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Making and Narrating Women as Modern Colonial Subjects in Papua New Guinea

1945 - 1975

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of
Doctor of Philosophy

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August 2011

Declaration

I, Jemima Frances Mowbray, certify that this thesis embodies the results of my own studies and is an original work, and that due acknowledgment has been made in the text to all other materials used.

I submit this thesis as the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, History Department of the University of Sydney, Australia.

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August 2011

Abstract

This thesis examines the policies and programs of the Australian colonial administration in the period following the Second World War through until independence in 1975. It focuses on the way in which these affected indigenous women's lives and shaped their relationship and engagement with the state. Drawing from the administration's archive, but blending this with archival research from a range of contemporary sources - personal memoirs, ethnographies, newspapers, and publications and films produced by the administration – the thesis provides an overview of the Australian colonial state's intentions and practical efforts towards what they saw as 'raising women's status'.

Within the thesis, closer studies (micro-histories) of two groups – the Motu-Koitabuans of Hanuabada village located in the centre of Port Moresby, and the Halia and Haku speaking peoples who live along the east coast of Buka Island, Bougainville - sit in conversation with this broader archival history. Fieldwork research and oral histories undertaken between 2006 and 2007 with Hanuabadan and Buka women allows an examination of their experiences of colonialism in the post war period with a focus on motherhood, marriage, sexuality and work.

The awkward fit between the two histories within the thesis – one emerging from the colonial archive, the other woven through village women's testimonies of the everyday – points to the contradictions and constraints inherent in the project of the colonial state. To colonial authorities, the power to transform indigenous women's lives and fashion modern mother-wife subjects lay with the state. By contrast, indigenous women's personal narratives reveal their active participation in the changes taking place within the village. Through their narratives we hear a very different set of stories telling of what colonialism and becoming and being 'modern' has meant for women in their roles as mothers, wives, community members and subjects of the state.

Acknowledgements

My supervisor Penny Russell has been a source of great support and guidance. I thank her for asking the perceptive and gently probing questions. I would like also to thank the staff and my fellow postgraduates students within the Department of History at the University of Sydney for their assistance, encouragement, and friendship during my candidacy. Particular thanks to the sustaining support and friendship of my fellow PhD travellers, Samia Khatun, Briony Neilson, Sophie Loy Wilson, Amanda Kaladelfos, Alecia Simmonds, Hannah Forsyth, Rebecca Monson, Lynne McDonald and Fleur Beaupert.

This thesis research has been supported by an Australian Postgraduate Award, two rounds of funding from the University of Sydney's Faculty of Arts' Postgraduate Research Support Scheme and a travel grant administered through the Faculty of Arts, University of Sydney. The National Research Institute of Papua New Guinea provided invaluable help in obtaining the appropriate research visa so that I might undertake my fieldwork.

Special thanks to the staff of the Department of History and the Michael Somare Library at the University of Papua New Guinea, as well as to all those who made me feel so welcome during my stay.

In Hanuabada and in Bougainville I was blessed to have found new friends and family who took me in and I am grateful for their generosity. There are too many to mention, but special thanks must be paid to the Morea and Gera families in Hanuabada, especially Nancy and Elia Morea, as well as Eleina Butuna. Nancy, in particular, was generous with her time and her friendship and her knowledge.

In Bougainville, again so many communities and individuals to thank, but I would like to make particular mention of the warmth and generosity of Grace and Aquila Garei, and their extended family and the broader community of Basbi. Grace's stories, her generous laugh, and her kind heart made me feel so welcome, and stay with me always. Moses Koliwan, Romeo Tohiana, Barbara Tanne, and Namosi Tousala became good friends, were very interested in the project and provided great assistance within it in many, various ways.

Thanks and more thanks to my family and my family of friends who were so generous in their interest and support for my project. And with their time and patience. I give special thanks to my family in Port Moresby, Jane, Yasap, Bella and Patrick (and all the little ones) for putting up with me (and my then partner) for extended periods while we did fieldwork. And to my wonderful friends and family here in Sydney (and sometime draft chapter readers). In particular, Mari Jane Elliot, Jean Parker, Cornelia Betzler, Jan Idle, and Anna Clark for their help, endless patience, and encouragement. To the Kwiatkowska – Hawkins family (Maria, Dave, Francesca and, late arrival, Arlo): thank you so much for your belief, warmth, and support (and your wonderful editing – and culinary – skills). To my friend, Anthea Vogl, my enduring thanks for the love and friendship, and the kind, curious words and challenging questions, always at the right time.

Thanks to my mum, Bligh Glass, and my dad, David Mowbray, whose help and support in this, as in all things, cannot be overstated.

I would like to thank all the many, many women (listed at the back of this thesis) who so generously shared their time and their stories with me. And allowed me to share these with others.

And lastly I give thanks and dedicate this thesis to the memory of two amazing, strong women, Rae Gorman and Joyce Mowbray. I was truly blessed to have them in my life.

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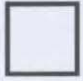

Introduction

In 1975, in anticipation of the country's coming independence, the Papua New Guinea Office of Information produced a variety of 'awareness' pamphlets, documentary film, radio scripts and other media. One pamphlet, *Women and Nation Building*, was directed towards its new female citizens.[1] It posed two questions of its imagined female readership: 'What can we do for our country?' and 'What can our country do for us?' Then it began:

> Every woman should use the skills she has for the good of her country. This may mean being a better mother, cooking good food for the children, making sure they learn at school, and are well behaved. A healthy nation depends on healthy children.
>
> This may mean making billums, beads, and baskets for sale to help the village become self-reliant.
>
> This may mean learning new methods of working in the gardens, or cooking or sewing and teaching other women in the village.
>
> This may mean showing the men of the village that the women have an important job in politics. Both men and women must work together as a team for the good of the family, the village and the nation.[2]

In answer to the second question the pamphlet introduced a number of government officers and their work to the reader: the government liaison officer ('can keep women up to date with the decisions of government'); the adult education officer ('can teach people things they want to know such as better cooking, sewing, weaving'); the community development officer ('can help run women's groups ...'); health educators ('can teach you to look after the health of baby'); the business development officer ('can discuss with husband and wife how to develop a small

[1] Papua New Guinea Office of Information, "Women and Nation Building," ed. PNG Office of Information (Port Moresby: 1975).
[2] Ibid.

industry in the village'); and the *didiman*, or agricultural extension officer, ('can advise on how to grow better food crops').[3]

These answers show clearly how the government envisaged the future indigenous female citizens of what would soon be the new independent nation. They would be mothers and wives with basic knowledge of hygiene and domestic science, participants within the informal economy earning a small income to contribute towards their family, and potential female village leaders enacting their right to participate politically, proving their worth to the men of the village. The pamphlet painted a rather constrained picture of citizenship, in terms of both the responsibilities of the female citizen and her corresponding rights. It began with the family, but gestured towards broader political participation 'for the good of the family, the village and the nation'. There was no mention of formal education unrelated to household management, of waged employment, of legal protections extended to women by the state or of their rights to political participation irrespective of men's approval. The replacement of any real discussion of 'rights' – practical or abstract – with an introductory description of 'the work of government' (personified by the different roles of government workers mentioned above) suggests an assumption that many village women had thus far had limited direct interaction with the colonial state and could have little awareness or understanding of national independence or what it might mean for them.

When I talked to Motuan women from the village of Hanuabada in the centre of Port Moresby about what they had understood independence to be and what it had meant for them, their answers suggested it was something quite distant or far removed from their lives. Reasonably common was an understanding illustrated by one woman's response, 'it wasn't a big event in the village; it just came. We were not worrying about what was going on. All we were busy with, was our little community.'[4] Another woman when asked about 1975 and whether this had been an important year had replied yes, the boubou (an annual competitive church fundraising event[5]) was a very 'big event' that year, before realising I had meant independence.[6] On the other hand there were those who remembered clearly their families' anger that Papua New Guinea was becoming independent. Hanua Mea recalled a meeting which most people from the village attended to voice their

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[3] Ibid.

[4] Mary Mase, 16 June 2007, Hanuabada

[5] The *boubou* originated in Hanuabada in the 1950s, but has spread through region through the Uniting Church. Adapting a system of customary gift exchange it involves the performance of *peroveta* or prophet songs and dance and generous donations of material gifts, generally money. Money raised is used to cover the costs of pastoral work.

[6] Oala Mia, 13 July 2007, Hanuabada

opposition, most agreeing they were not ready for independence. Geua Asi's father, a big man in the village, had helped organise the meeting:

> When he heard about this he was so angry and didn't accept independence. And so he got the men together and they talked about it. And they told the Council, they told the Church leaders and the councillors who spread the message. They told them they didn't want independence. They told them, but I have no idea if this was passed on to the government. But then all of a sudden it happened. And we've got independence and it was already celebrated. And that day they did a really big celebration but then we were angry, so we didn't attend it.

Most women, whether they had noticed independence much at the time or not, looked back now and were critical of the changes that had taken place since independence – in particular they talked about 'law and order' problems, lack of jobs, and the high price of living in a village located in the middle of a city. A number looked back to independence and felt that perhaps, as one woman said in terms familiar to me by the end of my stay in the village, the 'country was not mature enough to look after themselves'; or perhaps as another observed, 'our people were not advanced enough yet'.[7] Alongside a clear critique of recent national governments, their responses suggest the continuing pervasiveness of the colonisers' framing of the Australian colonial project as one of benign trusteeship and paternalist care.

Among the women I spoke with on the island of Buka in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville many said they knew of independence at the time and recalled the official celebrations, but hadn't felt a part of these. Their experience of independence was, of course, complicated by the fact that in Bougainville secessionist sentiment had been clearly present in both the north and south of the island district from the 1960s, and in 1975 had culminated in the (unsuccessful) petitioning of the United Nations to recognise Bougainvillean self-determination.[8] Today Independence Day celebrations on 16 September (Papua New Guinea's official day of independence) are always outshone by those of 1 September, which was chosen as Bougainville's alternative day of independence in 1975. Women in Buka had been both involved in the very first alternate, secessionist celebrations, and witness to the government organised celebrations.

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[7] Oru Vani, 17 July 2007, Hanuabada; Naomi Goava, 05 July 2007, Hanuabada

[8] Indeed it was Bougainville's demand for secession that had forced the establishment of the provincial government system. James Griffin, "Movements Towards Secession 1964 - 76," in *Bougainville before the Conflict*, ed. A. J. Regan and Helga Griffin (Canberra: Pandanus Books, 2005).

Independence, I was told by Buka women, had meant 'the people stood up', 'we'd be our own boss', 'we would stand together and try this'.[9] Women remembered wondering, 'would it be good or not good?'[10] And most now agreed not much had really changed, in the sense that living standards had remained the same. But assessments of change since independence seemed in many ways irrelevant to women on Buka who, having lived through a destructive nine year secessionist war begun in late 1988, made comparisons of 'before and after' by default always with reference to 'the Crisis' rather than independence. One woman felt that if there had been women in the local government councils at the time of independence then maybe they would have been more aware of what was happening.[11] Women's participation in government and government work (through church groups and Non-Governmental Organisations and so on) was something that had happened 'after Crisis', she explained. Another told me: 'I'm not a woman who has much to do with government, so for me it is hard to tell you ... us women who just stay in the village we don't have much to say about these things.'[12]

Bronwen Douglas's analysis of the place of the state in the lives of ni-Vanuatu resonates clearly with the opinions and experience of the women I interviewed in Hanuabada and Buka:

> The state is present, but as an aggravation and an absence, for men and women alike. It is widely seen as divisive, corrupt and producing few of the benefits expected from payments of taxes and electoral support.[13]

While there is a/the state, its presence is marked by its very 'absence' – that is, in its failure to deliver on government services. The 'nation state', however, is absent in an entirely different way. It does not have real meaning, and plays only a subsidiary role within people's lives. 'There are "states"' argues Douglas, 'but not "nation states", and very few citizens in the sense of equal members of a national polity'.[14] This too rings true in the Papua New Guinean context. At the moment of the nation's independence, however, those involved in the drawing up of the new constitution and the establishing of the liberal democratic structures of the new independent state made much of this new opportunity, promising equal citizenship for all.

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[9] Lucy, 7 November 2006, Lemankoa; Barbara Motse Tanne, 7 October 2006, Hahalis; Martha Tonang, 7 November 2006, Lemanmanu.
[10] Martha Tonang, 7 November 2006, Lemanmanu.
[11] Barbara Motse Tanne, 7 October 2006, Hahalis
[12] Talmits Hagai, 5 November 2006, Hahalis
[13] Bronwen Douglas, *Weak States and Other Nationalisms: Emerging Melanesian Paradigms?*, vol. 3, State, Society and Governance in Melanesia (Canberra: Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, ANU, 2000), p.7.
[14] Ibid, p.8.

With regards to women there were a number of positive, hopeful signs in the lead up to 1975 that the new government would work seriously to encourage women's participation in economic and social development and in governing the new nation. In 1973 all powers over internal matters were transferred from the Australian Government to the Papua New Guinean Legislative Assembly, an important first step towards self-government and eventual independence. The newly empowered assembly immediately endorsed a programme of action that came to be known as The Eight Point Plan. The seventh point of this related to Papua New Guinean women's equality. It proposed 'a rapid increase in the equal and active participation of women in all types of economic and social activity'.[15] The new constitution in 1975 followed suit with a similarly stated goal in its preamble calling for 'all citizens to have an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from the development of our country'.[16]

Soon after taking office as chief minister, Michael Somare (soon to be the new nation's first Prime Minister) quickly appointed a women's adviser and set up a Women's Unit in the Office of Home Affairs.[17] And the following year, notable as the year Papua New Guinea formally gained independence and the year named by the United Nations as 'International Women's Year', a delegation of women was funded to attend the UN conference on Women in Mexico City. In the country, a number of key women organisers helped to organise the first ever Pacific Women's Conference as well as – a separate event – a National Convention for Women out of which came the establishment of the National Council of Women (NCW). In 1979 the NCW was formally recognised in an act of Parliament, the National Council of Women Incorporation Act, helping to expand the Council's reach and establishing provincial councils for women throughout the country. Women leaders and organisers were initially very optimistic about the Council as a channel through

[15] Quoted in Anne Dickson-Waiko, "Women, Policy Making and Development," in *Policy Making and Implementation: Studies from Papua New Guinea*, ed. Ronald J. May (Canberra: ANU E Press, 2009), p.284. In a paper calling for 'educated' sisters to take the initiative to encourage and involve their village sisters in aims and goals towards development, Margaret Loko critically noted that in Point Seven the reference to 'political' activity had been left out and wondered whether this omission had been deliberate. Margaret Loko, "The Changing Role of Women in Society," *Administration for Development* 4 (1974).

[16] Quoted in Anne Dickson-Waiko, "The Missing Rib: Mobilizing Church Women for Change in Papua New Guinea," *Oceania* 74, no. 1&2 (2003), p.101. Dianne Johnson notes that despite the constitution's rhetoric of equality for all, the process of drawing up the constitution was one that did not involve women to any great extent. There were no women on the constitution drafting committee, and no female external consultants. Women were also marginalised from the consultation process. Dianne Johnson, "Women and the Constitution of Papua New Guinea," in *Essays on the Constitution of Papua New Guinea*, ed. Ross De Vere, Duncan Coluquhoun-Kerr, and John Kaburise (Port Moresby: Tenth Independence Anniversary Advisory Committee
, 1985).

[17] Tamo Diro was appointed as adviser on women's affairs in 1974. Dickson-Waiko, "Women, Policy Making and Development.", p.290.

which they might influence the political and economic sphere to assist all women.[18] Though educated indigenous women took advantage of these new institutions and opportunities to articulate women's needs and grievances, they very quickly saw through the promises made at independence and were critical of the government for its failure to follow through on programs or real policy that might adequately address women's marginal participation in formal political activity, and work towards providing equal access to health and education services and waged employment.[19] Notable also was the failure of these early institutional moves to encourage much beyond an embryonic women's movement in the country.

Anne Dickson-Waiko has labelled this promise in regard to women and nation building at the time of Papua New Guinean independence as an 'abundance of male rhetoric'.[20] Explaining that indigenous women were excluded from colonial society during the period of state formation, she argued that this history in tandem with customary gender roles meant women through the colonial period and into the present have been positioned as somehow present in and yet existing outside of the modern state. Women are instead symbolically identified with 'collective clan and tribal identities'.[21] To the extent they have been brought within the colonial and now post-colonial state this has been

> as mothers rather than as citizens with the same rights as male citizens ... while citizenship is supposedly an individual's relationship with the state, Papua New Guinean women have great difficulty in claiming rights as individual citizens. They enter the political domain as sexed beings and this

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[18] Angela Mandie, "The Role of an Educated Woman in Women's Organisations in Papua New Guinea," in *Women and Politics in Papua New Guinea*, ed. Maev O'Collins (Canberra, ACT: Department of Political and Social Change, Research School of Pacific Studies, ANU, 1985), pp.49 – 52.

[19] See various authors of the Women and Development section, in particular Rose Kekedo and Margaret Nakikus in Peter King, Wendy Lee, and Vincent Warakai, "From Rhetoric to Reality? Papua New Guinea's Eight Point Plan and National Goals after a Decade" (paper presented at the Waigani Seminar (15th : 1982 : Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea) 1985); and various authors, in particular Nahau Rooney and Angela Mandie in Maev O'Collins, ed., *Women and Politics in Papua New Guinea* (Canberra, ACT: Department of Political and Social Change, Research School of Pacific Studies, ANU, 1985).

[20] Dickson-Waiko, "The Missing Rib: Mobilizing Church Women for Change in Papua New Guinea.", p.101. See also Maev O'Collins, *Social Development in Papua New Guinea 1972 - 1990* (Canberra Dept. of Political and Social Change, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, 1993. , 1993), pp.231 – 235.

[21] Anne Dickson- Waiko, "Women, Individual Human Rights, Community Rights: Tensions within the Papua New Guinea State," in *Women's Rights and Human Rights; International Historical Perspectives*, ed. Patricia Grimshaw, Katie Holmes, and Marilyn Lake (Basingstoke, Hampshire Palgrave, 2001), pp.54-55.

construction interferes with and even sabotages their claims for equal citizenship.[22]

The citizen-mother, a very familiar model of female citizenship, is one rarely recognised as an equal citizen. Rather, as Carole Pateman argued in her classic though now much critiqued work on the gendering of citizenship, in traditional European understandings of the state men have been imagined as producers (in that they must work to 'create' or 'contract' both cultural and political relationships with one another) and are thus exemplary citizens able to exercise and access *political* rights. Women, on the other hand, are imagined as reproducers and as such hold subordinate status, remaining bound within the domestic or private sphere; their relationship to the state always mediated through their relationships with men (in their role as mothers and wives).[23] Pateman's work recognised women's exclusion from full citizenship based on a clear division between public and private, but this is a division that has been labelled a theoretical fiction, one that does not apply tidily (and sometimes not at all) outside of non-Western (European) contexts.[24]

In Papua New Guinea, as Dickson-Waiko explained, while customary gender roles prior to contact were generally differentiated they were understood as complementary and the labour undertaken by men and women was not necessarily distinguished as being social or economic or political; certainly domestic and ritualised activity could not be understood through a neat framework of public and private.[25] Of course traditional gender relations and roles were affected by colonialism, not least through the colonisers' promotion of a European public/private dichotomy, and the imposition of the colonial (and equally the post-colonial) state and with this the emergence of new public/political arenas. Dickson-Waiko reflected that while the promise of 'equal participation' at independence may well have been drawing on notions of traditional gender complementarity, as uncritical references to custom these could quickly be dismissed as rhetoric in the context of the 'highly masculinised body politic' that emerged in the decade

[22] Dickson-Waiko, "The Missing Rib: Mobilizing Church Women for Change in Papua New Guinea.", p.102.

[23] Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Cambridge: Polity, 1988).

[24] For a good overview of literature assessing and critiquing the distinction, see Joan B. Landes, "Further Thoughts on the Public/Private Distinction," *Journal of Women's History* 15, no. 2 (2003).

[25] Anne Dickson Waiko, "Colonial Enclaves and Domestic Spaces in British New Guinea," in *Britishness Abroad: Transnational Movements and Imperial Cultures*, ed. Kate Darian Smith and Patricia Grimshaw (Carlton: Melbourne Uni Press, 2007), p.212.

following independence and given the significant changes regarding indigenous gender constructs and practice that had taken place as a result of colonialism.[26]

My thesis begins here at the moment of independence and women's practical marginalisation from the post-colonial state. It begins here but tracks back, understanding Papua New Guinean women's relationship with the state at independence (and after) as having its roots in the colonial period. Anne Dickson-Waiko, in her scholarship on gender, colonialism and nation building in Papua New Guinea, has extensively explored contemporary indigenous women's marginalisation from the political structures and institutions of the postcolonial state in Papua New Guinea and their continuing inability to claim rights – be those political, social or economic.[27] Significantly she identified this as being, in large part, the result of early colonial policies which institutionalised gender inequality – both within customary and colonial structures – and kept women outside the colonial state, confined to the village.[28] Yet Dickson-Waiko has left largely unexamined the period after World War Two leading up to independence, a period in which women for the first time began to be considered by the colonial administration.[29]

This thesis examines the policies and programs of the Australian colonial administration in the period following the Second World War. Before the war in Papua and New Guinea indigenous women, as Dickson-Waiko has established, had been sidelined within the Australian colonial project (though, nonetheless, crucial to its implementation). It was indigenous men who were given colonial positions of authority in the villages; men who were recruited to the native constabulary and taken on as indentured labourers on plantations; and men, not women, who were brought into colonial homes as domestic servants. Despite the efforts of some missions to provide for the education of girls, it was also primarily men who were the beneficiaries of the very limited educational opportunities provided by the missions in the two colonies.

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[26] Dickson-Waiko, "The Missing Rib: Mobilizing Church Women for Change in Papua New Guinea.", p.101.

[27] Dickson- Waiko, "Women, Individual Human Rights, Community Rights: Tensions within the Papua New Guinea State."

[28] Dickson Waiko, "Colonial Enclaves and Domestic Spaces in British New Guinea."; Anne Dickson- Waiko, "Taking over, of What and from Whom?: Women and Independence, the Png Experience," in *Alfred Deakin Research Institute, Working Paper No. 10* (Geelong, Vic.: Alfred Deakin Research Institute, Deakin University, August 2010).

[29] Dickson-Waiko does consider this briefly in her historical background to the Papua New Guinean post-colonial state's phases of women's policy. Post war colonial policy with regards women she identifies as having been a welfare approach influenced heavily by modernisation theory. Dickson-Waiko, "Women, Policy Making and Development.", pp.282-283.

After World War Two the Australian colonial administration, now the one body jointly administering the two colonies, received a considerable boost to their funding. In the context of a shift to policies framed around 'welfare and development', female-targeted welfare programs were introduced. The Minister for Territories Paul Hasluck was to explain this new suite of welfare initiatives aimed at women as an attempt to 'redress the imbalance in the rate of advancement by native men and that of native women'.[30] The 'welfare and development' policies of the post-war administration did not simply redress an imbalance or make up a leeway, they helped to frame the engagement between the indigenous female subject and the colonial state in a particular way, one which was to have lasting implications for indigenous women's construction as citizens within the independent post-colonial state.

