where kinships of shame can lead to dramatic consequences – for instance ‘job opportunities may dry up and marriage prospects may reduce’ (Davies 2015, p. 33) – in Papua, there is no ongoing stigma attached to unwed mothers or, for that matter, her parents or child.

That ontologies of persons as relationally constituted is supported by how debt and prestige are transposed in the calculation of fines – both in immaterial (mother’s milk, tiredness) and well as material (medicines, school fees) terms. Bridewealth too, as a form of recompense for the loss of a daughter’s company and labour as well as her reproductive potential, communicates beliefs that items and substances that contribute to a girl’s growth circulate ‘as parts of persons’ (Strathern 1988, p. 178). That people are continually made by gifts that embody the giver was demonstrated by the aunt, described in Chapter Four, who complained of sore breasts as an idiom of demand for a greater share of bridewealth. The dividual layers of habitus should, as Strathern intended, be used as a heuristic to trace shifts in modalities of personhood within different contexts for action. As LiPuma notes, ‘cultures differ critically in the ontological status, visibility, and force granted individual/relational aspects of persons’ (2000, p. 131) and ‘persons emerge precisely from that tension between dividual and individual aspects/relations’ (ibid., p. 132).

The possibility that long-standing sexual moralities create cultural disjuncture is apparent in the lack of symbolic elaboration around virginity. In Manokwari there is little stigma for unwed mothers, and while there is pity, there is no shame attached to ‘grass children’ (anak rumput), as a child born out of wedlock is known.155 Coastals have no semantic equivalent to ‘shotgun wedding’ or the institution of chaperonage. Young women, irrespective of statements to the contrary, enjoy relative freedom of mobility, and curfews are

155 This term may be used by a mother when angry with a child to remind him/her of the burden they carry raising them without their father.
not often enforced. Though they are familiar with Indonesian practices of hymen testing, Papuans do not believe in hymens.¹⁵⁶ Friends all knew that unmarried female police recruits had to undergo virginity testing¹⁵⁷ and had seen advertisements for hymen-reconstruction surgery. Some had heard stories about sexual practices to preserve hymens and one friend had a neighbour from Sulawesi who had hung out bloodstained sheets after his wedding night to prove his wife’s virginity. ‘I don’t know why Papuans don’t have this skin that closes their vagina’ said one Papuan housewife. As if an afterthought, she added, ‘I think it is because God made Papuans different from the other races.’

Aligning History to a Moral Modern Standard

The myth of Mansar Manakameri or the scabious old man is a Biak-Numfores saga about a culture hero who discovers the secret of salvation and eternal life (Korēri). It is a saga that involved the people of Biak scorning Manakameri and exiling him from the island after a perceived transgression of sexual morality. He then, together with the maiden Insořaki and their illegitimate child, sailed around Cenderawasih Bay, performing miracles including creating the geography of the land, then travelling further east. Since Biaks became aware that they had exiled their prophet (B: konoor) they have been anticipating his return. As a message of salvation, the myth of Manakameri was a charter for early modern cargo cults and, in the second half of the twentieth century, a potent message for nationalist movements (Kamma 1972; Rutherford 2003; Giay & Godschalk 1993; Sharp & Kaisiepo 1994). For my friend Rinna, the myth was a kind of charter for the sexual moral order. Rinna’s family, unlike my other friends, had a special interest in

¹⁵⁶ Hymens are not a biological fact because the ‘vaginal corona’ has highly diverse variations in appearance (Magnusson 2010)
¹⁵⁷ The 2010 Indonesian Policewoman’s Handbook stipulates that candidates must consent to having internal checks to ensure their hymen is intact (Davies 2015, p. 33).
Manakameri because when her mother was pregnant she encountered the prophet while fishing in her canoe past Mansinam Island. The man had beckoned her and though he did not speak, he handed her cans of soup and beans. For her uncle, the older brother of her mother who was an adat leader – this chance encounter was a sign that her brother, who her mother had been pregnant with at the time, had a special destiny.¹⁵⁸

One evening Rinna shared a section of the myth with me as well as three Biak girls who were staying that night. ‘In the time before,’ she began:

..there was an a man with kaskado [ringworm], he was just a farmer who also sold palm wine. One night he had been drinking palm wine all night at the top of the tree and just grabbed the star as it began to rise. The star said, ‘please let me go, tell me what you want, I will give it.’ The old man asked for some fruit, magic fruit. Later that day he spied some young women bathing in the river with lovely breasts. He threw the fruit at them and it bounced, hit the water, then a tree, then it bounced back across the water and hit the breasts of one of the girls. A few months later her belly grew and she was surprised because she was a virgin. No one believed her. Her parents were angry and hit her for not being a virgin, for being nakal. They were really angry because she would not tell them who the father was. They thought she was being difficult. Poor thing, she didn’t know. No man came forward to take responsibility.

This recounting of the tale, which Rinna had heard from her uncle who liked to share parts of the myth in the evenings to entertain the family, departed in significant detail from Kamma’s (1972). In particular, she framed the prophet as a drinker who randomly grabbed the star whereas other versions describe Manakameri as a palm wine trader, not a drunk, who waited in the tree for the

¹⁵⁸ According to Ace, he would have had a spectacular fate had her mother not refused the offer of American missionaries to take the boy home with them when he was seven years old. ‘That opportunity was from Manakameri’ Ace told me, ‘but mama said no, she felt too much love (sayang) to let him go. My brother is angry with mum about that’.
morning star because the star had been stealing his palm wine.\textsuperscript{159} As a fluid and changing construct, Rinna’s interpretation of the myth emphasises the moment when sexual transgression becomes public and creates a narrative that mirrors the ideal-typical responses that are common today.

This narrative technique of aligning the past with the present as a morally continuous temporality was also apparent in the next part of the myth, when the identity of the father was revealed:

They never gave up wanting to know who the father was. When the boy was five the community had a special ceremony ... we don’t have that adat anymore. Everyone in the village was there and after a long time the small boy pointed to an ugly grandpa with kaskado at the back of the crowd. ‘He is my father.’ Just like that. People were shocked, then angry – the man and the girl were beaten and chased off the island. ‘If you stay here we will kill you.’ That is what the village men said. Those three sailed away ... That is where it all begins...In the first night the old man jumped in fire and came out young and handsome. Uncle says we are still waiting for him, some say he is Jesus.

The girls in the room were enthralled. They had not heard of these stories and vowed to make an effort to not look at Facebook in the evenings but instead ask the old people they knew about Manakameri. In terms of sexual moral understanding, it is significant that Rinna frames the anger of Insoraki’s parents as being triggered not by their loss of prestige, but by her loss of virginity. By suturing pre-Christain morality with contemporary ethical frames, her rendition makes this culture hero myth a kind of sacred template for the Christian Papuan status quo.

Anthropologists, Robbins (2007c, p. 6) has argued, have all too often represented Christianity ‘as inconsistently and lightly held or as merely a thin veneer overlying deeply meaningful traditional beliefs.’ Though this picture is

\textsuperscript{159} Another point of difference with Kamma’s (1972) version is that the star asked Manakameri to throw the fruit.
changing (Engelke & Tomlinson 2006; Robbins 2007c; Cannell 2006; Aritonang & Steenbrink 2008) I was often surprised just how far traditional beliefs could stretch to support Christian modern principles with no sense of frictions, mixing, or novelty. If the fine distinction between sex and fertility makes Rinna’s idea that virginity was a traditional value plausible, my friend Dede’s insistence that parents traditionally monitored the sexual activity of youth seemed improbable. Middle-aged Dede, who worked for a local NGO, shared his knowledge of history:

... before the missionaries came orang Biak built youth houses. They were constructed a single pole. Boys were expected to sleep on one side and girls, the other. If there was macam macam [fooling or messing around] the house would tip, so parents would know.

Dede, whose eyes lit up as he shared this bit of information, saw no inconsistency in the notion of a ‘youth house’ that was monitored at night for sexual activity. As for Rinna, he mapped older practices onto modern moral values, an encompassment that returns us the importance of Durkheim’s Ideal. In this chapter I have suggested that pre-marital pregnancy is common and rarely carries lasting consequences. I have also suggested that attitudes to sexuality are overall positive, likely a combination of the pre-colonial sexual habitus and the kinds of sexual incitements that Foucault (1985) identified as being a feature of discursive life in the modern era. These stories by Rinna and Dede, because they reduce moral slippage and discursive complexity to a single Christian standard, have the effect of embedding chastity in the adat sacred.

Sexual Desire

Sexual desire is a complex realm of cultural knowledge and experience that, depending on context and biography, is subject to shifting and varied evaluations. In this final ethnographic section, I describe some of these understandings, ideas that range from holding sexual desire as shameful to it
as a force that brings pleasure. *Nafsu* (sexual desire), I have pointed out is considered a hydraulic energy that should be experienced for pro-social ends – to bring forth Christian children, create intimacy in marriage, and even to channel academic concentration. It is thought to be unknown to children and the elderly, and considered a normal development in puberty, though if expressed, places a girl at risk of being labeled. As well as the term *perempuan nakal*, a rich lexicon of Indonesian words demonise feminine sexual desire; for instance, *ayam kampung* (village chicken), *kasur belakang* (mattress back), *perempuan jalan* (street woman), or WTS (*wanita tuna susila*, prostitute). These words, which have no masculine equivalent, point to a double standard, and are available for regulating female sexuality.

Whether passive or predatory, sexual desire can be fraught with guilt and shame or else, it can be the object of mirth or, if tethered to marriage, celebration. To return to the day before Febe’s wedding (described in Chapter Four), the aesthetics of the bridal chamber – the front room of her natal home – provide an example of the latter orientation, the cultural recognition that sexual desire can be a source of joy and intimacy.

A small army of aunties are in the front room of the house, placing a dozen of teddy bears with pink bows around their necks and my doll ‘Moses’, around the bed. This anatomically detailed African-American baby boy doll that came with its name on the packaging was, one aunt told me, a ‘joke’ because of Febe’s pregnancy. Piles of cushions and pillows adorn the lace and pink duvet. The windows are blackened, covered with the same lavish folds of satin-like fabric in hues of pink and red that cover the walls, ceiling to floor. Gauze pink fabric hangs loosely

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160 Indeed, words that convey male promiscuity, such as *buaya darat* (land crocodile) and *jagoan* (macho), connote virility and prowess.
around the light bulbs, casting a soft light across the double bed and reflecting off the tiny scraps of metallic paper cut into love hearts and sprinkled across the bed.

May 29th 2014.

This aesthetic ode to the pleasures of marital sex was, one aunt explained, created because the couple could not get time off work, they made a room for the couple’s pleasure. ‘They could not go on a honeymoon [bulan madu],’ she said, ‘so we made them a bride room [kamar pengantin] so they can be romantic.’

This symbolic inscription of the belief that sex is good, albeit in the right relational context, is consistent with the conceptual frame of the ‘pure relationship’ – Giddens’ (1992, pp. 2, 58) term for a late modern ideal whereby relationships are established and maintained through an ongoing process of negotiation of mutual enjoyment and pleasure. Even though realities, in contexts of poverty and violence, are far from this democratic ideal (Jamieson 1999), the pure relationship is a moral ideology encoded in media representations that link sex, as unmoored from the burdens of reproduction, to closeness, pleasure, and trust.161 This modern construction of sex as ‘plastic’ – Giddens’ (1992, pp. 2, 178) term for a malleable eroticism de-anchored from reproduction – is ambivalent. Just as ‘plastic sexuality’ promises marital intimacy, it also has the potential for the kinds of anti-social sexuality I documented in the last chapter. Late-modern constructions of desire, after all, can manifest the form of individualised ‘hedonism ... pursued through episodic and uncommitted encounters and through forms of auto-eroticism’ (Attwood 2006, p. 80).

161 For instance, women’s magazines feature articles in the format of their racier Western counterparts that advise on matters of improving sex in marriage, such as the right color to paint your bedroom to enhance erotic mood, proper hygiene practices before and after having sex, and ‘safe’ sex positions during pregnancy.
Not long after I had confidently scribbled ‘Papuans are strongly adverse to discuss sexual matters in public’ in my field-notes, I heard sexual joking. I had been sitting outside on my back table peeling peanut shells when the silence was pierced by the shrill cry of an *ibu* above my house. ‘Ooh I miss my husband. My vagina is itchy [*memet gatal*].’ Having barely recovered from the shock of words that seemed incongruent from the polite Christian tone of public conversations, I found myself the target of her next comment. ‘What are you doing white mama? Go and *mandi* [wash]. Your husband will be home soon and he has missed you. *Bapak* Darius [the father of Darius] won’t be working tonight.’ When children were at school and men had gone out, this kind of bawdy banter was common. Young women could be present, but this kind of talk made them tense – not from shame but fear that they could become the butt of a joke. Sometimes women would yell out to each other as they were going about their chores. ‘I just bought some goats milk Ibu A (a substance well known to be an aphrodisiac). Does Ibu B want some?’ Another time, when I was sitting on the back step with two of these women, one said to the other, ‘How are you today? Have you recovered from Bapak’s hammering [*pukulan paku*] last night?’

As humour encodes and creates social tensions (Carty & Musharbash 2008, p. 214), overt sexual teasing cannot be taken as straightforward evidence of positive attitudes to sexual desire. Since Held (1957, p. 89) also noted how sexual innuendo could bring laughter in public, it is more likely evidence of embodied memories of sexual desire. At the same time, as with the bold embodiments of pubescent girls and the enthusiasm of Febe’s aunts, the glee of women who engaged in sexual joking conveyed a far from prudish message about sex. In the twists and turns of sexual complexity, I move from the themes of celebration and humour to shame. Despite the push to Brazilian waxing, touching one’s vagina (*kemaluan*) – literally, ‘the shame’ – was said to be improper. The womb doctors (*dokter kandung*, gynaecologist) in town never looked at your genitals, people told me: ‘there is no need, they have a *canggih* [high tech] machine that looks inside your womb. Pads and not tampons were not sold in shops, something I found out when friends stumbled
across a tampon in my first aid pack. Explaining what it was, one said, ‘if we had these, no one would buy them.’ ‘What girl would put this cloth stick inside their vagina and keep it there as they walked about?’ exclaimed young Susi. ‘Surely they would not stay a virgin?’

A nurse who worked nightshift at the local hospital put to rest any doubt that virginity, after all, might not matter.

A girl – a Waropen person I think – came to my workplace with a high fever. She was white and very thin [badan habis, ‘disappeared body’]. We gave her infus [IV fluid drip] but we didn’t know what was wrong with her, we put her in the infectious diseases ward. The malaria test was negative, the HIV test was negative. She got worse and worse. A sister noticed that her vagina really stunk when she changed her pants and so she was suspicious. She called in the gynecologist who looked inside and stuff and fluid flowed out. She died a few days. Later I heard she had been pregnant, there were bits left inside after the abortion. If we had have known, we would have given her medicine. But her mother did not tell us. She felt heavy shame. Shame can be very heavy in Papua. There are mothers who would let their own child die …

Far from all families are willing to engage the path of tradition to resolve the shame of an unplanned pregnancy. Many say that as Christian, they turn to God for understanding and forgiveness, yet very often, I found, the shame sits with nowhere to go – it can be the etiology of sickness, suicide, and murder. In sum, sexual desire is a highly pluralistic understanding that provides multiple moral frameworks in which to negotiate chastity.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have illuminated a range of discourses, embodiments, and sentiments through which sexual morality and desire are apprehended and experienced. As well as suggesting that the Ideal of chastity has been fashioned through re-representing older structures of sexual regulation,
residual elements of habitus also support cultural forms that oppose modern Christian sexual morality. These findings add support for Durkheim’s understanding of social change as incremental transformations in the patterning of the sacred, but raise questions, since human behaviour is so often discordant, of the validity of the Ideal. Given that Papuans negotiate a variety of sexual meanings with biographic particulars, is it possible that the New Morality is a better fit for analysing moral life? To put this in other terms: if Papuan discourses are dual and contradictory, on what grounds is the Ideal analytically worthwhile?

I suggest an answer here by reference to Durkheim’s final piece, the unfinished introduction to La Morale. In this writing Durkheim made a new distinction between Ideals and practices – levels of reality he calls *morale* and *moeurs*. As part of a broader argument to outline the parameters of the sociology of morality, he argues that what should be of interest is:

> ... ideal morality, over and above human behaviour, not the deformations it undergoes in being incarnated in current practices which can express it only imperfectly (Lukes 1973, p. 420).

Putting aside his judgment that moral action is coarse, oafish, and a ‘degraded form’ of moral precepts, there are two implications of this distinction. One, contra Laidlaw’s (2002) argument, Durkheim does not crush the realm of subjective intent and practice by conflating rules with behaviours. His category of *moeurs* – the culturally varied ‘manner in which man situates himself in the world’ (Lukes 1973, p. 420) – is clearly the domain for ethnographic inquiry. We do not have to agree with his view that *morale* is the proper focus of inquiry to appreciate the importance of the Ideal, in the sense what people often say is the right thing to do. The habitus presents individuals with different moral options, but because choices are rule-governed, the Ideal has analytic gravitas. Shame, for instance, can kill, and abortions and *adat* courts are not simply options for moral redress, they are forms of negative sanction. It is now time to turn to another question: how does the Ideal become a benchmark for action in the structuring of everyday sentiments?
Chapter Seven

Hope

‘Stop boyfriending and think of the future’ a Papuan girl posted on her Facebook page. In the context of Facebook, a medium for flirting amongst techno-savvy youth, this posting could be read as tongue in cheek advice or perhaps satirical commentary on the difficulties of resisting sexual temptation. Another interpretation, one I wish to follow here, is that this social media posting was part of a discourse of hope. Hope, ‘that sense that one may become other or more than one presently is or was fated to be’ (Jackson 2011, p. xi), has not, to my knowledge, been explicitly studied in relation to decisions about sexual behaviour. Yet in conversations about why chastity mattered, anticipation for particular achievements in the near future arose as a key theme. The hope that motivated chastity was not attached to distance far abstractions – such as entry into heaven or avoiding HIV – but pragmatic concerns with secure employment, as opposed to the endless ‘search for money’, and a harmonious, as opposed to violent and conflict-ridden, marriage.

In this chapter, I will explore hope as the first of three emotions that, by inspiring young women to avoid love and sex, co-construct chastity as an Ideal. I describe this kind of hope, in contrast to its more utopic variety characterised by temporal rupture, as biographic hope. Taking a lead from Jackson (2011), I conceptualise hope as both a cultural category and an existential momentum: that is, I take it that hope is a pan-human possibility grounded in the belief that ‘life, for ourselves and those we care about, holds more in store for us than less’ (ibid., p. ix). At the same time, how to hope, what to hope for, and tensions between agency and passivity in being hopeful are shaped by sociocultural particulars and the limits of poverty and domestic violence. Taking a Durkheimian approach to hope requires keeping these two facets in dialogue, so that hope can be conceptualised as a feeling that is
both shaped by the social and as an experience that connects us to self, others, and the future, in turn shaping the social.

In the first part of this chapter, I explore socio-psychological ontologies and structural limits that shape hope as a category of experience. To this end, I describe two case studies in order to explore what social factors are involved the experience of hope. After discussing recent interest and treatments of hope in anthropology, I explore the meanings of money, marriage, masculinity, and marital erotics: the targets of biographic hope. In the latter parts of this chapter, I examine the agency of hope in two fields, understandings of human maturation and of blessings: that is, tangible gifts from God for good behaviour. Biographic hope, I will argue, is a thought and feeling that can be approached through a Durkheimian lens. Hope for a future self married to a good man and in waged employment inspires conformity to sexual moral imperatives. In the long term, by virtue of the objects of desire, biographic hope can also be analysed as a normative force, an emotion that creates and reproduces social ideals.

