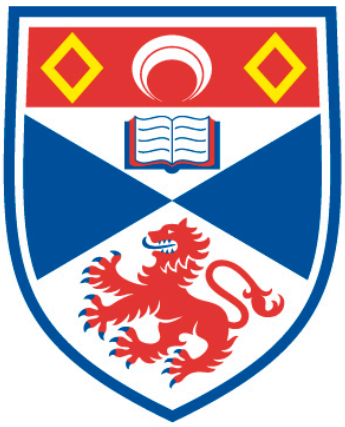
BLOK LAIF: AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF MOSBI SETTLEMENT

Fiona Sonia Karejo Hukula

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



2015

BLOK LAIF: An Ethnography of a Mosbi Settlement

Fiona Sonia Karejo Hukula

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

at the

University of St Andrews

May 2015

Table of Figures

Declarations

1. Candidate's declarations:

I, Fiona Sonia Karejo Hukula, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 73,000 words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

I was admitted as a research student in September, 2008 and as a candidate for the degree of PhD in Social Anthropology in September, 2009; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St Andrews between 2008 and 2013.

Date …… signature of candidate

2. Supervisor's declaration:

I hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution and Regulations appropriate for the degree of PhD in Social Anthropology in the University of St Andrews and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree.

Date …… signature of supervisor …

3. Permission for electronic publication: (*to be signed by both candidate and supervisor*)

In submitting this thesis to the University of St Andrews I understand that I am giving permission for it to be made available for use in accordance with the regulations of the University Library for the time being in force, subject to any copyright vested in the work not being affected thereby. I also understand that

the title and the abstract will be published, and that a copy of the work may be made and supplied to any bona fide library or research worker, that my thesis will be electronically accessible for personal or research use unless exempt by award of an embargo as requested below, and that the library has the right to migrate my thesis into new electronic forms as required to ensure continued access to the thesis. I have obtained any third-party copyright permissions that may be required in order to allow such access and migration, or have requested the appropriate embargo below.

The following is an agreed request by candidate and supervisor regarding the electronic publication of this thesis:

(iii) embargo on all printed copy and electronic copy for a period of five years maximum on the following ground:

-Publication would preclude future publication

Date …… signature of candidate …… signature of supervisor

Abstract

This thesis is about urban sociality in the context of an urban settlement in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. I explore issues of urban life through everyday stories of settlers who reside in a settlement (also known as a blok) at Nine Mile, Port Moresby. I present settlers' ideas of work and money through their income generating efforts as well as their perception about giving. This thesis explores settlement notions of the forms that relatedness takes through everyday interactions of eating together, sharing and thinking of one another. These actions in turn inform ideas of personhood and gender. I use blok ideas to rethink assumptions about the meaning of land and place in an urban setting. Furthermore I seek to use blok understandings of kinship, personhood and gender to portray an urban sociality that is entwined in relations.

Acknowledgments

My first and foremost acknowledgement goes to the people of Morobe Blok who kindly welcomed me into their lives and over the course of my research became kin. I am especially indebted to Sheila Koivi, Jasper Touna, Kevran Gop, Martino and Joyce Bauai and their children, and Bubiang.

At the Papua New Guinea National Research Institute (NRI) my deepest gratitude goes to Dr Thomas Webster for his unfailing support and continuous encouragement. I also acknowledge and thank Michael Pepena, Marie Ann Sundie, and Jean Morimai from the NRI finance office. Lucy Avei, Siling Geatulu, Georgia Kaipu, Logo Lotu, and Matthew Outapa helped in various ways and I thank them all. Dr Musawe Sinebare, former Deputy Director and former HR Manager Ipul Powaseu were both helpful during their time at the NRI. My sincere thanks goes to my *vavi* Kani Kikman for always being my go to person for everything from following up allowances to spss data inputting. I thank my colleagues for their encouragement and remember Longamel Moi Kippel, Ombo, and Ena Gimumu who have since passed on. I am especially indebted to Ena Gimumu for locating and sending me many old articles on urbanisation. *Naso Apie*, thank you.

At the University of St Andrews I wish to acknowledge and thank Prof Peter Clarke and Prof Steve McGee for their support of my studentship. I would not have been able to attend this University without the support of these two gentlemen.

Also at the University of St Andrews my appreciation goes to the Head of the Department of Social Anthropology Dr Mark Harris for his thoughtfulness and understanding, especially with funding assistance for childcare in 2012. I also thank Prof Christina Toren for her support during

her time as Head of Department and Director of Pacific Studies. Personally I thank Christina for showing kindness and encouragement to me over the last four and a half years. I am extremely grateful. I also thank Adam Reed for reading various chapters of my thesis in his role as second supervisor and for his very efficient handling of administrative matters in his role as Postgraduate Convener. Adam's guidance and advice has been helpful on a number of occasions. I thank the academic staff of the Department of Social Anthropology particularly Prof Peter Gow, Prof Nigel Rapport and Prof Christina Toren whose post field write up seminars I attended. Peter Gow, Stan Frankland, Mattia Fumanti, Paloma y Blasco, Huon Wardle, Juan Pablo Sarmiento, Craig Lind, and Jara Hulkenberg have showed me kindness during my time at St Andrews. I also thank Lisa and Mhairi from the Department office for their warmth and friendliness.

I have made some great friends at St Andrews and met some truly wonderful people. I thank Moises, Maire, Daniela, Jan, Phil and Aixa, Chris, Veronika, Giovanna, Rodrigo, Anthony, Linda, Anna, Qing Qing, Alexander, Jonathan, Shuhua, Karolina, Susie, Victor, Katza, Emilka, Priscila, and Christina. I am especially thankful to Linda Scott, QingQing Yang, Christina Basso, Jonathan Tracey, Victor Cova and Shuhua Chen who shared the same office space with me at various points. My thanks to Philip Kao and Christopher Hewlett for their detailed comments and feedback during the write up seminar of the Spring Term of 2012. I acknowledge Christina Toren who led that write up seminar. The concerns that she voiced at that seminar were a motivating factor to think more clearly and thoroughly about my work.

My appreciation goes to Sue Farran, Philp Kao, Priscila Santos de Costa, Christopher Hewlett and Karolina Kuberska for reading final drafts of my chapters. Priscila Santos de Costa so very kindly offered to help me with

formatting. I acknowledge and thank her for kind gesture. Her help and support at the very end is invaluable. Karolina Kuberska was instrumental in helping me in the final stages of formatting and Jonathan Tracey was a calm presence during the crazy last hours. I thank them both.

The Royal Anthropological Institute awarded me the Radcliffe Brown/Sutasoma award 2012. This award assisted me during my final write up stage.

I would like to thank my *susa* Stephanie Cath Garling, her husband Yuri and children Seeley and Willa. My life in St Andrews has been enhanced beyond measure by the friendship, love and kindness of this most wonderful person. I thank Steph for being a sister and friend and for sharing the amazing journey of being first time mum's together.

In St Andrews I also thank my friend Shika for her generosity and kindness and thank Lyn Reid who went beyond her duty as Health Visitor when things were tough for me.

I reserve the final thanks to the people who have been the most important along this PhD journey. Firstly I thank my supervisor Dr Tony Crook. Tony has helped me to view Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea and Melanesia in a way that no one else would have been able to. I am very fortunate to have been the student of a great thinker. The words thank you do not adequately express the gratitude that is in my heart. Tony Crook made it possible for me to pursue a PhD at St Andrews. Tony has not only supported me through my intellectual journey but has been patient and understanding as I embarked on the journey of motherhood a long way from my home and family. Tony has gone above and beyond his duty as a supervisor and in the language of Melanesian reciprocity; I have a VERY big debt to repay. I must also extend this appreciation to Tony's wonderful wife Emma Sutton. I

cannot repay Emma for the numerous acts of kindness but she will always be a very special person to my family and me.

In Papua New Guinea I am indebted to my parent's Martin and Helen Hukula for their never-ending support. It is my privilege to call these two people my parents. My father is gentle and kind and my mother a determined innovative woman. They have supported my choices and decisions even when they have not completely agreed with me. My father prays for my family every morning when he goes to mass and my mother always believes in me. I thank my siblings (Vanessa, Nigel, Trevor, Nathan and Israel) for the words of encouragement and moral support. I also acknowledge the care and thoughtfulness of my sister Febronia and my cousin Jessinta. I extend my appreciation to my family and friends. I especially thank my *malanua* Polly Yauieb for caring and my *las wawo* Michael Wagambie for his assistance over the last four years. I am always appreciative for the support of my *Farienduong* clan members and my maternal family. I thank my *tambu's* in *Wakoia, Nagovisi* for their kind offer of childcare assistance and I remember my late *kabo* Barbra Waneoko who gave us her blessings to travel so far away from her in 2008. She waited for us to make the long trip to *Wakoia* in 2009 before she bid us farewell. *Tabem Kabo*

I owe the greatest thanks and appreciation to my sister Valentina Waninjo aka Mama Niaks. Niaks gave up two years of her life to take care of my children. She cared for Tabai from age three months and Kimari from age six months. Niaks lived with me in the settlement and took care of Tabai while I carried out field work, then she came to St Andrews for two six month stints to take care of both Tabai and Kimari. She has not only lessened my load but was instrumental in helping me to meet people in the blok. Niaks

taught me how to live life-blok style. She has truly showed me the love and patience of a sister. *Tenkyu yu Niaks, lewa susa blo mi.*

My precious daughters were both born while this PhD has been in progress. Tabai Emma was born in 2009 and Kimari Kirsten in 2011. My daughters are my greatest achievement. I thank them both for this has also been hard for them at times. I am most grateful to Tabai whose first year of life was spent in the settlement. Her presence during fieldwork made life easier for me in many ways.

My final word of appreciation goes to my husband Simon. This has been our journey. We came to St Andrews together in 2008 after one year of marriage and the very painful experience of losing our first child to preeclampsia. St Andrew's was our fresh start. I enrolled as a PhD student and Simon as an MRes student. Fate and his own brilliance has led to a PhD of his own. This has been a very long and hard journey for the both of us and I will always love and treasure Simon for his support, patience, love, weird sense of humour and absolutely sharp intellect.

Proverbs: 3:6

Introduction

Morobe blok em gutpla ples, yu ken wokabout yu yet, nogat samting bai kamap lo yu, ol Morobe ol gutpla lain (Morobe blok is a good place, you can walk around by yourself, nothing will happen to you, Morobe people are good people). Port Moresby settlements have been in existence since after World War Two, yet they are still very much unknown to long term residents and anthropologists. "You're living in a settlement! Wow you are really brave, what is it like anyway?" I received these sorts of comments from friends and relatives who I met during fieldwork. One friend remarked with an incredulous smile "You are a crazy girl" when I mentioned that I was living in a settlement at Nine Mile with my husband and baby girl. Other people asked me about issues of safety, health and hygiene. But the most frequent question was "What is it like out there?".

Introducing the study

This thesis is based on fieldwork that was carried out from September 2009 to December 2010 in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea (PNG). This is an ethnographic study of everyday life in a settlement. It seeks to provide the reader with an understanding of how people engage with urban life through work and money, forms of relatedness, gender and violence.

Port Moresby the capital of Papua New Guinea is a city of over 500,000 people with an estimated 93,000 people living in 89 settlements (NCD 2006:5). It is the gateway to Papua New Guinea and the central point for commerce, politics and urbanisation.

Most of my time in Port Moresby was spent living and working at Morobe Blok, Nine Mile, a settlement community of approximately 5000

people. The Papua New Guinea census (National Statistics Office , 2000) states that the population of the entire Nine Mile settlement area is 5927. The Papua New Guinea National Census is conducted every ten years. Due to various administrative issues the census was not conducted in 2010 as expected, but was postponed to 2011. I arrive at this population estimate via two sources. The first being from settlers themselves, the chairman of the settlement included and secondly this estimation is based on the population from the mini household survey that I conducted which covered nearly half the settlement.

What is a Blok?

A blok or a settlement is made up of groups of people who settle on either state or customary land. According to the National Capitial District Settlement Strategic Plan (2006) there are three official definitions of a settlement. The first being a formal settlement which is described as low cost housing on state land, the second being squatter settlements which is described as a spontaneous community or cluster of families who initially invade or progressively settle on land without the consent of the owners of the land and thirdly a community of landless migrants who have been permitted to settle on land held under customary land tenure. The term "blok" is also used to describe a settlement. At Morobe Blok this term is used more regularly than settlement. The word "block" is also used to describe one's own area hence the double meaning and description of "blok" and "block". People can be described as living at a blok but also refer to a block as the block of land on which their house is built. For the purpose of this thesis I shall use the *tokpisin* spelling

"blok" when refering to the settlement and the English spelling "block" when I refer to individual plots of land.

Issues, Scope and Focus

Settlements in Papua New Guinea have always been associated with low income earners and unemployment. This categorisation leads to assumptions about criminality, urban safety and vagrancy. A settlement though physically part of Port Moresby epitomises the contradictions of an ideal urban social life, the world of the city where you can thrive to make a living through paid employment or street selling in the informal economy, and a world where blok law and blok rationale dictate what actions are to be taken at whatever point in time. Settlement residents vote for national members and local level government councillors but they also vote for their own leaders within the settlement. The community is built on an understanding that leaders take the lead in negotiating disputes and averting conflict. The blok is a microcosm of a larger scale of relations in that within the community there are blok leaders, then there are also leaders such as the local level government and the local members of Parliament. I will show in chapter one how these relations connect people together in ways that go beyond just living next to each other.

Port Moresby is generally referred to as having a high population growth and low formal employment rates, with the fastest growing demographic (ages fifteen to twenty four) having the highest rates of unemployment. Many of those who fall into this category are believed to be settlement residents. While the growing middle class[1] and the educated elite of

[1] I use this term very loosely. It has been used as a the way to refer to different groups of people and not in the context of class *per se*.

Port Moresby continually condemn settlements as crime infested locales, connected to the city through potholed roads and illegal utility connections, where unemployed people spend their days sitting around gambling, planning criminal activities and engaging in other socially unacceptable behaviour. These assumptions are based on continuous negative media coverage, a western informed idea about what a modern Port Moresby should look like coupled with a lack of knowledge of the lives of settlement residents. It is also assumed that settlers are mainly rural migrants who come to the city looking for a better life. While this is true, my research indicates that this dominant view is not entirely correct. Morobe Blok is made up of people who were living in other parts of the city for many years before the blok was established. One of the aims of this thesis is to adddress this ongoing debate as to what settlers do in terms of income generation. This is important for this study and also for purposes of debunking the most common held view of settlers being that they are unemployed trouble makers.

The ongoing debates about settlements and urbanisation has been prevalent in Papua New Guinea since the 1970's. The daily newspapers regularly publish letters from Port Moresby residents condemning settlers and urging the government to take a tougher stance towards those who live in settlements by repatriating them to their home provinces. In addition to the more traditional forms of media, the internet has given Papua New Guineans the opportunity to debate such issues on online forums on facebook, on blogs and on websites concerning Papua New Guinea.[2]

Because settlements are stereotyped as the breeding gounds for anti social behavior they are often the target for police operations and demolition

[2] Examples being the Namorong Report, The Masalai Blog and the Papua New Guinea Facebook group Sharp Talk.

exercises which are mostly knee jerk reactions by government authorities when pressured by public opinion on issues such as crime and unemployment.

Public opinion about settlements also seems to be shared by policy makers and bureaucrats. Recent Government documents about urbanisation portray settlements as places where low income earners, unemployed and criminals live.[3] These various government policies and plans have been formulated to address what is perceived to be a problem of development (or lack of) and modernity. International NGO's and donors in their effort to address developmental catch phrases such as "poverty alleviation" and "gender equality" also depict the experience of settlement life in many ways that affirms the conventional ideas about settlements. While I do not necessarily disagree with these claims made by international donors and government agencies alike, this is not a path which I want to pursue in this thesis. What I intend to present here is an ethnography of Melanesian urban sociality for which I use blok life as a way to look beyond the common discourse of modernity and development that is synonymous in post colonial countries.

In order for the reader to appreciate why a study of an urban settlement is important to anthropology and to contemporary Papua New Guinea, I will present an overview of urbanisation so the reader gains a historical perspective of how settlements have grown from the colonial era to post-independence.

[3] See National Capital District Settlements Strategic Plan 2007-2011; National Urbanisation Policy 2010-2030 pg 52; Papua New Guinea Development Strategic Plan 2010-2030.

An Overview of Urbanisation in Papua New Guinea

Settlements are viewed as a direct result of urbanisation and migration. By outlining the progress of urbanization in Papua New Guinea I intend to show how settlements were established and what social connotations are attached to being a settlement dweller. This is relevant for my project because these nuances are still present in discourse about settlements.

The process of urbanization in Port Moresby and other towns of Papua New Guinea occurred largely as part of the colonization process. Colonization of the eastern half of the island of New Guinea began in 1884 when Britain established a protectorate over the south eastern part of New Guinea. Germany established control over various parts of the north-east coast of New Guinea with the colonial boundaries being defined by 1885 (Levine and Levine 1979: 11). Papua and New Guinea was administratively united after World War Two as a protectorate of Australia. Colonial towns were established and divided into districts and sub-district headquarters where government facilities and colonial administration staff operated from.

Towns such as Port Moresby were predominantly made up of colonial administrators and their families. Papua New Guinean men were mainly employed by companies to perform low skilled jobs and by expatriate families as *haus boi* (domestic servant). Married men usually left their families in their villages while they worked in town. Accommodation for locals was in single, barracks type set up which did not allow for or cater for families because like in some African states, Papua New Guineans were viewed as rural dwellers therefore the colonial administration did not adequately plan for the inclusion of local people into the urban environment. In addition to the lack of accommodation for families, prior to 1960 settlement within legal town

boundaries in Papua New Guinea was restricted. Stringent colonial laws such as the Police Offences ordinance Act (1925-41) and other legislation such as the Health regulations Act (1922); The Public Health ordinance Act 1932-1938 (New Guinea) also restricted people from settling within legal town boundaries. In this context Papua New Guineans were defined as rural even when they were living and working in towns. There may have been an assumption that those who came to work in town would eventually return to their villagers therefore there was no need to provide infrastructure to cater for families.

From the period 1889-41 Port Moresby was described as a 'sleepy colonial backwater town' (Levine 1979:15) functioning mainly as an administrative centre. The first squatter settlements began to appear in Port Moresby shortly after World War Two. These settlements were located beyond the legal town boundaries, on traditional land where the strict colonial legislation was not applicable or could not be enforced (Jackson 1977:22). In some cases, negotiations for land between settlers and landowners were based on some shared history, such as the Hiri trade between the Motuan and Gulf people. The legacy of these negotiations remains through settlements such as Taikone. According to Jackson (1977:29-30), settlement life was based upon single or multiple nuclear families with residents being employed in the "unskilled labor force" as laborers and grass cutters though occasionally other professions such as business managers and teachers also resided in settlements. The rural role of women as food suppliers was transported to the settlement where there was land that enabled families to make gardens. Jackson states that family life was viewed to be better developed in settlements as opposed to the urban towns whose populace were predominately working men. This was in direct contradiction to stereotypical notions that settlements were breeding grounds for social disorder. Many settlers continue to make gardens to

supplement the daily family food needs as well as for income generation purposes.

Migration within the colony occurred mainly through contract labour programs to coastal plantations. Most of the labourers worked for plantations or miners with their conditions being set by the Native Labour Ordinance Act of 1907 (Waiko 1993). Labour migrants during pre World War One were mainly from the Sepik, Gulf, Morobe, Madang and Milne Bay districts. Following the war, most labour contract workers came from the New Guinea Highlands region with migration generally occurring from densely populated areas to areas such as Rabaul and Bougainville, where there were plantations and in the case of Bougainville in the 1970's, the Panguna mine. Other destinations for internal migrants were the coastal towns of Port Moresby, Lae, Madang and Wewak (Levine and Levine 1979:27).

Contract labourers usually worked for a period of time and then were repatriated back to their home provinces. Some, however, did not return to their home provinces but remained in the coastal areas and looked for more work or moved into the nearest towns. Others, who returned back to their villages, used their repatriation pay to purchase tickets back to the coast. In some areas as in East New Britain, plantation workers from places such as the Sepik married local Tolai women and consequently established a Sepik community in Rabaul. Similarly, Kerema people from the Gulf province who went to work in Madang established a Kerema compound as their numbers increased (Waiko 1993:146). The inter marrying of local women to men from other provinces and the creation of settlements based on provincial affiliations paved the way for relatives and wantoks to visit and in some cases settle in other provincial towns. An example of this form of migration and settlement is the 'Papua compound' in Lae where people from the Papuan region settled and still

live. As a result, terms such as "Sepik blo Rabaul", or "Kerema blo Sepik" have emerged.[4]

After Papua New Guinea gained inpendence in 1975 the urban population began to grow. Yala and Chand (2008) note that Port Moresby recorded a 4% growth every year from 1980 until 2000. The census of 1980 recorded a population of 112,000 people. In 2000, this figure had grown to over 250,000. In 1945, Port Moresby was recorded as having no informal settlements, in 1980 thirty four informal settlements were recorded with a total population of 11,270 people residing in settlements. The 2000 census recorded fifty five informal settlements with a population of 53,390. On a average, a new settlement was established every year for twenty years with the annual growth rate being 7.8%. This is twice the growth rate of Port Moresby overall. Yala and Chand's observation that the growth rate of urban settlements is larger than that of Port Moresby is revealing in that here we see a clear separation of Port Moresby as a imagined space of formal legal housing and that of the settlement being of another kind of place. The differention clearly indicates the boundaries of what Port Moresby is or should be and what settlements are, without considering that people who use the urban space of this place called Port Moresby may not distinguish themselves in such a manner. The high growth rate of urban settlements has been attributed to the high levels of rural urban migration, however the lack of planning by successive governments to cater for housing and land for an increasing urban population is also a contributing factor as to why urban settlements are being created.

[4]These terms refer to people from a certain province who were born and brought up in another province. So even though they can say they are from Kerema they also have an affiliation to the place in which they were brought up. See chapter three for further discussion.

Placing the thesis in the urban

There is a solid body of literature that has come about from research in urban Papua New Guinea in the 1970's. This research mainly focused on rural urban migration and urban adaptation. (Oram 1968; 1976; Lucas 1972; Salisbury 1972; Strathern 1972, 1975; Rew 1974; Bryant 1977; Jackson 1977; Levine and Levine 1979; Morauta 1979). The 1980's experienced a decline in urban research followed by a renewed interest in the 1990's.

Recent studies that focus on urban issues in Papua New Guinea have concentrated around themes of Law and Order (Guthrie 2013; Reed 2011; 2003; Luker 2010; Dinnen 2001; Koczerberski 2001; Sali 1996; Goddard 1995; 1992;2005), income generation patterns and urban poverty (Storey 2010;Umezaki 2003), and urban land (Chand 2008). Anthropological research in the urban was concentrated around the pre and post-colonial era with Louise Moruata (1979), Dawn Ryan (1989) and Sr Chao (1989) working on issues of rural-urban migration, and urban poverty in Port Moresby. All three women worked with groups of people from the Gulf Province. Sr Chao's informants were some of the original inhabitants of the Nine Mile settlement area. Following on from the the late 1970's and early 1980's there has been an absence of anthropological research in the urban with much work being limited to Errignton and Gwertz (1999) who write about the emerging middle class in Papua New Guinea. Based on long term field work with the Chambri people of East Sepik, Errington and Gwertz research the lives of the middle class in the small coastal town of Wewak[5] where they observe how local elites use exclusive

[5] Wewak is a town on the North Coast of Papua New Guinea. It is the administrative headquarters of the East Sepik Province.

spaces like the Wewak Golf Club as places where they can engage in a world that removes them from kin and *wantok*. Keith Barber (2003) studied household income generation and expenditure patterns among the Bugiau people of Eight Mile Settlement. Adam Reed (2003, 2011) and Michael Goddard (1992; 1995; 2002; 2005) worked in Port Moresby in the 1990's with Reed conducting research among male inmates at the Bomana jail outside of Port Moresby. Goddard has had along term association with research in Port Moresby, especially researching village courts and dispute resolution in the city. More recently, Alice Street (2012) researched biomedicine and knowledge practices at the Madang General Hospital. John Cox (2011) studied contributors of the UVistract fast money scheme that originated in Port Moresby and eventually shifted its operations to Bougainville. Lorena Gibson (2011) worked with women's organisations in Lae as part of a comparative study of exceptional women organising social change in PNG and India. Gibson describes the efforts of women to create meaningful lives for themselves and their families through grass roots movements like the Butibam Womens cut flower association. Gibson asserts that social relations are vital for sustaining colletive action by women groups. Jaka Repic (2011) researched settlers from Okapa in the Eastern Highlands who reside at Two Mile in Port Moresby. Repic asserts that urban settlements appropriate space and boundaries through the medium of water. Water that is connected illegally is visible through the long water pipes and reflects the claims to water that various ethnic groups in the settlement make. Anthony Pickles (2012) builds an ethnographic understanding of gambling and uses it to interograte theories of gambling and money. He provides a description of gambling in Goroka, Eastern Highlands. The resurgence of urban anthropology has mainly been in centred outside of Port Moresby with Street and Cox working in Madang, Gibson in Lae and Pickles in

Goroka. Cox (2011:10) asserts that town dwellers and often children of town dwellers, whom he terms the "working class," are little studied by anthropologists, partly because their lives are not constituted by the village as the centre of meaning. I would argue that anthropologists have not studied town dwellers and their children because anthropologists hold on to the notion of studying distant and 'untouched' tribes, and secondly because the urban in Papua New Guinea, particular Port Moresby is not appealing in aesthetic or intellect.

Recent anthropological research in Port Moresby has focussed on Adam Reed's work is in Port Moresby's Bomana jail while Barber, Goddard and Repic's research is centred around various settlements. Barber reveals that there is a gap in knowledge about information on basic livelihood functions of settlement dwellers. He attempts to fill this gap by providing information about the Bugiau settlement community in Port Moresby. His data on household composition, expenditure, employment and income is based on four weeks of residence within the community. According to Barber the settlement is set up like a village with most of the residents being from the same village. Barber found that in the Bugiau settlement community that people engage in ongoing concrete relationships with those in their home village and that residents regularly visit their village with some using their earnings to build houses in the village (Barber 2003: 8).

Reed provides another picture of urban life through his ethnography of Bomana jail in Port Moresby. Reed's book 'Papua New Guinea's Last Place' focuses on the constraints that prisoners of Bomana jail feel and experience as part of their incarceration. Reed captures the feeling that prisoners sense when coming to Papua New Guinea's "last place". The book concentrates on the pains of imprisonment and the nature of inmate culture. One of the pains of

imprisonment is the worry that inmates feel. They worry about the life that they left behind. These worries are based on relations they have with people outside of the prison. Prisoners worry about the welfare of their parents, wives and families. Reed refers to prison records from colonial times which report that prisoners come in healthy and wither away with worry. This is explained in *tok pisin* as dying of worry- *wari kilim ol*. An interesting contribution to urban anthropological theory is the way in which Reed describes how prisoners negotiate or identify with different groups. Reed's research encountered relations which are created in order to form and maintain relationships. Reed states that prisoners describe Bomana as a place where there is no kin or women (or men), no money and no familiar surroundings (Reed, Papua New Guinea's Last Place, 2003, p. 7). Just like Wagner (1974) describes the way in which the Daribi people have different affiliations, in prison, inmates also have different ways in which they create groups. In this case it is the place that may create the relation. I take up Reed's exposition of *wan* in Chapter Three.

Michael Goddard's book 'The Unseen City' addresses the link between labelling settlements as places of lawlessness, unemployment and poverty. His book is a collection of previously published papers on various issues relating to Law and Order such as the village courts and gangs in Port Moresby. Goddard discusses the lives of settlement dwellers through his work with village courts and research on the formation and social identity of gangs in the city. Goddard disputes the popular rhetoric of settlements as being the home of unemployed criminals and provides an in depth overview of how settlements have come to be vilified.

This thesis will build on the limited contemporary anthropological research in urban Papua New Guinea by providing an ethnographic description of the every day lives of settlement dwellers. What this thesis offers is a

perspective of urban life based on ethnographic research within a settlement community. I draw from the mundaness of daily living to create a description of life in a settlement.

Morobe Blok, Mosbi and Me

As the ethnographer and author of this thesis I feel that it is important to situate myself in this thesis. Morobe Blok, Mosbi and Me is in reference to my field site and my home town Port Moresby. I was born in Port Moresby and raised in the suburb of Tokarara and like many Papua New Guineans have multiple claims to place and *ples*[6]. Historically, the urban is not unfamiliar to my family as my maternal grandfather was a policeman and my mother who was born in Telefomin, Sandaun province was raised in Madang, a town on the North Coast of Papua New Guinea. My father was born and raised in Tui Village, East Sepik. Both my parents moved to Port Moresby in the 1970's to work as public servants. My father as a park ranger and my mother as a midwife. In 1978, my parents applied and were accepted to be part of the *Stret Pasin Stoa* scheme and this was how we ended up in Tokarara, where my family has lived for thirty five years. The *Stret Pasin Stoa Scheme* was an initiative of the Papua New Guinea Agricultural Bank aimed at assisting Papua New Guineans to own and run their own trade store business. The property that my parents aquired as part of their bank loan consisted of a shop with a small two bedroom house that was attached to the shop premises. I spent my childhood growing up among people mostly from the Gulf and Central provinces. We had a *haus boi* called *Ari* from the Buang area of Morobe province who lived in the same neighbourhood and came to the house every day to help my mother with cleaning and ironing. During the very early days of our life at Tokarara we had a baby sitter from Goilala, in the Central Province, who took care of my older sister, younger brother and I while my parents worked. My parents employed mostly young men from the *Okapa* District of Eastern Highlands to work in the shop

[6] *Ples* here refers to village and place of origin.

alongside a couple of people from other parts of PNG. After ten years of fourteen to sixteen hour days my parents sold their shop in 1988 and we moved to a house in another part of Tokarara where my parents currently live.

Twenty five years after my parents sold their shop we still closely associate with some of our workers from *Okapa* and our most loved baby sitter Anna (now known as *bubu*[7] Anna to our children). We celebrate marriages together, mourn our losses together and help each other where we can. I live a life of ongoing relations with my *Farienduong* clan of East Sepik where I have never lived, as well as a life of ongoing relations in my other village of Tokarara where I have lived all my life.

My parent's decision to go into business made it possible for me to attend an international primary school in Port Moresby and following that I spent five years in Townsville, Australia where I was a boarding student at a all girl's Catholic school run by the Sister's of Mercy. After I completed year twelve, I received an Aotearoa scholarship and spent another three years in Wellington, New Zealand where I studied anthropology at Victoria Unversity. I left my home when I was twelve years of age and returned to live permanently in Port Moresby at age twenty. Many of my school holidays were spent in my village Tui with my maternal grandmother Kimari and my father's family, who at that time were mainly village based. My parent's always reminded me that my western education must never over ride my relations with my clan, wawo's (maternal uncles) and community. It is important that the reader knows this part of my history because as a Papua New Guinean researching my own people I aknowledge that I come from a background that is far removed from those whom I lived with in the blok.

[7] Grandmother.

Up until 2004, my knowledge of settlements was very limited. Prior to 2004 my idea of a settlement was this dark, disorderly no-go zone where stolen vehicles were hidden and people were hostile and unfriendly. My first experience of settlements was in my capacity as a research officer at the Papua New Guinea Research Institute. I worked on a Australian Government funded research project tracking public perceptions of crime and the criminal justice system. This took me to various parts of Port Moresby including three settlements in three different locations. As part of this project, the Australian Aid Security Protocol required an elaborate security plan which included the purchase of hand-held radios for the purpose of communication between research teams. But most importantly, for security reasons. While I had never been to a Port Moresby settlement, there was something about this elaborate security precaution that made me feel uncomfortable. As it were, the settlements turned out to be places where people lived, went to work, to nearby gardens, and went about life just like the rest of Port Moresby. This was the beginning of my wanting to know more about settlement life and also the change in my own perceptions about settlement people. At each of the settlements I worked in, I wanted to know how people came to live there, what kinds of things they do for a living and what sorts of things concerned them as residents of Port Moresby.

My claims of Port Moresby as home is a large part of my motivation to write about the urban in Papua New Guinea, in addition my motivation also stems from the dearth in urban anthropological research in Papua New Guinea and also from a slightly political point of view in which I want to inform national policy debates about urbanisation through ethnography and anthropology. This political point of view has come about through my fieldwork and the experience of living in a settlement, getting to know how

people live, and learning about the things that make life in a settlement. This has motivated me to contribute to helping policy makers and politicians understand settlements from a perspective that shows the relations that constitute settlement life. I want to show how settlers negotiate life in the city through the relations that are made and how these relations sustain life, activities and persons. This research is important because it explains life in the settlement in a way that does not consist of numbers and in depth satistical analysis using indexes and standardised surveys. Here, I use ethnography to appeal to those who are in places of power and decision making to understand how and why those who live in a setttlement act in the ways that they do. I do not mean the obvious hardships of life such as the lack of access to basic services that should be afforded to all residents of the city, but more so to the intricacies of social life that contributes to kinship, social action and dispute resolution. In addition to this, my motivation to work in a settlement stems from the reason that I wanted to do a PhD in the first place. I came to St Andrews to study masculinty and gender violence. I went to the field and spent a few months looking and listening and waiting for people to tell me why they fight and was dissapointed at their lack of interest in my interest. I learnt that violence between men and women is not the most important thing in people's lives but it is how people do gender and how this interacts with their daily life that informs their actions. For the discipline of anthropology, this study will contribute to an undestanding of urban life in Melanesia as well as kinship studies and contemporary Melanesia. As I have mentioned earlier, urban anthropological research is not an area that anthropologists actively engage. I hope that this study will show the richness of urban social life and the possibilities for research in an urban context.

Morobe Blok

Morobe blok is located in the Nine Mile area of Port Moresby. The city of Port Moresby is organised in a way that suburbs are situated in relation to the central business district or what is commonly known as Downtown Port Moresby, hence the name Nine Mile indicates that the blok is situated nine miles out of the CBD.

Figure 1: Morobe Blok, Aerial Map.

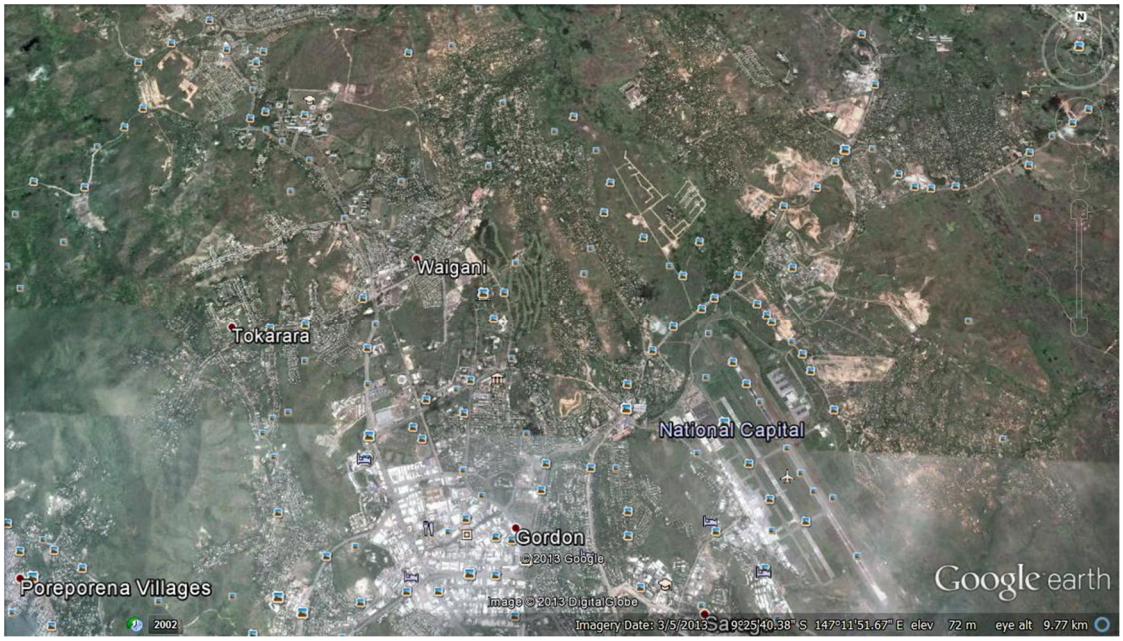


Figure 2: Port Moresby suburbs, Aerial Map.

Morobe blok is located within the greater Nine Mile settlement area which begins at the Nine Mile junction. At present it is estimated that there are over seven hundred blocks within the settlement which is spread over two portions of land, with most settlers living on the first portion of land and a smaller number of families living on an adjoining parcel of land known as *Dedua*.[8] Descriptions of the size of the settlement were usually given in terms of the physical occupation of land. When I conducted a mini household survey, my research assistants and I walked to the house which they claimed to be the house which marked the beginning of the block, this house was on the side of the main road, and near the Makana drain, which serves as the physical marker that differentiates Morobe Blok from another settlement called Makana. The first house marking Morobe blok is situated along the Hubert Murray highway, otherwise known as Sogeri road. The blok shares a common boundary with the Evedahana primary school

[8]Named after a place in Morobe Province.

and stretches back towards the Papua New Guinea Correctional Service Senior Officers' housing quarters. There are three main streets: the first street is closest to Makana the neighbouring settlement; the second street begins where the settlement's main bus stop is located; and the third street, where I lived, is opposite the Nine Mile cemetery and adjacent to the Evedahana primary school. These three main streets are long, dusty, bumpy dirt roads that branch off and join up with smaller streets and access roads.

Figure 3: Main Road leading to Sogeri. Main bus stop in the background.

Houses at Morobe blok are both permanent and semi permanent with most having no access to utilities such as electricity and water. The settlement was created through an agreement between local landowners and people from the Morobe Province of PNG (see chapter one) and is governed by the Morobe Community *Goroac Juju*,

formerly known as the Morobe Community Development Association. The association is registered with the Papua New Guinea Investment Promotion Authority and was formed to pursue the interest of the settlers. The name of the association reflects the Morobean origins of the settlers, thus the use of words in the *yabim* and *kote* languages of the Morobe province. The word *Goroac* means "the people" in *yabim* language and the word *juju* translates to mean "good life" in *kote* language. Chapter one is dedicated to telling the story of how the blok came into being.

There is a Lutheran church (cf. Figure 5) as well as a Revival, Seventh Day Adventist and other smaller pentecostal churches within the settlement. The Lutheran church is the most prominent church in the community and is associated with Morobe Province through the historical significance of the arrival of Reverend Johann Flierl on Simbang, Finschhafen in July 1886.

Figure 4: Second Street, Morobe Blok.

During my time at the blok, I counted eight structures that resembled shops while there was numerous smaller *maket* tables[9] right throughout the settlement. Shops sold a variety of products ranging from frozen poultry and meat to tinned food, laundry detergent, biscuits, soft drinks and soap. The shops are usually differentiated from the smaller businesses by the fact that they mostly are larger in size, operated with electricity and are able to sell products that require refrigeration such as protein and cold drinks. Smaller businesses usually consist of a small structure that resembles a cubbyhole which stocks products such as maggi chicken stock cubes, assorted lollies, batteries, biscuits and tinned meat. There were five

[9]A *maket* table is a mini table-like structure made of timber or iron.

Figure 5: Mt. Zion, Lutheran Church Banner

places that sold beer. Two of the beer places that were located near where I lived also had pool tables which encouraged customers to stay within the premises to socialise when drinking. The life of these establishments are quite fluid as 'businesses' open and close quite randomly.

In chapter two I explore the ways in which blok residents make a living. For now I will present data from a mini household survey of three hundred and twenty seven households[10]. I use the household survey data to give the reader an idea about the types of work that settlement residents engage in.

Places of employment and types of work

Based on the mini household survey that I conducted about seventy percent of the population of 2261 are above the age of fifteen and are included in the survey of employment. Of that seventy percent, thirty one percent (31%) indicated that they are employed (defined as work for others). Twelve percent (12%) of this group is made up of government and private sector workers, eleven (11%) work in the construction and labour industry, six percent (6%) are employed as domestic workers (*haus meri* and baby sitters) and two percent (2%) work in the security industry. Twelve percent (12%) indicated that they were wholly involved in street selling, while seventeen percent (17%) described themselves as being unemployed. There was no response from another ten (10%).

[10]Approximately, half the settlement's population.

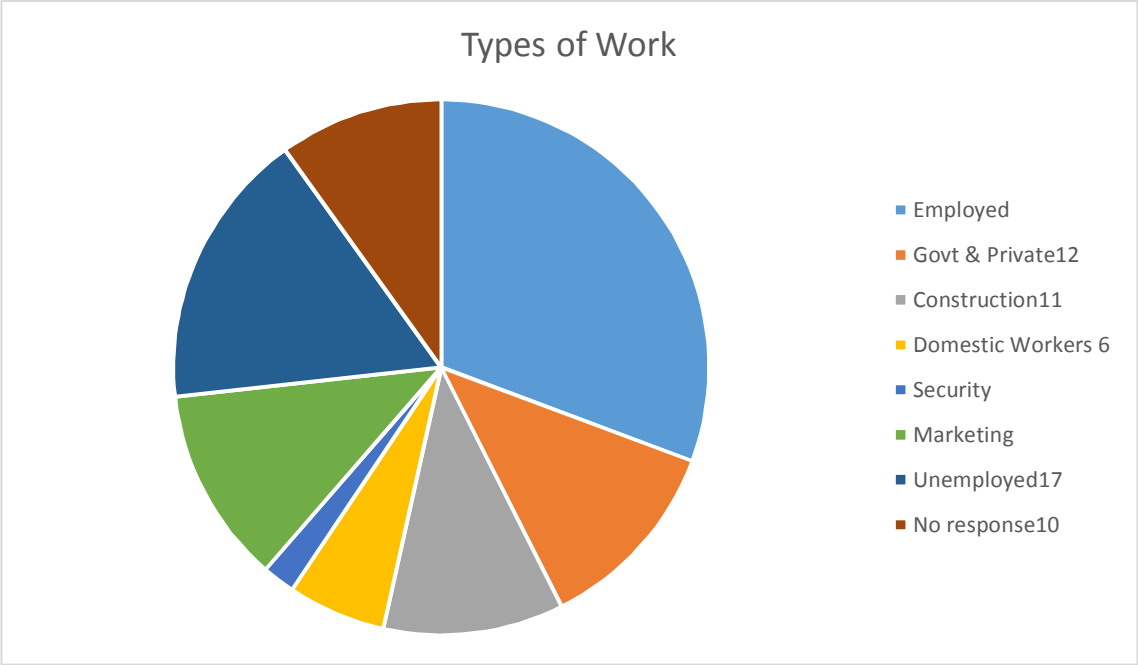


Figure 6: Types of Work.