This thesis is a contribution to the history of Australian colonialism in Papua New Guinea. It is interested in exploring how Papua New Guinean women experienced Australian colonialism in this period, and what impact it had on their lives. Apart from Anne Dickson-Waiko's very useful, theoretically sophisticated, but still preliminary work on the early period of colonisation and the effect of protectionist policies, very little has been written about the impact of Australian colonialism on indigenous women. Noting this, Dickson-Waiko has called for urgent investigation of the experiences of colonised women, 'so that the colonised other can also move on to the postcolonial'.[31]

LITERATURE REGARDING AUSTRALIAN COLONIALISM

There is a substantial historiography of Australia's colonial project in Papua and New Guinea. Early works, largely traditional political histories, documented colonial efforts to extend administration (or administrative 'control') across the colonies, assessing colonial policy and legislation in terms of colonial development.[32] Colonial development, within these works, referred both to economic developments in the colonies, as well as the 'well being and development' of colonial indigenous subjects. Though not entirely uncritical, these histories generally measured the 'success' of the Australian colonial project on the basis of criteria that were not so

[30] NAA: A452/1960/8272, Education and advancement of Native women – Policy – Papua and New Guinea; Letter from Minister, to Administrator, 18 March 1955.
[31] Dickson Waiko, "Colonial Enclaves and Domestic Spaces in British New Guinea.", p.206.
[32] Lewis Lett, *The Papuan Achievement*, 2nd ed. (Melbourne ; London: Melbourne University Press in association with Oxford University Press, 1944); Stuart Reed, *The Making of Modern New Guinea* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1943); Lucy Mair, *Australia in New Guinea*, 2nd ed. (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1970 [1948]); C. D. Rowley, *Australians in German New Guinea, 1914 - 1921* (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1958); Francis West, *Hubert Murray: The Australian Pro-Consul* (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne Uni Press, 1968).

different from those of the colonial administration assessing its own progress.[33] Often painting a clear picture of the personalities involved, they also usefully distinguished the different interests and agendas of the various groups and sectional interests of colonisers: the Australian Government, the colonial administration, private enterprise and the missions. The official histories authored by those who worked within the administration complement these early histories, providing personal insight into the politics of decision-making behind closed doors.[34] They also, however, conveyed – though unintentionally – the extent to which the administration was not only dominated by men, but also male oriented in the sense that discussions of 'native welfare' were concerned, almost always as if by default, with rule over and management of indigenous men.

From the 1970s, however, scholars began to write more critical histories of Australian colonialism. New and different questions began to be asked. Edward Wolfers' work on the colonial administration's management of 'race relations' and securing of colonial rule through Native Regulations and Amirah Inglis' analysis of fears for white women's sexual safety in the early colonies brought race firmly into view.[35] Peter Fitzpatrick's history of law and the state, and Development and Dependency, an edited collection of essays on the political economy of Papua New Guinea introduced analysis of class and the impact of Australian capitalism within the colonies. Though both works suffered from a quite clunky imposition of dependency theory, they very effectively placed early protectionist policies and the development of the colonial economy, along with the legal and political structures of

[33] Rowley's assessment of the wartime administration in New Guinea, for example, was very critical of their labour and 'law and order' policies, and especially in their ignoring of 'native' interests in deference to those of European commercial enterprise. He was much more receptive to Murray's notion of good 'native administration'. He shared Murray's conception of the colonial project as one that was about the betterment of the indigenous peoples in the colonies through appropriate colonial 'welfare and development'.

[34] J. H. P. Murray, *Papua or British New Guinea* (London: T. F. Unwin, 1912); J. H. P. Murray, "Review of the Australian Administration in Papua from 1907 to 1920," (Port Moresby: Edward George Baker; Government Printer, 192?); J. H. P. Murray, *Papua of Today or an Australian Colony in the Making* (London: P.S. King and Son, 1925); Paul Hasluck, *A Time for Building* (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1976); Ian Downs, *The Australian Trusteeship, Papua New Guinea 1945 - 75* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1980). Other histories by those involved in the administration that do not fall under the classification 'official history' include: James Patrick Sinclair, *Kiap: Australia's Patrol Officers in Papua New Guinea* (Sydney: Pacific Publications, 1981).

[35] Edward P Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea* (Sydney: Australia and New Zealand Book Co, 1975); Amirah Inglis, *Not a White Woman Safe: Sexual Anxiety and Politics in Port Moresby, 1920 - 1934* (Canberra: ANU Press, 1974).

the colonial state within the broader frame of Australian and global capital interests.[36]

The various mission histories that began to emerge from the late 1970s had also shifted significantly from the earlier genre of mission hagiography.[37] While seeking to outline the role of the various missions within the colonial project, these histories were hesitant to paint missionaries as agents of colonialism – at least not without complicating what this implied. Read together, these histories of mission efforts are revealing of the differences (as well as the similarities) in the social and class background, and the approach and practice of the missionaries of the various denominations.[38] The mix of institutional and social histories that began to be written on colonial welfare – notably Donald Denoon's contribution on medicine in the colonies and Peter Smith's work in the area of education – often made reference to the work of missionaries as crucial in delivering 'native welfare' in the colonies through the first half of the twentieth century.[39] Their main focus (Denoon, Weeks, Smith, et al.), had, however, been the provision of welfare services (or lack thereof) by the colonial state.

More recently, historians writing on colonial policy and governance practice have begun to situate these more firmly in the context of Australian nationhood (and national identity) and domestic race relations. Roger Thompson's history of Australian imperialism in the Pacific, and Hank Nelson's work with its more

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[36] Peter Fitzpatrick, *Law and State in Papua New Guinea*, Law, State, and Society Series ; (London ; New York: Academic Press, 1980); Azeem Amarshi, Kenneth Good, and Rex Mortimer, *Development and Dependency* (Oxford University Press, 1979).

[37] David F. Wetherell, *Reluctant Mission : The Anglican Church in Papua New Guinea, 1891-1942* (St. Lucia, Qld.: University of Queensland Press, 1977); Hugh Laracy, *Marists and Melanesians: A History of Catholic Missions in the Solomon Islands* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1976); and Diane Langmore, *Missionary Lives: Papua 1874 - 1914* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989).

[38] Diane Langmore's research, *Missionaries' Lives*, was particularly useful in this regard. Her analysis placed the various missions in Papua side by side to draw this out. Langmore, *Missionary Lives: Papua 1874 - 1914.*

[39] Donald Denoon and Kathleen Dugan, *Public Health in Papua New Guinea: Medical Possibility and Social Constraint, 1884 - 1984* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Donald Denoon, "Medical Care and Gender in Papua New Guinea," in *Family and Gender in the Pacific : Domestic Contradictions and the Colonial Impact*, ed. Margaret Jolly and Martha Macintyre (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Peter Smith, "Education Policy in New Guinea: A Classic Case," in *Papua New Guinea: A Century of Colonial Impact 1884 - 1984*, ed. Sione Latukefu (Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea: National Research Institute and University of Papua New Guinea in association with the Centennial Committee, 1989); Peter Smith, "A Department of Native Development: W.C Groves and Non School Education 1946 - 55," in *Pacific Perspectives on Non Formal Education*, ed. Michael Crossley, Joseph Sukwianomb, and Sheldon Weeks (Waigani, Papua New Guinea: Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, Suva and University of Papua New Guinea Press, 1987); Peter Smith, *Education and Colonial Control in Papua New Guinea: A Documentary History* (Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1987).

contained focus on Papua and New Guinea were early examples of this trend.[40] More recently Andrew Lattas and Patricia O'Brien have continued this tradition, examining the discourse of ethical or humanitarian colonialism that underpinned Australian efforts to 'pacify and civilise' in terms of the role this played in making white man's (or western) identity, and as a measure of Australian national stature.[41]

Within my thesis I have drawn significantly on this broad ranging early scholarship, but for my purposes the existing scholarship was limited in two main ways. Firstly these histories in general, only briefly considered indigenous responses to Australian colonialism and its impact within their communities. It is worth mentioning that indigenous scholars have authored those few histories that have taken indigenous experience as their starting focus.[42] And secondly, though women had slowly begun to publish autobiographies of their experiences of Australian colonialism – most notably the first Papuan female politician, Alice Wedega, and

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[40] Roger C. Thompson, *Australian Imperialism in the Pacific: The Expansionist Era, 1820 - 1920* (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1980); Hank Nelson, *Taim Bilong Masta* (Sydney: ABC & Griffin Press, 1982); Hank Nelson, "Changing the Label," in *Papua New Guinea: A Century of Colonial Impact 1884 - 1984*, ed. Sione Latukefu (Port Moresby: National Research Institute and Univeristy of Papua New Guinea in association with the Centennial Committee, 1989);

[41] In his work Andrew Lattas paid attention to the work of anthropology in establishing knowledge over the colonised subject, and Patricia O'Brien's work compared how protectionist policies looked different in Papua than in the Northern Territory. Jane Landman's and Max Quanchi's histories adopt a similar approach, but read this history through novel sources (through cinema in the case of Landman, and photography for Quanchi). Andrew Lattas, "Humanitarianism and Australian Nationalism in Colonial Papua: Hubert Murray and the Project of Caring for the Self of the Coloniser and the Colonized," *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 7, no. 2 (1996); Patricia O'Brien, "Remaking Australia's Colonial Culture?: White Australia and Its Papuan Frontier 1901 - 1940," *Australian Historical Studies* 40, no. 1 (2009); Jane Landman, *The Tread of a White Man's Foot: Australian Pacific Colonialism and the Cinema, 1925 - 1962*, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, the Australian National University (Canberra, : Pandanus Books, 2006); Max Quanchi, *Photographing Papua: Representation, Colonial Encounters and Imaging in the Public Domain* (Newcastle Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007).

[42] August Kituai's *My Gun, My Brother* told the history of the police recruited by the Australian administrations in the Papua and New Guinea largely in reference to and through the stories of the Papua New Guinean men who were recruited to work beside the kiap and patrol officer bringing the colonies under administrative control always with not always the use of, but certainly the threat of force. The unpublished theses of John Waiko and Romeo Tohiana wrote histories of contact from the perspectives of their own people (the Binadere for Waiko, the Halia from Tohiana). August Kituai, *My Gun, My Brother: The World of the Papua New Guinea Colonial Police, 1920 - 1960* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1998); John Dademo Waiko, "Be Jijimo: A History According to the Binadere People of Papua and New Guinea" (Ph.D, Australian National University, 1982); Romeo Tohiana, "The Hahalis Welfare Society of Buka, North Solomons Province: Its Establishment, Subsequent Development and Eventual Decline, 1960 - 1980" (Hons, University of Papua New Guinea, 1982). Though see Gary Trompf's extensive work on indigenous religions. Trompf, a historian of ideas with a focus on religion, blended anthropology and history to write about indigenous religions in Melanesia (including the influence of colonialism and Christian missionaries) in the twentieth century. See, for example, G. W. Trompf, *The Gospel Is Not Western : Black Theologies from the Southwest Pacific* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1987); G. W. Trompf, *Cargo Cults and Millenarian Movements : Transoceanic Comparisons of New Religious Movements* (Berlin ; New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1990); and G. W. Trompf, *Melanesian Religion* (Cambridge, England ; Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

Rachel Cleland, the wife of long serving post war Administrator Donald Cleland – historians had paid only cursory attention to women's experience.[43] Work on this had generally consisted of single chapters within broader histories of public health, education and mission work in the colonies.[44]

When historians of empire did begin in the mid 1980s to write women back into imperial histories and to ask how women had experienced empire and affected it, this, at least initially, took the form of histories of white women and empire, focusing on the quotidian – their everyday activities as travellers, missionaries, teachers, nurses, and of course, wives.[45] Published in the early 1990s Chilla Bulbeck's Colonial Passages fell within this genre.[46] It gave an account of the experiences of white women in Papua and New Guinea, drawing on oral histories and the written personal records of nineteen women to give focus to her argument that women's relationship to the colonial enterprise was different to that of men, their lives were lived in a different 'register'. Like many of the other histories of white women and empire, Bulbeck's consciously offered a corrective to earlier presentations of white women in the colonial setting as more racist, intolerant and ignorant than their male

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[43] Alice Wedega, *Listen, My Country* (Sydney: Pacific Publications, 1981); Rachel Cleland, *Pathways to Independence: Official and Family Life, 1951 - 1975* (Perth: Artlook Books, 1983). Others included, for example, Valerie Laughton, *From Housework to Adventure*, Ilfracombe (Devon: Arthur H. Stockwell Ltd, 1978); Margaret Clarence, *Yield Not to the Wind* (privately published, 1982). Only a very few indigenous women have published autobiographies. See Josephine Abaijah and Eric Wright, *A Thousand Coloured Dreams: The Story of a Young Girl Growing up in Papua* (Mount Waverley, Vic.: Dellasta Pacific, 1991). And the following biographies Virgina Drew Watson, *Anyan's Story: A New Guinea Woman in Two Worlds* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997); and Deborah Carlyon, *Mamakuma : One Woman, Two Cultures* (St Lucia, Qld.: University of Queensland Press, 2002). There is now a wealth of published autobiography from white women who lived in Papua and/or New Guinea through the Australian colonial period. Most of this has been published after 1990. See a comprehensive list (up to date to 2008) in Hank Nelson, "Lives Told: Australians in Papua and New Guinea," in *Telling Pacific Lives: Prisms of Process*, ed. Brij V. Lal and Vicki Luker (Canberra: ANU E-Press, 2008).

[44] Denoon and Dugan, *Public Health in Papua New Guinea: Medical Possibility and Social Constraint, 1884 - 1984*, chapter 10; Denoon, "Medical Care and Gender in Papua New Guinea."; Langmore, *Missionary Lives: Papua 1874 - 1914*. (chapter 3). See also Diane Langmore, "Object Lesson of a Civilised, Christian Home," in *Family and Gender in the Pacific : Domestic Contradictions and the Colonial Impact*, ed. Margaret Jolly and Martha Macintyre (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989). And regarding women and agriculture, see H. Barnes, "Women in Highlands Agricultural Production," in *A Time to Plant and a Time to Uproot*, ed. Donald Denoon and Catherine Snowden (Port Moresby: Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, 1981).

[45] Claudia Knapman, *White Women in Fiji: The Ruin of Empire?* (North Sydney, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1986); Helen Callaway, *Gender, Culture, and Empire: European Women in Colonial Nigeria* (London: Macmillan, 1987); Mary Ann Lind, *The Compassionate Memsahibs: Welfare Activities of British Women in India, 1900 - 1947* (New York, N.Y.: Greenwood Press, 1988); Langmore, *Missionary Lives: Papua 1874 - 1914*, chapter 3.

[46] Chilla Bulbeck, *Australian Women in Papua New Guinea: Colonial Passages 1920 - 1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge Uni Press, 1992). See also Jan Roberts, *Voices from a Lost World : Australian Women and Children in Papua New Guinea before the Japanese Invasion* (Alexandria, N.S.W.: Millennium Books, 1996). Roberts' was rather more uncritical of the white women's testimonies she relayed, especially as regards their reflections and descriptions of indigenous custom and practice, see for example, p. xix.

counterparts. Though clear she was not asserting that no white woman had been racist, Bulbeck nonetheless presented white women's role in colonising as the more benevolent, 'feminised' aspect of the colonial 'civilising' project. She argued that white women, whose lives had been largely 'confined to the private domain', had not been explicit purveyors of colonial domination. They provided another perspective on the colonial project and the 'white man's burden': that of onlooker, not participant. Though demonstrating the contributions – domestic, moral, educational and medical – women had made, she concluded their stories could not be written 'into the grand sweeps and measured paces of the colonial project'.[47] In many ways this conclusion, one I argue in this thesis is incorrect, misses the point. As Jane Haggis made clear in an early sharp critique, simple 'recuperative histories' of white women risk colonising gender for white men and women 'rather than introducing it as a relational dimension of colonialism'.[48] Persuasively arguing against simply inserting women into histories of empire, Anne McClintock in her influential work, Imperial Leather, declared:

> Imperialism cannot be understood without a theory of gender power. Gender power was not the superficial patina of empire, an ephemeral gloss over the more decisive mechanics of class or race. Rather gender dynamics were, from the outset, fundamental to the securing and maintenance of the imperial enterprise.[49]

Amirah Inglis' much earlier work on the passage of the White Women's Protection Ordinance in 1920s' Papua had much more successfully analysed the way in which, as McClintock suggested, gender dynamics had secured and maintained colonial rule. Inglis' analysis of the Ordinance, which introduced a compulsory death penalty for the rape or attempted rape of a white woman, understood it as an assertion of colonial rule, one that revealed the gendered and racialised fracture lines within Papuan colonial society.

It was from outside the discipline of history that the most interesting and provoking research on the gendered impact of colonialism for indigenous women emerged. In the 1970s feminist anthropologists had begun criticising older ethnographies for having ignored domains in which women possessed power, and underestimated women's role in decision-making and politics within indigenous societies. Marilyn Strathern, in her ethnography among the Melpa of Mount Hagen

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[47] Bulbeck, *Australian Women in Papua New Guinea: Colonial Passages 1920 - 1960*, p.249.
[48] Jane Haggis, "Gendering Colonialism or Colonising Gender? Recent Women's Studies Approaches to White Women and Histories of British Colonialism," *Women's Studies International Forum* 13, no. 1/2 (1990), p.113.
[49] Ann McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Conquest* (New York: New York University Press, 1995), pp.6-7.

dealt explicitly with women's roles and relations between the sexes, arguing Melpa women's social identity came from their role as intermediaries in a system of exchange between their clan of origin and their husband's clan; they were women 'in between'.[50] While Annette Weiner's Women of Value, Men of Renown demonstrated Trobriand women's involvement in public mortuary rites and exchanges constituted a distinctive women's culture or domain.[51] Their work opened up a space for ethnographies of women, though neither was particularly well historicised or was significantly concerned with the impact of colonialism. Other feminist anthropologists, however, began assessing the impact of colonialism for women as their focus. Jill Nash, for example, argued that the introduction of cash cropping among the Nagovis in southern Bougainville had strengthened women's position within the traditional system of matrilineality.[52] Lorraine Sexton examined how women in the eastern highlands responded collectively to the changes taking place within their villages after contact in the 1930s, establishing Wok Meri, a new savings and exchange system in the early 1960s.[53] She argued that this system enabled women to enhance their rights to property and take on status previously only available to men. And Dianne Johnson examined the emergence of a new class of educated, elite indigenous women, who attended university, were employed within government and private enterprise, and had entered into national politics.[54]

The most insightful and exciting work on women and gender in the Pacific has often come at the intersection of these two disciplines, out of the interdisciplinary work of feminist scholars in their productive blend of both anthropology and history. This blending occurs both in terms of approach within individual scholars' work, in particular in the work of Margaret Jolly and Bronwen Douglas.[55] Or alternatively

[50] Marilyn Strathern, *Women in Between : Female Roles in a Male World : Mount Hagen, New Guinea* (Lanham, Md. : Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1995 [first edition: 1972]).
[51] Annette Weiner, *Women of Value, Men of Renown* (Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 1976).
[52] Jill Nash, *Matriliny and Modernisation : The Nagovisi of South Bougainville*, New Guinea Research Bulletin ; (Canberra: New Guinea Research Unit, Australian National University, 1974); Jill Nash, "Women, Work and Change in Nagovisi," in *Rethinking Women's Roles: Perspectives from the Pacific*, ed. Denise O'Brien and Sharon W. Tiffany (Berkeley ; Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984).
[53] Lorraine Dusak Sexton, *Mothers of Money, Daughters of Coffee : The Wok Meri Movement*, Studies in Cultural Anthropology ; (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1986).
[54] Dianne Johnson, "The Government Women: Gender and Structural Contradiction in Papua New Guinea" (Ph.D, University of Sydney, 1984). And for later work on 'elite' Papua New Guinean women see also Laura Zimmer Tamakoshi, "Nationalism and Sexuality in Papua New Guinea," *Pacific Studies* 16, no. 4 (1993). and Deborah B. Gewertz and Frederick Karl Errington, "Sleights of Hand and the Constructions of Desire in a Papua New Guinea Modernity," *The Contemporary Pacific* 10, no. 2 (1998); Deborah B. Gewertz and Frederick Karl Errington, *Emerging Class in Papua New Guinea : The Telling of Difference* (Cambridge, U.K. ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), chapter 5.
[55] See Margaret Jolly, "'To Save the Girls for Brighter and Better Lives': Presbyterian Missions and Women in the South of Vanuatu, 1848 - 1870," *Journal of Pacific History* 26, no. 1 (1991);

takes place within the various edited collections that have brought together research from different disciplines to address the diverse themes of the role of female missionaries, the changing organisation of the family, motherhood and maternity and birthing, sexuality, citizenship, human rights, and the gendering of 'politics'.[56] It is to these works that I am most indebted in terms of the questions I asked and my general theoretical approach in writing a history of the colonial state and Papua New Guinean women.

My decision to focus on the colonial state may need some explaining. For many scholars the natural entry point into the histories of indigenous women in the Pacific has been a focus on missionary workers and wives.[57] Missionaries in many areas of the Pacific were the first to make contact with indigenous communities, and certainly the first to begin the work of 'uplifting' the Pacific woman. Perhaps most compelling in making the argument for such a focus is Bronwen Douglas' critique of the 'romantic secularism and the feminist ethnocentrism' that has kept historians of the Pacific from engaging with the historically central role Christianity has played within

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Margaret Jolly, "Ill-Natured Comparisons: Race and Relativism in European Representations of Ni-Vanuatu from Cook's Second Voyage," *History and Anthropology* 5, no. 3 - 4 (1992); Margaret Jolly, "Woman-Nation-State in Vanuatu: Women as Signs and Subjects in the Discourses of Kastom, Modernity and Christianity," in *Narratives of Nation in the South Pacific*, ed. Ton Otto and Nicholas Thomas (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1997); Margaret Jolly, "Other Mothers: Maternal 'Insouciance' and the Depopulation Debate in Fiji and Vanuatu, 1890 - 1930," in *Maternities and Modernities : Colonial and Postcolonial Experiences in Asia and the Pacific*, ed. Margaret Jolly and Kalpana Ram (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). And with relation to the work of Bronwen Douglas see Bronwen Douglas, "Provocative Readings in Intransigent Archives: Finding Aneityumese Women," *Oceania* 70, no. 2 (1999); Bronwen Douglas, "Encounters with the Enemy? Academic Readings of Missionary Narratives on Melanesians," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 43, no. 1 (2001); Douglas, *Weak States and Other Nationalisms: Emerging Melanesian Paradigms*, Bronwen Douglas, "Christian Citizens: Women and Negotiations of Modernity in Vanuatu," *The Contemporary Pacific* 14, no. 1 (2002). Douglas discusses the usefulness of an historian's engagement with anthropology for writing Pacific histories concerned with indigenous experience in Bronwen Douglas, *Across the Great Divide : Journeys in History and Anthropology*, Studies in Anthropology and History ; (Amsterdam, Netherlands: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1998).