Chastity and Hope

The desire to shape the future by delaying sexual gratification has much in common with Giddens’ (1991) notion of ‘future colonisation’. This idea of a late modern subjectivity that relies on appraisals of risk to control the future also captures a sense of agency in relation to what is yet to come. Yet unlike future colonisation, biographic hope does not apprehend time as a territory to map and stake through rational planning and calculation. Hope is a feeling as well as a rational evaluation. Walker (2006, p. 48) has described as an ‘affective attitude’ because it is a sentiment that characterised by high degrees of cognitive activity. In addition, hope departs from future colonisation because what it yet to come cannot be controlled – fate is more powerful than the will, it is thought to be in the hands on God (dalam tangan Tuhan). As I demonstrated in the story of when Mrs Rumawan gave away her
money to Pasca (Chapter Three), hope (harapan) is a Christian metaphysic—it is both a test and proof of one’s faith in God.

Since hope hinges on His higher agency, talk of hope implies God and requires pious demonstrations of humility. This is often achieved by the oft-uttered expression ‘humans can strive but God decides’ (manusia bisa usaha tapi Tuhan tentukan). The Indonesian word kalau – which captures the English words ‘if’ and ‘when’ – provides an avenue for such humility, as using this term in a statement about the future registers uncertainty. In a place where too much confidence for one’s social rank renders one vulnerable to accusations of conceit, to discuss the future in bold terms would come dangerously close to appearing self-important. This had important methodological implications, insofar as understanding how hope might motivate sexual continence could hardly be addressed head on: it required excavating cultural domains that invested hope with agency.

Debora was a sixteen-year-old girl who described herself as orang Biak-Wandamen. She had a weekend job selling ship tickets at the port. In a conversation shared on a bench under a tree near her house, her understanding of sex, pregnancy, and teen marriage generated a certain hope for her own future that made her scared of ‘boyfriending’:

D: I am takut [afraid] to have a boyfriend. Every year at my school some drop out, they get pregnant and don't graduate. Their parents are ganas [enraged, ferocious]. When girls are nakal parents are rugi [suffer a loss; ‘wasted money on school fees’]. These have children when they are still children. One girl at my school was expelled the day of her final exam. I see her now, sometimes at the market buying noodles for her kids. Her face is old, like a grandma. Her husband is jahat [bad, wicked, evil; ‘violent’], and already has another girlfriend and I heard they fight and fight.

S: Jealous huh?

D: Before yes, now they fight about money. When husbands have a woman who is not the wife this makes chaos. Money goes out of the
home. Their baby has diabetes, she needs much money for medicine.

Stories like these, they make us scared to even look at boys....

In speculating on the fate of a former peer, chastity is linked to hope through the fear of the social consequences of failure. In this case, boyfriending, as exemplified by an old school peer, presents the danger of school expulsion, parental anger from lost investment in education, and a too-early entry into marriage.

In the next narrative, which comes from seventeen-year-old Racel, hope, once again, can be sensed in appraisals of the hardships of others. Where Debora’s relationship to the future was mediated by a desire to avoid turning out like a fast-ageing peer, for Racel, hope emerged from her evaluative experiences of life with her mother before her death, in contrast to the harshness of life with her stepmother. Racel was sympathetic to why her dad remarried: ‘a man needs a wife to help look after his children if the mother has died,’ she once told me. She was not forgiving of the woman’s temper and the near constant conflict she now lived with. ‘She yells at me every day,’ Racel confided. ‘Cook this, sweep this, make this... she has a hot anger. When I spoke back to her last week she hit me with the kuali [wok], saya pingsan [I passed out].’ This experience was all the more painful given her memories of her mother, who Racel had in previous times described as ‘good’ and ‘cocok [compatible]’ with her dad. She once told me that her mother’s ‘voice was soft’, that ‘she was rajin [hard-working, industrious] ... she worked from sunrise to sleep’, and also that ‘she cooked delicious food.’ In a poetic tone, she remembered that ‘when mama smiled, ‘the stars became brighter.’

One balmy night, when the other girls who lived my house had gone to a dance contest in town, I found myself alone with Racel. She told me a long story about her teenage years and how, after becoming sexually active, she decided to be chaste in order to maximise the chances of a future with less struggle. ‘How did your mum and dad meet?’ was the open-ended question that initiated a long response:
I don’t know about mum and dad’s courtship, we kids don’t talk to our parents about that sort of thing. I do know that it was after dad arrived in Manokwari, he went to high school in Bosnik (Biak) and when he was in theology school he got a letter (of being received into the public service). He knew the letter was coming, God spoke to him, told him he was to be a teacher not a pastor. He came here and met mum, she was at the school where he taught. I don’t know when they got married, if she finished school or not… it’s rude to ask. I know her parents were pleased. Dad was a good man, and they knew they were jodoh [mate, ‘well-matched partner’]. Mama liked to iron, we were always rapi [neat], always kenyang [satisfied, sated]. If the morning was cold, she would put hot-boiled eggs in my pocket so my hands stayed warm … (whispering) Dad didn’t know about the obat KB [family planning medicine; ‘contraception’] mama was taking, that medicine twisted her womb, the doctors could not save her…. 

As her voice broke off from the pain of memory, a long silence filled the space. When she had gathered her thoughts she began describing an unhappy phase of life after her father remarried:

Dad doesn’t like the way my stepmother talks but he would never leave, divorce is a sin. He asks her to pray, asks us to all pray, sometimes we go to our pastor, he helps us pray and gives us counsel [counselling]. Our problem is common, he said because when people remarry a new parent will always be jealous of the children. Dad did not know she was like this, he just heard she was rajin [industrious, diligent]. We were still small, he had to ‘find money’ [mencari uang] so he asked our pastor help find him a wife. She was from our church but no-one knew he r because she had recently arrived from the village to work as a pembantu [domestic help]. Dad thought, she’s from the village – she will be hard-working.

When I was in SMP, I never liked coming home so I went jalan jalan [stroll; ‘walk about’, ‘travel aimlessly’] after school. I became nakal I had many boyfriends. You know what they say ma – kacau [chaotic] home kacau children. One of my boyfriends was a big man, he looked after me...
well but then I met Eko. We fell in love. But Eko died on his motorbike when I was 15 and I became a widow. I did not believe in love anymore – losing it makes you want to die. Then I met Dani. An angel sent him to me because he is a good man – polite, shy – and the day I saw him God spoke to me. You see it was weeks after Eko died and my period was late, I was scared. He told me that He had sent me a jodoh in Dani but I could not main [play, ‘have sex’] with him, He had bigger plans for me if I would concentrate at school. I fell on my knees and cried and asked for forgiveness and he forgave me and said he would give me one more chance if I would follow His plan for humankind. I committed. He sent me my period. That was two years ago and Dani is my teman [friend, euphemism for boyfriend‘]. After next year, when I graduate, Dani and I will get married while I wait for God to open a path for me to get a jabatan [waged position].

In this story, hope is configured though inscribing her experience of avoiding pregnancy after a period of sexual recklessness with the hand of God’s favourability towards her. Her belief that the external circumstances of an unhappy home were involved in her immorality played a role in her perception of God’s kindness. The death of her lover and lateness of her period brought about the awareness, after God appeared before her, that she needed to rebuild her ties with Him by pledging pious commitments.

The desire for a future in a loving marriage with a happy family (Winskell et al. 2011, p. 950; Ogunsola 2012) or else for educational and career (Grant 2012; Schvaneveldt et al. 2001) is a common finding in research on reasons for teen sexual abstinence in a range of different societies (Supametaporn et al. 2010). In the stories of Debora and Racel, the decision to wait for ‘the right time’ – where ‘right’ is synonymous with marriage – foreground the importance of hope as a category to analyse such phenomenon. Hope, which always has a ‘special kind of motivational force’ (Martin 2011, p. 148), adds social-moral dimensionality to studies of sexual motivation. Life circumstances configure feelings of hope, for Racel the pain she has endured since her mother died generated an atypical intensity to her visions of the
future. Her reflexive awareness education, contingent on God’s blessing, would lead to waged employment, renewed her commitment to chastity. ‘I see now. I have an angel’ she told me later that day, ‘I have always had an angel, it is my mother. All those years when I was looking for attention outside the home, I was never raped or poisoned and I never fell pregnant. This is the working of an angel and I know if I am a good Christian God will bless me.’

Biographic Hope

As with morality, hope has recently moved from its home in philosophy and psychology to become a topic of interest in anthropology. Where psychology has been interested in hope as a psychic force to be measured (Snyder 1995) or harnessed for therapeutic purposes (Snyder & Taylor 2000; Taylor et al. 2000; Lopez et al. 2000; Michael, Taylor & Cheavens 2000; Sympson & Elder 2000), philosophers have explored its phenomenological aspects and asked questions about how hope can be harnessed for the good life (Rorty 1999, Bloch 1986a, 1986b, 1986c)162. Beginning with the pioneering work of Miyazaki (2004, p. 4)163, who explored hope amongst Fijians who had been waiting for over a century to be compensated for ancestral land, anthropologists have approached hope ‘within historically and culturally specific understanding’ (Crapanzano 2003, p. 15). Reed (2011) has studied hope among men on remand in a Port Morseby prison, while Moore (2011) and Crapanzano (2003) have studied it in regards to the messianic longings of prophetic Christianity social movements. In addition, Dinerstein and Deneulin (2012) have looked at hope as the impetus of radical visions for the good life in settings of post-development, and Street (2012) has analysed how

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162 In his three volumed The Principle of Hope, a masterpiece in scholarship on hope, Bloch surveys a dazzling array of fairy tales, myths, art, religion, and literary works to argue that throughout human history, people in all societies have dreamed of a better life.

163 Miyazaki (2004), building on Bloch’s notion of hope as a prospective momentum, argues that hope should be a method in anthropology because it can teach us new ways of knowledge creation.
hope is built into the architectural design of a hospital in Madang in Papua New Guinea.

In their ethnographic applications, anthropologists have speculated on the qualities of hope – that is, what constitutes the hopeful present. Jackson (2011, p. xii) offers a condensed description of some theoretical speculation in this respect:

For Gabriel Marcel, hope is the feeling that time is not closed to us, a sentiment echoed by Pierre Bourdieu, for whom hope is the belief that our social investment in the world will pay off, if not immediately, than at some time in the future. For Hannah Arendt, hope is synonymous with the appearance of the new ... [it is the] sense of promise and potential transformation that Marcel refers to as ‘enthusiasm for living’ ..., Bourdieu as ‘the forthcoming’, Arendt as ‘natality’ and Ernst Bloch as ‘the spirit of utopia’ ...

In these various philosophical treatments, hope is presented as an openness to novelty and change, a connection to something beyond and, in Bourdieu’s understanding, as inspiring action that might bring future rewards. This sense of ‘might’ or ‘maybe’ is a central element of hope. The notion of hope as a desire for something that ‘is possible but not certain’ is key to conceptualisation of several philosophers, including Aquinas, Hume, Hobbes, and Spinoza (Martin 2011, p. 150).

Hope can be felt among the rich as much as the poor and it can be directed towards ‘millennial dreams and revolutionary ardour’ as much as ‘banal pleasure’ (Jackson 2011, p. xii): the hope for good weather, to find a car park, or a favourite dish on the menu. The kind of hope that sustained commitments to sexual avoidance among coastals is not revolutionary or banal, but somewhere in the middle. It is a hope for one’s unfolding biography: realistic, mundane, and located in a temporal zone Minkowski calls the ‘mediate future’ (1970, p. xxvi) and Guyer, the ‘near future’ (2007). To date, hope within the frame of a lifetime has been encompassed within literature on wellbeing
Reynolds White 1997; Deneulin & McGregor 2010), happiness (Mathews & Izquierdo 2009), and the good life (Fischer 2014). Hope, an idea that registers the emotional investment in the near future, is a potentially productive way to speculate on the ‘prospective momentum’ (Miyazaki 2004, p. 4) generated by the desire for wellbeing. In relation to coastal teens, the anticipation for what has not yet become is encoded in understandings of adolescence as the ‘not yet’. For Bloch, the ‘not yet’ (noch nicht) is a concept key to his theory of the utopic impulse, a latent sense of anticipation for that which has yet to come.

Since hope is not a moral emotion in the sense that it is not a sentiment that responds to behaviours that conform or violate a norm (Chapman & Anderson 2011, p. 255), how can my interest in the hopes of chaste coastal Papuans further a Durkheimian account of morality? This question is especially pressing since, as a highly reflexive sentiment, hope might appear to be an analytic that better serves the conceptual aims of the New Morality. Though he does not position himself as part of the New Morality conversation, Jackson’s conviction that hope is an ethic illustrates the affinities between the two disciplinary developments. Writing on wellbeing in Sierra Leone, Jackson (2011) explores feelings of hope among a people who are, by all objective measures, besieged with poverty, ill health, and other uncertainties. Returning to the village of his PhD fieldwork, Jackson (2011, p. ix) found that wellbeing was more a ‘field of struggle’ than a ‘settled state’ in the imaginations of the community. Within the vicissitudes of life, he argues, hope becomes a kind of ethic that springs ‘from the fundamentally unstable and ambiguous nature of relationships with others and with the world’ (ibid., p. xiii). This ethic to live well, he adds, with a nod to Ricoeur, prefigures the ‘morality of norms’ (ibid., p. 68) and involves a willingness to live ‘within limits rather than struggling to transcend them’ (ibid., p. 150).

By letting go of the belief that having a boyfriend was an option, the hope of Debora and Racel might appear to be an ethic in the sense of ‘surrendering one’s freedom in order to be free’ (ibid., p. 150). There is no evidence, however, that freedom is their intention or even that it can be analysed as an
unintended outcome of their sacrifices. Given the limited possibilities for viable
womanhood in Manokwari and the uncertainty of the economic environment,
wellbeing, I suggest, is less a matter of asking how one is to live well and
more a predetermined answer that one can only hope for. The remarkable
uniformity of the twin objects of this hope attests to how hope is shaped by
political economic limits as much as cultural understandings. This raises the
further point that although hope is self-interested, insofar as visions of the
future focus on the self, it is an experience entangled with the dividual aspects
of selfhood. Securing employment allows one to give back: for instance, it
allows one to give back to Church funds, make bride wealth payments, and
repay ontological debt to parents and relatives. As a feeling that is normatively
configured, I will later discuss, young women’s hopes are not an ethic of living
well but a sensual engagement with the world that serves to create ideals and
reproduce the social.

Exemplars: the high stakes of becoming

One of my more surprising discoveries was the power of fear in the
experience of hope. Though ‘hope always arises with fear and anxiety’
(Jackson 2011, p. xiii), the two feelings have also been theorised as mutually
antagonistic. Jarymowicz and Bar-Tal (2006, p. 367) have argued that fear, a
less conscious and more dominant emotion, shuts down the ‘complex
processes of creativity and flexibility’ that characterise hope. The intersections
between hope and fear were salient in the attention young women gave to
others in the next phase of life. Ibu Dina, a rake-thin mother of two and long
suffering wife who lived in a house several doors down, provided one example
of how hope is embodied by others who instil fear that life, if one is not
cautious, might not turn out. Ibu Dina’s life was ‘difficult’ (susa), the girls I lived
with told me, a never-ending cycle of cooking, cleaning, and searching for
money.
Ibu Dina was quiet and withdrawn, a state they attributed to ‘shame’ from her husband’s beatings. This conjecture was based on the sound of a male voice that frequently yelled from inside her home and bruises she often carried, poorly concealed beneath makeup. Through often heard, Ibu Dina’s husband was seldom seen. He slept in the day, it was said, and passed his nights going to parties, gambling, and ‘carrying women’ (bawah cewek). At times, when on a drinking bender, he liked to sing on a karaoke machine turned up so high that its speakers crackled. Her diligence as a mother, her industriousness selling rice-moulds she wove from strips of banana leaf, and her stoic acceptance of her lot earned her much sympathy. ‘She is rajin [hard-working, industrious], oh mama so rajin,’ said one friend:

She organises everything herself. Her husband doesn't work. She cuts the grass in her yard with a machete, not a machine, she makes the whole area clean. She grows food in that yard, cooks it for her children, sells it and those baskets. On Sunday she sells pinang at the beach. Her husband sits around and drinks, he gets drunk and hits her. Kasihan [poor thing].

Kasihan was a word often uttered by neighbourhood friends as Ibu Dina shuffled past on her way to market or church, the only two places she ever went. No doubt because she embodied the feminine virtues of shame and sacrifice, no one blamed Ibu Dina for her misfortune.

It was, however, apparent that she was paying for her youthful folly. Ibu Dina had arrived in the neighbourhood around seven years earlier as a teenager with a protruding belly. She had come from a village in the Wandamen area, though people thought she was born in and came from a region near Sorong. Someone had heard that while she was still in junior high (SMP), she became attracted to a man who sometimes visited her village, an older brother of a friend of her younger brother. This man, who soon became her husband, was, so the story went, handsome and sweet back then. The fact that her family of origin never visited was a source of speculation. Some thought they had all died in a landslide and some took it as a sign her father had sumpah dia –
sworn an oath of emotional exile – as a result of her elopement with a no-hoper. At other times I heard people assume her husband forbade her to talk to anyone, even her family, and I even heard a few people say her social isolation was self-imposed, an manifestation of extreme shame.

In the language of psychology, Ibu Dina would be a ‘role model’ after Merton’s (1968, pp. 356-357) theory of how people identity with others in social groups who occupy the roles to which they aspire. Given that becoming a housewife is more an inevitability than an aspiration, it is preferable to analyse Ibu Dina as a ‘moral exemplar’ in Burridge’s (1979, p. 184) sense of the term. In the preface of a book that pays tribute to Burridge (Barker 2007), Strathern and Stewart (2007) note that Burridge did not use the term exemplar in the sense of someone who ‘illustrates perfection’, but rather as someone whose social actions within particular situational contexts expose the difficulties of moral choice. Where Burridge (1975, 1979) and those who use this idea (Robbins 2007b, p. 27) study moral exemplars in the guise of big men and other male figures of leadership, the term can be extended to ordinary people, including women. After all, the consideration young friends gave to married women in their social milieu suggest that the ibu is a moral exemplar because she ‘reveal[s] normative dimensions that at other times are hidden’ (Strathern and Stewart 2007, p. xvii).

Though eliciting stronger affect, it was not only women whose lives were far from ideal who were moral exemplars. Fortunate women too embodied ‘the dilemmas of morality which each must resolve for [her]self’ (Burridge 1979, p. 141). Mama Israel was a woman who stood for the possibilities, rather than dangers, of everyday ethical alternatives. With a spritely six-year-old daughter, a position with the government and a ‘good man’ (laki yang baik) for a husband who worked in the same office as her, she was, people often said, ‘blessed’. One sixteen-year-old neighbour explained why:

It is a blessing when a mother and father both work. Like mama and bapak Israel. They have mutual understanding [saling mergerti] – they can talk about
working in the office, just sit and talk about the day. You see them travelling
together, all three on one motorbike. Families that do this stay close, when
they are all together no-one can talk, say ‘I saw your husband somewhere
with someone’, talk like that. They don’t need to think of money, they know
they can just go to the bank.