These statistics provide an indication of levels of employment and types of jobs, however it is also imperative to note that the survey data showed that the majority of households who indicated that there was one or more persons in paid employment also stated that their main source of income was from a combination of formal employment and informal income generating activities such as selling *buai* and cigarettes.

The involvement in extra income generating activities by wage earning blok dwellers is not localised to the blok. The sale of ice blocks, mobile phone top up cards and other small items in front of suburban homes is a highly visible activity. This

Figure 7: Market Table.

type of entrepreneurship by urban dwellers is something which has been ongoing since the late 1970's.

Hagener's who were employed in the early seventies were engaging in other forms or income generation such as Taxi driving (Strathen 1975) as an avenue to make more money. While Hageners' motivations at that time were directed towards having access to more money to achieve rural prestige, and while these motivations still remain, I propose that in addition to rural connectedness those who engage in these forms of micro *bisnis* also do so to achieve a sort of urban recognition in the form of their ability to contribute to urban commitments such as *haus krais* and bride price exchange (See Chapter three).

The sale of betelnut, fruit, art, and craft outside of designated market places is also a trait of urban living that has expanded over time. Ranck (1982) divided the informal retail trade into three catergories, the first being the urban markets, many of which were established during colonial times; the second being side-walk traders or street sales people; and the third being mobile trading vans and *liklik stoa's* or what is also commonly known as a tucker box. A *liklik stoa* is a small store that sells basic household items and is usually located in the front yard of the owner. I have spent time discussing this aspect of blok life because settlements are primarily classified within the domain of economic disadvantage. It also sets the tone for discussions about land, kinship, gender and violence which will be covered in this thesis.

A Night and Day in a Settlement

I can vividly recall the first night at the blok. I felt a sense of disconnect to the city of Port Moresby. Even though I rented a room in a permanent house which had both electricity and running water, I still felt that this place that was going to be my home for the next year was not part of the city of Port Moresby. I sat on the verandah and looked out to the sea of darkness which was the rest of the settlement and took in the coolness of the night and the quiet surrounding. It was so quiet, there was no sound of car engines or loud noises, just the silence of the night. Our house was one of three houses accessible by a dirt track.

Figure 8: I rented a room in this four-bedroom house.

Our little dirt track led out to the edge of the blok and on to the famous Turf Club. During the 1980's, the Turf Club was a popular socializing venue for both expatriate and Papua New Guinean horse enthusiasts. Various activities such as racing and show jumping took place at the turf club. When I first arrived at the blok, I would frequently hear women saying that they were going to the Turf Club to collect fire (firewood) or children would say '*Kam yumi go waswas lo Turf Club raun wara'* (Come lets go and wash/swim at the Turf Club water hole) or *"Yumi go pilai lo Turf Club maunten*"(Lets go and play at the Turf club mountain). The Turf Club mountain is also a known to accommodate young lovers in the darkness of night, with our little dirt road being the discrete passage that guided them to the Turf Club mountain.

Figure 9: The Room I rented.

Figure 10: Dirty track on the way to the house.

A typical day in the blok begins between five and six in the morning. Familes wake up with mothers or older children starting fires so that breakfast is prepared before school, work and the day ahead. Many people in the blok cook outside in the open using firewood or in makeshift kitchens because their houses are not connected to electricity. For those who have electricity, outdoor cooking is also frequently used as a cheaper alternative to electricity.

Figure 11: Outdoor fire place.

Breakfast typically consists of fried flour, or on some mornings, leftovers from the night before. Depending on affordablity some families eat meals that consist of *hevi kaikai* (heavy food) such as rice or vegetables. A quick and popular breakfast option consists of dry scone or dry biscuit with a hot cup of sweet black tea. Dry scone is a plain white bun with no butter or additional paste like peanut butter. Dry biscuit is a cracker that is plain or seasoned with chicken or beef flavours. This can be bought from other residents who provide breakfast on the go for those in a rush to make it to school or work in town.

The early start for part of the settlement population occurs because many workers and students commute to work and school in town. The morning sun brings a mad rush of men, women and children trying to get on the first PMV's (Public Motor Vehicle) to the city. A number of buses that operate the Port Moresby city routes are local to the blok and pick up settlers walking to the main bus stop. By the time the bus reaches the main Morobe Blok bus stop all twenty five seats are filled with a couple of brave male bodies hanging off the sides of the PMV door. For those who wait at the bus

stop, it is a waiting game to see how many buses will turn up from Gordons or other surrounding settlements and how many people will be able to squeeze themselves on to the buses. Some smaller fifteen seater buses that operate the Sogeri[11] route take advantage of the morning rush and charge blok dwellers K1 (£0.24)[12] to go to Gordons. Gordons is a suburb in the Port Moresby North East Electorate. It is the surburb which houses Port Moresby's biggest market and is also the transit point for those who live outside the city boundaries. Commuters from the blok have to change buses at Gordons to connect to other parts of the city. The standard bus fare is 0.80 toea (£0.21). Children who attend the nearby Evedahana primary school, leave home between seven and eight in the morning and walk a short distance to the school.

After the morning rush, the blok begins to quieten down. Those who remain at home are busy with household chores such as laundry. Others set up their *maket* tables for the days sales. Sometimes children can be heard playing, a car can be heard driving through the blok or the sound of music coming from a random radio, but most times it is quiet. The blok starts to get busy again around noon as those who have been to town or nearby gardens begin to return. Vegetable markets spring up along the road side around two in the afternoon, as mostly women set up their vegetables for sale. The streets begin to fill with people, laughter and noise as residents come out to buy vegetables, meet friends and relatives and chew betelnut. Others begin to return from their places of work and school in town.

Evening meals are prepared before dark so that food can be cooked while there is still sunlight. Evening meals comprise of rice and or vegetables such as *tapiok* (cassava), *kaukau* (sweet potato) or banana. Protein accompanying a meal frequently consists of tinned fish or other tinned meat such as corned beef. On some occassions some families cook chicken or lamb flaps. Most families eat a variety of greens (aibika,

[11] Sogeri is in the Central Province. The Sogeri Plateu is home to the Koiairi people.
[12] One PNG kina is equivalent to twenty-five pence.

pumpkin tips or watercress). These greens are usually cooked in coconut cream or chicken stock or are alternatively chopped up and fried. The main evening meal is most often served with tea or water.

As darkness falls the blok is still a hive of activity as people return from *taun* (Port Moresby city) on 'last buses'(usually the last buses from Gordons market to Nine Mile), some people are watching television at the local tucker box while others replenish their *buai* and cigarettes supplies for the night.[13] Young people can be seen congregating around a *maket* table listening to music, sharing *buai* and smokes and, on a lucky day, drinking alcohol.

The nights can also bring uncertainty with children afraid to wash in the makeshift outdoor bathroom because of fear of ghosts and women
afraid to wash at night because of the fear that there might be unknown men (real or imagined) lurking around in the darkness.

Some of us were scared of the big black toads that lurked around the out door shower area. The adult women and children go to the wash area together. Once the bathroom duties are done, it is time to go in the house and sit on the verandah and play cards or, on a good night, sit out under the night
sky and tell stories.

The prospect of needing to go to the bathroom in the middle of the night was always a nerve wrecking one, especially because I never knew who might be hanging around in the dark.

[13] A tucker box is a small outfit made from corrugated iron that usually sells basic necessaries. In the blok, a tucker box is also referred to as a store or shop. Customers stand outside the tucker box and are served by a shopkeeper.

However, I would take comfort in knowing that the neighbours were still awake as I would hear them playing cards and see a flame from a fire still flickering away. A neighbour said to me *'Yu noken wari, mipla no save slip hariap. Mipla save sindaun aninit lo haus na lukim yupla go kam stap.* (Do not you worry, we do not go to sleep early. We sit under our house and watch you go up and down).

Figure 12.1: Blok Shower

Figure 12.2: Blok Toilet.

Out and About in Morobe Blok

When I first started fieldwork I would head out around ten in the morning only to find that there would not be anyone out on the streets. I changed my tactic and started going out around one p.m and that is when I would meet up with people coming back from the gardens, setting up their markets (See more on chapter two) or coming out of their houses to look for *kumu*[14] to cook for dinner. I spent my days walking around by myself, chatting with people that I became friends with or hanging around at the main bus stop.

I went to the field fully aware of the perceived security issues of living in a settlement and one of my greatest fears was being harassed when walking around the blok myself. This never eventuated. The worry that 'rascal'[15] gangs might attack at night or during the day was also a worry when I first moved to my fieldsite however this also was an experience that I was not confronted with. We spent a couple of months of 2010 with a axe wedged under the front door accompanied by a single bolt as our means of locking the door. Maybe it is this particular settlement that made me feel comfortable. Maybe if I had lived in any of the neighbouring settlements, I may not have felt so safe. I walked through the neighbouring Makana, Kerema and Highlands bloks a couple of times and I felt that the atmosphere and feeling of being safe was different to that of Morobe Blok. I walked through these neighbouring settlements mainly on Sundays when the streets were populated with people either gambling, sitting around telling stories and, or drinking.

[14] *Tok Pisin* word for green vegetables.

[15] Groups or gangs of mostly young men who commit crime.

At one point during my fieldwork the *buai* market that I regularly visited became gambling central. Two or three groups of six to eight people would be sitting around in a circle intently playing *bom* or *kwin*, two favourite *kas* (cards) games. Gambling in public is illegal therefore on a number of occasions that I was hanging around the *kas ples* (cards place) I was told by some concerned *kumu* (vegetable) marketers *'Eh yu noken sanap lo hap, sapos polis kam bai ol paitim yupla olgeta ya, kam na sidaun lo maket wantaim mipla'* (Hey stand over there, if the police come they will beat you all, come and sit here with us at the market place).

I was intrigued by the business like manner in which a game of cards is played. The gamblers were very serious and were also very particular about the type of cards that are used in a game. The cards always looked brand new because as soon as there is a mark or any sign that foul play could occur the cards must be replaced by a new set. The faces of those playing cards were usually expressionless so not to give away any hints on where one is at with his or her card playing tactics, because I was told that playing cards is definitely about luck as much as it is about tactics[16].

On more than one occasion I was asked if I wanted to join in a game of cards but I always politely refused, mainly because I was an amateur *bom* player (I learnt how to play *bom* during fieldwork) and I had no clue about how to play *kwin* (Queen) even though I had spent a good amount of time intently watching a game of *kwin* in the hope that I would understand the game. Even after being coached by some very experienced card players, I was still very slow. When I voiced my frustration at my mistakes, a friend told me not to worry too much because playing cards was not a good thing anyway.

Kas (card) times are great times for the *buai*, smoke and food vendors who sell scones, cordial and cooked food such as boiled or fried *kumu* and chicken feet. *Kas* players constantly buy *buai*,smokes and food to accompany their gambling. Money that

[16]See Pickles (2012) for a recent ethnography of gambling.

is won by gambling is then circulated in the same periphery with the purchase of *buai*, smokes or food. For those who are particularly lucky, a day of gambling enables them to buy a packet of rice and a can of fish for the night's meal. After a game has ended, those who have lost money can be heard saying things like *"sapos mi bin holim displa kas na displa kas em bai nating tru mi kisim ia*" (If I had this card and that card in my possession then definitely I would win). Coins will be counted and put in the middle for the next round of games. A number of card playing friends told me that *kwin* is a better game to play because you can play for longer, unlike *bom* which is a fast game and usually finished quickly.

Most of my days were spent talking to people about whatever was of interest in the blok, in politics or sports in PNG. There was always something to talk about in the street, whether it be the price of *buai*, the latest prison break or diseases that were invading the Mosbi like TB, HIV and Cholera. It is important for blok people to discuss these kinds of illnesses, because the severity of the sickness sometimes leads to death which in turn leads to thoughts, accusations and suspicions as to who caused another to die. Gossiping is a favourite pass time of many of the market *mamas* (mothers), some being more notorious than others. Mothers talk about their children and how some children are allowed to run wild and do as they please. Others talk about their relatives in the village, in Lae or else where in Port Moresby or PNG. For those who have access to newspapers, discussion about the latest happenings in Port Moresby and the rest of the country are also a topic of idle talk.

The blok really comes alive at the weekend. Begininng Friday, drunkeds can be heard singing out of tune and people are out and about chewing *buai* and socialising on the road. Saturday is also a busy day with individuals visiting each other or going to town to buy food and market supplies. Sunday is more subdued with church goers attending church services and non church goers selling *buai* or sitting around at their houses. The

weekend is when most community related meetings are held. Community meetings are organised to discuss matters such as blok rentals or disputes.

Figure 13.1: Confirmation Procession, Mt. Zion Lutheran Church

Figure 13.2: Congregation Members, Mt. Zion Lutheran Church

During the time that I lived at the blok, the Governor of the National Capital District (NCD) initiated social activities for city residents such as public viewing of the Australian State of Origin rugby league games. The National District Commission (NCDC) erected big screens in various parts of Port Moresby so that city residents

could watch the live telecast of the game. One of the screens was erected on a empty space opposite Morobe Blok, much to the delight of the settlers who made the most of the opportunity to support their favourite team. The first of the Governor's Christmas concerts was staged in 2009 and many blok residents went into town to join in the christmas festivities organised by the city authorities. These initiatives by the Governor are an excellent avenue to bring city residents like those of Morobe Blok out to enjoy activites at night, something which city residents do not often do.

The question that I was asked the most during fieldwork time was 'What's it like out there?'. A day and night in the blok, is a condensed version of my fieldwork experience. It gives the reader a glimpse of what people do in the blok as well as how they interact with the city of Port Moresby. This short narrative provides an insight into what this thesis is about, the every day lived experience in a *Mosbi* settlement.

Thesis Style and Structure

The chapters in this thesis are connected through the stories of several key characters who were close informants and friends throughout my stay in the blok. I have chosen to do this as a writing style because I use the relations and connections of these central figures as a way of emphasising aspects of urban sociality which I regularly came across through daily conversation, sharing and forming relationships with people within the blok. These characters are people who I saw and spoke to on a daily basis. I rented a room in Joy and Mark's four bedroom house. I recall meeting Joy and Mark on a hot Saturday morning in September 2009. I was nervous about meeting them because I did not know them and was not sure if they would want to take strangers into their house as tenants. Joy and Mark were nervous about whether I would find the room in their house suitable because they had been informed that I had arrived from overseas a

couple of weeks ago and thought I was a *bikpla meri tumas* (important) to want to live in their house. Joy was especially worried because I had a new born who was born in Scotland and the settlement is a far cry from the *ples blo wait man* (white man's place). After our initial meeting which included my parents and my brother, Joy and Mark agreed to offer me the room and I agreed to pay the fortnightly K90 (£22) rental. We moved in to their house soon after and lived there until November 2010. It is at this point that I wish to introduce some of the people who are key to this thesis.

Joy is in her late thirties and from Morobe. She is married to Mark and they live at the blok with their five children. Joy was raised in the Highlands of PNG where her father worked for a large retail company. She lived in Lae prior to marrying Mark and moving to Port Moresby. Joy features right throughout this thesis. In chapter two, I write about Joy's work as a *haus meri* (domestic worker). Joy's story in chapter two illustrates how money is not always the motivating factor when blok people choose whether to work or not. Joy also is a key person in Barb's story in Chapter four. It is through Joy that I met Barb. Joy's friendship with Barb's mother, Kate, gives insight into relatedness in the blok.

Mark, Joy's husband is in his early forties. His mother is from Morobe and his father is from the Central province. Mark came to Port Moresby as a young boy and lived and grew up in a settlement in another part of Port Moresby. Mark completed year ten at Della Salle Catholic High School in Port Moresby and has worked for various state and private organisations. His work experience ranges from book keeping and customer service to security work. Mark was unemployed when I began fieldwork, he eventually found work in the security industry during 2010. In chapter two, I show through Mark's story that while good relations is an important motivating aspect for those who work in the blok, blok dwellers also have ambitions and aspirations that offer

them the opportunity for better wages and training which leads to an element of prestige.

John is forty and married to Karen. John's mother is from Oro and his father is from Central. John was raised in Port Moresby by his mother after his father died when John was nine. He completed year ten at the local high school in his mother's place and returned to Port Moresby where his youth was spent engaging in criminal activities such as stealing and car jacking, something he says he did when he was bored and hanging around on the streets. What started out as fun and something to pass the time turned into serious violent crimes, which he says he abandoned when he met his wife Karen. John is now involved in volunteer work and showed a keen interest in my research. I write about John's volunteer work in chapter two. John's involviment with volunteering presents a blok perspective of the meaning of work. Volunteering as a unpaid service to community is underpinned by western notions of giving time and service to the betterment of others. I will show how in John's case, volunteering is an opportunity to gain skills and information as well as helping others. John shares his views about human rights and violence in chapter six where he talks frankly about violence and what causes him to act violently towards his wife Karen.

Karen is John's wife, she is in her late thirties, was born in Lae but has spent much of her life in Port Moresby. Karen's father worked as a draughtsman for many years for different engineering firms in Port Moresby. Karen attended primary school and completed year ten at a local high school in Port Moresby and has work experience as a baby sitter. Karen's father bought two blocks of land within the settlement and her family moved to their current block after her father retired. I begin chapter two with a conversation about hardship with Karen. Karen speaks of her worries about where to get money for food as a cause of illness. I use Karen's story to show the reader that

relations contribute to wellbeing as much as food. Karen's story emphasises the most significant characteristic in this thesis, that being the importance of relations. In chapter six, Karen recalls her experience of violence between her and her husband John and gives her perspective of how and why she deals with violence. Karen expresses her reaction to violence as a way of balancing out relations between her and John.

Sarah, also in her thirties is a community health worker. Sarah's father is from the Gulf province and her late mother is from the Central province. Sarah has spent much of her life in Port Moresby and lives at Morobe Blok with her Morobean husband and three children. She is also the person who helped me find a place to rent in the blok. Sarah had heard of my plans to live and work in the blok through my mother, who worked with Sarah at the Port Moresby General Hospital. I had initally made plans to live with another family whose home had no utitlity connection but upon hearing that I had a newborn baby Sarah suggested that she find a place that had running water and electricity. Sarah arranged for the Saturday morning inspection of the room which turned out to be more of a meet and greet between myself, my parents and Mark and Joy, the owners of the house. This was also the first time that I met Sarah. Sarah features in chapter one where she expresses her thoughts about rental payments and legal title to her block. She expresses dissatisfaction at the system of paying rentals to the local landowner because she views it as a method that allows some blok residents to live in the blok without paying their annual rental fees. In chapter two, the reader will appreciate why I choose to collapse catergories of work by using Sarah, John, and Karen's stories as an example of how blok people do not necessarily catergorise work in terms of the known terms "formal" and "informal," but instead classify work as something that people do. In chapter three, I introduce blok ideas of relatedness through Sarah's relationship with her childminder Cynthia.

Barb. Chapter four is dedicated to Barb. Barb was poised to be a close informant and had agreed to use her outgoing, loud personality to assist me in getting to know some younger people in the blok. Unfortunately, she committed suicide about five months into my fieldwork. I shall tell Barb's story to once again emphasise to the reader that relations is the key to life in the blok. Barb's story outline the relations that are at stake, how one is affected by the actions of another and how actions are carried out with others in mind.

There are other characters that come up in the thesis, these people will be introduced as they appear, however these six people are those whose lives are entwined closely to my work. Finally, the reader will note that at some points throughout the thesis I make reference to various members of my family. The reason for this is because my fieldwork was conducted with my family in residence. My husband Simon, daughter Tabai and cousin Valentina (Tina) lived in the blok for the duration of my field research. My parents, siblings and various cousins also visited us at various points in time.

Thesis Outline

Part One: The How, Why and What?

The two chapters in section one are the background chapters. Chapter one will provide the reader with a history of the blok, how it came into existence and how relations are maintained through the enactment of agreement signings, memorandums and ground breaking ceremonies. Chapter one also introduces the reader to notions of belonging, to ideas of land and place as seen by blok residents. Chapter two answers the question "What do people do?". This chapter provides a detailed ethnographic account

of blok notions of work, money and giving. As I have mentioned earlier, unemployment and low waged work are synomous with settlements. Chapter two uses blok notions of work to present ideas of work that are not necessarily grounded in the commodity economics but alternatively shows work as product of relations.

Part Two: Kinship and Relatedness

Chapters three and four fall under the theme kinship and relatedness. Chapter three introduces ideas about relatedness and kinship. This chapter expands on the limited literature on urban kinship in Papua New Guinea by moving away from kinship in town that is based on village ties to contemporary kinship and relatedness that emanates in the urban itself. I shall show the reader how kinship as a non-biological form is expressed through actions and thoughts. Chapter three will analyse the word *wantok*[17] and its associated idioms by showing how this form of relatedness reveals itself in life cycle events such as bride price and death. I want to clarify that my use of terms such as family, immediate relatives, relatives and extended relatives encompasses the kinship description of nuclear families, cross and parrallel cousins, clan and tribal affiliations.

Chapter Four is about my friend Barb. Barbs story kept making an appearance in various parts of this thesis and has now found a place on its own. Barb is a girl who I met and befriended in the Blok. I came to know her quite well over a short period of time. The circumstance of Barb's story is a tragic one but I have opted to tell her story to show the reader how people live their lives through relations with others and the effect that these relations have on ideas of relatedness, gender and violence.

[17] *Wantok* is a *tokpisin* word that is used to refer to people from the same clan, tribe or province. See chapter three for an in depth discussion.

Part Three: Personhood, Gender and Violence

Chapter Five follows on from Barb's story by reiterating how blok people talk about the ideal person. I use blok expressions of *pasin* and *luksave* as analysis of agency. These two words are commonly used to describe actions which inform ideas of the person. Chapter five is also dedicated to an analyses of the gendered person and the forms that it takes in the blok. There are aspects of blok personhood that does not subscribe to gendered thinking, but are also certain ways of being that are gendered according to what people do.

Chapter Six ends the thesis with a discussion about violence within the home. Here, I specifically discuss violence between husbands and wives or intimate partner violence. Chapter six will contribute to the vast research on domestic violence by presenting examples of violence between husbands and wives in the blok. Why do men and women in the blok fight and why do they choose particular pathways to address this violence? I will address these questions through an analysis that engages with recent work on violence against women as well as the global and local concerns that drive the violence against women agenda in Papua New Guinea.

I shall conclude the thesis with an overview of the chapters that have been presented and then move on to reiterate why I think this study is important to policy making in Papua New Guinea as well as to anthropology of urban Melanesia. An epilogue that narrates my departure from the blok will close the thesis.

PART I

Chapter One
Making Morobe Blok

Paga Hill Demolition

On Saturday 12 May 2012 dozens of homes at the idyllic seaside settlement of Paga Hill were crushed in an eviction exercise that would make way for the Paga Hill Development Corporation to begin work on a proposed marina complex.[18] Police accompanied by an excavator and armed with assault rifles, machetes and sticks supervised as the excavator crushed the homes and lives of the people of one of Port Moresby's oldest settlements. Paga Hill residents are descendants of settlers from Kikori in the Gulf Province who obtained permission to reside on the land known as Paga Hill from the *Lohia Doriga* clan (Wilson 2012). The police claimed that they were following court orders to evict the settlers and no amount of protest or intervention by the settlers or their local Member of Parliament and Opposition leader Dame Carol Kidu would derail the eviction exercise.[19]

[18] See www.pagahill.com, accessed on 29/10/2012.

[19] For a comprehensive background report see (The Demolition of Paga Hill: A Report by the International State Crime Initiative 2012) and ("Not Just Criminals" A Response to the Paga Hill Development Company, 29 October 2012).

Figure 14: Catherine Wilson/IPS (photo credit).

Thousands of miles away in the idyllic seaside city of St Andrews, Scotland hot angry tears streamed down my face as I anxiously listened to Radio Australia Pacific news and watched footage of Dame Carol Kidu being manhandled as she defended the settlers who tried to protest against their eviction[20].

Eviction of settlers in Port Moresby is not a new phenomenon, so why did this eviction have such an effect on me and why is it that I was worried about a group of people whom I do not know and who like nearly all settlers in Port Moresby have a story to tell as to why they feel they should be able to remain in their places of abode? What this story brought home to me was that Paga Hill could have just as easily been

[20] See http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ovPdiIJNynU&feature=share, accessed on 29/10/2012.

Morobe Blok, the settlement that I lived in for over twelve months, researched and most importantly where I made new friends and family.[21] Every settlement in Port Moresby has its own story of how and why people settled on a piece of land whether state or customary. This is the story of Morobe Blok.

Introduction

This chapter is written in two parts. The first part intends to give the reader an understanding of how, why and when the settlement came into existence. I focus on agreements, memorandums, money and legal status. My focus on these instruments of legality emanates from the narrative of settlement creation that was told to me. The detailed story of settlement will provide the reader with a blok perspective of land, ownership and property by foregrounding agreements that are based on relations as opposed to the market based rationale of supply and demand. This rationale of relations being the centre of actions is also presented through land rental negotiations and aspirations of settlers and the landowner. The first part of chapter one will also show how blok dwellers present themselves and negotiate legitimacy of settlement through the staging of events such a ground breaking ceremonies. The second part of this chapter will focus on community organisation. Here I concentrate on the settlement leadership with the aim of drawing out how blok leaders negotiate legitimacy with the view of advancing an agenda of *gutpela sindaun* (amicable way of life) that takes into account the various relations that have enabled the creation of the settlement. I will also provide an overview of the governance structures of the blok in this part of the chapter. Chapter one serves as an introduction to the rest of the thesis

[21] More recently in 2013 the Waigani Arts Settlement (Saiyama 2013) was destroyed and a reported 4000 people were left homeless while settlers at the Oro ATS settlement have been issued an eviction notice in April (Rooney 2013).

with the remaining chapters providing a closer analysis of income generation, kinship, gender, personhood and violence.

In order to talk about living, belonging and settling on land anywhere in Papua New Guinea, one must not bypass the how, when and why. Although the focus of my research is not necessarily concerned with land ownership and its associated dynamics, it is unavoidable when talking about settlements, especially at a time when access to urban land is at the centre of ongoing discussions of urbanisation and its effects. Before I begin with the narrative of settlement, I will provide some background into the nature of land tenure and its relationship to settlements. The significance of land in Melanesia cannot be over emphasised. Alongside gender and kinship, land is a key feature of anthropological studies and ethnographic description. It is not my intention to provide a literature review of land, but for the purpose of this thesis my concern is to provide a perspective of land in the urban setting.

Land and Settlements

Ninety seven percent of land (97%) is under customary land tenure in Papua New Guinea with the remaining three percent (3%) classified as alienated land. The majority of this alienated land is situated in urban areas. In the National Capital District sixty percent of land (60%) is alienated while the remaining forty percent (40%) is classified as customary land. In the thesis introduction, I made reference to the stereotypical claims of how land is acquired and settled in settlements. I also showed that settlements are a legacy of colonial regulations that restricted indigenous movement thus resulting in migrant workers seeking permission from customary landowners to build houses. Following on from the colonial era, settlements have continued to grow in Port Moresby and Lae and more recently in towns like Madang.

One of the most pertinent issues relating to settled land is claims to ownership of land and the right of abode. This often results in disputes between traditional landowners and settlers or state agencies such as police and settlers. Principle to the debate surrounding development of land is that of the land tenure system. Advocates for land reform such as Gosarevski, Hughes and Windybank (2004) believe that communal land ownership has not helped any country in the world to develop therefore for Papua New Guineans to prosper land tenure needs to evolve to cater for individual ownership rather than the current customary system of land ownership that places an emphasis on collective ownership. In urban areas, it is frequently advocated that if customary land is freed up for development purposes then a win-win situation is possible with landowning groups benefiting from payments from land rentals and urban residents having better access to land for housing (Papua New Guinea Office of Urbanisation 2010). In 2009, the PNG government passed the amendment of Incorporation of Land Groups and Land Groups Incorporation (ILG) Act with the intention of strengthening the legal mechanism by which customary landowners who wish to 'develop' their land can do so within a recognised legal framework.

The experience of Incorporated Land Groups in the PNG natural resource sector has proven to be problematic. For example, James Weiner (2007) using his extensive research experience among the Huli shows that the ILGs do not cater for groups whose social organisation is not based on unilineal descent rule. This results in larger clans splitting into sub clans to accommodate the requirements of the ILGs (Filer 2007; Golub 2007; Goldman 2007). My reference to these specific tensions relating to land stem from my understanding of how Morobe Blok was settled and also because I intend to show how agreements are made based on motivating factors that are outside the economic advantages that is most associated with land and development.

I draw on the work of Satish Chand and Charles Yala (2008) who provide several insights into how institutions have evolved to cater for the rising demand for land for housing in the settlements of Port Moresby. Chand and Yala draw their conclusions from a purpose driven survey in twelve randomly selected settlements of Port Moresby covering a total of four hundred and forty one households. The sample-covered settlements built on what is classified as customary, state land and settlements built on what is termed 'mixed' land (customary and state land). This study found that security of tenure on settlement land was defined by the nature of occupation (how the land was settled), longevity of the settlement and some form of remuneration to a landowner. In instances where state land was settled Chand and Yala described this as "outright invasion". One of the main findings from this study is that settlements built on customary land use what Chand and Yala (2008:1) term as both modern and traditional institutions to secure their rights of access to land. This made access to traditional land more attractive to those in need of housing because agreements to settle were based on common understanding rather than the complex formal system that exists within the 'legal' framework of land acquisition. Georgina Numbasa and Gina Koczberski (2012) provide another example of how migrant settlers gain and maintain access to land in the town of Wewak. Based on research conducted in seven informal settlements that are built on customary, state and land owned by the Catholic Church, Numbasa and Koczberski's findings show that land tenure in settlements in Wewak is characterised by informal arrangements between migrant settlers and customary landowners through various means such as prior traditional trading relationships, friendship, and marriage (2012:158).[22]In Wewak, continued settlement occupancy is negotiated through personal exchange relationships between the settlers and the landowners and ongoing support in the

[22] Unlike in the larger cities of Port Moresby, Lae and Madang settlers in Wewak are mostly from the East Sepik.

form of cash and kind for landowners' customary obligations. While this form of land tenure has worked for nearly fifty years in some settlements, there is now a noticeable generational shift between settlers and landowners. Numbasa and Koczberski contend that pressure on urban land, constrained economic livelihoods coupled with crime as an ongoing tension contribute to mistrust between landowners and settlers. Koczberski's (2012) research among migrant settlers and landowners in the oil palm growing provinces of Oro and West New Britain found that land transactions varied, with mostly cash payments for sale or lease of land by customary landowners to migrants. According to Koczberski, disputes between landowners and migrants arose from the difference in interpretations of land transactions. While migrants interpreted payment of land as a sign and claim of ownership to land, landowners primarily drew on customary principles that land is an inalienable resource that belongs to kin and clan groups. Similarly, Keir Martin (2007) states that in East New Britain there are problems in defining customary land or non-customary land because people evoke notions of custom even when land is classified as non-customary. Martin provides evidence of this through ethnographic description of how Matupit Islanders talk about being free from customary land obligations under the resettlement scheme at Sikut.[23] The common theme among these studies is that local or what can be termed as "informal" land acquisition and tenure arrangements between different land owning groups and settlers are being created in the absence of weak formal land administration facilities. An examination of these informal arrangements has led to the suggestion that local initiatives (Koczberski 2012) be strengthened because while it is recognised that informal land tenure arrangements may cause anxiety for both landowners and settlers, there is evidence that land tenure based on local logic of ownership rather than a western individualised mode of property has enabled both

[23] Matupit Islanders were relocated to government land at Sikut after their island homeland was devastated by volcanic eruption.

landowners and settlers to negotiate agreement of settlement and land use. This overview of the key issues relating to land tenure in the urban setting and migrants has similarities for the story of Morobe Blok.

Describing the landscape – Morobe Blok

Before I proceed to a historical analysis of Morobe Blok, I want to give the reader a sense of what this land that the Morobe Blok is built on is like. Unlike the serene view overlooking the sea at Paga Hill (cf. fig 14), the ground at Morobe Blok is harsh and parched. The ground is dusty, dry and hard. For those residents who have access to water, the dryness of the land and the heat of the sun is a small obstacle to obtaining green grass, colourful flowers and healthy fruit and vegetable plots. During the wet season the dry ground turns into a sea of insalubrious mud where residents have to negotiate walking through the thick black sometimes ankle deep sludge to get to the bus stop and *buai* markets. Eric Hirsch (2003:2) writes about landscape as the landscape that we initially see and a second landscape that is produced through local practice. This second landscape is one which anthropologists come to understand and recognise through fieldwork, ethnographic description and interpretation. What I have described above is the landscape that I first saw when I began fieldwork. Over the course of my research I learnt that this settlement was not just dry hard ground that turned into mud during the rainy season but it is a place where the lives of people are intimately bound (Gow 2003:47). Places like the Turf Club, *raun wara* and *maunten*, and *Dedua* are not only names and places in the blok, but important points of reference when giving directions, describing activities and creating relations.

Figure 15: Rainy season.

Boundaries between blocks are established by growing hibiscus flowers around individual blocks of land or fencing off blocks with perimeter wire fencing. This is the only marking of boundaries for blok residents as there are no maps or paper copies of individual blocks of land. This hard, dry land has provided a home, food, and life for many people over the last twenty years. Miriam Kahn (1996:168) writes that places capture the complex emotional, behavioural and moral relationships between people

and their territory. They represent people, territories and interactions. Places become malleable memorials for negotiating human relationships. At Morobe Blok, the boundaries that are established within individual plots of land are full of stories about people. Fruit trees, flowers and banana suckers often present a history of relations through stories of where the plant came from, who gave it or planted it and the relationship between those people and those who live on the block of land. Taro peels from the village that are used as mulch embody the people who have sent a little bit of the village to the blok. Marilyn Stathern (1991:117) states that the Melanesian person makes places travel. Places stay but persons move. This is evident in Morobe Blok where people make reference to plants through people.

Figure 16: Growing Vegetables

Stori bilong Morobe Blok

The discussion of studies relating to urban land and customary land negotiations, and the short description of the landscape, which the settlement is built on, brings me to the *stori blo Morobe Blok* (story of Morobe Blok). The narrative of settlement that I tell here is one which was told to me by various informants. I feel that this is an important clarification to make at the outset because as other studies have found, ownership of the land which houses settlers is often contested with claims that land identified as customary land often being disputed by entities of the state such as the Department of Lands or the National Capital District Commission (Chand 2008:19). It is for these sorts of reasons that I had reservations about pursuing a vigorous line of inquiry into the 'real' ownership of the land. I am mindful that as in other settlements there are other claims to the land on which Morobe Blok is built. A resident of the blok told me that the land that Morobe Blok is built on is land that is leased by the Education and Agriculture departments and is not customary land. The claim that Morobe Blok is built on state land was confirmed by an officer at the National Capital District Commission's Regulatory Services Division and is also documented in the National Capital District Settlements Strategic Plan 2007-2011 (2006:10). This is an important aspect of how people think of belonging and place because it is these kinds of competing claims that give rise to uncertainties, elaborate proclamations of legality and conflict - because land is not only a place on which people build houses but it engenders feelings of place and gives life to both the history and the future of the people concerned. It is these stories that give rise to Morobe Blok as a place that has been created through '*stori*' (story/narrative). There are many versions of stories some often conflicting. These are the stories that are essential to the discourse of settlement and the constitution of the blok because they

take a particular form irrespective of whether they are true or false. I write this chapter with these considerations and recognise that while I focus on one particular story of settlement I also recognise that there are competing claims of ownership.

Yumi Yet Sindaun (Staying on our own)

The story of how Morobe Blok came into existence reminds me of *tumbuna* (ancestral) stories about relocation and settlement. In the case of Morobe Blok, the most common story recited to me was that Morobe Blok is built on customary land belonging to the *Behori* clan of the Sogeri Plateau of Central Province. The story of settlement is centred on a situation of conflict in another part of Port Moresby which led to a group of Morobean people deciding to '*sindaun mipela yet*' (live by ourselves).

Morobe Blok was created around 1992. The majority of inhabitants of this settlement are from Morobe Province and claim the right to live on this particular piece of land through an agreement with a local *papa graun* (landowner) called Foxie Kaeaka, who is said to be a member of the *Behori* clan. I was informed that prior to moving to Nine Mile, many of the residents of Morobe Blok lived in various other locations in Port Moresby. Some of the current residents of the blok resided at another ethnically mixed settlement community in the Six Mile area of Port Moresby, commonly known as Saraga Street. The Morobeans that lived at Saraga Street were mainly from the Menyamya, Finschhafen and Wain areas of Morobe and from what I was told this particular group of Morobeans are the apparent link to why Morobe Blok was created. It is said that two incidents occurred at Saraga Street, which was the catalyst for these particular residents to seek another place in Port Moresby to live.

It was recounted to me that prior to the move to Nine Mile a girl from Morobe province who lived at Saraga Street was raped by non-Morobean residents of that

community. The second incident that prompted the move was the death of a young Morobean man who was apparently hung in an act of criminality by unknown people. These two incidents heightened the anxieties of Morobeans living at Saraga Street as they became increasingly worried for their lives and safety. What strikes me as mythical about this story is that these two very important events were not further elaborated on in terms of what happened to the girl who was raped or the reasons surrounding the hanging of the young man and whether the authorities of the state such as the Police were involved in prosecuting offenders. The importance of these two tragic events seems to hinge on the notion that they were the motivation for Morobeans to move from Saraga Street. The Morobeans living at Six Mile felt that they could not live among people who were aggressive and therefore they felt that as peaceful people they needed to move to a place where they could live among themselves and pursue their lives in a manner that did not leave them feeling threatened. The anxiety and worry of those living at Six Mile was relayed to Sondiong Babago, a man from the Wain area of Morobe who lived among the Koiari people of the Sogeri Plateau. The Koiari people of the Sogeri Plateau make customary land ownership claims to land around the Nine Mile area and beyond the city boundaries.

Various versions of this same story were given to me by several informants, one of them being the chairman of the blok, a man named Atisinke. The chairman of the blok is the elected leader of the settlement community, he is part of a *komiti* (committee) of men who have been elected by the residents to represent the interests of the members of the different electorates of Morobe province who reside at the blok. This *komiti* serves as a conduit between the *papa graun* and other parties such as the NCDC. More will be said about this *komiti*, its role and vision in the latter part of this chapter.

To come back to this story of origin, one informant told me that the land was specifically given to Morobeans to settle because the Ahi people who are the

customary landowners of Lae, the capital city of Morobe had been kind enough to allocate customary land to people of the Papuan region who lived and worked in Lae during the colonial era. This settlement in Lae is called Papuan Compound and is still in existence. The location that is referred to as Papuan Compound is formerly known as Milfordhaven. The informal name 'Papuan Compound' was given to that particular suburb because a large number of its residents originated from the area surrounding Kerema in the Gulf of Papua. These Gulf people migrated to post-war Lae as labourers for the Australia New Guinea Administrative unit (ANGAU) (Willis 1974:141). I find two things interesting about the reference to Morobe Blok and Papuan Compound. The historical and temporal act that is being recalled here as a basis of origin of the blok emphasises the idea of reciprocity which precludes any reasoning behind economic incentive or material gain. Basically, what is being claimed here is that local landowners felt that they need to reciprocate the kindness that Morobeans in Lae accorded to their forefathers who went to help build the city of Lae. This justification for land allocation between the two provincial groups points to some important ideas about the continuation of social relations and the form that it takes. It alludes to relations being at stake and goodwill in exchanging land based on prior acts of kindness and assistance. This kind of rhetoric is far removed from economics and monetary gain as the motivating factor behind these actions. It also poses questions about why exactly this piece of land was given to these particular people by this particular man. These questions lead me to the next part of the story of blok creation.

Relations creating Relations

The settlers from Saraga Street approached their *wantok* Sondiong Babago who used his amicable relationship with the Koiari people to facilitate a meeting between Foxie Kaeaka of the *Behori* clan. According to the current blok chairman Atisinke, the *papa graun* was sympathetic to the Morobean settlers and offered to help them resettle on his clan's customary land. The *papa graun* offered the Morobeans a portion of land outside of the city boundary at Seventeen Mile, however, those who went to see the land thought the land was too mountainous so they were taken back towards Nine Mile and shown a vacant stretch of land opposite the Nine Mile cemetery, which they agreed to settle on. After they were shown the land and an agreement to settle was arranged, Foxie Kaeaka told those who accompanied him that he wanted people from all electorates of Morobe province to settle on the land that he had allocated so that the settlement would be a community of people who came from all parts of Morobe as opposed to small groups from one part of the province. In this way the settlement would be created to show that this was their *ples*. What has happened here is that one relation has created another relationship and a space for people to live. Foxie Kaeaka did not necessarily know the people who lived at Saraga Street but he did know that they were related to Sondiong Babago and it is this relation that has been converted into the current relationship between those who reside at Morobe Blok and the Koiari landowners.

Following the meeting and agreement with the *papa graun*, a big meeting was planned and staged at Port Moresby's Jack Pidik Park at Five Mile, where Morobeans who were interested in acquiring a block of land at Nine Mile were asked to meet. The *papa graun's* wishes and the successful negotiation and allocation of land was relayed to

those who attended the meeting. Morobeans who were interested in settling at Nine Mile were asked to form groups based on the Morobe Province electoral boundaries. Komiti members were then appointed to represent the different electorates from the province. This was done to establish relations before settlement and also because it was intended that people would be physically settled according to electoral boundaries. Although the evidence of settlement in electoral boundaries is not so clear now, this intention is still evident with people from the different electorates living in close proximity to each other and in some cases clusters of houses of close kin. The physical settlement of Morobeans in spaces that reflect electoral boundaries raises questions about nostalgia and wanting to create *ples* in Mosbi. It gives a sense of bringing something into view by creating an intentional space between what Eric Hirsch (1995:204) terms foreground (Morobe Blok) and horizon (*ples*). It also gives this impression of manageability, familiarity and exclusiveness in that by living within electoral boundaries people are able to easily access local leaders, live among people they know and in some sense isolate those whom they do not wish to live among them. At present there are complaints that a number of Morobean Blok holders have sold their land to non-Morobeans and the community is at risk of increasing social problems. People were especially concerned because those who were buying blocks originate from the Highlands region. The reluctance to have Highlanders live in the community is based on assumptions that Highlanders are aggressive troublemakers. It also reflects the original reason for the establishment of the settlement and the need to *sindaun yumi yet*.

Katim Blok

After meeting at Five Mile, the designated piece of land at Nine Mile was surveyed by a surveyor from Morobe, for which I was told he was paid K11, 600 (£3,000). Each person who wanted to settle at what would be called Morobe Blok was required to pay a one-off fee of K32 (£8) for a thirty-by-thirty metre block of land. According to Atisinke, a total of K98, 000 (£25,000) was collected by the leaders of the community. It was agreed that this one-off fee would enable a plot of land to be allocated to those who paid and then an annual rental would be paid to the blok komiti, who would then give this payment to the local landowner. Here we have another example of how relations have enabled a large amount of money to be exchanged for the use of land. This money is said to be a one-off payment and is a symbolic gesture of rights to settle.