[56] Margaret Jolly and Martha Macintyre, *Family and Gender in the Pacific : Domestic Contradictions and the Colonial Impact* (Cambridge Cambridge University Press 1989); Lenore Manderson and Margaret Jolly, *Sites of Desire, Economies of Pleasure : Sexualities in Asia and the Pacific* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1997.); Margaret Jolly and Kalpana Ram, *Maternities and Modernities : Colonial and Postcolonial Experiences in Asia and the Pacific* (Cambridge Cambridge University Press, 1998.); Margaret Jolly and Kalpana Ram, eds, *Borders of Being : Citizenship, Fertility, and Sexuality in Asia and the Pacific* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2001); Margaret Jolly and Vicki Lukere, *Birthing in the Pacific : Beyond Tradition and Modernity?* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002); various papers in the 2003 special edition of *Oceania*, Margaret Jolly and Bronwen Douglas, "Women's Groups and Everyday Modernity in Melanesia," *Oceania* 74, no. 1-2 (2003); Anne-Marie Hilsdon, *Human Rights and Gender Politics in the Asia-Pacific*, Routledge Advances in Asia-Pacific Studies ; (New York: Routledge, 2000).

[57] Patricia Grimshaw, *Paths of Duty: American Missionary Wives in Nineteenth Century Hawaii* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989); Langmore, "Object Lesson of a Civilised, Christian Home."; Douglas, "Provocative Readings in Intransigent Archives: Finding Aneityumese Women."; Douglas, "Christian Citizens: Women and Negotiations of Modernity in Vanuatu."

Pacific women's lives.[58] Douglas here highlighted the ways in which Indigenous women have been active participants in church and mission activities. When they were given the opportunity, they very quickly assumed a variety of formal roles within church structures. Among contemporary Pacific women, Christian women's groups remain an important means through which indigenous women organise collectively and are able to raise publicly key issues affecting women's ordinary lives.[59]

Within this thesis, I take as given the importance of recognising Christianity and the role the various missions played within the colonial project, and also – in a very meaningful, and ongoing way – within indigenous women's lives. Nonetheless I agree with Nira Yural Davis, who in a slightly different context, has argued:

> While the state is not unitary in its practices, its intentions or its effects, there is a need to retain the state as a separate sphere, 'a body of institutions which are centrally organised around the intentionality of control with a given apparatus of enforcement at its command or basis.'[60]

Yural Davis asserts that the state remains a critical subject for analysis, because it remains crucial to the exercise of individual and collective rights, and continues to attempt to intervene into the lives of its subjects.[61] In the period under consideration within this thesis, the colonial state certainly attempted to intervene in and assert control over the lives of indigenous subjects and direct their futures. The Australian administration believed it had the power to transform indigenous women's lives and remake indigenous women as 'modern' colonial subjects.

ARCHIVES AND PEOPLE TELL VERY DIFFERENT STORIES

Generally substantial in volume, the sheer weight of the document archive works to lure the unguarded historian into optimistic appreciation of the empirical material promised within. So many brown folders to unpack, pink ribbons to untie, and yellowed pages to turn; the story must be here somewhere.

I began my research for this thesis in the archives: unpacking folders, untying ribbons. Within this thesis I have drawn upon the available existing archives of the Australian colonial administration – those available through the Australian National

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[58] Bronwen Douglas, "Introduction," *Oceania* 74, no. 1&2 (2003), p.3.

[59] Ibid. See also the various other contributions to the 2003 edition of *Oceania* on women's organising in the Pacific, in particular that of Anne Dickson-Waiko.

[60] Yural-Davis was responding to theoretical shifts that threw into question a model of the state grounded in an assumption of the vertical structures of power. Nira Yural-Davis, "Women, Citizenship and Difference," *Feminist Review* 57 (1997), p.13.

[61] Ibid, p.13.

Archives, but also the Papua New Guinean archives. Though significant high level policy discussion and decisions were recorded and archived in the files (and duplicate files) of the Department of Territories in Canberra, much of the intriguing day to day discussion and deliberation behind the administration's work was found within the archives held in Papua New Guinea. It was here in the more local administration archive that I found the files holding the correspondence and reports of kiaps, district officers, and welfare officers, among others. It was here I found the individual cases and situations characteristic of their work, but also those that threw up a challenge to administration policy. However the PNG archives, because of a lack of resources, are not the easiest to research. They are largely uncatalogued, and rather haphazardly indexed. Searching here I could not help but wonder what files – and the stories they hold – might now be lost for good.

Yet to ask such a question in many ways begins from a presumption of, as Antoinette Burton has pointed out, 'the total knowledge which the official archive guarantees', as though a well preserved archive could hold the 'truth' and the historian need only enter and retrieve then marshal all relevant 'facts' of the past to tell her history.[62] Though there will be many stories buried within the documentary archives, these can only ever offer a very partial understanding of a history. More than this, archives – including, of course, those outside official spaces and state repositories – are not simply the source-base of history, but themselves constitute 'full-fledged historical actors'.[63] Bronwen Douglas in an essay on reading 'intransigent archives' for traces of indigenous experience and agency, has written of official archives as legitimising and participating in state power in the way in which they:

> underwrite History the discipline and the secular, linear, precedential conception of the past which imperial and national regimes deploy to engender and discipline colonial subjects and national citizens.[64]

Any attempt to tell the histories of indigenous peoples cannot rely solely on the catalogue of materials saved in dusty government archive boxes, or in the microfiche or stacks of National Public Libraries. Overwhelmingly authored by European colonial actors to be read by European audiences, these reflect a particular set of experiences. A reading of them, even one that seeks to read between the lines, or

[62] Antoinette Burton, *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions and the Writing of History* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2005), p.4.
[63] Ibid, p.7.
[64] Douglas, "Provocative Readings in Intransigent Archives: Finding Aneityumese Women." p.112.

'against the grain', largely unearths an understanding of the attitudes, motivations, and experiences of white women and men in the colonies.

Bronwen Douglas suggests something of a 'subaltern' reading strategy when approaching colonial texts and archives, one that

> decentres colonial representations by identifying and decoding the traces of indigenous actions and presences which are sedimented in, and surreptitiously help shape, dominant texts.[65]

She argued that this kind of critical approach allows the historian to know something of indigenous pasts. Douglas' optimism should perhaps be placed beside Gayatri Spivak's solemn note of warning: the indigenous female woman's voice cannot be heard except as archival trace or shadow in those moments that imperial and indigenous patriarchal concerns converged (and when imperialists, as Spivak famously parsed, could tell the story as 'white men are saving brown women from brown men').[66] The creation of the framework within which the 'native' might speak – by the archives, by the intellectual – undermines the attempt to give voice, and may, warns Spivak, simply repeat the very silencing it aims to contest. Yet Douglas' strategy is one that, even as it suggests the possibility of finding 'indigenous women', calls for an explicit tracing that identifies the moments of silencing and effacement.

My turn to oral history to create a new archive was in many ways an attempt to circumvent this problem. Within the thesis I have drawn on indigenous women's own accounts of their experience of colonialism, undertaking a series of interviews with women from two different areas of Papua New Guinea about their lives. Oral history has long been argued as capable of providing a more democratic, a more comprehensive account of the past.[67] Certainly there is a clear shortage of published primary materials to draw on that tells of indigenous women's experiences of Australian colonialism in their own voice, from their own perspective.[68]

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[65] Ibid, p.113.

[66] Gayatri Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?," in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. C. Nelson and L. Grossberg (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1988), p.92.

[67] Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); Popular Memory Group, "Popular Memory: Theory, Politics, Method," in *The Oral History Reader*, ed. Alistair Thomson and Robert Perks (London and New York: Routledge, 1998);

[68] Two prominent Papuan women, Alice Wedega (a missionary, women's activist, and member of the pre-independence Legislative Assembly) and Josephine Abaijah (the newly independent nation's first female member of Parliament) have published autobiographies. There are also two published biographies of women from New Guinea, which are based closely on stories the women themselves told the authors. *Anyan's Story* tells the story of Anyan, a Tairora woman of the Eastern Highlands. Anthropologist Virginia Watson drew

Oral histories are, however, not a way of getting at some kind of unmediated 'real', or 'authentic' experience. Memory and its narration is not the recollection of retained events of the past, it is a partial and interpretive act that is always remaking the past to make sense of, or be made sense of in, the present. Making use of oral accounts requires, on the part of the historian, a listening in for how memories unfold and stories of the past are retold. Ann Stoler and Karen Strassler, in their work on the experiences of domestic servants and labourers in colonial Java, point out the need to attend not only to what is remembered within shared testimonies but also to how this is remembered and shared.[69] Understanding memory as an interpretive labour, they call on scholars to give focus to and analyse the 'memory work' present in experience narratives. And to do this in a way that marks 'the colonial a subject, rather than an assumed category of analysis'.[70] Applying this as working methodology requires, they argue, a renegotiation of many of the 'received wisdoms and long cherished assumptions' of post-colonial studies, these being:

> that the colonial is ever present in postcolonial lives; that postcolonial subjectivity by definition pivots on the transition from the colonial to the postcolonial; that there are subaltern circuits in which colonial critiques are lodged; that there is resistance in the smallest of gestures and the very lack of gesture at all; and that telling of the colonial past is a therapeutic act.[71]

Stoler and Strassler's work has prompted me, in the Pacific postcolonial context, to similarly question the testimonies I heard. Were these rehearsed narratives or plots that had been told before, that circulate? How did the colonial and 'contact' figure

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extensively on Anyan's own oral testimony to put together the book. The other biography, *Mama Kuma*, tells the life story of Kuma Kelage, a Sina Sina woman from Chimbu province. This very personal biography was written by Kuma's granddaughter, Deborah Carylon, and was based on the many stories of her life that Kuma shared with her. Wedega, *Listen, My Country*; Abaijah and Wright, *A Thousand Coloured Dreams: The Story of a Young Girl Growing up in Papua*; Watson, *Anyan's Story: A New Guinea Woman in Two Worlds*; Carlyon, *Mamakuma : One Woman, Two Cultures*. More recently Christine Kewa published a book length essay discussing various challenges facing women in Papua New Guinea, Christina Kewa, *Being a Woman in Papua New Guinea : From Grass Skirts and Ashes to Education and Global Changes* ([Papua New Guinea]: Christina Kewa
Copy Press). 2007). Otherwise creative works – fiction and poetry - are the main ways in which indigenous women have expressed themselves in a published form. See, for example, Nora Vagi Brash, *Which Way, Big Man? : And Five Other Plays*, Oxford Pacific Writers (Boroko, Papua New Guinea ; Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1996). Finally oral histories were undertaken by Dame Rachel Cleland for her book on women's organising, and Ann Turner has also undertaken oral histories with indigenous women. Both interviewed elite, educated women and published short summaries of each woman's life. Rachel Cleland, *Grass Roots to Independence and Beyond: The Contributions by Women in Papua New Guinea 1951 - 1991* (Claremont, W.A.: Dame Rachel Cleland, 1996); and Ann Turner, *Views from Interviews: The Changing Role of Women in Papua New Guinea* (Melbourne ; New York: Oxford University Press 1993).

[69] Ann Laura Stoler and Karen Strassler, "Castings for the Colonial: Memory Work in 'New Order' Java," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 42, no. 1 (2000).

[70] Ibid, p.38.

[71] Ibid, p.38.

within the women's stories? Was the assumption of the centrality of 'the colonial' to their past and their history an imposition to understanding the memories and the meanings held within these oral accounts? I use these questions to both structure and guide my reliance on (and before that, collection of) oral testimony throughout the chapters of this thesis.

These oral histories should not simply be seen as adding depth or running parallel to the account revealed through archival sources. Nor do I look to the oral histories to necessarily counter or critique the colonial documentation of the period. I see them as working to complicate archival documentation, forcing questions at those points where the two sets of sources come together, but also where they diverge. The gaps and contradictions, the silences and assertions of the two, need to be understood in relation and with reference to one another.

MAKING AND NARRATING LIVES ...

Like Stoler and Strassler, anthropologist Michael Young reminds historians dealing with life narratives that they must bring to bear 'scrupulous attention to the nesting contexts which surround any narrative, including the context of elicitation'.[72] The narrative that emerges in the moment or context of the interview is one that is clearly collaborative in the sense that I – as interviewer – prompted its telling. I came with certain motivations and interests and so did the women with whom I sat down to talk. The research and interview process was not – and could not be – an equal one. I had significantly greater power within the interviews to initiate certain conversations, to lead these in certain directions, and to then later edit and interpret the women's stories. I do not wish, however, to overstate my role or position within the interview; many of the women I interviewed guided me along pathways I hadn't thought of following, redirected questions or simply shut some of my questions down. Sometimes the most fruitful questions or prompts came from other village women, as interviews were often done amid a circle of friends or female relatives.

When analysing and presenting the women's accounts of their lives I have not unfolded each of these individually as a coherent narrative (and of course within interviews they were never presented as such). Instead I have drawn from the diverse, often idiosyncratic personal accounts of the women to allow an examination of what I felt were the main themes or issues that emerged across interviews. In many ways then, my use of these oral histories and fieldwork as an alternative archive involved the same complex process of selection and interpretation that took

[72] Michael W. Young, "'Our Name Is Women; We Are Bought with Limesticks and Limepots': An Analysis of the Autobiographical Narrative of a Kalauna Woman," *Man* 18, no. 3 (1983), p.480.

place when I approached and engaged with the more traditional archive of government files, personal records, manuscripts and published texts. My retelling and arranging of testimonies – sometimes taking only snippets of women's interviews on a topic to be read in concert or against those of others, sometimes narrating and interpreting a moment or fragment of their lives from a particular vantage – is not a re-presentation of their 'voice' or 'perspective' on the page. And certainly I have presented and interpreted the experiences or memories they shared with me in very different ways than the women themselves would have done.

Nonetheless I approached their life stories mindful of the need to understand these on their own terms, rather than seeking to immediately fit them into the history I thought I was writing. This was following a loosely feminist approach to oral history advocated by Gelya Frank and Elizabeth Hampsten (as interpreted by Susan Geiger) that emphasises understanding rather than controlling the material and information generated, and conceptualises the task of interpreting testimonies as one of opening rather than closure.[73] It was sometimes hard to resist and I failed to hold back from attempting to seize control, but in these moments I often found myself stymied: the neat chapter structures I wrote up just didn't work out. Every read through of my folder of interview transcripts generated a new series of questions and complicated some of my basic assumptions about these women's lives.

I have talked here of creating and drawing from an 'archive' of oral histories: my intention in this was in part to destabilise the authority of the traditional textual archive. This however is unhelpful to the extent it creates the impression of these life narratives or testimonies as simply alternative texts rather than the shared stories of people. There is a danger here of erasing the women who shared the details of their lives. Within the thesis I hope not simply to present my very partial, particular interpretation of what meaning lay behind the words shared, but to convey to the reader some sense of the women who shared those words with me.

TWO COMMUNITIES: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION AND EXPLANATION

The women I interviewed for this thesis came from two communities. Given the extraordinary diversity of peoples in Papua New Guinea and their varying social organisations not to mention contact histories, it would be impossible to provide one encompassing 'overview' of indigenous women's experience of Australian colonialism in the post-war period. Instead I chose to focus on two places and present closer studies (micro-histories) of these communities.

[73] Susan Geiger, "What's So Feminist About Women's Oral History?," *Journal of Women's History* 2, no. 1 (1990), p.170.

The first group with whom I undertook oral histories and fieldwork was the Halia and Haku speaking peoples of Buka.[74] Their villages stretch along the north-eastern coast of the island of Buka. Buka is a small island, home to the administrative capital of what is now known – after a prolonged period of secessionist conflict through the late 1980s and into the 1990s, commonly referred to as 'the Crisis' – as the Autonomous Region of Bougainville. Buka came under the Bougainville District of New Guinea during the Australian colonial period. The second group was that of the Motu-Koitabuan peoples of Hanuabada, a cluster of smaller 'urban' villages, around which the capital city of Port Moresby has grown. The Motu-Koitabuans are the traditional owners of much of the land that Port Moresby now sits on. Hanuabada, more accurately known as Poreporena, now sits within the boundaries of the National Capital District (NCD). During the Australian colonial period it was part of Central District in Papua for administrative purposes.

Two cultures, in a country that is host to a multitude of heterogeneous cultures, is certainly not comprehensive, nor do I claim that these two localities are representative of a wider 'indigenous colonial experience'. Rather the value of these two case studies lies in their potential, as closely drawn portraits, to reveal the complexity of what colonial administrative rule looked like in practice. They show how decisions made in Moresby played out at the local level, and how indigenous communities negotiated these locally. Direct comparison between the two sites chosen is not particularly instructive, however the two do present an interesting contrast. While much comparative work grounds its analysis in two or more sites that are similar, the two case study locations in this thesis were chosen for their specific, very different, histories of contact and colonisation.

Hanuabadans have generally been represented by colonising Europeans as having a history of early and successful, though not necessarily uncomplicated, co-operation with the colonial state. The Motu and Koitabu peoples were the first group with whom European missionaries were to permanently settle and already by the early twentieth century they were regarded by the colonial administration as a particularly 'sophisticated' native population. The village's location directly beside the headquarters of the Australian administration in Port Moresby (it is around one kilometre from the old colonial administration headquarters at Konedobu) meant that it was from Hanuabada that the first indigenous clerical workers were recruited, and that it was in Hanuabada that early political, welfare and education initiatives

[74] Haku is classified as a dialect of Halia. Cultural practice is understood by the Haku and Halia as distinct, but very closely related.

were first implemented. Colonial concerns regarding 'contact' were evident mainly in relation to the rapidity of the Hanuabadans' acculturation to European ways.

The Halia and Haku, on the other hand, though receptive to the general project of 'modernisation', have actively sought to define and implement this themselves. Their relationship with the colonial administration was better characterised perhaps as one of antagonistic co-operation. The village of Hahalis, half way along the east coast of the island, is now quite famous as the site for a popular and influential indigenous-led social movement, the Hahalis Welfare Society, which emerged in the late 1950s and functioned for well over 30 years. The movement's reach extended across all Halia villages, and through to the connected northern Haku villages, as well as to some areas of the northern tip of mainland Bougainville.

The Hahalis Welfare Society was an autonomous movement that was generally antagonistic towards local Administrative rule, but which embraced some of the changes brought through contact with Europeans. Indeed it often sought to transform or 'modernise' local, traditional practises or custom, but on its own terms. Not all Halia and Haku were involved in the Welfare Society, but none avoided its impact. Many sided with the Catholic Church in strong opposition. In their pro or anti 'Welfare' stance, villagers could not help but be shaped by its presence. The Australian colonial administration, for its part, regarded the Hahalis Welfare Society as 'a political group, with anti-administration tendencies'. The administration sometimes referred to it as a 'cult', but after initial, explicit opposition was willing to work with Welfare Society leaders and attempted to draw them within the Local Council system.[75]

FIELDWORK AND COLLECTING THE ORAL HISTORIES

The fieldwork and oral history component of my project was undertaken from the end of 2006 through to the end of 2007. I spent approximately 6 months living in Basbi, a hamlet in the larger village of Hahalis on Buka Island. From there I travelled up and down the main road, the John Teosin Highway, that reaches from the north of the island and south to the main township and administrative headquarters to sit and talk with women from the various villages that run along the eastern coast.

Over the course of my time spent in Buka I recorded interviews with 42 women about their lives. In both Buka and Hanuabada I carried out interviews with two generations of women. The women in Buka ranged in age from 35 through to 75. They were all born in Buka, or on one of the small islands surroundings Buka, and

[75] PNGA: 496/ARC6A917/1965-7/BN7, Bougainville District Annual Report, Annual Report, Bougainville District, 1965 – 66, p.23.

had spent all, or at least most of, their childhoods in the village. They were almost all married or widowed. Only two women that I spoke with had never married – one of these women being a nun, the other having strongly considered joining the church as a sister as a young woman. Four were separated from the husbands at the time of our interview, and a number were remarried after their first marriage did not work out. The educational and employment histories of the women I interviewed varied greatly. Many had received only very basic formal schooling (a couple of years), a number, however, had gone on to higher education. Most lived in the village, went to garden and earned money working copra or marketing. However a number were employed as teachers and nurses. One woman worked for a well-established non-governmental organisation in town, another held a high level position in the local Buka Town Council. Many had travelled or lived in various places throughout Bougainville. A number had lived in other provinces in Papua New Guinea. Two had travelled overseas.

The other five months were spent in Port Moresby. Dividing my time between archival research and fieldwork, I would visit the village of Hanuabada around two to three times a week. After an initial introduction through a work colleague of my father, I developed a friendship with a young woman, Nancy Gera (Morea). Nancy was a young wife and mother. Having put her education and career in hospitality on hold to take care of her young child, she took a particular interest in my project. It was something outside of the everyday, but it was also, she told me, an opportunity to hear stories from the older women in the village she would otherwise have never have heard. Nancy became my research assistant, and it was primarily through her family and church networks (particularly important in Hanuabada) that I made contact with women who I then arranged to interview.

I interviewed 21 women from Hanuabada village, ranging in age from 49 to 80. Though in the village of Hanuabada there are two groups of people, the Motuans and the Koitabuans, the 20 women I interviewed talked about themselves as Motuan. Following this, within this thesis I am largely talking about Motuan women in the village of Hanuabada.[76] All the women I interviewed had been married. A number were widows. Two had divorced and then found new partners. As had been the case for my respondents in Buka, the education and employment histories of the women varied greatly depending on their age. The older they were the less formal

[76] This is, of course, a messy distinction. The two groups have intermarried for generations. There are different Motu and Koitabu clans, and different villages within Poreporena (Hanuabada) distinguish themselves as Koitabu, but in many ways they share histories and custom, and for this reason are often referred to as Motu-Koitabuans. For more information see Background: Hanuabada, this thesis.

education they had received, and the more unlikely they were to have had any waged employment. Three had travelled overseas (one for schooling, one with her husband for his tertiary education, another for her work). A number had travelled around Papua New Guinea. Mostly this was through the church, but a number had lived in other provinces for work.[77]

The interviews with women in Buka and Hanuabada lasted anywhere from 30 minutes through to three hours. During the interviews we followed a semi-structured format. I generally opened with background questions about age, family size, clan and their land and then shifted to ask a series of more open-ended questions. Together we would follow through the women's lives in loose chronological fashion, me prodding with another question (often following on from their response) as their answer to the previous answer was wavering to a close. Occasionally I would draw the women back over a topic to fill in details of something mentioned earlier. This question-answer format was used because, although a few felt comfortable to simply tell me the story of their lives without prompting, most were much happier for me – and requested this directly – to lead them through the interview in a more structured manner. While many were great storytellers in a social setting, the idea of 'storying their lives' for me (and the tape recorder) seemed quite foreign to most; a little daunting even.[78] This was not about women being silent or shy, but more about the setting and the particular genre here of 'story' sharing. In particular questions relating to the quotidian – to the everyday village activities of women: their mothers, themselves, their daughters – seemed to be answered by the women in abrupt or summary statements. A number of times the women I interviewed asked me what could possibly be interesting about their lives.