Mama and Bapak Israel had all the ingredients for an ideal marriage: a child,
cash employment, and intimacy and understanding facilitated by a shared
working life. The emphasis on having something in common to discuss is
clearly inflected with the values of modern love, but their good fortune also
resembles the traditional idea of jodoh. As found in many pre-modern
romantic traditions (Jankowiak 2008), the notion of the jodoh refers to a
spouse who one works alongside to make life satisfying and productive. In
Manokwari a jodoh is often described as cocok (a good fit) through modern
notions of a soul mate, in the sense of a person with whom one strikes a
profound psychological connection, is filtering into the meaning of the term.
The harmonious connection of Mama and Bapak Israel – largely attributed to
a dual and regular income – stands as an example of the benefits of having a
jodoh. Just as Ibu Dina’s romantic impulsiveness led her into an untimely
marriage, the level of ease enjoyed by Israel’s parents communicated the
necessity of sexual choices that promote good educational outcomes.

The Good Man

The single most significant factor in future wellbeing is being married to a
‘good man’ (laki yang baik). This expression, though bland and generic, is a
local idiom that packs emotional punch. Even without a regular income,
having a jodoh makes the difference between a life that is acceptable or one
that is a nightmare. The jodoh is a love-match of sorts, but where love does
not exist prior to but is built within marriage through mutual effort in respective
gendered roles. As one man put it, ‘my wife is my jodoh, she gets the kids up
and feeds them breakfast, I go out and catch fish. From sunrise to sunset we
are *rajin* [hard-working, industrious], together we are building *harta* [wealth]. Fear of winding up with a husband who drinks – where alcohol consumption is associated with domestic abuse, sexual affairs and financial strain – is foremost in mind for young women interviewed about their reasons for chastity.

Drawing on material from focus group interviews, I offer some responses that shed light on local conceptualisations of masculinity:

> He will be *cocok* [compatible]. We will work together, side by side. I like men who I can talk to, who make me laugh. It is good if he is the same age but age is not as important as *sifat* [character]. A good man is not *kasar* [coarse].

Marta, aged 15

> My husband will kiss me in public. And not spend money outside the home.

Grace, Age 22

Grace’s fly away reference to romance and Marta’s to emotional companionship are examples of romantic framings of the ‘good man’. Yet negative framings were by far the more common in young women’s descriptions of what they wanted in a future spouse. Sometimes respondents expressed what constituted goodness by reference to bad qualities:

> I pray God will send me a man with a wage. But a wage is not as important as a good man – someone who works hard so that we eat every day and who does not hit me. I do not want my husband to be lazy or drink, Biak men are drunkards [*orang mabuk*] ma, makes me scared to marry ... I would like a man who enjoys the same kinds of films as me.

Inga, aged 15

> If I have a husband, God willing, he will be good – he will have a position

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164 *Harta* pertains to family valuables, land, and, in the modern context, cash, but it refers especially to children or anything that brings renown.
[jabatan, ‘job’]. I want a man who does take women that are not the wife.

Marcia, aged 15.

Most often, they described the ‘good man’ by invoking his pure antithesis:

I want a man who is not kasar... This means drunk, hits you, says things like you are stupid, idiot, you are nakal. Elsa, aged 17

I don’t want to get married. I’m scared, too many laki kasar in Papua. Drunk men, violent men, men who have rough mouths, call you nakal ...

Liyda, aged 13.

I was never short of surprise listening to the unromantic descriptions of what is, normatively speaking, a romantic union. If we are to better understand the power of hope for a good man as a means of motivating sexual avoidance, it is necessary to unpack the cultural meanings of drinking and violence.

Drinking alcohol features in regional histories. In her fieldwork on Biak, Rutherford (2003, p. 76) writes that she became ‘used to people voicing this anxiety’ – that is, the anxiety about drunk men. Within her theory Biak foreign raiders, the ‘shock’ of being surprised by drunk men was evidence of the how surprise from the alien kept the foreign at bay. From the vantage of my friends, drunkenness was a moral problem that was the gendered equivalent of sexually predatory women. Even though the production, sale, and consumption of alcohol was recently outlawed, as could be predicted from other situations of prohibition, highly concentrated palm wine had flooded the black market. In my second field trip, the sense that drunk men

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165 Of the Waropen, Held (1957, p. 11) noted that ‘drunkenness is the order of the day, or rather of the night’ and that ‘with so frequent an abuse of drink, a coarsening of manners is unavoidable and the struggle started by the mission against this popular abuse is fully justified’.

166 Rutherford became aware of this when she was warned by friends not to jog in the morning lest she encounter a drunk man, which gave strength to her idea.

167 The main source of palm wine in Manokwari is known as ‘Ampou’ (Arenga pinnata, ‘black sugar palm’). This grows extensively on the lower slopes of the Arfak Mountains.
were a menace had intensified. Friends had taken to sending me SMS updates, warning me of the whereabouts of drunken men. Drunk men rarely pose the threat of rape: ‘they couldn’t catch you, they are too slow and fall over,’ laughed one friend. Understandings of the dangers of drunk men were captured in a poster drawn by the eight-year-old son of an employee from Rob’s office. Stuck to the wall of the front room in his house, this colourful poster depicted nine boxes: each framing a stick figure with lines around it (to indicate wobbliness?). In each box, the figure was creating different sorts of havoc – chasing smaller people, setting fire to buildings, throwing rocks at passing motorbikes, pouncing on young women, punching another woman. Above all, as addressed in sermons, media articles, and government and NGO awareness materials, drunk men threaten family life.

Within the Papuan pride movement, the word *kasar* (coarse) has been reclaimed from its status as a trope of ethnic denigration. Yet in the semantic fields of love, gender, and marriage, *kasar* is morally abject. *Kasar* men drink, gamble, smoke cigarettes, and ‘carry women’ (*membawa cewek*): all activities that hurt women and children, not least because they take money away from the family budget. While it is awkward to speak of an epidemiology of *kasar* men, Liyda’s belief that there are ‘too many’ *kasar* men in Papua and Inga’s opinion that ‘many Biak men are drunkards’ confers hope with a certain urgency. Biaks, the ethnicity young women are most likely to marry, are stereotypes as the most *kasar*, likely based on their ‘foul reputation’ (Kamma 1977 cited in Rutherford 1997, p. 89) as palm wine drunks and slave raiders. A man called Alo shared a story of heartache that highlights the social power of stereotype:

When I was young I had a *jodoh* [soulmate]. Her family were from Sentani and we met at university. They did not give me permission to marry her because I was a Biak person. My heart broke, we had planned to live on my father’s land, humble living, raise children, grow *harta* [wealth, ‘legacy’]. This is the thinking in Papua. If you are Biak you are *mabuk* [drunk]. If you are drunk you are *kasar* – that the wife will have injuries and money will leave the house.
Even allowing that the refusal of his marriage proposal may have been based on factors more complex, the ability of this family to enlist an ethnic character to justify their decision underscores the efficacy of this social representation. And this – the realities of domestic violence combined with stereotypes of the dominant ethnic group in the local dating pool – is another factor in young women’s gut awareness that it is wise to delay sexual activity.

Erotic Hope

Fear of spousal abuse mitigated the desire for marriage, but this was offset by hopes that marriage would bring reward. As well as it presenting an opportunity to achieve independence by running their own household and being a welcome relief from ongoing scrutiny and gossip, many hoped that marriage would bring sexual pleasure, emotional intimacy, and romantic companionship. These ideas were understood through multiple discourses, such as the traditional romantic ideal of jodoh, the globalisation of the ‘pure relationship’ (Giddens 1992), and also Christian messages that sexual quality awaits the pure. Overall, the importance of waiting for marriage was transmitted through informal beliefs that deferring sex generated erotic energy.

Discussing a recently married friend, one young woman told me and the other girls sitting on the mattress that night:

She said it did not hurt, there was no blood or anything, she said it was fun. The only thing that hurts are her thighs (laugher). They play continuously, before work, after work, all night. She told me it was good she waited – after she stopped feeling afraid her body just exploded with pleasure.

168 Papuans, as far as I know, are not in direct relation with American ministries, such as True Love Waits, The Silver Ring Thing, and Pure Freedom, but their moral message filters through Christian texts, including Christian literature and televangelism. As Gardner (2011, p. 41) observes, American abstinence movements use ‘sex to sell abstinence’.
Bent forward in titillated rapture, the enjoyment in hearing such stories was surely a powerful mode of communication about the rewards of chastity.

The erotic joys of marital sex, coded in the enthusiastic use of colour and fabric in Febe’s bridal chamber, intersect with another eroticism – the cultural fetish of a tight vagina. Sitting on ‘black sand beach’ with a group of teenage girls, one shared the following:

You know *nona* who got married last month? She told me that she was so scared because everyone told her vagina would hurt, some said it would bleed. She was surprised because it did not hurt and now they cannot stop, when I saw here they were holding hands the whole time. She told me that having lots of sex makes you *longgar* [loose, saggy] but you can make it tight again with a medicine at the supermarket – tight and fragrant.

The sexual aesthetics of vaginal tightness are common throughout Asia\(^{169}\) and products are available for purchase. Traditional post-partum techniques, for a fraction of the cost of store-bought products, were also known to diminish the size of the vagina. ‘You just mash the seed of the *pinang* a little and eat it. It helps clean out the womb and tightens the vagina,’ said one friend. Another, ‘boil *daun sirih* [leaf from a betel pepper vine], let it cool, then rub on your vagina. It makes it small.’ Local erotics of virginity, even without belief in hymens, add another dimension to understanding the agency of hope. In this case, agency is inscribed in reserving the full force of passion for an anticipated marriage.

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\(^{169}\) This ideal is commonly found across Indonesia (Davies & Bennett 2015, p. 2) and Asia, including India, where in 2013 a television commercial launched a vaginal tightening product called ‘18 again’ (Shackle 2012). The ad featured an older married couple dancing seductively to a jingle with the words ‘I feel like a virgin’.
Waiting for Marriage

Teen marriage, while common enough, is popularly conceived to be a cocktail of hardship, hand to mouth existence, and emotional volatility. This perception, combined with beliefs that the older the boy the better one is able to predict what kind of man he will be, is also a cultural element that strengthens the hope that inspires chastity. Young women all knew of someone whose fate took a turn for the worse after marrying before the man had a chance, by virtue of maturity and opportunity, to become steady and responsible. For my friend Elisa, a young woman who lived in a three bedroom, three generational household on the opposite side of the bay, this someone was her brother. As the cousin of one of the girls who lived with me, Elisa spent increasing amounts of time at my house after her seventeen-year-old brother brought home his pregnant fifteen-year-old wife. The marriage was a quiet and hasty affair that none were too pleased about. ‘There must have been some magik done,’ Elisa had told me:

My brother has changed. His wife is not cocok [fit, compatible] with our family, we have stopped talking, everyone is tegang [tense]. When she cooks, she just thinks of herself and my brother. She sleeps in the morning and then just sits around, doing her makeup and hair. Grandpa is angry we paid bridewealth. He says, ‘why have we paid for something we don’t want’? When my brother comes home, he goes to their room and they start fighting. She yells at him, says he must have another girlfriend because there is never enough money. All this yelling, there is no peace, I cannot concentrate on homework but exams are in two weeks. Poor mum, she is pusing [dizzy]. They are always asking her for money. Dad is feeling heavy shame [malu berat]. This makes us very worried (long pause and silent tears)... Their baby too, poor thing, he is not growing, he is staying small ...

Elisa’s experience highlights how marital hardship is more than a problem for the couple and their children: it can perpetuate suffering amongst all members of a household. For Elisa, the turbulence of her brother’s marriage has
prevented her from focusing on study, and for their mother, a fisherwoman and traditional medicine expert, it has created economic burden. Her grandfather’s comment about the new addition as a poor investment highlights tensions in meanings of bridewealth, as well as the older generations’ disappointment with changes in values of femininity and marriage.

Elisa’s greatest sadness is reserved for her father, who was overwhelmed by shame after recent events. To better understand this fear, I must backtrack to an earlier time when I first met Elisa in her peri-urban village on the other side of the bay. Slightly dizzy from betel nut, I was brushing patterns into freshly swept dirt with my foot in a clearing at the back of her house when a man appeared on the horizon, his muscular torso and arms dragging his stunted legs along the ground. When I asked her at a later time what had caused her father’s condition, she answered, without hesitation, ‘jealousy.’ People were jealous of her father: he had been tall, handsome, and a great fisherman, so they ‘talked’ (bicara, ‘gossip’) and this had made her dad malu (shamed) which had made him ‘small’ (keci). While I had suspected he had suffered polio, Elisa was sure the shame, so often associated ‘with a shrinking feeling’ (Friedman, JR 2007, p. 235), had literally shrunk his legs and left him half his previous size. This suggested an acute sensitivity to the feeling his son was creating in him. This understanding, it is likely, also inflects concern for their non-thriving baby.

After a few months, Elisa’s home life became unbearable, and she transitioned to living in my house. Before she asked if she could stay for a while, Elisa updated me:

It is more chaotic at home. My brother has started to hit her, more push than hit. He is pusing [dizzy, frazzled]. Money, money that’s all she has eyes for. He doesn’t want to come home, he knows she will start ... then when he does come home, she yells more. Before he was a good man, I am afraid he will soon become jahat – all the stress. He works long hours at the market, their baby takes medicine now. Have you seen him? He
sells Papua t-shirts... Our brother prints them in Sulawesi and sends them to us to sell. He has started to drink, she does not thank him for the money just yells there is not enough.

Elisa’s increasing desperation with her home situation was based on an incremental shift in her brother's temperament; once good, he is showing signs of becoming jahat. Yet Elisa, by blaming his wife for making him feel stressed, was able to preserve the idea that this change in behaviour was situational. His victimhood was further framed through accusations, which are common when relationships are not personally approved, that his wife entranced him through the deceptive means of love magic.170

One can never be too sure of whom one is marrying. People are known, especially after a trauma, when magik is done, or when they get very old, to become peculiar or otherwise different. It is equally the case, however, that the character (sifat, karakter) of teenagers is unfixed and unformed, an extension of the ‘not yet’ qualities of this phase of late childhood. As with the story of Ibu Dina – though her gendered selflessness earned her compassion – the experience of Elisa contains a moral lesson about the timing of sex. That is, due to the of bio-chemical flux that makes adolescent bodies potentially emotionally fickle and impulsive, combined with pragmatic economic realities, too-early weddings leave a couple ill equipped for the sober and steady demands of marriage and children.

Hope, Efficacy and Divinity

Hope, as Hage writes of waiting, ‘emphasises a dimension of life where the problematic of our agency is foregrounded’ (2009, p. 2). For McGeer, hope is ‘a unifying and grounding force of human agency’ (2004, p. 100), but it could

170 Of the Huli of PNG, Wardlow (2006a) has written that falling in love, seen as a kind of external assault that erodes the power of the will, is an experience often attributed to the use of love magic. This understanding is structured by broader ideas about gendered relationships as a battle.
also be said that there is ‘a passivism, a resignation, inherent in the notion of hope itself’ Crapanzano (2003, p. 5). Crapanzano rightfully observes that hope ‘depends on some other agency – a god, fate, chance, an other – for its fulfilment’ (2003, p. 6). Future colonisers, it could be said, put their trust in risk matrices, while for Christians, the agency of hope is God. Culture too, I have demonstrated, plays a part in the relative agency versus passivity of the self in relation to the future. The waiting time for marriage, I have mentioned, is invested with agency through beliefs about erotic build up, as well as ontologies of masculinity, personhood, and development. As I have argued in relation to dividual versus individual aspects of self, our task as ethnographers is not to choose between agency and passivity, but to explore how these dual modes of being and their points of tension are elicited in cultural contexts and meaning.

Friends in Manokwari were, to use a term coined by Robbins (2001, p. 526) to describe the Urampin of PNG, ‘everyday millenarians’ in that they blended ‘a strong belief in the imminent end of the world as they know it with a steady commitment to carrying out the tasks of everyday life.’ While Guyer (2007) has suggested that a commitment to the immediate present combined with a yearning for the distant future has evacuated investment in the near future, I found that young women’s hope connected the now with the soon-to-be. As for Christians everywhere, the animation of agency through time raises the conundrum of theodicy. God’s will, it was well recognised, was mysterious, as good behaviour was not always subject to divine reward. Despite injustices all around, especially corrupt officials enjoying their money, Papuans tend to deploy what psychologists call the ‘just-world phenomenon’ (Goldstein 1980, p. 235). When things go wrong, such as when a car has a fatal collision or an earthquake strikes, people filter events through a simplistic model in which He allocates fortune and misfortune in relation to piety or sin. When a neighbour contracted malaria and delivered a dead five-month-old baby, no one mentioned that her night-shift work at the local hospital left her vulnerable to malaria vectors. At her time of suffering, all talk was on how she had brought
the hardship on herself by exposing herself to *masuk angin* (the wind gets in) by travelling at night without a thick enough jacket.

When it comes to evaluating the self, few deployed this logic of blame. The Christian idea of ‘blessings’ (*berkat*) was a potent site for mitigating the fatefulness of hope by registering the efficacy of one’s actions. A grey-haired women we called *nenek* (grandma) explained to me how blessings work. ‘God is good,’ she said. ‘When we follow Him, listen to Him, do his work on earth, He sends blessings. He might fill our nets with fish or send an angel to our child on the exam day.’

This convergence of divine and human agency could bring rewards that were often immediate and material. ‘One time we prayed for a television,’ a young woman shared, her eyes full of awe. ‘The next day someone came to our door and gave us a television.’ Blessings, as an active register of hope, can even shade into the semantics of black magic. ‘My mother is a very strong at prayer,’ boasted one twenty-two-year-old married woman. ‘When her neighbour *bawa mulut* [carried her mouth, gossiped] she prayed to God to strike her with a heavy fever. The next day the neighbour had a fever.’

Chastity is not a strategy to maximise future success, but in stories like this, I could not but notice how blessings – brought on by prayer and other pieties – resembled other conceptual schemes. As well as sorcery, there was gift logic at play in that good behaviour, such as teen obedience and chastity, is a kind of offering that God, if one has strong faith, will return.

**Discussion: why Durkheim?**

Durkheim was an incorrigibly hopeful *fin de siècle* sociologist, but hope, as a concept, was never on his theoretical radar. It is possible to arrive as a Durkheimian reading of hope by recognising that affective yearnings for the near future play a pivotal role in both influencing normative behaviour and constructing moral ideals. In an essay where she notes the difference between hope and desire, Martin (2011, p. 150) suggests something of the
conservative implications of hope when she writes that ‘fully perverse desire may be possible, but not fully perverse hope.’ Going further than her suggestion that hope is ‘endorsed desire’ (ibid.), I believe that hope can animate the internalisation of moral regulation and integrate young women into education, economic, and family institutions. In the lives of coastal schoolgirls, hope is ontologically constructed through gender, agency, divinity, marriage, and human development. As a socially created sensibility, hope has motivational force in relation to chastity and, generally speaking, as a force of social integration and reproduction. To make this point, it is helpful to invert the thesis Durkheim presents in his ground-breaking study *Suicide* (1951).