Agreements, MOA's and Ground Breaking Ceremonies

What followed after the initial meetings and discussion was a series of agreements and a groundbreaking ceremony to recognise the existence of the settlement and also to strengthen the relationship between the settlers, the *papa graun*, and the state authorities. The importance of these events lies in the strengthening of relations between the landowners and the settlers and also the recognition of the community by the authorities of the state, because the claim to customary land does not necessarily translate to the provision of services, such as water or electricity. The settlement must have some recognition by the state in order for services to be

provided. The first of these agreements was a *wanbel* (in agreement) Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) which was signed on July 23 1995. The signing of the agreement took place between Foxie Kaeaka for the customary landowners and Somot Kambe who represented the settlers. The signing of the MOA was to signify that the landowner was '*wanbel lo ol Morobe lo sindaun lo displa graun'* (landowners are happy for the Morobeans to settle on the land). The signing of the *wanbel* agreement happened three years after initial discussions began in 1992. The *wanbel* agreement essentially confirmed the commitment that the *papa graun* has to the settlers. The *wanbel* agreement is significant to this process because it is precisely *wanbel* that prompted those who lived at Saraga Street to move. *Wanbel* means to be in agreement or to be happy. The literal translation of *wanbel* is 'one stomach'. Many emotional states such as *sutim bel* (to provoke), *bel hat* (to be angry) are described as coming from the stomach or belly. In this instance, the happiness derives from the stomach, it comes up from deep within and is a measure of how relations can be evaluated. For the *papa graun* to be *wanbel* is a sign of the importance that he places on his relationship with the Morobeans.

After the signing of the MOA between the *papa graun* and Somot Kambe, another agreement in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed in 1996 between the National Capital District Commision (NCDC) and the Morobe Community Development Association. The NCDC is the governing body of the National Capital District, whose mandate covers Morobe Blok. The NCDC was established by an act of Parliament in 2001 to, among other things, provide services to residents of Port Moresby. The 1996 MOU signing was witnessed by the Governor of the National Capital District, Bill Skate, Governor for Central Province, John Orea, Sondiong Babago for the settlers and the *papa* graun Foxie Kaeaka. The MOA between representatives of the city authority and the settlers essentially recognized the Morobe Blok community as a legitimate community that has user rights but not title

rights. It was explained to me that having user rights meant that in addition to the acquisition of land for housing, the surrounding customary land could be used by the settlers to collect firewood and cultivate food gardens, but the settlers were not what the blok leaders described to me as 'title holders'. The first agreement formalised the relationship between the settlers and the *papa graun,* and the second agreement was an illustration of the administrative and political support that both the settlers and *papa graun* had garnered from the city authority as well as from the governors of both Central Province and the National Capital District in supporting the establishment of Morobe Blok.

To further consolidate the legitimacy of the settlement, a groundbreaking ceremony took place in March 2003 and was said to be witnessed by Papua New Guinea's founding Prime Minister, Sir Michael Somare, former Central province Governor, John Orea, local Koiari leader Bagua Wati, Bill Skate who was at that time the Speaker of the Papua New Guinea Parliament, and former Premier of Morobe, Jerry Nalau. The presence of such high profile leaders from the government, the local Koiari community representative along with a prominent leader from their home province of Morobe, again gave the settlers an added sense of recognition of the relations between all the relevant parties which include the local landowners, the local government and the national government. This groundbreaking ceremony occurred nearly ten years after the blok had been established. This again shows that relational aspect of the relationship with the *papa graun* and the settlers. Ten years is a long time to wait to convene a groundbreaking ceremony in a place where a lot of time and effort had been invested in building houses and establishing relations within the blok. It highlights the importance of being seen to be performing the right ceremonies and the meaning of such events.

What I have just rehearsed here is a historical background of transactions between the settlers, the *papa graun* and other parties such as the NCDC. The

transactions that have occurred over time can be interpreted as different ways of legitimising the establishment of the blok through reaffirming the relations between the concerned parties, in this case the *papa graun* and his clan and the settlers. The events that I have just described are not unique to Morobe Blok or Papua New Guinea. These sorts of transactions between settlers and customary landowners are recognised as part of land tenure negotiations between settlers and landowning groups. I have taken time to rehearse the different agreements because these events are not only key to the settlers legitimising themselves but they also provide an understanding into how the performance of agreement making, negotiation and legibility (see below) is done. This piece of land is purported to be customary land, yet the documents are a performance to elicit a particular response from audiences such as the NCD and the landowner. The documents are an integral part of the process of settlement creation. The process that I have described opposes the conventional thinking that settlements are all about people squatting illegally on a patch of land.

This performance is part of what Dan Jorgensen calls "legibility" (Jorgensen 2007:57-58). Jorgensen makes reference to the book 'Seeing like a State' (Scott 1998), which infers that a precondition of implementation of state plans is the establishment of what is called "legibility". Legibility enables the state to intervene in the affairs of its citizens through the invention of units such as citizens, trees, houses and villages. These are the kinds of legible units that a state can control. While the state seeks to implement projects for its people through legibility, those who are affected by the state seek to reciprocate through recognition. Recognition enables visibility of a state citizen and it is this visibility that gives some purchase on the decisions of the state and its operations. This process of settlement involves three parties, the settlers, the customary landowner and the agencies of the state. Jorgensen's view of Scott's theory of legibility can be extended from the PNG natural resource sector to that of the urban land transactions.

The signing of the memorandums and the groundbreaking ceremony fulfils the state's requirements for implementation of projects for the blok community and the process of recognition importantly enables the visibility of the community which in turn gives them some kind of leverage to negotiate with the state. The legal language in the form of the memorandums reflects the way that legal arrangements are made but the cultural status of the memorandum reflects the relations that have made the memorandum possible. However, this can also be contested in the sense that over time settlers can start to claim ownership or want to obtain title to individual blocks of land so as to make rental payments redundant. I will discuss this further in the rentals and payments section of this chapter.

I offer that the recollection of settlement can also be narrated as a description of relations. As a starting point for analysis I take the claims people make rather than the objects claimed (Leach 2004:42). In this case, the land that the settlement is built on is not the point of analysis. The point of analysis lies in the transactions that I have just described for it is the signing of the various memorandums that enables the *papa graun*, the settlers and the relevant government authorities to reveal their concerns. What may simply look like acts of legitimacy show the interests of the landowner as well as the settlers that extend beyond legitimacy of settlement but foregrounds the relations that give life to the blok. In recounting the reasons why Morobeans settled at Nine Mile along with the recounting of transactions that have occurred, the settlers are setting a claim to belonging and origin. My use of the words "origin" and "belonging" refers to their idea of Morobe Blok being in some sense their place in that they can trace a reason for settling here as well as a relation which provides legitimacy to their claims of occupancy. This claim to belonging does not transcend that of the landowners but works in cooperation through the continuous transaction of relations that take the form of official documents such as agreements and

understandings. The story of how the settlement began reveals the relations between one man (Sandiong Babago) with a group of people (*Koiari*) which has enabled another man (*papa graun*) to make use of on his capacity as being part of a landowning group to assist another group of people (*Morobean*). It is also this relationship that has some bearing on the *ad hoc* land rentals that have been made by the settlers to the *papa graun* after nearly twenty years of residence. Marilyn Strathern states that questions of ownership frequently arise from the need to analyse rights to resources (2004:7). If we think of the settlement from this vantage point then this most elaborate explanation by the blok leaders of the various agreement- making documents and ceremonies gives rise to an analysis of this resource.

Rentals and Payments

Further to the agreement making process rental or what is deemed as "rental payment" was agreed upon by the settlers and the *papa graun*. After making the initial payment of money to acquire individual blocks of land, settlers are required to pay an annual fee called a blok fee to the *papa graun*. This payment is supposed to be made to the governing body of the blok via the respective elected leaders of each electoral boundary group. The governing body of the blok is made up of the leaders of the electoral boundary groups and are often referred to as the '*komiti*'. The *komiti* then makes the payment to the *papa graun*. I enquired about the frequency and payment amount and subsequently heard a number of complaints that over the years money that was paid by the blok holders was misused by former community leaders, thus people were now reluctant to give money directly to their leaders. I was trying to understand the issue of payments and rentals because shortly after I moved to the blok there was an elaborate ceremony where members of the community gathered to witness their leaders give K25,000 (£6500) kina to the *papa graun* and other *Koiari* leaders. When I asked what this payment was for I was simply told that it was the blok fee.

Some people told me that they had not paid a fee in several years. People mostly said that they were not happy with the way previous rental money was collected therefore they were not going to give money to the leaders if they were notified to pay their annual blok fee. One person told me that blok fees should be paid straight to a bank account, akin to a community trust account, and all residents would have to do is show the bank deposit slip to their respective leaders as proof of payment. At the time that I lived at the blok, the blok residents had just elected a new set of leaders. I shall discuss the issue of leadership further on in the chapter.

I soon came to understand that this system of payment was irregular, *ad hoc* and informal with people residing at the settlement without giving any form of payment. This leads to the question of legitimacy, broken agreements and the meaning of payments. The next section of this chapter will give the reader a clearer understanding of how the community is prompted in making annual rental payments.

Meeting with Papa Graun

"We have to pay the papa graun, or he might evict us from his land," my landlady Joy said worriedly as we walked home from a Sunday afternoon community meeting with the blok leaders and the *papa graun*. The focus of this part of the chapter will be on a meeting, which took place in April 2010. I use this meeting as an example of blok rationale of payments based on what is known as the blok fee. This section of the chapter shows that the blok fee is not necessarily about money but is more a symbolic gesture of goodwill between two groups of people. It can be seen as a form of self-directed transaction by blok dwellers aimed at stabilizing their own collective anxieties and fears regarding displacement. Demands by settlers for title to individual blocks of land also brings to light blok notions of title and how this may be seen as a way of negating responsibility and displacing existing relations. Here, I show that blok understanding of rent and title is starkly different from that of a neo-liberal discourse where economics prefigure life. I will show how relations between and among people elicit and motivates blok dwellers to address issues pertaining to rent and title.

Joy's comment is telling in that even with the history of relationship and dialogue between the *papa graun* and the settlers, there still seemed to be some uncertainty about the permanency of the settlement. This particular meeting in April of 2010 was convened by the newly elected executives of the community and was

attended by around two hundred residents and the *papa graun*. The meeting began with a brief overview of the relationship between this particular landowner and the people of Morobe Blok. Following this the members of the community who were present were told by various community leaders that they (blok residents) needed to pay their blok fees so that they can show the *papa graun* that they appreciate his goodwill in allowing them to settle on his land. All block holders were required to pay a set amount of money to the *komiti*. In 2010, the required amount was K240 and forty kina (£60) for the blok fee, and an additional K120 for water (£30). All together all, blok holders were required to pay K360 (£90) to the *komiti*. The blok fee would then be given to the *papa graun* as rent and the water fee would be paid to *Eda Ranu*, the company that provides water to the city of Port Moresby.

After the blok fee was announced, the *papa graun* was asked to speak. He too spoke of the relations between the settlers and the landowners. Foxie Kaeaka said he comes to Morobe Blok because he signed the MOU that recognises settlement and therefore he feels that he should come and listen to matters regarding the blok. He said he was very busy but he made the time to come and see the community and talk with them. Speaking about the leadership of the community, the *papa graun* said that Atisinke and his *komiti* were voted in by the people and therefore they are his representatives in the community. He urged the people to work with the elected *komiti* members because he is going to work with them and they are his 'eyes' and 'ears'. He also talked about the K25, 000 (£6500) which the Morobe Blok community presented to him in October 2009. The *papa graun* said that K25, 000 was peanuts and he could pay back their money today if he wanted to. Essentially, he was telling the settlers that the money that was given to him was a token of appreciation and that the land that the settlement is built on is worth much more. Hence, he was emphasising his claim and indirectly reminding the settlers of the difference between them. He said that the *Behori* clan members would be developing their land at Bautama where twenty-seven

houses would be built. He said that *Behori* clan land at Six Mile would be the site for a new hospital.

The transactions described previously show relations through agreements and memorandums. The payment of a blok fee to the landowners can be seen as a form of bringing groups together but it can also be seen as separating groups. In paying rentals to the landowners a distinction is drawn between the owner of the resource and those who have been mandated to live and use the land. By not paying rental, the settlers may be seen to be *bikhet* (strong headed) and not respecting the relationship that they have with the landowners. This can also be interpreted as asserting claims to ownership in that the settlers think that they have invested time, energy and money into building houses, planting fruit trees and negotiating with the relevant state institutions for utilities and services. Strathern (2004:7) states that resources of various kinds enable one to describe the relations between persons which establish ownership of rights and resources. In this case, customary landowners own the land and it is their right to negotiate with others such as those from Morobe Blok. When the settlers do not comply with rental payment, they may be seen as not wanting to recognise ownership or established relations.

Land title and other concerns

After the *papa graun* left the meeting, concerns were raised by residents about the length of time they would have to continually pay rent to the landowner and when they would be entitled to get title for the land. My friend Sarah was particularly vocal about this.

> "*We can't keep paying rent to the landowner and live in uncertainty about whether we will get title to the land or not. Some of us are faithful in paying our land and water rates while others just ride on our honesty*."

When I asked Sarah what she meant by this, she explained that some people did not pay their blok fees because they had the kind of thinking that if enough residents paid their rental and water rates then the *komiti* would not be too fussed about chasing up those who did not pay because they would have collected a satisfactory amount of money already to give to the *papa graun* and therefore the absence of rental and water payments from those who did not keep up with their payments would not matter too much. Sarah's claims suggest a view that is far removed of economic rationale. My understanding is that each person who lives on a blok has to pay the associated fees, part of which forms the annual rental that is then presented to the *papa graun*. Yet, Sarah talks of actions that reflect a rationale that considers collective contributions as sufficient representation of the whole community as opposed to individual responsibility and initiative.

Sarah later informed me that she was in the process of acquiring a piece of land in suburban Port Moresby from the Lands Department as she was going to use this land to build a house. I asked her if she would move out of the blok and she replied,

> "*No, I just want a piece of land in town because I cannot be sure whether we will be able to stay here permanently or not. I don't want to build a good permanent house here because if the landowner decides to kick us off the block then I would have spent all this money on a house and I won't have anywhere to go. I rather get title for a block of land in town and build a house and rent it and I can stay in my little tin shack here in the block. My house looks tiny and run down from the outside but inside, sister I have everything there".*

Sarah's comments allude to Kalinoe's (2004:63) explanation that whilst ownership and possession are very much intertwined, they are distinct concepts where

in many cases possession is said to be "prima facie proof of ownership". Uninterrupted adverse possession, over a passage of time, may mature into ownership or legally enforceable property rights, particularly with customary land tenure[24]. Uncertainty of land is one of the reasons why some people chose not to build permanent houses. My friends John and Mark felt that there were many reasons why people are living in semi-permanent houses. John explained,

> *"Yes many people do not have money to build permanent houses, but for some, they are worried about building permanent houses because we don't have any title to this land, we are just living here. If the landowner decides to kick us off, he can".*

Mark added to the conversation by saying,

> "*But I think it will be hard to kick us off here because we have made improvements to this land. Before the blok was build, this was just kunai. The people who started this blok came and cleared the place, and those of us who came after and settled here also cleared the place, we have planted fruit trees and other things which we will have to be compensated for if we are to be moved off here. We heard that the Minister Arthur Somare has approached the landowner for land. With the big LNG[25] project, there will be a need for land to house the project workers and the landowner might want to move us off here if the government offers him a lot of money."*

Mark's explanation about improvements to the land was in reference to the effort that settlers have made to create a place to live. He specifically refers to the work that settlers have done to clear the tall *kunai* (blady grass) and how they have transformed this land from a dry grassland area into a place where fruit trees grow alongside other vegetables such as bananas, cassava and pumpkin. Efforts to establish and build the community have been made through the construction of roads and the

[24] This claim is also contestable as it has been rejected by the courts in some Pacific countries (pers comm. Sue Farran).

[25] The Papua New Guinea Liquefied Natural Gas Project.

building of significant community buildings such as churches and a community office. In essence, the settlers do not claim to own the land that they reside on, but rather claim the developments that have occurred on the land.

The general feeling that I got from listening to members of the community talk at community meetings and from discussions with my friends and the chairman of the community was that they were appreciative of the fact that they are able to have a space to live and make a home. Many of the men and women who spoke at the meetings acknowledged that land and rentals in Port Moresby city were inaccessible to them because of the exorbitant rental prices and high levels of corruption within the Papua New Guinea Department of Lands. Various friends also spoke of the affordability of living in the settlement.

> *"Living in the block is cheap, compared to town. People who live in town pay huge amounts of rent and on top of that have to pay for utilities such as electricity. Even people who own their own homes in town have a lot of expenses because they have to pay for their water and land rates".*

The fact that individual block holders like Sarah want to obtain title for their block of land, is an example of blok perception of land in that while they acknowledge that the land they live on is customary land, the use of western legal language of property rights shows the merging of two different types of systems to accommodate the present situation. Blok dwellers speak of the economic benefits of living in a settlement however they also wish to have access to services that those who live in suburbia have and one way to make this happen is if they present themselves as single title holder's to their block of land. This will mean a shift from the present irregular communal payments to service providers to individual agreements and payments by individual blok holders. While acknowledging the benefits of living in a settlement as

opposed to a suburb in town, blok residents are also aware that there is a need to improve their standard of living especially in relation to gaining access to utilities such as electricity and most importantly water. At present, the provision of utilities is quite arbitrary with no systematic planning to ensure that all blocks of land are connected to water pipes and electricity being connected to individual blocks at the discretion of the block owner.

The first part of this chapter aimed to provide a background as to how, why and when Morobe Blok was created. My intention was to show the reader that it is "good life" and relations between people, as opposed to supply and demand economics, that have enabled this settlement to be built and it is relations through agreements and memorandums that give rise to legibility and recognition. The second part of this chapter will now explain how "good life" is envisioned by the blok leadership and how again relations feature as key to achieving their vision for the community.

Part Two: Blok Leadership

The first part of this chapter showed that Morobe Blok is a community that was created and has grown from dialogue arising from personal relationships between the *papa graun* and the several Morobeans who lived and worked among the Koiari. Since the establishment of the settlement in 1992 there has been ongoing dialogue with the *papa graun* and other relevant parties such the National Capital District Commission and various politicians and leaders who represent both Port Moresby and Morobe Province.

Part of the performance of legibility includes the presence of some form of leadership within the community. During the early part of my research, I was

informed by various residents that there is an established leadership structure and various *komitis*, such as water and law and order committees, that were created as part of efforts to address the most important issues which the community faces. Having a core group of leaders who are able to represent the community at different levels if the need arises to meet with the *papa graun* or the NCDC is also important for community representation. Although these structures are in place, as I mentioned earlier in the chapter, there are issues with transparency and accountability that make some residents reluctant to contribute towards paying for utilities.

According to the current chairman of the community, between 2003 and 2009 Morobe Blok had problems with leadership. Those who were expected to lead and guide the community were inactive and were not proactive in terms of providing the sort of leadership that would assist the settlers to gain access to vital services. Past leaders had failed to provide leadership that encouraged *"gutpla sindaun insait lo komuniti"* (a good community).

The call to action to address the issue of leadership within the community was made prominent on April 8 2009, when Foxie Kaeaka, the *papa graun*, verbally reprimanded the settlers for being complacent toward paying some form of rent in return for settling on his clan land. Anxieties were further fuelled when Somot Kambe, one of the founding fathers of the settlement, relayed to the settlers that he had heard that the *papa graun* was planning on bringing developers to the blok to offer them land for ten thousand houses for the Papua New Guinea Liquefied Natural Gas Project (PNG LNG). Upon hearing this, some members of the community went and met with Foxie Kaeaka where he said the following words *"Yupla sindaun antap lo flower pot, mi no putim yupla igo insait lo graun yet, yupla bai stretim mi o bai mi tromoi yupla i go"* (You people are sitting at the top of the flower pot, I have not firmly planted you in the ground, you will have to do something about this or else I will throw you out). The *papa graun* then told the men who went to meet him that if nothing was done to

address his grievances by November 2009 then he would bring developers to view the land.

Blok Elections

In order to be seen to be responding to the *papa graun's* grievances, the community responded to the threat of eviction by organising themselves to conduct elections. On June 27 2009, Morobe settlers elected their new leadership *komiti*. Prior to the election the settlers gathered into their respective electorate groups and elected their representatives. Following this the whole community elected the people who they wanted to represent them at the community leadership level. The elections were conducted on June 7 2009 and the President, Deputy President, Secretary and Deputy Secretary were elected. The elections were conducted by secret ballot. A Morobean policeman, Senior Inspector Daniel Linonge, who is a senior officer in the PNG police force, assisted in conducting the elections. Inspector Linonge was called to assist because he is an officer of the law, respected by the community and also a fellow Morobean.

Leadership Structure

The new leadership has created three main *komitis* to oversee the governing of the settlement. These three *komiti* are a Steering *Komiti*, which is made up of church leaders mainly from the local Mt Zion Lutheran church and plays the role of an Ombudsman that polices the conduct of the elected leaders, oversees community elections and decides on disciplinary action for leaders who do not perform as

expected. This *komiti* was set up as a result of grievances and uncertainties that the settlers felt about leadership in the blok. This Ombudsman reflects the role of the PNG Ombudsman Commission which is the government organisation mandated to investigate and police the behaviour of elected leaders. In this case, the church leaders or *Songans* play this role. The second *komiti* is the Body of Christ Council that includes community leaders and youth leaders from the Mt Zion Lutheran Church. This *komiti* was set up in April 2010 and is mandated to take care of the spiritual aspect of settlement life through outreach programs within the community. This *komiti* had begun its work in 2010 by organising two nighttime rallies at the Mt Zion Lutheran church. The third *komiti* is the executive *komiti* which is headed by the deputy chairman of the settlement. This committee works to coordinate and oversee the efforts of the other two *komiti*. At the time that I was living at the settlement these *komiti* had just been newly created thus what I have just described is more of a vision of how the community should be organised and what the leaders can do to achieve this vision. What is interesting here is that the personnel of Ombudsman office that has been set up to monitor the performance of the leaders are leaders within the Lutheran church. Not all blok residents are members of the Lutheran church but it is members of the dominant church that have been appointed for this important role. It remains to be seen whether religious affiliation will take precedence over other aspects of social life where matters of governance of the blok are concerned therefore having members of the dominant church as members of an Ombudsman may not turn out to be unfair or oppressive to members of other church denominations. The reason that I suggest this is because people in the blok operate within different sets of relations at different moments in time which means that religious affiliation may be eclipsed by other relations such as kinship. The leaders have been brainstorming and want to bring services into the community as they want to raise the standard of living of the community. Collection of fees will be led by a chief fee collector who will be

appointed by the *komiti* in consultation with the appointed electorate leaders. One fee collector will be appointed under each electorate and will work alongside the chief fee collector. The new leadership *komiti* wants to employ an administrative clerk to do administrative work because most of the people doing work for the *komiti* are volunteers and according to chairman Atisinke they have their "rights" to look for food for their *meri* and *pikinini* (wife and children). The leadership have written to the Governor of NCD[26] for assistance towards the procurement ofcomputer equipment. The *komiti* plan to raise between K200,-K300,000 (£50,000) within the community. This money will be used for various projects. The settlement leaders have a vision of setting up a functioning governance system that operates in the community in the same way that Local Level Governments and other political institutions operate.

In 2009, one of the priorities of the newly elected executives was to collect fees from the blok residents. In total, the executives collected K34,000 (£8000). The executives set a fee of K150 per block, the break down being K100 (£25) as the block fee and K50 (£12) as a fee for water usage. In November 2009, a ceremony was held at a playing field opposite the block where K25,000 (£6,200) was given to the landowners, with the remaining K6000 (£1400) being spent on water payment to *Eda Ranu*, and K3000 (£700) was used to pay for food for the event. On the day of the event settlers also contributed garden food, tinned fish and other store goods along with two pigs. All together the chairman of the blok estimated that more than K10,000 (£2500) was spent on the event. The settlement leaders told the *papa graun* that the money that was given to him was *tok sori* (money to say sorry), money for occupying his land like *bikhet* (big head),[27] and not recognising or acknowledging the *papa graun*. This event reaffirms my point about relations being the centre of

[26] National Capital District.

[27] This word is used to describe someone who is recaltriant. It is also used to describe women who do not conform (see Spark).

transactions. The K25,000 (£6200) was given as an apology to the *papa graun* and not as rent. These events give new meaning to what it means to pay rent, how relations take precedence over economics and how potential conflicts are averted.

Given the past issues of leadership and mistrust, the current leadership believes that the level of leadership in the community needs to be raised and more awareness about the role of the community leaders is needed. The current chairman of the community told me that it is their vision to make Morobe Block a model community and in order to achieve this certain procedures have to be put in place, such as the regular collection of fees in an open and transparent way. In addition to this, the new leadership of the community have begun the process of working towards securing the land for future generations. Kurumai, one of the community leaders, consulted the NCDC regarding the process of securing the land. However, Kurumai mentioned to me that he was informed by officers at the NCDC Regulatory Services Division that the community needed to liaise with the customary landowners before entering into discussions regarding title. The *komiti* feels confident to begin this process because according to the block chairman Atisinke, the *papa graun* is now giving the community leaders the power of attorney to authorize land and support loan applications for blok residents who want to apply for small business loans and to develop their blocks of land. As non-title holders it is difficult for blok residents to obtain small loans because land that is not legally titled cannot be used as collateral for loans. The blok constitution will be amended to reflect this. There are some legal matters regarding powers of attorney that need to be sorted through the *papa graun's* lawyer. There is a fee of K10,000 for which the community will contribute K5000 and the landowner will contribute the other K5000. The leaders plan to raise the money for the legal costs through community fund raising and also asking local businesses to contribute towards the legal costs. The plan to ask local businesses to assist arises from the notion that businesses benefit from the custom of the members of the community,

therefore businesses will be asked to help to offset legal fees, because all members of the community have a stake in what happens in court. Atisinke said that some of the more educated residents of the blok have questioned why they cannot obtain individual title to their block. He added that they do not completely understand that block holders do not automatically obtain title to their block, they have to get the approval of the *papa graun*. Their main concern is for the welfare of the grassroots people as they moved to this community first. Atisinke thinks that if procedures and processes and the reasons as to why the association is seeking financial contributions are clearly explained then the association will be able to generate some income from fund-raising activities within the community. The leadership is looking to make this settlement a permanent settling place for Morobeans because they have heard of experiences of people selling up their bloks and going back to village only to return because they found that they could not cope with life in the village with kinship demands being a key factor.

Figure 17: Blok fundraising Nov, 2010

After hearing the plans and vision of the community leaders and given the recent anxiety about the settlement being demolished to house the PNG LNG

project, I asked Atisinke about his thoughts on how secure the settlers are on customary land. Atisinke replied that when the *papa graun* came to the blok in April 2010, Atisinke invited Foxie Kaeaka to share a meal with his family. As they sat together, Atisinke's wife brought the *papa graun's* food and gave it to him, the *papa graun* then asked her to bring a small table. The *papa graun* then put the plate of food on the table and said to Atisinke *"yu kaikai hap na mi kaikai hap"* (You eat half and I will eat half). At this particular moment, *Atisinke* believes that Foxie Kaeaka took the settlers out of the flower pot and put them into the ground. In Atisinke words, *"after that we are now safe and secure"*. Although the settlers and leaders alike deploy western legal jargon to advocate the classification of this land, these exact words exemplify the relations that binds those who live in this settlement to this land. It is shared food and the analogy of being planted firmly in the ground that confirms and affirms the status of settlement.

I get a sense from the community leadership that they want Morobe Blok to be exclusive but also inclusive. The whole idea of Morobe Blok was to create a community of Morobean people who could live together and uphold Morobe *pasin* (morobean ways). The association leaders acknowledge that the initial vision of having Morobeans only settle at Morobe Blok is not being realised because Morobeans themselves are selling their blocks of land to people from other provinces. In reference to this Kurumai, one of the leaders said to me,

> *'This is not supposed to happen, we Morobeans are causing problems for ourselves because we are selling our blocks to people from other provinces and we are not following the agreement that we made with the papa graun'. There is a reason that we came here in the first place, and that is that we wanted to live by ourselves. We are not aggressive people. Mipla nogat strong lo pait, mipla bai tok pait lo maus tasol*"(We will not use violence, we will just argue our point).

These words epitomise what is believed to be the Morobean way, a way that is not violent and aggressive but patient and non-confrontational.

This chapter began with a story of how a settlement in another part of Port Moresby was demolished. When a settlement such as Paga Hill is demolished, what is not seen among the rubble of corrugated iron and plywood is the investment of time, history, negotiations and relations which are essentially what makes a settlement. This is what I have tried to show in the story of Morobe Blok. To conclude, I want to return to the idea that land is not independent of people. This chapter has shown through the story of Morobe Blok that land is not always seen as a commodity in the western sense and land transactions do not always occur in an economic/commodity model. The land transaction that has occurred here is happening in other parts of PNG (Numbasa 2012; Koczberski 2012; Martin 2007) because the western legal framework of ownership and property is either too difficult for people to understand or alternatively because the transactions occur as part of relations. This chapter has also shown that settlements are places where the land forms part of people through the food they grow and the places they visit within the settlement and the names that are given to places.

PART I

Chapter Two
Making a Living in the City

Introduction

Chapter One introduced Morobe Blok and set out to provide an alternative discourse to how settlements are made. As opposed to the familiar explanations of settlements being a place of illegality and forceful occupation, I attempted to show the performativity of settlement creation through actions such as the signing of memorandum of agreements and establishments of *komitis*. I also aimed to show the reader that land is not only a commodity or resource quantifiable through economic transactions but is also very much dependent on good relations.

Now that I have shown the reader how this settlement was established, I want to move on to a discussion of a key aspect of urban life, simply put, how people make a living. I have pointed out in the introduction that urban poverty is synonymous with settlements (Chao 1989; Kumagai 2001; Wai 2010; Storey 2010) and unemployment (Goddard 2001). The objective of this chapter is to give the reader an idea of how people who live in settlements make and earn a living. Through the stories of how income is generated, I intend to address the issue of work and money. This chapter seeks to answer questions such as what do blok people do to earn money? How is money conceived? Is it a commodity that is primarily used to access goods and

services or is does it represent obligations? How do people talk about work? As an interrelated component of work, I will also pursue a discussion about money, specifically in relation to giving and not giving. I am doing this because my ethnographic data shows that my conversations with people about work always leads to a conversation about how money that is gained through work is expended. Through a discussion about how money is spent my research shows that conversations about money are about giving and not giving to others as much as they are about what people spend for their daily living such as food or clothing. I write about giving as part of what money engenders. Access to money provides thoughts about giving or not giving food, clothes or school fees.

This chapter begins with a conversation about hardship, a common narrative about blok life and urban living espoused by policy makers and international agencies (Papua New Guinea Office of Urbanisation 2010; Asian Development Bank 2012). Although this chapter begins with a story of hardship, which in many ways confirms the assumptions about blok life that I have outlined in the introduction to this thesis, my intention here is not to focus on poverty; but on work and money because of the insight that a discussion of work and money will provide to the reader. The conversation between my friend Karen and I serves to highlight the issues which are key to work and money. We talk about Karen's worries of not being able to access money and how her worries are making her look and feel unwell. Our conversation reveals some of the ideas of work, money, sharing and giving that will form a large part of this chapter. Specifically, the conversation with Karen aims to provide a framing for getting at what constitutes work. It is with this in mind that I set up this chapter as an ethnographic encounter of examples of the ways in which people who live in the blok make and regard money. These vignettes aim to show how income is generated as well and in addition provide detailed narratives about conceptions of work and how money should or could be spent.

In the introduction to the thesis, I provided background data about the types of employment commonly referred to among blok dwellers as '*wok*' (work). I will now expand on this by presenting narratives based on their thoughts of work and its associated conceptions and meanings. This chapter is framed around ideas of *wok* (work) partially as a project of analytical engagement and critique of ethnographic accounts in postcolonial PNG whereby urban sociality has largely been theorised as a dynamic sphere where its subjects are subsumed through the mosaic of modern employment and consumption into possessive individuals (Foster 1995; Errington 1996, 1999 ; LiPuma 2000; Martin 2007; Sykes 2007). It is important for the reader to note that while I do make a mention of work in terms of the informal and formal, these categories are not key to this chapter. My position here is to concentrate on narratives about *wok* in terms of how blok dwellers themselves articulated their notions of *wok*. My reasons for doing this stems from a reluctance to engage in a conversation about categories which I feel are restrictive and unhelpful in enabling a description of work which is burdened with prefigured categories such as the formal or the informal. My analytical aversion to the use of the categories informal and formal stems from a partial recognition that these categories are to a certain degree a function of anthropological analysis which traces its roots to western sociological capitalist history and the influence of Mauss (1990) on gift and commodity debates in Melanesia (Gregory 1982). While I recognise that the analytic terms (formal and informal) are helpful to think with, I will ethnographically demonstrate the conceptual weaknesses of these terms and demonstrate how Morobe Blok dwellers do not necessarily conceptualise wok as a separate sphere or domain. Indeed, an ethnographic appreciation of Morobe Blok sociality demonstrates how the categories formal and informal are conceptualised as a single socioeconomic sphere through the overarching notion of *wok*. As an example, one blok resident told me that regardless of whether one works for a company, at a construction site or vends food or *buai* in

the street, they are all working towards obtaining the same thing, namely money. Here we see *wok* and money as the denominating force which displaces the illusory dichotomy between different spheres of economic activity (informal and formal) and the notion of wok and its nuance that regardless of the different categories of wok, people still end up being compensated through the same form: money. The difference in value and frequency in people's income from different economic transactions is rarely appropriated as a significant marker of their engagement in either an informal or formal economy. During the course of my fieldwork, I came to understand that what counts as work for people in Morobe Blok is the engagement in a particular activity by actively channelling their energies and capacities to certain ends. It is with this in mind that this chapter places an emphasis on stories rather than categories as a way of thinking about income generation and its relationship with work.

I will conclude chapter two with a discussion on the notion of giving or not giving. Chapter two will conclude in this particular way because during the course of my research I found that money that originates from work has endless possibilities for disbursement. I was under the assumption that blok residents worked to primarily feed themselves, which is very much the case, but my ethnographic data also shows that giving or not giving to others (friends and relatives) is an integral part of how money is dispersed and distributed by blok residents. Whether one chooses to give and or not give and who one chooses to give to are pertinent aspects of how a person is viewed by others, thus the importance that people placed on giving and sharing.

Money concerns

It is a hot afternoon and I am walking along the dirt road at around 2:30 pm on a Tuesday afternoon. This is my usual routine as I learnt quite early during my fieldwork that blok people were not around in the morning, as they, like many other

residents of Port Moresby were out and about often before dawn, getting busy with life. After lunch, when the Port Moresby sun is scorching and sweltering with its post-noon fiery radiance, is when I would find people venturing out to set up their market tables under the shade of trees, umbrella's or makeshift market shelters. It was on one of those afternoons that I met Karen, my friend who I introduced to the reader in the thesis' introduction. Karen was raised in Port Moresby and is married to John. Together with their three children, they live with Karen's family on a block of land that Karen's father purchased before he retired from his job as an architectural draftsman. I was walking back from the shop when I saw Karen walking down her street slowly with a worried look on her face. I did not recognise her for she looked like she had lost weight. She greeted me with a tired smile as I approached her,

> *"Hello sister[28], where are you coming from?"*
> *"Oh muwing[29] I am coming from four kona, how are you? Have you been unwell? I nearly didn't recognise you, would you like a buai?"*

I gave Karen a betelnut and we continued our conversation. Karen leaned against an old drum that is used to fill water for bathing during the rainy season and continued to talk.

> *"Sister we are in hard times, your brother is not working, he is so committed to his volunteer work but that won't put food on the table. I worry all the time about where I will get money to buy rice for my kids and where I will get money to buy scones so the kids can have breakfast and go to school. I don't like the idea of my kids going to school on an empty stomach. When your brother was doing this bit of work last year, we were okay but now there is uncertainty as to whether the programme will continue and he hasn't signed a new contract. There are so many of us and it is just so hard".*

[28]It is not uncommon to call people who are not related biological by such kinship terms. Eg; Sister, Brother, Mother or Father.
[29]Term used to describe the first born female in the Mumeng language of Morobe.

Karen said that she was so frustrated and worried about where they would get money from that she went and picked up an application form from a local security firm and filled it out on John's behalf. When Karen showed the form to John he reacted by telling her that if she wanted to work for a security firm then she should fill the application form for herself because he was not interested. There could be numerous reasons for John not being interested in working as a security guard but Karen was of the opinion that his commitment to volunteering is a primary reason for him not wanting to take up other jobs. John has been a volunteer for several international non-government organisations (INGO) in Port Moresby for approximately five years. John also introduced Karen to volunteering. As volunteers John and Karen are trained by NGOs such as the Red Cross and World Vision to carry out awareness projects pertaining to violence against women and children, and HIV.

Our conversation turns to Karen's brother-in-law, James, who is employed by a bakery in a town. James is married to Karen's younger sister Mona. James and Mona and their three children also live in the same house as Karen and John and their children.

> *"What about James?' Doesn't he buy food for the house?"*, I ask
> *"Oh they gamble so much that when his fortnight [comes] he has to pay back all their debts".*

She shook her head disapprovingly as she spoke of her sister Mona and brother-in-law James. She continued to tell me that these sorts of actions by her sister Mona and brother-in-law James caused her to *tingting planti* (think a lot) and it was

making her lose weight. She said that even though she is eating, her worry is consuming all the food.

I ask Karen if there are any *wantoks* who she can ask for help and she replied,

> *"We have lots of relatives, my cousin Ari lives further up the road, I don't like to go to her because the last time I sent the kids to her house, she didn't talk nicely to my kids. When she saw the girls at her door, she just looked up and said what do you want? When they replied that they had come to ask for some rice, she replied that she had nothing. And yet when she is in need and comes to my house, I always share what little we have with her. Now I'm not interested in what she does".*

Karen's situation indicates the hardships of settlement life particularly the limited access to money at any one particular time. Other aspects of life such as her cousin Ari's perceived lack of empathy towards Karen's children also affect her quality of life and wellbeing. In this instance Ari's reaction to Karen's children troubled Karen more than her inability to share her rice. Similarly, Karen's worries about the lack of resources to feed her family contributed to her looking and feeling unwell thus my enquiry about Karen's health led to a story of being in hard times and not of illness.

This story highlights the issue of money and how money should or could be spent. Karen expresses her disappointment at what she considers to be irresponsible behaviour on the part of her sister Mona and her brother-in-law James. Karen also shares her unhappiness about her cousin Ari's reaction to Karen's children asking Ari for rice. Karen's sentiments give rise to questions about personal choice, decision and the morality of money. Should James be compelled into converting money into food for family members, and why is it that James can spend the money he earns in whatever way he pleases? I shall revisit these questions at the end of the chapter. But Karen's concerns with questions pertaining to personal choice should not be mistaken

for a desire to transform into a relationally detached individual because of the social and economic pressures afforded by modernity.

Contrary to the view of some Melanesianist anthropologists (Martin 2007; Wardlow 2006; LiPuma 2000; Errington 1999) that wage work and conspicuous consumption of modern commodities intensifies individualism, Karen's negative affectivities towards sharing with her sister's family are not about extinguishing her kin connections. Her concerns have more to do with the practical difficulties of blok life and the general view that economic and social burdens such as lack of money and food are best addressed through the concerted efforts of everyone in the household. In some way, Karen's concerns go against the general assumption that urban life (be it in the settlement or suburbia) and rural life are lived through two different modes and registers of conceptualising livelihood. In fact, the example drawn from Karen demonstrates the ubiquity with which Melanesians creatively deploy novel ways of reconciling what may seem conflicting if we juxtapose the 'urban' and 'rural' as distinctive spheres where the practicalities of livelihood are governed by different sets of logics.

My conversation with Karen foregrounds several aspects about work and money. The first being an example that work is seen as a particular activity by which blok residents channel their energies and capacities to certain ends. In the case of Karen's husband, John, his active involvement as an unpaid volunteer is in his and Karen's view still a form of work. Karen told me that on the days that she and or John are required to attend trainings or conduct awareness in other settlements, they are usually provided with K5 (£1) as a contribution towards transport costs. Karen thought this was inadequate compensation because they (John and Karen) had children to feed and by volunteering they were giving up time that could be used to engage in other activities like marketing that could earn them money for their meals and other necessities. Karen said her five kina allowance enables her to buy a five

hundred gram packet of rice and a small can of tinned fish to contribute to the night's dinner. According to John more than fifty people in Morobe Blok have undertaken volunteer training. Several young volunteers that I met said that volunteering gave them some news skills[30] and it gave them an opportunity to do something practical, and also on some occasions travel to other parts of the city to participate in related activities and meet new people. There are several important points to take from this example of work, the first being the difference in cultural logic that underpins volunteering. The western notion of volunteering is to give up one's time to help others without expectation of remuneration in the form of payment. Volunteering involves giving time to an activity to benefit another individual, group of community (Wilson 2000). This kind of volunteer work is present in Port Moresby in the form of organisations such as the Port Moresby Cancer Relief Society where volunteer members who are usually in full time employment, raise funds for cancer equipment and awareness by hosting fundraising events such as the biggest morning tea[31]. The volunteering which the settlement dwellers are involved in is of a different kind in that volunteers are trained by NGOs to impart new forms of knowledge about social issues. This kind of volunteer work is based on a premise that settlement communities are places where multiple social issues need to be addressed therefore training people like John and Karen and the others in the community is a way in which a given NGO can show that they are building local capacity and relationships with the local communities in which they operate.

For Karen, the five kina contribution to transport costs is converted into food for the family. In thinking about this, could it be asked that Karen's claim that volunteers should be compensated better be viewed as a way their way of demanding adequate payment for their labour as one would do when working? I would suggest

[30] Most of the people that I spoke to have been educated to year eight and above.
[31] See www.pomcrs.org.pg, accessed on 29/10/2012.

not, because both Karen and John talk about money in the practical terms such as the need for money to take care of their family and not so much in being compensated for the time they spend doing volunteer work because they do acknowledge and are appreciative of the opportunity to learn new ideas and ways of doing things. Also, within the community John's volunteer work is recognised to some extent, as I sometimes heard him being referred to as the 'NGO man'. From speaking with John regularly, I could tell that his hopes and aspirations for work lay in a job that would present him with an opportunity to work with communities thus volunteering may provide him with the avenue to pursue his future ambition.