All except two of the interviews with Buka women were recorded in Tok Pisin rather than the women's vernacular (Halia and Haku). The other two were done predominantly in English with a scattering of Tok Pisin. So though we were reasonably fluent in Pisin, neither the women nor myself were using our first language. Initially I met with women who I was introduced to because they had been very involved in the early government run women's clubs on the island. I also

[77] Three women had travelled around as children with their missionary relatives. Quite a few women had travelled as adults with their church groups to various provinces. Two had lived in other provinces for work.

[78] Chilla Bulbeck noted that for her project on Australian women in Papua New Guinea she and fellow researcher, Deane Fergie, had conducted a number of interviews with local women from New Ireland. Bulbeck had wanted to be able to include something of the indigenous women's perspective in her history. She encountered a reticence: 'unfortunately, despite our attempts to include them, indigenous women spoke little during these interviews'. Bulbeck, *Australian Women in Papua New Guinea: Colonial Passages 1920 - 1960*, p.3.

went through a stage of introducing myself and my project to groups – initially often to the chiefs in a village, but also to groups of women after Church on Sunday, or at the local primary school during Pilai (sports day). I would then organise a later time to walk and visit with those women who showed interest. Many of the women I interviewed, however, were those I met informally in the course of getting to know life on the island.

In Hanuabada Nancy accompanied me on most interviews and translated for me. Four of my interviews with Motuan women were done in English. These women were younger than most of the others, and very well educated (two had completed high school, the other two, tertiary education) and fluent in English. Apart from these four, the other women were not comfortable speaking English (though many were quite familiar with it and could understand everything I said), and preferred to speak Motuan. At times family members of the woman being interviewed would also intervene to help with translation; invariably a small crowd of family or friends would crowd around to listen as we recorded the interview.

Nancy was in many ways also a social mediator. Her familiar presence helped put the older Motuan women at ease. They had generally only heard of my project but not actually met me before we sat down to talk. As time went on I became a more familiar figure in the village, nonetheless prior close acquaintance with the women I was interviewing was rare. This arrangement meant that the process of interview and translation was informal, with Nancy sometimes inserting herself into the interview, prodding, beginning conversations, and commenting on the women's memories and stories. I felt this was something productive (rather than problematic).

In both places who I was, or presented as – female, young, privileged, Australian, unmarried (though known to be in a relationship), and childless – no doubt affected the content of what was shared with me. As did the women's appreciation of the project I undertook as 'history', something taken very seriously by people in both the communities. When they sat down and told their story to me and to the small recorder I carried with me, the women of Buka and Hanuabada no doubt imagined an audience wider than simply myself (and the small group of women and children that might be crowded around). The social realities of their lives, and their relationship to me (as well as to this imagined, wider audience for the history I might

write) placed constraints on how open or honest they felt they could be, or wanted to be, about certain topics.[79]

My fieldwork and the oral histories I collected shaped the eventual framing of my thesis. When I first arrived in Papua New Guinea mid way through 2006 the focus of my thesis was on education, though this was defined quite broadly to include – as the colonial administration had – informal training and women's club organising. I had thought education to be the lens through which I could adequately tell the story of indigenous women's experiences of Australian colonialism. Staying in the village (in Buka) or visiting it (in Hanuabada) and with women going to the gardens; going to church; washing clothes and washing dishes; participating in women's group meetings; attending marriage and reconciliation and funerary rituals and finally, most importantly, sitting in their kitchens and under their houses or in their front family rooms and listening to their stories made me realise that many had never engaged with state programs and policies in the ways I had expected. Nonetheless the colonial state (and certainly Australian colonialism) had shaped their lives in many ways that could not be accounted for through a discussion of the state's provision of education (no matter how broadly defined). I was forced to open up the focus of my thesis and reconsider what I would give space to (there was so much to say).

THESIS STRUCTURE

The thesis is divided thematically into four parts. The first part, *Women and the Australian Colonial State*, provides a largely archival history of women's role within and relationship to the colonial state. Though the focus of this thesis is on Papua New Guinean women's experience of Australian colonialism, the three chapters that make up Part One address how white women, in their advocacy for the 'advancement of native women', delivery of welfare services, and attempts to reform indigenous women's motherly and wifely practice were enacting *their* female colonial citizenship as they attempted to 'make' the indigenous woman as 'modern' colonial subject. Following McClintock's early admonition against inserting women into histories of empire as simply 'hapless onlookers', here I examine the ways in which white women in colonial Papua and New Guinea were 'ambiguously complicit both as colonisers and as colonised, privileged and restricted, acted upon

[79] Heidi Gengenbach has argued, however, that it is precisely in the way that memory is 'embedded within lived social networks and social experiences' and then shared again within an often complicated context of another set of social relationships that it holds a form of 'historical truth' (which, following Luisa Passerini, she defines as 'knowledge about the past that matters in the present'). Heidi Gengenbach, "Truth-Telling and the Politics of Women's Life History Research in Africa: A Reply to Kirk Hoppe," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 27, no. 3 (1994), pp.624 – 625.

and acting'.[80] These chapters also serve to outline the details and content of colonial policy that was specifically women-focused and concerned with women as colonial subjects.

In Chapter One, The Problem Recognised, I outline the ways in which even as indigenous women were marginalised from the 'opportunities' offered by employment on plantations, in colonial homes, or with the administration in the early colonial period, they nonetheless remained crucial to the colonial project. The colonial policy of 'neglect' was a conscious decision. Explicitly restricted to the village, women's subsistence labour subsidised the development of the colonial plantation economy, and their continued presence there was believed to be holding in check the disintegration of village life. Indigenous women were regarded by the colonial administration as key to preserving tradition and 'holding back change'. I then move on to examine the social and political circumstances and imperatives behind the significant shift in colonial policy into 'welfare imperialism' after the Second World War. This shift saw village women repositioned as potential agents of transformation within their village communities, and targeted as recipients of colonial welfare services.

In the second chapter, The Nuts and Bolts of Organising, I outline the practical application of this new policy focus, looking at both who was delivering 'welfare work for women', and the various problems they encountered along the way. Although this was work recognised as necessary, it was certainly not a colonial priority, and much of it relied on the voluntary labour of the wives of missionaries, planters and, most often, of colonial officers. In this the administration was quick to make a virtue of necessity: in volunteering their time white women modelled for their indigenous female charges an ideal of female 'active' citizenship. White women in the colonies, but also in the Australian regional branches of the Country Women's Association (which established links with village women through the administration's welfare work) proved themselves worthy as colonial citizens via their contribution to the colonial project.

The last chapter in this section, Envisaging a 'new woman', draws on the basic literacy aids, newsletters, and educational films produced by the administration for use within their welfare work with women to provide a sketch of the ideal modern colonial female indigenous subject as envisaged by the colonial state. Who was she? And where did she fit within the wider colonial polity? Here I identify the way in which the colonial administration sought to both engage and transform women in

[80] McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Conquest*, p.6.

their roles as mothers and wives. Through village women's clubs (the Club) and the infant and maternal welfare clinic (the Clinic) welfare officers hoped to bring women into contact with the state and help them find their place within nation, and indeed within the broader empire. The Club and the Clinic – as a practical activity and a real encounter between women and agents of the state – also served to locate the colonial state, literally give it place, within women's lives in the village.

The two chapters that form Part Two, Motherhood and Marriage, offer a response to this archival history. Moving away from the archives to focus on the local context and response to the colonial state's attempts to make 'better mothers and wives' of village women, both chapters are largely shaped by the concerns and priorities expressed in the oral testimonies of the women I interviewed.

Chapter Four, Halia and Haku mothers, Hard times in the village, is concerned with portraying the changes that occurred for women on the island of Buka as a result of colonialism in terms of both the expectations placed on mothers, as well as the actual experience of motherhood. Decisions to engage with the Clinic or the Club were made by Buka women depending on their ability to access these services and the extent to which they judged access to be of benefit to them given their personal circumstance at the time (and this could and did change over time). What became clear, through the oral histories of Halia and Haku women, was that changes with regards to the expectations placed on women as mothers and their experience of motherhood, were less a result of explicit state interventions directed at maternal practice (such as the Club and the Clinic) than the increasing intrusion of the cash economy within everyday village life. As women began to participate in the cash economy it became clear that customary obligations to 'reproduce the lineage' could come into conflict with their new responsibilities as mothers. The tensions between the customary role of mothers and a new emerging one was apparent in the ways in which Buka women articulated to me stories of mother 'neglect'. Drawing on a discourse of 'rights' that had become familiar to Bougainvillean women in the context of post-Crisis peace negotiations and the subsequent period of reconciliation, this vocabulary of rights both relied on the customary status of women within their matrilineal societies and evidenced a disruption of customary gendered relations.

The focus of Chapter Five, 'This is the Motu Custom', is not so much on women's roles as wives, as their becoming wives – the process and ritual of marriage. The colonial authorities and missionaries were concerned about marriage customs such as child marriage, polygamy and brideprice but could not agree on the best approach to discouraging these. This chapter is concerned to present Motuan women's own stories of negotiating traditional Motuan practices of engagement and marriage, and

their assessments of the changes that have taken place. What emerges from their testimonies is that traditional practice was never a neat system under which young women and young men's personal choice and autonomy was absolutely constrained.

Part Three, Race and Sexuality, returns again to the archives. Chapter Six, 'Protecting' indigenous women?, examines the rhetoric of 'protecting native women' as it emerged in the post war period. After the war the colonial administration introduced new legislation – the Native Women's Protection Ordinance – and strengthened existing policy that allowed for the regulation of (consensual) sexual relationships between indigenous women and white men, relationships, which had previously been largely ignored by the administration. As expressed within internal discussion on policy, as well as in the more public debates on the proposed legislation, these 'protective' concerns revealed not so much a concern for women's welfare, as a deep seated anxiety regarding the administration's relationship with and ability to govern over indigenous male subjects in the context of an increasing sense of the precarity of colonial authority and the shifting terrain of race relations within the colonies during this period.

Following on from this Chapter Seven, (Not quite) Black and White, moves to look at how these tensions and concerns manifested at the local level. Elite indigenous men had been active in discussions about the threat of white men to 'their women', and were keen to insulate them from relationships with outsiders (and, perhaps more to the point, relationships outside of their control). They were, however, alert to the ways in which the colonisers' proposals for regulation or management of these relations positioned them (indigenous men) in an unequal relation to the coloniser. While this is considered, the main purpose of Chapter Seven is to introduce and prioritise indigenous women's voices within this discussion. How do they remember and reflect back on village women's (and in some instances their own) participation in interracial relationships? In the stories shared with me, this discussion or debate around legislative 'protection' was not something that featured. Women's choices about entering into relationships with white men were various but ultimately guided by their concern for respectability and reputation; a concern anchored in both Christian and customary expectations regarding appropriate behaviour for women.

In the fourth and final part of this thesis, Women, Work and 'Colonial Modernity', I discuss waged labour and education, two pathways through which the colonial state believed indigenous subjects might be introduced to 'modernity'. For indigenous women, access to these was never straightforward. Chapter Eight, Ol meri bilong wok (Hard working women), blends archival research, fieldwork, and

oral history to talk about the impact of colonialism on women's work in the village. Indigenous women were first excluded then marginalised from waged work and other work regarded as economically 'productive' by the colonial administration. While within customary social organisation the distinction between productive and reproductive labour had not featured to any great extent prior to contact, Anne Dickson-Waiko has elsewhere observed that 'during the process of colonial rule reproduction and production became transformed, redefined and increasingly separated from each other.'[81] The work of Buka women, like most other women in Papua New Guinea, remains largely that of subsistence agriculture. They are proud of this work, but recognise it also as 'a burden'. It locks them out of various opportunities, and despite the value they place on it, and despite it being crucial work for the family, it is generally devalued because it is considered simply domestic/reproductive. The work that women now do to earn income because it is women's work is also similarly classified. The importance placed on formal education by Buka women, including those who were able to access education; those who 'dropped out' (often not of their own free will); and those who never had access, points to their recognition of the way in which their limited access to education and to waged work has again effectively locked them in the village. They are still largely expected to play a role determined by custom and tradition. In this way they are (ideologically, not of course practically) placed outside of the state and the capitalist economy, even as these have – through the colonial and postcolonial period – significantly impacted on the village and custom and tradition.

The stories of the women of Buka and Hanuabada that emerge in the later chapters demonstrate that the colonial state's provision of welfare through female-targeted policies and programs failed to transform women's role in the village as mothers and wives in the ways the colonial administration may have hoped. I argue through the course of the thesis that the protectionist policies of the colonial state with relation to sexuality and with relation to labour ensured, though in different ways, that women remained 'locked in the village'. They also ensured women's secondary or dependent status as subjects and – at independence – as citizens.

To colonial authorities, the power to transform indigenous women's lives and fashion modern mother-wife subjects lay with the state. Yet, the stories of women's lives reveal their participation in, negotiation of, and resistance to the changes taking place within the village through this period. Certainly in women's narratives becoming and being 'modern' does not appear as something distinct or separate

[81] Dickson- Waiko, "Women, Individual Human Rights, Community Rights: Tensions within the Papua New Guinea State.", p.53.

from practicing (an albeit modified version of) custom and tradition. Within this thesis the women of Buka and Hanuabada shared their own version of what it has meant to be modern mothers and modern wives, but they also told of the many other roles they play as women – as workers, active members within their clans and their communities, and as modern (though not necessarily equal) subjects of the state.

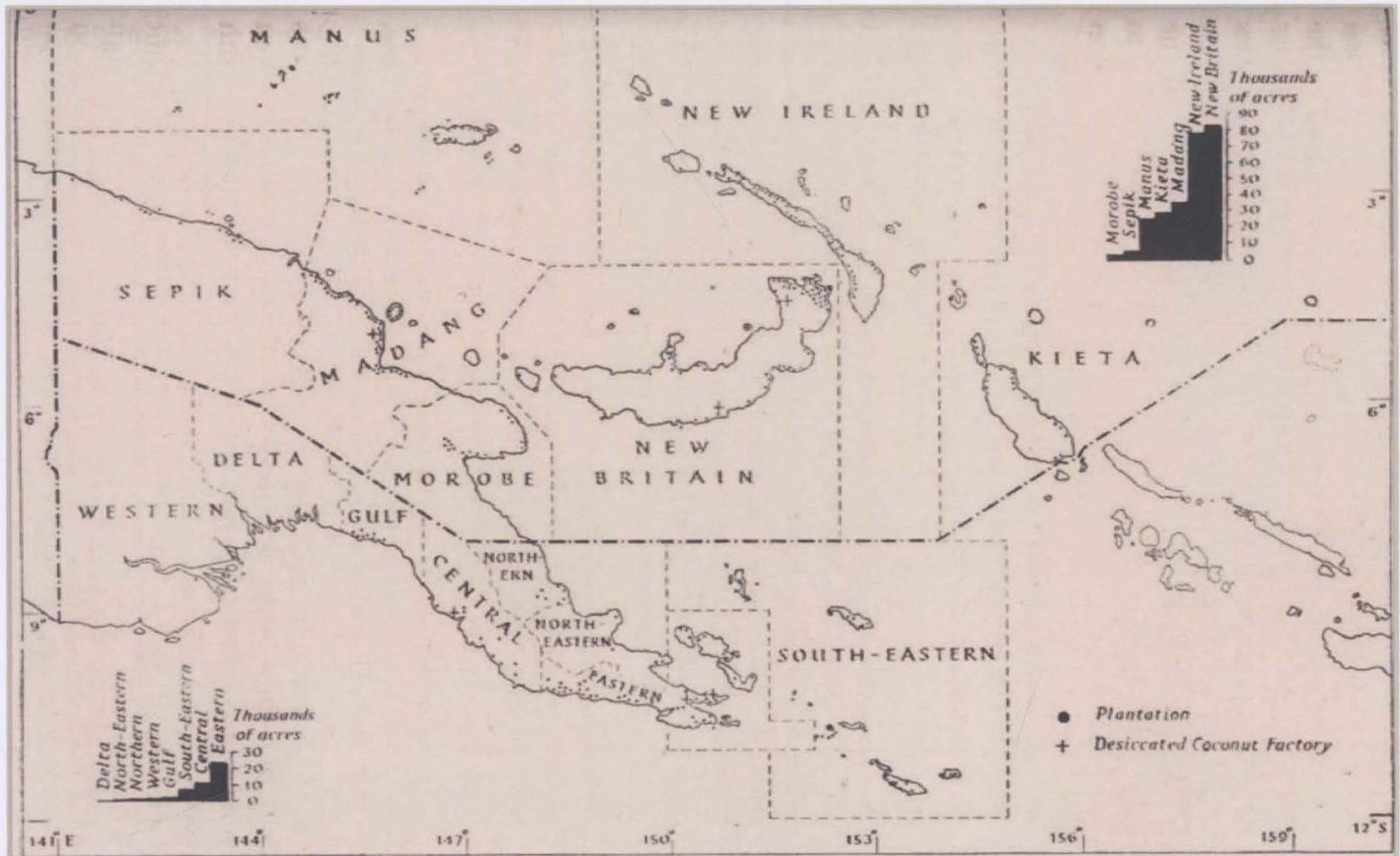

Figure 1.1 Map of pre-war Papua and Mandated Territory of New Guinea (with information about coconut plantations), from R.E.P Dwyer 'A Survey of the Coconut Industry in the Mandated Territory of New Guinea', *New Guinea Agricultural Gazette*, vol.11, p.10. (Rabaul, 1936)

Background

Australian colonialism in Papua New Guinea

By way of introduction to Part One, *Women and the Australian Colonial State*, – a largely archival section focused on the work of the colonial administration – I present here a short overview of Australian colonialism in Papua New Guinea that places my project within its broader historical framework.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries rival European powers explored and colonised the South West Pacific. In the mid nineteenth century when the Australian colonies had started to look with interest toward the Pacific, their concern was primarily economic or alternatively related to missionary activity. By the late 1870s, confronted with French and German imperialism, their interest in territorial expansion became more strategically defensive and their calls for Britain to step in and annex territories in the Pacific on their behalf became more urgent.[1]

In 1883 the colony of Queensland made an attempt to annex the eastern half of the island of New Guinea for Britain.[2] On hearing the news, Reverend James Chalmers of the London Missionary Society who had been on the island some six years expressed his dismay: 'there must be some mistake somewhere.'[3]

> Nowhere in the world have aborigines been so basely and cruelly treated as in Queensland – the half has never been told – and are the natives of New Guinea to be handed over to the tender mercies of the men who have done these deeds?[4]

Chalmers was not alone in this opinion. Indeed Britain refused to recognise the annexation, explaining this was at least in part because they feared 'international

[1] Roger C. Thompson, *Australian Imperialism in the Pacific: The Expansionist Era, 1820 - 1920* (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1980), pp.223-4.

[2] In fact there had already been a number of attempts to annex New Guinea for Britain, all ignored by Britain.

[3] R. Lovett, *James Chalmers: His Autobiography and Letters* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1902). An earlier unrecognised attempt had been made to annex the eastern half of the island for Britain by Lieutenant Yule in 1846. This was, however, not instigated by the colonies themselves.

[4] Ibid.

scandal' would result given Queensland's reputation for the ill treatment of Aboriginals and Melanesian labourers in the colony.[5]

A year later following continued and now combined pressure from all of the Australian colonies, Britain agreed to annex the lower portion of eastern New Guinea, but remained sceptical of the colonies' ability to govern 'native populations'. When the newly federated Australia assumed responsibility for the colony of Papua in 1901, their interest in it was no longer simply economic or strategic.[6] The colony would provide a key defensive landmass, exploitable resources, and an important testing ground for the new nation to demonstrate it was capable of administering a colonial territory and its indigenous peoples.

During debate of the Bill formally giving authority over the colony to Australia, many in Parliament called for a new mode of Australian colonial relations with the indigenous peoples of Papua.[7] Entering into this mood, George Reid, Prime Minister during the passage of the Papua Bill in 1904 pledged:

> that the interests of the black people of this Territory shall be safeguarded by a paternal government. In maintaining our say over the uncivilised blacks, it would be an odious thing to regard the Government as anything but their friend and protector.[8]

Australia would finally show itself to be in step with international standards of English-speaking imperial powers. When Sir Hubert Murray became Lieutenant Governor of Papua in 1908 (remaining in this position until his death in 1940), he was quick to position himself at the front of this movement for paternalist care, telling an assembly of fellows of the Royal Colonial Institute in 1911 that Papua presented,

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[5] For a discussion of this see Clive Moore, "Queensland Labour Trade and the Annexation of New Guinea in 1883," in *Papua New Guinea: A Century of Colonial Impact 1884 - 1984*, ed. Sione Latukefu (Port Moresby: National Research Institute and Univeristy of Papua New Guinea in association with the Centennial Committee, 1989).

[6] Since 1888 when British New Guinea had been made a crown colony, rather than simply a protectorate it had been the joint responsibility of Britain and Australia, with Queensland playing a supervisory role. The newly federated nation assumed sole responsibility in 1901, but did not pass legislation that formally transferred authority to them until 1906 (through the Papua Bill 1905, which came into effect in September 1906) when the territory – previously known as British New Guinea - was renamed Papua.

[7] M.H.P. Williams, for example, made reference to Australia's treatment of Aboriginals as 'a black page in the history of Australia which I do not wish to see repeated in the history of New Guinea'. Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, vol XIII 1904, p.7541; an editorial in the April 1906 edition of the *Australasian Review of Reviews* highlighted Australia's chance to 'make good' past errors, calling for administration of the new territory in the interests of the indigenous peoples (its 'dark skinned children'). Editor, "Brown New Guinea," *Australasian Review of Reviews* 1906.

[8] Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, vol XIII, 3 November 1904, pp.6506-7; (emphasis added).

perhaps the last opportunity of showing that European civilization is not necessarily the harbinger of despair and death to a primitive people, and we intend to make the most of that opportunity.[9]

Murray believed that imperialism and native welfare were complementary, and was committed to protectionist policies. In Papua this involved the prohibition of alcohol for natives, prevention of wide-scale land alienation, the regulation of indentured labour contracts, and a commitment – though a rather vague one – to 'native welfare'. Despite these expressed concerns, colonial protectionism did not extinguish violent practices in frontier Papua.[10]

Following World War 2, the League of Nations granted Australia the mandate over German New Guinea (the north-east quarter of the island claimed by Germany in 1884, and developed as an economic colony first by the German New Guinea company and then the German Imperial government). The classification of New Guinea as a C-class mandate allowed the Australian administration a great deal of freedom in the territory, though 'as a sacred trust of civilisation' the welfare of the indigenous inhabitants was supposedly paramount. However, given the relative prosperity of New Guinea and the much larger commercial interests within colonial society, Australian policy in New Guinea was largely driven by economic considerations (the territory received no funding subsidy, and so had to be economically self sufficient). As had been the case under the previous German administration, wages remained half that of Papuan indentured workers, forced labour for government works and plantations continued, and power to administer disciplinary punishment remained widely distributed and more frequently applied.[11] Nonetheless, the administration of the colony compared itself favourably to the Germans, whom they characterised as having governed in a particularly brutal, harsh manner.[12]

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[9] JHP Murray, Chairman's comments to J.G. Jenkins "Papua and the Papuans", address before the Royal Colonial Institute, London on February 14, 1911, published in *United Empire (N.S.)* 2.3, March 1911, pp. 183-194.