To briefly recapitulate, in order to study suicide sociologically, Durkheim analysed swathes of statistics to argue that what seems a highly personal decision – that of ending one’s life – is a socially influenced outcome. Teasing out differences in the rates of suicide between gender, religion, country, and year, Durkheim proposed four different causes of suicide, three of which were based on the notion of the breakdown of social bonds and/or meaning in modern societies. There are a number of difficulties with his social theory of suicide that are beyond the scope of this discussion (Lukes 1973, pp. 217-219, Selvin 1958). What is of interest, and which is an idea supported by contemporary research (Eckersley & Dear 2002), is that social integration and meaning are correlates of suicide. If suicide – so often enacted from a sense of disconnection and despair – is common among people who lack of meaningful bonds with others, could it be that hope, which animates longing for a good, better, or more meaningful life, is a force of social integration? A Durkheimian approach to hope would not crush space for choice, agency, and subjectivity; it would paint the bigger picture as to how ideals direct this feeling and are constructed in the actions it inspires. After all, if people are more likely to renounce their existence when their bonds to

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171 The lack of meaningful bonds only pertains to two of his four types of suicide – anomic (lacking social direction, particularly at times of social change) and egoistic (not being emotionally and socially connected to community). The other types are altruistic (self-willed for the benefit of the group) and fatalistic (excessive regulation and control so that individuals have no space for vision or passion).
society are too lax or oppressive, hope creates vital connections to others and openness to the social world. In this way hope, which structures the Ideal through the commingling sensations of fear and desire, is another affective rationale that can advance a socially and emotionally grounded moral anthropology.
Chapter Eight

Fear

When I asked chaste friends why they did not want to boyfriend, more often than not they answered with one word: ‘scared’ (takut). Usually uttered with a shrug of the shoulders, a long blink of the eye and a short, sharp shake of the head, at times it seemed as if the mere word ‘boyfriend’ could send an icy chill through their bodies. Boyfriending was not only associated with pregnancy, a problem that could bring shame to the family, costly adat dispute resolutions, and also premature marriage, it was a prospect entwined with a host of other dangers: arousing the suspicion of teachers, being caught by a branch of the police who deal with moral offences, being the target of gossip. Perhaps most of all, young women were afraid that if they had a boyfriend they would be slapped, punched, or otherwise beaten for misconduct. Other kinds of violence were also seen to lie in wait. Boyfriending raised the chances of being raped, murdered, or becoming a victim of sorcery and other kinds of spirit or black magic attack. If fear can gives meaning and sustenance to hope for an adult future, it can also motivate sexual avoidance in a pure form, catalysed by the thought of objects that pose an immediate threat.

In this chapter I explore how fear, or rather the cultural meanings that generate fear, compels young women to avoid romantic and sexual involvement. After discussing how moral choices based in fear — a primary and negative emotion activated spontaneously, automatically and on a low level of the nervous system (Damasio 2003, cited in Jarymowicz & Bar-Tal 2006, p. 368) — give sound supports for Durkheim’s moral theory, I explore perceptions of dangers that inspire the sense that boyfriending is not worth the effort. These are, in respective order: random violence by unknown others, beatings by relatives, reputation attack by gossip, surveillance by teachers and the moral police, and supernatural sanctions. At the end of the chapter, I consider how the centrality of fear in young women’s moral
decision-making is perhaps the strongest evidence for the importance of Durkheim's moral fact in regards to anthropological approaches to ethical life.

Fear: primal and social

Fear is considered a candidate for universality (Ekman 1992): a feeling initiated by a perception of threat that triggers a fight or flight response and serves an evolutionary function (LeDoux 2012). Though the physiological changes that create fear are pre-cultural, in that they enable us to make snap decisions about confronting or escaping the perceived threat, fear is also a learned reaction. The fear I found to motivate chastity was not a direct outcome of confrontation with an unwanted stimulus, characterised by a physiological response of accelerated breathing and heart rate (Myers 1989, p. 391). It was fear based on vicarious experience of the consequences of a moral lapse: a fear learned from having heard, experienced, or seen peers or siblings attacked or otherwise hurt for a moral transgression, even a suspected one. In this light, chastity was not only a manifestation of fear, it was a strategy to manage it.

Studying fear as a social and cultural experience involves the recognition that fear is determined by political, economic, and cultural scripts that teach people what to fear, how to express fear, and how to create meaning and values in relation to fear. In Manokwari, the fear of multiple agents that featured in discussions with young women about the sexual choices were refracted through fears that lay outside the context of sexual activity. These fears were structured through the hostile environment of urban Papua, where rates of domestic violence are high and numerous spirits, militias, and other malevolent forces are seen to lie in wait. Links between passion and dangers to the body were made through symbolic understandings of mobility and the night as well as the subterranean life of sexual desire. The particulars of the

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172 It also involves recognising that temperament plays a role in this experience. Some people are more or less fearless or fearful than others (Myers 1989, p. 391).
Papuan situation bring to mind Elias’ (1982, p. 327) point that ‘the strength, kind and structures of the fears and anxieties that smoulder or flare in the individual never depend solely on his own “nature”.’ Rather they are ‘always determined, finally by the history and the actual structure of his relations to other people.’

The power of the state and media to deflect, assuage, or transmit fear out of economic and moral interests has been well documented (Pain & Smith 2008; Ahmed 2004; Linke & Smith 2009), so that fear, as Pain and Smith (2012, p. 1) note, has become a post-millennial ‘motif for the human condition’. Though research on fear has grown, both in relation to specific areas of research such as risk, crime, or terrorism, and as an experience that creates racism and other inequities (Ahmed 2004), anthropologists have not explored fear in relation to moral life. The notion that people adhere to group norms and espouse group values because they fear the sanctions for nonconformity is well established in social psychology (Homans 1965; Schachter 1951), yet in the recent literature on morality and ethics, fear is nowhere to be found. Considering that fear is an emotion that shuts down innovation and the openness to novelty (Jarymowicz & Bar-Tal 2006, p. 372), this is perhaps unsurprising. After all, if the ethical domain is a space of ‘the development of one or another competent and conscious exercise of the practice of freedom’ (Faubion 2011, p. 36), then fear, because it ‘stalls consideration of various alternatives’ (Jarymowicz & Bar-Tal 2006, p. 372), would appear to have no role in ethical and moral life.

Faubion (2011, pp. 77, 122, 163, 170) comes close to articulating this position when he writes that though fear is an inevitable emotion in moral life, if it motivates moral action, whatever is being studied is likely outside the ethical. Drawing on Foucault, who argued that where there is no freedom there is no ethical domain, Faubion provides the example of a slave ‘ideal – typically conceived as a subject whose substantive agency is wholly determined by his or her or its master’ (2011, p. 37). Given that the young women in this thesis – who have no master determining their agency – choose not to boyfriend
because they fear the consequences of doing so, Faubion’s unwillingness to entertain the notion that fear can motivate acts of moral goodness suggests conceptual weakness in his theoretical frame. For Durkheim, fear was a potent force in both the experience and creation of sacred ideas, and so played a key role in moral reasoning.

Random Violence

Young women who spent time with men in the secretive and after-dark spaces of the underground were known to leave themselves at risk of becoming a victim of passion. Men's sexual desire, it was said, could overcome them, but rape was only one spectacle of horror. Young women, it was reported in the news or through gossip channels, could be poisoned or murdered by men, known and unknown, out of sexual jealousy or simply because they were evil (jahat). In the focus group interviews in 2011, many recited a story about a tragedy that befell some schoolgirls after graduation the previous year. In the words of one sixteen year old.

Last year a group of kids from my school went out to celebrate graduation. They went to Bakari, you know where they call the fish ma? Far far past Rendani. The boys put spertus [spiritus, ‘methylated spirits’] in the girls’ drinks, so they would become a little bit drunk. Boys like to do this ma because it makes girls happy so it is easier for them to get a pacar [girlfriend]. But one of them must have put too much in the drink, or perhaps the spertus was bad, because three of the girls died the next day. They died quick, before they could get to hospital.

Danger could lurk in many forms and women too could maim or kill – not only jealous girlfriends or wives but any woman invested in stopping the affair could also cause harm.

The following story, told by my friend Anggita, describes violence committed against a girl by the sister of the wife of the man with whom she was sexually involved: 
My cousin has a neighbour who had an affair with a high school girl when his wife was in hospital. She had not taken her contraception out after three years, like you must do, it had been five years and she was very sick. While she lay in a hospital bed almost dead, there was a nona at home playing with her husband. The nona did not know the wife had a sister who had a man-style [gaya laki laki] – she was really galak [fierce, aggressive], her body was huge and she wore army boots, laced tied right up to here (points to below her knee).

My neighbour saw her go inside then she heard screaming then the girl was hanging upside down, up high above their garage. Her memet [vagina/vulva] was facing the street, her legs were caught in the pillars of the verandah, cars started to slow down when they went past. Then the man ran out onto the verandah – in a primary school uniform (belly laughter...). He was confused because he had stopped in the middle of sex and put his son’s school uniform on (riotous laughter). The shorts and shirt were inside out and tightly fitted, he picked them up, without thinking off the floor.

That girl has deep shame, her family have locked her up and she cannot have children. I heard the woman kicked her vagina so hard, then grabbed her leg and dragged her outside. The girl’s memet was bashed on the corner of the door-frame as she was pulled outside. That’s when my cousin saw her, just hanging off the verandah. That woman was so galak, she did not stop, she kept kicking the girl until she escaped, climbed up and over the railing and fell onto the ground.

This story, where a young woman is singled out for a brutal bashing while the man is a laughable buffoon, illustrates the gendered valency of danger. The man’s immorality was framed in terms of the timing of his affair – when his wife was in hospital for a birth control complication – while the full reserve of pain and shame was directed at the young women.

Tales of violence, George (1996, p. 1) noted of headhunter narratives in highland Sulawesi, are forceful and seductive ‘even when violence is left behind.’ Whispers of girls raped and murdered instilled fear by the
randomness of atrocities, leaving a ‘disquiet of thinking’ (ibid., p. 1). Though repulsion – which propels the desire to avoid a certain fate – ensures that fear is rarely proportional to chance (Jarymowicz & Bar-Tal 2006, p. 372), being attacked by lovers or strangers was a lesser fear than being attacked by kin. After confessing that fear stops them boyfriending, young women went on to elaborate that they were ‘afraid of being hit’ (takut dipukul). Where violence outside the home was diffuse and unknown, young women were certain that at least one relative – usually the father, but any male or female who had an interest in their reputation and was kepala batu (stone head, ‘stubborn and hot tempered’) – would react violently if they suspected them of sexual misconduct.

**Domestic Violence**

Domestic violence – discursively linked to alcohol abuse and framed as a social problem blocking Papuan progress – is rarely contested when directed at a sexually active daughter. Even without evidence, such as pregnancy, beatings of young women are assumed to be warnings to stop an affair or to not even think of having an affair and, as we saw in the case of Suri (Chapter One), taken as evidence of a girl’s immorality. During my years in Old Town I became accustomed to sights and stories of random attacks by youth. As well as the broom thrashing of Suri, Silas being run down by a motorbike (Chapter Six), and the young women kicked naked over the balcony, I have seen a father cut a daughter’s arms with a machete and another chasing a boy down the road and knocking him over by throwing a small rock at his head. Lying on the road, he beat this person he suspected of seducing his daughter over the face and back with a heavy stick until he was bruised and bleeding. To my mind, these beatings came from nowhere, an eruption that broke the smooth surface of the day or night. For the victims, they tended to have an inkling that

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173 Even hitting students, which has long been seen as a teacher’s right, is no longer accepted in Manokwari. According to one woman, ‘if you hit children they become afraid, then their mind closes and they do not learn’.
danger was near by monitoring for warnings: verbal and shifts in mood and attention of those who had the power to harm.

To give an example of how violence is an unfolding drama, I will describe a series of events in my neighbourhood that culminated in the beating of two young women. After a few weeks of rain, I had been enjoying convivial gatherings in the evening. Such conditions were, it seemed, perfect for romantic shenanigans and so, when two sisters living with their aunt a few doors down started to take long periods of *jalan jalan* (travelling about), their aunt grew suspicious. One evening when I popped in to collect my son, who had been playing with a mouse tied to a string attached to a stick, Ibu Ina expressed her concern about her nieces. As the head of a women’s rights NGO, she told me that girls can go *jalan jalan* because ‘they have the same rights as men to travel about’, but not every night, and especially not at exam time. For four nights now, she told me in exasperated tones, the girls hadn’t come home until after 10pm and this was not acceptable:

I am furious with Acha and Yetha. They are giving me a headache [*bikin kepala saki*]. All day and late in the night, too much *jalan jalan*. What are they doing? They won’t tell me, they don’t listen. And it is exam time. They are not preparing for exams. I made a promise to their mother.

The movements of the girls were all the more troublesome for Ibu Ina given the reason why her nieces had come to live with her. Her older sister, the girl’s ‘womb’ (*kandung*) or biological mother, had approached her sister some years earlier to request that her daughters spend their teenage years in Gospel Town and not Sorong, where she lived and worked. Yetha once explained this to me. ‘I live with my aunt because Sorong has too much *pengaruh* [influence]. It is *kacau* [chaotic] not a good place for kids to grow big – there is lots of truancy, prostitution and *narkoba* [narcotics, ’illegal drugs’].’

Ibu Ina did not go so far as to accuse her nieces of sexual impropriety, but this was implied in her question ‘what are they doing?’ An uncle, Ibu Ina’s
younger brother, began to take an inordinate interest in the girls' whereabouts. Word was out that he thought one of them was boyfriending with a particular policeman, a Kaimana man who was a notorious philanderer, from another part of town. This was a most unwelcome development because this uncle, a short, unmarried, unemployed man, was something of a nuisance to Ibu Ina’s household. Whenever his motorbike was heard arriving out the front, Acha and Yetha cringed. ‘He comes around drunk and hungry’ Acha once told me, ‘then he yells at us for not having food on the table. He even tried to hit us for this. He is lazy, he had no money, we want him to go back to Sorong so we can live in peace.’

Things did not improve for Ibu Ina, who became increasingly agitated by the girls’ late nights. According to the girls I lived with, the girls were not coming home because they were scared. ‘They are hiding, waiting for everyone to go to bed so that people are too sleepy to hit them. They will wake up subuh (before dawn) and leave again.’ Out of desperation, their mama piara issued an invitation for anyone who saw the girls to beat them and send them home. One night I was pulled from a light sleep by the voice of a man shouting. By the time I scurried outside, the commotion had stopped, but Violet, one of the girls who lived with us, was sitting on a chair in the shadows out the front. She informed me that Ibu Ina’s younger brother had just beaten Jofan, a fifteen-year-old boy he suspected to be a ‘pengaruh’ (influence) in the girl’s mysterious absences. Though mobile phones allow for direct communication between lovers, the older institution of a ‘go-between’ (jembatan, ‘bridge’) is still used, especially in the early stages of a relationship. This arrangement places close friends in danger of being blamed for facilitating illicit encounters.

The next day, the girls came home from school early and stayed in their room. I was blocked from seeing them by their aunt who politely told me the girls were studying and could not talk now. She pulled me to one side of the lounge room and spoke softly:

..they heard what happened to Jofan and felt bad. My adik [younger sibling] was drunk, he was wrong to hit Jofan. He said that he had seen
Jofan with the policeman. This policeman also left his home at the same time the girls did ... it is very suspicious but poor Jofan. He is just a boy. When my adik saw Jofan last night he just exploded, he just ran at Jofan and punched him in the face. Jofan was wearing a helmet and the force of the punch shook his helmet from his head. My adik picked up the helmet and threw it at him, hard.

After two days and two nights, Ibu Ina’s house felt as if it had returned to an equilibrium. Ibu Ina spent time of the evening reading the Bible with the girls to remind them of their godly duties, and they had returned to doing domestic work and homework after school.

As well as highlighting gross inequities in social power, the idea of justifiable rage suggests a complicated relationship to anger. Coastals, I mentioned in an earlier section, prided themselves on their ability to keep calm, a point of moral contrast to stereotypes of volatile and less-civilised Mandechan. And yet I often sensed relish when people such as Ibu Ina recounted the details of a family member’s attack. At the same time, anger was described as uncontrollable: ‘when a head gets hot it cannot finish until it comes out’ said one. Christian and modern ideals of emotional styles and non-violent conflict resolution were certainly at odds with social realities, and evaluations of angry eruptions appeared as a form of ‘cultural intimacy’ – Herzfeld’s (2005) term for features of local character that were both cherished and a source of discomfort.¹⁷⁴

Precisely because domestic violence is an important motive for sexual avoidance, I want to add complexity to my analysis of the notion that violent sanctions are a more or less predictable and culturally legitimate response to premarital sex. On the third night after Jofan was beaten, the uncle returned

¹⁷⁴ By way of brief illustration, whenever my son yelled and threw his toys at someone he felt had aggrieved him, people would laugh it off and say that he was just ‘stone-headed’. When I tried to address what I saw as an anger management problem, friends would block my behaviourist strategies with words to the effect of, ‘after a year in Papua Darius has become Papuan. He is ‘stone headed’ just like Papuans.’
and yelling started in the house. Hearing the distinctive sound of his motorbike, I put my sandals on and started to walk out the door but was physically pulled back by the girls in my house. ‘You must not interfere,’ Violet had said. ‘This is their business. You might get hurt. He could hit you.’ It was hard to look at Acha and Yetha the next day, their faces lumpy and blue, without feeling I had failed them. When the house was quiet I crept through the back door to find them in a room, face down on mattresses. One was deadly still and one fiddled with her mobile phone. Sitting on the mattress, I put my hand on Yetha’s shoulder and apologised for not coming to help.

She spoke in a voice, so soft and small she seemed altered:

We don’t understand: why is this uncle so angry? He has already made one victim [korban] and it is between us and God. We have talked to God, He has forgiven us. This uncle pays nothing for us. He comes and eats our food. Why does he act like this, is he jealous? We feel uncomfortable [rasa tidak enak] with his attention. Last month he told us if we go to university and have a boyfriend he will come to our [student accommodation] and beat us. Our mum has always said we should jaga kemungkinan [protect from possibilities] because our uncle could follow through.

Unlike Suri, who experienced her mother’s beating as an act of care, these young women were suspicious of their uncle’s intent. Violence, in this case, had no social frame of moral redemption and there was a clear undertone that it may well have been driven by incestuous desires.

Though the legitimacy of beatings can be contested within the contingency of circumstance, the phenomenology of violence can have a similar outcome on perceptions of moral choice. Acha – who had in fact had a secret relationship with the policeman – explained how it felt to be beaten by her uncle.

You have to stop because they hit you until you go into shock. It makes you angry but you also think, “tidak usah sudah” [no effort already, don’t bother]. There’s a special word for it, aaaa …’trauma’. When you suffer
trauma you go into shock and can’t ... you can’t think, or feel. We have an expression *korban cinta* [victim of love, sacrifice for love]. You lose so much for love. They make you stop seeing your boyfriend, your friends... Being hit, it makes your blood hot, you cannot eat, you feel stress, you are sick in your stomach. This means your *proses di dalam* [internal processes] is not functioning.

By explaining how it feels to be on the receiving end of violent assault, Acha uses the word ‘trauma’ and ‘stress’, suggestive of the influence of therapeutic thought in this part of Papua. In this deepest level of somatic knowledge, of feeling numb, losing appetite, and suffering stomach pains, the potential joys and excitement of romance often feel not worth it. As with young women who come off the edge or back from the sexual line they have crossed after a religious epiphany, young women who are beaten often develop an apathy to rebellion.