This is a key point regarding the relationship between perceived knowledge exchanges as work. By providing training for John and Karen and others in the community, the NGOs see themselves as equipping their volunteers with knowledge to address issues within the community that are deemed as problematic, such as HIV and gender violence. However, John mentioned to me that while the trainings he received are informative and important, they are also challenging because volunteers are then expected to carry out the awareness and training in the community without much support by way of follow-up training or further assistance. John's observation that volunteer training can be challenging and demanding because of the expectation to demonstrate the knowledge received through training destabilises an important assumption about the ease and readiness with which international humanitarian organisations often naively assume that people would readily put into practice what they learn and gain from the training. It is only when one comes to understand the contents and modularity in some of the trainings such as those components underpinned by universalist ideals of "human rights" and/or "gender equality" as ideas and artefacts of ideas themselves that we grasp the real sense of John's sentiments. John's sentiment about the expectations and challenges has as much to do

with the tacit outcome in which the trainings are geared toward transforming individual subjectivities into those idealised in the training programs. In other words, in order for the trainings to precipitate any meaningful change in the community this change would necessarily have to be preceded by a different kind of consciousness and subjectivity. People in the community would have to have a self-awareness of their need to change certain aspects of how they behave prior to participating in these trainings. One only begins to appreciate John's concerns when the full gamut of assumptions underpinning the various humanitarian training programs become analytically unravelled as ideational forms which at the core constitute a political exercise in transforming human subjectivities. It is evident that the accomplishment of indicators and knowledge transfer is what is most important for the NGO's, and volunteers like John and Karen are instrumental in helping the organisation to achieve its objectives. However, local volunteers then sometimes struggle with having to carry out programs on their own. As I mentioned earlier, John and Karen felt that the time and effort spent doing volunteer work do not really amount to any substantial gains in terms of a source of income. They also spoke of how difficult it was to mobilise community interest because people in the community had more important things to do, such as gardening and marketing. Abraham and Millar (2011) also found the same sentiments expressed in their study of local volunteers engaged by an Australian NGO operating in Papua New Guinea. In response to indigenous understandings about voluntary work, Abraham and Millar suggest that by applying a gift exchange perspective to volunteering, international NGO's can be seen as recognising the cultural dynamic of gift giving. Abraham and Millar propose a model for effective formal volunteering incorporating gift-exchange principles. Three reciprocal pairs of gifts are proposed with the assumption that for effective formal volunteering to occur, the volunteer gifts need to be appropriately matched by corresponding organizational gifts. I will not go into a detailed analysis of this gift/volunteer model that Abraham

and Millar propose, however I think that a model of gift/volunteer work does not change the dynamic between what the NGO wants to achieve and the aspirations of the local volunteers because it essentially still treats volunteering as extracting a gift of service from a volunteer without actually exchanging a gift which really signifies what the volunteer means to the organisation. A better understanding of the assumptions and understanding of the locals towards NGO's and volunteering would provide a clearer insight into how to create better partnerships with communities.

Here, I show the reader one example of an activity that would not be considered as work in Euro American terms, and in considering this I also make the point about why people do what they do. I illustrate that money may not always be the primary focus of doing what may be considered as work. There is no monetary incentive for people like John to continue to want to do volunteer work. Even with the concerns that John and Karen have regarding volunteering, they both continue to volunteer because of the perceived skills that they gain from working with various NGO's. This story poses questions about what it means to work and what constitutes work. In order to address these questions, I move on to the next story about Tuo, a bank seller turned *buai* seller.

Tuo's story

During my frequent visits to the bus stop, I met Tuo, a regular vender at the main bus stop market. Tuo told me that with marketing he gets more money than he did when he was working full time as a bank teller. He makes between K70 (£17) and K100 (£25) profit daily from his *buai*, smoke and lolly sales. He said he is better off

now that he is unemployed because when he was working he would book[32] money, drink a lot and go to clubs. He said when he started to sell *buai*, some people were surprised because they knew him as a bank employee and his daily presence at the bus stop was for the purpose of catching the bus to work in town and not to be selling *buai* at the bus stop market. Now that Tuo is not in waged employment, he does not feel pressured to socialise with his friends in the same way as when he was employed. He now feels that he has more money from selling *buai* every day and he also has more money because he does not engage in activities like drinking and night clubbing. This is not to say that men who are formally employed are the only ones who consume large amounts of alcohol because they receive regular wages, because in the blok a young, single *buai* seller can also buy beer and drink away his profits and then start to build his business back up again. For Tuo, it is as much about having or not having money as it is about being in a different place and not being with the sets of relations which activate this idea to drink, borrow money and go to clubs. It is more about the kind of money that comes with the job, meaning that there are expectations on how this money could or should be spent. Being at a different place and associating with different people and the distinctiveness of particular activities generates different capacities for relatedness and being. In this case, it is the *moni blo benk* (banks' money) meaning that the money though earned through work is specifically the money of the bank as opposed to it being just money. For Tuo, the *moni blo benk* has capacitating qualities that have the material potency of imbuing it with agentive power to enable particular kinds of relations – which in this case involves subjecting Tuo to acts of unrestraint borrowing and spending. This kind of thinking is reflected in comments about working people and the specific origins of their money. An example being money from resource extraction sites such as *moni blo Ok Tedi* or *moni blo LNG*. Tuo feels he is now released from those relations and that

[32]Borrow money on credit.

kind of money, and now engages more in his duties as a father and husband. The irony of Tuo's situation also lies in the western derived idea of work and prestige where it is assumed that a bank teller would have more money than a *buai* seller due to the nature of their jobs. Tuo said he was thinking of going back to work and was considering looking for waged employment in 2011. This consideration is not based on a need to go back to work as a means to survive because Tuo knows that he can earn money from selling *buai*. It is more the case that he knows he has options. Tuo was one of a number of people who I met who left his job for one reason or another and was doing other kinds of work. It is through meeting people like Tuo and Victor, whose story I tell next that I want to show how blok people think about work.

Victor and the flawa lain (Flower people)

Amongst the weekday movements of *buai* and urban gardeners were the *flawa lain* who came by with their wheel burrows full of soil or leaves which they collected to *lukautim* (look after) their plants. The *flawa lain* only sell their plants on the weekend because their chances of selling their flowers are maximised by the increase in numbers of city residents who travel on the main Sogeri road. Flower Gardening enthusiasts regularly travel to Nine Mile to view and buy the seedlings cultivated by blok gardeners. On the weekends, when it is too hot to stay around in the settlement, I venture out on to the main Hubert Murray Highway to sit and talk with the *flawa lain*. I watch as four-wheel drive vehicles and dark glass sedans pull up along the dusty roadside and its occupants came out of their air-conditioned vehicles to inspect the flowers and on many occasions purchase seedlings to take to their homes in the city. Prices of seedlings range from one kina to fifteen kina, and prices are dependent on the species of flower. Orchids will sell at a higher price than a white hibiscus, for

example. I usually sit with my friend Victor, his wife Betty and members of their extended family. Victor, who is in his thirties, owns a small landscaping and pot plant hire business. Victor cultivates a wide range of flowers and easily rattles off the scientific names for the hibiscus, frangipani, and different orchids. Victor is small in stature but very determined to succeed in his business. Not long after meeting me, he seized the opportunity to ask me for assistance in promoting his business. Victor decided to go into business for himself after working at various places as a gardener. He also worked for Port Moresby's leading flower and landscaping business which is owned by an expatriate. Victor said he realised that he knew as much as the *waitman* (white man) when it came to gardening and plants and he thought the *waitman* did not adequately remunerate his workers. While aspiring to gain more work, Victor also said that it is really difficult to do business in Port Moresby if you are a grass roots[33] man.

> "*It's who you know, I don't know anyone in government and in business so when I approach people to market my business, they are not interested. My plants are on hire at two big companies and one government organisation but honestly that's not a lot. My overhead costs are large because I don't have my own truck which means when I have to go to the different offices to change the flower pots, I need to find people in the block who have cars available for hire. Can you help me market my business please? You work for the government, can you use your connections to assist me? I just need some more exposure and so I can get more jobs and hopefully make enough money to one day buy a car".*

By seeking my assistance, Victor was essentially asking me to grant him access to a network of relations which he felt was inaccessible to him. He was, however, hopeful that with my assistance he may be able to access network of relations which he could then convert into business opportunities. Victor and I worked to put together a flyer advertising his small business, which I sent to various contacts. As a

[33] In the PNG context the Grassroots are low income or unemployed. Settlers are often classified as grass roots.

result, Victor successfully acquired a number of small landscaping jobs. After he was remunerated for his first job, Victor came to my house and shared twenty kina with me. When I refused his money, he insisted saying that it was my assistance that helped him get a small work contract therefore it was right that I have a share of his good fortune. By sharing twenty kina with me, Victor is keeping the network in view (Kirsch 2004). Success in the Melanesian context means including all those who have contributed to one's wellbeing. In this case, Victor felt compelled to give me money from his work contract as his way of acknowledging my contribution as well as keeping our relations in view in case there is a need to further help each other.

Figure 18: Plants at Victor's nursery.

Figure 19: Sunday afternoon, roadside plant sales.

There are others like Victor who have left paid employment for one reason or another and engage in entrepreneurial activities as a way to earn a living. Tuo, the *buai* seller, and Victor's story highlight the dynamic nature of work and the fluidity with which people conceptualise and do work. Victor who has experience working for companies continues to find networks of relations that will assist him to make his small business viable. Tuo does not place any emphasis on finding wage work. He does not have a sense of urgency about getting back into the workforce as he has

found other means by which to earn a living for now, but at the same time he has not completely ruled out the notion of going back into paid employment. Similarly, prior to Mark finding employment again, Joy would often say,

> *"We used to be ok when Mark worked at Coca Cola, but now that he is not working, life is hard. Right now Mark is taking Coca Cola to court for unfair dismissal, when his court case is over and when he has found another job, I think I will stop working for a while. I need a rest and I want to do my own things like making meri blouses and selling them. I think I can do many little things around here to earn money. We used to look after chickens before. The haus kakaruk (chicken coop) was under the house. I worked really hard with that, we didn't have saw dust like other people have, we put the chickens on canvas and bags and every day I used to clean those bags, wash them and hang them out to dry while I replaced them with clean ones. Oh and our chickens were so fat too."*

When I asked why they stopped their *kakaruk bisnis* Joy replied,

> *"Oh you know, too many bookings[34], and then people never pay. I would follow them up for our money and they would say 'next week, next week' and next week never came, so we gave up"*

These sorts of sentiments expressed by Joy and Tuo show the flexibility by which people approach work and employment. While this may come across as rather arbitrary, it also could be interpreted as having an open mind to the prospects and possibilities of income generation that life can offer. The knowledge that relations can turn into different relations such as small work contracts provides a sense of possibilities for business opportunities. These prospects do not necessarily fall into the Euro American categories of school, university and a good office job. The kind of work ethic described here is shaped by entrepreneurial motivations and interpretations

[34]Customers would come and get chicken on credit with a promise to pay.

of where money comes from and relations both good and bad. I will explore this through Joys work as a *Haus Meri* (domestic worker).

Haus Meri Wok

During my fieldwork time I often heard my landlady Joy say the following words,

> *"I am so tired from travelling to and from work, it costs a lot of money to get to Waigani and back, but I need to work now that Mark is not working. I must work, it is for the kids, for their rice and tinned fish".*

At the beginning of my fieldwork, Joy left home at 6am every morning from Monday to Friday to go to work as a *haus meri* from eight in the morning until four in the afternoon for a family in suburban Waigani.[35] She earned one hundred kina (£26) a fortnight[36] which she would use to buy food, electricity[37]and pay for transport costs to and from work. Joy worked for this family for a year before finding employment with another family in 2010. Joy and her husband Mark who was unemployed at the time I started fieldwork supplemented their household income by renting a room in their four bedroom permanent house for K90 fortnight (£24). At that time, Joy was working as a *haus meri* for Nela, a woman from the Central Province. Nela is married to Stan, an Asian businessman, and they have two daughters. Joy found this job through Nela's mother who is Joy's *wan lotu*[38] (one church). Although Joy liked Nela and Stan, she was often tired when she returned home. Nela's extended family was

[35] Waigani is a surburb in the Moresby North West electorate of Port Moresby.
[36] In Papua New Guinea, wages are usually paid every two weeks.
[37] Port Moresby has a pay as you go electricity service called EASYPAY.
[38] See Chapter Three for a discussion the the idiom wan lotu.

frequent visitors to the house and as a result Joy spent most of her day cleaning up after Nela's relatives. Joy also felt that the money she was given did not adequately compensate for the amount of work that she did. She also started becoming uncomfortable about going to work because she said that Nela was having an affair with a young man who visited the house regularly while Stan was away. Joy felt this was inappropriate because she said Stan was a *gutpla man* (good man) and Nela was taking advantage of his kindness and good nature. After a couple of months of listening to Joy's daily stories of Nela's indiscretions, Joy ended up finding a new job at Four Mile where she worked as a *haus meri* for Jane and Karl. Jane works as a purchaser for a major local retail company while her husband Karl runs their small mobile liquor business. Joy met her new employers through me as Jane and Karl and their daughter Tiana had visited us at the blok on a number of occasions and asked if Joy could assist them to find a suitable *haus meri*. However, upon hearing of Joy's situation with Nela and Stan they offered the *haus meri* job to her, which she accepted.

At her new job, Joy worked three days a week from eight in the morning until just after noon and was paid K20 (£5) per day. In a week, Joy earned sixty kina, more than half of what Nela and Stan paid her for two weeks work. Joy felt that her move from her *haus meri* job at Waigani to her new cleaning job at Four Mile was good because now that she worked three days a week she could spend the other two days doing other things that she enjoyed such as sewing. She used the two days that she had at home to catch up on her housework and sew *meri* blouses[39] which she sold to friends, *wantoks* and members of her church. Joy said she was not as tired as when she worked for Stan and Nela because she only worked until one pm and also because she felt that her workload had somewhat lessened as Jane and Karl only had one child and though they had a good number of young male relatives frequenting their home, Joy's

[39] Most common attire for Papua New Guinean women. The *meri* blouse was introduced by Christian churches and is now viewed as Papua New Guinea's national dress for women. It's similar in style to the Ni Vanuatu Mother Hubbard dress.

tasks were limited to general cleaning and laundry for Jane and Karl and their child only.

Although Joy regularly stated that she was only doing *liklik wok* (small work) to put food on the table, her daily stories of her work day were nearly always a topic of conversation. Not only did Joy describe the finer details of washing dishes, cleaning windows and mopping floors, she always had an interesting story to tell about her employers as well.

Joy would come home from work in the afternoon usually with a bundle of *kumu* in her hand and a packet of rice accompanied by a can of Diana tuna tinned fish concealed in her *bilum* (traditional net bag) and lots of stories about her day at work. This attention to detail through the retelling of the day's work chores and activities is not unique to Joy. Her best friend Kate who worked for three different expatriate families indulged me with wonderful stories of cooking and eating curry with her Indian *bos meri* (employer) and sharing a meal with her *Buka bos meri* during lunch breaks. I began Joy's story with her own explanation of why she made the tiring journey to town every day. While she openly states that she works because she needs money there are clearly other things at stake that impact her desire to work. It is evident through Joy's stories that working in a happy environment as well as having good relations between her employers and herself are important factors that motivate Joy to work.

Joy and Kate's stories about their places of work again bring into question the meaning of work and money and what it means to people. One would think that the need for money would be the sole driving factor behind work, and the relations that come with work may not be a telling factor in the quest to earn an income. Joy's comfortable relations with her employers which allows her access to the private domain of their lives in the form of being familiar with their relatives, knowing aspects of their business operations and also sharing stories from her own life with

her employers goes against the assumption that a domestic worker would see and hear things in a house but not discuss matters out of the house. This was also true for Joy's friend Kate and other women who were *haus meri*. While my fieldwork material does emphasise the importance of good relations as a motivating factor to work, I do not discount the aspirations that blok dwellers have in terms of work opportunities and prestige relating to work. My next example of Mark's work within the security industry is evidence of this.

Wok Sikiriti (Security Work)

During the course of my fieldwork, Joy's husband Mark went on to find employment as a driver for the Dog Unit of the security company Corps PNG, a franchise of the UK Corps security firm. He worked for Corps for nearly three months before resigning to take up another job as a driver for the British owned security company G4S. Mark left the Corps because the conditions that G4S offered were better and also because he aspired to work around the PNG LNG project. G4S is the security provider for the project. Security jobs pay a minimum wage[40] of around K300 (£80) a fortnight[41], however, as a driver Mark's salary is closer to K500 (£130). Mark's role as a driver allows him to earn a wage above that of a static *siggy*[42] because the job of a driver comes with the responsibility of driving company vehicles and transporting static security officers to their work locations. Mark's aspires to work for a company like G4S because the salary is better than other security firms and also because G4S is associated with the PNGLNG project. Therefore, Mark believes those

[40] Current Minimum Wage is K2.29 per hour.
[41] Every two weeks.
[42] *Tokpisin* slang for Security Guard.

who are employed by G4S and work specifically at the project site may have better benefits such as training and maybe the opportunity to work at the project site in the Highlands as well. Employment as a security guard is seen as unskilled menial work, however the private security industry in Port Moresby is a big business and the demand for security workers is large with both local and international firms advertising and holding day recruitment drives to hire static guards, drivers and dog handlers.

Work in waged employment does bring a sense of prestige, however it does not necessarily equate to financial security for urban dwellers, thus many families like Sarah's, whose story I tell next, supplement their wages through street sales and other income generating activities.

A health worker and bisnis meri

Across the dirt track from us lived Sarah a health worker who works at the Port Moresby General Hospital; she is sometimes referred as the "*nurse meri*". Sarah could be considered well off as both her and her husband (a mechanic) had jobs and Sarah also engaged in other income generating activities such as chicken farming and *dinau moni* (money lending business). From her informal businesses and their combined employment Sarah and her husband were able to send their daughter to a private Christian school in town. Sarah and her husband also own a second-hand car which they use when it is free of mechanical problems. As a health worker, Sarah's take home salary ranges around K750 (£190) while her husband, a qualified mechanic, works for a leading automotive distributor. His take home pay would be around the same as Sarah's. Sarah works seven day shifts with two or three days off between shifts depending on whether she is working a day or night shift. She employs a baby sitter who lives nearby to help her with her children and this enables her to travel early

to the hospital if she is assigned to work a night shift (10pm-6am) or to sleep at the hospital if she works an afternoon shift (2-10pm) and had difficulty with transport (See more in Chapter Three). Sarah rarely talks about her work except to say that the ward is always busy because there are not enough nurses and community health workers to serve the increasing number of patients seeking medical attention at the hospital. Apart from being a qualified community health worker, Sarah is also an astute businesswoman who while holding down a full time job has a *kakaruk bisnis* and a *dinau moni bisnis*. In the same way that Sarah's extra income generating activities is not limited to the blok, the *dinau moni bisnis* is not also limited to settlements but is a feature of urban living with many people living on *dinau moni* either as sellers (creditor) or borrowers (debtor). The *dinau moni bisnis* entails loaning money to trusted customers for a return profit. There are different levels of interest that are usually set by the creditor themselves depending on different factors such as competition and knowledge of customers. The minimum amount of money one can borrow is K10 (£2.50) which generally requires a repayment of interest of K3 or K5. In some cases, it is acceptable to creditors for their debtors to pay the 'interest' every two weeks and repay the *mama moni* or original loan amount when they are able to. By doing this the debtor is avoiding the accumulation of interest which if added on every two weeks would end up costing the borrower double or more than the original loan. Also by paying the interest on a loan the debtor is continuously acknowledging the relationship between the two. The payment of interest by the debtor to the lender indicates that the debtor is thinking about the lender and the money that it is owed. While the *dinau moni* essentially operates on good faith, non payment of debts are also known to be the cause of disputes (Goddard 2005:121).

Figure 20: *Haus kakaruk* (chicken coop).

Figure 21: Notice, chicken on sale.

As this chapter deals with making a living in the settlement and by implication how the discourse and pragmatics of money is intrinsically interwoven to blok sociality it is worth making a few observations on blok dwellers conceptions about money. Here, I want to concentrate on the specific notion of *mama moni* (literal English translation

meaning mother-money). If we stretch *mama moni* from the economistic prism that delimits its semantic symbolism to the financial language of principal and profit, a different dynamic of conceptualising value emerges. This conception involves a certain degree of embeddedness of value in kinship reckoning, where the principle amount is conceptualised as *mama moni*. Here we can see that the material form of money is connected to a broader set of associations that extends beyond the mere abstraction of value. Instead of money being merely a medium of exchange and a store of abstract value the term *mama moni* imbues both its value and material form a feminine attribute. The multiplier effect of *dinau moni* and its associative generation of *win moni* (profit) are analogical to the reproductive capacities of the female. The analogical reference to female capacities is akin to the fact that the human race multiplies through women just as just like *dinau moni* multiplies through a female form.

In Sarah's case, she loaned her money out for an interest rate of fifty per cent per fortnight. This means that for every ten kina (£2), which is the minimum that can be borrowed, an interest of K5 (£1) is charged. . The borrower is usually required to repay the amount borrowed within two weeks or by the next fortnight. If the money is not repaid within the stated two-week time frame then the interest accumulates. Sarah loans her money to her work colleagues and to trusted friends and relatives. On the occasion that a borrower in the blok has not repaid her money she follows up by calling them or waits at the road side to catch them as they walk by. Sarah feels she can do this because she operates her business on trust and therefore if her customers do not repay their loans she is quite within her means to ask about her loan repayments in public places within the blok. This is also a good tactic by which one can be shamed into repaying debts because along with money, reputations, relations and trust is at the heart of money lending. By now it will become obvious that the operation of Sarah's *dinau moni bisnis* is undergirded by relational trust. Sarah rarely

lends to strangers with whom she has no prior connection to or relationship with. But trust in itself is not a sufficient guarantee for timely repayment. Trust is essential in so far as it provides the neutralising capacity for mistrust between Sarah and her clients. In other words, trust acts as a kind of capacitating conduit through which particular kinds of relations are acted out. There is also another interesting aspect underpinning Sarah's *dinau moni bisnis* in which she consolidates two quite distinct affective sensibilities (trust and shame) in the operation of her business. We can see here that the success of Sarah's money lending business to a certain degree relies on a broader set of existing social relations whereby she can publically shame defaulters by asking if and when they fail to repay. By asking for repayment in public areas Sarah relies on the extended network of social relations as a means of compelling her clients to repay for a transaction which was initially entered into within a delimited sphere of relationship based on trust.

Joy, Mark and Sarah along with other private company and government employers leave the blok for their places of work as early as five in the morning with some returning at dusk because public transport is limited and few people own cars. Those who work in industries such as security and construction are often picked up in company work trucks in the early hours of the morning and then dropped off late in the afternoon. Many of these workers work six days a week or on a seven day rotation, therefore my interaction with those who worked in town was minimal with most of my ethnographic data about work is based on conversations with settlers who are known as the *maket lain* (market people).

Maket lain

My communication with the *maket lain* was on a daily basis for these are the people who I conversed with as I bought my vegetables, *buai* and mobile phone top-up cards. The gendered nature of *maket* activities is most evident in the sale of vegetables, with this being mostly an activity that is carried out by women. Other products are sold by both men and women, young and old. The *maket lain* are engaged in the sale of betelnut, vegetables, flowers[43]and other small items. After the early morning work and school rush, the blok is usually quiet. Activity in the blok starts to pick up just before noon, when women with *bilums* filled with *tapiok, kumu*, *pitpit* (*Saccharum spontaneum*) and firewood start returning from their nearby gardens. *Buai* sellers also return with plastic bags and *bilums* filled with *buai* and *daka* (mustard) while small store owners carry in stock for their stores and those who look after chicken wheel in chicken feed on wobbly wheel burrows. I met many people who were actively involved in *mekim maket*. While those who engage in *maket* acknowledge the struggle to get by daily, they are almost always adamant that selling food crops and *buai* is how they are able to access money. *Maket lain* often contrast their form of income generation to those who go to work every day in offices and construction sites. Money made from *buai* sales range from ten kina to one hundred kina daily. Poultry can earn around K1000 (£250) every nine weeks.[44] *Maket lain* often state the difference between waged employment and marketing is that *maket lain* see money every day. As one seller said to me *"Mipla ol maket lain, mipla save lukim moni olgeta dei na ol lain wok lo opis ol save lukim moni lo fortnight tasol"* (We market people, we see money every day unlike those who work in offices they only see money every two weeks).

[43] Small scale floriculture.
[44] It takes nine weeks for chicken to be ready for sales.

The significance of seeing money every day in the *maket* sense relates to access and the ability to create money. Those who are in waged employment also see money every day but the source of that money is dictated by external forces within a limited timeframe. What will follow is a description of three income generating activities that enable *maket lain* to see money every day. For blok people, to see money is to see different possibilities. Blok people like other people say that *Mosbi em ples blo moni* (Mosbi is a money place) (Hirsch 1995; Reed 2003). It is a place where you need money to survive but it is also a place where if you are industrious you will obtain money.

Selling garden food

Port Moresby is known to be a dry, infertile place that is not conducive to gardening. People in the blok often reminisce about their villages and the fertile soil and good crops that are yielded in comparison to the vegetables that they produce or buy at the market. However, a recent study (2008) by the Fresh Food Development Agency (PNG) stated that most fresh food in Port Moresby is supplied by sources local to the city. Port Moresby is imagined as a dry and hostile gardening environment by those who come from other parts of PNG who compare the ground and the produce that comes from the ground as of better quality than produce cultivated in Port Moresby. An increase in hillside gardening has transformed the city landscape with hillside gardens, now a common feature of the city. There are two main vegetable production seasons in Port Moresby. The wet and humid season is usually from November to May and the cool dry season is usually from June to October. The main gardening season takes place in the wet season from mid-November to late March. Wet season crops include peanut, corn and sweet potato while cassava is a popular dry

season crop. At Morobe Blok, settlers plant vegetables within their own blocks, at the edge of the settlement and on the opposite side of the main road, nearby the Nine Mile cemetery, while other settlers have gardens further out of the city boundaries at Fourteen Mile. Because access to water is difficult for most settlers, those who do not have water usually grow vegetables using artisan and drainage water whereby crops are planted near water sources such as the Laloki River outside Port Moresby or near drains. Gardening is not done for the sole purpose of making money as some families grow their vegetables for household consumption too. The gardeners who do sell their produce, usually do so in the blok itself or at Port Moresby's main vegetable market which is located at Gordon. Martha a blok resident told me that depending on the weather she gets between K150 (£40) and K500 (£130) for a bag of *kumu* or beans. She said that if Port Moresby has had a particularly dry season then she will make good money from the sale of her greens as there may not be a large variety of green leafy vegetables for consumers to choose from. The gardeners who sell produce in town usually sell at Gordon's market because Gordon's is not only the closest urban market to the blok but it is also considered to be a wholesale market where buyers who are also known as "resellers" or "*black maket lain*" purchase produce such as *kumu* in bulk from urban settlers and villagers from the Central Province and then repack and resell the same produce for usually double the original price at various suburban markets in Port Moresby. Martha told me that she has *ol save pes* (contacts and associates) who come to the market and buy her produce. In addition to selling garden produce, Martha also cultivates flowers and from these income generating activities she is able to expend her money on food, school fees for her children and church related activities.

Figure 22: Blok gardening.

The *kumu* that I saw women carrying into the settlement at mid-day were sometimes left over from their sales from Gordon's market or just enough for a day's sales in the settlement for those who did not wish to go to Gordon. The marked difference between sales at Gordon and sales in the blok is the price, with *kumu* sold within the settlement being twenty or thirty toea while *kumu* sold at Gordon is 0.50t (£0.13) or more. I asked a seller on my street why *kumu* sales in the blok is relatively cheap compared to the suburban markets to which she replied that when they sell in the settlement price are at the *level blo community* (sell at level where settlement residents

can afford). She said that those who sold their *kumu* at a higher price in the blok were probably *black maket lain*, meaning that they may have bought their *kumu* at the main market at Gordon or at the market at Nine Mile and are reselling in the blok therefore they have to sell at a higher price to recoup the money spent on purchasing the *kumu*. Blok economics is determined by thinking of the level of affordability that the consumer can afford as opposed to trying to benefit from making a profit from the sale of *kumu*. Unlike *kumu* vendors, betelnut vendors operate on a different rationale, that being that they sell at the same price. This rationale contributes to the *ad hoc*, random and inconsistent buai marketing of some blok dwellers and it also prompts those who sell *buai* to diversify their products. We shall see this at play in Goi's story.

Figure 23: Selling vegetables in the Blok.

Salim Buai (Selling Buai)

Selling betelnut is one of the most common forms of marketing in the blok and in Port Moresby. *Buai sales* are transacted in front yards, on street corners, bus stops, in the Port Moresby CBD and via mobile buai street sellers. Earlier in the chapter, the reader met Tuo the banker turned *buai* seller.

Figure24: Selling Buai.

Others who I met and befriended included Goi, who was born and raised in the mountains of Central Province, then moved to Port Moresby after living for a period of time with her brother in Kerema[45]. When I first met Goi, she was selling her

[45]Kerema is the provincial capital of the Gulf province. There is a road connection from Kerema to Port Moresby.

buai and cigarettes in front of her friend Nola's house, she said to me *"Sepik*[46] *kam kisim wanpla buai"* (Sepik, come and get one *buai*), and from there on we became instant friends. Goi and I would talk about general happenings and she would update me on the latest street gossip. After a couple of months, Goi stopped her marketing on our street and began selling doughnuts at the local primary school. When I asked her why she stopped selling *buai* and smokes on the street, she said there were many other street sellers and her *buai* sales profit were not so good due to competition. The competition Goi refers to is the number of *buai* sellers within the vicinity of her *maket* table. This leads to prices going down or sellers simply not getting enough customers. After selling doughnuts at the school for another couple of weeks, she then moved her *buai* market to the main bus stop where she continued selling *buai* and smoke. I would see her at the bus stop and sometimes sit with her at her market table and help her sell her *buai*. Goi was a *meri blo toktok* (woman who talks a lot), so the afternoons were always engaging and informative as we sat on her stool, an empty coca cola crate turned sideways, with her huge umbrella stuck in the ground providing shade from the sun. One afternoon, I went to chat with Goi at the main bus stop because I had not seen her in a couple of days and wondered whether she had gone somewhere. She said that she was sick and was not able to do any marketing and her husband was supposed to be helping her but he instead "spoilt" [47] her market and her profits were down. She then started telling me about how she came to live in the block.

> "I *moved to the block on February 6 2002. I used to live at Hohola*[48] *with some of my relatives but I was treated badly by them so my brother bought me to this block and I moved here. The block cost K4500 (£1100)."*

[46] It common to refer to people using their ethnic place of origin. Goi also referred to me as Sepik, as this is the part of PNG where I come from. However, I was mostly addressed as 'mama blo Tabai' (Tabai's mother).

[47] The term spoilt is used to describe acts of black magic or sorcery.

[48] Hohola is a surburb in the Moresby North West Electorate of Port Moresby.

> *"When I lived at Hohola I used to make good money from marketing. I used to sell buai, cordial, cooked meat like lamb flaps, scones and also sell money. My market was set up near the PNG Power*[49] *Head office so the workers from PNG Power would come and borrow money from me. They would borrow K50 (£13) or K60 and above. My kids and I were 'set'. Now I market buai only and get seventy kina. My husband is my downfall; he just stays in the house then comes to get free buai. I was sick for two days and he spoilt my market. I wasn't supposed to marry him. He did black magic on me and that's how he married me. I don't need him, I can get rid of him if I want to, and I will. I can make it so that he will just get up and go and forget about us. I am not here because of him; I am here because of my brother that's why I am not worried about him."*

Goi, like Karen, speaks about the quality of life through the relations with various people. Although she speaks of the good money she was making while living in town, this was not enough to keep her in town where she felt she was not being treated well by her relatives. While she does not make as much money as she did in town, she compensates for that by her knowledge that the block of land which she lives on was bought by her brother and the support that she receives from her brother enables her to continue to sell her *buai* and make a living for her family. At this particular point in time, she was unhappy with the way in which her husband was acting and feelt that she could get rid of him by eliciting the same capacities in which she is convinced he utilised to marry her. Goi felt that she also could use black magic to get rid of her husband just as he used black magic to lure her into marrying him. Goi's story is an example of the possibilities of seeing money that I mentioned above. Goi speaks about what life was like for her at Hohola but clearly the good money that she was making was not enough for her to endure the bad relations with her relatives. Instead, she has moved to Morobe Blok and while the possibilities are less, she still tries to keep up with her *buai* sales.

[49] State-owned electricity provider.

Money, Money, Money – what to do?

I began this chapter with a conversation that reflected the tensions of not having money. I then went on to dedicate much of the chapter to addressing the topic of how this tension of not having money is addressed through an account of how people in the blok earn a living. To conclude this chapter, I shall discuss how the tensions of having money affects the way people think about giving and not giving. As much as the lack of having money causes tension in one's life it can also be said that having money also has the ability to cause tension within one's life. When people do have money, they then have to think about what they do with that money in terms of how they distribute the often little or sometimes not so little amount that they have. My friend John said to me,

> "*My ambo*[50]*it's tough-I occasionally get an allowance as a volunteer and that is next to nothing. Sometimes I want to buy my kids something extra but their cousins are around and I can't just buy stuff for my kids and not for their cousins. So it's hard to have money because it's not good not to share. If you share then you will be blessed".*

My friend Goi also shared the same sentiments of being blessed through sharing. On one of our afternoon chats at her roadside *buai* stall, she called over a man whose name is Tate. Tate was dressed in long black trousers with what looked like a black trench coat worn over a long sleeved black shirt. He was described to me by various friends in the blok as one of the settlements *"long long man"* (mentally affected man). That afternoon Goi called Tate over to give him a free cigarette and *buai*. Goi said that Tate had a mental disorder as a result of his knowledge. He was training to be a doctor but some people were jealous of his knowledge and they spoilt

[50] Younger sister in Binanere language of Oro Province.

him and now he is walking around in the blok like a *longlong*. Goi said she feeds him and gives him smoke and *buai* because he is Jesus. I asked Goi what she meant, to which she replied that Jesus comes in all forms and shapes to test mankind and many people see Tate as just a *longlong* guy and they rubbish him, ignore him and sometimes make fun of him but in actual fact he is Jesus testing our ability to share and be kind to others even if we do not have much ourselves. Goi's story offers the same principles as John's ideas of sharing and thinking about others even if you have little yourself.

Though people complained and worried about not having money, when they did have money they did not always spend it on the things that their families needed the most. There is always this tension of looking for ways to get money but then when the money is available there is an added tension of what to do with that money, who to spend it on and what to spend it on. Men end up buying beer instead of food or men and women end up gambling instead of buying soap powder or sometimes other commitments just pop up and the things one intended to spend money on are obscured. This ambivalence towards spending is guided by the nature of social relations in the blok in that people are always thinking about each other. Although people consistently talk about the need to have money, it is not the ontology of money that drives these tensions. Rather it is the recognition of social relations that motivates these anxieties.

Sometimes it could be that one feels that by going to town and coming back with shopping plastics of food people may think you are doing okay with cash. When I would return from the blok from a trip to town, I would sometimes feel a sense of discomfort as I walked past the markets. I would often stop to buy a *buai* or *kumu* from one of the sellers, but then I would feel bad for not buying from others. There is a sort of tension about who to give your money to, especially when sellers were kind

enough to give a free *buai* or *kumu*. Some part of me was half expecting that somewhere along the way I would get a request for something, but the *buai* and *kumu* sellers that I associated with the most never asked me for anything the whole time that I lived at the blok. I did had a sense of loyalty and a feeling of wanting to reciprocate in one way or another to these *buai* and *kumu* sellers and so when Maggie, one of the women that I befriended at the blok was unwell I bought her a packet of rice and a tin of fish and went and left it at her house after my friend Sarah told me that Maggie was sick because she was hungry. This clearly shows that the buying and selling of goods at the market is not reduced to that of just a commoditised customer-seller relationship where you buy your produce then leave but it is more like a continued investment that leads to wider social interaction outside of the buying and selling sphere.

I sometimes felt a sense of discomfort from those who returned from work in town. I could not help but notice how on pay week, those who walked by with their bags of rice or tins of food would do so hurriedly. I am not sure if they were walking at a fast pace because they did not want to be seen as having food while others were sitting by selling vegetables and *buai* to get money or because they felt embarrassed about being seen with food because it showed they had money or it could have been because they were just tired and hungry and wanted to get home to cook before dark, or maybe it was me reflecting my own discomfort upon others. Thoughts about giving do not only affect daily life but also affect the way in which people are represented or how they present themselves at occasions of social importance such as *haus krai's* (mourning houses) or bride price ceremonies (See Chapter Three). For urban dwellers, this can be an extremely expensive exercise as *haus krai's* require food and can be ongoing if the deceased person is to be repatriated to their home province. Expectations of rural kin coupled with the knowledge that one's contribution to clan and village activities will keep relations between a urban dweller and his or her *ples* in

view is an important consideration to blok dwellers for the majority of the households in my survey data stated that they remitted money to their relatives in various parts of the country as well contributed to *hauskrai's* in Port Moresby. In this regard, the tension of money is not only limited to physical survival on a daily basis but also affects one's ability or inability to represent oneself at occasions of importance where their status as a social being of their group is measured. The implication of the way people think about each other based on this notion of giving directly influences blok people's views and understanding of kinship and personhood. (See Chapter Five).

Chapter's One and Two have provided the reader with an insight into how the blok was created, some of the issues that legitimacy, how people make a living and their ideas of giving. This first section of the thesis was background information for the reader; the second section of the thesis which begins with Chapter Three will discuss ideas of kinship and relatedness.

PART II

Chapter Three
Making Kin, Making Relations

Introduction

In Chapter one, 'The Making of Morobe Blok' which described the origin of the Blok, I explain to the reader how and why the settlement is called Morobe blok by illustrating the relations which the settlers have with the *papa graun.* It is through these relations that people see themselves as belonging to this place, even if not permanently, at least for now. Not all of the settlers know this man that they refer to as *papa graun,* however there is a feeling of relatedness because it was *papa graun's* wish that Morobeans from all parts of Morobe live at Nine Mile and not just people from the area from which he had established relations. Chapter Two, 'Making a Living in the Blok' is an ethnographic description of ideas of work and money and the implications of giving and not giving. These two preceding chapters lead the reader to chapter three, 'Making Kin, Making Relations' which focuses on relatedness and ideas of kinship. How do people in the blok talk about relatedness? What sorts of actions inform ideas of relatedness and how are competing interests managed? This chapter takes its theoretical inspiration from the work of (Gow 1991; Carsten 2000, 2004; Leach 2003; and Bamford 2007, 2009). Firstly, it will show how blok dwellers talk about relatedness through actions such as thinking of each other, sharing food and growing in this place called Morobe Blok. Secondly, the chapter seeks to engage with

the idiom of *wan* and discusses how it connects to notions of kinship. This chapter lays the foundation for Chapter Four, which will be dedicated to telling the story of my friend Barb because her story reflects the ideas of relatedness that I will foreground in this chapter. Before I move on to present how blok dwellers describe ways of being related, I will establish why the non-genealogical model of kinship is relevant to my ethnographic description. I will then engage in a discussion about relatedness and kin through *wan*. In discussing *wan*, I look to extend the discourse of relatedness and *wan*, especially *wantok*, beyond the ethnographic and sociological analysis of social relations in the urban context. This will be followed by an ethnographic example dealing with bride price, which will lead me to a discussion about my own experience of relatedness in the blok. This will be followed by a longer ethnographic example of relatedness. Sarah, Cynthia and Toby's story is used to illustrate how relatedness informs ideas of kinship and how these ideas of relatedness and kinship inform action. This story is also a scene-setting story that leads to some of the issues that I shall take up in Chapter Four.

Relatedness and Kin – the Non-Genealogical Model in the Blok

Peter Gow (1995) learned about kinship among native people living on the Bajo Urubamba in Peru through stories about land, as well as through observing how they used the land and the ways this mediated their relations with other people. Gow writes,

> In truth, I did not learn of the centrality of kinship for native people through the classical anthropological techniques. I found the famous 'genealogical method' rather embarrassing to use, for my informants were either insulted or aggrieved by my objectification of their kinship relations. (Gow 1995:48)

In a similar fashion, I learnt about blok ideas of kinship and relatedness not

through the collection of genealogies, but through listening to the stories that people told about their daily interaction with other people and places. It was next to impossible for me to document genealogies the 'traditional' way because people in the blok refer to each other as *'brata', 'susa', 'mama' 'kandre'* (brother, sister, mother, nephew) regularly in everyday conversation and attempts to find 'real' blood relatives proved futile. I would ask someone how they were related to another person and I would usually get a reply of "We are sisters, our *tumbuna's* (ancestors) came from the same place". While some people do place their relations quite specifically, these examples are discussed in chapter four. I often asked blok residents how they knew people who were not related by *blut* (blood) and I would often get a reply of "*Oh, she is my sister or he is my brother, we grew up together that is how I know them*." Over the course of my fieldwork, I came to know the extended kin of the families that I closely associated with, however most people were quite vague about how they were related to each other. This vagueness does not indicate that one does not know who his or her kin is, it was more the case that people knew their connections to each other and did not need to go into grand explanations of genealogies.

Relatedness through a sense of similarity in a place like Morobe Blok, where one who is not Morobean may be seen as different, is a way that people establish and maintain a sense of connection. It also shows that coming from the same province is not always a defining character of relations in the blok, but can serve also to emphasise difference. As I stated in Chapter One, groups are formed and disbanded according to perceived needs; therefore, blok residents are united as Morobeans when they need to show solidarity or amass materials for payments such as annual rents to the landowner. However, this solidarity is not static and constant and changes over time to suit different social situations. I mentioned earlier that many people refer to, or address, one another by using kinship terminology, yet the loose use of kinship terms in everyday conversation and interaction must not be interpreted only as an

observation of the use of language to describe what is considered as a socially correct way to address others, especially people who are older. I observed how kinship terms such as 'sister' and 'mother' were acted upon through caring, sharing, eating food together and through the recollection of historically shared stories, thus the term is not sufficient to designate existing relations but becomes a medium that is combined with action.

Writing about the Reite of Madang, James Leach (2003:29) notes the importance of drawing substances for growth from the land. People share substance, and are therefore kin because they have grown in the same land. For Leach, kinship is not about descent through genealogy, but is an outcome of the relations between people and the land. Leach states,

> Persons, constituted by kinship relations of shared substance, are not joined to places are mutually entailed aspect of the same process. In this sense kinship is geography of landscape. (Leach 2003:31)

For Morobe Blok residents, notions of kinship are expressed through feeding and eating as well as good will and thoughts. To think about someone is an important expression of relatedness. The phrase "*yu save tingim mi tu o*?" (Do you think of me?) is one that is used as a reminder of obligations that people have to one another. These obligations are not necessarily material in nature but encompass other actions, such as visiting and telling stories. People create relatedness through the experience of living together in the same place.