[10] August Kituai, *My Gun, My Brother: The World of the Papua New Guinea Colonial Police, 1920 - 1960* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1998).; Patricia O'Brien, "Remaking Australia's Colonial Culture?: White Australia and Its Papuan Frontier 1901 - 1940," *Australian Historical Studies* 40, no. 1 (2009), p.100.

[11] O'Brien, "Remaking Australia's Colonial Culture?: White Australia and Its Papuan Frontier 1901 - 1940.", pp.106 – 107.

[12] Hank Nelson, "Changing the Label," in *Papua New Guinea: A Century of Colonial Impact 1884 - 1984*, ed. Sione Latukefu (Port Moresby: National Research Institute and Univeristy of Papua New Guinea in association with the Centennial Committee, 1989), p.29.

Thus in both Papua and New Guinea, Australia liked to see itself as a humanitarian coloniser.[13] Jane Landman has explained this conception of Australian colonialism as necessary to Australia's own sense of nationhood, or 'national self-realisation':

> On the one hand, national self-realisation depends on a racial entitlement to colonial territories in the Pacific; on the other, it depends on differentiating the nation from those acquisitive and exploitative colonial practices that were part of its own formation.[14]

This continued with the shift in the post war period to a colonial policy of 'welfare and development', in which the rhetoric of trusteeship was more apparent than ever. In his 1956 Roy Milne Lecture for the Australian Institute of International Affairs, for example, Minister for Territories Paul Hasluck explained that Australia was not in Papua or New Guinea 'to serve our own advantage or to place our own gain above their [indigenous subjects'] welfare ... we consciously accept an obligation towards them and we regard ourselves as having a trust to discharge towards them'.[15] However given the broader imperial context of widespread anti-colonial struggle, the paternalism embedded in this notion of trusteeship was increasingly coming in for criticism. Thus Hasluck, in the lecture, felt the need to justify the continued application of discriminatory Native Regulations (this body of regulations governed all aspects of the indigenous population's lives). He did this on the basis that Australians, 'as a civilised people' had taken on the trusteeship of a 'primitive and dependent people' and discriminatory policy was sometimes necessary to protect their interests:

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[13] Andrew Lattas, "Humanitarianism and Australian Nationalism in Colonial Papua: Hubert Murray and the Project of Caring for the Self of the Coloniser and the Colonized," *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 7, no. 2 (1996), pp.143-147. See also Hank Nelson, who has pointed out that Papua was never formally designated an Australian colony, and saw significance in this, arguing its status as territory was a choice that allowed avoidance of association with exploitative European colonialism. In fact neither Papua nor New Guinea was ever formally a colony. Papua was designated a 'Territory of Australia' under the Papua Bill of 1905, and New Guinea became a mandated territory when expropriated from Germany after the war, and then a 'Trust' territory of the UN (though administered jointly with Papua) after the Second World War. Hank Nelson, *Taim Bilong Masta* (Sydney: ABC & Griffin Press, 1982), pp.12 - 13.

[14] Jane Landman, *The Tread of a White Man's Foot: Australian Pacific Colonialism and the Cinema, 1925 - 1962*, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, the Australian National University (Canberra, : Pandanus Books, 2006), p.xii.

[15] Paul Hasluck, Roy Milne Memorial Lecture 1956 as cited in Edward P Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea* (Sydney: Australia and New Zealand Book Co, 1975), pp.125 – 126.

> It will probably be objected by those who love to deal with colonial problems by the use of cant phrases that ... [the policy as stated] is mere paternalism. We should remember that paternalism in its true nature is good.[16]

Hasluck went on to recognise that paternalism becomes oppressive if carried too far and too long: 'If it checks the growth of the child, after the child has grown up, then it can become tyranny'.[17] This was clearly not Hasluck's estimation of the current situation. Indeed, up until the late 1960s it was assumed that Papua New Guinea would remain a colonial territory of Australia far into the future. Certainly as late as 1967 it was clear independence was not being seriously considered for the colonies – the general attitude among Australians was that Papua New Guinea should remain formally connected to Australia either as a colonial territory or a seventh state.[18]

It was in this period of almost uncomfortably self-conscious paternalism that the colonial state began to roll out welfare policies and programs addressing the 'education and advancement' of indigenous women. Through the late 1950s and early 1960s colonial welfare work for women was at its strongest. A Women's Central Committee had been established. Government run village women's clubs, a key plank of colonial welfare policy, were spread across the colonies. Women in both the urban settlements as well as rural villages were attending administration run Infant and Maternal Welfare Clinics. And an increasing number of girls' schools and training centres were being built and opened. The first chapter of this thesis addresses the question of why the colonial Administration, having largely neglected women through the first half of the twentieth century, shifted in the post war period to begin to take account of and practically engage indigenous women as colonial subjects.

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[16] Hasluck in Ibid,p.126.

[17] Hasluck in Ibid, p.126.

[18] A Morgan Gallup poll in 1967 found that 31% wanted Papua New Guinea to remain under Australian control; 30% thought it should become another state of Australia; 27% felt it should become independent; and another 12% were undecided. Quoted in Patricia Mary Reid, "Whiteness as Goodness: White Women in PNG and Australia, 1960s to Present" (Ph.D, Griffith University, 2005), p.86.

1. The 'Problem' Recognised
Institutionalising a concern for women's status

Though indigenous women were crucial within the Australian colonial project, in the early colonial period they were left in the village – indeed kept in the village – and in many ways neglected by the colonial state. This chapter gives context to the fundamental shift in colonial policy that took place after the Second World War, when indigenous women began to be targeted as recipients of colonial state welfare. It is divided into two parts. In the first half I set out early colonial attitudes towards indigenous women and the way these shaped the initial colonial administrative policy of non-engagement with indigenous women. The colonial state did not seek to engage women in employment or as agents of the state, but was instead quite happy for Christian missions to assume the work of 'uplifting' the native woman within the village context. In the second half of the chapter, I provide an overview of the various local and international pressures building through the interwar period that pushed the colonial administration towards a reversal of previous policy, and a focusing of attention on 'the problem' of advancing indigenous women's status.

EARLY COLONIAL ATTITUDES AND POLICY REGARDING INDIGENOUS WOMEN

> The more debased the situation of a nation is the more harshly we found the women treated.[1]
>
> **Johann Reinhold Forster, 1784**

When European explorers first travelled through the 'South Seas' in the late eighteenth century, they romantically characterised the local inhabitants of the islands they passed through as 'noble savages' living an idyllic island life. Some hundred years later as they moved further west through the South West Pacific – or Melanesia, as the region came to be known – they seemed markedly less impressed by the indigenous peoples encountered.[2] Here, the people's technologies were

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[1] Johann Reinhold Forster, *Observations Made During a Voyage Round the World* (1784), cited in Nicholas Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), p.101.

[2] Margaret Jolly, "Imagining Oceania: Indigenous and Foreign Representations of a Sea of Islands," *The Contemporary Pacific* 19, no. 2 (2007); Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture*, p.101.

considered cruder, and their social organisation more simple or undeveloped.[3] Bernard Smith first examined this change in the 1960s, identifying a shift in European representations of Pacific peoples from an early 'soft primitivism' to a 'hard primitivism' in which the so-called 'innocents of nature' were re-envisaged as 'depraved' 'ignoble savages'.[4] Smith accounted for the difference in representations not on the basis of an actual difference in appearance and culture, but in terms of the wider political context and prevailing race ideologies of the particular period in which contact between Europeans and the Islanders took place.[5] Patricia O'Brien, writing more recently about these differing representations, identified contact in Melanesia as having occurred in a political climate 'shaped by intense racial paranoia and the harsh indentured labour system'.[6] This, alongside the early categorisation of Melanesians as 'hard primitives', had affected the way in which Melanesian women were regarded by European colonisers.

Where the image given of Polynesian women had overwhelmingly been one of eroticised, seductive beauty, the women of Melanesia were, by contrast, described in distinctly negative terms.[7] Within explorers' accounts Melanesian women were commonly caricatured in speech and illustration as ugly and haggard. This mode of description continued within the host of colonial materials published through the late nineteenth and early twentieth century describing the region, 'discovering' and making familiar this new realm of Empire for a burgeoning consumer market of

[3] The French philosophers Dumont d'Urville and Domeni de Rienzi are commonly credited with creating the persistent three-way division of the South West Pacific into the discrete geographic and cultural regions of Polynesia, Micronesia and Melanesia in their writings dating to the early 1830s. Melanesians' darker skin was taken to indicate they were closer to Africans in the scale of evolution than their neighbours in Polynesia. Twentieth century scholarship continued to draw a clear distinction between Melanesian and Polynesian peoples and cultures. See for example Marshall Sahlins' canonical essay on leadership in the South West Pacific, Marshall Sahlins, "Poor Man, Rich Man, Big Man, Chief: Political Types in Melanesia and Polynesia," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 5, no. 3 (1963). Since the 1970s there has been extensive debate, as the usefulness or meaningfulness of these received categories has been sharply critiqued. See, in particular, Nicholas Thomas, "The Force of Ethnology: Origins and Significance of the Melanesia/Polynesia Division," *Current Anthropology* 30, no. 1 (1989).

[4] Bernard Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific, 1768 - 1850*, Oxford Paperbacks (London ; New York: Oxford University Press, 1960). pp.5-6.

[5] Ibid. , chapter 11.

[6] Patricia O'Brien, *The Pacific Muse: Exotic Femininity and the Colonial Pacific* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006), p.227.

[7] Jolly, "Imagining Oceania: Indigenous and Foreign Representations of a Sea of Islands.", Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture*, 101 – 103, p.99-101; Richard Eves and Nicholas Thomas, *Bad Colonists: The South Seas Letters of Venon Lee Walker and Louis Becke* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1999), pp.135-136. But see Jolly regarding the way in which colonisers were often confused about (real or imagined) cultural differences between the two regions, and often transposed colonial mythologies regarding Polynesian peoples to the western context. Margaret Jolly, "Ill-Natured Comparisons: Race and Relativism in European Representations of Ni-Vanuatu from Cook's Second Voyage," *History and Anthropology* 5, no. 3 - 4 (1992).

middle class readers back 'home' in Europe.[8] Writing in 1908 for her serialised column in the Sydney Morning Herald, Beatrice Grimshaw, a widely read and prolific author of novels, non-fiction and travel books on the South Pacific, described the women she encountered in the village of Goaribari in the following way:

> They were neither young nor lovely. They wore no clothes save a brief and insufficient fringe of grass, and they were evidently afraid of me ... [The women] kept at a distance up the creek, and howled in the most dismal and depressing manner.[9]

Grimshaw's bleak picture here of indigenous women as old, fearful, and physically unattractive was drawing on already familiar motifs.[10]

Historian and anthropologist Nicholas Thomas, writing on early colonial representations of Pacific peoples, has noted that in early colonial texts and illustration indigenous women's physical repugnance often served as aesthetic representation of their subjugated status.[11] Often described in juxtaposition to that of the European woman and found lacking, indigenous woman's 'degraded' physique was attributed not simply to genetic factors but also environmental and/or cultural ones, that is indigenous women's subjugation at the hands of men.[12] Women's social position was frequently narrowly characterised with the now familiar epithets 'drudge', 'chattel', and 'beast of burden' – all derogatory descriptors that referenced the manual labour undertaken by local women. It was this heavy manual labour that seemed to most shock colonial observers. Captain James Cook, on his second voyage

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[8] The South West Pacific was 'discovered' and made familiar for a burgeoning market of Metropolitan middle class consumers via the sentimental missionary vignette and the adventure travel account, alongside 'serious', 'scientific' reportage of colonial 'progress' within journals of Empire and more mundane colonial publications such as the various colonial Administrations' Annual Reports. Regarding this idea of making Empire familiar, known, and owned through travel literature see Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992).

[9] Beatrice Grimshaw, "The Truth About Papua," *Sydney Morning Herald* 4 April 1908. While Grimshaw often wrote about indigenous women in her novels via the trope of the exotic seductress, in reportage of her own personal experiences of contact with indigenous women she wrote consistently of 'degraded', 'ugly' 'creatures', see for example also Beatrice Grimshaw, "Head Hunters of the Sepik River," *Northern Territory Times and Gazette* 14 August 1925.

[10] Another typical example includes the following depiction of the local women encountered during a British expedition through Dutch New Guinea in 1911: 'Slaves from childhood, worked from daybreak till long after dark in the search for food, and to make the man, their master, happy, they rapidly become old, haggard, and hideous'. A Report on the 1911 expedition led by Mr W. Goodfellow, organised by the British Ornithologists' Union published as "Dutch New Guinea," *Sydney Morning Herald* 28 December 1911.

[11] Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture*, 101 – 103, pp.99-101. See also O'Brien, *The Pacific Muse: Exotic Femininity and the Colonial Pacific*, chapter 4.

[12] Anne Maxwell, *Colonial Photography and Exhibitions: Representations of the 'Native' People and the Making of European Identities* (London ; New York: Leicester University Press, 1999), p.42.

through the Pacific, remarked of Aneityumese men (from the islands now known as Vanuatu) that they did not seem overly 'fond' of hard work:

> ... what I judge most from, is their makeing the Women do the most labourious work, of them they make pack-horses, I have seen a woman carrying a large bundle on her back, or a Child on her back and a bundle under her arm and a fellow struting before her with nothing but a club or spear or some such like thing in his hand. [sic] [13]

Enlightenment philosophers deliberating over the substantial ethnographic material brought back from Cook's various Pacific voyages and those of his fellow explorers were quick to employ the idea that the 'progress' of a people (or lack thereof) could be measured in the status of their women. In accounts like Cook's, women's 'lowly status' came to sit neatly alongside other 'savage' practices such as cannibalism, 'native treachery', and polygamy as a marker of the 'primitive'. As Margaret Jolly has made clear in her discussion of the representation of Pacific women during this period:

> 'Woman' was the sign and prophetic index of the passage from savagery to civilisation ... Pacific women were both index of hope and portent of danger, in the uncertain path toward 'progress' that these explorers [Cook and those that travelled with him] charted.[14]

By the late nineteenth century the idea that women's status could act as a measure of progress was a commonplace assumption within contemporary European racial discourse.[15]

The organisation and structure of indigenous societies in Papua New Guinea prior to contact with European colonisers varied greatly, but they were generally characterised by a clear distinction between female and male roles. The expression of this distinction could range from the radical antagonism of the sexes observed in some Sepik societies in New Guinea to the relatively strong position of women in

[13] Captain James Cook quoted in Bronwen Douglas, "Provocative Readings in Intransigent Archives: Finding Aneityumese Women," *Oceania* 70, no. 2 (1999). pp.114-5. A later description of the women of Katow by W.F. Petterd, who accompanied the Chevert expedition to New Guinea in 1875, is striking in its similarity: 'They are low and degraded, doing the most menial and labourious work. They are not, as may be imagined, very beautiful. They attend to the plantations, cook, carry home firewood, attend to their children, and perform many other duties. The principal and only occupations of the men are fighting and looking after their weapons, hunting, trading, and fishing.' "New Guinea," *The Mercury* 19 April 1876.

[14] Jolly, "Imagining Oceania: Indigenous and Foreign Representations of a Sea of Islands.", p.520.

[15] See Fiona Paisley, *Loving Protection? Australian Feminism and Aboriginal Women's Rights 1919 - 1939* (Carlton South: Melbourne University Press, 2000), p.73; and Jolly, "Imagining Oceania: Indigenous and Foreign Representations of a Sea of Islands.", pp.520-521.

some matrilineal systems, for example many societies of Bougainville. Even in systems characterised by radical masculinist warrior ideologies, in which women were normatively shut out of public life, considerable, if indirect, power was wielded by women, who were very often the primary agents of economic production.[16]

However the various agents of colonialism who came into contact with indigenous women – early European explorers, colonial officers, planters, settlers, travelers, missionaries and anthropologists – rarely attempted to understand the means by which women played a crucial, active role within traditional cultural life.[17] Colonial observers judged indigenous women to be grossly subordinate to their male kin. They were seen as holding low status: ground down by the disproportionate share of garden work allocated them, and treated as simply a form of wealth or a work unit by local men.

Their presumed 'lowly status' was taken as one indicator that indigenous social organisation and culture represented a 'child stage' of the Caucasian races. It was also taken as evidence that indigenous women themselves were dull, lacking responsiveness, and ill-equipped to adapt to 'modern' ideas and the rapid changes that would result from contact with Europeans. Their supposed shyness and passivity was considered symptomatic of an instinctive female conservatism that manifested in a resistance to change or innovation. Sir Hubert Murray's pessimism regarding women's ability to modernise was expressed clearly in a written response to Anna Bugge-Wicksell, the sole female member of the League of Nation's Permanent Mandates Commission. Bugge-Wicksell had expressed a keen interest in the situation of women in Papua, and asked Murray to provide her with an overview. 'I do not think,' he wrote to Bugge-Wicksell,

[16] Marilyn Strathern, *Women in Between : Female Roles in a Male World : Mount Hagen, New Guinea* (Lanham, Md. : Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1995 [first edition: 1972]).

[17] O'Brien, *The Pacific Muse: Exotic Femininity and the Colonial Pacific*, pp.265-266; Denise O'Brien, "'Women Never Hunt': The Portrayal of Women in Melanesian Ethnography," in *Rethinking Women's Roles: Perspectives from the Pacific*, ed. Denise O'Brien and Sharon W. Tiffany (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1984). The ethnographic work of early female anthropologists Camilla Wedgwood, Margaret Mead, Phyllis Kaberry and Lucy Mair for the Pacific context and Audrey Richards and Margaret Read for the African context began to make clear the crucial role women played within indigenous society. See Nancy Lutkehaus, "She Was 'Very Cambridge': Camilla Wedgwood and the History of Women in British Social Anthropology," *American Ethnologist* 13, no. 4 (1986), pp.789 – 790; Ute Gacs, *Women Anthropologists: A Biographical Dictionary* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988). In the Australian context the publication in 1939 of Phyllis Kaberry's *Sacred and Profane* - an ethnographic study of the role of women in ritual among the Aboriginal groups in the Kimberley region of Northern Australia - was, Fiona Paisley noted, the first time that a crucial, active role for women in Aboriginal cultural life was recognized within anthropological literature. A.P Elkin's introduction to the book went so far as to commend Kaberry's study for *finally* revealing Aboriginal women's 'personality', a grudging acknowledgement that women played a significant role within Aboriginal society, and that anthropologists had thus far failed to attend to this. Paisley, *Loving Protection? Australian Feminism and Aboriginal Women's Rights 1919 - 1939*. p.74.

> that much can be done for the women in the villages, as distinct from the men. In the larger villages it may be possible to give some of the women simple instruction in nursing (especially in the case of childbirth) and in the care of children, and it may also be possible to teach them some industry which they can carry on in their homes and which may bring a quick return – e.g. lacemaking; this will probably relieve them from some of their heavier tasks and may improve their position generally, but it is a method which can only be employed occasionally and under exceptional circumstances.[18]

The idea that women were the 'bulwarks of village conservatism' was to become a fundamental feature of colonial discourse regarding women and administration policy in the first half of the twentieth century in Papua and New Guinea. This assumption of a 'natural female conservatism' meant indigenous women were positioned as the remedy (a brake or constraint) to rapid change in the village context.

The result of this was not that the colonial state ignored women, rather it sought to 'lock' women in the village. As the key to assuring continued village settlement, women were prohibited from entering into indentured labour contracts and discouraged from leaving the village to accompany their husbands to plantations. Sir John Hubert Murray (Lieutenant Governor of Papua from 1908 through to 1940) explained the prohibition on the basis that if women were to be employed on plantations then, 'the native villages might be broken up, social life decay, the men might not return'.[19] If women remained in the village, 'the men may drift away, but they will always come back'.[20] Early colonial administrators in Papua and New Guinea did not want to see the indigenous population turned from 'a race of peasant proprietors' into 'a landless proletariat, entirely dependent on plantations for their livelihood'.[21] If indigenous populations were to leave the village and migrate to urban centres there was the potential for disruptive class organisation.[22] Given the small number of Australian colonial staff and the limited resources allocated to them,

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[18] Sir Hubert Murray in response to Anna Bugge-Wicksell (a member of the Permanent Mandates Commission), 'Situation of Women, 1922 – 23' quoted in Susan Gardner, "Sir Paul and the Sleeping Beauty, Or: Some Reflection on Women, 'Development', and Administration in Hasluck's *a Time for Building*," *Research in Melanesia* (Dec 1976), p.31.

[19] Murray quoted in Anne Dickson Waiko, "Colonial Enclaves and Domestic Spaces in British New Guinea," in *Britishness Abroad: Transnational Movements and Imperial Cultures*, ed. Kate Darian Smith and Patricia Grimshaw (Carlton: Melbourne Uni Press, 2007), p.216.

[20] Murray quoted in Ibid, p.216.

[21] Murray is explicit on this, see James Griffin, Hank Nelson, and Stewart Firth, eds, *Papua New Guinea: A Political History* (Richmond, Vic.: Heinemann Educational Australia, 1979). p.26. Later officials were equally adamant, see Paul Hasluck's discussion of this as a priority of Government (Hasluck was Minister for Territories, 1951 to 1963) in Paul Hasluck, *A Time for Building* (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1976),p.229.

[22] Peter Fitzpatrick, *Law and State in Papua New Guinea*, Law, State, and Society Series ; (London ; New York: Academic Press, 1980), p.2.

the administration could not afford to see village structures break down. Preserving 'the village' also had the effect of keeping the wages of indentured labourers low. Plantation owners need only pay enough to support the individual worker rather than the whole family. Women in the village could be relied upon to continue to attend to the gardens and provide subsistence for the family. Thus almost nothing was required to be paid towards the reproduction of labour power.[23]

The administrations of both Papua and New Guinea believed men's involvement in indentured labour and other such employment was an integral aspect of the colonial 'civilising project'. Indeed, the New Guinea Report to the Council of the League of Nations in 1921–22 claimed a few years spent in Western employment was 'the most hopeful means of introducing the natives to civilisation.'[24] Thus women's exclusion from such labour effectively marginalised them from the coloniser's 'civilising project'. Anne Dickson-Waiko has argued that one effect of Australian protectionist policies that prohibited women from indentured work was a gendering of colonial space such that the village came to be classed as a feminised domestic or 'private' space. The urban/rural divide mirrored a European public/private split.[25] Indigenous women were firmly placed in the local 'private' sphere of the village, and only indigenous men were given access – albeit limited – to the political and public sphere of the urban colonial enclave.[26] What direct engagement there was with women in this early period of colonisation took place slowly and within the village via Christian missions rather than the colonial state.

[23] Azeem Amarshi, "The Precolonial Period," in *Development and Dependency*, ed. Azeem Amarshi, Kenneth Good, and Mortimer (Oxford University Press, 1979), p.30 See also Ester Boserup, *Woman's Role in Economic Development* (London,: Allen & Unwin, 1970); Carmen Diana Deere, "Rural Women's Subsistence Production in the Capitalist Periphery," *Review of Radical Political Economics* 8, no. 1 (1976). Boserup has shown that this was also the case across Africa, where again male workers' wages were kept at a level insufficient to provide for the worker's family.