**Gossip**

Another fear that upheld chastity as an elementary form of moral life was the fear of being an object of ‘talk’ (gossip). Gossip, as the word ‘talk’ (*bicara*) suggests, is a ubiquitous feature of Papuan life as well as a slightly derogatory term for women’s conversations. The gendering of gossip, even though men also engage in talk about others, is common to other world regions, as is the ambivalence Papuans feel towards this linguistic form (Besnier 2009, p. 17). People enjoyed being part of groups and dyads that gossiped but, with no obvious dissonance, everyone hated gossip. One woman described it as ‘like when your canoe is rocked by the waves of a passing speedboat.’ Another used a tsunami metaphor: ‘first you see little waves then a big wave comes and kills people.’ Gossip was even implicated in a critique of the Papua problem: Ibu Salawaki, a Serui woman and head of a women’s right NGO, told me, ‘this talk, it is no good, too much time spent with short thoughts (*pikiran pendek*). Makes people fight. For example, I come to your house. We sit and talk about the world. We talk about life here 244
compared to life in Australia. I ask you about how the government is in your country, things like this. This opens our mind, helps Papua to advance.'

As a ‘quintessentially anthropological focus of inquiry’ (Besnier 2009, p. 1), gossip is a social and communicative practice that has been studied in a number of ways, including as a form of agency to the disempowered and a vehicle in which to negotiate the micro-politics of daily life (ibid., pp. 8-11). As a literature mostly concerned with the contingency of form and meaning or the agency and intention of speaker, I was ill prepared to make sense of the cavalier attitude of some women who divulged secrets and ridiculed others. Though ‘talk’ was potentially everywhere, it tended to be associated with certain characters: types of women described as cerewet (talkative, chatterbox, gossipy). Gossips could strike by teasing. When my neighbour said to one girl who lived with me, ‘you are looking good, where are you going all dressed up like that. Got a boyfriend?’ she received it as slander. She fumed for days over what she saw as the woman’s ‘sharp tongue’, and was careful to stay indoors and avoid company.

Such women could instill fear by their mere presence. Young women hated passing by groups of people where gossips were present, and often took longer routes or cancelled plans to go out if they knew eyes would be watching. Laughter provoked the fear that it was they who was the butt of the jokes. The cerewet, typically large in body and supported by a pegawai husband, was often the life of a gathering and easily attracted company. Being a cerewet did not automatically imply one was a gossip: the term referred to any woman who was loud, brash and talkative. Neither was gossip concentrated in the cerewet – one could never be sure who might gossip.

From my stance as an outsider, when young women reported to ‘hear’ gossip, it seemed to me like the moralising scene of a Greek chorus. ‘Stop,’ Nofi demanded of me in the middle of our interview in my lounge room. ‘I am furious [ganas] with the neighbours, Ibu Ina d’orang [Mrs Ina and her people] ribut ribut [making noise].’
'What are they saying?' I asked, not hearing a thing.

She replied:

They are saying, “Nofi telling ibu all about the jalan jalan she does and about all her boyfriends”. OK. I have an idea. We should sembunyi [hide] in your bedroom, not out here in the front. We will tipu [lie to], tell people ibu is helping Nofi with Bahasa Ingriss and giving Nofi a computer lesson.

The potential for stigma from being interviewed, given that people knew my research interests, was vocalised by Nofi through the idiom of gossip. It would though be incorrect, however, to assume gossip was being used for some other purpose, like stopping an interview or moving location. The phenomenology of gossip in Manokwari was such that gossip often struck – in the sense of being felt as an attack – even though it was empirically impossible to hear voices that far away.

Anthropological interest in the people who gossip and their audiences has left the consequences of gossip for its victims an understudied area of research (Besnier 2009, p. 16). Young women were pained by gossip: a pain felt as shame when internalised or anger when externalised. These feelings, depending on circumstance, could coincide for young women, but shame, not anger, was the culturally legitimate response. Senior men and women could lash out in defense of their young relative, and this incited conflict that created ripples of more pain. ‘Gossip bikin kacau (makes chaos)’ it was said. An older woman told me, ‘Talk can kill. It is true. Sometimes people murder other people because of talk, or they kill themselves from the shame of talk.’

Pausing in a conversation, Violet hissed, ‘aaagh I can hear her talking about us.’ Straining to hear anything beyond the loud croaks of frogs, I asked ‘who?’ ‘Ibu Yunitha’ Violet replied without skipping a beat. ‘She is calling us dogs.’ Between my perfect hearing and the physical impossibility of voices being carried through walls forty metres away, I was puzzled. Suspending doubt, I took such experiences as a form of local knowledge: the idea that young
women are not only always poised for seduction, they are also poised for attack by gossip.

I will describe an episode that transpired in my house during my second year of fieldwork in order to illuminate how careless words can become social facts that hurt girls and their families. This story also demonstrates how the prospect of being gossiped about motivates the negotiation of self in relation to others that share a social world. Violet, a young woman who lived in our house, had been corresponding via text message with a civil servant in his mid-thirties in Jayapura. She had met him a year before at church, where he was accompanying his mother who also lived in Jayapura but was home visiting her family. Her mother, he told her, thought she was a ‘good woman’ (*perempuan baik*) and so did he. In recent texts, he had asked her to visit and stay with him and his mother. Violet was tempted by the offer, not only because he had a *jabatan* (position). He was also an *orang baik* (*good man*), she said, but she ultimately decided against such a trip based on what others might say if she were to embark on a journey to spend time with a man.

One afternoon, after we agreed that his mother’s favourable opinion of her was a positive sign for a future relationship and that she should go, Violet backslid. ‘No’ she said. ‘I can’t, people will talk.’

‘Go,’ I urged. ‘I will tell them you are visiting a relative in hospital.’

She replied:

Ma you don’t comprehend talk around here... Even if you say this, they will say I am *nakal*. When people say things, we feel ashamed [*malu*]. If they say you are *nakal*, then you are *nakal*. Gossip makes people furious, they can become *jahat* [*evil, violent*]. My mother is like this. It is funny yeah? You would not think my mother could be like this but when I was in SMP she heard that a friend’s mother had called me *sombong* [*conceited*] so she arrived at her house and hit her with some wood. Mama becomes wild when she hears talk.
Violet did eventually go to Jayapura and is now married to this man. In the end it was not me that encouraged her to go but her mother and father, more legitimate authorities in Violet’s moral line. God visited her mother one night, Violet recounted, and He told her a husband was approaching her daughter. However, this did not stop speculation that Violet had disappeared in morally suspicious circumstances.

‘Where has nona gone with that big bag?’ asked a local cerewet.

‘She is catching a ship to Jayapura to look after her sick aunt’ I replied. In the days and weeks that followed, I became aware of what Violet meant by ‘if they say you are bad, you are.’ All sorts of stories that cast aspersion on Violet’s character emerged in the gaps of her absence, irrespective of my attempts to fill in these gaps with information. I list a few shared by friends:

At school people say nona has been kicked out of your home, that she had been caught boyfriending and you told her to leave immediately and never come back.
Sandra, aged 15

I was with Ibu Payu before. She saw nona Violet at Pasir Putih today with a soldier. She has eloped with him.
Anneke, aged 15

Nona was at Maruni [a place with a large brothel and so with negative moral connotations]. Ibu Pinang passed her on the road.
Jeanni, aged 17

I was often frustrated by how gossip was never qualified with ‘apparently’ or ‘according to …’: rather, words were spoken as hardened truths. When I rang Violet, I did not report what people were saying back at home, and yet somehow she knew. When she returned, she announced she had to leave my house and go home to her peri-urban village. ‘Thank you mama’ she said. ‘I like living here with you close to my school but I don’t feel safe [aman], only safe at home. The neighbours here are too sibuk [busy, ‘gossip’]. Even before
I went to Jayapura I was so mad with all the talk that because I live with bule [albino, ‘westerners’] I am sombong [arrogant]. I will just leave. Sorry.

Gluckman’s (1963) functionalist analysis of gossip, which first put gossip on the disciplinary radar, was discredited by forms of methodological individualism that emerged in the 1970s (Besnier 2009, p. 16.). It is the case that ‘it is the individual and not the community that gossips’ (Paine 1967, pp. 280-281), and yet Gluckman’s insight that gossip creates a boundary between moral deviance and acceptability is highly relevant to my findings. The emotional appeal of gossip — the pleasure of hearing stories that inscribe you as part of the group — does confer the sense that a speaker and her audience are on the side of righteousness. At the same time, unpleasant and painful feelings that arise when one feels they have been spoken of serve to sanction and regulate sexual moral rules. The power of sentiment to affirm chastity was summed up by Violet: ‘there are so many sharp tongues (lidah tajam), I am malas (lazy, can’t be bothered’) to look at boys.’

State-backed Sanctions

If the threat of violence and gossip are spontaneous and informal modes of moral control, the interventions of adat leaders, teachers, and adat police (traditional police) in the sexual lives of youth are examples of what Durkheim meant by formal sanctions — that is, sanctions backed by the legitimacy of institutions. I described in Chapter Four the emotional and financial sanctioning of customary conflict resolution by adat leaders and I now concentrate on the sexual surveillance by agents of the state. Friends often told me that teachers are quick to find out if you have a secret boyfriend and if they do, they will report it to your parents. I was a friend of one such teacher, a large-bodied, devoutly Christian, fifty-something Biak woman whom everyone called Ibu Guru [Mrs Teacher]. ‘I gave a warning to a girl only yesterday,’ she told me when I raised the topic:

She was off drinking with someone’s husband. The man’s wife went to
her house, and yelled at the girl’s mum. Then she went to the school and reported the girl to me, her teacher. This made a problem, her dad was furious, but it is my duty to pay attention. Teachers and parents should work together to help children pass exams. I called her in, talked to her about the importance of concentrating on study.

A teacher’s suspicion can be raised in different ways. Sometimes, as in this case, a teacher is tipped off, but Ibu Guru told me that school absences are also a sign that a student is on the downward slide:

When we do the roll we may ask ‘where is so and so today?’ and sometimes we hear that they were seen earlier wearing their uniform and so we take note…. If we have evidence we call them into the office to talk to them about the risks [risiko] of interacting with boys... If we think they are not listening, or if they are at high risk (of failure) we speak to their parents. Every year there are some few girls who get pregnant and leave. It is the duty of teachers to stop this, to notice before there is a problem. Parents become rugi [loss, to suffer a material or social blow]. One girl in year eleven last year killed herself – she drank sprite and malaria tablets together – she felt such heavy shame.

That teachers extend their duty of care beyond the bounds of the classroom would, to a western reader, appear a gross blurring of the public/private divide. Yet this situation reflects social hierarchies found across the nation where inferiors, whether students or employees (anak buah; ‘fruit children’), are morally answerable to their boss. In the civil service, for instance, an employee must request permission from their boss to get married or divorced, and ‘immoral’ conduct, even by the employee’s family, can be grounds for dismissal. Counseling one friend after her fiancée ran away with another woman, I soon realised my words of comfort were not speaking to her reality. Where I assumed the sick heart (sakit hati) she complained of was from thwarted love, she was heartbroken because of the implications her broken engagement could have on her father’s position on the church’s council. ‘Dad might get dismissed from the church for this, the council gave me two years to get married, when they find out ….’ Though I never heard of anyone being fired
for a child’s immoral conduct, the mere possibility of a parent losing a position served as a strong incentive to avoid pre-marital sex.

Ibu Guru’s belief that teachers are helping students by monitoring their behavior underscores how in Indonesia, ‘surveillance operates in contrasting modes of care and control’ (Davies 2015, p. 43). The high rates of teacher absenteeism in Papua (Munro 2009, p. 4) shows that the mere presence of teachers is construed as care but, curiously enough, care is also registered in what Davies calls control. Sali, a friend and a former student of Ibu Guru, shared what it felt like to be singled out by her for a moral warning:

A few years ago, there was a boy in my class and we became friends. One night we took a taxi ride to Kwawi, you know that beach at the end of the taxi route. We just talked, you know, ate *nasi bunkus* on the rocks, I was only thirteen. Then we couldn’t get home – there were no taxis. We had to walk from far, far to here. I was scared, scared of magik, scared of spies, scared of being watched by gossips – I tried to hide, walking away from the lights in the shadows so no one would see us. My *kakak* [older sibling] told mum and dad that I was sick, so they thought I was in my bed sleeping...

The next day, at the end of the day, the teacher dismissed the class but asked that I stay. I thought I would faint. I felt ashamed. All the school children know what it means to have your name called. That you are *nakal*. When the classroom was empty, Ibu Guru said she knew I was out late the night before. She said she would not tell my mother this time but if she heard I was out at night again she would be visiting my house. In Papua our teachers can make us leave the school if we are bad ma…

Then we prayed together, we prayed for a long time for me to ask God to

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\[175\] I did hear of a woman, described in sneering tones as a ‘career woman’ (*wanita karir*), getting fired. She had lived in our neighbourhood before I arrived and the story went, she lost her job following an extramarital affair. The circumstance of the affair’s discovery was implicated in this scandal – her lover was found dead from an overdose of ecstasy in a hotel room in Jakarta. I suspect that the unpopularity of this woman, who was said to have risen high in her department and was never at home, leaving her husband to raise their two children, led to her dismissal more than her affair.
help me be his faithful child and keep him close. Ibu Guru has a good heart. I thanked her for her paying attention, prayer and the chance to do right. Her students are like her children. She wants us to do well.

In the intimacy of her teacher's gaze, however unpleasant, Sali felt that Ibu Guru was ‘paying attention’ because she cared about her educational outcomes.

The mobile phone is presenting new challenges for teachers in monitoring the extra-curricular activities of their students. In 2011, I was alerted to how some had risen to the challenge of flirtation via mobile phone by instituting a novel regime known as *swiping hp* (mobile phone sweeping). This effort, which uses the idiom of traffic police ‘sweeping’ operations, involves teachers sporadically demanding that students hand in their mobile phones for examination. As with the barricades that channel vehicles towards police officers checking for licenses and vehicle registration, students cannot escape having their text messages and other immoral content, such as downloaded pornography examined by teachers.

Across Indonesia, regional police stations\(^\text{176}\) have a branch entrusted with the preservation of moral values and the resolution of social conflict. In Manokwari, this wing is known as *polisi adat* (traditional police) – a mixed ethnic group of Papuan policeman who negotiated disputes between neighbours, cases of drunkenness, domestic violence, and also ‘girl problems’ (*masala cewek*) – the colloquial term for issues to do with illicit sex. Given the general distrust among Papuans towards the police (International Crisis Group 2002, pp. i-iv), it surprised me that some went to them instead of *adat* leaders in order to seek justice for their daughter’s seduction. One mother explained her decision in this respect: ‘The police are quick, they *tuntut* (make a demand, ‘impose a fine’) and follow up repayment.’ Local confidence in the

\(^{176}\) The police, who were separated from the army in the reform era, are the second-biggest security force in West Papua (Supriatma 2013, p. 106). Regional police headquarters (Polda) oversee precinct and district-level offices (Polres and Polresta) as well as sub-district offices (Polsek) and police posts.
adat police, who are not known for their brutality, seems to be based on their authority and power to implement fast justice.

The efforts of moral police predate reformasi, but with the implementation of moral regulations (perda) and the growth of the city there is a sense of urgency and importance to their work. In Manokwari, the moral police have not, as is documented for other parts of the nation (Davies 2015, p. 35), taken to raiding hotels to check that couples have a marriage certificate, but they do ‘sweep the streets’ (menyapu jalan) at night to find drunk men and illicit sexual relationships. In 2011, I was witness to such a spectacle from the shadows beside the house opposite White Sand Beach (Pasir Putih) where I was staying. It was Saturday night, a popular time for lovers who could not afford hotels to hook up in outside destinations. Around 9pm, coinciding with the time of informal curfew, a police van arrived with dim light and without sound. Every hundred metres or so, the van pulled over and silently (though it was difficult to see) plucked people from beneath the stone wall or nearby bushes and into the police van. When it reached the last stop, at the beach carpark, only one man was put in the back. He emitted a cry of surprise more than anger as he was led from behind the public toilet block.

This scene of radical alterity put me in what Wardlow (2006b, p. 35) calls the ‘gadfly mode of ethnographic inquiry’. I scurried back to the house to ask my host a series of rapidly fired questions:

Sarah: What just happened? Why are they taking them? I counted nine people, how many are in the car? Where are they taking them? What will they do to them?

N: The police are just catching drunks and naughty girls.

Sarah: Is it illegal to have sex on the beach?

N: I don’t know. Maybe. I know it is illegal to drink and it’s against God’s law to have sex with a man who is not our husband. It might be illegal too... Don’t think about it ma... it’s already usual ... the police will take them back to the office, put them in a cell, and call their parents. The
drunk men will have to wait for the toxin [racur] to leave the body. When
the parents come to get their daughters they will feel shame, just pay the
fine and get them out quickly.

Sarah: What about the police, do they rape or beat them?
N: No (laughs). The navy is jahat [evil] ma, not the adat police. They take
money and might hit the drunk men if they get too loud ... they are not
jahat.

As foreigners, we had to report monthly to the police station to extend our
surat jalan (letter of permission to stay and travel in Papua). I tried hard not to
look at the men, and less often women, slumped and despondent in a cage-
like cubicle outside the room we reported. My kids liked to run up to the bars
and run away when hands reached out to grab them. This game of ‘catch’
made everyone laugh: my kids, the prisoners, and the policemen. The mere
thought of being ‘swept’ – a cleaning metaphor that invokes the power of the
state to remove moral pests – is yet another affective rationale that repels
chaste girls from participating in the romantic underground.

Sorcery and Magic

Another common expression in conversations about why girls preferred to not
have a boyfriend was, ‘no good I am out at night at someone makes magik
[magic].’ Premarital sex runs the risk of magik – which in this context refers to
supernatural attack, but mostly sorcery – in one of two ways. Simply being
out at night heightens the chance of being seen and struck by spirits or other
malevolent entities. Urban living, with increasingly dense living spaces,
heightens the fear of accidentally standing in the path of sorcery being sent to
hit someone else. In 2011, one host forbade me to sit outside at night, even
though her verandah was much cooler than inside the house. A feud had
developed between her neighbors on either side, she told me, so I needed to
avoid becoming a victim of the magik she suspected was being sent between
them at night. The tense social climate, where poisoning is seen as the
predominant form of death, confers unique meanings and intensity to sorcery and magic, but fear of invisible assailants is likely also grounded in pre-modern beliefs about spiritual sanctioning for moral transgressions. As Held (1957, p. 89) noted for Waropen, ‘cohabitation’ of young lovers is considered ‘dangerous’ in the forest and the front of the house for breaking this taboo will see the lovers’ souls stolen by water spirits.

The second mode of attack, far more common, was sorcery initiated out of jealousy. Aggrieved people are said to seek the services of sorcerers – men knowledgeable in the dark arts of *ilmu* (science, knowledge, ‘black magic’). For a negotiated fee, they will harm through tangible means, such as performing rituals with objects collected from the victim (hair, clothes, toenail cuttings). After the infliction of *magik*, a victim will suffer illness, disfigurement or death. ‘Last year a small boy was dragged from the ocean,’ a friend told me, beginning an anecdote that illustrates the extreme suffering that jealousy can create:

There was an awful smell. I could smell it from my house, a rotting smell.
I followed it to the beach where they had pulled the boy from the bottom.
He was puffed up ma all white and his face was all fleshy and smashed like pulpy over-ripe papaya. Apparently his older sister had been playing with someone’s husband and the man’s wife sent a *suangi* [ghost, spirit].