Relatedness and Kinship through Wan

My intention is to focus on how forms of relatedness are shaped by ordinary everyday activities in order to show how these interactions influence the way in which

relations are produced (Carsten 2004:9). Janet Carsten asserts that kinship is, among other things, an area of life where people invest their emotions, their creative energies and their new imaginings. To this effect, I use the term relatedness alongside kinship as a way of describing and analysing blok relations that symbolise what can be identified as traditional kinship terms (such as mother, father, brother, sister). Here I want to concentrate on the use of the term *wan* to show relatedness and kinship in the blok.

My use of the word *wan* is rooted in the Tok Pisin word *"wantok*". *Wantok* literally means "one talk". The term "*wantok*" is most commonly associated with being from the same province or region, hence the literal English translation of "one talk" means to speak one language. *Wantok* is often referred to as a social safety net-system (Monsell-Davis 1993; Nanau 2011; Mohanty 2011), which offers social protection and security for Papua New Guinean's and other Melanesians. It is also considered a system that enables relations of sorts to thrive in business and politics at the expense of others who are not party to a particular *wantok* system that has access to such benefits. Paulo de Renzio (2000), borrowing from Mannan (1978), loosely defines the *wantok* system as the system of relationships (or obligations) between individuals characterised by some or all of the following (a) common language, (b) common kinship group, (c) common geographical place of origin, and (d) common social associations and religious groups.

Early studies of the urban in Papua New Guinea have documented the role of *wantok* relations as an integral part of urban kinship. As rural migrants moved to cities and towns in search of employment opportunities, *wantoks* in town aided their transition from village to town life by way of provision of accommodation and assistance in finding unskilled jobs for village relatives (Salisbury 1972; Rew 1974; Strathern 1975; Koroma 1975; Siebert 1975; Levine 1979).

During the early years of colonisation and the years immediately preceding Papua New Guinea's independence from Australia in 1975, urban spaces were considered to be unfamiliar, regulated spaces and the *wantok* network provided support and security for rural migrants coming to towns. Such is still the case now with many settlements predominantly being made up of people from the same province or district. However, other avenues such as education, work and sport have given people the opportunity to form relationships with people outside of their provincial or regional groups. Much of what has been documented about urban relations is focussed on adaptation strategies of rural migrants with kinship relations from *ples* being acted upon in town. For example, Rew's (1974) study of a Barracks housing employers of a company in Port Moresby looks at the social life of workers from different parts of the country who are housed in a compound. The social processes and the way in which the occupants of the compound interact at that period of time illustrates that Papua New Guineans socialized in groups that are familiar to them, i.e. relatives from the same village or *wantoks* from the same area or region.

Salisbury and Salisbury (1972:59) suggested that at least some migrants may successfully adapt to the urban situation without any adoption of so called "urban values". Using the network analysis, they describe how Siane labor migrants assist each other to secure employment, live in compounds and rarely interact with people from other villages or regions (p61). The constant communication and interaction among themselves allows them to live an urban life without fully integrating.

Similarly, Strathern's (1975:32) 'No Money on Our Skins' was concerned with how Hageners thought of themselves in relation to their people at home. For the Hageners, migration out of Hagen was not a simple desire to find employment, but was spurred on by the aspiration to find alternative means of raising cash. Those who traveled out of their villages and on to Hagen or other places like Port Moresby did so with the idea that they would find employment, make quick cash and save enough

money to take back home for *bisnis* enterprises. This was also the case for some of the Siane people and those who Rew studied. Towns were not seen as a permanent place therefore, in addition to security, *wantoks* and kinship ties to *ples* remained key to social life. However, as Ryan and Morauta (1982,1989; Chao 1989; and Battaglia 1986) show, the transient nature of the urban space has become permanent for many urban residents. My intention here is to provide a contemporary account of how relatedness is imagined and performed in everyday life. My account of relatedness moves beyond the definition of *wantok* in urban kinship discourse to a description of what makes relatedness and how *wantok* and other similar words are lived.

While I do not go as far as Charles Stafford's (2000) reference of relatedness as literally any kind of relations between persons, I place relatedness and the different forms and understanding that it takes in various contexts. This is not only based on blood and *wantok* ties but also through reciprocal sharing, and the lived experience of place-based connections such as *wan lotu* (one religion), *wan skul* (school mate) and *wan strit* (neighbours). However, *wantok* may encompass other relations that are defined through place, religious activities, work and bounded history. I want to contribute to the discourse of *wantokism* by arguing in this chapter that in order for *wantok* and relatedness to be active beyond definitions and descriptions, certain capacities and qualities must be activated and utilised in a way that informs this feeling of relatedness. It is with this in mind that I will focus on relatedness and the *wan* aspect of how blok people recognise and define forms of relatedness. For the purpose of discussions in this chapter, I use the *tokpisin* word "*wan*" as opposed to the English word "one" as a way to draw out the linguistic possibilities of "*wan*" such as *wan strit* (one street), *wan skul* (one school), *wan lotu* (one church) and its influence in situating relations between people. The "*wan*" as a prefix to *lotu*, *strit* and *skul* locates where relations are created, but as I intend to show it is not the place that evokes the sense of relatedness that people feel towards each other but rather other mundane acts such

as eating together, thinking about each other, as well as participation in exchange ceremonies of significance such as bride price and mortuary feasts.

Adam Reed (2004:123) writes that at Bomana jail a body of men is distinguished as being "one" *(wan)*, of plural composition yet singular form. Male prisoners are sometimes brought together as *wanbanis* (one fence). The distinction of being *wan* is what the prisoners share in common: being locked up and forced to abide by prison rules and also to justify mutual acts of assistance. At Bomana, the idiom *wan* can evoke any relation that encompasses other male prisoners. Interestingly, Reed's reference to this state of being *wan* is specific to bodies of men. Female prisoners at Bomana are said not to recognise unitary divisions but see themselves as "family". In Bomana, male prisoners transform themselves into bodies of men because of penal constraint and separation but this is not the case for female prisoners who identify separation as a moment of substitution, from one particular state to another. They replace kin ties with other kin ties.

My elicitation of *wan* differs from that of Adam Reed's portrayal of *wan* where "being one" is what men at Bomana aspire to, a state that is elicited as having kin taken away. On the contrary, *wan* in the blok is not being elicited as a consequence of an absence of kin, but as a display of relatedness in which *wan strit, wan skul, wan lotu* is used to locate the relationship. In locating these social markers, the possibility of who might be called or treated as kin is widened. Like in Bomana, the distinction is seen to characterise what they share in common: church, neighbourhood, educational background, however unlike Bomana where the "recognition of oneness is always a demand for support and expectation of obligation" (2003:123) in the blok, the recognition of oneness does not necessarily motivate a demand for support or an expectation of obligation because people who are "one" share other things which illuminate oneness. "Making one" in the blok is possible through investment of time, money, food, warmth and caring. It is this kind of action that transforms a *wan* into

something that is like kin. Depending on the situation at hand, people present themselves in a plural form as *wan lotu* or *wan strit.*

In thinking about relatedness in the blok and urban Papua New Guinea in general, I look to the seminal work of Sandra Bamford who uses her ethnography of the Kamea to critique Euro-American American assumptions that regard kinship as being rooted in biology, reproduced by individuals with a fixation of the parent-child tie as the connection that carries sociality forward (2007:55). Bamford espouses that the Kamea, unlike Euro-Americans, draw a sharp distinction between what goes into making a person—the substance that contributes to creation—and what connects them through time as social beings. The Kamea expression of "one blood" differentiates persons in their social universe and is not an expression of genealogical connections as in the western world. For the Kamea, social relations are traced through time but are not based on physiological connections. It is the ties that people form with the land and the importance of *tumbuna* (ancestral stories) that enhance social relations. However, the knowledge of stories is not enough to establish claims to land. For an individual to activate claims there must be investment of self to place (Bamford 2009).

Taking Bamford as a point of reference, I want to show that communities that are made up of what may be considered as a homogeneous group, such as Morobe Blok, form kin-like relations that are not solely based on provincial or clan allegiance but locate relatedness through continuous routine activities such as eating together, child rearing, sharing food and praying together. These aspects of daily life, when carried out continuously over a long period of time, produce relatedness between people that at certain points in time can overshadow allegiances to clan and regional connections and form the basis of claims to people and places. I consider this form of urban relatedness to be an important facet of Melanesian urban sociality and will emphasise this aspect of urban life by first sharing my own experiences of negotiating

this and then considering relationships within the blok as examples of urban kin relations at work.

I want to capture the importance blok imaginations of relatedness as a significant aspect of the everyday social lives of blok people because it provides an insight into why certain people react to certain situations in certain ways. This will be used as a background for a more thorough discussion in Chapter Four when I tell the story of my friend Barb.

To begin with I want to use an ethnographic meta-narrative of a bride price exchange that I witnessed in the blok. This bride price event motivated me to think about ideas of relatedness in the blok and the importance of the everyday interaction of blok dwellers. Blok dwellers make claims to each other every day, however, relatedness is most prominent during events such as deaths and/or where a bride price is exchanged. Given the importance that Melanesians place on these two events in the life cycle of a person, the urban *haus krai* or bride price exchange provides an opportune setting to observe how, what and why relations appear at those precise moments.

To clarify to the reader, when a person dies in the city, a *haus krai* is usually set up at the home of the deceased or a close relative where relatives, *wantoks, wan wok*, *wan skul, wanlotu* and others associated with the deceased or their immediate family members go to mourn and make contributions in cash and kind. The most obvious visual sign of a *haus krai* is a blue *kandis* (canvas or tarpaulin) which is typically erected at the beginning of *haus krai* and is usually kept in place until after the deceased is buried at their home village or Port Moresby's Nine Mile cemetery. Following the burial, a procedure called *rausim haus krai* (removing the mourning house) is carried out where the family of the deceased thank those who contributed to the upkeep of the *haus krai* as well as those who contributed financially or through other means. In some instances, final mortuary rituals and customary obligations are also completed as

part of the end of the *haus krai*.

At bride price exchanges, families of both the man and woman along with *wantoks* and friends join the families of the man and woman to witness the exchange of money, food and other items as well as share food and drink together. Depending on their affiliation, those present at the bride price may have also contributed money or food to either side of the exchanging parties. These respective guests and supporters of both parties are also usually given raw food such as bananas, coconuts and pork meat as a sign of appreciation for their support.

The reader may be wondering why I have taken time to explain the workings of an urban *haus krai* or bride price exchange and why I place an importance in foregrounding how these two life cycle events are marked in the urban setting. Firstly, my early introduction to the *haus krai* is in anticipation for what will unfold in Barb's story in Chapter Four, thus I think it is important for the reader to be introduced to the *haus krai* at this juncture. Secondly, *haus krais* and bride price in the urban context are events where urban relatedness is made prominent. I am specific in saying "urban relatedness" here because *haus krais* are places where relations are made prominent in Melanesia regardless of whether a death occurs in the city or in a village. It is at one's death that both maternal and paternal kin are acknowledged for the input to the life of the deceased. In the urban setting, such gatherings bring together people from different provinces, religious affiliations and ethnic groups.

In my observations of many years of attending such events these particular public events make prominent a person's ordinary experiences of relatedness. It is at public events such as deaths and marriages that relations are articulated clearly and knowledge of why certain persons assume responsibilities in their capacity as a relation of *blut* or otherwise. It is a time when private relations are revealed. Private relations are the acts of relatedness that occur at a personal level between persons. At urban *haus krais wan skul*, *wan lotu* and *wan strit* may sometimes claim relatedness in the

same way as clansmen and *blut* relatives. I shall take this idea up further in Chapter Four. It is with this in mind that I focus on blok experiences of relatedness and relations through stories of routine everyday life, for it is these daily experiences that shape responses to public events such as deaths and marriages.

What will follow from the bride price story is a recollection of my own experiences of finding my way around the blok and the process of locating myself that reflects multiple claims to my belonging. I focus on my own experience of introducing and explaining myself to people in the blok as a consideration of how blok people interacted with me during the early days of my fieldwork. As a Papua New Guinean researcher, I was never just a *sumatin* (student) or *wok meri blo gavman* (woman who works for the government). Those who I met in the blok were always interested in where I came from and the initial discussions that I had with people were nearly always about place and belonging, which for me as a Papua New Guinean researcher was very helpful in placing myself in relation to the blok. I will then move on to revisit Chapter Two's discussion about giving and not giving. I want to return specifically to Chapter two's tensions of who to spend money, the ways this is decided, and how this effects relations because giving or not giving is a fundamental aspect of defining relatedness. I use giving and not giving as the starting point to introduce Cynthia's story, which is intended to show how kin-like relations are formed through daily interaction and living and how this form of relatedness presents itself in the claims in which people make upon each other.

Papua New Guinea lives here

"Papua Niu Guinea yumi mus kamap wan nation, wan kantri, wan femli. Papua Niugini yumi mus kamap wan nation, wan solwara, wan pipol" (Papua New Guinea we must become

one nation, one country, one family. Papua New Guinea we must become one nation, one sea, one people). Barike Band of Rabaul 1991.

This song came to mind as I thought about a bride price ceremony that I witnessed at Morobe blok in January of 2010. Morobe Blok is predominately made up of Morobeans and was settled with the intention of exclusively having Morobeans only living within the settlement. The reality is, however, that there are also people from other parts of Papua New Guinea who reside at Morobe Blok and though small in number their presence does not go unnoticed and is certainly not ignored. Those who come from other parts of Papua New Guinea have their own connections to Morobeans, either through blok friendships, church affiliation or other relations such as marriage.

On occasions where there is confrontation, violence or events such as deaths and marriages it was not uncommon to see people from different provinces participate as observers, mediators and/or supporters. An example worth mentioning is a bride price exchange I attended in the blok. I happened to be hanging around the *buai* market when I saw a large group of people singing and chanting as they entered the residence of a blok resident who hails from the Simbu Province. I stood at a distance with other members of the people and watched members of the groom's family enter the yard of the relative of the bride's family.

After the groom's family entered the premises, the gate remained open and about five minutes after the singing had ended someone from inside the yard came out and invited us to witness the bride price. Upon hearing the invitation I went along with some of the *buai* and *kumu* sellers to watch the event. As the designated master of ceremony began talking he acknowledged that they were from Simbu and lived in Morobe blok. He then went on to say that in reality there were people from all over PNG who live in the blok and therefore he took the opportunity to welcome the Simbus, the Morobeans and, in his words, "the rest of Papua New Guinea" who had

joined them to witness the occasion. What I find telling in the few words "the rest of Papua New Guinea" is the recognition of difference in that we were all from different parts of Papua New Guinea as well as the importance of similarity. We all were part of this place called Morobe blok and our connection to this place was what seemed important at this particular occasion. It is recognition of a multiple sense of place in which urban dwellers identify with and claim to belong to that is foregrounded because apart from the Motuan people, no one can really ever be referred to as being solely from Port Moresby for everyone is believed to have come from elsewhere.

To make this more explicit I wish to share my own experience of meeting people and trying to find my way around the blok. My first encounter with blok residents would usually result in the person I was speaking with asking me *"Where are you from?"* with me automatically replying *Sepik*[51]. I would maybe get a reply that went something like "*ah sepik dirty wara, ol lain blo kaikai saksak".* (Sepik dirty, river, people who like to eat sago)[52]. Then when I further added that I was actually born and raised in Port Moresby, I would know the comments of *'o yu Sepik blo Mosbi'* would follow (Oh, so you are a Sepik from Mosbi). For those who were long time Mosbi residents like myself the conversation would proceed on to where in Port Moresby I grew up, which often resulted in me being further defined as a *"meri toks"* [53] (Toks lady). These references to place and space not only define me as a Port Moresby resident, but also serve as an example of how people locate relatedness through history in the urban context.

[51] Meaning to come from the East Sepik.

[52] This reaction is based on a common assumption that identifies all sepiks with the Sepik River, crocodiles and sago.

[53] Mosbi residents often refer to themselves as being from the suburbs that they grew up in.

Making Kin

People in urban spaces like Port Moresby find themselves in situations where relatedness can be objectified through *wan wok, wan strit and wan lotu.* These particular relations become a part of urban life and influence actions in various ways, one of which is how one chooses to give or not give. In Chapter Two, I showed that the tensions of not having money is not always resolved through having money. Having money brings its own tensions of how and who to spend on because giving and sharing is one way that blok residents cultivate relations with each other. Worries about how to spend money coupled with ideals of giving and the importance of certain relations inform the ways in which one chooses to give.

Giving to one who is not considered a *blut* relative opens the possibility for reciprocity and the building of relations between people that may result in the formation of lifelong associations. Giving and sharing is not only limited to the sphere of money and material goods. Giving in the form of time, help and thinking about others is also a significant aspect urban sociality. The continuous investment in relations through time, sharing and giving creates relatedness between urban dwellers which in my observation expands one's kinship options and informs thinking about relatedness.

On the other hand, treatment through sharing of food, time and money with those who are not blood or clan related can lead to animosity among families where the claims of "blood" relatives to people and things are sometimes overlooked by relations and claims to the same people and things by people who would normally be seen as *narapela lain* (outsiders).

Urban living has added another dimension to the strong clan and tribal affiliations that Papua New Guineans know, which enables urban residents to form

lasting kin like relations with those who are not from the same clan, tribe or province.

In a settlement community such as Morobe Blok, it may be expected that being from the same province is enough to define kin-like relations. My fieldwork experience showed me that though I lived in a community that is seen as *wan* because of the fact that residents are mostly from the same province, I still found that within the blok the differences between Morobeans were highlighted and sometimes it was affiliations to *lotu* or *strit* that was more significant than being from the same province. Here, I specifically refer to provincial affiliations because the most common word associated with provincial origin is *wantok*.

Everyday Relatedness

I now move on to give some examples of how relatedness is acted out on a daily basis. The first thing that stands out in my observation is food. Blok people talked about sharing food and eating together. On many occasions, I saw groups of people or individuals openly sharing food. For example, there was a group of young boys who had a *maket* table set up from which they sold *buai*, *cigrarettes* and lollies. At any one time, there would be two or three boys sitting around the *maket* table. If one boy went and bought a scone most times he would share with the others who were at the *maket* table regardless of how hungry he was.

I learnt to recognise relationship patterns based on how people approached, greeted and made demands upon each other when food was present. Those who had a kin-like relationship openly made demands to share food. It is not uncommon to hear one person say to another "*hap kam*" (half come). To say "*hap kam*" is to indicate a certain historical familiarity of sharing. One would not ask someone with whom they did not have a relationship of familiarity to give food as this would be considered shameful. It was also not unusual for persons who have that familiar relationship to

ask another to buy food such as scones or biscuits.

Wan lotu frequently gather for prayer meetings and worship. For example, members of the Revival church gathered on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons to have fellowship together. In some instances, preference was given to *wan lotu* in situations such as *bisnis* transactions. Those who were *wan strit* also helped each other practically with food or childcare. Men and women who grew up together often referred to the husbands or wives of their wan strit as *tambu* (in-laws). But could this be seen as friendship? Is it that I have interpreted acts as a form of friendship? I would argue that the line between friendship and kinship is quite blurred. I do not recall anyone using the word friend to describe a relationship between two unrelated persons. The word "squad" is the closest description to friend that I noted. Most people used kinship terms and then located the relationship in a place (school, street, church).

Every day relatedness is made through various mediums and caring for another, whether it be an old or young person, creates close connections relatedness between people. I now want to elaborate on this point through Sarah, Cynthia and Toby. This story firstly aims to give the reader a blok example of one way in which kinship is made, and secondly provides an example of how kin-like relations are created between children and adults who are not their mother or father. It is important to make these two points clear because the story essentially has two parts. It is about the relations between a little boy and his baby sitter (child minder) and it is also about the relationship between two women who are friends and also employer and employee.

He's my son: Toby and his Mama Cynthia

Sarah is the dynamic health worker and *liklik bisnis meri* (small businesswoman)

that I talked about in Chapter Two. She lives in the blok with her husband and three children and commutes to town to go to work at the Port Moresby General Hospital. I met Cynthia through Sarah. Cynthia worked for Sarah as a baby sitter caring for Sarah's five-year-old son. Cynthia who is now married with her own children began caring for Toby when she was a teenager. Cynthia herself told me of how she took care of Toby from when he was an infant. When Toby was a baby he often slept at Cynthia's house when his mother was rostered to work a night shift (10 pm to 7 am) or evening shift (2 p.m to 10 p.m) at the hospital.

If the reader thinks back to Chapter Two and how Joy recalled details of her daily routine as a *haus meri* she also talked about her job satisfaction in terms of the wellbeing of her employers. When she worked for Nela and Stan, she felt unhappy because she knew Nela was being unfaithful to Stan and this affected her motivation to continue her employment. For Cynthia, her job as a child minder and her life outside of her work seemed to be one and the same in some instances and in many instances the fact that she was paid to care for Toby was eclipsed by how she talked of Toby as her son and not a little boy who she cares for out of duty or as a means to earning cash. It did not seem to be a demarcation between work and life outside of work for Toby and Cynthia because Toby spent time with Cynthia on weekends and on days that she was not meant to be caring for him. A keen soccer player, Cynthia plays for a team in the blok competition, she spoke of how she would be playing soccer on a Sunday afternoon and Toby would come to the field with his mother Sarah and start crying and screaming for Cynthia to carry him. Cynthia told me that Toby was like a son to her.

> *"I'm his mother. I have been taking care of him since he was a little baby and even slept in the hospital and took care of him when he was really sick and admitted to the children's ward at Port Moresby General Hospital. Now he is a bit older he has stopped crying for me. I*

began looking after Toby when I was young and now that I am married he calls my husband daddy. My husband knows that Toby is like my very own because he would see me carrying Toby around the blok when I was single".

Although Cynthia is not Toby's biological mother it is acknowledged that she is his mother because she cares for him like he is her own child and Toby himself claims Cynthia as his mother by referring to her as "mama Cynthia". Cynthia was a teenager when she started caring for Toby and had never been married or had a child of her own, but she was already a mother through her relation with Toby.

I should make it clear to the reader that I can be critiqued on my use of kinship terms such as "mother", "brother" or "sister" to describe relatedness in the blok or Port Moresby because it is common for a stranger to refer to another stranger as "brother" or "sister", "mother" or "father". For example, children begging in the streets of Port Moresby usually address those whom they are asking for food or money as "mams" or "paps" (mother or father). The use of these terms in conversations emanate from both a Christian mode of thought in the use of kinship terms such as "brother" or "sister" and also from a cultural perspective from some parts of Papua New Guinea where people do not call other's by name; therefore, kinship terms are deployed as a substitute based on categories such as seniority.

My use of kinship terms here is based on specific, frequent interaction over an extended period of time as a basis of creating relatedness. In the case of Cynthia and Toby it is the care and love that she shows to Toby and the affection that he returns to her and her family members that shapes their claims to each other. Susan Viegas' (2003) ethnographic account of time and sociality in a Caboclo-Indian community of south Bahia, Brazil explores time as a way in which kinship between a mother and child is formed through the repetition of small acts such as feeding, dressing or bathing over a continuous period of time.

Taking her theoretical inspiration from Christina Toren (1996;1999), Viegas analyses the process whereby children become aware of themselves through acts of feeding and nurturing by adults. Viegas demonstrates that Caboclo Indians are deeply aware that if they stop performing these small acts then the link between parents and children will be weakened or severed; hence, her article "Eating with Your Favourite Mother" not only discusses the temporal aspects of sociality and kinship making, but the possibility of unmaking kin through the cessation of such acts as feeding and nurturing. Viega shows how children can identify with women in their compound, such as their grandmothers or "focal mothers" (Viegas' term) as mother-like because they feed, clothe and take care of children on occasions where their mothers go to work for the day, or if they are in the postpartum period of childbirth.

These 'substitutions' of mother-like activities happen on a regular basis and are repeated throughout a child's life; therefore, children begin to form strong bonds with their focal mother which may lead to the child choosing to eat at its focal mother's house rather than the house of the mother who birthed the child. This is an important revelation for mother-child relations because essentially the house which the child chooses to eat from is the house from which the child chooses its mother, which in effect unmakes the parent-child link in terms of the other. What is of interest to me is Viega's assertion that choosing one's mother is a way of emphasizing the possibility of unmaking parent-child links(Viegas 2003:32) and how the intersubjective relationship between the adult and the child based on pleasing and attraction, which is expressed in the local notion "*agradar*" (to please, in Portuguese), feeds and motivates acts between adults and children.

Coming back to my own ethnographic example, Toby chooses Cynthia as his mother but he also recognises and acknowledges his own mother Sarah. He is fed and nurtured by both women and addresses them both as "mama". Sarah herself refers to Cynthia as "*mama blo Toby*" (Toby's mother). As I mentioned earlier, Cynthia was

newly married when I met her. She had just married Rusty, a young man from the Gulf Province, and together they had adopted a little girl from Cynthia's side of the family. Cynthia was also pregnant with their second child. Cynthia continued to mind Toby up until she gave birth to her daughter after which her younger sister, Rita, sometimes helped to take care of Toby. Toby continued to visit Cynthia's house regularly even though she was officially not his babysitter anymore. The notion of "feeding and nurturing" as a contribution to kinship or one's knowledge of what constitutes relatedness and kinship (Toren 1999; Carsten 1995; Gow 1991) is evident in Toby's continued association with Cynthia after she effectively ceased being paid to care for him. In this instance, one could infer that the proximity of having Cynthia living in the same area as Toby allows this relationship to flourish.

However, I think that it is more than that, because up until now I have not mentioned the relationship between Cynthia and Toby's siblings, Rena who is eight and Seth who was born in July 2010. This is because the specific claim to Cynthia as "mama" emanates from her relationship with Toby. I recall Sarah telling me that Cynthia was Toby's mother and not Rena's because Rena was already a big girl (toddler) when they moved to the blok from Sabama[54] and she was cared for by Sarah's relatives at Sabama so she had more of an affiliation to her family at Sabama and often went to visit and stay with them when she was on school holidays.

It is for this reason that I suggest that for Cynthia and Toby, it is not mutual attraction in the sense that a child will unmake parent child links by choosing to eat in his favourite mother's house because it is not really about choosing one mother over another, but more about the multiple claims that one can have on another based on certain act such as caring and feeding. Toby will always know that his mother is Sarah however it may be argued that Cynthia's relationship will change now that she has her 'own' family and ceases to be Toby's carer.

[54] Port Moresby suburb.

This could lead to the unmaking of their mother-child relationship. On the contrary, I think the mother-child relationship between Toby and Cynthia will be sustained through Toby's memory of Cynthia feeding and caring for him and Cynthia's recollection of caring for Toby. It is the mutual story of relatedness that will sustain the relationship between Cynthia. To further elaborate this, I draw from the work of Sandra Bamford, who argues that the Kamea draw a sharp distinction between what goes into making a person in a physical sense and what connects them through time as social beings (Bamford 2009:162). Kamea trace social relations through time, not through physiological connections, and through ties which people form with the land. In the urban, blok people also recognise the contribution of substance through maternal and paternal actions, however as I have shown through Cynthia and Toby's story, social relations can also be traced through time based on everyday activities. Where the Kamea make claims to relations from the ties which people form with the land, blok people trace relations through time based in the particular landscape known as the blok, but specifically by continuous everyday actions that serve to constitute kinship.

They're my family-Sarah and Cynthia's story

The relationship between Sarah and Cynthia extends beyond the employer/employee relationship in that both Sarah and Cynthia associate regularly when Cynthia is not working and also because Cynthia's family also spend time at Sarah's place and vice versa. In Chapter Two, we get a sense of familiarity and personal relationships between *haus meri* and their employers such as that of Joy and her different employers and Karen and her employer, which raised questions about public and private and the role of domestic workers.

In the case of Cynthia and Sarah, it could be speculated that the proximity of place ensured that their employer/employee relationship took on a form of relatedness that transcended that of employer/employee to that of kin, where weekends may be spent together watching soccer with frequent movement between houses. Where Joy in Chapter Two had to commute into town to go to work, Cynthia only had to walk a short distance from her house to Sarah's house to take care of Toby. Sarah not only opened her home to Cynthia as the carer of her child, but she also opened her home to Cynthia's parents and siblings, hence Cynthia's parents would also be at Sarah's place either chopping fire wood or helping Sarah take care of her poultry. Some may see this as a difference in power dynamic between Sarah and Cynthia because the money that Cynthia earned from being employed by Sarah effectively provided for her family, therefore it was important that the relationship continued.

Daniela Kraemer's (2007:9) research with contemporary Ni Vanuatu *haosgels* shows that paying a family member to become a house girl is becoming more common in Vanuatu with family relationships being commoditised, which leads to power relations between families being changed. This is also the case in Mosbi, where there is anecdotal evidence of village relatives being brought to the city to care for children and in some instances being mistreated. Different *haus meri* that I met in the blok are older married women who worked for expatriates and Papua New Guineans who are not from the same province or related.

It could be observed that money brings an element of imbalance in power relations between Sarah and Cynthia's family because financially Sarah could afford to help Cynthia or any other person who worked for her out. However, in this case I would argue that for Sarah, Cynthia and her family not only provide the domestic help that she needs, but importantly they create the family support that she needs. In return for their help, Sarah assists Cynthia's parents if they are ill by giving them

money to pay for medication at the local clinic or cooking food for them when they are unwell. Sarah also visits Cynthia's family regularly to chew *buai* and sometimes cook corn or *kaukau* over the fire while telling stories with Cynthia and her extended family members. Sarah's husband sometimes parked their car at Cynthia's family home when the road was too muddy to drive to their own house.

While the two families interact regularly on a daily basis, there is some tension especially when Sarah's mother-in law-visits Sarah and her family. In these times Cynthia and her family are noticeably absent from Sarah's place. On one occasion, I noticed that Cynthia did not come around to our house or to Sarah's house as much as she used to. I mostly saw her on the street or we would meet at the street market where her mother and extended relatives sold *kumu*. When I enquired with Sarah why Cynthia stopped coming around, Sarah replied that her mother-in-law was staying with them and she did not approve of Cynthia and her family being around all the time. Sarah said to me,

> "*I don't care what they [*affine*] think, I want Cynthia and her family to come to my house, they are my family, I'm not from Morobe, I don't have any family here and my tambu's are not good to me. They won't help me; they expect that I must give them money before they help to look after the kids. But Cynthia, she is like Toby's mother, he cries for her and gets sick if his grandmother [paternal] doesn't allow him to go to Cynthia's house"*

She continued to tell me of how when Toby was sick for days and his mother asked him if she could get him anything he replied that he wanted to go and see his "mama Cynthia". Sarah took Toby to Cynthia's house and left him with Cynthia before she went to work in the morning. Sarah said when she returned from work in the afternoon Toby was running around Cynthia's yard. Sarah concluded that Toby

only felt sick because his grandmother did not allow him to go to Cynthia's house and because Cynthia stopped coming to Sarah's house.

Sarah's statement is telling in that she has created her own family in a place where she lives among her affines, and though she does have close family members living in Mosbi, she has chosen to create her own family at the blok by converting an employer/employee relationship into one that allowed her to feel like she has her own family within the settlement. These relationships such as that of Cynthia and Sarah are the relations that sustain many lives within the settlement, not only in material terms but also in the context of *hevi* (problems). I will articulate this more clearly to the reader in Chapter Four.

Blok people acknowledge kin relations through substance, clan and tribal affiliations, but also show relatedness through sharing, feeding and thinking about one another. This chapter has focused on the non-genealogical aspects of kinship in the blok to show the reader how people talked about relatedness and what actions constitute ideas of relatedness. Chapter Three has also engaged with the concept of *wan* to illustrate that *wantok*, *wan strit* and *wan lotu* are aspects of relatedness that take the form of kin relations.

PART II

Chapter Four

Barb

This chapter tells the story of Barb, a young girl who I met and befriended in the blok. Barb's story is one of many different stories about life in the blok. This story connects different elements of the thesis through an emphasis on the relations that are made as part of blok life. I focus on this story to articulate some of the points that I have made in Chapter Three about relatedness.

Here, I will articulate the claims that people make upon each other and how relations are made prominent at times of conflict. In Chapter Four, the reader will again see the importance of food and the reference that people make to food and relatedness. Barb's story introduces issues of gender and personhood, which I shall take up in Chapter Five. It gives the reader an insight into blok understandings of personhood and agency.

Barb's story portrays the thinking behind why people act in certain ways and the interconnectedness of lives. This story provides the reader with an insight into the possibilities of life from the perspective of a young girl from the hardship, the happiness and how life is continuously being negotiated in relation to others. I want to show the reader how different rationales of relatedness are in play and how they can cause friction and also convert into one another. I will start Barb's story from when I first met her and explain to the reader how and why I met Barb. Barb's story will start with Joy and Kate. Following this, the rest of the chapter will be about my

conversations with Barb about various aspects of her life. The intention of the chapter is to show the reader lived experience of blok *laif* (life) through sharing Barb's story.

Joy and Kate

I met Barb through her mother Kate and my landlady Joy. Kate and Joy are best friends. Joy and Kate both came from Morobe but do not consider themselves as *wantoks* as they came from different parts of the province. Kate often comes around to our house in the evenings or weekends to sew with Joy. Joy and her husband Mark often go down to Kate's house to visit Kate and her husband Keith. If Kate and her children are around when Joy and her family are preparing a meal or just about to serve up, they always make sure that they offer a plate of food to their friends. Joy and Kate tell many stories about their lives in the blok. Kate and Joy's friendship began in the blok and has continued. Kate was the first person to befriend Joy when she moved to the blok with her then very young family.

> *"Kate was so kind. She would come and take me to go and cut firewood and before we both started working, we used to go gardening together. We planted all kinds of things like kaukau, beans and tapiok. We always do things together, she showed me practical things like how to cut firewood from the big Kumurere*[55] *tree. When we both started working, we would all go to the bus stop together in the morning to catch the bus to Gordons, Kate and Keith and Mark and I".*

Kate and Keith and Mark and Joy have their own whistle which I too became familiar with, as most times Keith or Kate would whistle to announce their arrival at our house.

[55] Eucalyptus tree

Joy and Kate have nine children between them, Joy's five and Kate's four, and like their parents, the children went freely between each other's houses. Kate's two youngest children, Barb and Ben, often came around to our house to spend time with Joy's children. It is this relationship between Joy and Kate that showed me the dynamics of relatedness in the blok. I was aware that both Joy and Kate lived among their close relatives but during my fieldwork it is the relations between these two families, particularly the women and children that gave me the everyday example of how relatedness is created and acted out in the blok. It is the relationship between Joy and Kate that made me start to think about how blok people constitute kinship and relatedness.

Getting to know Barb

I met eighteen-year-old Barb soon after I moved to the blok, however, I did not get to know her until December 2009 when she started spending more time at the house. Barb was a happy girl with a loud laugh and a big smile. She was friendly, outgoing and quite feisty. In addition to spending her days with us she also started spending nights at our place. I invited Barb to have meals with us occasionally because within the short space of time that we got to know her, she formed a solid friendship with my cousin Tina, and she regularly helped Tina to take care of my baby while I was trying to familiarise myself with blok life. Barb and I talked in the street and when she came over to the house, but she never came out to sit with us on the veranda because she was not sure how "*papa blo Tabai*" (Tabai's father) would react to her being in our space. Her friendship with my cousin was the icebreaker between us. I started interacting more with her on a daily basis, asking her about blok life, telling her a bit more why we were in the blok and listening to her talk about her own life.

One day when we were sitting under a mango tree, I asked her if things at home were all right. Barb had been at our place for nearly two weeks now. She told me that she decided to come and stay with her "mummy Joy" because she was *belhat* (angry) at her parents because her younger brother Ben burnt her clothes after she beat him for not going to school, playing cards and carrying other people's things (*kamap wok boi blo ol narapla*). She thought that her parents should have given her money to buy herself new clothes, but instead her stepfather bought her brother Ben a new bike and then her parents used the family's Christmas vouchers from her mother Kate's employers to buy food for their family Christmas' *kaikai* (food). Barb said that she was angry at her parents so she took off to stay with Joy and Mark. She was hoping to go to *Sogeri* to spend Christmas with her mother's younger sisters. Even though, Barb had many relatives in the blok that she could go to, she chose to come to Joy and Mark because they are like her parents and she feels free to stay with them. Barb and Joy had the kind of relationship that Toby and Cynthia had. While the circumstances may be different in that Cynthia was paid to care for Toby, the same sentiments of history, shared food, warmth and generosity is evident in both relationships.

Barb and I continued talking. I asked her a bit about her life and she said that even though she was feuding with her parents and brother at the moment, life was not too bad. She said she could always find something to eat and she often had "coins"[56] to buy her cigarettes and *buai*. I asked Barb if she was enrolled at a school and she replied.

> "I *was at school. After I finished year 8 at Evex* (Evedahana Primary School), *I was selected to go to Marianville secondary. There were only two of us from Evex. Me and this other girl who lives further down the blok. I went to school at Marianville and began year nine, it was fun, the nuns were strict but I liked going to*

[56] Tokpisin slang for money.

a school where there is only girls, we can concentrate better. I was a day girl because the blok isn't that far from the school, anyway I did not want to be a boarding student, I might get hungry".

She stopped talking and laughed loudly. I asked her why she was not attending school anymore and she replied,

"School fee problem"
"They (her parents) said they will pay for my fees to go back to school next year, I really hope so. I want to go to school; I do not want to just be here at home doing nothing. If they do not pay for my school fees I'm going to go and stay with my relatives at Sogeri. Life is good at Sogeri, there is always a lot of food and the river is nice".

Once we got talking Barb starts telling me more about her life and how she came to live in at Morobe Blok.

"We moved to the blok, before Mala (Joy's eldest child) *and them. I was really small, maybe like Bea*[57] (Joy and Mark's fourth child). *We came here after my father died. Before my father died we lived in town. Dad had a good job, he was about to go away and study when he died. They spoilt him"*
"Who spoilt him?"
"People... people who were jealous of him and his job. When we lived in town the boys went to school in town, they went to school at Salvation Army. Later after dad died, we moved here. Sometimes I wonder what life would be like if my dad was alive, I do not think I would not be out of school, I would be at school and we would not be living in the blok but somewhere in town".
"Is your step father (known as Paps Keith) *not a good man then?"*

[57] Age 8.

> *"Oh no, he is a good man, he treats us just like we are his own children. He is the one who has been paying for our school fees. When we have no flour to fry for breakfast and if mum is angry with me and takes off to work without giving me money to buy scone, Paps Keith will feel sorry for me and give me money and he won't tell mum too. He's a good man, he's good to us. Not like some other stepfathers who are not good to their stepchildren. He's been in our lives since we were very young"*

Barbs affirmation that her stepfather being a good man was in reference to stories in the blok and elsewhere of children not being treated well by stepfathers or stepmothers which often leads them to seek refuge with other relatives.

Barb stayed with us for close to a month. During the time that Barb was staying with us I met her mother Kate at the *buai* market. I mentioned to Kate that Barb had been really helpful in showing me around the blok and also showing me where the Nine Mile clinic was and how to get there. Her mother replied that she was happy that Barb was staying at Joy's house because Joy is her mother too, so as long as she was not getting in our way she was not too fussed that she was at Joy's place. Kate said "*Em belhat lo mipla na em kam stap wantaim yupla"* (She's angry with us that's why she has come to stay with all of you.). Kate continued by saying that when Barb had cooled down from her anger then she would return to the house. We bid 2009 farewell and welcomed 2010 with Barb still at our place. Eventually Barb went back to her parents' house at the end of January of 2010 but she continued to come around to our house to hang out and tell stories. If she did not come around to our place she would be at her own home or at the *buai* market helping her friends to sell *buai* which meant we were most likely to see her when we went out to find *buai* late in the afternoon.

Now that I have given the reader the background to how I met Barb I want to continue the chapter by narrating the events that followed from the time Barb left our house to return to her own home.

Pregnancy rumours

By mid-February I did not see Barb at the market much and she stopped coming around to the house. I asked her friend Bertha about Barb's whereabouts and she said that Barb was around but just at home. After about two weeks of not seeing Barb, Mala, the eldest child in our house, came home from school and said to her mother "*Mama, ol lain toktok lo rot na tok Barb gat bel ya*"(Mum people are talking on the road and saying that Barb is pregnant). Joy was really worried for Barb, she said that she saw Kate nearly every day and Kate did not mention anything. Joy's distress intensified as rumours of Barb being pregnant circulated quite rapidly within the area we lived. The rumours and assumptions were carried out through a visual diagnosis of Barb's appearance. There were comments that she had lost weight and was looking pale. A concerned Joy asked her children if Barb had been to the house when Joy was at work to which they said no.

'I should go down to her house and bring her up here and talk to her these kinds of rumours are not good'. On one of her days off work, Joy found Barb sitting outside her front gate playing a game of *bom* with her friends. She approached Barb and asked her to come to the house when her game of cards was finished. When Barb eventually came around to the house, Joy asked her if the rumours were true and Barb nodded affirmatively. Joy asked her who the father of the baby was she answered "*Willy*", a young man who we knew as her boyfriend and he knew that we knew that they were friends as he was always extremely shy if he visited his relatives who were our neighbours.

As the rumours of Barbs' pregnancy spread, she began to spend more time at home with her parents and was rarely seen out on the street. Her older brother, Manu, who like many brothers in the blok was quite protective of her, had been the one who

noticed that she looked pale and that she was sleeping all the time which prompted him to ask their mother Kate if she thought to ask Barb if she might be pregnant or sick. When Kate talked to Barb, she admitted that she was pregnant and upon enquiry as to the paternity of the child she replied that Ronald, a young man who lived a couple of streets away from Barb was the father of the baby. Barb only told her parents who the father of the baby was and refused to tell other people by letting them speculate about the paternity of the baby. Barb's parents asked her to bring Ronald to their home so they could speak with him and confirm what Barb had said because they did not want the story to go out in the community and then have Ronald deny that he was the father of the baby. Barb brought Ronald to her parents' house where they met with him and he confirmed that he was the father of the baby and he was willing to marry Barb and take care of both her and the baby.

I will continue the story by showing the how Barb's relatives reacted to her pregnancy and also Barb's own feelings about the opinions of her relatives.