[24] Report to the Council of the League of Nations on the Administration of the Territory of New Guinea, 1921 -22 quoted in Ian Hogbin and Camilla Wedgwood, "Native Welfare in the Southwest Pacific Islands," *Pacific Affairs* 17, no. 2 (1944), p.136; Andrew Lattas, "Humanitarianism and Australian Nationalism in Colonial Papua: Hubert Murray and the Project of Caring for the Self of the Coloniser and the Colonized," *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 7, no. 2 (1996), pp.148-149.

[25] It is worth noting that no similar public/private split was recognised in the organisation of indigenous societies. See Marilyn Strathern, "Domesticity and the Denigration of Women," in *Rethinking Women's Roles: Perspectives from the Pacific*, ed. Denise O'Brien and Sharon W. Tiffany (Berkeley ; Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984).

[26] Dickson Waiko, "Colonial Enclaves and Domestic Spaces in British New Guinea." Indeed Dickson-Waiko goes on to argue, 'Men could come forward and participate in the first steps 'towards civilisation', but women could not become civilised; indeed, women had to wait until at least the 1960s before they could venture into the colonial 'public domain', p.216.

MISSIONARY EFFORTS TO 'UPLIFT THE NATIVE WOMAN'

From the outset of Australian colonial administration in Papua and New Guinea, missionary efforts were understood to be a useful, *necessary* element of colonisation. Missionaries had helped, among other things, to ease the process of colonial acquisition. Joseph King, writing in 1909 on the life of the early missionary WG Lawes and his time in Papua, described the colonisation of the territory as having been peaceful and without bloodshed, asserting this to be the result of the hard work of missionaries to win 'the friendship and confidence of the inhabitants'.[27] Many in the colony shared this opinion. William Macgregor, the first Administrator of British New Guinea (later Papua), pointed to mission education and the setting of a 'civilised example' as the basis of colonial authority in the territory:

> On fair play, on mission teaching, and on the example of decent lives in the presence of native races, is built that intangible fabric of moral force by which alone we hold our footing in this country, the only one of its size and importance that never had a soldier in its service . . . years ago I pronounced mission teaching to be indispensable to the progress and settlement of a country such as this is.[28]

Eliding the violence that accompanied many first encounters, Macgregor's statement also made clear the central role envisaged for the Missions in the colonial project.[29] They were expected to provide for the educational and welfare needs of

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[27] Joseph King, *W.G. Lawes of Savage Island and New Guinea* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1909). Missionary activity had begun on the island of New Guinea long before colonial claims, German or British, were made over the territory. A few early, but temporary attempts were made in the mid nineteenth century. Marist missionaries arrived on Woodlark Island in 1847 but lasted only 5 years before retiring. Dutch Roman Catholics set up a station in 1852 on Rooke Island in the Dampier Strait. They were forced to relocate to Dutch New Guinea soon after. Later efforts were more successful. From the 1870s the London Missionary Society, and the Methodist missions, were able to establish semi permanent missions in the Torres Straits, the area around Port Moresby, and the islands in the New Britain group. By the turn of the twentieth century Papua and New Guinea had been rather neatly divided up into denominational spheres of contact/influence, and the various denominations proceeded to establish mission stations in their appropriate field of work.

[28] Macgregor quoted in R.B. Joyce, *Sir William Macgregor* (Melbourne, New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 178. A small clarification: Macgregor was the first Administrator of the colony of British New Guinea (formally annexed and proclaimed as colony in 1888). He was, however, preceded by Sir Peter Scratchley, Sir Hugh Romilly, and Sir John Douglas who were Special Commissioners of the protectorate of British New Guinea (taken possession of in 1884) between 1884 and 1888.

[29] The Australian administration made much of their claim to follow the principle of 'peaceful penetration' in their establishment of control over the 'backward peoples' of Papua. When challenged with examples of force used by officers on patrol they invariably pointed to Sir Hubert Murray's 1909 pamphlet 'Information for the Guidance of Newly Joined Patrol Officers' which discouraged the use of excessive force, except in certain circumstances. See Lewis Lett, *The Papuan Achievement*, 2nd ed. (Melbourne ; London: Melbourne University Press in association with Oxford University Press, 1944), pp.181 – 192. But see Patricia O'Brien, "Remaking Australia's Colonial Culture?: White Australia and Its Papuan Frontier 1901 - 1940," *Australian Historical Studies* 40, no. 1 (2009), pp.101 -102 for an overview and

the indigenous population – something the colonial state declared they were unable to afford to do.[30] As much as anything else, education meant introducing European culture and everyday civilised practice to local indigenous populations. Missionaries would stand as an ideal model of the family and of a Christian way of life. Sarah Chinnery, wife of the New Guinea government anthropologist, praised missionaries for their maintenance of an appropriate European attitude and standard of behaviour wherever they went:

> Missionaries ... always maintain their own position [as Europeans], introducing their own cultures, and enriching natives by these contacts. One has only to notice the difference in the country round a mission station and that of the country not under mission influence, to see the benefits of the new culture contacts.[31]

From 1918 onwards the colonial state formally recognised and recompensed the various missions for their work in Papua, granting them a small financial subsidy provided they taught English and arithmetic, and subjected the village schools to Government inspection. The monies for the subsidies were raised through the introduction of a head tax on the local indigenous population.[32] The Missions were also primarily responsible for the provision of education and health services in New Guinea, but here no government subsidy was provided. Instead the Australian administration attempted to establish its own system alongside that of the Missions, mainly in an effort to fulfil their League of Nations' Mandate obligations. Their attempts, however, were only ever half-hearted and constantly met with criticism from the League's Permanent Mandates Commission.[33]

Missionaries were tasked with the 'uplift of the native woman', and it was expected that this would be accomplished by the women who came to Papua and

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discussion of the ruthless violence displayed during patrols by Australian officers to bring areas under Administrative control and as retribution for European deaths.

[30] See John Cleverley, "Schooling in Papua New Guinea" in *Going to School in Oceania*, ed. Craig Campbell and Geoffrey Sherington (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2007), p.200.

[31] Sarah Johnston Chinnery and Kate Fortune, *Malaguna Road : The Papua and New Guinea Diaries of Sarah Chinnery, Edited and Introduced by Kate Fortune*. (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 1998), p.57. Here Sarah Chinnery was favourably comparing the influence of missionaries to that of anthropologists whom, she explained, were known to have adopted a more informal style of dress, eat local food, and 'squat round with natives', in order that they might 'get initiated into all the mysteries [of the native]'.

[32] Head tax for indigenous workers was established under the *Native Taxes Ordinance of 1918*. Revenue collected was to be used towards general and technical education, and other direct benefits for indigenous people.

[33] The Permanent Mandates Commission's education specialist Mlle Dannevig (and Bugge-Wicksell's successor as the female representative on the Commission) famously complained in 1939 that 'she knew of no territory under mandate in which native education progressed so slowly'. Dannevig quoted in Lucy Mair, *Australia in New Guinea*, 2nd ed. (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1970 [1948]), p.225.

New Guinea as part of the missionary endeavour either as wives, or as female missionaries in their own right.[34] As Diane Langmore noted in her work on missionary lives in Papua, European women would act as a 'gracious influence of wise and thoughtful womanhood'.[35] Beyond presenting as 'model wife and mother' many took on a broader and more interventionist role, teaching in mission schools, nursing in village clinics, and holding special literacy and homecraft classes for women.

Mission women hoped, of course, to convert local village women.[36] But they also sought to improve and elevate local women's position within their own communities, believing this would be achieved through the reforming of indigenous custom and traditional practice. From women perceived to be 'the slave of men, the drudge made to carry his loads', they would make 'clean and helpful wives' who would support their menfolk in their task of building a new Christian community.[37] To this end village women received lessons in basic literacy – reading, writing and counting – so they would be able to read scripture themselves and develop a rich, direct relationship with the Lord. Through organised Christian women's fellowships they received informal training in sewing, European cooking, child-care, laundry, basic household hygiene and other domestic procedures to ensure their success as dutiful, domestically oriented housewives and mothers.

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[34] Diane Langmore, *Missionary Lives: Papua 1874 - 1914* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989), (chapter 3); David F. Wetherell, *Reluctant Mission : The Anglican Church in Papua New Guinea, 1891-1942* (St. Lucia, Qld.: University of Queensland Press, 1977), pp.86-87. For elsewhere in the Pacific see Margaret Jolly, "'to Save the Girls for Brighter and Better Lives': Presbyterian Missions and Women in the South of Vanuatu, 1848 - 1870," *Journal of Pacific History* 26, no. 1 (1991), Bronwen Douglas, "Christian Citizens: Women and Negotiations of Modernity in Vanuatu," *The Contemporary Pacific* 14, no. 1 (2002), pp.2 – 5; Patricia Grimshaw, *Paths of Duty: American Missionary Wives in Nineteenth Century Hawaii* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989). Pacific Islander women also played an important role as early missionaries, especially in their work with women. 'South Sea Islanders' – that is, men and women converts from Samoa, the Cook Islands, Rarotonga and the Loyalty Islands – were an instrumental part of early efforts to establish Christian missions in the South West Pacific. Islander teachers carried much of the burden of teaching and preaching in many of the Protestant and Anglican missions, but despite this the quality of their mission work was often criticised by their fellow European missionaries. Cleverley, "Schooling in Papua New Guinea.", p.201.

[35] Langmore, *Missionary Lives: Papua 1874 - 1914*, 172 - 174, pp.172-174.

[36] Education, in the mission context, was primarily about enabling the project of conversion. Lessons were based around Christian religious teaching and at some Missions conversion was requirement for students who wished to continue attending lessons. Up until World War Two, and even after this, the church and school could be the same building. Though partly a matter of pragmatics, this reflected the missionary belief that the process of 'civilising' went hand in hand with that of conversion. R C Ralph, *Education in Papua New Guinea to 1950; an Introduction to the History of Education in Papua and New Guinea; the Development of Government Interest in and Influence on Education to 1950* (Bowral, NSW: J.M. Ralph, 1978), pp.9 - 11

[37] Mrs Beharell quoted in Langmore, *Missionary Lives: Papua 1874 - 1914*, p.172.

Where missionaries established schools for village children they regularly attempted to provide a formal education for females alongside males. By the 1920s, almost all missions had a female teacher on hand specifically for the instruction of girls.[38] Missionaries' expectations as to what should be taught and to what ends were quite different for their young male and female charges. While both girls and boys shared a basic educational program, girls were given special practical training in domestic subjects and were taught separately from the boys in their own classroom and segregated playground.[39] The mission station at Kwato Island in eastern Papua, established by Charles Abel of the London Missionary Society, was famous for training students along clearly established gendered lines - at a vocational level boys were trained as carpenters and introduced to cricket, the girls were taught good housekeeping and given recipes for drop scones.

After the Second World War when the Australian colonial administration began to directly provide health services and education to its indigenous subjects, the influence of missions in these areas did not decline. Missionaries remained crucial to the delivery of education and welfare to women. They were, however, forced in many ways to integrate and professionalise their provision of these, this leading in some ways to a clearer distinction between their role as agent of Christ and agent of the state.

A 'NEW DEAL': THE SHIFT TO COLONIAL 'WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT' AFTER THE WAR

After the Second World War there was a noticeable shift in the Australian attitude to Papua and New Guinea. Eddie Ward, the Minister for External Territories immediately after the war, explained that his Government was:

> not satisfied that sufficient interest had been taken in the Territories prior to the Japanese invasion, or that adequate funds had been provided for their development and the advancement of the native inhabitants.[40]

He announced a dramatic increase of funding to the two territories. Education and Public Health Departments were established, with the intention that their focus

[38] Cleverley, "Schooling in Papua New Guinea.", pp.200-202. Reverend Short, of the London Missionary Society, claimed success for his Mission's efforts in 1935, assuring a concerned Sydney congregation that, 'as a result of mission educational work among Papuan girls, their mental power is equal to that of boys'. Reverend Harold Short, LMS missionary of Papua, at a meeting at the Congregational Assembly Hall, Sydney in April. *Pacific Islands Monthly*, May 1935, p.39.

[39] Ibid, p.200. Indigenous males nonetheless remained the primary recipients of mission training, though the disparity in enrolment numbers between females and males depended on local conditions.

[40] Ward quoted in Griffin, Nelson, and Firth, eds, *Papua New Guinea: A Political History*, 102, p.102.

would be on the provision of services to the territories' indigenous subjects.[41] Ward's post-war concern for native welfare and development was not simply a response or recognition of Papuans and New Guineans' assistance during the war, though this had no doubt played something of a role. Stepping up 'development' in the territories, and a focus on welfare provision as part of this process, reflected a broader shift within colonial administrative practice not only in the Pacific, but across the British Empire.

Joanna Lewis, historian of colonial Kenya, has identified the passing of the Colonial Development and Welfare Act in 1940 as a clear marker of the British shift into 'developmental' colonialism or what Lewis, following John Lonsdale, has termed 'welfare imperialism'.[42] The 1940 Act called for greater state intervention from colonial administrations to address the welfare needs of colonised populations, particularly in the areas of health, education and communications. Welfare and development initiatives promised to modernise backward colonial subjects, secure their loyalties, and stabilise colonial rule. Welfare programs were to be designed and delivered in a manner that recognised the need to ease the process of 'culture shock' and, explained those advocating for them, would allow for the gradual assimilation of the good or useful aspects of European culture within traditional societies. Lewis noted that in British Africa this shift to focus on 'welfare and development' was accompanied by a new focus on female colonial subjects. Given the previous lack of attention to women's education and welfare needs it was recognised that special efforts towards women's 'advancement' would be required.[43]

This new focus had come about as a result of a number of what Lewis described as 'mutually reinforcing processes'.[44] These she identified as: increased intervention in debates on colonial administration by international organisations; a growing confidence in the capability of colonial administrations and the professionalization of colonial administrative staff; and – perhaps most importantly –

[41] Ward also abolished the indentured labour system through the introduction of a new Native Labour Ordinance with stricter conditions, and committed the administration to the introduction of a new agricultural extension programme as the means by which to encourage indigenous (driven) economic development. Kim Godbold, "Didiman: Australian Agricultural Extension Officers in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea, 1945 - 1975" (Ph.D, Queensland University of Technology, 2010), pp.75 – 77.
[42] Joanna Lewis, "The Ruling Compassions of the Late Colonial State: Welfare Versus Force, Kenya, 1945 - 52," *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 2, no. 2 (2001).
[43] Joanna Lewis, *Empire State Building: War and Welfare in Kenya, 1925 - 52*, East African Studies Series (Athens, Oh.: Ohio University Press, 2000), pp.52 – 68.
[44] Ibid, p.21.

Figure 1.2 Islands Girl, ***Pacific Islands Monthly*****, February 1935**

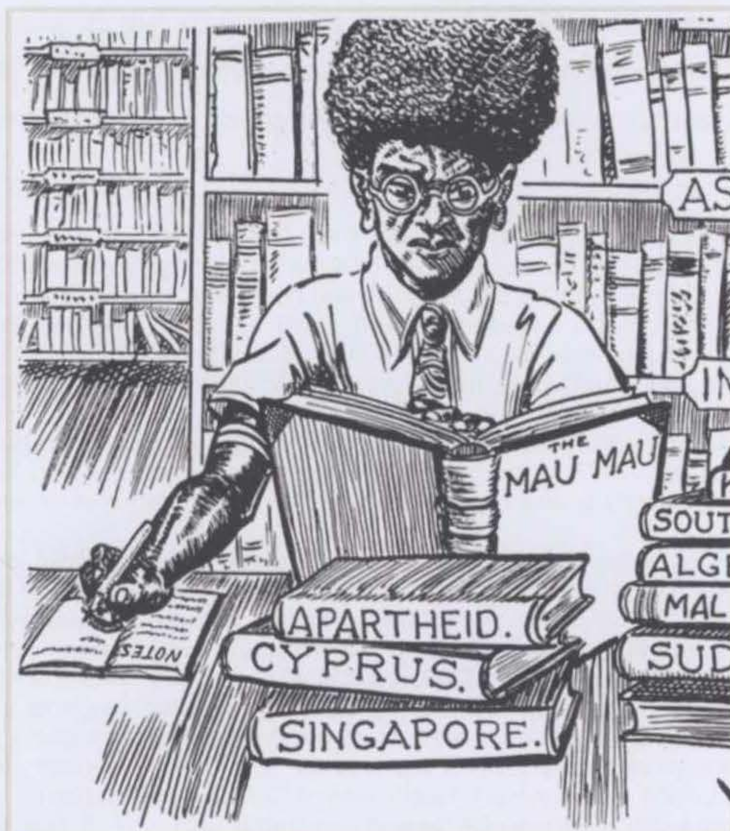

Figure 1.3 **'Learning from MauMau',** ***Pacific Islands Monthly*****, March 1956, Illustrator: W. Gill**

a new faith in policies of state intervention within British domestic politics which overflowed into the colonial context.[45] In the Pacific context, though all of these were present it was the first factor – the opening up of colonial administrative practice to public critique and consideration – that was most important, although the British shift into 'welfare imperialism' identified by Lewis was *itself* a significant influence on Australian colonial practice.[46]

'A NEW ATTITUDE TOWARD COLONIAL QUESTIONS'?

After the First World War New Guinea, previously a German colonial territory, became the responsibility of Australia under the newly established League of Nation's mandates system.[47] The mandates system granted guardianship of a territory to an outside power on the basis that the territory was not developed or civilised enough to decide its own political fate. New Guinea was judged 'not yet able to stand by itself under the strenuous conditions of the modern world'.[48]

Within the system there were three different classes of Mandate (A, B, and C), placing the territories along a continuum from the 'almost, but not sufficiently civilised' through to completely 'uncivilised'.[49] New Guinea was assigned the last class of Mandate: Class C. Class C mandates were deemed territories whose indigenous people were in need of the greatest degree of paternal guidance. Jan Smuts, the South African statesman, ardent supporter of the British Empire, and one of the main architects of the system, was rather more frank in his description. According to Smuts, self-determination was entirely impractical as Class C Mandates were completely incapable of governing themselves. They were, he said, 'inhabited

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[45] Ibid, chapter 1.

[46] The post war Directorate of Research and Civil Affairs, a continuation of a similar policy advisory group established during the war, advised the Australian Government on post-war colonial policy and are said to have borrowed heavily from the British Colonial Development and Welfare Acts of 1940 and 1945 See Brian Jinks, "Hasluck's Inheritance: Papua New Guinea in May 1951," in *The Hasluck Years: Some Observations; the Administation of Papua New Guinea, 1952 - 1963*, ed. Alan Ward, Tony Voutas, and Brian Jinks (Bundoora, Vic.: La Trobe University, 1979).

[47] The League of Nations' mandates system was established immediately after World War One in the context of post-war peace negotiations. At the end of WW1 the Allied powers immediately sat down to negotiate the division of the sixteen seized Ottoman and German colonial territories.

[48] Article 22 quoted in Michael Havinden and David Meredith, *Colonialism and Development: Britain and Its Tropical Colonies, 1850 - 1960* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), p.132.

[49] See Kevin Grant, "Human Rights and Sovereign Abolitions of Slavery, C. 1885 - 1956," in *Beyond Sovereignty: Britain, Empire and Transnationalism*, ed. Kevin Grant, Philippa Levine, and Frank Trentmann (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007). Here Grant argues the system was based on a newly emerged 'transnational' concept of 'civilisation' in which societies were assumed to progress along a path leading through discrete historical stages of economic and political organisation. See also Nele Matz, "Civilization and the Mandate System under the League of Nations as Origin of Trusteeship," in *Max Planck Yearbook of the United Nations Law*, ed. A von Bogdandy and R. Wolfrum (London ; Boston: Kluwer Law International for the Max-Planck-Institut für Ausländisches öffentliches Recht und Völkerrecht, 2005).

by barbarians'.[50] As a 'sacred trust of civilisation' the mandatory power was to be entrusted with the 'tutelage' of local peoples, and under Article Two of the Mandate, it was directed to 'promote to the utmost the interest and moral well being and the social progress of the inhabitants of the Territory.'[51] What did this mean for Australian colonial policy?

At least initially, it did not have much direct impact. The League's Mandates System was not by any stretch of the imagination a radical intervention into colonial administration. And neither was the League, despite some of the rhetoric that preceded its establishment, anti-colonial.[52] Rather, it was the natural culmination to a series of imperialist liberal critiques of Empire common in the era of what Frederick Cooper and Ann Stoler described as 'new imperialism'.[53] 'New imperialism', starting in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and continuing through the early twentieth, marked a moment, argue Cooper and Stoler,

> when colonialisms became part of a pan-European debate on the practices of 'civilised' states that consolidated an imperialist morality.[54]

Cooper and Stoler make clear that this change in imperial philosophy had little effect on empire 'on the ground': the 'new imperialism' was no less coercive or brutal than the old.

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[50] Smuts quoted in Matz, "Civilization and the Mandate System under the League of Nations as Origin of Trusteeship.", p.54.

[51] Article 2 of the Mandate of Australia over New Guinea. See W.E. Tomasetti, *Australia and the United Nations: New Guinea Trusteeship Issues from 1946 to 1966*, vol. 36, New Guinea Research Bulletin (Boroko, Papua New Guinea: July 1970), p.11.

[52] American President Woodrow Wilson's post war anti-colonial rhetoric (recognised generally as mere rhetoric) is widely credited with having deterred direct annexation. Instead the Mandates System was created under Article 22 of the League's Covenant, though only after assurances were made to the concerned or relevant Imperial powers that the terms of a mandate would be all but indistinguishable from direct annexation. The subsequent parcelling out of the territories was recognised by many contemporary observers directly for what it was: the distribution of the spoils of war. Contemporary anti-imperialists such as E.D. Morel and George Padmore (writing in 1920 and 1937 respectively) identified the League's mandates system as an attempt to camouflage what was a blatant 'imperialistic grab at the expense of the beaten foe'. See Matz, "Civilization and the Mandate System under the League of Nations as Origin of Trusteeship."; Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations* (Princeton Princeton University Press, 2008), pp.44 – 46; Susan Pedersen, "Settler Colonialism at the Bar of the League of Nations," in *Settler Colonialism in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Caroline Elkins and Susan Pederson (New York: Taylor and Francis Group, 2005), pp.130 – 131; and Lewis, *Empire State Building: War and Welfare in Kenya, 1925 - 52*, p.35.

[53] Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, *Tensions of Empire : Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1997), p.31 For a discussion of the context of liberal critiques behind the establishment of the League, see F. Ermacora, "Mandates," in *United Nations: Law, Policies and Practice*, ed. R. Wolfrun (Dordrecht ; Boston M. Nijhoff ; München : C.H. Beck, 1995), p.871.

[54] Cooper and Stoler, *Tensions of Empire : Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, p.31.