The power of spirits, ancestor, deities, totems, and other non-material agents to sanction moral transgression has been well recognised in anthropology since at least Evans-Pritchards’ (1937) pioneering work on the Azande. The power of the supernatural to inscribe earthly moral rules is pertinent to the sexual moral life of many Papuan women.

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177 *Ilmu* covers many terms for sorcery and magic including: ‘*ilmu hitam*’ (black magic); ‘*ilmu gelap*’ (dark magic); ‘*ilmu cinta*’ (love magic). There are also several words that capture all kinds of magic, sorcery and witchcraft including *buatan* (creation); *fui-fui* (magic spells) and *guna-guna* (use-use). The words *swangi* (or *suangi*) means ‘spirit’ but can also be used to describe Arfak sorcery. Arfak Highlanders have a reputation for using magic (swangi) to send silent and unseen teams of assassins.
As with adat, women claimed to know little about sorcerers – they couldn’t answer questions about whether the positions were ascribed or achieved or how men learned the dark arts. When describing how sorcery was performed, people pursed their lips and blew with a short sharp breath across their palm of their hand. This conveyed common wisdom that sorcerers sent magic through air currents that hit the victim. Though reluctant to share names, women were keen to tell stories of having sorcery reversed by the same men, I assumed, who ensorcelled them.

One sixteen-year-old called Nona told me, ‘I am scared to even look at boys ma. I always come home quickly. No good if what happened to mama happens to me.’ I was intrigued. With my prompting, she told the following story:

When mama was young she was very pretty. One time, a jembatan tried to arrange her to meet with a boy but she said no. A while later she became sick. They put thirteen bits of bark and one stick of bamboo in her stomach. She went to the hospital and they took a photo with the machine that sees inside and that is how they saw the wood and the bark. First they prayed, but she was still sick so then her mum took her to a man with ilmu [knowledge]. Her dad was a Church man so her aunts did not tell him about this, the adat man blew at the middle of her body as he chewed special leaves. That hurt mum so much she screamed. The bark and wood left her body, mama saw it come out and it hurt so much. Then she got better. She still has the scar on her stomach where the bark went out.

The power of this story to guide Nona’s decisions about her sexuality highlights that fear can be transmitted intergenerationally. ‘That is why I stay away from boys ma,’ she added. ‘If you refuse them it can make them angry and they hurt you with magik. They can even send magik so that you want to pacar with them. This is why I do not even look boys in the eye, and why I dry my underwear inside. In Papua our mothers teach us to protect ourselves.’
Nona’s personal vigilance was not idiosyncratic: young women were hyper-cautious not to become victims of sorcery. They inspected food bought from strangers, were careful in how they disposed of waste, and liked to keep their belongings ordered (menyimpan) so they could keep track of suspicious activity. Hair and nail clippings were burnt immediately, shoes were kept inside, and galak (vicious) dogs were favoured. Dogs, fed with matches and subjected to other rites to make them more ferocious, were valued not only because they scared away thieves and would-be anti-Papuan assassins, but because their special ability to see and bark at spirits alerted owners to nearby danger. Some friends performed rites to boost protection from ilmu – they wore extra layers of clothing, carried talismans, and rubbed oils onto the skin. A few had travelled to Serui, where drinking water from a well with a human skeleton in it was famed for having strong prophylactic qualities against sorcery.

Discussion and Conclusion

Durkheim did not explore fear according the specificity of cultural context, but his abstractions about the implications of what fear does is supported by my investigation. For Durkheim, fear is one of many emotions felt both in daily conundrums and religious ideas and imagery. In The Forms, he described fear as an emotion structured in relation to respect and closely related to love (for others), awe (for God), and majesty (for the sacred). From a Western standpoint, love, fear, and awe are separate categories of emotion, ones that imply different capacities to expand, absorb, or fortify ego boundaries. For Durkheim, these feelings intermingled on a continuum of duty and desire for the moral rule, and originated in the domain of the sacred. ‘The sacred object’, Durkheim wrote, ‘inspires us, if not with fear, at least with respect that keeps us at a distance; at the same time it is an object of love and aspiration that we are drawn towards’ (1953, p. 48).
In light of popular understandings of fear as something to avoid, overcome, or otherwise banish from the mind in order to achieve upper limits of wellbeing and success (Yogis 2013, p. xi), Durkheim’s evaluation of fear in the production of the social is intriguing. In thinking about everyday fears, he grappled with how to escape the punitive connotations the idea has come to be associated with through the Judeo-Christian cultural tradition. Whenever a girl elaborated on why she was ‘afraid to boyfriend,’ her fear was not a discrete and atomised emotion, but a sentiment that was shaded and woven with other feelings. Fear of gossip, for instance, also constituted the desire for social acceptance. Fear of pregnancy was the flipside of hope for gainful employment and marrying a ‘good man’. That fear reinforces desire and makes moral rules compelling, even coercive, casts doubt on the explanatory power of recent theories of morality that focus on virtue and reasoning as the agents of moral life. While generating important insights into how people evaluate, strategise, or enact their sense of the good, the assumption that morality is pursued according to the tastes and desires of individuals is clearly limited.

The fears that arise when thinking about the likely consequences of sexual transgression support Durkheim’s work on sanctions more than the fear involved in pro-social yearnings for transcendent goodness that preoccupied his later work. The immediacy of the dangers of rape, murder, beatings, gossip, being caught by teachers or the police, and supernatural attacks are, in Durkheim’s language, forms of ‘predetermined social reaction to rule violation’ (Karsenti 2012, p. 22). Chastity is, then, an ideal less in the sense of a selfless desire for the good than an ideal that becomes woven through the normative social fabric out of self-interested concern for wellbeing. This is not the self-interest assumed by Bourdieu, of actors competing for value and recognition; it is an interest that arises from people wanting to be accepted by others. The fear of violence is also the desire to live in harmony, and the fear of a parent’s anger is simultaneously the desire to honour them, with a sense that some ideas are sacred. Irrespective of process, the outcome for sexual moral life is the same: that is, through emotions felt towards social
phenomena that reinforce the reverence of premarital chastity, sexual morality becomes an ideal. In the next chapter I will explore this dynamic in the experiences and expressions of motherlove – the third and final emotional rationale for chastity.
Chapter Nine
Motherlove: sayang mama

If a seventeen-year-old in Australia said she loved her parents so much that she did not want to have a boyfriend, she would likely be considered odd. In Manokwari, love (sayang) for one’s mother and father is more than an acceptable reason to avoid romance, it is culturally expected. The following is from sixteen-year-old Violet’s Facebook wall, an ode to the virtue of parental over romantic love:

Really bad
Imagine me choosing my boyfriend over my parents
For me
A boyfriend can be found
Parents can’t be replaced by
A boyfriend, money etc..
There’s no greater treasure in my life
than your touching feelings and love for me
Love you dad and mama

Paraah sklii [Parah sekali]
Masa Ko Lbh Memlih Pacar dari pada ortu [masa ku lebih memilih pacar daripada orang tua]
Bagi’q [Bagi ku]
Pcar Bisa di cari [Pacar bisa di cari]
Orng Tua takkan Terganti oLeh [Orang tua tidak akan terganti oleh]
Pcar, uang, DLL. [Pacar, uang, dan lain lain]
Tak ada Harta yg Terindah dlm Hidup’q [Tidak ada harta yang terindah dalam hidupku]
This most public of postings foregrounds the topic of this chapter – how the love for one’s parents, and especially one’s mother, motivates some young women to avoid premarital sex. As with hope and fear, the key to understanding how love features in affective rationales for chastity lies in exploring the meanings and experiences of young women as well as the cultural categories that shape this experience. This Facebook post, which semantically clusters romantic love with money as well as things ambiguously classed as ‘etcetera’, is suggestive of understandings of love in economic terms. If sexual love, as the morally inferior kind, is placed on the side of alienated value, could the love for one’s parents be framed in light of the moral economy of the gift?

In this chapter I describe ideal typical relationships between mothers and daughters and analyse their professed love from the perspective of Mauss’ theory of the gift. By recognising how motherlove is expressed and built instrumentally, I shall argue that the care and goods that go into raising a child give a mother an informal authority over the recipient’s behavior. Mauss’ interpretation of ‘hau’ as the spirit of the gift that both proclaims love and compels reciprocity is particularly apt as a way of understanding the meaning of motherlove and the responses it provokes. It provides a way to make sense of how young Papuan women understand their choice to sexually conform as a respectful moral action that reciprocates a mother’s effort in their upbringing.

After explaining why I focus on motherlove specifically, I provide two vignettes of young women who invoke love for their mothers when explaining why they are chaste. In the he middle sections of this chapter, I analyses the experience of being in receipt of maternal care, an acknowledgement that builds the experience of love as well as ontological categories that structure the shape of intensive care practices. In the last section, I examine how
constructions of moral personhood frame chastity as a form of respect, where respect is a kind of return gift for care and other maternal inputs in the creation of ‘dividual’ aspects of selfhood. At the end of the chapter I will iterate the phenomenological aspects of the experience of love, in relation to chastity, and suggest it constitutes an emotion that supports Durkheim’s proposition that moral ideals are co-constructed in emotional life. Love for mothers, as the antimony of fear, provides an exceedingly intimate space where the commingling sense of duty and desire sustains chastity as a moral fact.

Thinking of mama: the affective constitution of maternal offerings

Even though youths felt love for both parents, I focus on motherlove because I found it the more salient sensation in sexual moral decision-making. For many, chastity was linked to the desire to spare a father from becoming angry and a mother from sadness, an understanding reflected in ideal typical gendered roles. This rule of thumb, which applies to children with adoptive parents, stands, even though there are many exceptions. For instance, women, including mothers, can have violent tempers; some girls claimed to be emotionally closer to their fathers; and far from all youths have a mother and a father. As a generalisation, likely because of the cultural value of their involvement in the process of birth and early care, mothers are most often experienced as loving protectors. To illustrate this gendered patterning of intimacy, I draw from a section in a homiletic book about the Bupati (Regent) of Jayapura (Poli, Salle & Purnomo 2008) that recounts a time when his father gave the young mayor some tough discipline. In the first chapter of this slim volume, commissioned by the Bupati to promote the success of his approach to development, his mother recounts a time her husband punished their child for not going to school by tying him up in a space under the house:

I just looked at him. I could not help to untie him because I was afraid of his father. He cried, but I could do nothing until his father came to his
This brief narrative about a harsh father and sympathetic mother is loaded with cultural meanings about gender, age, and power, but more importantly for my purposes here, it is suggestive of how mothers within patriarchal marriages are culturally positioned as the kinder and more loving parent. In the author’s conclusions, sentiment and social representation intersect, drawn by the Papuan academics contracted by the office of the Bupati to write the story. This tale, they sum up, highlights the value of, ‘1) the application of discipline by his father; 2) his mother’s love when she saw her son being punished’, and also, they speculate, ‘it can be imagined that after HMS was untied, his mother comforted him’ (Poli, Salle & Purnomo 2008, pp. 14-15). It is precisely this kind of protective sympathy that comes to mind when young women speak of reasons to avoid romance.

In 2011, I visited Aretha, a Biak friend and former neighbour who was now twenty-one, married to a civil servant with one child and pregnant with another. I had arrived early that morning to spend a day and a night in her small square cement brick house, and instantly marveled at how different her life was now compared to when she had lived down the road from me. All those years earlier she had been a schoolgirl, living with her mother who traded betel, her father, a primary school teacher, her two sisters, and paternal grandparents. She looked tired when I arrived, though her spirit was buoyant in a way that reverberated with my memories of her as a particularly optimistic teenager. She spent much of that day lancing and pressing a boil that had appeared on her three-year-old daughter’s forehead. After all the attention with a rag dipped in freshly boiled water had worn the child’s screaming out, I caught up with her about the happenings in our lives since we had last met.

At one point she remembered a story I had told her when she was fifteen about my own teenage romantic rebellion. The story had left a trace in her
mind and helped her, she told me, to come to terms with and guide her through an experience she had after I left:

I now also have a story like that. It started when I was sixteen. I became *malas* [lazy, indolent], school was just too boring. Wherever the teacher said something but I didn't pay attention. I started to go about with friends, sometimes not coming home until late. I discovered sex – it was so much fun, I mingled with all kinds of men, *mama* and *bapak* must have known but they were polite. They didn't call me *nakal*, just asked me to come home after school. I didn't listen to them. I had stopped talking to God, only Satan. One day I came home late and dad hit me. He was not a *jahat* man, but he was *pusing* [dizzy, confused, frustrated] with me. He hit me hard, ooo mama, hit me across the head, the arms, the body.

At the time I was with Billy. *Orang Sorong*. Very funny and handsome. He was in his last year of high school. After he graduated he went to Jayapura to *kuliah* [attend university]. Every few months I received a letter, this was when mobile phones were still expensive. The letters made me so happy, dad's beating had stopped me wanting to boyfriend but I still boyfriended in secret with Billy. I would wait for Billy, wait forever for him. In the letters he would tell me what life was like in Jayapura, just tell stories. Sometimes I'd write back. One day, a letter came saying he would be visiting Manokwari on the next school holidays. It had been one year since I had seen him and I was in my last exams before graduation so I wrote and told him I could not see him. I thought he would give up on me, but no, he wrote me another letter, asking that I visit him when my exams are over. In the letter was a PT Pelni (passenger shipping company) ticket from Manokwari to Jayapura. But not a ticket from Jayapura to Manokwari and that made me afraid. What if I could not afford to return home?

I wanted to go, but I knew my parents would never give me permission. I told them I wanted to go to Jayapura to visit my mother's younger sister. They knew Billy was in Jayapura but didn't think... I had been a good girl ever since dad hit me and they never saw my letters from Billy. They said yes and gave me 200,000 rupiah (approx. USD$18). I was so happy. Then I felt *salah* [wrong, guilty]. I wrote to Billy, told him I was coming, but
every night I could not sleep, thinking of mama. If she found out I had lied to her, travelled to be with a boyfriend she would be so disappointed [kecewa]. Every night I would see her face, pale and silent. I would feel her heartache. It's different to you ma, you opposed your mother to run away with your boyfriend but that is a sin. I could not bear [tahan]. I started feeling bad – I thought about how I had made her sick from shame when I was younger, and remembered all her effort [usaha] searching for money to feed me, pay for my school fees and cared for me – like the time I went to hospital to get my appendix out. So I wrote to Billy and said no and put the put 200,000 on the table. I wanted mama to have it. I am married to Stan now, but I still think of Billy.

This recounting of a story of moral redemption – brought about initially by the shock of a beating – after a period of recklessness resembles other accounts, where chastity is a state to return to for fear of reprisals. But after a year or so in a long-distance relationship, Aretha became unsettled when an opportunity arose to secretly meet her boyfriend. Her decision to resist temptation on this occasion rests entirely on sympathy for her mother and a concern with the effects of her lying. The fear that the revelation of her lie would bring about disappointment and heartache weighed on Aretha, triggering other memories and regrets until finally, guilt about the potential lack of respect for all her mother had done for her led her to abandon her plans to visit Billy.

Another example of how motherlove motivates conformity, although for a different reason than the reciprocity of gratitude for the instrumental acts of maternal care, came from seventeen year old Juliana. In her second last year of high school, her experience of chastity was less conflicted than Aretha’s. ‘I never think about this question, it is obvious why I don't want a boyfriend. All that I need is above and at home.’ This answer, to my question about her moral commitments, was elaborated on later that night. Juliana and I sat end to end, swinging in a large hammock I had tied to the beams in our fly-wire enclosed front verandah. Juliana stared out at the lights of the city and an ebb in conversation shifted to a flow of words:
There is no answer to that question before. I know you are very interested in it but it is God’s law. There is nothing more to know. God wants us to sayang [love] our parents and parents to sayang their children. When there is love in the house, there is no need to search outside. All the love a child needs is at home so it is important for the parents to love each other and to speak softly, the father should not hit the mother or children, so children can be satisfied with love. My parents are good people, so I never feel I need a boyfriend.

This narrative echoes the poem at the beginning of this chapter and elaborates a point touched on in Chapter Seven as to how a loving and harmonious home life can promote chastity. What might be true for one member of the household is not always the experience of another. I asked Juliana about the year before, when her sister was suspected of boyfriending. What, I asked her, was going on there? Why did her sister not respond in the same way as she did? Did she not feel as much love from her parents?

Who knows what my sister was feeling? (laughing) I guess she felt nafsu [sexual desire] – this heat can be very strong. Mum never became angry, even though my sister was spitting milk in her face. She just said to my sister the same thing every day. She said, ‘this is not the time to boyfriend.’ Maybe my sister grew ashamed. She could see mama was starting to get heartache [sakit hati], worrying that people would talk. We cannot disappoint her after she has setengah mati [half died, ‘expend great effort’] raising us. Giving birth, giving milk, wiping away our shit and tears.

In the first part of her narrative, Juliana expresses the understanding that parental love can be so satisfying that there is no need to seek other kinds of affection. This notion supports the view that a loving and harmonious family home operates as a moral prophylactic, as it offsets the desires that prompt teen promiscuity. Juliana’s discussion about her sister’s moral failure suggests that a mother’s love more than deflects desire, it is a currency that accrues value through acts of embodied care that demand respect. Before I look at some aspects of maternal care and kindness and how these become
recognised as gifts, I will briefly consider how motherlove is constituted as a structure of feeling though a brief historical and cultural history of motherhood in this region, with specific reference to local meanings of maternal care.

Motherlove: biology, culture and history

In local taxonomies, found through Indonesia and even Malaysia (Goddard 1996, p. 449), there are two kinds of love: sayang and cinta.\(^{178}\) Sayang, the appropriate feeling between kin, pertains to cluster of sentiments, including fondness, sympathy, pity, care, affection, longing, and even regret. It is a sad kind of love that bears more than a passing resemblance to the Micronesian ethno-affect of ‘fago’ (Lutz 1998, pp. 119-154). Cinta, by contrast, is closest to the English ‘romantic love’, yet, as a potent and passionate kind of love, can also be used to express one’s feeling for God. As distinct as these semantic domains are, it is possible to feel sayang for someone you feel cinta for, but sayang, as a compassionate love, is usually invoked in relation to those who are on the continuum of dependence and/or pity. One can feel sayang for the elderly, for a victim of a tragedy, for a crying child or, in a stronger capacity, for one’s mothers or children. ‘Saaayaaang,’ my neighbour cooed to her baby as she rubbed her chubby body with Johnson’s baby powder. ‘Sayang,’ people say in sing-song tones to their toddlers as they chase them around spoon-feeding them rice porridge.

The placing of motherlove within the semantic domain of sayang supports claims that affective bonds between a mother and child are a universal potential (Bowlby 1989). The cognitive and biochemical process involved in pregnancy, parturition, breastfeeding, co-sleeping, and other forms of on-the-body nurture facilitates the mother/child bond, but motherlove is an experience that is culturally mediated and even contingent on the resource

\(^{178}\) Kasih is another word that translates as ‘love’ in Bahasa Indonesia. In Bahasa Papua, this word tends to be used for reduplication, as in the compound expressions ‘kasih-sayang’ and ‘kasih-cinta’ (Kluge 2014, p. 171).
allocation of mothers (Scheper-Hughes 1993; Hrdy 1999). In the Asia-Pacific region, 'maternal love was adjudged deficient by colonial observers – being portrayed as variously insufficient, too dispersed or too indulgent' (Ram & Jolly 1998, p. 4). As with other colonial powers, the Dutch introduced nineteenth-century European ideals of motherhood into Papua as a natural state and sacred bond between children and mothers.