Family reactions to Barb's pregnancy

Barb's brother, Manu, reacted angrily when it was confirmed that Barb was pregnant. In his angry state, Manu said harsh words to the effect that Barb should move out of the house and go and live with Ronald as she had brought them shame by getting pregnant, Manu's shame has its origins in the ideas of morality and the implications that Barb's actions would have on the rest of the family. This morality is both Christian based given that Barb's parents were known members of the Revival Church, but also based on people's ideas about courtship and marriage. Barb and her brothers were not part of the Revival Church and did not seem to care much for the strict rules that members of the church abided by. Manu's reaction was centred on the

understanding that the proper procedures of courtship should have been followed with both families meeting to talk about their children's intentions and to essentially make the relationship public. If this had been done then Manu may not have reacted the way he did because Barb and Ronald's relationship was recognised by both families. There is a common saying in the blok that *'pikinini save kamap lo ass blo flawa'* (Children are conceived among flower beds). This saying refers to relations between two people that are not public therefore people meet in secret usually at discrete locations such as along little tracks which have hibiscus and bougainvillea plants as make shift fences. Cross-sex sibling relations in the blok, like elsewhere in Melanesia is an important aspect of kinship and sociality, thus Manu's shame and anger may have been directed at his sister Barb as an expression of disappointment in himself for not paying attention to what was happening in his sister's life. Barbs' pregnancy implicated various people differently. These implications and claims to Barb's life were manifested through threats to beat her and her mother and to take her to live with Ronald. Those who were most vocal were relatives from her late father's side of the family. The woman who Barb was named after was particularly vocal. She lived in another part of Mosbi but came to visit her relatives in the blok regularly. When she heard rumours of Barb being pregnant, she said that she would wait to hear confirmation of Barbs pregnancy and then she would beat Barb and her mother Kate. When I asked her why she wanted to beat Barb and her mother, she replied *"Mama ino save lukluk gut lo pikinini na pikinini tu no save stap isi"* (The mother does not watch her child properly and the child does not stay quiet).

Once the rumours of Barbs pregnancy was confirmed, the blame game of how and why she got pregnant was made prominent by different people who claimed to have a stake in her life. It was never a case of acknowledging it was Barbs own actions that got her into her current situation. Others claimed that her mother not bothering to find her and bring her back to the house when she ran away at night encouraged

her behaviour as she was the only girl in the family and her parents should have taken more notice of her whereabouts. The relatives who felt that they had contributed to Barbs growth wanted to bring her straight to the father of the baby while others wanted to beat her and her mother Kate up to show their dissatisfaction at the situation. Barb's mother Kate was singled out for her relaxed attitude to parenting. Some of Barb's relatives and neighbours thought that her pregnancy was the direct result of Kate's lack of parental supervision, especially at night.

Of course Barb herself felt all the tension of being pregnant and knew what was being said and by whom. This led Barb to initially tell us that Willy was the father of the baby. When Joy asked Barb about the father of her baby, she said that it was Willy but eventually she revealed that the father of the baby was Ronald. I asked Barb why she did not tell us the truth about Ronald when Joy first asked her about the paternity of the baby she replied *"mi les lo planti toktok*" (I do not want too much talk) but I could tell that she knew that the extended members of her family would probably disapprove of Ronald. Barbs motive for telling us that Willy was the father of the baby could also have been because we were all aware that Willy was her boyfriend. Prior to the news of her pregnancy, Barb was living with us therefore she may have thought that to state that Ronald was the father of the baby would be to make herself look promiscuous.

I asked Barb if she had talked with her parents and she said her parents knew of Ronald and while they did not disapprove, they were troubled by the fact that they heard a rumour that he (Ronald) had two wives in Lae. They were also concerned that Ronald lived with his relatives and did not have a block of his own hence their decision to have Barb stay with them until she delivered the baby. Barb told me that she was aware of what various relatives were planning to do however she said that they could only really try to impose their will upon her but it would not happen because her parents had already reassured her that she would be live with them until

the baby was born. The members of her family who were incessant on taking Barb to Ronald's house were acting this way for two reasons. Firstly, by taking Barb to Ronald, her family were essentially coercing Ronald into taking responsibility for Barb and the baby. Secondly, by bringing Barb to Ronald, the unborn child would have a 'father'. The phrase "*pikinini nogat papa*" (child has no father) is used when a child is being raised by his or her mother or if the father is deemed to be 'absent' in the child's life. I asked why this phrase is used, especially when in most cases there is knowledge of the paternity of a child. The most common reply to my question was "*mipela ino save lo dispela man*" (we do not know that man). In other word,s to make a statement that a child has no father is to deny public knowledge of a relationship between two people.

Knowing Relations

Barb was always aware of her relatives and the relationships she had with them, she was particularly aware about how to act around certain relatives so as not to show disrespect or bring shame to herself or her kin. Prior to her pregnancy, I remember having a conversation with Barb and her friend Anna. We were standing at Anna's parents little tucker box. I had been asking Anna about her boyfriend Sam and she began telling me that he was at his house sleeping because he was hung over from drinking the previous night. I began to make a comment about Sam when both Anna and Barbs suddenly stopped talking and looked at the ground, I turned around and saw my friend Sarah approaching. After Sarah left, both girls said to me that if they were talking about boyfriends and Sarah overheard them she would get angry at them. Barb and Anna asked not to mention Sam or any of their boyfriends when Sarah was

around because Sarah (who was married to Barbs cousin) was their *tambu* and she wouldn't approve of them talking about boyfriends.

Barbs knew that many people were unhappy and disappointed that she was pregnant but she was also adamant that it was her parents who would have the last say on what would happen to her and her baby. She would say things like "*ol wanem, givim mi kaikai na ol toktok" (*What do they do for me? Do they feed me)? She also knew that there was much gossip and talking behind her back which caused her stress as the people talking about her were her relatives. The friction between Barb and her relatives derive from the claims that they are entitled to act on Barb's pregnancy by deciding that Barb should be made to go to live with Ronald.

These reasons stem from the understanding that Barb and Ronald must now be married because they are having a child together therefore it is right that Barb move to live with Ronald. Barb's paternal relatives are also motivated by the understanding that they take the place of her deceased father therefore their kinship obligations to Barb's father prompt them to react in such a way. Barb's own opinion about why her relatives should not be talking about her pregnancy relates to food, ingestion and ideas of what kin should be doing. The reader will recall that in Chapter Two Karen was upset with her cousin Ari for not helping her with food.

A key point in Chapter Three is about feeding and sharing food which is something that occurs regularly between Sarah and Cynthia. Sharing food and eating together regularly brings people together and is important to urban sociality not only because of the obvious reason that a meal fills an empty stomach but because meals shared regularly shows empathy and familiarity. Barb's statement about her paternal relatives in essence questions the validity of their claims and their reasons for the interest in her life when they do not think of her. In the blok, to say that someone else does not feed you means that you are not nourished by their thoughts, goodwill and

empathy. Therefore by asking "Do they feed me?" Barb highlights her own struggle in life while she reminds relatives of their kin duties.

Ending it

On the afternoon of 20 March 2010 Barbs hung a rope on a piece of timber on the ceiling of her room and hung herself. Her mother returned home from work thinking that her daughter was lying in her room reading, so she opened the door to greet her and let her know she was home. When she opened the door she saw her daughters two feet slightly above the floor. Kate looked up and to her horror saw Barb's body hanging from the ceiling, her bedsheet tied around her neck.

Kate screamed for help as she tried to free her daughter from the noose. Neighbours and friends come to help as word was sent to Sarah the nurse *meri* to come and help keep Barb alive. Sarah hurriedly went to Barb's house where she tried in vain to resuscitate Barb, while Barb's brothers frantically ran to relatives to look for a vehicle to take Barb to the Port Moresby General Hospital. Once a vehicle was found her mother Kate, a host of relatives and and people close to Barb, Joy included, accompanied Barb to the hospital. Joy later told me that just as they approached Gordons Barb took her last breath.

Distraught with grief they returned to the blok, with Barb's lifeless body. Relatives and friends who remained in the blok knew that Barb had not made it to the hospital alive when the vehicle returned to the blok. Barb was brought to her uncle Tim's house where her body was placed to remain overnight while her relatives and friends came to see her. Barb's relatives who lived in other parts of Port Moresby

were informed, with those living close by arriving during the night to mourn. The next morning, Barb was brought to the Port Moresby General Hospital morgue where she would be left until burial arrangements were made.

I was not in the blok the afternoon Barb hung herself. I was informed of Barb's death via frantic screams from Joy's children. My cousin Tina and I found it hard to believe that Barb would take her own life so we called other friends in the blok who confirmed what we heard. This was a very sad time for me because Barb had offered to help me with my fieldwork by introducing me to her peers. I had already started packing nappies and outgrown baby clothes to pass on to her unborn child and continued to encourage Barb to think about completing her high school education after the birth of her child because I believed that she was capable and that her parents would support her.

Reaction to Barb's Death

The immense sorrow that Barb's family felt upon finding out about her suicide was accompanied by questions and tension about how and why she died. As the news of her death spread throughout the blok and to her relatives in other parts of the city, some of Barb's her young paternal male relatives from a nearby settlement made their way to her house where her parents Kate and Keith were sitting outside and crying. These young men beat up Barb's parents and asked them why they were crying. They ordered Barb' parents stop crying because Barb was not an old woman and that she should not have died. It was inconceivable to these young men that a young person would suddenly take her life.

In trying to find answers for Barb's deat,h these same young intoxicated men preceded to the house where Ronald was staying, damaged property in the house and

forcefully took him to the house where Barb's body was kept. There they beat him and questioned him about why Barb had died. They then sat him in a chair and told him to watch over Barb's body. A drum was placed next to him and he was told to fill it up with money. Barb' relatives placed the drum in front of Ronald because they wanted him to know that he would have to fill the drum up with money as a form of compensation because he had not initiated any form of bride price for Barb's family to know that he was serious about marrying Barb when she was alive. Secondly, her relatives believed that Ronald's role in impregnating Barb contributed to her worries about life which led to her death.

The actions by Barb's drunken young relatives strained relations between Ronald's family with their absence at the *haus krai* not going unnoticed by Barb's friends and family. Four days after Barb's death, Ronald's family sent a letter to Barbs family demanding that they compensate Ronald K20,000 (£5000) for kidnapping, property damage, assault, grievous bodily harm and attempted murder.

Upon reading the letter from Ronald's family, Barb's family decided that they would claim compensation from Ronald for the death of their sister and daughter. These claims were not made by Barb's mother and stepfather but by Barb's paternal relatives who claimed to "*makim maus*" (speak for) the family. Barb's family were still searching for answers as to why she died and saw Ronald as the main cause of Barb's death because if he had not impregnated her, then she would not have been subjected to the worries which caused her to take her own life. Also, Barb was said to have been upset with Ronald on the Friday before she hung herself because Ronald had called her mobile and she did not want to speak to him and asked her mother's sister to answer the call. Upon hearing another person's voice Ronald swore and this was said to have upset Barb a lot. In other words, Barb's family blamed Ronald for her decision to end her life.

The reaction to Barb dying is exemplifies of how some blok people try to make sense of death. In this case, the death of a young woman that is not sick is unacceptable in the minds of her relatives. The violent reaction and subsequent attack on Ronald's family causes a rift between the two families. Ronald was taken to hospital and a complaint was lodged at the local police station, however Ronald's family still felt that Barb's family needed to directly address the issue. Ronald's family's letter to Barb's family is an example of blok performance of law. The letter sent from Ronald's family to Barb's family use the language of the law to outline their grievance and then use blok rationale of compensation as the mean by which the issue is to be rectified. As a counterclaim, Barb's family also demanded that Ronald pay compensation for Barb's death and the death of her unborn child. Some of Barb's family felt that the beating Ronald received from Barb's young male relatives was justified and a claim for compensation to injuries sustained cannot be met without questioning why Barb died.

Explanations of Death

Before hanging herself Barb wrote a letter to her parents and brothers which she left on her bedside table. Her suicide note expressed some of her worries and feelings of causing embarrassment to her family. As a result Barb, said the only way to make things better for everyone was to leave. The suicide note was not enough to convince some of her relatives and friends that it was her will to take her life.

Firstly, Ronald was blamed for what her relatives claim to be his part in contributing to her being pregnant and feeling shame at being in such a predicament. The second explanation for Barb's death emerged a few days after she had died. Some of Barb's relatives drew the conclusion that Barb had already been 'killed' and her

suicide part of her pre-planned death. It was deduced that Barb's life had been taken prior to her suicide and that was walking around "*bodi tasol*" (body only).

There was speculation and accusations of who might have killed her or why she might have hung herself. One rumour was that she was 'spoilt' by people in the blok. This rumour came about after it was mentioned that several days before her death a possum went into Barb's house while she was at home and destroyed the house, jumping from place to place and knocking things down. The possum was said to have taken Barb's spirit at that time. Barb caught the possum and took it to her uncle Tim's house and the owner came and collected it from Tim's place after Barb had died. This kind of sorcery was alleged to have originated from Kerema (Gulf Province). It was believed that a Morobe man married to a Kerema woman was the owner of the possum. There were other rumours such as her mother's relatives from Finschhafen had something to do with her death and that some former boyfriends who were not happy with the way Barb treated them and taken revenge on her. I asked her friends and Joy to explain the boyfriend rumours and Joy said '*Barb ino save lukautim maus blo em'* (Barb does not worry about what she says). Joy further explained that Barb was the type of girl that would not hesitate to put a boyfriend in his place if she felt something was not right so there is a possibility that she may have offended a former boyfriend who took to sorcery as pay back.

Another possible cause of death was that *sanguma* (sorcerers) from Koiari had taken her life and she was just walking around waiting for the time that they marked for her to die. It was said that she herself knew she would die because she had problems with her skin awhile back and this was a cause for concern for her and her relatives. Barb's aunty said that Barb's skin looked like she had been burnt by fire. To cure her from this skin ailment, her namesake's husband boiled leaves and instructed her to bathe in the leaves to lift the curse that was put on her. This time it was too

late. Her mother's relatives from Sogeri identified possible culprits and promised to deal with them in their own way.

The final text messages that she sent to a friend asking her to buy a red rose for a coffin was read over and over again and analysed by her blok family and other members of her family. The fact that she seemed to be contemplating suicide in the texts were interpreted as her life already being taken by someone else and her suicide was just a cover up for what was already a planned death.

Some of these suggestions of her cause of death were based on visits to her at the morgue. Her relatives and friends were concerned as to how fast her lifeless form had deteriorated. The women who went to wash Barb's body at the morgue said that her body had ballooned very fast and her skin had turned hard and black in a short space of time. Speculation of foul play relating to her death was fuelled when it was rumoured that Barb was said to have rang two different people and said things which made them believe that her death was caused by others. Despite it being well known that Barb wrote a suicide letter to her parents, this was still not enough evidence for her relatives of friends to believe that it was her own mind that compelled her to act in such a manner. This clearly shows blok interpretations of agency and the person and how one acts are caused not by one's own motivation but by that of others. Chapter Six will deal with ideas of the person and blok agency further.

This part of Barb's story is important for several reasons. Firstly, it demonstrates the complexity of death in the blok. This story is indicative of many other stories about death that I heard. People in the blok often seek to explain a death by asking who caused the death. Suggestions of possible causes for Barb's death indicate the relational connection of her life. Former boyfriends, maternal relatives, another blok resident and sorcerers from Koiari were all possible suspects. The possum and Koiari accusation stems from Barb's places of movement. Apart from staying the blok, Barb also spent time at Sogeri with her maternal family. Her maternal

family have lived at Sogeri among the local Koiari people for many years. This specificity of the accusations enabled her relatives to trace her movement.

Haus Krai

Loud wailing could be heard on the first few nights of the *haus krai* as relatives and friends alike wailed loudly as they remembered Barb. The wailing grew louder as those who Barb spent most of her time entered the *haus krai*. Memories of food, words and betelnut shared were accompanied by questions such as "who will share half my scone with me?"

Relatives and friends slept at her parents' house for a month, where food was cooked, scones were buttered and hot cups of tea were brought around to feed those who had taken time to come and sit with her parents and brothers during their mourning period. The upkeep of the *haus krai* is a costly one because vistors to the *haus krai* are usually fed by the family.

Joy and Tina informed me that Kate and Keith were maintaining the *haus krai* through contributions from both sides of Barb's family and also from Keith's family. Many visitors to the *haus krai* brought a contribution of tea or scones. Kate's employer who is a woman from Bougainville also visited the *haus krai* and made a contribution for *haus krai* expenses. Urban residents lament the cost of the *haus krai*, however, as we see from this story, people will still give the little that they have if the need arises.

As the days went turned into weeks and the shock of her death lessened, her young friends brought music, played cards and told stories to keep themselves occupied throughout the night. Joy and her children and my cousin Tina spent every night with Kate and Ken at the *haus krai*. They would cook and eat dinner at our house then walk down to the *haus krai* to spend the night. Sometimes children were asked to stay at home but there were always tearful protests because the children were scared to sleep alone in their room, even with the knowledge that we were at home.

Mark, who had begun work at a security firm, sometimes finished his shift and joined his family at the *haus krai* when he was not too tired. I was advised not to visit the *haus krai* at night because I was told that it would not be good to take a young baby to the place where a person had taken their own life as people believed that she did not die in a 'right' way. Those who were closest to Barb sensed that her spirit was still present. A visit to the *haus krai* would lead to the baby getting sick or crying a lot and finding it hard to sleep. Children and adults alike were gripped with fear that she would appear at night. There were numerous sightings of her around her yard, our yard and in other areas of close friends and relatives. This was the reason that Joy and Mark's children were afraid to stay alone. Barb was practically a big sister to the five children of our house so they were worried of the possibility that she may appear to anyone of them.

My family and I had only known Barb for five months but her mother and stepfather acknowledged that in the short space of time that she knew us, Barb had spent a lot of time with us and had become a good friend to my cousin Tina. I had an experience of firmly locking the front door before I went to sleep, only to wake up the next morning to find out from Mark that he let himself into the house when he returned from work because the door was slightly open. Joy and her children did not need convincing that it was Barb who was around the house and probably let Mark in so our sleep would not be disturbed.

Due to the restrictions placed on my visitation times, I waited until the next morning to get a brief from the *haus lain (*house people) as to what transpired at the *haus krai* the previous night before.

Politics of Death and Kin

For the few nights of the *haus krai*, Barb's relatives discussed burial options and other issues such as the "real cause of her death". It was too hard and unbelievable to think that she would take her own life just because she was pregnant as she was not the first girl in the blok to have a baby without being married and she would not be the last.

As Barbs lay waiting in the morgue to be buried, these compensation claims and counter claims escalated to a point where it became the central focus of her death along with the incessant obsession of discussing the last few weeks of her life. Efforts were made to recall what may have transpired as this could be used as evidence to prove her cause of death as her relatives were not convinced that she took her own life willingly.

Family politics and point scoring, talk, fear and violence eclipsed Barb's death. One of the most important features of her *haus krai* was the claims that people made to Barb regardless of whether they played an active part in Barb's life or not. Her biological father's family assumed the lead in the *haus krai* "*em body blo mipla, em haus krai blo mipla*" (It's our body, it's our mourning house). Yet, Kate's maternal family were getting impatient because Barb's paternal relatives were being indecisive about where to bury Barb and what steps should be taken to find the cause of her death. There were disagreements about where to bury Barb because her father was buried in his village in Morobe and as the only girl in her family she should be buried with her father. Kate and her family wanted to bury Barb in Port Moresby because Kate and Keith lived in Port Moresby and to bury Barb in the village would mean that Barb would be in a place far away from where her mother and brothers live.

While the family politics and claims to her life were going on, the people who she spent most of her time with dutifully attended the *haus krai* every night and reminisced about their life with her. These people, who she called "mama", "brother" and "sister," were mostly not related through blood and clan ties so their significance in her life was overshadowed by the talk of her kin, however they were seen as an important part of the *haus krai* because as the weeks went by, it was often those mama's and brothers and sisters who also had a claim to her life who spent the cool nights sleeping in her yard. Joy said she felt that she needed to stay at the *haus krai* until the day Barb was buried. Barb's close friends also spent every night at the *haus krai* while the debate about where she should be buried and how she died continued.

In Chapter Three, I went to into some detail explaining how life cycle rituals like a *haus krai* takes place in Port Moresby. In this section of the chapter, I have shown how Barb's paternal family dominate the story of her death by enacting violence on Ronald, demanding compensation from Ronald for allegedly driving Barb to her death and then taking on the responsibility of arranging where Barb should be buried. This chapter showed how persons are construed through multiple relations which unfolds in Barb's story.

The reaction to her pregnancy by her relatives highlights how people who may not have had much to do with Barb on a regular or daily basis recall kin relations with her deceased father as their claim to an opinion as to how Barb's pregnancy should be handled. Similarly, it was also kin relations recalled through her late father that motivated her relatives to react to her death by beating Ronald. Barb's friends who lived at the blok were present at the *haus krai* every day. These people were seen as her family also in that they supported Kate and Keith during their grieving process and would continue to be part of Keith and Kate's life after the *haus krai* was over. The importance of their relationship with Barb as well as that of her parent's seemed to

have been eclipsed at this particular time as the concerns of Barbs *blut* (blood) relatives took precedence.

Finally, after over a month after Barb passed away, it was agreed that she would be buried in Port Moresby. My cousin Tina and I went along with the rest of the members of our household to Barb's place for the outdoor funeral and viewing. I watched as her heartbroken friends and relatives threw themselves at her coffin weeping their final good byes. I had decided not to view her body as I wanted to remember her the way I knew her best, smiling, loud and full of life. We proceeded on to the Nine Mile cemetery around midday where her coffin was lowered into the ground while we sat on the mounds of freshly dug earth and watched people throw ground and fresh flowers on to the coffin.

The aim of Chapter Four was to present the reader with a detailed description of the complexity of social relations in the blok through the story of Barb. Although this narrative has focused on a young girl, the kinds of claims, demands and actions that have been described in this story are not specific to Barb as a person because she was young, unmarried and pregnant. *Hevi* (problems) happen to everyone and it is when someone goes through problems such as what Barb encountered that we see the kinds of reaction that was displayed by Barb's relatives. Their behaviour is illustrative of how persons are revealed. Barb did have her own thoughts and plans about how to deal with her pregnancy but she was also aware that she had to contend with the opinion of those who felt that they had authority to speak about her life.

PART III

CHAPTER FIVE

IDEAL PERSONS: GENDER AND PERSONHOOD

Introduction

This thesis is about how relations shape every day aspects of blok life whether it be notions of belonging, work, giving or kinship. In Chapter One, I showed how the relationship between two different groups of people has enabled the blok to come into existence. By recognising the relationship between Sondiong Babago, a Morobean man and the local Koiari landowners, blok dwellers give life to a story of settlement, for it is this relationship that facilitated the creation of the space they call Morobe Blok. Chapter Two outlines how relationships such as that of Joy, a *haus meri* and Tuo, a former bank, worker affect and inform work ethic. Chapter Three and Four describe how kinship is made, claimed and activated. In Chapter Four, the reaction to Barb's pregnancy and death is an example of how blok people place the cause of Barb's actions as beyond her own individual agency. Her death was seen as a result of the actions of others, such as her mother Kate and the baby's father, Ronald. The themes of relatedness that have been highlighted in the four previous chapters of the thesis lead to a discussion of personhood and gender in the blok.

Chapter Five seeks to address how people in the blok talk about and interpret personhood and gender. What do people in the blok identify with when they talk about what it means to be a certain way, and how do actions influence what people do

and what others think? I have shown in the thesis that blok people live their lives through relations with others. It is relations that influence how people think about security of land, work and kinship. This chapter seeks to explore contemporary views of Melanesian personhood through the evaluation of every day talk and actions.

The contested definitions, modifications and explanations of the Melanesian person lead one to ask, what makes a blok person? If the Melanesian person is a "living commemoration of the actions that produced it" (Strathern M,1988:302) then does an identification with personhood that is closely associated with the exchange of substance through semen, blood, breast milk, bones and food, as well as the symbolic exchange of gifts in recognition of the history of actions and relations have a place in the description of an urban person? Furthermore, how do blok people negotiate and make sense of their own actions and those of others? Is this dividually-contested person that Marilyn Strathern (1988) describes as the Melanesian person someone we can find in the blok or has Melanesian encompassment by the West (LiPuma, 2000) enabled qualified forms of this relational person to appear, disappear or present him/herself as a self-contained individual? In the absence of what one may call "traditional"[58] for the lack of a better word or familiar contributions to the making of a person, how does one attempt to describe a blok person that adequately does justice to the lived experience of their daily interactions?

This chapter will begin by engaging with the concepts of the Melanesian person from the perspective of the dividual and that of the possessive individual that is suggested to have emerged as a result of modernity and the commoditisation of the economy (Foster, 1995; Li Puma, 1998). While the debate about personhood in

[58] I wish to clarify to the reader that I am not saying or insinuating that blok dwellers do not partake in rituals or initiation practices. What I am trying to do here is show that these sorts of contributions to a person is synonymous with rural ethnographies and may be viewed as somewhat absent in a discussion of the person in an urban setting. This however does not render blok conceptions of the person irrelevant to familiar discourse of the person such as the dividual.

Melanesia is well worn, the significance of the debate is still relevant to Melanesian sociality, and for the purposes of this thesis it is important to thinking about contemporary notions of the person. Following on from the theoretical perspectives of Melanesian personhood in general, I will then move on to dedicate much of the chapter to gender with particular attention given to the idea of maleness and femaleness as being acted out in a household. I concentrate on gender in relation to personhood in the blok because while some aspects of being a person are not defined by gender there are aspects of blok personhood that are clearly gendered in nature. This gendered aspect of the person guides social interaction, relations between men and women as spouses, as sons and daughters, and influences other relations such as that of brothers and sisters. The effect of notions of the person can be described as *pasin*. Both men and women possess *pasin* whether good or bad. I use every day talk to describe blok views of *pasin* and *luksave* and their relationship to being a *gutpela* (good) or *nogut* (bad) person. The word *pasin* is ambiguously used by Papua New Guineans and in different contexts. For example, Anastasia Sai (2008) refers to the term *Pasin blo Lo* as the way/the law of giving and sharing, which is more than giving for fame and prestige. Sai describes a man who is kind, hospitable and giving as a *'man blo lo'*. In examining contemporary teacher education partnerships and the "interrelationship between" western and indigenous knowledge systems, Maretta Kula Semos (2009) proposes *pasin* as a modern Melanesian framework of enquiry that draws from both Western and Melanesian knowledge that shapes teaching and learning. Patrick Kaiku (2011) uses *pasin* in the context of *kastom* and tradition. My definition of the word *pasin* stems from its everyday usage by native speakers in the blok. For the purpose of this thesis, I interpret *pasin* as "ways of being". My use of this word derives from a commitment to best describe the language which blok residents themselves use when describing persons or their relations with one another. *Pasin* is an action, it is something that people do. It is an action that can be described as good or bad, yet

pasin is also a way of being. A person can be described as having *gutpela pasin* (good ways) and yet a single action by the same person can be described as a *nogut pasin*. This *nogut pasin* does not necessarily change the perception that people have of this one person, although it does recognize an act that is deemed as unfavorable.

Gendering *pasin* happens within specific relations and contexts. For example, the *pasin* of women who are also mothers, wives or *tambu's* (affines) can be viewed as gendered, specifically because of their relation to their husbands, children and *tambu's*. Therefore a discussion about how blok people talk about the image of a person cannot be understood without knowledge about gender relations and how these relations are being acted out. My intention is to provide a description of the ways in which people talk about what makes a good or bad man or woman and use this as a platform to think about the gendered person in the blok. In the fast-changing modern city of Port Moresby, people are drawn into creating new forms of social action and are doing domestic life and personal relations in different ways. Although settlement residents talk about gender roles and responsibilities, which resonate with so-called traditional understandings of gender, it is evident that new ideas are challenging older ways of thinking about gender and working both with and against blok ideas of gender. In approaching this problem, my specific interest is in relations in the household. In this vein, I want to look at aspects of gender through what Marilyn Strathern terms as "domestic sociality" (1988, p. 97). I discuss how persons are gendered through what they do and explain why it is that gendering occurs in the domestic sphere.

Melanesian Personhood and Agency: Blok Persons

Marilyn Strathern's concept of the Melanesian Dividual has had an important influence of the anthropological discourse about personhood. Strathern (1988:274) interprets that the Melanesian person is revealed in the contexts of relationships. Melanesian persons are made through multiple relationships therefore when social action takes place, one reveals one's inherently multiple constructs. Strathern (1988:273) distinguishes between "persons" and "agents" by explaining that a person is construed from the vantage point of the relations that constitute him or her and is thus revealed in those relations. In any given moment, the constitution of a person shifts as relational axis shifts with the action of social life. Strathern's theory of the relational person stems from a critique of the use of Euro-American terms and concepts employed by anthropologists to interpret and describe Melanesian sociality. Strathern asserts that this misguided frame of thought influenced the outcomes of ethnographic analysis by theorizing Melanesian sociality through western assumptions of social life and personhood, the outcome being a portrayal of the Melanesian person as a self-authored individual.

Strathern's model of Melanesian personhood is best articulated in her seminal book *The Gender of the Gift* (1988) which generated considerable academic debate with anthropologists such as Lisette Josephides (1991) criticizing Strathern's model of Melanesian sociality as being a description of an indomitable process that neutralises moral and political perspectives in gender relations (Josephides,1991: 159). Josephides critique of Strathern and likeminded thinkers whom she refers to as New Melanesian Ethnographers, is that this model of the Melanesian person does not allow for self-criticism within the Melanesian societies it is supposed to describe, hence the apparent inability to deal with the social practice of power politics. Furthermore,

Josephides (1991) argues that anthropological analyses based on an *apriori* differentiation between Melanesia and the West mistakenly take for granted what the West and Western anthropologists are. Similarly, Carrier (1992) sees the divide between "Us" and "Them" as a form of essentialism and Occidentalism perpetuated by Western anthropologists. Also according to these critiques, accounts based on stark dichotomies fail to recognize similarities between the West and Others, and seem to be more interested in advancing the theoretical ambitions of anthropological thought.

Other anthropologists who work in Melanesia, such as Keesing (1992) and Thomas (1991:53), have reservations about the use of the term "Melanesia" because the geographic area known as Melanesia is a colonial construct and while there may be similarities in terms of ritual and hierarchical leadership there are also vast differences. Therefore, to attach the geographical term of "Melanesia" to a singly description of personhood may seem misleading to those familiar with the region. One of the main criticisms of the dividual or composite person is the perceived failure to address processes of social change in Melanesia. A change caused by capitalism, the rise of the nation state, Christianity (Robbins 2005; Knauft 1985), all of which foster the emergence of the possessive individual (Foster 1995: 40), or incipient individual (Wardlow 2006), and the relational-individual (Strathern 2000. Robert Foster (1995:176) advocates that personal identity and interpersonal relations are effectively defined in and through relationships to consumer commodities. He suggests that the bounded individual emerges in discourse of the nation state and commodity consumption through the individualising language of nation building and consumer advertising. According to his argument, the colonial experience and subsequent independence of states like Papua New Guinea provides the opportunity for the emergence of a class based society where individuals appropriate commodity items in

an economic system that transacts alienable products, thus enabling a possessive individual to emerge as the owner or proprietor of his or her own actions.

Li Puma (1998: 56) argues that Strathern's theory that Western and Melanesian images are incommensurable is ethnographically, theoretically, and in the context of an emerging nation state also politically troubled. Li Puma's (2000, p. 131) argument is that all cultures have individual and dividual aspects of personhood with the individual emerging from languages, specifically from the use of the presupposition 'I' and also in the existence of separate biological systems. According to Li Puma, all societies encode relational, dividual aspects of personhood where the foregrounding of individual and dividual aspects of personhood will vary across contexts for action within a given culture. His goal is not to refute relationality in Melanesia but to clear a theoretical space to better explore the conceptual and historical relationship between Western and Melanesian persons. Li Puma follows Josephides critique by stating that a general problem in the conceptualization of Melanesia and the West is that accounts of Melanesian thoughts and practices are contrasted with Western ideology and not accounts of Western personhood. Li Puma attests that there has always been an individual aspect of personhood in Melanesia and that this aspect of personhood is becoming more important, visible and foregrounded with modernity.

Similarly, Keir Martin (2007:289) proposes that the relational person is a moment of personhood that is kept within the bounds of a delimited social sphere. Martin's research among the Tolai of East New Britain has led him to observe that a form of possessive individualism is being asserted by an emerging indigenous elite who Martin refers to as Big Shot[59]. According to Martin, Big Shot's use possessive individualism as a way of differentiating themselves from grassroots villagers. Based on an interview with a Tolai Big Shot, Martin deduces that his informant puts

[59] Big Shot's according to Keir Martin are individual elites.

together two opposing "lives", the modern and the community. The community life is referred to as customary ritual obligations to kin such as mortuary and wedding exchanges. This type of activity was viewed by this particular Big Shot as reciprocal interdependence performed through *kastom,* and as the essence of village life as opposed to "modern" or "town" life. The "town" life is described as the big shot's life in town, away from the village and in the sphere where his business is in operation.

It is not my intention to enter into the debate about Melanesian ethnography being too concentrated on the differences between personhood in Melanesia and the West. However, in light of the debate about the notion of personhood in Melanesia, it is useful to reflect on aspects of the relational person as I move on to discuss personhood and gender in the blok in the next section.

Gendering the Person

I have shown how the lives of blok people are entwined in relations with others and how these relations inform action. I have illustrated in chapters Two, Three and Four through the stories of Joy, Sarah and Barb how actions of an individual have consequences for the lives of others. I have mentioned previously that many aspects of the blok person is not gendered, yet relations between men and women are an integral part of the way in which people in the blok talk about ways of being. This only implicates one aspect of blok social life as there are other aspects of the lives of men and women that are important. Given the importance of actions and relations, it seems worthwhile to ask what people do that constitutes their gender. What would an analysis of blok gender look like if we were to take the approach that gender is what

people do? In order to do this, I propose to present a brief historical overview of anthropological studies of gender in Papua New Guinea that were influenced by feminist thought, and its interest on relations between men and women. Such an overview is important because much of the contemporary discourse guiding gender affirmative action in Papua New Guinea share similar assumptions with feminist anthropology regarding the perceived inequalities between men and women. These inequalities are believed to be the cause of violence against women, unequal division of labour and the general low status of women in Papua New Guinea. Therefore, I feel that it is important to look at the ways in which anthropological research about gender has been shaped and progressed over time. An engagement with the literature will be followed by a description of how gendered persons in the blok are created and viewed through their actions.

Anthropology and Gender in Papua New Guinea

Anthropological interest in sex and gender in Papua New Guinea is long standing and dates back to Malinowski's 'Sexual Life of Savages' (1929), Mead's 'Sex and Temperament' (1935) and 'Male and Female' (1949). While male initiation, ritual and presentations of prestige through ceremonial exchange gave an insight into how the male person emerges, ethnographic descriptions did not really focus on what it means to be male or female. Ethnographic descriptions of women's lives were virtually non-existent with women being discussed in relation to the formal institutions of marriage, cult activity, and domestic or family relations (Lutkehaus, 1995, p. 6). Bateson's book, 'Naven' (1936), was an exception. Naven was instrumental in describing the symbolism in Melanesian gender imagery. Bateson's description of the Naven ritual, shows how a mother's classificatory brother dresses as a woman to celebrate the achievements of his sister's son. 'Naven' is one of the earliest anthropological accounts of gender in Melanesia as not a bounded, fixed entity, but as a product of multiple relationships and dualism.

It has been suggested that the academic interest in gender was a result of a shift in focus to women's lives through feminism. This focus came about during the 1960's through feminist theoretical interests in sexism, inequality, and questions around the universality of their occurrence in different societies. In order to explore their questions, feminism turned to anthropology in search for insights into the lives of non-western women. For anthropology as a discipline, feminism and feminist anthropology provided an opportunity to place women at the centre of relations and also to importantly raise questions about anthropological technique and the domain of male ethnographers who often excluded or made little reference to the lived experience of women which in turn had implications for anthropology's male oriented

discourse about sex and gender (Tiffany 1984: 6). Whilst this is true, the problem with this approach also lies in the assumption that to talk about gender is to talk about women. Marilyn Strathern (1988: 35-37) critiques this claim by stating that feminism did not invent anthropological interest in women and gender as subjects of study. Feminist theoretical approaches to women's lives were problematic when describing non-Western societies such as Papua New Guinea. Chief among these concerns was Michelle Rosaldo's (1974) suggestion that the opposition between domestic and public orientations provides a necessary framework for an examination of male and female roles in any society. Rosaldo proposed that women seem to be oppressed or lacking in value or status to the extent that they are confined to domestic activities, cut off from social life with other women, and the social work of men. In order for women to overcome this confinement, gain power, and a sense of value, they would have to be able to transcend domestic limits either by entering men's world or by creating a society among themselves. Similarly, Ortner (1974: 71) states that domesticity aligned women with a lower order of social and cultural organisation. More so, women's physiology identified them with nature, which in itself was an existential sphere devalued in comparison to the cultural one. Drawing on Hagen ethnographic material, Marilyn Strathern (1984, p. 13) dislodged feminist assumptions about the universality of meanings associated with domesticity and women, such as those put forward by Rosaldo and Ortner (1974). Strathern states that the assumption that people go through processes of socialisation and social formation are Western concepts rooted in evolutionary beliefs and in an industrial heritage, and they do not correspond to Hagen or Papua New Guinean notions (Strathern 1984:17). Instead, Hageners' view of the person does not require a child to be trained into social adulthood. Furthermore, Strathern asserts that it is precisely the Western denigration of domesticity that leads feminist anthropologists to make such universal statements about women. Strathern (1988, pp. ix-xi) provides a definition of gender as

> "the act of categorizing persons, artefacts, events and sequences that draws upon sexual imagery in the form of the distinctiveness of male and female characteristics to make concrete people's ideas of the nature of social relationship".

Strathern proposes that Melanesian demonstrations of gender relations to themselves must not be separated from how Melanesian's present sociality. Melanesian persons contain both male and female parts and what differentiates men and women is not the difference between their physiologies but in what form things (including bodies) are made to appear. In other words, gender is defined by how people carry out actions to specific ends.

I will proceed on to some examples of how blok people talk about doing gender, but before doing so I think it is important to explain to the reader why I have chosen to recall this history of gender and anthropology. The importance of the feminist approach in studying lives of women and on the influence it has had on anthropology and feminist scholarship lies in how feminist interests took form in the first place. The interest in gender took on a character that is linked to the progress and advancement of women by placing women as the focal point of enquiry. This is important for the present day "gender agenda" in PNG as the current language and rhetoric around gender is based on the same worldview that spurred feminism to advocate for the advancement of the inquiry into women's lives. Here, I make direct reference to the gender policy of donor countries such as Australia and also to the gender policies of the PNG government. For example, the AusAid funded Pacific Women shaping Pacific Development[60] initiative is a twenty-year program that aims to empower pacific women through economic advancement, education, health and leadership. Once more, the focus on women reflects the Western idea of why women

[60] www.pacificwomen.org.

come to be denigrated and of what should be done to prevent this from happening, such as the strengthening of women's lives through education and economic empowerment. It is for this reason that I think it is important to document the history of Western interests on gender and the form they have taken.

Recent research on gender have utilised feminist research methods to study masculinity (Sai 2007), culture and protective mechanisms against violence (Dogimab 2009), and women's leadership in education (Vali 2010). Anthropological research has focused on the changing roles of women in urban areas (Rosi 1993; Spark 2010), female personhood (Wardlow 2006) and masculinity (Macintyre 2008). Rosi and Tamakoshi's (1993) research with National Arts School of the University of Papua New Guinea has showed that values and expectations of love and marriage in traditional societies are no longer relevant for the educated elite who live in the city, but that problems still arise in marriage due to interference of in-laws and relatives, and that educated men and women have different ideas about marriage and partnership.

Men are more likely to want their wives to fulfil traditional roles of cooking and domestic care, while women are more inclined to want husbands that support their career aspirations. Spark's (2010) study of Papua New Guinea women who have spent some time in education institutions in Australia found that young, single women were what Spark's called "embattled". Sparks asserts that education and a desire for autonomy away from the domestic sphere of men's domination meant that these women were targets for gossip and being seen as big-headed for avoiding marriage or partnerships that may end their autonomy or career aspirations. Sparks draws from Holly Wardlow's work with Huli *painjia meri* (prostitutes). Wardlow (2006, p. 3) describes the category *pasinja meri* as a discourse to control women's behaviour and also as an identity category that some women enter through complex trajectories that are not fully captured by simple notions of "choice" or "force". *Pasinja meri* who want

to get out from "under the legs" of their brothers or husbands disrupt bride wealth systems to sell sex. Wardlow (2006:14) infers that *pasinja* women express a sense of incipient individualism as they strive to control their bodies as a form of protest. I have made reference to this contemporary research because they allude to changes in gender relations that are occurring and the consequences that these have on sociality. I now move on to blok explanations of what it means to be a male or a female.

Being Male, Being Female

If we were to take Strathern's view of gender as what people do and not something that is attached to biology, then how do people in the blok talk about what it means to be male or female? What kinds of things do people do that defines them as male or female, and is there a rigid demarcation of gendered activity? Morobe Blok settlers, distinguish men and women as distinct sexed beings whose social lives are evaluated through the different relations that constitute them. Let me clarify here that when I say that blok dwellers distinguish men and women as distinct sexed beings I am referring to the way that men and women speak about their differences. This may seem in contradiction with Strathern's view of gender as what people do; however, I also propose that this claim of difference is not one that defines men and women. What defines men and woman in the blok is what they do and what they are expected to do. These expectations are defined through the relational aspect of the person. Husbands are beings seen through their wives and vice versa, daughters through their mothers, and sons through their fathers as well as parents through their children. These sorts of sensibilities inform ideas or notions of gender and are continually being reinforced and reconfigured. The most obvious imageries of gender are defined by

expectations of appropriate gendered action by both men and women in relation to domestic practices. For women (and girls) the performance of domestic duties such as cooking and cleaning are the most obvious gendered activity within the household. Blok talk about ideal female persons reifies the idea of *gutpela meri* as one who has *pasin* and *luksave* and who has been prepared to take on the responsibilities of a wife and a mother. This is seen as an important part of life, which is embedded in everyday social action. Preparation for possible future marriage and motherhood begins early, when girls in primary school are informed, reminded and sometimes reprimanded about performance of domestic duties. Older girls and teenagers are often told that an inability to perform domestic chores will result in future "*tambu's tok baksait*" (gossip from in-laws) or the possibility that a future husband may turn violent towards a wife who is not able to act like a mother or a wife. The concern here is not only for the future happiness and quality of the life of a daughter, but also because a wife who is not capable of performing certain duties not only portrays herself in a negative light but also her family because they will be perceived as not having played their part in preparing her for life as a mother and a wife. This is because it is expected that parents or kin should provide guidance to their children about socially acceptable behaviour. Hence, a daughter who is not able to be a wife or mother reflects badly on her own kin.

It isn't uncommon for mothers to disagree with a son's choice of wife on the premise that "*em i no save lo wok"* (She does not know how to work). Knowing how to work is clearly a positive aspect of femaleness which not only older women talked about, as younger women and girls also shared the same sentiments. I also noted that while it seemed that there was a concentration on the girl child when it came to teaching children about domestic related duties, these activities were highly interchangeable. For example, young boys often cook food and help to carry firewood. There is a certain logic that places an emphasis on making sure girls learn

the basics of home life; however, both boy and girl children carried out the same tasks regularly, either upon instructions from parents, elders or on their own accord.