Indeed there is very little evidence to suggest that mandated territories fared any better than their colonial siblings with relation to welfare and development policy and provision.[55] Instead, the logic of paternalism – so clearly apparent in the language of trusteeship deployed within the system and an ubiquitous feature of earlier (British) critiques – married the mandates system's humanitarian ethos of native welfare and social improvement with a prescription of authoritarian, though 'benevolent', alien rule on behalf of indigenous peoples. As Antony Anghie writing on the League in the broader context of European colonialism has argued, the mandates system allowed for the recreation of colonial rule, albeit under new circumstances and in a new setting.[56]

Nonetheless perhaps in spite of the intentions of those who established the League, these new conditions did have some, though necessarily limited, effect in destabilising colonial rule and colonial policy for European powers. In laying out a tiered structure of classed Mandates the system planted the informal idea, if not the formal legal principle, of self determination for the various mandated territories and a framework that envisaged movement towards this.[57] The independent – and comparative – monitoring and scrutiny of European powers' governing of subject peoples was something quite new (and something that was, for the most part, unwelcome). As a deliberative body responsible for monitoring the treatment of indigenous populations, the Permanent Mandates Commission established as a part of the League's mandates system instituted a set of shared or universal criteria with which to judge a colonial power's performance. And while the Commission was powerless to enforce its principles, mandatory powers worried over their standing in

[55] Despite the rhetoric of humanitarian ideals, the mandatory power was given full governing authority over a territory and, as Susan Pedersen in her work on the mandates system has pointed out, oversight of governance by the League was minimal. Under the Mandates System annual reports were required from mandatory powers by the Permanent Mandates Commission (the formal oversight body); territory representatives were expected to travel to Geneva to report to the Commission; and in addition, tours were made by members of the Commission of the territories so that they may judge for themselves how far the mandated powers were fulfilling their 'sacred trust'. However the members of the Mandates Commission were mostly former colonial officials from among the assigned mandatory powers. And the Commission's system of petitioning (by, or on behalf of subject peoples) was complicated and flawed. Petitions could not be anonymous, they could not call into question the mandate itself (only practices within it), and they had to be sent via the mandatory power rather than allowing petitioners to lodge complaints directly with the Mandates Commission. Susan Pedersen, "Metaphors of the Schoolroom: Women Working the Mandates System of the League of Nations," *History Workshop Journal* 66, no. 1 (2008), p.191.
[56] See for further discussion of this point see A. Anghie, "Colonialism and the Birth of International Institutions: Sovereignty, Economy, and the Mandate System of the League of Nations," *Journal of International Law and Politics* 34 (2001).
[57] Pedersen, "Settler Colonialism at the Bar of the League of Nations.", p.114.

relation to their fellow powers, and over any 'bad press' that might result from a poor report.[58]

Perhaps the most significant change, what did shift, was that questions regarding what constituted ethical performance of mandated and colonial responsibilities towards subject/subjugated populations had been opened up for discussion and debate to a wider public. It was no longer simply colonial officials and administrators who discussed colonial administrative practice. The colonial administration of 'native subjects' became a topic of research interest within academia, and especially within the new discipline of anthropology.[59] Through the structures of the League and within more public forums, welfare and humanitarian organisations began initiating and intervening in debates on the 'colonial question' of how best to achieve the protection and 'uplift' of native or 'subject' races. Lucy Mair, in a piece on 'scientific administration' for Contemporary Review in 1934, took note of this new trend, writing:

> One of the most remarkable developments of opinion in the post war era has been the emergence among *the general public* of a new attitude towards colonial questions.[60]

She continued,

> The modern attitude is one of criticism, of a demand that imperialism shall justify itself by new ethical standards.[61]

In Papua and New Guinea this meant a consolidation of the protectionist approach already adopted by Sir Hubert Murray in Papua, one in which Andrew Lattas persuasively argued colonialism was reformulated as 'philanthropy operating on a global scale', and in which the redemption of humanity 'involved the "higher cultures" having a "sacred trust" to morally and intellectually uplift the natives.'[62]

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[58] Lewis, *Empire State Building: War and Welfare in Kenya, 1925 - 52*, p.25.

[59] In the Pacific context debate and discussion regarding what constituted 'good colonial administration' flourished within a number of forums. Journals such as *Oceania, Far Eastern Survey* and *Pacific Affairs* served as venues for the publication of academic as well as amateur studies of indigenous cultures, and disquisitions on 'The Future and Progress of the Native Races in the Pacific'. They frequently carried debates on the 'how to' of education and health provision in the region. The Permanent Mandates Commission commissioned reports on various subjects pertaining to the welfare of 'native subjects', which were often used a starting point for discussions.

[60] Lucy Mair, "A Science of Colonial Government," *The Contemporary Review* 1934, p.80 (my emphasis) Mair went on to become a key advisor to the Australian administration of New Guinea during World War II.

[61] Ibid, p.80.

[62] Lattas, "Humanitarianism and Australian Nationalism in Colonial Papua: Hubert Murray and the Project of Caring for the Self of the Coloniser and the Colonized.", p.147.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN: FEMINIST ACTIVITY WITHIN INTERNATIONAL AND IMPERIAL NETWORKS

International feminist organisations and activists were amongst the first and the most enthusiastic to engage in these new international conversations about colonial policy.[63] Pressure from international women's groups ensured that a female representative, Ann Bugge Wicksell, was appointed as one of the nine members of the League's Permanent Mandates Commission.[64] On her appointment Bugge Wicksell declared that in her capacity as the only female member she would 'feel as a woman for other women as well as for children' and make it 'her special business to care for and speak for that part of the native population'.[65]

Bugge Wicksell was especially focused on issues of welfare and through her interventions within the Commission exerted pressure on various mandated powers to act on issues such as infant mortality, domestic sanitation, the age of marriage and the training of midwives. She was perhaps most effective in raising the issue of education for women. In her first term she published a comparative study on education in the Mandated territories, called attention to the need for colonial powers to ratify the new Convention concerning the trafficking of women and girls so that it may apply in their Mandates Territories, and wrote a report on the employment of women as indentured labourers in category B and C mandated territories.[66] After Bugge Wicksell's death in 1928, Valentine Dannevig, a prominent women's activist and educationist took up her position on the Commission. Like Bugge Wicksell, Dannevig paid special attention to the issue of sexual trafficking in the mandated territories, questioned administrators on marriage laws and gendered franchise restrictions, and took great interest in assessing the provision of education in the colonial territories.[67]

Joanna Lewis has argued that it was at least partly as a result of the Permanent Mandates Commission 'making noises' on the issue of native education and

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[63] See as one example of the advocacy role played by members of the Council for the representation of women in the League of Nations, who met with British Secretary of State re colonial policy and native women and called for the appointment of a woman advisor in the Colonial Office, in BNA: DO35/402/12, Native Women's Restriction Act, 1926 – 1930, available at http://www.empire.amdigital.co.uk Women in attendance included MM Ogilvie Gordon, Nina Boyle, Eleanor Rathbone MP, Corbett Ashby, and Helen Ward.

[64] Pedersen, "Metaphors of the Schoolroom: Women Working the Mandates System of the League of Nations.", p.194.

[65] Bugge Wicksell quoted in Leila J Rupp, *Worlds of Women: The Making of an International Women's Movement* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997), p.151.

[66] Pedersen, "Metaphors of the Schoolroom: Women Working the Mandates System of the League of Nations.", p.193. See also Lewis, *Empire State Building: War and Welfare in Kenya, 1925 - 52*, p.52.

[67] Pedersen, "Metaphors of the Schoolroom: Women Working the Mandates System of the League of Nations.", pp.193-4.

women's welfare that colonial powers began to consider the issue more seriously.[68] For the British Colonial Office this external pressure, combined with complementary and already existing internal requests, led to the establishment of an Advisory Committee on Native Education in Tropical Africa. In March 1925 the Committee published a statement of 'principles and policy' on 'native education', a formal memorandum entitled Education Policy in British Tropical Africa. The memo – which was to become a foundational document on 'native education' across the British Empire, and referred to frequently by various policy makers in the Australian administration – described the education of girls and women as a particularly 'delicate' and 'difficult' problem, one that required immediate and urgent attention. The need for women's education was explained in a paragraph that is worth quoting at some length:

> (a) Clever boys, for whom higher education is expedient, must be able to look forward to educated mates. (b) The high rate of infant mortality in Africa, and the unhygienic conditions which are widely prevalent make instruction in hygiene and public health, in the care of the sick and the treatment of simple diseases, in child welfare and in domestic economy, and the care of the home, among the first essentials, and these, wherever possible, should be taught by well qualified women teachers. (c) Side by side with the extension of elementary education for children, there should go enlargement of educational opportunities for adult women as for adult men. Otherwise there may be a breach between the generations, the children losing much that the old traditions might have given them, and the representatives of the latter becoming estranged through their remoteness from the atmosphere of the new education. To leave the women of a community untouched by most of the manifold influences which pour in through education, may have the effect either of breaking the natural ties between the generations or of hardening the old prejudices of the elder women. Education is a curse rather than a blessing if it makes women discontented or incompetent.[69]

The ideas expressed in this paragraph continued to underpin colonial policies regarding women's advancement for the next fifty years. These being: that women be educated in order that they would be suitable wives for educated male 'native' subjects and might practise appropriate and hygienic mothering to their children; that educated women – as mothers – might act as a bridge between generations in societies undergoing rapid transition; and that women be educated to the extent that

[68] Lewis, *Empire State Building: War and Welfare in Kenya, 1925 - 52*, p.52.
[69] Advisory Committee on Native Education in the British Tropical African Dependencies, "Education Policy in British Tropical Africa: Memorandum Submitted to the Secretary of State for the Colonies," (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, March, 1925), p.8.

they might comfortably adapt to change, but not strive (discontentedly and incompetently) beyond that offered by colonial administrations.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN: LOCAL INTERVENTIONS

Through the interwar period white Australian women activists made concerted efforts to engage with the 'Aboriginal question' within broader feminist campaigns for women's citizenship rights. They called for harsher penalties for the sexual abuse and exploitation of Aboriginal women by white men, argued against policies of child removal, and stressed the need for welfare policies that addressed specifically Aboriginal women's living conditions and status.[70] Their efforts were focused at the local, domestic level but also took place and were influenced through their involvement in dominion networks.[71]

Australian feminists' interest in the conditions of Aboriginal women in Australia did not, however, translate to activism on behalf of the indigenous women of Papua and New Guinea. Only very rarely had they directly involved themselves in matters of colonial administration policy in Papua. One of the few recorded instances demonstrates the limited nature of early involvement. In 1913 a deputation from the Victorian Women's Political Association led by Vida Goldstein visited the Australian Prime Minister. They raised a comprehensive range of issues, including a request that 'steps be taken to safeguard the women' of the New Hebrides and Papua. During the meeting Prime Minister Cook admitted a lack of knowledge about the situation of indigenous women in the colonies and delegated External Affairs to provide a reply to Women's Political Association (WPA) on the matter. They responded quickly (and curtly) via correspondence. The Australian administration in Papua, they wrote, had exercised 'every care' in their treatment of women, adding dismissively: 'no complaints have been received that they [indigenous women or children] have, at any time, met with ill usage'.[72] The WPA seem to have let the matter rest: no follow-up response from them can be found in the archive.

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[70] Marilyn Lake, *Getting Equal: The History of Australian Feminism* (St Leonards, N.S.W.: Allen and Unwin, 1999), chapter 5.

[71] Fiona Paisley notes Australian women were involved in the push for progressive reform on the 'Aboriginal question' through the Women's Service Guilds of Western Australia, the South Australian Women's Non Party Association and the Victorian Women's Citizen Movement, the efforts of these organisations co-ordinated through their national representative body, the Australian Federation of Women Voters. At a transnational or dominion level Australian women were represented within the British Commonwealth League. Paisley, *Loving Protection? Australian Feminism and Aboriginal Women's Rights 1919 - 1939*, pp.3-5 See also Alison Holland, "Wives and Mothers Like Ourselves? Exploring White Women's Intervention in the Politics of Race, 1920 - 1940s," *Australian Historical Studies* 32, no. 117 (2001), p.298.

[72] NAA: A1/(A1/15); 1913/15985, Treatment of Women in the New Hebrides and Papua; Notes of a Deputation received by the Prime Minister from the Women's Political

In general white Australian women campaigning for better treatment of Aboriginal women believed that the indigenous people of Papua and New Guinea had fared better than their Australian counterparts. Indeed Edith Jones, a strong supporter of Aboriginal rights in Australia and an outspoken critic of white men's sexual abuse against Aboriginal women, cited with approval the situation of the 'native' in New Guinea. In a speech delivered to the 1930 British Commonwealth League Conference, she argued Australian Aboriginals would be lucky to be treated as natives under a League mandate, as was done in New Guinea. She believed if this were done Aboriginals would immediately accrue a range of basic rights at the time denied them: rights over land, voting, education, and guardianship over children.[73] Jones' faith in the League of Nations as a guarantor of humanitarian rule over indigenous peoples through its mandates system was a not uncommon position among (imperial) feminists and liberal internationalists.

In the Papua and New Guinean context, it was in fact female anthropologists and female welfare professionals rather than feminists or women activists who played the most significant part in placing pressure on the administration to begin tackling the 'problem' of women's advancement.[74] Through their research and their consultancy work for Pacific colonial administrations, female anthropologists emphasised the important role women played within traditional societies, arguing this meant women just as much as men needed to be part of any process of 'modernisation'. British anthropologist and educationist Camilla Wedgwood, for example, was particularly critical of the lack of attention paid to the role women played within social change. Her background survey on the education of women and girls in the Pacific for UNESCO explained:

> It is sometimes assumed unwittingly that the males play the dominant role in social change and that for a study of acculturation the effects of culture contact on females are relatively unimportant. The effects on the lives and outlook of the females are less obvious, less direct and usually less easy to analyse, but we cannot assume that they are less important.[75]

Association, 2 October 1913; Correspondence from Atlee Hunt to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 14 October 1913. See also media reportage of this, "Australian Women: Series of Demands: Deputation to the Prime Minister," *The Argus* 3 October 1913.

[73] Paisley, *Loving Protection? Australian Feminism and Aboriginal Women's Rights 1919 - 1939,* p.45.

[74] Paul Hasluck, for example, makes particular mention of Camilla Wedgwood, Margaret Mead, and Marie Reay as having influenced him to reassess the importance of 'women's advancement'. Hasluck, *A Time for Building*, p.328.

[75] Camilla Wedgwood, "A Background Documentary Survey on the Education of Women and Girls in the Pacific," in *Papers of Camilla Wedgwood* (1957). [Commissioned by UNESCO, written in 1954, published posthumously in 1957]

Wedgwood was a vocal proponent of women's education. On her recommendation, the colonial administration of Nauru had appointed a female specialist in education – trained in anthropology – to work on establishing the first secondary school for girls in the territory.[76] Working closely with the Australian colonial administration in Papua and New Guinea she similarly applied pressure on them to begin 'making up the leeway' that had resulted from their previous neglect in the area.[77]

Wedgwood was, however, by no means a feminist.[78] In fact, the very idea of feminism frightened her. That someone might mistake her for a feminist was more frightening again. When Wedgwood was awarded a coronation award as 'a prominent feminist leader' in 1937 she wrote to her father in Britain, expressing her immense irritation at the misplaced label. 'You have' she wrote, 'no idea how I loathe feminism – I was so angry at first that I failed to see how comic it was.'[79] She did not appreciate the feature in those around her either. When lecturing at the Australian School of Pacific Administration, Wedgwood once dismissed a promising female student as a 'disappointment' on the basis she had been 'obsessed with women's rights'.[80] Wedgwood's motivation in calling attention to indigenous women's education and welfare needs was not a feminist impulse to activism, she explained, but simply a 'practical consideration' of the colonial situation. Wedgwood was not alone in advocating greater attention to be paid 'women's advancement' on the basis of 'practical considerations'.

'DANGEROUS DISEQUILIBRIUM' (OR THE RISKS OF IGNORING THE 'PROBLEM')

> Special attention must be directed to improving the life of the native women. I believe that the former system of labour division must be modified, since it belongs to the past when conditions were very different from those that obtain today. ... It goes without saying that improvement in the living

[76] Camilla Wedgwood, "Report on Research Work on Nauru Island, Central Pacific (Part One)," *Oceania* 6 (1936); Camilla Wedgwood, "Report on Research Work on Nauru Island, Central Pacific (Part Two)," *Oceania* 7 (1936).

[77] Wedgwood, "A Background Documentary Survey on the Education of Women and Girls in the Pacific."

[78] Very few of Wedgwood's fellow female anthropologist colleagues – also influential in colonial administration, though in British Africa - would have identified as feminists. Like her, they would have baulked at the label. Raymond Firth, for example, described Audrey Richards in the following way: 'she assumed rather than strove for equality with men'. Gacs, *Women Anthropologists: A Biographical Dictionary*, p.313. However, many of them, like Wedgwood, played a significant role as advocates for women's education and an increased provision of health services to women in the colonies.

[79] Correspondence to her father, Josiah Wedgwood, 28 June 1937 quoted in Lutkehaus, "She Was 'Very Cambridge': Camilla Wedgwood and the History of Women in British Social Anthropology.", p.789.

[80] Wedgwood quoted in D. Wetherill and C. Carr-Gregg, *Camilla: C. H. Wedgwood 1901 - 1955, a Life* (Kensington, N.S.W.: NSW University Press, 1990), 205, p.205.

> conditions of the men without corresponding changes for the women will never be far reaching or lasting. Native women must be provided with new sets of interests, and must develop a new social outlook which will extend beyond the cooking stones and the feasting ground. There must be a greater freedom of communication and a greater friendliness amongst them, so that they will be able to participate fully in the new life and in the social changes that will come about in the villages in the future. They must, in short, be given a new and higher status in the community. Education of the women must, therefore, be pointed towards this end, even from the humble educational beginnings in the village.[81]
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> **William Groves, 1936**

In an early essay on 'native education' William Groves, anthropologist and educator and later to become Director of Education in the post-war administration, warned of the dangerous impact that rapid social change was having on daily village life for indigenous peoples. Villagers seemed, he explained, to be losing 'their former bulwarks and refuges'.[82] A sympathetic – or 'nativised' – education was necessary to stop 'malaise and racial melancholia' from taking hold:

> It is a situation which the people themselves simply do not understand, and are incapable of meeting without sympathetic and enlightened guidance.[83]

Unless the administration provided education equally to both sexes, women were liable to be left behind. Groves went on to describe how in a society experiencing rapid 'culture contact' this could lead to a 'dangerous state of disequilibrium'.[84]

Groves' warning of dangerous disequilibrium relied upon his functionalist reading of the consequences of culture contact for native society.[85] His essay – part

[81] W C Groves, *Native Education and Culture Contact in New Guinea: A Scientific Approach, Being a Study of the Part That Education Might Play in the Social Adjustment and Future Development of the Natives of the Territory of New Guinea*, 1st ed. (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne Uni Press, 1936; reprint, 1977, AMS Press), pp.68-69.

[82] Ibid, p.10. Groves' essay followed on (and drew) from that of government anthropologist in Papua, F. E. Williams. F. E. Williams, "'the Blending of Cultures: An Essay on the Aims of Native Education'," in *Anthropology Report No. 16* (Reprinted by Department of Education, Official Research Publication No. 1, 1951 [1935]).

[83] Groves, *Native Education and Culture Contact in New Guinea*, p.10.

[84] Ibid. p.7.

[85] Groves was trained as an anthropologist and was quite explicit about his views on the applicability of anthropological theory to colonial administration. Functionalist theory envisaged society as being made up of interdependent, interrelated elements that, when taken together, tended towards 'equilibrium'; that is, they were internally stable. The alteration or removal of just one element without attention to its function and relationship to the whole might easily lead to excessive strain in the social order. Anthropologists Camilla Wedgwood and Ian Hogbin also discussed the dangers of culture contact, similarly warning of racial malaise, See Hogbin and Wedgwood, "Native Welfare in the Southwest Pacific Islands." For a general discussion of the influence of anthropology theory (and in particular functionalist theory) on colonial policy see, Eyal Ben-Ari, "Colonialism, Anthropology and the Politics of Professionalisation: An Argumentative Afterword," in *Anthropology and*

anthropological study, part guide to administrative practice in the colonial setting – warned that European institutions must replace, rather than displace those of the indigenous culture. A European education could help fill the 'cultural void' created by culture contact if it took the village as its starting point, and adapted content and program to local circumstances in order to provide 'communal tools for improving life and its local conditions'.[86] Not all traditional practices should be abandoned, some might be adapted, and where it was appropriate that European institutions replace older local practices they must first be embraced by the indigenous population. Crucially Groves felt that if indigenous men were educated and their lives transformed without a corresponding change taking place in the lives of women then this would lead to cultural disintegration or dissolution. Groves' publication was intended as a contribution towards, and was indeed heavily influenced by, international debates regarding good colonial administration and practice taking place during the inter-war period.

Some 20 years later Minister for Territories Paul Hasluck adopted a similar descriptor when discussing education and welfare policy for indigenous women and girls. He declared the need for a set of female-targeted policies to address the problem of women's advancement in the territories on the basis that:

> at present, over the Territory as whole, there is a serious state of imbalance between the rate of advancement of native men and that of native women and that exceptional measures have to be taken to correct it before we can settle down to a steady and uniform progress for both men and women.[87]

Reflecting later on the administration's welfare policies for indigenous women in his political memoir of the period, Hasluck explained that his support for targeted policies was purely practical. He described the period during which he had been Minister as one of great 'social transformation'. Women needed to share in this transformation; otherwise 'there would be *social imbalance and unnecessary stresses, strains and impediments*'.[88] Hasluck's turn of phrase here resonated clearly with Groves' earlier warning; was in fact a bastardised or common-sense version of this.

'Social imbalance' could have serious consequences for administering the colonies. Rachel Cleland, wife of the Administrator and herself very involved in women's organising in the territory, warned in 1961 that it had 'become woefully

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Colonialism in Asia and Oceania, ed. Jan van Bremen and Akitoshi Shimizu (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1999).

[86] Groves, *Native Education and Culture Contact in New Guinea*, p.12.

[87] NAA: A452/1960/8272, Education and advancement of Native women – Policy – Papua and New Guinea; Letter from Minister, to Administrator, 18 March 1955, (my italics).

[88] Hasluck, *A Time for Building*, p.330.

apparent that social dangers lie in a community where there is too great a gap between the development of its men and its women'.[89] The dangers involved – those Cleland had obliquely referenced – had been more clearly spelt out in a formal memo circulated in the mid 1950s by John Gunther, then Assistant Administrator, which underlined the need for the colonial state to engage with women:

> The advancement of women is regarded by the Government as a matter which must receive the maximum attention possible. The existing gap between the men of the Territory and its women must be closed, and closed rapidly, in order to avoid many social and other problems which will follow should the disparity continue. Experts who have analysed the MauMau movement in Kenya have placed, 'the gross disparity between the advance of men and women' high on the list of the causes of unrest.[90]

The MauMau movement, or the Kenya Land and Freedom Army, was a popular national political movement comprised mainly of poor and landless Kikuyu who in the early 1950s staged an armed uprising against the British colonial settler regime in Kenya. In October of 1952 the British colonial Governor declared a State of Emergency to deal with what they were calling the 'MauMau emergency'. The Kikuyu's militant struggle for civil and political rights lasted through the 1950s and up until Kenya's independence in 1963.