Unlike other parts of the East Indies, disciplining maternity in colonial Papua was more an indirect outcome than a direct concern of colonial projects of Christian missions, medicine, and other interventions (Stoler 2002). Changes in mother-child relations in the early twentieth century are too numerous and complex to do justice to in this small window. Educating children of both sexes entailed women spending more hours in child supervision as mothers assumed the tasks once entrusted to older girls in a family. Christian conversion also involved renouncing traditional practices such as polygamy, shrinking broader networks of obligation and allocating new role-based responsibilities to its members. Moving clan grouping from longhouses to two bedroom dwellings, as with Christian teaching in general, also encouraged the nuclearisation of the family form. Giving birth in hospitals, which become the dominant practice in the 1950s, coincided with training native obstetric nurses in modern methods of antiseptic procedures. This practice, as with the correct cutting of the cord and the provision of medicines and inoculations, reduced rates of maternal and neo-natal morbidity and mortality. As well as associating motherhood with cleanliness, health, and hygiene, these practices altered affective life by decreasing rates of infant death and improving quality of health.

In the later decades of the twentieth century, as I explained in Chapter Four, motherhood was modernised through state ideologies of ibuism, or 'housewification'. In contrast to parts of Melanesia, where women’s embodied work has been devalued by commoditised gender relations (Wardlow 2002, p. 145), this ideology – which is today reconfigured in the media and advertising – shapes the experience of motherhood as a socially valued and so, gratifying
role for many women. In recent decades, this ideology has shifted from supporting national unity and economic prosperity to capitalist consumerism. Privileging motherhood and the nuclear unit as a locus of sentiment in Papua is coming to resemble what Hays refers to as 'intensive parenting' (1996, p. 129). Though she used this idea to describe white middle-class values of ‘child-centred, expert-guided, emotionally absorbing, labour-intensive and financially expensive child rearing’ (ibid.), intensive parenting is being globalised. If the imprint of the state is felt in coastal desires to educate, nourish, discipline, and limit through patronage of state family planning, the number of children they have and the influence of intensive parenting is visible in indulgent consumerism for children.

Despite considerable historical differences between Papua and the West, not the least the public-private split that has nurtured discursive links between love, consumption, and happiness in the latter (Illouz 1997), Papuan housewives have embraced a version, related to income, of home as a 'haven in a heartless world' (Lasch 1995). Papuan women, I noted, elevate cooking and cleaning to an art form. Middle class mothers enjoy reading articles on ‘how to better communicate with your child’ adopt techniques for hosting successful children's birthday parties, and those who are wealthier enjoy taking their children to child entertainment or to an indoor play centre that opened in Manokwari in 2008. Whenever they watch commercials of a good mother woman pouring her child a glass of milk then hugging him, they learn that good mothers buy things for their children, and so support the reproduction of a global capitalism while learning its underpinning emotional ideology.

179 This situation also contrasts with the modern West, where care work is the ‘shadow economy’ of neo-liberalism, ‘outsourced and devalued through their association with idleness and lacking monetary value’ (Manne 2008, p. 71).

180 A ‘free booklet’ of this title was offered in a popular powdered milk product. It outlined, in cartoon form, ways to communicate with children to develop their kepintaran emosi (emotional intelligence). Transnational discourses of positive parenting, as with the globalisation of pop psychology in general, are a rich vein for future ethnographic research.
Since ‘women’s socialisation orients them to the caregiving relations of the kind that they received from their own mothers’ (Bueskens 2014, p. 18), care should be taken not to overstate the degree to which modernity has re-scripted the values, configurations, and expressions of intimacy between mothers and children. Long-standing care regimes can be detected in the disjunctures of Papuan domesticity: for instance, the value and ubiquity of adoptive children while prioritising the nuclear family as form of ‘modern love’ (Giddens 1992), albeit one where democratic negotiations of intimacy are inflected with Christian values of role hierarchies. Another example of disjuncture is found in the elevation of the domestic arts while devaluing micro-management of children and houses. Papuan mothers concentrate on cooking, cleaning, and grooming children, efforts geared to nourish and make presentable.\textsuperscript{181} If the front guest room is neat as a pin, the back of the house is littered with clothes, dishes, plastic wrappings, betel nut husk and belongings in disarray. It is not only the appearance of the formal front and domestic back that hints at the logic of pre-modern life (Rutherford 2003, p. 41): it is the warmth and conviviality that is found at the back. It is in this informal and familiar sphere where children feel their mothers’ care not as duty but as a gift that gives life.

A number of researchers have found that a daughter’s relationship with her mother will influence the timing of sexual debuts. Quantitative studies, for example, have found factors such as ‘connectedness’ (Rink, Tricker & Harvey 2007, p. 398) and ‘relationship satisfaction’ (McNeely et al. 2002, p. 256) between mothers and daughters are positively correlated with chastity. In Confucian (and Buddhist) societies ‘filial piety’, a constellation of role-based virtues, structure understandings of the importance of deferring individual gratification in order to honour parental love (Browning, Greene & Witte 2006, pp. 369, 394, 395). The importance of expressing respect through obedience,

\textsuperscript{181} It is hard to underestimate the value placed on presentability in mainstream Indonesia. A well-groomed appearance is encouraged by the mirrors located at school, homes, or offices inscribed with the words, ‘have you already groomed?’ (sudah rapikan anda?).
as exemplified by the girl who understood child obedience as one of God’s Ten Commandments (Chapter Four), is common in Islamic and Christian traditions. In this sense, Papuans who say that feelings of sayang for their mothers preclude their desire to have boyfriends are apparently consistent with the sexual moral reasoning of youth in a variety of conservative cultural milieus. Notwithstanding this similarity, the symbolic economies of family life and personhood will guide the meanings of respect and obedience. Building on earlier observations that Papuans have facets of dividuality as a result of exchange practices and consequent relational personhood, I suggest that familial love in this part of Papua is constituted through distinctive understandings of gifts and agency.

Care Work: moral economies of motherlove

I was in a peri-urban village spending the afternoon with Lisa, one of twins, and realised it was Mother’s Day because she had bought her mother’s favorite kind of fish, ekor kuning (yellow fin tuna), at the town market as a gift. ‘Not all Papuans do this, but we learned to do this from Mr. Evans,’ she said. A legacy from an American evangelist who had left ten years before I arrived, the fish was a token of a daughter’s appreciation. Lisa could afford the fish, which fetched a relatively high price, because she worked as a junior teller in the local branch of national bank. Her job brought her money and status, but she told me that she could not wait to leave at 5pm, because she preferred the comfort of her mother’s kitchen to the chill of an air-conditioned space.

I had observed she and her mother many times over the last year. I found myself once again enjoying their company and watching their rhythmic intimacies: a dance of tone and gesture on this particular night as they went about scaling and cooking the fish. On other occasions I had watched them wash clothes together, weave fishing nets, and build walls for a new kitchen with concrete blocks (batu tela) and mortar paid for by Lisa. As night fell and
fireflies circled, she shared with me, at my prompting, why it was important, as she had told me, that she give ‘every pay check to mama’:

“My mother gave birth to Wini and me in Timika. Dad had a job as an evangelist. It was a difficult time. We had to hide from the army with other Papuans. There was nothing to eat, just soil and coconut. Me and Winny were born there, we came out like tiny birds. Mama had malaria so we were born before we grew strong enough – but we are girls so we survived. I once heard from a nurse that if boys are born too early they don’t survive, only girls do, so God blessed mama. Mama kept us alive by feeding us with rain water. She soaked *kapas* [kapok, the cottony substance surrounding ceiba seeds] with the water on leaves then squeezed the *kapas* into our mouths. She could see through us, see our stomach through our skin so she knew when to stop squeezing the *kapas*.

This appreciation felt for care in infancy is linked to the extraordinary difficulties of her start in life, but recognition of physical care is a common theme found in the textures of love by Papuan children for their mothers. Lisa’s mother had set off fishing that night, but even if her mother was present, she would wax lyrical about all the things she loved about her mother:

Mama has always been *rajin* [hard-working, industrious]. In all my memories she is cooking, fishing, gardening, making nets to sell at the market, running here, running there. All the recipes I know, that delicious curry I made at our house, mama taught me. She is even better than me at cooking. Mama is always doing things, when we were young and now running after Andris and Sara. Her eyes are red because even when she should be sleeping she is busy. Last night she was up trying to fix the hole in the roof because it was raining. Then she did not sleep because she was listening for thieves – if it rains there are more thieves. I tell her, ‘you are too old now, you should be resting’ but she doesn’t want to hear. She just orders me to rub *daun gatal* [stinging nettle tree leaf] or to *kerok* [to scratch the body with coins]. After that she sits up and starts
breastfeeding Andris ...

Though her daughter would like her to slow down and get more rest, her mother continues to be as rajin (hard-working, industrious) as when she was young. If anything, judging by her enthusiasm for full-bodied care of her grandchild and adoptive child, she is even more so. Taking on her daughter’s son when he was two months old, she even re-lactated for purposes of caring for him, expressing both her love for her daughter and grandson as well as maternal virtue. ‘When Wini wanted to study in Yogyakarta after a short-lived relationship with the boy’s father, mama said, “go. I will take care of him until you get back. Do not think, if you think of him he will get sick”.’

Though Lisa presents her mother’s love as timeless and essential, a particular story about the time Sara’s ‘womb mother’ tried to reclaim her daughter suggests that motherlove is a construction with uniquely cultural inflections. When I visited this family in 2011, Lisa told me a story about Sara.

When nona [girl] was seven years old her parents divorced. Her father is my father’s young brother so we said we could take Sara as our anak piara. Her brothers went to another relative. Her father remarried, poor thing ... this is why divorce is no good, when the marriage ends, the kids must go because step-parents can never love them. Her mother got work with the plywood factory in Serui, children are not allowed at their basecamp.

The story thus far choked Sara with emotion. Her eyes welled up and I sat in respectful silence for a minute or so. Then she continued:

Last year, her mother arrived and asked for nona back. Her contract with the factory had ended. But it had been four years and she could not afford to pay. It was too expensive to give back nona. We counted for everything, rugi kecapean [loss from tiredness] barang makanan [food goods], biaya sekolah [school fees], apa saja yang anak mau [whatever the child wants], her womb mother didn’t have the money to pay.
At the end, Lisa sighed deeply and said, ‘Mama has come to love that little girl.’ For Lisa, her mother’s devotion is strong and pure, motivated by her love of children. Yet the expression that the child was ‘too expensive’ to give back implies care is a currency through which love and debt are structured in mutual relation.

In other sections of this thesis, I have described how family members create affections and obligations through contributing to school fees, the building of houses, bride-wealth payments, and the like. As well as being used in stereotypes of Papuan goodness, these gifts of goods and money generate facets of people as ‘dividual’, embodying multiple strands of the exchanges that created them. Though he never spoke of maternal care as a gift, Mauss (1990, pp. 5-6) opened the space for such an analysis when he wrote that things exchanged were ‘not solely property and wealth, movable and immovable goods, and things economically useful.’ Gifts can be ‘acts of politeness: banquets, rituals, military assistance, women, children, dances, festivals, and fairs, in which economic transaction is only one element, and in which the passing on of wealth is only one feature of a much more general and enduring contract.’ Similarly, even though ‘emotions and feeling are not central to Mauss’ work’, Alexeyeff (2004, p. 70) notes, ‘he does offer glimpses of what a study of affective exchange might include.’ For instance, he describes gifts as ‘alive with feeling’, and as offering a mode for people to take ‘emotional stock of themselves and their situation as regards others’.

If we use Mauss’ (1990) classic formulation of the gift as having three components – the obligation to give, to receive, and to reciprocate – chastity can be understood as embedded in the fields of obligation that constitute reciprocity. If care was recognised as an offering in Aretha and Juliana’s memories of their mother’s physical sacrifice for parturition, lactation, and care, the moral perversion of not reciprocating was captured in Juliana’s reference to her sister spitting milk in their mother’s face. The socio-psychological implications of gift economies can be illuminated by Strathern’s (1988) theories of partible personhood. As products made from the objects
and substances of a mother, chastity, as with any action, is enacted and publically received as an externalised aspect of the family in which young women are connected and of which they are made. Understandings of self as relationally constituted ensure that ethical choices reflect the substances and actions of the others who produced them. In the context of maternal care, the theory of the gift can illuminates the dynamics of a love that becomes felt as a desire to repay. This is because it sheds light on how maternal care, or rather, its *hau*, may well be the power base of a mother’s command over her offspring’s moral action. If a mother’s care initiates the power to reciprocate, it is worth inquiring into the cultural beliefs that structure care practices as relatively physical onerous.

The Precariousness of Little Bodies

Lisa’s, Juliana’s, and Aretha’s narratives each emphasise an awareness of care as a kind of sacrifice. This understanding is partly based in what, to my eye, were physically intense practices in *menjaga anak* (minding children). The comfort and safety of small children was an ongoing concern embedded in a daily stream of practice that fostered connection and care. Tears and extremes of physical effort were to be avoided, with the result that babies and small children were indulged with whatever they desired. For babies and sometimes toddlers, breasts were indispensable, a nip in the bud of irritation that could grow into distress. When Pasca developed the hiccups, she was brought to my breast for soothing and nourishing. ‘Poor little thing ma,’ the person carrying her to me would say, ‘*setengah mati* (half dead, strenuous effort) to hiccup.

They were not disciplined, for they did not ‘yet know’ (Chapter Four), and were encouraged to do or have what they wanted, as long as it posed no danger. ‘Danger’ was an ongoing concern. When I put Pasca in a high chair, whoever spotted her would exclaim, ‘dangerous’, then pluck her out and plop
her on their lap. Small accidents were experienced as a near calamity, so older boys and girls or whoever was caring for a toddler were never more than a step away. With bodies poised to pounce, people guided their charges away from obstacles that might hurt or trip them up, such as stepping on an ant’s nest, excrement, or broken glass. On one hand, these are rational responses in a region where no safety standards regulate the production of consumer goods, where there are high rates of contagious disease (malaria, tuberculosis), and where infections can become gangrenous. Yet over time I came to appreciate how ‘local biologies’ (Lock 2001) and a fear of spirits were factors in the creation of childcare as a labour-intensive realm.

Care-work, as associated with a more ‘time consuming, expensive and self-sacrificing mode of motherhood’ (Bueskens 2014, p. 30), intersected with older belief systems. One day when Pasca emitted a sharp, shrill cry of pain, I learned of other cultural underpinnings of maternal care practices. Pasca had been sitting on the lap of Paulus, a man from Ternate who was well into his sixties. He had absentmindedly let Pasca touch a pawpaw then rub a stinging secretion from the fruit into her eye. As I calmed her, a friend sitting at the end of the bed explained why babies should never cry:

This is not good, spirits can hear babies cry ma, they find them that way. There are two kinds of winds here – winds that cause masuk angin [the wind gets in, common throughout Asia]. There is also a kind of wind, a barang halus [fine thing], it is a kind of suangi [spirit]. Barang halus look for babies, if they find them they make them sick, sometimes very sick. Or they swap them for a spirit. So if a child cries we must watch carefully ... to see if their sifat [character] changes ... If we smell clove cigarettes, or ginger, or hear a dog bark, there is probably a barang halus near. God is more powerful. My pastor tells us that we are close to God we cannot fear. But (whispers and hisses) these things happen.

For instance, Pasca skipped the so-called ‘crawling stage’ of infancy and transitioned straight from being-in-arms to walking. Whenever I placed her on the bright quilted rug sewn by my mother, people would look horrified as they scooped her up. ‘It helps strengthen her muscles,’ I pleaded. ‘No,’ friends would insist, ‘it is dirty. Later she will be sick’. 182

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182 For instance, Pasca skipped the so-called ‘crawling stage’ of infancy and transitioned straight from being-in-arms to walking. Whenever I placed her on the bright quilted rug sewn by my mother, people would look horrified as they scooped her up. ‘It helps strengthen her muscles,’ I pleaded. ‘No,’ friends would insist, ‘it is dirty. Later she will be sick’.
It was not only the fear of spirits. Humoural beliefs about bodies as in a precarious state of balance structured care practices as a series of gentle and regular responses and inputs. As I touched on ethno-biological understandings in Chapter Four, I will here mention how beliefs about bodies as permeable to winds and other influences demand routine and stabilisation.

Small babies received ritual treatments to strengthen the balance of white and red bloods and to help them grow. In the morning, ideal care practices dictated they had a morning mandi (wash) in the following order: after water was boiled to make a tepid bath, the baby was soaped up; rinsed off; rubbed dry; left for half an hour or less in the early morning sunshine; massaged with eucalyptus oil; then patted white with baby powder. While this treatment helped a baby become ‘strong, stops the winds getting in,’ as one woman explained, following children closely is hoped to prevent knocks and shocks to the system which can place the body in a dangerous state of imbalance. It was unacceptable to let children learn by trial and error and activities. Using a knife, climbing trees, or self-feeding were only acceptable if a child’s cognitive-motor skills were sufficiently developed. When Benson fell down our steps (while in my care, I might add), my cuddles and checks for damage were not satisfactory. I was hounded by many to take him to the ‘bone doctor’ not once, but for monthly appointments over a year. In summary, beliefs about the vulnerabilities of little bodies, especially in the presence of overly desirous spirits, add up to relatively excessive maternal effort. Within the frame of gift moralities, if care regimes are costly to mothers, this cost translates to a certain urgency of obligation that limits a child’s moral choice and action through the desire to pay respect.

Ontological Debt: milk and food

Milk – warm, sweet and abundant – is a natural symbol of maternal affections and sacrifice. This interweaving of love and debt is perhaps nowhere better illustrated than in the cherished tradition of ‘milk money’ (uang susu).
Bridewealth may be controversial, but I never heard a word of protest about this special payment reserved for a mother at the time of a daughter’s marriage. Even if a father chose to waive his right to bridewealth, a mother will almost invariably defend their right to milk money. Daughters endeavoured to amass a sum, which was placed in an envelope to be given to their mothers in order to, it was said, ‘replace her for the susu, the food, the tiredness.’ Susu, the word for both breast and milk, is a valued substance that not only gives nutrition but brings comfort and even holds medicinal properties. Mother’s milk is dropped in eyes that develop pus, on ulcers to ‘dry them up’, and, according to some, can even neutralise poison and revive the near dead. These cultural meanings, as well as economic calculations, have likely been important in Papuan resistance to advertisements and sale of baby formula and bottles.