Another dimension to the talk about being a "*gutpela meri*" lies in the domain of Christian-based teachings of morality and appropriate ways of behaving. Parents talk to their daughters and advise them not to stand on the road. I have heard mothers say that frequently standing on the road can lead to all kinds of problems like getting pregnant, being harassed or assaulted. Young girls who stand on the road are criticized for bringing unwanted attention on themselves. Several mothers that I know would tell their daughters not to wear shorts that were above knee length and go out in public spaces like the market or blok stores. Parental advice about appropriate dress codes seemed particularly important to those who were members of Pentecostal churches.

In the blok, it is men who take on public roles such as church and community leadership. All the informal dispute resolution events that I attended were also adjudicated by men. Blok talk about what it means to be a man is not only about showing leadership in public spaces such as community meetings, but showing leadership at home by taking the initiative to provide for family members and to look out for the best interests of wives and sisters. In Chapter Four, I talked about Barb's brother's reaction to her pregnancy. His reaction is not unexpected because this is how boys are expected to show their care for the welfare of sisters.

Leadership by men in the public sphere does not silence women's voices. Women were very vocal at community meetings, at church related activities and at dispute resolution meetings. For example, while attending a community meeting in July 2010, I witnessed a number of mothers speak very strongly and passionately about the need for all houses in the community to be connected to the city's water supply. In this case, women were the ones interested in raising this issue since they are the ones (together with their children) who carry water for household consumption.

Although men are not the only ones to perpetrate violence, this behaviour is a feature of masculinity in the blok that is not necessarily discouraged; although, it may be challenged through other means such as gender and domestic violence awareness programs. Chapter Six will present a more detailed discussion about violence within families. In addition to being able to protect family and kin, maleness in the blok is also closely associated with men being able to provide for their families. It is really the emphasis on providing for one's family (or seemingly doing so), and the ability to participate in exchange related activities[61] that are the most important characteristics of blok descriptions of what a good man is. I mentioned earlier that mothers are known to disapprove potential daughter-in-laws by claiming a women's apparent inability to perform household duties. Similarly, parents of daughters are also known to disagree, express concern and not accept potential son-in-laws who are not industrious or who show characteristics of being a *rabis man.* We saw this as a concern raised by Barb's parents in Chapter Three.

Anastasia Sai's description of the *rabis man* is based on her analysis of what she terms typologies of men in PNG and masculinities in transition (Sai, 2007:287). Sai (2007:314) describes the *rabis man* as not productive for his family or tribe and does not build his resources or if he does, he fails. He has no wealth to build alliances with other men in his community and he shows no aggression. While I agree with Sai's characterisation of the *rabis man* as being unproductive and not having wealth, her assertion that a *rabis man* shows no aggression is highly contestable, especially in the blok where Sai herself discerns as an environment where *rabis men* can be easily found (2007, p. 303). In a blok, the *rabis man* is often known for his tendency to be violent and disruptive within the community regardless of whether he has wealth or not. In other words, *rabis man* can be defined through *pasin* and not necessarily based on

wealth and alliances. Blok people often talk about men with money who do not assist their relatives. These men are referred to as *rabis man*. Men who are aggressive and cause trouble can also be described as *rabis man*.

Now that I have given an idea of the ways that blok people talk about being male and female I want to show how the ways of doing gender are changing. A mundane example of these changes in contemporary social action and in gender notions more broadly, is evident in the fact that men may not always be the breadwinners of the family. Therefore, women who are the main provider are known to be strong women. For instance, Betty, a Bougainvillean woman whose Morobean husband went to work in a mining town in another province, was admired by many people in the community because it was common knowledge that her husband had remarried a young woman from the province that he was working in and stopped supporting his family in Port Moresby. I would hear people talk about how strong and hardworking Betty was because she had raised her three children on her own when her husband had deserted her. Betty herself told me that she heard that her husband has a new baby and said *"Well he wants to clean baby shit that is why he went and got married again, when he was with me, I never allowed him to do such things. I looked after him really well"*. The admiration for Betty comes because she is doing what the father of her children is supposed to be doing. She is both mother and father to her children in addition to being the sole provider for her family. Betty's comment to me about her husband doing what she thinks is *wok blo mama* (mother's work) is telling in that child-rearing and women's work in the home is not reduced to something that is not seen as work in the commodity sense but is a show of women's value and the contribution they make to the lives of their families. Women in the blok do not view the work that they do in the home as something that needs to be remunerated or equated to other kinds of work (such as working for money). *Wok blo mama* stands on its own as a different kind or work that identifies a woman as a mother or wife.

While women may be considered strong for working and earning money, they are sometimes subject to unnecessary jealousy from husbands. This jealousy stems from mostly unfounded suspicion of infidelity and also because of a purported reversal of roles that affects a husband's ability to perform the social role that is expected from him as father and husband. But is it really a case of role reversal or is it more the case that a man's role as provider is diminished? Relationally speaking, it is the diminishing role of the man as the primary provider that is important in assessing relations between men and women because in traditional times women always were providers alongside men.

In a situation where the woman is the main income earner for the family, the importance of her work within the home is not necessarily reduced. It is more that she is recognised as extending her role as mother and wife to a world outside her home, which in some ways put her in direct opposition to her husband. People talked about the activities of men and women as complementary and that both women and men needed to contribute to the functioning of households; however, the reality of urban life poses many challenges for husbands and wives to work towards achieving this. It is within this kind of climate of uncertainty that sexual jealousy and ideas of maleness and femaleness are challenged and changing. For example, my friend Karen once told me "*I married John in the year 2000 and for six years he didn't have a job, I should have dumped him and married someone else like my sisters in the street (susa lo strit) are doing, but I am a strong woman and I am still with him"*. Karen's evocation of being a strong woman provides an example of how the diminished role of men can draw dire responses from women such as Karen's sisters in the street (*wan strit)*. Women like Karen were in the category of *gutpela meri* because they were seen to be withstanding the pressure of urban life and not resorting to the easy way out by *painim narapela man* (looking for another man) who will provide for Karen as a husband is expected to. Those who choose to show dissatisfaction with their husband's perceived financial inadequacies

or other perceived wrongs usually are criticized for wanting money and not thinking about their husbands, children and the greater good of the family. However, Karen can also be seen as weak because she chose to endure six years of hardship and not get out and find herself someone who will provide for her. It is not unusual for people to talk about money as being the cause of problems between husbands and wives, however I would suggest that it is the gendered expectation of male tasks and female tasks that create problems and not money.

The husbands of women who were main income earners are positioned in a sphere of opposition to their wives in the sense that they are not doing the things that they are expected to do such as to provide for their families. This is a difficult position to be in because praise for a strong woman who carries the load of working for the family often comes in opposition to sharp criticism regarding what her husband is not doing to maintain the family. I met a number of men whose wives were the main providers and it is clear that having a wife that earns the main part of the family income does not prompt a reversal of domestic responsibilities where the man is expected to take up the duties of the household. This is still seen as the domain of the wife and mother and in many instances older female children. Chapter Six will provide several case studies around these sorts of actions and reactions and its relationship to violence.

To come back to the issue of domesticity and the denigration of women, Marilyn Strathern (1984) has already made a compelling argument through her Hagen material as to why Hagen women are not lesser persons due to their child rearing capabilities, their apparent domesticity and exclusion from public life – something which Ortner (1974) suggested was true of Euro-American women. The reader may be wondering why I have taken such inspiration and paid much attention to a piece of work from thirty years ago. My reason for this is primarily because thirty years on the same sentiments persist. This is not to say that it is expected that Papua New Guinean

women will always be domesticated and hold no place in public life but it is to reaffirm that blok women like Hagen women are credited with will, volition, and the capacity to put things into social perspective (Strathern M 1988: 88). While their influence is more limited than men, women are credited with minds, a capacity for judgement and choice and an ability to entertain as points of reference both a consciousness of selfhood and a consciousness of social relationships. It is their capacity to put things into social perspective that enables them to "act out" if they see the need to do so. This leads me to the next point of discussion: how those who do not act the ways they should act are thought of.

Pasin as Action, Action as Pasin: Blok Persons, Blok Agency

To end the chapter, I now want to reflect on how blok people use *pasin* to think about others. I shall begin by reminding the reader about the ways in which people make claims in the blok and why they make these claims. I take the reader back to Chapter One, where it is relations between the *papa graun* and the settlers that reveal Morobe Blok as the place it is now and subsequently the persons that have settled on this piece of land. The claims to place, legitimacy of settlement and belonging are made with this relationship in mind. In Chapter Two, I recall Karen's complaint about her cousin Ari not assisting her with food in times of need. Karen's specific complaint towards Ari reveals who Ari is and what she is to Karen. Here it is their relational connection that allows Karen to send her children to ask Ari for food. Karen wouldn't complain or contemplate sending her children to ask from someone who she did not consider as having contributed to their wellbeing through the sharing of food and other resources. From Karen's point of view and perspective, she is

acting with her relationship with Ari in view. Also, chapter two ends with a discussion of giving and not giving. Again, I remind the reader of my observations of how people who were returning to town with plastics of food seemed to walk a little faster. I asked the question as to whether this was because they were uncomfortable to be seen with food or maybe they concealed what they had because there may not be enough to go around, therefore concealment does not leave the chance of pre-empting what one may think that another is thinking. Similarly, in chapter three, the relation between Cynthia, Sarah and Toby objectifies kin-like relations. It is the feeding, caring and time that contributes to Toby's wellbeing making her as much as a mother to Toby as Sarah. It is the history and the quality of the relation that Toby has with Cynthia and also the quality of the relationship between Cynthia and Sarah that enable claims to be made upon each other. Barb's story in chapter four also shows how people make claims upon each other based on investment made over time and through family ties.

Barb's story in chapter four also highlights how blok people are construed from the vantage point of others (Strathern M.1988:273). The reaction to her pregnancy and to her death revealed who Barb was to the different people who had an opinion of her pregnancy and also at the time of her death. Barb's whole story is an example of what happens during the life events of people in the blok.

The various stories and events that have been described throughout the thesis are related to or can be generally described as *pasin*. My focus on the Tok Pisin word "*pasin*" is based on the frequent use of this word in idle talk at the market and in conversations with friends and acquaintances. I interpret *pasin* as a moral evaluation of actions constituted through persons. *Pasin* is a way in which blok persons make claims to and reveal people and relations. This moral evaluation takes place at two levels. The first level being an evaluation of general friendliness and ability to *luksave* (to see, or acknowledge or recognise). There are no claims here, just general observations about

the behaviour of others. The second level of moral evaluation is motivated by perceived contributions, which leads to persons being revealed through relations. In this everyday talk an ideal person is someone who has *pasin* and *lukasave,* someone who is able to think of others through sharing of food, time or someone who greets and acknowledges others as they go about their daily lives. *Pasin* and *luksave* can be used interchangeably because to have one is to have another. To give an example, two of the most common references to *pasin* point to totally opposite forms of action. I sometimes would hear a person say "*Em ino meri blo toktok, naispla meri em save stap isi tasol"* (She doesn't talk much, she is a nice person who just stays quietly) "*O dispela meri em gutpela meri, meri blo toktok na lukim ol wantok"* (This lady is a good lady, she talks and always sees her people).[62] I cannot recall the number of times that I have heard the words "*gutpela man, gutpela pasin*" (good man, good ways) and "*nogat luksave blo em*" (no recognition). The articulation of *gutpela* or *nogut pasin* is constantly used to describe what blok people think of the actions of their fellow blok dwellers, friends, relatives and acquaintances. *Nogat luksave* is a direct admonishing of one's disapproval of a person who does not recognise the relationships that constitute him or her. Joel Robbins (2009: 50) presents the Urapmin gift economy as one of mutual recognition where people explain their exchange behaviour by referring to emotions such as *aget atul* (anger) and *fitom* (shame). According to Robbins, the Urapimin never talk about the reasons for their exchanges as being because persons stand in particular relationship of kinship or affinity to them. My ethnographic description of *luksave*, which equates to recognition, stands in contrast to that of Robbins. In the blok, to not have *luksave* is a negative action or *pasin* and is seen as choosing not to acknowledge relations, particularly those of kinship and affinity. This may seem like the form of personhood that Keir Martin speaks of in the context of his Tolai Big

[62] Note here that I refer to a female in my example but these sentiments are expressed about both men and women, girls and boys.

Shot (2007) that sets up boundaries between different social lives and exerts what looks to be a form of possessive individualism. I suggest that not having *luksave* in the blok is not an indication of an emerging sense of possessive individualism but is more an expression of dissatisfaction through action which emanates from the person who is not acknowledgeable. It is not my intention to equate *luksave* and possessive individualism but to show how a negative connotation of *luksave* can be interpreted as affirming individualism. By not acknowledging a *wantok* or friend, one can also be expressing or showing dissatisfaction in the relationship that is at stake, however this does not necessarily mean that the relational aspect of one's personhood is being boxed in as suggested by Martin because blok residents view their relations with others from the vantage point of everyday living. For example, the local trade store owner or *buai* seller may give a monetary contribution to assist a regular and familiar customer with *kastom* obligations, such as bride price or *haus krai* expenses. Blok people have a sense of those who contribute to their wellbeing and life but may choose not to *luksave* in order to show dissatisfaction at the state of relations or because they may not be in a position to do so. A counter argument to my point could be made that a Big Shot is somewhat different to a blok person because a Big Shot has the financial capabilities to choose not to acknowledge relatives outside the ambit of *kastom*, however I would think that the fact that one chooses not to associate with kin in areas of life outside of customary obligations still reveals persons through relations because one would not be taking such a stance against relatives if one did not acknowledge relations outside of *kastom*. To conclude, it suffices to say that even with the magic of modernity and the encompassment by the West (LiPuma 2000) blok people live relationally and while they may choose to live lives that are seen as individualistic, they can never really be the owners of their own capacities but rather chose moments in time as to when they wish to activate these relational capacities.

This chapter has reemphasised the importance of the relations that constitute people's lives. It has showed through the use of the Tok Pisin words "*pasin*" and "*luksave*" that blok people think about persons through their actions. These actions are not necessarily gendered but are reflective of what makes persons. What is considered gendered in the blok is what people do. Here I have shown the reason how gendered action takes place within the household. This gendered action is considered important not because it demarcates males from females but because it prepares persons for future relations as wives and mothers or husbands and fathers. The gendered actions within the domestic domain is now being done in different ways as life in the city requires different kinds of action in terms of what women do and what men do. Ideas about work and the type of work that men and women do affect how both men and women are viewed. I have tried to emphasise here that domestic responsibilities of women may be the same as before but that contemporary conditions of low formal employment opportunities require changes in other aspects of life such as the possibility that a wife may be as successful in finding work as a husband. This has an effect on expectations of the kinds of things that men and women are expected to do.

PART III

Chapter Six

Gender and Violence

Introduction

Chapter five's discussion about personhood, gender and agency will now be followed with an examination of violence between men and women within the blok. I recorded eleven incidents of violence over a fifteen-month-long period. All except for one of these incidents had a gendered dimension. By gendered dimension, I mean that the violence occurred between men and women or the purported cause of the violence related back to relations between a man and a woman as husband and wife. Discipline of children in the form of severe beatings was also a common occurrence, as was violence between men. I consider all these forms of violence important, however for the purpose of the thesis I will focus on the violence between men and women, specifically husband and wife.[63]

My interest in this particular form of violence is based on a long-term commitment to addressing a pressing social issue within Papua New Guinea. This commitment is further strengthened by a concern that policies addressing gender issues, such as violence against women, have had minimal impact in dealing with what is widely believed to be an escalating social problem. Research focusing on gender over the last thirty years in Papua New Guinea and Melanesia has produced a large

[63] I follow the blok use of husband and wife here, as couple's who are in some form of an intimate relationship.

body of knowledge, which includes the continued research interest on gender violence.[64] In order for me to be able to place my research within the wider research of gender violence in Papua New Guinea, I shall revisit some of the important findings from different studies into aspects of gender violence. The literature will cover both anthropological and development related definitions and causes of violence. It is important to frame this issue in this context because the problem of violence against women in Papua New Guinea is deemed to be, simultaneously, a human rights issue, a development issue, and a key contributing factor to gender inequality. This is the kind of language used in documents such as PNG Development Strategic Plan 2010-2030 and AusAid's Violence against Women in Melanesia, and East Timor Report (2007). Violence against women in this Western-development-oriented framework places the question of violence as a phenomenon perpetuated by differences between men and women. It concentrates on trying to address this difference with an aim to improve the lives of women as independent bounded persons, whose lives do not exist within relations with others.

I will then follow this general overview by presenting several examples of violence between husbands and wives or men and women with a view to present marital concerns as a cause of violence and the remedies taken to address these problems. These examples are the basis my analysis of violence between husbands and wives. This will be followed by a description of the local experience of global efforts of ending violence against women. Here I will discuss how West-driven global efforts can have a limited impact on local lives primarily because of the individualist nature of their efforts. The chapter will end with a final vignette about gender, violence and dispute resolution. This particular story is about a young girl who finds herself in a situation where she needs to choose between two men, one being the

[64] See, for example, Ending Violence Against Women for Women and Girls, Evidence, Data and Knowledge in Pacific Island Countries (2011).

father of her child and the other being the man that she is currently married. This story appears at the end of the chapter because it demonstrates some of the issues raised in the chapter and also reflects much of what has been discussed in this thesis in terms of ideas of the claims people make upon one another, causes and reasons for action and relations between men and women.

Violence against women – An Overview

Violence – both physical and sexual – against women is generally viewed as a pervasive ongoing social problem within Papua New Guinean society.[65] Gender violence is an issue that has come into a primary focus in gender related research (Hukula, 2005; Lewis, 2008; Macintyre, 2008; Capie, 2011) In addition to the wealth of anthropological documentation on gender, academics such as Morauta (1985), Banks (1997), Tamakoshi (1990), Borrey (2000), Bradley (1994) and Toft (1986) have explored and documented the issue of violence against women in Papua New Guinea. Violence against women is prevalent both in rural and urban Papua New Guinea (Toft 1985). Research relating to gender violence can be roughly divided into two areas: sexual violence and domestic violence. More recent studies concerning sexual violence, explore the social contexts of sexual offences such as Banks (1997) ethnographic research of rape in four different societies in Papua New Guinea, Hammar's (1999) research on sexual networking and violence on Daru Island and Borrey's (2000) work with University students and settlement residents of Morata, Port Moresby. Most recently, Margaret Jolly and Christine Stewart and Carolyn Brewer (2012) edited a volume titled 'Engendering Violence in Papua New Guinea'

[65] There is no systematic up-to-date data to verify this. This assertion comes from perceptions of the wider community in the form of letters to local newspapers and also through continuous funding from development partners such as AusAid.

with contributions discussing different aspects of violence against women in Papua New Guinea, ranging from rape, to prostitution, to the legal system, and to domestic violence.

Domestic Violence

The early eighties and nineties produced insightful research in the subject of domestic violence, its causes and prevalence (Toft 1985; Bradley 1985; Rosi 1992).

Concepts of social change and adaption to urban or modern life also engage with gender and gender violence with a particular focus on marital violence (Toft 1986; Tamakoshi 1993; Counts 1990; Mantovani 1992). These discussions include problems associated with development such as poverty and lack of educational opportunities and interrelated issues of traditional notions of gender and how these ideas have been translated to modern-day life. For instance, Sinclair Dinnen (1997) speculates that the factors underlying current patterns of violence against women in Papua New Guinea are complex. Changing household relations, high levels of societal tolerance of violence, alcohol abuse, the breakdown of traditional restraints, and the persistence of male dominance in all fields contribute to violence against women.

Prevalence of Violence

It is difficult to ascertain whether violence between husbands and wives is increasing in Papua New Guinea. The most comprehensive study into domestic violence was conducted by the Constitutional Law Reform Commission nearly thirty

years ago[66]. The Law Reform Commission's rural survey found that two-thirds of wives had been hit by their husbands. For urban residents the survey found that fifty-six percent of wives of low income earners and sixty-two percent of elite wives had been physically assaulted by their husbands (1992: 16)[67]. More recent studies (Kopi 2010; Naemon 2009) also indicate that high levels of violence within Papua New Guinea communities affect the sense of personal security as well as raises concerns for sexual health. A recent study of 415 women accessing Antenatal and Voluntary Counsel and Testing[68] found that over half of the women had been subjected to physical violence (Lewis 2008:68). Amnesty International (2006:13) reports that eighty to ninety percent of women presenting to health facilities in Papua New Guinea are victims of domestic violence.

Reasons for Violence

Violence between married couples is viewed as "normal" and is condoned by both men and women. The Papua New Guinea Law Reform Commission (1992:6) categorizes three main types of domestic violence as the following:

1. Punishment/Discipline – where a man hits a woman for something she has or has not done in order to "teach her a lesson";

[66] The PNG Law Reform Commission was given a reference in 1982 by the then Minister for Justice Hon Tony M. Bais to enquire into and provide a report on the nature and extent of domestic violence. There were three other terms of reference regarding legal remedies, changes in law, and awareness on domestic violence.

[67] There were five approaches to the urban research. These include: a survey of urban elite, a survey of urban low income earners, a survey of two urban settlements, a hospital survey, and two case studies of urban battered women. (Toft 1986:1). The rural survey covered sixteen out of twenty provinces.

[68] As part of a strategy to address the issue of HIV in Papua New Guinea, all pregnant women presenting at government-run health facilities should be offered voluntary testing.

2. Preventive –where a man hits his wife to show her who is boss;
3. Expressive – where a man hits his wife as a way of getting rid of his negative feelings such as anger and frustration;
4. Defensive – where one partner (usually the wife) hits back after being hit.

The findings of the Papua New Guinea Law Reform Commission concur with several other studies about domestic violence. Dorothy Counts (1992:76) research shows that in West New Britain a Kaliai wife can be beaten if she fails to meet domestic obligations such as preparing meals, caring for children and not keeping the house clean. Similarly, Nancy McDowell (1999:92) writes that in Bun village, East Sepik, the reason a man's reason for hitting his wife frequently stems from her not preparing food or not doing work. McDowell also states that while there are diverse reasons why men and women quarrel, all of the reasons are related to power issues. Violence for the Yuat people of Bun village is not random and it is located around four related relationships. These relationships center on husband and wife, co-wives, brother and sister and affine or potential affine (McDowell 1999:91). The importance of understanding violence lies in the exchange marriage system of the Yuat people. Ideally, all marriages occur by brother, and sister exchange of classificatory cross cousins. This form of marriage ensures that equality and balance are achieved (McDowell 1999:89). Therefore, a recalcitrant sister may spoil her brother's chances of marrying if she refuses to marry or causes problems in her own marriage.

Richard Eves (2007) research on masculinity and violence in Simbu, Bougainville, and Western province also found that violence between men and women is related to women not looking after pigs, gossiping or playing cards. The women in Eves study saw these transgressions as "mistakes" (Eves 2007:24). Eves mentions that the women in his study mentioned playing cards instead of working as common mistake. Eves asserts further that such offences seem trivial, however, the

real misdemeanor consists in the wife being off doing what she wants as opposed to what her husband wants her to be doing. While the Law Reform Commission's study on prevalence rates is outdated, more recent research and anecdotal evidence suggests that violence within homes is increasing with the reasons for violence remaining the same in different parts of Papua New Guinea.

The observed increase of violence within households has also been attributed to increased mobility of men, modernity, and a breakdown of traditional customs pertaining to relations between men and women.[69] In some parts of the country the natural resource extraction industry has provided the impetus for men to move to locations within the resource area in search of employment, a situation which is now viewed as a catalyst for violence within families.

Acceptance of Violence

The Papua New Guinea Law Reform Commission's research shows that there is a difference between acceptance of domestic violence by both men and women in rural areas and men and women in urban areas. Research in rural areas indicated that sixty-seven percent of men and fifty-seven percent of women thought it was acceptable for a husband to hit his wife. In contrast, in urban areas the majority of respondents, both men and women, did not think it is acceptable for a man to hit his wife (1992: 19). The Law Reform Commission suggests that this change in attitude may be taking place in urban areas as a result of education, acculturation, the influence of missionaries and women's groups.[70] Once again, these statistics are consistent with

[69] See Toft 1985; 1986 Lepani 2008; Wardlow 2006 ;Zimmer Tamakoshi 1997; Rosi 1993; Haley 2008.

[70] More recent research by Lewis et al. (2008), Ceridwen Sparks (2010) and Eastern Highlands Family Voice (http://www.postcourier.com.pg/20121120/feature.htm, accessed 22/11/2012

ethnographic research on wife beating, for example both Kaliai men and women of West New Britain accept wife beating in principle; there is a strong feeling that others should not interfere in marital conflict but there is also a point where violence ceases to be acceptable and becomes abusive (Counts 1992:77). Richard Scaglion (1999) writes that the Abelam consider a certain level of physical violence against women as acceptable. His research found that most women in Neligum village regarded certain amount of physical violence as an unfortunate part of married life. In his interviews with women about past mild beatings, one woman responded that she was very angry at the time but later realized that she had been wrong and accepted the situation without much bitterness.

Richard Eves (2007) suggests that the Papua New Guinea Law Reform Commission's findings on the acceptance of violence have not changed much. Amnesty International (Amnesty 2006:12)[71] observed that in some communities there did not seem to be a debate as to whether violence against women at home was acceptable. Amnesty International found that community discussion was focused on the degree of violence that was acceptable and behavior which might legitimate a violent response. People expressed disapproval but did not support any action against men who were considered to beat their wives severely and frequently and towards men who beat their partners without cause or under the influence of alcohol. Similarly, Naomi MacPherson's (2012:69) work on spousal violence among the Bariai of West New Britain states that with a very few exceptions all Bariai men and women claim that physical violence against women is permissible in certain circumstances.

---

suggest that a higher level of education does not necessarily mean that the woman's chances of being subjected to violence lessens or that a man with a higher level of education is less likely to be violent towards a spouse or partner. See also Macintyre (2012).

[71] Amnesty International visited three locations in Western Highlands Province and five locations in East Sepik Province.

Violence in the Urban Setting

Violence in urban Papua New Guinea has been attributed to the stresses of changing living structures, the cash-based economy, and changing ideas of maleness and femaleness. In the urban setting, it is believed that the change in residence patterns, where families live in a westernized nuclear style, as opposed to kin- and clan-based living where families live in proximity each other. This view is contested as urban living, especially settlement dwelling is more akin to village-based living where families do live in proximity to each other or more than one family often occupies one dwelling. The cash-based economy is seen as a contributing factor to urban violence, with low levels of formal employment available, which impacts gender through changing ideas of work. Changing ideas of the male and female are also informed by education, Christianity, and the widespread availability of alcohol (Herdt 1982; Tamakoshi 1993; Shadlow 1990).

Violence in the Blok-Man, Meri Pait

The literature on domestic violence in Papua New Guinea shows that generally violence within marriages is caused as a wife's non-performance of domestic expectations. The discussion pertaining to domestic violence is that aggression is a way for a man to assert control over a woman and to discipline or socialise her into performing her social duties (McPherson 2012:56). The available research demonstrates that there is a level of acceptance for some form of wife beating within

many communities. These findings support my own material on violence between husbands and wives in the blok. The incidences of violence presented here have been randomly documented as fights I was made aware of or witnessed myself. Whilst I have a long-term interest in issues of gender and violence, my fieldwork did not concentrate on this issue as separate from blok life, therefore, what I present here are descriptions of situations of violence and the context within which they happen. There will be three stories, followed by a more detailed example. Two of the stories are about women who are showing dissatisfaction over the way in which their husbands are behaving and one story is about a couple who also act in certain ways to show each other their discontent.

Pait blo wanpela dei (A fight for a day)

One morning there was a commotion on the street over from our house where Keri and Harry, a young couple, were fighting. Keri and Harry lived in a rent house with their young children, one aged two and a week-old newborn. The fight was a continuance from the previous night. The wife had waited for her husband to come home from work and when he did not return at his usual time, she went looking for him and found him drinking with a relative. When she found him, she berated him for his behaviour and then smashed his mobile phone on his head. Upon seeing Keri smash Harry's mobile on his head, the relative he was drinking with said "*yu wetim wanem? paitim em*!" (What are you waiting for? Hit her!) When Harry did not hit his wife, his relative hit Keri and poured beer over her. This particular woman is strong-willed and does not hesitate to show her husband her dissatisfaction. Some of his relatives told me that she does not like her husband drinking with his friends and relatives and this is not the first time that this sort of thing has happened. In the

morning, she continued her angry rage by smashing everything in the house and also nearly ruining Harry's laptop computer. After fighting at their house, they both went to the bus stop with their two-year-old daughter. Keri, knowing that Harry needed to get to work, gave him their daughter to hold, boarded a PMV, and went to town. Harry had no choice but to bring their daughter back to the house and leave her with her one-week-old brother who was left in the care of relatives while his parents fought.

Harry, the man from this story is known to be a *gutpela* man (good man). I spoke to one of his male relatives after the incident who said to me "*em olsem yet, em save larem meri bossim em*" (He is like that, letting his wife boss him around). I asked him what he meant and he replied that this was not the first time that Harry's wife Keri had berated him in public. I mentioned that maybe she was angry because she has a newborn and a toddler to take care of so she expected Harry to come home to help her with their children rather than drink with his kin. Harry's relative replied that Harry was always helping his wife, unlike many young fathers he rarely went out drinking and this was not a planned meeting, in fact, a relative whom he had not seen in a while asked him to have a few beers with him so he obliged. Some of the women from their street who witnessed the couple fighting said that Keri went a bit far with her public display of anger. "*Em mus belhat lo mak, na noken brukim ol samting blo man lo go lo wok. Dispela komputa tok na meri ia save kaikai "(*Her anger should have a limit and she should not have tried to break his computer, it's the computer that ensures that she eats). Those who were discussing this incident with me were not condoning Keri's actions; they were more concerned about the level of violence and the extent to which Keri was willing to go by damaging Harry's property, which they felt would be counterproductive to making her point. Harry's male relative thought that Keri's actions was unwarranted because Harry did not go drinking with his friends or relatives often and Keri was making herself look foolish by her display of anger. In

this discussion, the act of violence between Keri and Harry was not the issue, what was of importance was the cause for violence and the level of violence that occurred.

In the time that I lived in Morobe blok, I saw and heard sporadic episodes of violence between men and women and upon enquiry as to what actions were taken by the victim, I was often told that "*em fight blo wanpela dei day*" (It's a one-day fight). I have seen and heard neighbours involve themselves into violent arguments and fights and then, on the very next day, I would see the same couple walking to the bus stop together.

People in the blok do not speak of actions of violence being right or wrong without evaluating it through the story behind it; it is never a simple matter of the justifiability for the act of violence, which itself is never the focal point of discussing violence. As an ethnographer and Papua New Guinean, one who has fairly strong views about violence in general but in particular about the violence against women, I did struggle at first to comprehend such actions. At the same time, these very events and words enabled me to rethink my stand as well as ask whether or not the descriptions of gender used at the levels of policy, NGO, and donor countries are reflective of the everyday lives of people. I will return to this issue later on. Let us now move to John and Karen, a couple who the reader was introduced to at the beginning of the thesis.

John and Karen are involved in volunteer work within and outside of the community. Both of them have attended various trainings on violence against women and human rights as part of their volunteer work. I spoke to Karen and John about this issue because I know their involvement with NGOs means that they would have an idea about how awareness and training translated to practical initiatives and also if the kind of awareness they received was useful for their everyday life.

John and Karen also have a history of violence in their relationship so when John beat Karen while I was in the blok, I took the opportunity to talk to them about the incident. For his actions, John was fined K250 (£65) by the *komiti* for disrupting the peace in his family. Larry who is one of the *komiti* members told me that John was influential in assisting NGO's to come into the community to carry out trainings on topics such as gender based violence and yet he returns home and beats his wife up which in the eyes of many defeats the purpose of his volunteering. John told me that he knows it is wrong to beat Karen but when he comes home and sees that the house is a mess and their children tell him that their mother has been on the road playing cards all day then he feels hurt and even though he talks to her and asks her not to continue, she keeps doing the same thing and while saying things like '*em raet blo mi*' (It is my right). John then gets angry and beats her to try and scare her into not playing cards. I asked John why he does not want Karen to play cards and he said that card playing a waste of time and also because he thinks it is socially unacceptable. Karen's father is a *het man* (leader) in the local Lutheran church therefore John thinks that Karen playing cards reflects badly on her father as a local leader.

I asked John what the training that he receives about violence against women means in his life. He replied that while he is pleased that he is learning new things and new ways to deal with issues like domestic violence, in reality it is very hard to put into practice. John then went on to say "*displa ol training save bagarapim sindaun tu ya*" (those trainings spoil life too). By *bagarapim sindaun* John is referring to Karen using the rights based language to chastise him for trying to stop her from playing cards. John said Karen advocates for her right to be able to do whatever she wants but he also says that rights come with responsibility which means that, yes, Karen can do what she wants but is it fair that he (John) is expected to go out and look for work and get money through volunteering while Karen spends her day playing cards? John's explanation resonates with the reaction from men in Vanuatu regarding

changes to law that engenders women's rights, specifically the domestic violence protection court orders and the family protection bill (Taylor 2008).

After I spoke with John, he left me to talk with Karen. Karen said that when her husband beats her she tells him that *"Yu save dring bia na pinisim moni lo spak so why yu toktok lo mi lo kas"*(You drink beer and finish money by getting drunk so why do you talk to me about [playing] cards?). She said she knows that if she talks to him about his drinking then she might get beaten up so she shows her dissatisfaction by *mekim wantaim action* (showing her dissatisfaction through action). In this instance, her actions, that is, to play cards on the road is her direct response to what she feels is inappropriate behaviour from John. By doing something that he disapproves of she is showing him that she also disapproves of his actions. From Karen's perspective, she sees card playing as a way of defiance because she feels that John fails in his responsibility to her and the children when he spends money drinking with his friends. John and Karen's story is not unfamiliar to blok life where actions by one partner serves the purpose of influencing another either in a positive or negative way. In the case of John and Karen, John did stop smoking, drinking and chewing betelnut and the family started going to church again. John did not beat Karen again during my fieldwork time.

Another example of *mekim wantaim action* came from Waina, a woman who said to me "*pikinini, mi, nogat mahn bai korosim mi lo kaikai"* (child, no man will get angry at me for not cooking). This was Waina's response to me one afternoon when I jokingly said to her "*Yu inap lo maus wara na go kuk nau, nogud bai papa kam bek lo haus na koros sapos kaikai no redi* (You better stop joking and return home to cook, your husband might return home and get angry if the food is not ready). She continued to tell me that if she is angry with her husband she can go dancing at club twenty-two[72], and her children will support her because they have grown up seeing their father getting

[72] Outdoor dancing place in Port Moresby

drunk. Waina said that when her husband drinks and does not give her money for the children, she does not worry about him (*mi no bisi lo em*). She still cooks for the family and puts his food aside and when he returns she brings his food, then takes the protein[73] (*abus*) and gives it to their children while she gives her husband the plate of rice. This is Waina's way of conveying to her husband that, if he can go out and spend money drinking beer with his friends than he should not expect to come home to eat a meal with protein (*abus*) because the money that he spends buying beer could be spent buying protein because protein like beer is a luxury and not an everyday essential food item.

How best can an ethnographer think about these stories and stay true to the way in which these people themselves tell the story? For example is it power and insubordination that makes John beat Karen when she plays cards? Is John's violence towards Karen an expression of his wanting to control her and express his masculinity (Eves 2007:14)? For Keri and Waina, can we think about their actions as a form of "negative agency" in the way that Huli women behave when they want to make a point? Holly Wardlow (2006:14) describes Huli women's negative agency as an important way in which women can influence their social field. This negative agency entails a refusal to commit their bodies to projects of social reproduction and can take the form of a refusal to go to the garden or to carry out tasks demanded by men, such as doing laundry.

The conversations surrounding the fights do not place the act of violence as the most important aspect of the story, it is the circumstances surrounding the acts of violence which are usually of the most importance. These three stories from the blok are very similar to those mentioned previously in the literature; in fact, this leads me to question what new knowledge will be brought by my ethnographic observations to

[73] Protein here refers to chicken or any other fresh meat.

the discourse about gender violence and violence between couples in Papua New Guinea.

Violence against Women-Global to Local

Before I consider this question, I turn to the subject of global discourse on violence against women and its relationship with local definitions and explanations of violence. The reason for doing this stems from the observation that the violence against women in Papua New Guinea agenda is driven by a western concept of gender and relations. In an attempt to understand masculinities in Papua New Guinea, Richard Eves raises the issue of disconnect between local and global definitions[74] of violence where he found that respondents in his study defined violence mainly as physical abuse. Margaret Jolly (2012:1) posits that gender violence poses a classic anthropological dilemma by the way of human universals and culturally relative concepts and values. Jolly advocates that both policy, research and programs associated with prevention and intervention needs to move past this impasse and look at the local and global meanings in the transnational relations of our world and at the dynamic and complex historical processes which ground how gender violence has been named a problem by national and international agencies and social movements. Sally Engle Merry acknowledges that everyday violence against women as a human rights violation[75]has not been established, nor has it moved readily from transnational to local settings. Human rights ideas, embedded in cultural assumptions about the nature of the person, the community and the state, do not easily translate from one

[74] Global definitions as defined through international instruments such as The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against women.

[75] Merry states that gender violence became acknowledged as a human rights violation in the 1980's and 1990's.

setting to another (Merry 2006:3). Merry's statement leads me back to John and Karen who have both had training on gender and violence and human rights. John was quite frank in saying it is easy to learn about these issues but not as easy to put into practice. The sentiments expressed by John are not unique. Martha Macintyre (2012:253-254) states that "awareness" of gender violence remains high within the Papua New Guinea Police Force, yet police officers remain reluctant to prosecute the criminality of intimate partner violence. In sharing her experience as a consultant on a PNG police project where she conducted workshops on gender and human rights, Macintyre states that the majority of officers confessed that when they were confronted by a woman wanting to lay a complaint their first reaction would be to "counsel her". Upon Macintyre's invitation to share why police officers opted for this strategy, the police explained that women were notorious for withdrawing charges or for failing to attend court proceedings therefore police bitterly resent the waste of time and energy they expend in prosecuting to no purpose. In cases where women's families demanded customary compensation payments for injury, women will report the crime in order to have leverage in compensation negotiations then withdraw the charge or refuse to follow through. In some instances, women did not want to have charges laid at all, their trip to the police station was to publically declare a grievance and "shame" assailants. I heard the coordinator of the Port Moresby Family and Sexual Violence police unit say on a morning talkback show in May of 2010 that over the past year the unit had registered 1023 complaints relating to domestic violence with 750 Interim Protection Orders (IPO's) being issued. Half of the IPO's were subsequently processed. Interim protection orders are issued straight away to anyone who suffers from violence and is valid for 14 days. After 14 days a woman can come back and tell the court whether they want to pursue the matter further or leave the matter as it is. According to the police coordinator, most women who turn up to the police station to report violence do not want to leave their husbands but would like

the police to speak to their husbands about their behaviour. The sentiments expressed by police are very familiar to me. In my capacity as a member of the PNG Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee, I have had the opportunity to talk to many police officers who have said that on many occasions women do not follow through with prosecution of violent offender, mostly for the reasons that Macintyre mentions.

Dealing with violence in the blok-the perspective of women

Macintyre's extremely useful insight into police responses to addressing intimate partner violence provides the background from which I shall try to answer my own question of the ethnographic relevance of my material. I will start this analysis by using Macintyre's descriptions of police attitudes to dealing with intimate partner violence as a starting point. Firstly, I will take up the issue of women's responses to violence and why women do not always pursue redress through the legal system.[76] As I mentioned previously, "*em fight blo wanpla dei*" is a common response as to why police intervention is not sought, however this response does not imply that the fight is easily forgotten and life goes on as normal. For example, I asked Karen why she did not report John to the police and she replied that she knows that she can report her husband to the police when he beats her but she thinks of their children so she refrains from doing so. She said that in the last bout of violence she wanted to report him to the police but the fight happened at night and she had no way of going to the police station. She instead went to her aunty who sheltered her and subsequently severely reprimanded John when he went to appease Karen. She then

[76] There are also some other important reasons as to why women do not report incidences of violence. There is a high level of mistrust in the work of the police and therefore some women could be afraid of being sexually assaulted and so they fear for their safety (See Guthrie 2006; Human Rights Watch 2005).

went on to say that John promised in front of her and their children that he will change and so she agreed also to change too and not to play cards. In my observations, women in the blok have various ways of dealing with violence. Some choose to fight back, others choose to '*mekim action*' in the form of defiantly playing cards or not cooking, leaving their husbands and marrying other men or taking off to stay with relatives for extended periods of time. Other women choose to pray for their husband's and marriages and commit themselves to church related activities. Anna Karina Hermken's (2012:149) research with female members of the Legion of Mary prayer group found that Legionnaires look to Mary as their spiritual mother and example of a good woman from whom they draw strength.

Development focused responses and Local Responses

Development oriented responses to gender based violence includes awareness messages which are frequently reiterated through television, radio and newspaper as well as through social programs such as *Yumi Lukautim Mosbi.*[77] At Morobe Blok various NGO's have conducted trainings and workshops on gender violence, child rights and human rights. I found that people have some knowledge of these issues and are aware that there are laws to protect women and children from violence, however putting this knowledge into practice is not as easy. Numerous development partners such as the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA)(2010) observe that public understanding and perception of violence in Papua New Guinea is low. I differ in opinion and suggest that on the contrary, public perception and understanding is not low but rather public perception is slightly different to that of

[77] Urban safety and crime prevention program which is partly funded by National Capital District, Government of PNG and AusAid.

development agencies such as JICA and the United Nations and Asian Development Bank and it is this perception that informs community action on issues relating to violence.

Development agencies and partners in Papua New Guinea hold this view because the sorts of responses to violence that I have shown through my ethnographic examples are different to the development oriented responses to gender violence that donors, women's rights activists and NGO's espouse, therefore these actions by people like Karen are seen as not understanding violence. John, my NGO volunteer friend, relayed to me that when women who were beaten by their husbands came to him for help he always talks to them and asks them if they are sure if they want to go through the process of reporting their husbands to the police because although he is willing to help women who need assistance, he does not want to be seen as contributing or assisting to the breakup of families. He also said to me that he is not in a position where he is able to support vulnerable women financially therefore he is always stuck in a quagmire of whether to proceed with helping women prosecute their husbands or help in other ways that does not entail legal redress because of the bigger picture of the effect that his actions will have on families, hence some form of mediation usually takes place at the community level. For woman, this is a way of making her complaints public which can help to deter violence because these public avenues of dispute resolution often include the involvement of other people such as local leaders, church elders and kin of women. Marilyn Strathern (1985:13) states that domestic violence does not simply constitute a class of offences but also a class of reactions therefore is part of the way in which people seek remedy for conflict.