Milk is the beginning of a lifelong love affair with a mother’s food. I have made numerous references in this thesis that link a mother’s ability to feed to affection, status, and power. From feasts at ritual times, to the pride in a mother’s spice blends, to the boiled egg that kept a small girl’s hand warm on the morning walk to school, food is a medium that builds ties that bind. That women ‘used food and the idiom of feeding to create indebtedness’ was not lost on Rutherford (2003, p. 43). Reflecting on a Biak myth about a boy who could not escape a talking skull after accepting its cooked taro, she wrote, ‘anyone who had ever enjoyed a Biak mother’s hospitality could appreciate the boy’s predicament. Woe to the guest who attempted to escape a Biak household without a meal and some provisions for the road’ (ibid., p. 44). From personal experience as well as observation, which showed that there were always ‘plentiful provisions assembled for the smallest social gathering’, she came to the following conclusion:

When someone ate a woman’s cooking, he or she entered a lasting relationship. A mother’s status depended on her power to restrain her appetites so that others could ‘eat first’. By deferring their own consumption, these mothers were able to make gifts that controlled others’ memories and minds (ibid., p. 43).
This analysis raises an idea that, at least since Young’s *Fighting with Food* (1971), has been explored in the Pacific literature – that is, that food is a medium that creates, maintains, and manipulates relationships (Alexeyeff 2004; Thomas 1991, pp. 76-79). Though Rutherford uses this argument to highlight how reciprocity along gendered lines can transform foreign goods into objects of local value, her ideas support my argument. After all, when girls say they do not want a boyfriend because they love their mother too much, they are making a statement about the power of maternal gifts to create relations of binding obligation.

According to Rutherford, even when a mother dies her children are not released from their maternal ties. Death is the ultimate depletion of energy that, she argues, only reinscribes the magnitude of debt, so that children feel a desire and a duty to attend to their mother’s grave until the end of time (2003, p. 166). I certainly found that cemeteries were lively places where families gathered with containers of snacks, eaten in and around the tasks of weeding, praying, and decorating a mother’s colourful and well-kept grave. That other graves could be tended as well suggests other factors at play, but this does not diminish Rutherford’s point that food – which I take as a potent embodiment of maternal care – ‘created a commitment that enabled the “feeder” to make demands of the “fed”’ (2003, p. 45).

**Love: a feeling beyond economy**

In this chapter, I have argued that maternal offerings of material goods, emotional labour, and bodily sacrifice generate an affective momentum that, through their recognition as gifts, inspires a child’s desire to reciprocate. Chastity, as with other behaviours that honour a mother or at least spare her from shame, is kind of return gift, for it demonstrates respect through obeying a mother’s wishes. This analysis has been important for understanding the relational basis of the affective power of maternal care for moral conformities of youth. The multiple generosities of touch, sentiment, and acts of care, to
use Mauss’ terminology, are a ‘total prestation’ and so too is chastity, in this frame, another prestation – for it is a gift that stands for all dimensions of female virtue. Emphasising the cultural meanings of care and action should not take away from the phenomenological experience of mother-daughter love. Feelings of gratitude are not registered in economic terms: rather, they are experienced, as all the above narratives indicate, as taken-for-granted purity of sentiment. Just as a mother has no motives, a girl’s duty to respect usually manifests as the desire to give because she loves. Giving takes a variety of forms, of which chastity is one. It can manifest as a phone call which keeps the connection alive, or materially – giving food, a fish, or sending money. I once observed Lisa give her wage to her mother. She waited until her father had left the room, then placed a wad of notes into the palm of her mother’s hand. When their hands touched, her mother squeezed her daughter’s hand for longer than usual and they locked soft and moist eyes. Giving can be big – the honour of a child’s graduation or timely marriage. It can be small – massaging the knotted muscles to soothe the tired body of a mother, revive it with stinging nettles, or bring out toxins by scratching with coins.

By saying that maternal bonds are built by the _hau_ of care which leaves a trace of its giver, I do not wish to imply that mother love is a sentiment inscribed with calculation. Children may be seen as future financial contributors: they embody the name of parents, build the size and glory of the clan, and are important for replenishing a declining Papuan population. These symbolic and utilitarian meanings are transcended in feelings of love for babies, children and teens. Babies can be tiring, children irritating, and teens a source of worry, but they are all, as it is said, ‘blessings’. From the very first days of life, people take delight in young children – their plump limbs are pinched lovingly and often receive short, sharp sniffs on the face or head (akin to a kiss). The young amuse the adults with their mishaps, especially as they attempt to master language and culture. When older, they become companions. Given their continuity of gendered identification, role commitments facilitate this bond beyond the years when male children spend
time in the social world of men. Affective bonds are formed by the many years spent together, often hunched over, arms deep in domestic work — not ‘a series of tasks’ but ‘a series of processes, of tasks inextricably linked, often operating at the same time’ (Anderson, 2001, p. 26). By the time a girl grows, lasting affections can make a daughter’s marriage the height of maternal tragedy. Many a marriage proposal has been denied (though such vetoes are not always honoured) by a mother who feels the union will take her daughter too far away. Accustomed to thinking of weddings as happy occasions, I will never forget the shock of bounding up to the front of the church to greet a friend’s mother where her daughter was to be married. There she stood, her face saturated with tears, her eyes red from crying, grief etched into a face in repose. ‘After all these years,’ she later explained, ‘side by side, together, she has gone.’

Discussion and Conclusion

The work of feminist scholar Sara Ruddick (1989) lends support to a Durkheimian reading that maternal care and the desires for pre-marital chastity it inspires is pivotal in the creation and reproduction of ideals. Though her interest is in the rational capacities a mother develops in the daily *habitus* of nurture, the outcomes of ‘maternal thinking’, she argues, affirm the normative order. Though she wrote about middle-class American mothers, her observation that mothers want the best for their children, which means fostering their ethics, skills, and qualifications that make them an accepted and valued member of their community, is equally the case in Papua. It is here, in the reflections, judgments, and emotions that slowly and subtly bring a daughter’s behaviour in line with the demands of her social milieu, that mothers are key agents in reinforcing dominant values by directing children into group life.

Ruddick’s observation that maternal practice is orientated to training children as morally conservative subjects can engage the dynamic and relational
aspects of love and care in Papua. Social representations in coastal cultures reinforce the power of mothers to socialise and enforce the Christian code of premarital chastity. The value of motherhood, a value inscribed through registering care practices as gifts, frames chastity – and other acts that conform to a mother’s expectations – as a return gift, that of giving respect. Dimensions of the self as a ‘dividual’ make chastity less a choice and more an imperative, in the sense that moral action embodies the mother as primary creator of a child.

In this section I have explored how feelings in everyday life and desires to please others, bring marital and economic success, and avoid dangers to life and limb structure moral decisions about sexuality as fundamentally social. Residues of collective values are felt in the most intimate of spaces, of dreams for the future, of the painful realities of poverty and violence and the gratitude for a love that begins in parturition and the breast. The normative – of which chastity is but one Ideal – becomes entrenched through social life, and is affirmed and re-affirmed in the emotional responses to its patterns and permutations. Emotions that uphold the Ideal, as Durkheim understood, are complex and entwined, and encompass the sense of both duty and desire.

In the last three chapters I have explored different sentiments through which young women realise the value of chastity. Their desires to avoid sexual relationships are not arrived at through deliberation and commitment to any moral principles, though they understand chastity as a Christian code. They are moved to be chaste by deeply seated emotions whose origins transcend their bodily bounds. Sexuality is actively engaged through a sense of right and wrong, a sense inseparable from the anticipation of sanctions. Fear and love intertwine in this respect since making parents proud and raising the prospects of employment are flipsides of being gossiped about or beaten by kin. That sexual choice is experienced as duty, decidedly less-than-choice, supports Durkheim’s idea that emotions and especially fear, emerge in daily interactions. In my conclusion, I draw out some wider implications of the
finding that emotional responses to others who embody and, within social hierarchies, enforce the normative order, create chastity as a sacred reality.
Conclusion

In this thesis I deliberately chose to examine conformity to a moral ideal of sexual behaviour so as to discover the social forces at work in the lives of Papuan young women. Exploring the reasons why coastals in Manokwari decided not to have a boyfriend – where to do so was considered as near synonymous with sexual experience – I found that young women engaged sexual norms with sentiments of love, hope, and fear, rather than moral deliberation. The hope to graduate from high school or university, to marry a good man, and to respect a beloved mother for her bodily sacrifice encapsulate how conformity can be experienced as virtuous desire. These feelings were connected to their inverse, the fear of moral failure, such as shaming a mother or not repaying family members for their economic investment in her upbringing and education. These pragmatic and embodied reasonings presuppose a relational disposition for choices that is orientated to achieving harmony and wellbeing in young women’s immediate social world – the interconnected spheres of home, neighbourhood, school, and beyond. In this respect, the sentiments that compel chastity are as much constitutive as they are regulative of Papuan conduct.

The strongest emotion that directed moral reasoning was the kind of fear that arises from a sense of the immediacy of threat. This is not the fear of God’s final judgment or HIV infection, as one might expect in this ethnographic context, but the fear of pregnancy and violence. Pregnancy, seen as a highly likely outcome of premarital sex, is dreaded because it forces school drop out and too-early marriage. Fear of being beaten for sexual indiscretion by angry kin or being the target of sorcery, rape, or murder also provided strong motives to remain chaste. Fear is an emotion largely absent in recent discussions of moral life, yet, I believe, it plays a strong role in any moral judgement where people are concerned with costs to reputation, resources, or
bodily wellbeing. Fear may be more pronounced in situations – such as sexual moral life amongst Papuan youth – where social power is low and sanctions are high. Yet wherever ideas about ethical conduct are invested with a sense of being normal, time-honoured, or revered, fear of being judged or punished is never far from the surface.

Margaret Mead once said that ethnography could confound universal claims by pointing to exceptions. Since deduction is also an important goal of anthropology, I like to think that Durkheim’s belief that ‘one well-founded ethnographic case could prove a general sociological law’ (Beatty 2014, p. 546) is also the case. My finding that chastity could be desired, with no strong suffering or apparent cost to physical or mental wellbeing from repressing sexual urges, unsettles normative modern liberal ideas that sexuality among adults – young and old – needs to be expressed. I hope this assumption, implicit in scholarly interests in sexual agency and theories of sexual moral power, might usefully inform future anthropological debate. In terms of generalising, my study of Papuan sexual morality can arguably shed light on human moral behaviour in two interrelated respects, both of which support Durkheim’s Ideal as a concept embedded in his work on emotion and the sacred. One, by making emotion central to the analysis of moral choice, I hope to have convinced the reader of Durkheim’s point that morality is not simply a realm of persuasion because, as a sanctioned realm of social life, virtues are often felt as a duty as well as a desire. Two, the strong emotions that infuse the sexual moral domain in Papua – I have described anxiety, fear, and outrage – support Durkheim’s abstraction of the sacred as a vital energy that affirms and transforms moral life.

As well as being an external fact, encoded in social, cultural, and institutional life, chastity is an internal reality – a norm reinforced and, in turn, created through deeply held feelings and understandings. That sentiment determines and defines choice prior to decisions being made and enacted supports Durkheim’s thesis of emotional primacy in moral life, an idea that has strong support in different branches of contemporary psychology. Since emotions
that co-construct ideals were multiplex – and included love, awe, dread, hate, and hope – Ideals can be conceived of as something we want to follow and something we feel obliged to follow. In this sense, Durkheim’s theory of morality as a field of desire and duty has contemporary relevance. New Moral scholarship, by focusing on subjectivity and individual agency, leans towards Durkheim’s interest in the desire to be morally good. By relinquishing duty, which Durkheim was also inclined to do in order to develop his earlier mechanistic moral theory in line with his growing interest in ethical freedom (Weiss 2012, p. 89), anthropological discussions of virtue minimise the subtle workings of the sacred. Though passé, the empirical reality of fear and punishment in moral life suggest the re-theorisation of social sanctions could be a productive aim for future moral anthropology.

Durkheim’s contention that society is simultaneously imposed on us and is an object of attraction hinges on his notion of the sacred. In this thesis, I have argued that the sacred pertains to a sense of virtue and vice that is constructed through the interaction of embodied consciousnesses and symbolic representations. I have illustrated the binding power of the sacred by suggesting that chastity, as a traditional and Christian virtue, is an idea that carries emotional force because it is embedded in faith in God and everyday interactions with those who embody – and some who enforce – this Ideal. I have suggested that effervescence, emotional activity on a collective level, is generating a sense of Papuans as a moral community with special values. These broad fields of sacred power are, in the context of fears of ethnic marginality and social immorality, being vitalised through sensuously engaged bodies and symbolic renewal.

Contemporary Papua could not be any more different from the political, economic, and cultural life of fin de siècle France, yet some thematic overlaps can be identified. Socially, both contemporary Papua and turn of the century France are characterised by perceptions of social turbulence as a result of transformations in demography, communication, and economy. These changes were, in Durkheim’s France, configured as moral problems resulting
from the ‘relative absence of social goals and social regulation’ (Lukes 1973, p. 218) and topics discussed in public debate and intellectual contestation. In contemporary Papua, the problem of a new kind of individual – one who is ruggedly self-interested and, by choosing to act on the whims of personal desires and impulses, contributes to the declining morality of the collective – is the affective concern of community leaders, intellectuals, and journalistic commentary. Durkheim called the breakdown of social bonds between the individual and community *anomie*. Pauans see normlessness in the individual terms of *dosa* (sin), and collectively, sin erodes the sacred moral character of the Gospel Town, Pauans, and Papua. Bad moral choices arose when there was a breakdown in the relationship between an individual and God, a rupture that was often attributed to the influenced of the devil.

Joel Robbins sees Durkheim as useful because he is sensitive to how societies are characterised by continuities as well as novelties, by reproductions as well as transformations. I hope to have demonstrated in this thesis that Durkheim’s value lies in his theoretical explanations for why moral communities might *rage for* continuity and reproduction. Durkheim was preoccupied with the effects of excessive selfishness on the moral integrity of his beloved homeland, a concern shared by so many individuals in the world today. Against the grain of the secularisation hypothesis that prevailed in his time, Durkheim believed that as social ideals became obsolete, new ones would take their place, because of the longevity of the sacred impulse. This vision is supported by the efforts of religious and political interest groups across the globe that are struggling to rebuild, renew, or refashion ideas of right and wrong, good and bad, holy and profane within postcolonial social forces and global economic forms.

There are, I believe, three implications of using the ‘sacred’ as a heuristic for accounting for the dynamic of social change in the contemporary world. One, it offers the possibility of understanding sexual morality as the centrifugal pressure of the sacred that seeks to integrate people into moral communities against the centripetal pressures of population growth and technological
advance. Two, by recognising that movements moral renovation are constructed through the symbolic binaries of pure (positive and unpolluted) and impure (negative and polluted) raises questions of trends in anthropology that see dichotomies as simplistic and stress processual accounts of social life. Given the lived reality of binary thought, a reality based in asymmetrical cognitive patterns (Lizardo 2009), it is important to take critical purchase on concepts such as intersections, flows, worldings, assemblages, lines, and entanglements. It is important to analyse complexity in social life but only by apprehending how dichotomous thought creates frictions and tensions in social life can we create verisimilitudinous ethnographies of moral life. In this thesis I have described oppositional dualisms in the form of sexual desire and social duty as well as how the world, as emotionally engaged, is more or less plotted along Durkheim’s sacred and profane distinction. The configuration of dichotomies, their meanings and experiences will vary from place to place but their real life consequences, in the moral field, is apparent in the consequences of being judged as deserving or not-deserving of social respect and inclusion.

The final implication of re-theorising Durkheim’s sacred is that it can account for uneven social outcomes of moral pluralisation, namely how the recurrent nature of socio-religious movements across the globe can bring out the ‘beast’ as well as the ‘angel’ in humanity (Durkheim 2005, p. 38). In Chapter Five, I argued that the liberalisation of sexuality strengthens attachment to Ideals – in this case, notions of a perfect social order where respect and obedience cement proper hierarchies, where youth are loyal to their families and Papuan society, and where there is a religious moral consensus. This dynamic, I believe, can be applied to understand a range of moral developments in the world, including the African Renaissance, ‘Arab Spring, global Pentecostalisms, and the ISIS caliphate. At the core, conservative Papuan Ideals share fundamental similarities with these movements, as for any hopes for societal reconstruction through new forms of moral community based on a religious-traditional idyll (Karlstrom 2004; Anderson 2011). It is the case that the sacred can emerge in liberal as well as conservative visions – that is, in
desires for moral restoration on grounds of economic equality, tolerance of diversity, and fairness for individuals. Yet given the political right tend to be more willing to protect or else fight for their moral visions with the use of violence, the sacred is a more potent and dangerous force in conservative hearts. As religious and ethnic tensions become increasingly charged in Manokwari, I hope while others pray that militancy does not become a sacred duty.


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Appendix A

Reflections on my subject positioning

If the self is a tool for ethnographic research, explaining my methodology requires explicating my journey, relationships and ‘subject position’ in the field. Encumbered by family and assuming the role of wife and mother I was about as far from the lone, white (male) fieldworker so central to the romantic myths of anthropological research as one can be (Flinn, Marshall & Armstrong 1998, p. 7). The relative advantages and disadvantages of taking children to the field has been a source of debate (ibid.) I prefer to think of this situation in terms of a matrix and not a utility.

There were certainly advantages to being in the socially respectable role of housewife and the presence of my three small, blue-eyed blondes made it easy to forge connections. Yet social positions always close some doors as they open others. When I dropped into all night dance parties, I never stayed long as I felt discomfort in my presence not only because I was a housewife but because I my whiteness echoed encounters with a missionary past. My socially esteemed position as white, as a mother and wife to a man with a wage, in a society with clear status hierarchies, created taboos that blocked the possibility of securing interviews with social marginals such as abortionists, sorcerers and those who identify as selling sex for a living. My fertility, it seemed, placed me firmly as female and so, unlike some anthropologists (Butt 1998; Kraemer 2013) I was not readily accepted in the world of men. As is common among fieldworker couples in the field, I mostly relied on my opposite sex partner for the ‘man’s perspectives’.

Fieldwork, as an extension of living, takes place in social layers of intimate, familiar and unfamiliar. My neighbours referred to me as ‘mum’, after the cry of my children, and the girls in my house ‘ma’. This Dutch word for mother, used by Papuan children, is an informal expression that expresses warmth
and gratitude for care. When I was an unknown face or a face in the crowd I was addressed by the formal title of *ibu* (Mrs, mother/wife) or else, as *bule* (white, ‘albino’). Race too was negotiated in the flow of ethnographic serendipities. It has been noted, of Papua New Guinea, that positive perceptions of ‘westerners’ make working in this context relatively easy (Bashkow 2006). This was especially true in West Papua where whiteness is associated with Dutch colonialism, a time that was not without difficulty but in contrast to the post-colonial era, is recalled fondly.

Papuans perceive western countries’ (*negara barat*) as having lax sexual morality and are pitied for their declining Christian population. Yet the West is also a utopic place with functioning democracy, liveable cities and affluence. For the politically motivated, as I was aware whenever men approached me on the beach or in the marketplace to talk about ‘M’ (*merdeka*, freedom) westerners are seen to support the West Papuan independence movement (Rutherford 2012). Encounters like these gave the uncanny sense of already being placed upon first meeting – a sense Rutherford described in her fieldwork on Biak as being like Alice arriving at a tea party. In public spaces I was approached as an activist, but in private spaces people liked to show photos and tell me of their favorite missionaries. Aside from one MAF (Mission Aviation Fellowship) family, and two ageing mission nurses, the once vibrant mission presence in this area had weakened yet memories remained strong. One night, passing the bedraggled headstones of an increasing built-over Dutch cemetery on our street, a neighbour told me that under the full moon she thought I was a Dutch ghost.
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