The conundrum that those who are concerned with addressing violence between intimate partners or violence against women in general is that continued efforts in the form of anti-violence campaigns, gender education and awareness, the

strengthening of the systematic response to gender violence and the gender sensitization of police officers does not seem to be delivering expected outcomes.

However, local understandings, perceptions and forms of redress have been for the most part consistent. There seems to be acceptability of some level of violence and causes of violence and strategies for dealing with violence also seem consistent over the last thirty years. This has led me to question whether the continued assertion that violence against women and sustained inequalities[78] at all levels of PNG society is the main cause of men's violence against women. Could it be that we as ethnographers and anthropologists have been using descriptions that do not adequately reflect the lives of the people we have been studied? For example, the PNG Law Reform studies clearly show that there is a level of acceptance of violence between husbands and wives, this is also supported by ethnographic evidence. It seems to me that responses to violence campaigns do not acknowledge these sorts of information as a point of reference by which to engage with community descriptions of violence and or man and woman. In this vein, I take from Harriet D Lyons(1999:ix) that to refuse to engage with the topic of acceptable or unacceptable assault is to neglect information that may be important in understanding how women may be protected from serious injury or death. With that in mind, I want to offer an explanation as to why I think that inadequate descriptions of man and woman contribute to our understanding of violence, which in turn informs ill-fitting interventions.

Firstly, descriptions and analysis of violence within homes has long been viewed as a problem of the sexes-a man and a woman. Yet when violence occurs between a man and a woman it is a wife that is being beaten or in Keri and Harry's case a husband. In my observation, if a man fights with a woman or severely beats a

[78]Macintyre (2012) believes that "eliminating violence" against women entails that men will have to lose it.

female that is not his wife or in some circumstances his sisters, there is usually much criticism. Bystanders or family members will say things like "*em wanem meri blo yu*" (Who is she? Is she your wife)? On a few occasions, fathers who beat their daughters badly were criticized as *paitim em olsem meri blo yu* (hitting her like she is your wife)[79]. If we were to look at violence between men and women as specific to a relation, such as that of a wife or that of a husband then we may be able to see how this particular relationship influences violence. Fights between couples, occur because the husband or wife is not acting in a manner in which they are expected to behave. In saying this, I am thinking of a husband who drinks his wages away and a wife reacts by showing her disapproval by gambling all day. This is a way of showing the husband that she is not happy with his behaviour. This unhappiness stems from his behaviour as a father and husband and not as any other category of man (brother, uncle). This violence based on the relation can be interpreted within feminine discourse as men's continued domination of women or it can be viewed from the exact way in which it has been explained to me in the blok. This explanation being that a wife has certain expectations of her husband and vice versa and once these expectations are not fulfilled then the opportunity for confrontation and violence arises. This unmediated (Strathern 1988:178) exchange between a husband and wife works through violence as a way of effecting one or another and it is in this unmediated state that violence between husbands and wives may start to look like Batesons(1935) schismogenesis – whereby rivalry between parties elicits similar or symmetrical behaviour. In this case, the more a husband drinks, the more his wife defiantly gambles.

[79] In some instances I have noticed that a father who beats his daughter severely will draw gossip and accusations of an incestuous relationship.

Wally, Watson and Rita: an ethnographic example

I want to complete this chapter with Wally, Watson and Rita's story. This particular story not only encapsulates much of what this chapter has tried to show but also serves as a reminder of what this thesis is about: the relations within which lives are constituted.

Wally, Watson and Rita were in some kind of a love triangle. Rita and Wally grew up together in the settlement, were in a relationship, and had a daughter together. Wally left the settlement for a long time leaving Rita and their daughter in Port Moresby. While Wally was away, Rita entered into a relationship with Watson and both started living together after getting married. However, in 2009 Wally returned to the blok and resumed his relationship with Rita. In February 2010, a drunken Watson was "encouraged" by his friends to confront Wally and Rita. Watson had finished work and came to the settlement saying that he had come to cause trouble, so with "encouraging" words from some fellow drunkards, Watson set about looking for Wally and Rita. He eventually found Watson and Rita together and grazed Wally's arm with a bush knife. Wally and Rita managed to escape. However, Wally with his grazed arm stood in a dark place and waited for Watson to walk by so he could retaliate. As Watson passed Wally, Wally raised the weapon he was holding and dealt Watson a deadly blow on the head. Watson was rushed to the Port Moresby General Hospital. Around ten o'clock at night where he was pronounced dead.

Upon confirmation of Watson's death at around one o'clock in the morning, a group of ten to fifteen of Watson's male relatives and other unrelated men mobilised and began moving around in the stillness of the dark night where I watched as they targeted two houses opposite to the one I resided in. The group of men burnt down

the two houses along with Wally and Rita's family homes. Except for Wally and Rita's immediate families, all of the people whose houses were burnt down are not directly related to the couple but were neighbors and *wantoks*. When I enquired why the young men burnt the houses opposite to where I lived, I was told that those particular houses were burnt down because it is believed that these people condoned the affair between the couple, therefore it is right that they too carry some of the blame through their encouragement of "*pamuk pasin*" (promiscuity). From speaking with various people in the community, the burning of houses of those who were not related to Watson or Rita had more to do with the people who harbored and entertained the couple rather than as a direct result of the killing. Those who I spoke with said the burning of the houses after Watson's death was a way in which some members of the community intended to show that adultery is unacceptable. The burning of both Rita and Watson's family homes was to avenge the loss of Watson in a way that would make their families suffer. There was no retaliation on the part of those whose houses were burnt down, even though there was considerable anger and disapproval by a number of people who I spoke to who thought that families had lost their homes because of the actions of two people. Some members of the community also thought it was irresponsible of those who burnt down the houses to involve innocent children who would now be left homeless.

The police eventually arrived the next morning to investigate and arrest Wally, who had fled into town at night. Rita was taken by the police for questioning and also for her own safety in case Wally's relatives retaliated with violence. Wally eventually surrendered to the police and was charged with murder and sent to Bomana prisoner on remand. Following Wally's incarceration, the police offered mediation assistance between Rita's family, Wally's family, Watson's family as well as between the families of those whose house burnt down and those who committed the acts of arson.

In this story, the infidelity of Wally and Rita caused Watson as a husband to act like this. Wally acted with Rita as he felt that it was rightful to resume his relationship with Rita as he has a child with her, therefore he viewed her as his wife. Some of the members of the community that I spoke to after the event believed that Rita should be arrested and charged as an accessory to murder because one man was killed and another was arrested for murder due to her indecisiveness.

One of the concerns of gender related violence is the way in which these disputes are handled. Ideally, the police would have been the first point of contact for the disputing parties. In this incident, the police arrived at the blok ten hours after the murder took place and six to seven hours after the four houses were burnt to the ground. In the absence of police intervention, informal dispute resolution mechanisms such as the blok *komiti* that take the lead in diffusing tensions within the community. The point I want to make is that dealing with issues of violence between husbands and wives or is often dealt with at the community level for various reasons and it is precisely this kind of intervention which unintentionally derails efforts to encourage more women who experience domestic violence into the formal legal system. An intervention at the community level ensures that the grievances of all parties are heard, addressed in one way or another and most importantly assists in preventing further violence or destruction. The story resonates with Barbs story as well as the many examples I have given throughout this thesis of the ways in which relations dictate people's actions.

To conclude, this chapter offers an ethnographic insight into the already saturated literature on gender violence in Papua New Guinea. My aim here is to show the reader that violence between husbands and wives is specific to the relation-that of a husband and wife. This relation comes with certain expectations, which trigger specific actions if expectations are not met. My ethnographic evidence conforms to that of others who have researched domestic violence. Therefore, I am of the opinion

that to address violence within the family, the sorts of reactions to violence that I have presented must be taken into account as local experiences to be learnt from and not just examples of low levels of awareness. The continued attention on the issue of violence against women in Papua New Guinea means that more international organisations will pour money into efforts to address the issue of violence against women, however these efforts will continue to be in vein if the rights based language of individuality and gender does not adequately recognise the local understandings and contexts.

Conclusion

This thesis is about urban social relations. It is about land, place, livelihoods and notions of work and money. It is also abou blok ideas of personhood and gender. This study has provided the reader with a description of life in an urban settlement that portrays the hardships as well as the resilience and commitment that settlers have to urban life. Morobe Blok is not just a place with people from one province living in proximity to each other, it is home to many residents who have dual connections to place and *ples*. I have showed in this thesis that urban sociality is influenced by how people relate to each other through place, ideas of relatedness and notions of giving. What I have written in this thesis is based on from mundane everyday interaction with people in the blok. These are the things that people in the blok talk about every day. Conversations in the blok are about how to obtain money to buy necessities and to contribute to kin obligations. Blok residents also talk about what it means to be a good or bad person and how some of these actions relate to gender.

Chapter one introduced the theme of this thesis by showing how relations between two people (*papa graun and Sondiong Babago*) converted idle land into a place to settle for Morobean people in Port Moresby. The performance of memorandum's, groundbreaking ceremonies and agreements are a consequence of having to adhere to requirements of the state. The performance of settlement is similar to that of clan making in the resource extractive industry (Weiner 2007) where people are acting in ways deemed appropriate for their particular circumstance. Morobe Blok shows itself as a settlement made up of Morobeans when the need arises to make this evident. When that need has been taken care of people go back to living their lives as they do every other day. People may one day associate themselves with their district, clan or village and the next day align themselves with the church organisation, which may or may not have links to clan, district or village. Chapter one also shows how blok dwellers

appropriate the use of legal jargon to talk about ideas of ownership that recognises that the land that they live on is not theirs but can be made into some kind of legal agreement based on verbal agreements with a land owner and sporadic rental payments. The inclusive but exclusive nature of settlement is evident in the way that the leaders try to address how to keep the settlement true to its original intention, that being that Morobe Blok is a place where Morobean can "*stap yumi yet*". Chapter one presents land as something that is more that money and economics but is part and parcel of life. The place Morobe Blok engenders a sense of belonging through shared landscape, familiar places and a history of relations. Settlers at Morobe Blok can trace a history of relations that enables them to settle.

Chapter two is the second chapter in part one. Chapter two uses examples from the blok to show the reader that work and money is not just about the commodity world of exchanging alienable goods. In this chapter, I show blok perceptions of work through the stories of Joy, Tuo and Victor. People in the blok are very aware that to live in Port Moresby means to live on money. Yet, I show that having good relations with employers, enjoying the work environment and being able to find other ways to earn money are all key features of blok life. This chapter showed that money is not just money, but money of a different kind in different circumstance. When Tuo was working as a bank worker, the bank money did not sustain his family because he thought better to drink and borrow money. Now that he is unemployed he says he earns money every day but does not engage in the activities that he pursued when he worked in the bank. Tuo did not have any issues at his change in work and had aspirations to go back to work. He was taking a break from work but still earning money. In Mark's case, we see that his ambitions to work for a security firm also shows that blok people do have aspirations and goals for work and progress. Chapter two also shows how giving and money are two things that are paired in the blok. Many people like John and Goi express the sentiments that giving to people will bring blessings. Giving is one of the

most important ways that contributes to blok people forming kinship relations with one another. To give is not only to stop another from going hungry but it contributes to the exchange of good will and relations between people. It is assumed that global capitalism and a market economy leads to people asserting more individualist sense of self and being however my blok material shows that the very things that are deemed as key to appropriating a sense of individuality, money and work are also the very things that foreground the relational aspects of people's lives.

Chapter Three is about kinship and relatedness in the blok. I look beyond the dominant explanations of *wantok* as being from the same province to place and emphasis on the use of the prefix *wan* to locate other ways in which urban residents create relations. Here I show that being from the same province does not necessarily give rise to claims of relatedness. There are other aspects of everyday living that creates relatedness. This includes thinking about one another, kind gestures and most importantly sharing food and eating together. In this chapter, I show how Toby's relationship with Cynthia turns from an employed child minder role to that of a mother. I also show in this chapter how Sarah forms strong kinship ties with Sarah's family through them helping her with her household chores and Sarah helping to take of Cynthia's parents when they are unwell.

Barb's story in chapter four demonstrates the reality of life for a young woman in the blok. Barb's pregnancy and death is an example of how blok people locate agency in the minds and actions of others. Barb's pregnancy was never really said to be a result of her own conscious decisions and actions. Rather it was the actions of her mother that her relatives talked about. Her death brought the same reaction from relatives and friends who despite hearing her suicide note being read out still believed that the cause of her death was not her own doing but that of another. Barb's story spelled out more clearly how people make claims to the lives of other's and the contested claims that people can make. In Barb's case, her late paternal father's family took over the

arrangements for her funeral and burial because they said it was their body and their *haus krai*.

Chapter five draws from the previous four chapters by examining ideas of personhood and gender in the blok. The chapter outlines how blok people talk about gender and shows through Kate and Keith's story that gender is not just about a man and a woman. Kate and Keith's story in chapter five shows that Kate's infidelity is one that is not described as that of a woman but on the relational basis of claims to her as a wife and mother. It was for this reason that her son was so angry with her. He was angry with her for no acting in a way that a mother should act. Chapter five also looks at the changing roles of men and women and how this affects relations in the home.

Chapter six is the final chapter in this thesis. This chapter discusses an important aspect of sociality-relations between men and women and violence. This chapter provides an ethnographic account of reasons for violence between men and women and the approaches that victims of violence take to address violence. My research has shown how blok logic addresses matters of violence between men and women and how these actions do not conform with the current message of violence against women. Here I show that introduced systems such as the Western legal system is not always the preferred path of action by victims of violence for various reasons.

I embarked on a PhD because I have always had a firm interest in gender issues, especially gender violence. The focus of my PhD research proposal was on masculinities and violence. I chose an urban settlement as my research site because of the stereotypical perception of settlements being a place of violence and lawlessness. My research focus changed when I was in the field and the result is a thesis about urban sociality-the lived experience of social relations in an urban settlement. This lived experience encompasses forms of urban sociality that includes gender and violence. While I am still interested in gender and violence this thesis is a much more holistic approach to urban life in Port Moresby.

This research will contribute to the discourse on urbanisation and urban life in Papua New Guinea, Melanesia and the Pacific in a meaningful way because I will use this experience and my research to advocate for a better understanding of the lives of those who live in settlements. There is a growing concern about urbanisation in the Pacific and how to address the issue of a permanent urban population in island countries, Papua New Guinea included. In Papua New Guinea, the actions of successive governments have been oppressive and unfavourable towards settlers due to perceived notions of settlements and settlers, a Western idea of what a Melanesian city should look like coupled with Euro-American ideas of economics and land.

This thesis builds on the limited contemporary ethnography of settlement life by presenting aspects of settlement life that can only be observed through continuous everyday interaction. The six chapters in this thesis are based on my everyday interaction with settlers. My ethnographic description of life in a settlement aims to dispel stereotypes as well as provide an alternative view of settlements. This is why I have chosen to write this thesis in a style that is filled with personal stories, relations and the intricacies of the lives of the people who I came to know well. It conveys relations between people as well as their concerns, worries and problems. This thesis presents the settlement as a home to people who interact with the city of Mosbi every day by traveling to town on the bus to go to school, work and markets.

It is my aim to contribute to urban ethnography in Papua New Guinea and Melanesia however it is of great concern that I make this ethnographic research relevant so as to influence those who make policies and decisions about people in settlements. To this end I feel that anthropology as a discipline is important to assisting policy makers and those in governmentbecause it provides a kind of data that mirrors what daily life is like for people. I have been involved in survey's and other kinds of research in settlement communities and it is this experience that has convinced me that the methods and approach used in anthropological research is valuable in a sphere beyond

that of academia. The experience of this PhD research has continued to challenge me to think carefully and critically about how anthropology and ethnography can be made relevant in the policy context in Melanesia.

Epilogue

I moved out of the blok in November of 2010. It was the same kind of day as when I first visited the blok, the sun blazing hot, the ground was scorched and dry and it was a Saturday. The National Research Institute work truck slowly made its way through the dusty street and parked at my friend Sarah's yard. The same truck belonging to the National Research Institute had dropped me off more than a year ago with my blue backpack stuffed with a handful of clothes, a large stash of baby things and household essentials. I did not know Sarah that well then, so I asked the truck to stop outside of Sarah's place while one of my brothers unloaded our belongings and carried them to the house.

When I left my blok family all came to farewell my family and I. I knew Joy was going to cry but I was really sad when I went to shake Mark's hand and he grabbed me and wept. All he said was thank you. Joy and her eldest daughter Mala, another friend Mona and Joy and Mark's only son Wes climbed on to the back of the truck with my husband Simon and cousin Tina. They had decided that they were going to bring us all the way to my parents' home in Tokarara. As the truck reversed out, the children all waved goodbye to my daughter Tabai. Tabai had arrived at Morobe Blok just before she turned three months. She learned how to sit, crawl, walk and talk at the blok. We marked her first birthday in July of 2010 with a party in the blok, where her friends and my helpers came to share food with us. I only wish that Barb were with us.

The truck turned out of Sarah's yard and drove down John and Karen's street. I asked the driver to slow down so I could see if John was around so I could say good-bye. I had already seen Karen and said my farewells. As the driver slowed down, there was no sign of John. I called out to his daughter who was playing in their yard. As the vehicle continued over the dirt road, we heard a voice saying STOP! STOP! I looked out of the truck and it was John. John ran up to Simon and Tina and shook their hands. He came around to where I was sitting in the truck, holding Tabai. I squeaked out the words "*Thank you Aba*" (Big Brother). John hugged Tabai and I as the tears streamed down his face "*Awara, naso gagara,* (good bye my little sister) *thank you and don't forget us*". The truck slowly made its way out of the blok as we waved goodbye to friends along the way. At Tokarara, my mother cooked rice and fried ox and palm and served lunch for Joy, Mala, Mona and Wes. After they sat around for a little while I gave them money for their bus fare and my cousin Tina walked with them to the main Tokarara bus stop where they would catch a bus to Gordons then back to Nine Mile.

The fieldwork experience for me was enriched by the interest that my family showed in wanting to get to know what life is like in a settlement. My husband and daughter and my paternal cousin Tina lived with me while various maternal cousins and my parents and siblings visited us in the blok. My family got to know my blok friends and this enabled them to share food, to assist with helping blok people to find work and most importantly in my absence continue the relationship that I established. Most recently my mother, who runs her own NGO conducted cervical cancer awareness in Morobe Blok. I asked my mother who in Morobe Blok she was working with and she replied "*wanpla mama blo yu"* (one of your mothers).

I think it is fitting to end this thesis with the story of how my fieldwork time came to an end because the story that I have just told you epitomises what this thesis is about - urban social relations, it is about how urban lives are negotiated through ideas of

kinship, personhood, gender and violence. It is also about how relations are made, sustained and thought about.

Bibliography

Abraham, A, and Millar, M. 2011. Applying a Gift-exchange Perspective to Effective Voluntering in Papua New Guinea. *Pacific Affairs, 84*(4), 687-713. accessed December 2012

Amnesty International 2006. *Papua New Guinea: Violence Against Women: Not Inevitable: Never Acceptable*! . New York : Amnesty International.

Australian Aid. 2008. *Violence Against Women in Melanesia and East Timor. Building on Global and Regional Promising Approaches*. Canberra: AusAid.

Asian Development Bank. 2012. *The State of Pacific Towns and Cities. Urbanization in ADB's Pacific Developing Member Countries.* Pacific Series. Mandaluyong City: Asian Development Bank:

Bamford, S. 2007. *Biology Unmoored. Melanesian Reflections on Life and Biotechnology.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Bamford, S. 2009. "Family Tree" among the Kamea of Papua New Guinea. A non genealogical approach to imagining relatedness. In Bamford, S and Leach J (Eds.), *Kinship and Beyond: The Genealogical Model Reconsidered.* New York: Berghahn Books.

Banks, C. 1997. *Contextualising Rape and Carnal Knowledge in Papua New Guinea.* Waigani: National Research Institute.

Barber, K. 2003. The Bugiau Community at Eight Mile: A Urban Settlement in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. *Oceania, 73*, 287-297.

Battaglia, D. 1986. Brining home to Moresby: Urban Gardening and Ethnic Pride among Trobriand Islanders in the National Capital District. Boroko: Institute of Applied Social and Economic Research

Bateson, G. 1935. Culture, Contact and Schismogenesis. *MAN, 35*, 178-183.

Bateson, G. 1936. *Naven: a survey of the problems suggested by a composite picture of the culture of a New Guinea tribe drawn from three points of view.* Stanford: Standford University Press.

Borrey, A. 2000. Sexual violence in perspective: The case of Papua New Guinea. In Dinnen,S and Ley A (Eds.), *Reflections of Violence in Melanesia.* Canberra: Asia Pacific Press.

Bradley,C. 1994. *Why Male Violence Against Women: Methodological and Personal Perspectives.* California: Sage Publications.

Brewer, C, Jolly, M, Stewart, C. 2012 (eds). *Engendering Violence in Papua New Guinea.* Canberra: ANU E PRES

Capie,D. 2011. Small arms, violence and gender in Papua New Guinea. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*. Vol 52. No.1, 42-55

Carrier, J. 1992. The World Turned Upside Down. *American Ethnologist, 19*(2), 195-212.

Carsten, J. 1995. The substance of kinship and the heat of the hearth: feeding, personhood and relatedness among Malays in Pulau Langkawi. *American Ethnologist, 22*(2), 223-241.

Carsten, J. 2000. Knowing where you've come from: Ruptures and Continuities of time and kinship. Narratives of Adoption Reunions. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute. Vol 6 637-53

Carsten, J. 2004. *After Kinship.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chand, S, and Yala, C 2008. *Improving Acess to Land in the Settlements of Port Moresby.* Port Moresby: National Research Institute.

Chand, S, and Yala, C. (2008. Informal land systems within urban settlements in Honiara and Port Moresby. Making Land Work. Canberra: AusAID.

Chao, J. P. 1989. A new sense of community, perspectives from a squatter settlement. In Thirwall, C and Hughes P (Eds.), *The Ethics for Development: In search for Justice* (pp. 88-106). Port Moresby: University of Papua New Guinea Press.

Connell, J, and Curtain R. 1982. Urbanisation and inequality in Melanesia in RJ May and Hank Nelson (eds). Melanesia Beyond Diversity. Canberra: ANU PRESS. p461-500

Counts, D. A. 1992. "ALL Men Do It:" Wife Beatingin Kaliai, Papua New Guinea. In D. A. Counts (Ed.), *To Have and To Hit, Cultural Perspectives on Wife Beating.* United States: University of Illinois Press.

Cox, J. C. 2011. *Deception and Disillustionment: Fast Money Schemes in Papua New Guinea.* Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Melbourne, School of Social and Political Science, Melbourne.

Dinnen, S. 1997. Law, Order and State in Papua New Guinea. Canberra: Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies.

Dinnen, S. 2001. *Law and Order in a Weak State: Crime and Politics in Papua New Guinea.* Honululu: University of Hawi'i Press.

Dogimab, M. 2009. *An examination of culture as a protective mechanism against gender based violence: A case study in Mt Bosavi Papua New Guinea.* Massey University. Palmerston North: Massey University.

Errington, F and Gewertz D. 1996. The Individuation of Tradition in a Papua New Guinean Modernity. *American Anthropologist* 114-126.

Errington, F and Gewertz D. 1999. *Emerging Class in Papua New Guinea: The Telling Difference.* Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press.

Eves, R. 2007. *Exploring the roles of Men and Masculinities in Papua New Guinea in the 21st Century. How to address violenc that generate empowerment for both men and women.* Sydney: Caritas Australia.

Filer, C. 2007. Local Custom and the Art of Land Group Boundary Maintenance in Papua New Guinea. In J. F. Weiner (Ed.), *Customary Land Tenure Registration in Australia and Papua New Guinea: Anthropological Perspectives* (pp. 135-174). Canberra: ANU E PRESS.

Foster, R. 1995. *Nation Making.* United States: University of Michigan Press.

Gibson, L. 2011. *Hope, Agency and the 'Side Effects of Development in India and Papua New Guinea.* Unpublished PhD Thesis, Massey University, Palmerston North.

Goddard, M. 2001. Rolling Thunder to Reggae: Imagining Squatter Settlements in Papua New Guinea. *The Contemporary Pacific, 13*(1), 1-32.

Goddard, M. 2005. *The Unseen City.* Canberra: Pandanus Books.

Goldman, L. 2007. Incorporating Huli: Lessons from the Hides Licence Area. In J. F. Weiner and K Glaskin (Eds.) Customary Land Tenure in Australia and Papua New Guinea: Anthropological Perspectives (Ed.). Canberra: ANU EPRESS.

Golub, A. (2007). From Agency to Agents: Foraging Landowner Identities in Porgera. In J. F. Weiner and K Glaskin (Eds.) Customary Land Tenure in Australia and Papua New Guinea: Anthropological Perspectives Canberra: ANU EPRESS.

Gosarevski S, Hughes H &Windybank S. 2004. Is Papua New Guinea viable with Customary Land Ownership. *Pacific Economic Bulletin, 19*(3), 133-136.

Gow, P. 1991. *Of Mixed Blood.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Gow, P 1995. Land, People and Paper in Western Amazonia in Eric Hirsch and O'Hanlon Micahel. (eds)*The Anthropology of Landscape: Perspectives on Place and*

Space. Oxford: Clarendon House

Gregory, C. A. 1982. *Gifts and Commodities*. London: Academic Press.

Guthrie, G , Hukula F & Laki J 2006. Port Moresby Community Crime Survey. Port Moresby: National Research Institute

Guthrie, G. 2013. Social factors affecting violent crime victimisation in urban household*s*. *Contemporary PNG Studies: DWU Research Journal*. Vol 18

Hammar, L. (1999). Caught between Structure and Agency: The Gender of Violence and Prostitution in Papua New Guinea. *Transforming Anthropology, 8*(1 & 2), 77-96.

Hayley, N. 2008. Sung Adornment: Changing Masculinities at Lake Kopiago. *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*, 19 No 2. 213-229

Hermkens, A. K. (2012). Becoming Mary: Marion Devotion as a Solution to Gender based Violence in Urban PNG. in Brewer, C, Jolly, M & Stewart C(Ed.), *Engendering Violence in Papua New Guinea*. Canberra: ANU E PRESS.

Herdt, G. 1982. Alcohol use and abuse and urban adjustment of Sambia male identity in M. Marshall (ed), Through a glass darkly: Beer and Modernisation in Papua New Guinea. Boroko: Institute of Applied Social and Economic Research. p227-241

Hirsch, E. (1995). Local Person, Metropolitan Names: Contending Forms of Simultaneity among the Fuyuge, Papua New Guinea. In R. J. Foster (Ed.), *Nation Making. Emergent Identities in Post Colonial Melanesia* (pp. 185-206). Michigan: The University of Michigan Press.

Hukula, F. 2005. *Rape and Social Identity*. Discussion Paper 100. Waigani: National Research Institute

Human Rights Watch. 2005. Making their own rules: Police beatings, rape and torture, of children in Papua New Guinea. New York: Human Rights Watch

Ian, W. 1974. *Village and City*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.

Jackson, R. 1977. The Growth, Nature and Future Prospects of Informal Settlements in Papua New Guinea. *Pacific Viewpoint, 19*, 22-42.

Japanese International Cooperation Agency. 2010. *Country Gender Profile: Papua New Guinea*. Japan: Japanese International Cooperation Agency

Jolly, M. 2012. Introduction-Engendering Violence in Papua New Guinea: Person, Power and Perilous Transformations. In Brewer, C, Jolly, S & Stewart C (Eds.), *Engendering Violence in Papua New Guinea* (pp. 1-46). Canberra: ANU E PRESS.

Jorgensen, D. 2007. Clan Finding, Clan Making and the politics of identity in a Papua New Guinea Mining project. In Weiner, J & Glaskin K. (Eds.), *Customary Land Tenure in Papua New Guinea* (pp. 39-56). Canberra: ANU EPRESS.

Josephides, L. 1991. Metaphors, Metathemes and the Construction of Sociality: A Critique of the New Melanesian Ethnography. *MAN*, 145-161.

Kahn, M. 1986. Always Hungry, Never Greedy: Food and Expression of Gender Relations in a Melanesian Society. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kaiku, P. 2011. Rethinking the Youth Bulge Theory and Threat Discourse in Melanesia: Listening in, and Connecting with your people in Papua New Guinea. Unpublished Masters Thesis

Kalinoe, L. 2004. The Basis of Ownership Claims Over Natural Resources by Indigenous Peoples in Papua New Guinea. In L Kalinoe & Leach J (Eds.), *Rationales of Ownership. Transactions and Claims to Ownership in Contemporary Papua New Guinea*. London: Sean Kingston Publishing. p42-56

Keesing, R. 1992. Book Review of Gender of the Gift. *Pacific Studies* Vol 15 No 1.

Kirsch, S. (2004). Keeping the Network in View. In L. a. Kalinoe (Ed.), *Rationales of Ownership. Transactions and Claims to Ownership in Contemporary Papua New Guinea* (pp. 79-89). Cambridge: Sean Kingston.

Knauft, B. 1985. *Good company and violence: sorcery and social action in a lowland New Guinea society*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Koczberski, G, Curry G & Anjen J. 2012 Changing Land Tenure and Informal Markets in the Oil Palm Frontier Regions of Papua New Guinea: the challenge for land reform. *Australian Geographer, 43*(2), 181-196.

Kopi, M, Hinton R & Robinson M. 2010. Violence and Insecurity in the Southern Highlands of Papua New Guinea. Auckland: Oxfam New Zealand.

Koroma, J. (1975). Tribal Cohesion and Cultural Change. In *Urbanization in Papua New Guinea* (Vol. 1, pp. 1-19). Goroka: Melanesian Institute.

Kumagai, K. B. 2001. *Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Workshop. A Project Formulation on Poverty Alleviation Of Urban Settlements in Port Moresby.*

Leach, J. (2003). *Creative Land. Place and Procreation on the Rai Coast of Papua New Guinea.* Oxford: Berghahn Books.

Leach, J. (2004). Land, Trees and History Disputes Involving Boundaries and Identities in the Context of Development. In L. a. Kalionoe (Ed.), *Transactions and Claims to Ownership in Contemporary Papua New Guinea* (pp. 42-56). United Kingdom: Sean Kingston Publishing.

Lepani, K. 2008. Mobility, Violence and the Gendering of HIV in Papua New Guinea. *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*. Vol 19, No 2. p150-164

Levine, H. B. (1979). *Urbanization in Papua New Guinea. A study of Ambivalent Townsmen.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lewis. I, M. B. (2008). *Final Report on Links Between Violence Against Women and the Transmission of HIV in 4 Provinces in PNG.* Canberra: University of Canberra & National HIV AIDS support Program Papua New Guinea.

Li Puma, Edward. 1998. Modernity and Personhood in Melanesia. In M. a. Lambek, *Bodies and Persons: Comparative Perspectives from Africa and Melanesia* (pp. 53-79). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

LiPuma, E. 2000. *Encompassing Others, The Magic of Modernity in Melanesia.* United States of America: University of Michigan.

Lucas, J. 1972. Lae-A Town in Transition. *Oceania* Vol 42. No 4 p260-275

Luker, V, & Dinnen, S (eds). 2010. Civic Insecurity: Law, Order and HIV in Papua New Guinea. Canberra: ANU E PRESS

Lutkehaus, N. 1995. Feminist Anthropology and Female Initiaton. In N Lutkehaus (Ed.), *Gender Rituals, Female Initiation in Melanesia* . New York: Routledge.p3-32

Lyons, H. D. 1999. Foreward to the Second Edition. Counts, D (Ed.), *To Have and to Hit. Cultural Perpectives on Wife Beating* (pp. xi-xiii). United States: University of Illinois.

Macintyre, M. 2012. Gender Violence in Melanesia and the Problem of Millenium Development Goal No.3. in Brewer, C, Jolly M & Stewart C (Eds.), *Engendering Violence in Papua New Guinea* (pp. 239-266). Canberra: ANU E PRESS.

Macintyre, M. 2008. Police, thieves, gunmen and drunks: Problems with men and problems with society in Papua New Guinea. *Australian Journal of Anthropology.* Vol 19. No 2. p179-193

Malinowski, B. 1929. The Sexual Life of Savages. New York: Eugenics Publishing.

Mannan, M. (1978). Group Norm and Developmental Change in Papua New Guinea. In M. A. G (Ed.), *Paradise Postponed: essays on research and development in the south pacific*. Sydney: Young Nations Conference .

Mantovani E. 1992. Marriage in Melanesia: An anthropological perspective. Goroka: THE Melanesian Institute

Martin, K. 2007 Land, Customary and non customary in East New Britain. In J. F. Weiner (Ed.), *Customary Land Tenure in Australia and Papua New Guinea*. Canberra, ACT: ANU EPRESS. P15-38

Martin, K. 2007. Your Own Buai You Must Buy: The Ideology of Posseive Individualism in Papua New Guinea. *Anthropological Forum: A Journal of Social Anthropology and Comparative Sociology, 17*(3), 285-298.

Mauss, M. 1990. *The Gift. The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*. London: Routledge.

McDowell, N. 1999. Household Violence in a Yuat River. In D. A. Counts (Ed.), *To Have and To Hit. Cultural Perspectives on Wife Beating.*Second Edition . United States: University of Illinois. p87-89

McPherson, N. 2012. Black and Blue: Shades of Violence in West New Britain PNG. in Brewer C, Jolly, M & Stewart C (Eds.), *Engendering Violence in Papua New Guinea* . Canberra: ANU E PRESS.p47-72

Mead, M. 1935. *Sex and Temperament*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Mead, M. 1949. Male and Female: a study of sexes in a changing world. New York: Willam Morrow

Merry, S. E. 2006. *Human Rights and Gender Violence. Translating International Law Into Local Justice*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Morauta, L & Morauta H. 1979. *Rural-Urban relationship in Papua New Guinea: case material from Gulf province on net flows*. Boroko: Institute for Applied Social and Economic Research

Morauta, L. 1985. The social context of rape and related offences. *The managment of rape and other Sexual Offences in Port Moresby, Report of a workshop held on 4 June 1985*. Port Moresby: Department of Community Medicine, University of Papua New Guinea.

Naemon, A. 2009. *Behavoirs that put female youth at risk of Human Immunodeficiancy virus and Sexually Transmitted infections at Gerehu, Port Moresby*. Masters Thesis. Wellington: Victoria University

Nanau, G. 2011. The Wantok System as a socio-economic and political network in Melanesia. *The Journal of Multicultural Society*. Vol 2. No 1. p31-55

National Statistics Office . 2000. *2000 National Census: National Capital District Report.* Port Moresby.

National Capital District Regulatory Services. 2006. National Capital District Settlements Strategic Plan 2007-2011. Port Moresby, NCD: National Capital District Regulatory Services.

Numbasa, G. a. (2012, June). Migration, Informal Urban Settlements and Non Market Land Transactions: A case study of Wewak, East Sepik Province, Papua New Guinea. *Australian Geographer, 43*(2), 143-161.

Ortner, S. B. 1974. Ortn Women, Culture and Society: a theoretical overview , California: Stanford Universiy Press. In M. Z. Rosaldo (Ed.), *Women Nature and Society.*

Papua New Guinea Law Reform Commission1992). *Final Report on Domestic Violence.* Port Moresby: Papua New Guinea Law Reform Commission.

Papua New Guinea Office of Urbanisation. 2010. Papua New Guinea National Urbanisation Policy 2010-2030. Port Moresby: Office of Urbanisation.

Pickles, A. J. 2012. *The Pattern Changes, Changes: Gambling Value in Highland Papua New Guinea.* Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of St Andrews, Department of Social Anthropology.

Ranck, S. 1982. New Dimensions Emerging in Port Moresby's Retail Sector. *Australian Geographer, 15*(3), 180-182.

Reed, A. 2004. *Papua New Guinea's Last Place. Experiences of Constraint in a Papua New Guinea Prison.* Oxford: Berghahn.

Repic, J. 2011. Appropriation of Space and Water in Informal Settlements of Port Moresby, Papua New Guina. *Anthropological Notebooks, 17*(3), 73-87.

Renzio De, P. 2000. Big Men and Wantoks: Social Capital and Group Behaviour in Papua New Guinea. *QEH Working Paper Series.* Oxford.

Rew, A. 1974. *Social Images and Process in Urban New Guinea: A study of Port Moresby.* St Paul: West Publishing Company.

Robbins, J. 2005. The Humiliations of Sin: Christianity and the Mordernization of the subject among the Urapmin in Robbins, J & Wardlow H. The Making of Global and Local Modernities in Melanesia. Humiliation, Transformation and the Nature of Cultural Change. Burlington: Ashgate

Robbins, J. 2009. Rethinking Gifts and Commodities. Reciprocity, Recognition, and the Morality of Exchange. In K. E. Browne (Ed.), *Economics and Morality. Anthropological Approaches* . Plymouth: Altamira Press. p43-58

Rodman, M. K. 2007. Introduction. Rodman M, Kramer, D, Bolton L & Taresese J (Eds.), *House Girls Remember. Domestic Workers in Vanuatu* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. p1-26

Rosaldo, M. 1974. Women, Culture and Society: a theoretical overview. In M. Rosaldo & Lamphere L (Eds.), *Women, Culture and Society.* California: Stanford University Press.

Rosi, P. a. (1993). Love and Marriage among the educated elite in Port Moresby. In R. Marksbury (Ed.), *The Business of Marriage: Transformations in Oceanic Matrimony* . Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh.p175-204

Ryan, D & Morauta L. 1982. From Temporary to Permanent Townsmans: Migrants from the Malalaua District, Papua New Guinea. Oceania. Vol 53. No 1. p39-55

Ryan, D. 1989. Home ties in town: Toaripi in Port Moresby. *Canberra Anthropology* Vol 12. No 1-2. p19-27

Sai, A. (2007). *Tamot: Masculinites in Transition in Papua New Guinea.*

Salisbury, R. F. (1972). *The Rural Orientated strategy of urban adaption: Siane Migrants in Port Moresby.* Washington: Society for Applied Anthropology.

Scaglion, R. 1999 Spare the Rod and Spoil the Woman? Family Violence in Abelam Society. In D. A. Counts (Ed.), *To Have and to Hit, Cultural Perpectives on Wife Beating.* United States: University of Illinois Press.p137-152

Scott, J. C.1998 *Seeing Like the State.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Semos-Kula, M. 2009. Seeking transformative partnerships: schools, university and the practicum in Papua New Guinea. Unpublished PhD thesis. Townsville: James Cook University

Siebert, W. 1975. Migration and Exchange Relationships. Adjustment to Urbanization in Papua New Guinea. In *Urbanization in Papua New Guinea*. Goroka: Melanesian Institute.p43-14

Spark, C. 2010. Changing Lives. *Australian Feminist Studies*. Vol 25. No 63. p17-30

Stafford, C. 2000. Chinese Patriliny and the cycles of yang and laiwang. In J. Carsten (Ed.), *Cultures of Relatedness. New Approaches to the study of kinship.*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univesity Press.p37-54

Storey, D. 2010. *Urban Poverty in Papua New Guinea*. Port Moresby: National Research Insititute.

Strathern, A. & Stewart P 2000. *Arrow Talk. Transaction, Transition and Contradication in New Guinea Highlands History*. Kent: Kent State University Press.

Strathern, M. 1975. *No Money on Our Skins. Hagen Migrants in Port Moresby*. Port Moresby: New Guinea Research Unit.

Strathern, M. 1984. Domesticity and the Denigration of Women. In D. a. Obrien (Ed.), *Rethinking Women's Roles* (pp. 13-31). Berkeley: University of California Press.

Strathern, M. 1988. *Gender of the Gift*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Strathern, M. 2004. Introduction. In L Kalinoe & Leach J (Eds.), *Rationales of Ownership. Transactions and Claims to Ownership in Contemporary Papua New Guinea* . United Kingdom: Sean Kingston Publishing.p1-12

Street, A. 2012. Seen by the State: Bureacacy, Visibility and Governmentality in a Papua New Guinean Hospital. *The Australian Journal of Anthropology, 23*, 1-21.

Sykes, K. 2007. The Moral Grounds of Critque: Between Possessive Individuals, Entrepeurners and Big Men in New Ireland. *Anthropological Forum, 17*(3), 255-268.

Tamakoshi, L. 1993 Nationalism and Sexuality in Papua New Guinea. *Pacific Studies*. Vol 16. No 4. p61-97

Taylor, J. 2008. The Social Life of Rights: 'Gender Antagonism', Modernity and Right in Vanuatu. *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*, 165-178.

Thomas, N. 1991 Entangled Objects: Exchange, material culture and colonialism in the Pacific. Cambrigde: Harvard University Press.

Tiffany, S. W. 1984. Feminist Perceptions in Anthropologyin O'Brien Denise and Sharon Tiffany (Eds.), *Rethinking Women's Roles, Perspectives from the Pacific* (pp. 1-12). Los Angeles: Univesity of California Press.

Toft, S. 1985. *Domestic Violence in Papua New Guinea.* Port Moresby: Papua New Guinea Law Reform Commission.

Toren, C. 1996. Debate: the concept of society is obsolete: for the motion (1). Ingold, T(ed), In Key Debates in Anthropology. London: Routledge

Toren, C. 1999. Compassion for one another:constituting kinship as intentionality in Fiji. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*(5), 265-280.

Umezaki, M & Ohtsuka, R. 2003 Adaptive Strategies of Highlands-Origin migrant settlers in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea in *Human Ecology*. Vol 31. No 1

Vali, K. S. 2010. *Women Leading in Silence in Papua New Guinea Education.* University of Waikato. Waikato: University of Waikato.

Viegas, S. D. 2003. Eating with your Favourite Mother: Time and Sociality in a Brazialian Community. *Royal Anthropological Institute*(9), 21-37.

Wai, I. a. 2010. Building Community and Peace in Saraga Settlement, Port Moresby. Vicky Luker & Dinnen S (EdS.), *Civic Insecurity, Law, Order and HIV in Papua New Guinea* (pp. 237-264). Canberra: ANU EPRESS.

Waiko, J. (1993). *A short history of Papua New Guinea.* Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

Wardlow, H. (2006). *Wayward Women. Sexuality and Agency in a New Guinea Society.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Weiner, J. F. (2007). The Foi Incorporated Lnd Group: Group Definition and Collective Action in the Kutubu Oil Project Area, Papua New Guinea. In J. F. Weiner (Ed.), *Customary Land Tenure and Registration in Australia and Papua New Guinea: Anthropological Perspectives* (pp. 117-134). Canberra: ANU E Press.

Wilson, C. (2012, February Friday). Paga Hill-a model for the future of the Pacific Islands. *Inter Press News Agency.*

Wilson, J. (2000). Volunteering. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 215-240.

Zimmer, Laura J. 1990. "Sexual Exploitation and Male Domination in PNG." *Point* (14):230-244.