During the 1930s when the first patrols had started to push through the Highlands, to discover the rich, fertile grasslands beyond what had seemed impenetrable jungle covered mountains, some within the administration had begun to talk of New Guinea in hopeful tone as a 'second Kenya'. British Kenya, in the thirties, was regarded as one of Britain's key colonies – with an established white settler population, stable colonial government, and an expanding capitalist system of production. Oskar Spate, a geographer and advisor to the Minister for Territories, cautiously recalled these earlier comparisons to Kenya in 1956 as a warning to his readers to consider very seriously what would be the colonies' most appropriate path towards development:

[89] Rachel Cleland, "Pioneering Women," *South Pacific Post* 15 September 1961. Similarly the 1964 Currie Report on Higher Education recommended special attention be paid to girls' education to ensure appropriately educated wives and mothers for its new 'advanced'/'advancing' male indigenous political subjects. Currie warned the administration against inaction, 'There is all too much evidence in the underdeveloped world of the deplorable consequences of a great cultural differentiation between man and wife'. Australia. Commission on Higher Education in Papua and New Guinea. and George Currie, "Report of the Commission on Higher Education in Papua and New Guinea," (Canberra: The Commission, 1964).

[90] PNGA: 69/80-2-0, Social Welfare, Advancement of Native Women Policy; JT Gunther, Assistant Administrator Memo to District Commissioners re Advancement of Women, 12 November 1957, The 'MauMau movement' Gunther referred to here following colonial practice, was known to those involved in it as the Kenya Land and Freedom Army.

> Understandably these words [New Guinea as a 'second Kenya'] have not been much heard lately; they should perhaps be remembered.[91]

Others more specifically concerned with women's welfare also drew direct attention to the example of the Kenyan uprisings. The Officer in Charge of the Female Education Division, Barbara McLachlan, pointed to Kenya as an example of 'what can happen if a people's progress is ill balanced'.[92] In an update to the Administrator on the work of her division in 1955, McLachlan, who had recently travelled to London, referred to the debate going on in the British Parliament and within the British press about the causes of the MauMau unrest. She noted that many commentators felt Kikuyu women's educational 'lag' had been a root cause of the conflict. Unrest along the lines of MauMau, the touchstone of imperial crises, was to be avoided at all costs and McLachlan drew on this example as a means to reinvigorate the administration's commitment to her division and to shore up practical support for its work:

> I venture to suggest that this Administration should show sufficient moral courage, if not to halt men's education, at least to give, for the next 3 years, the highest priority to all programmes destined to promote the welfare and advancement of Native women.[93]

CONCLUSION: SETTING THE PARAMETERS OF POLICY (POST 1945)

In his political memoir of his experience as Minister responsible for the territories Paul Hasluck wrote about women (indigenous and European) and their role in development in a section of a chapter with the rather dismissive title: 'A Mixed Bag of Social Questions'. Something of a carry-all, in addition to a discussion of indigenous women, the chapter housed sections on, among other things, racial minorities, 'foreign natives' in towns, and alcohol prohibition for indigenous

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[91] O. H. K Spate, "Problems of Development in New Guinea," *The Geographical Journal* 122, no. 4 (Dec, 1956),p.436. Spate, who came originally from Britain and whose work focused on India, moved to Australian in 1951 to take up the position of chair of Geography at the new Australian National University. His research focus slowly shifted to the South Pacific. Spate was an advisor to the Minister for Territories from 1953 writing reports on the particular topics of demography and the development of the colonial economy. His work on Fiji, *The Fijian People: Economic Problems and Prospects,* written in 1959 and commissioned by the British colonial government, was eventually used as almost a blueprint by the administration re handling the process of independence. See David Hooson, "Oskar H. K. Spate, 1911 - 2000," *Geographical Review* 90, no. 4 (2000).

[92] NAA: A452; 1963/3951, Education and advancement of Native women – Policy – Papua and New Guinea 1960-1964; correspondence from Barbara McLachlan to Administrator, 24 February 1955.

[93] NAA: A452; 1963/3951, Education and advancement of Native women – Policy – Papua and New Guinea 1960-1964; correspondence from Barbara McLachlan to Administrator, 24 February 1955.

peoples.[94] This gives some indication that despite the widespread rhetoric regarding the administration's new commitment to women's advancement, it remained an add-on issue and a relatively low priority.

Hasluck writes that when he commenced as Minister in 1951 he was keen to see the development of a more clearly articulated policy with reference to women's issues. At the time he set limits on what the welfare objectives of a 'women's advancement' policy should be:

> What we are advancing is the welfare of the natives as a community, not the cause of feminism.[95]

This was an understanding shared by the female welfare officers working within the welfare and female education division. Women were to be given access to colonial education and training in order that they might 'fulfil their role in society as man's complement, and not in competition with man'.[96]

While limited in scope, the shift in colonial policy in the post war period signalled clearly that colonial officials no longer saw indigenous women simply as conservers of tradition, as 'holding back change'. They were now considered potential agents of transformation within their own communities. But this new positioning of the female colonial subject was something of a paradox: it was precisely in their capacity as 'conservers of tradition' that women were expected to play a central role in indigenous societies' transition to 'modernity'.

[94] The short section on 'women's advancement' nonetheless provides a useful overview of Hasluck's understanding of the policy and program priorities and aims. While Hasluck recognised that work 'to help women' had been started prior to the war to a limited extent he dismissed these efforts – primarily those of missionaries and a small number of voluntary organisations - as ineffective: 'I do not think I judge them unfairly if I compare them to the work of a mothers' union in a village. There were sewing circles, afternoons for craftwork and much friendliness and a little bit of something to eat', Hasluck, *A Time for Building*, p.328.
[95] NAA: A452/1960/8272, Education and advancement of Native women – Policy – Papua and New Guinea; Letter from Minister, to Administrator, 18 March 1955.
[96] Lois Niall, "The Education of Native Women as an Aspect of Cultural Assimilation" (paper presented at the Camilla Wedgwood Memorial Lecture and Seminar (1st : 1959 : Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea) Port Moresby, 1959), p.84.

2. The Nuts and Bolts of Organising

Welfare work for women, 1945 - 1965

The earliest surviving archive file relating to the 'Advancement of Women' in post war Papua New Guinea opened in December of 1949 with a memo written in slightly apologetic tone. The memo, circulated by Stephen Lonergan, Acting Government Secretary, explained that all records of the initial discussions relating to 'women's welfare' and the establishment of a Women's Central Committee from the previous two years had been destroyed in a fire in the Government Secretary's offices at the beginning of the year.[1] If there had been drama at the moment of the fire, it was extinguished in the report of the incident. The plodding bureaucratic prose mentioned the fire only to explain that delays in the actioning of plans were 'unavoidable'. Welfare work for women would have to wait.

Apologies for this setback seem a particularly appropriate beginning for a set of policies and programs consistently marked by a registering of delays, confused purpose, and lack of resources. The proposal to establish a Women's Central Committee was initially put forward by Barbara McLachlan, the new Officer in Charge of the Female Education Division in the Department of Education. Soon after taking up her position in 1947 she secured approval from the Administrator, John Keith (JK) Murray, to set up a committee to act as an umbrella or oversight 'body' over the social welfare and development of indigenous women and girls in the territories.[2] Women's advancement, she argued, required the co-operation of all Departments – Education, Health, Native Affairs, Agriculture, and Stock and Fisheries. The various officers attending the Women's Committee's monthly meetings were sincere in their attempts to tackle the problem of 'advancement', looking at it from a number of angles – employment, education, health and political representation. Ultimately, however, they were stifled in their attempts to implement substantive change by a lack of genuine political will on the issue. No single department was given the responsibility, the required personnel, or the much needed funding to get sustainable programs up and running.

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[1] PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; Circular Memorandum No. 22 of 1949-50, Department of Government Secretary, 20 December 1949.

[2] PNGA: 69/80-3-2, Social Development and Advancement of Women, Education, Infant Maternal Welfare, 1947-1963; Minutes of Meeting of Inter-Departmental Committees on Native Development and Welfare, 12 April 1949.

The primary archive files on women's advancement in the Papua New Guinean archives run from 1949 to 1967.[3] In the Australian archive there are another two hefty files relating to the 'Education and Advancement of Native Women' policy, which cover the period from 1955 to 1964.[4] These two sets of archives trace the high hopes and stalled plans of women welfare workers and reveal clearly that by the second half of the twentieth century indigenous women's welfare and 'status' had become a recognised, if not prioritised, concern of the colonial state. In the post war period administration officers had begun, as discussed in chapter one, to abandon the notion of indigenous women as emblems of tradition, inherently 'conservative', their place only in the village. They began instead to speak of women as capable of, and indeed in the process of, becoming 'modern' mothers and wives. Taking account of indigenous women as colonial subjects, perhaps for the first time, the colonial administration hoped to reform and remake their lives in ways they believed might enable them to – potentially, eventually – stand beside their male kin (their husbands, their brothers) as citizens of a modern state.

Scholars who have noted the development of these female-targeted policies and programs of welfare and development have generally dismissed them out of hand. They have assumed the policies' reach to be relatively restricted and their effects negligible due to the problems of the limited allocation of staff and resources to the programs.[5] Some have preferred instead to focus on (generally female) missionaries' work with indigenous women. In many ways such a focus is justified. Missionaries in many areas began working with women much earlier than did the government; they were more locally engaged and their efforts generally more sustained. Indigenous women became actively engaged participants in church and Mission activities and assumed a variety of formal roles within church structures, especially as these came to be increasingly indigenised through the post war period. In contrast, the colonial state's promise of 'welfare and development' for women faded

[3] PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; Parts 1-4, 1950-1967. Each administrative district also had their own set of files relating to work regarding 'SDAW' (Social Development and Advancement of Women). See for example PNGA: 69/80-2-1/5615, Social Welfare Advancement of Women Central District; Parts 1-3, 1957-1967 and PNGA: 69/80-2-11/5619, Social Development Advancement of Women Bougainville 1957-1963.

[4] NAA: A452; 1960/8272, Education and Advancement of Native Women – Policy – Papua and New Guinea 1955-1959; NAA: A452; 1963/3951, Education and Advancement of Native Women – Policy – Papua and New Guinea 1960-1964.

[5] See for example Mervyn Meggitt, "Women in Contemporary Central Enga Society," in *Family and Gender in the Pacific : Domestic Contradictions and the Colonial Impact*, ed. Margaret Jolly and Martha Macintyre (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Marie Reay, "Women in Transitional Society," in *New Guinea on the Threshold : Aspects of Social, Political, and Economic Development*, ed. E. K. Fisk (Canberra, ACT: Australian National University Press, 1966); Diane Langmore, "Object Lesson of a Civilised, Christian Home," in *Family and Gender in the Pacific : Domestic Contradictions and the Colonial Impact*, ed. Margaret Jolly and Martha Macintyre (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

almost as soon as it was made. Yet the common assumption of outright failure is worthy of re-examination. The institutional story of these early, targeted public programs is more complex than a simple case study of neglect. Tracing their history is instructive; it reveals a series of government attempts to engage women. Though these attempts were perhaps ultimately 'non-starters', they nonetheless decisively shaped the subsequent relationship between government and women, and indeed between the church and women.[6]

In this chapter I chart the newly unified territories' attempts to tackle the 'problem' of engaging women and improving their 'status', and analyse the implications of these. The chapter is divided in two parts. First I outline the practical application of the female-targeted policies. The work they entailed was divided somewhat messily between the colonies' two young 'welfare' Departments, Health and Education. Training, education, and health services for women were delivered primarily (though not exclusively) via the Infant and Maternal Welfare Section within the Department of Public Health, and the Female Education Division within the Department of Education. Though the two divisions were responsible to their own Departments, their work was also overseen by the previously mentioned Women's Central Committee (set up twice – originally in mid 1950 and again in 1957). The work of the divisions moved slowly, struggling under a lack of resources and allocated staff, but also pushing up against blatant discrimination and disinterest from male colleagues towards 'women's welfare work'.

In the second part I consider who was actually undertaking this work. These were special divisions staffed by a new class of white professional women, and heavily dependent on the enlisted labour of the wives of colonial officers and missionaries in the territories to deliver welfare services directly on behalf of the state or alternatively through a range of voluntary (social welfare) organisations or associations. These women – nurses, teachers, missionaries and female volunteers – were involved because they saw it as their duty as women to apply themselves to the task of introducing indigenous women to the benefits of the modern world.

BEGINNING THE WORK OF 'WELFARE FOR WOMEN'

On the first Friday in July of 1950, in a hot stuffy room inside the new Native Hostel of the Department of Education, downtown Konedobu, the Women's Central Committee sat down for its inaugural meeting. At the first of what were to be monthly meetings, those attending were probably still unsure what exactly the

[6] Missionaries were often the primary agents in the delivery of government programs, and strongly influenced the administration's reforms and initiatives. Their own practice was, in turn, affected.

Committee might achieve. At a minimum, they hoped to foster inter-Departmental co-operation around women's welfare work, which would help generate some practical measures or projects. But all were cautiously aware of the limited funding and resources of their respective Departments.[7]

Representatives had been sent from Agriculture, Health, Education, and District Services. Where possible female officers had been sent, in response to a direct request from Murray, then Administrator, that 'suitable women officers' be considered for nomination wherever possible.[8] At this inaugural meeting women outnumbered men, though only just: the headcount at the meeting was six women to five men.[9] Nonetheless such a gender mix was a first for a Government Committee. This pattern only strengthened through the life of the Committee, with attendance of male officers dropping off and additional women (from the various arms of the administration, as well as from outside the administration) attending as active 'observers' of proceedings, though not necessarily as formal members.

After the first meeting, Barbara McLachlan, head of the Female Education Division within the new Department of Education, took on the role of Chairman and Convenor. For the next year and a half she chaired discussions on a range of issues including (but not limited to): adequate village diet and nutrition, the accurate collection of health statistics, vocational and agricultural training for women and girls, the need for secure accommodation for female trainees, and the establishment, scope and structure of proposed women's village committees (or what came to be known as Village Women's Clubs). Meetings were most successful when specific welfare projects were tabled for feedback, with comment and criticism requested from other members. On occasion the ensuing debate was able to generate discussion within broader Administrative circles. The Women's Committee successfully advocated reform to colonial legislation in areas, for example, regarding the female Age of Consent, a (European) father's legal responsibility to his half-caste children, and the presence of European men in villages (see chapter six for further discussion of their advocacy in relation to this). By the end of 1951, however, the minutes showed that meetings had become brief; attendance was dropping. By 1952 meetings had ceased altogether. Demands from within officers' Departments, coupled with the general lack of resources and institutional support for their work, meant members chose to focus on their own specific projects. The work of 'welfare

[7] PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; Circular Memorandum No. 22 of 1949-50, Department of Government Secretary, 20 December 1949.
[8] PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; Circular from JK Murray, Administrator, 20 December 1949.
[9] PNGA: 69/80-2-0, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; Circular Memorandum No. 22 of 1949 – 50, 20 December 1949.

for women' after this was largely left to two divisions: the Infant Child and Maternal Health Division of the Department of Public Health and the Female Education Division within the Department of Education.

INFANT CHILD AND MATERNAL HEALTH DIVISION

Until the Second World War the administrations in both Papua and New Guinea had left the provision of maternal and child health care services to the Missions, explaining that only Missions had the required female personnel to deliver these services to indigenous women.[10] In 1930 the New Guinea administration flirted with the idea of providing infant welfare services, announcing they would establish a 'chain of infant welfare centres' throughout the territory. The first government clinic was opened in 1931 in Malabunga on the Kerevat River in the hinterland of Rabaul, staffed by two European nurses. The nurses lasted little over a year before asking for a transfer to somewhere less isolated. After this short and not very successful experiment the administration decided to leave the work up to the Missions, providing them with a small subsidy for their work.[11]

After the war the question was revisited and in 1948 the colonial administration – now jointly administering the two colonies – established a separate infant and maternal health section within the Department of Public Health. Joan Refshauge, who had arrived in the territories with her husband in 1947 and chosen to remain a year later when they divorced, helped to establish the administration's maternal and child health programmes and was then quickly put in charge of the Service.[12] She proved fiercely competent in the role.

The new government service aimed to provide 'every infant and woman' in the territory with regular advice on antenatal, post-natal and infant care, arrangements for the correct feeding of infants and children, and examination, correction and treatment of abnormalities.[13] Infant and maternal mortality rates were exceptionally high in the colonies – the infant mortality rate in 1949 was calculated as somewhere between 200 and 500 per thousand (this compared with an Australian rate of 30 per

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[10] Donald Denoon, "The Political Economy of Western Medical Services in Papua New Guinea," in *A History of Medicine in Papua New Guinea : Vignettes of an Earlier Period*, ed. B. G. Burton-Bradley (Kingsgrove, N.S.W.: Australasian Medical Publishing, 1990), pp.90-91.
[11] Lucy Mair, *Australia in New Guinea*, 2nd ed. (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1970 [1948]), p.235.
[12] Donald Denoon, "Refshauge, Joan Janet Brown (1906 - 1979)," in *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Melbourne University Press, 2002).
[13] PNGA: 247/1-4-1-16, Native Welfare Planning Committee; JT Gunther, Director of Public Health, Report submitted to committee, 1950 establishing principles under which Infant and Maternal Welfare Section to function, Infant and Maternal Welfare, p.19.

thousand).[14] These alarming statistics galvanised the administration in their new commitment to maternal and child health care. As Donald Denoon has shown, the lowering of infant mortality rates was more than a simple humanitarian consideration on the part of the colonial administration.[15] The lowering of infant mortality rates and maternal mortality rates (though the latter always of secondary importance) was believed key to addressing the 'problem of depopulation', an issue still of some concern through this period.[16]

There were two main components to post-war concern about depopulation. The first was the reproduction of a 'native' labour force. In October 1945 the Labor Government cancelled all native labour contracts and scrapped the system of indenture. This created significant labour shortages, as indigenous labourers in their thousands opted to return to the village rather than sign up for a new contract.[17] The Papuan Planters Association complained to the Australian government in 1949 that the rubber industry was 57% below labour strength, and that similar labour shortages had brought the copra and cacao industries to a halt in the islands.[18] Their short-term fears were allayed when John Gunther, as the Director of the Public Health Department, allowed labour recruitment from the Highlands, previously closed to recruitment due to health concerns. But the provision of comprehensive infant and maternal health services was seen as a complementary – and more effective, more enduring – strategy.[19] As JK Murray, post war Administrator who oversaw the establishment of the Division, explained:

> If we can cut down this appalling loss of child life, there should be a great increase in the native population and the result, in terms of the availability of native labour, apparent within a generation.[20]

The lowering of mortality rates would increase overall indigenous population figures, and ensure labour not only for plantations and other commercial projects in

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[14] Donald Denoon and Kathleen Dugan, *Public Health in Papua New Guinea: Medical Possibility and Social Constraint, 1884 - 1984* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p.86.
[15] Ibid, p.86.
[16] See Geoffrey Gray, *A Cautious Silence: The Politics of Australian Anthropology* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2007), p.201; Ian Downs, *The Australian Trusteeship, Papua New Guinea 1945 - 75* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1980), p.46. But by the late 1960s there had been a reversal in this, with concerns turning to overpopulation and the need for family planning clinics in the village.
[17] James Griffin, Hank Nelson, and Stewart Firth, eds, *Papua New Guinea: A Political History* (Richmond, Vic.: Heinemann Educational Australia, 1979), p.102.
[18] Downs, *The Australian Trusteeship, Papua New Guinea 1945 - 75*, p.46.
[19] Ibid, p.46. The Highlands, only opened up from the 1930s onwards and with little direct contact with the coastal populations prior to contact, had been closed to labour recruitment previously because of fears for population because it was feared they had little to no resistance to certain diseases, for example malaria.
[20] JK Murray to Senator Kendall (1949), quoted in Denoon and Dugan, *Public Health in Papua New Guinea: Medical Possibility and Social Constraint, 1884 - 1984*, p.86.

the territory (for example the emerging mining industry), but also for post-war state infrastructure and works projects. John Gunther was happy to build support for infant and maternal welfare work on the basis of economic consequences, arguing in an early planning document for the Division: 'The economic destiny of the country demands an increased population'.[21]

The second concern was that a shrinking population in the territories would be bad for Australia's national defence strategy. This was perhaps more abstract, but concerns for national security loomed large in the immediate post war political climate. Possession of the colonies was no longer sufficient. Murray argued that Australia's security was reliant on an 'adequately conceived and vigorously implemented policy of native welfare' in the two territories.[22] And a healthy, heavily populated colony, explained Murray in a letter to the Minister, was an essential 'condition of security' for Australia; it would serve as 'buffer' between Australia and encroaching foreign powers.[23] Murray used this as a basis for arguing for an increased administrative focus on maternal and infant welfare work, and the employment of more female medical practitioners in the territories.

The administration's attention focused initially on developing the service in and around Port Moresby. Though the number of people they could reach in this urban area was a small fraction of the indigenous population (estimated at some 0.5%), establishing the division first in an area in which Administrative facilities and resources were concentrated would allow practitioners – newly recruited European women – to develop their confidence before extending the programs and services to the more rural (and more challenging) districts.[24] After this the development of the service would proceed through to the use of 'special mobile teams' in the settled rural areas. Once permanent or 'fixed' centres were built by the administration, or in co-operation with the Missions, Clinics would travel further, expanding slowly to

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[21] PNGA: 247/1-4-1-16, Native Welfare Planning Committee; JT Gunther, Director of Public Health, Report submitted to committee, 1950 establishing principles under which Infant and Maternal Welfare Section to function, Infant and Maternal Welfare, p.19. This Report established the principles under which Infant and Maternal Welfare Section was to function.
[22] JK Murray quoted in Huntley Wright, "Protecting the National Interest: The Labor Government and the Reform of Australia's Colonial Policy, 1942 - 1945," *Journal of Labour History* 82 (2002), p.66.
[23] JK Murray to Minister for Territories (1949), quoted in Denoon and Dugan, *Public Health in Papua New Guinea: Medical Possibility and Social Constraint, 1884 - 1984*, p.86. Sir Hubert Murray's concerns regarding depopulation some 25 years earlier were also couched as concerns for Australia's security, and specifically the securing of a 'white Australia'. Preserving Papuans would ensure the 'races of Asia' could not overtake the land mass and threaten Australia. See Patricia O'Brien, "Remaking Australia's Colonial Culture?: White Australia and Its Papuan Frontier 1901 - 1940," *Australian Historical Studies* 40, no. 1 (2009), p.109.
[24] PNGA: 247/CA23/6/31, Medical Infant and Maternal Welfare; JT Gunther, Director of Public Health, Native Infant and Maternal Welfare, 12 December 1950.

reach rural and inaccessible regions.[25] The longer-term aim was to have a Clinic or Centre accessible within one hour's easy walk for all women. But the importance and necessity of contact and interaction in the early phases of setting up the services was clearly understood. Permanent centres would only be appropriate once trust had been built with local women and communities.[26]

Building trust was crucial for the functioning of the service as there was no compulsion for village mothers to attend the Clinics. Even in cases of, what they termed, suspected 'gross neglect' welfare sisters did not have the power to intervene themselves but were required to call on the local district officer (and the issue was then dealt with through Department of District Services and Native Affairs). Clinic nurses commonly reported that village women seemed, at least initially, reluctant to engage with the service. Nurses, who were required in most instances to travel with an armed escort when going to visit villages, often called on these officers – patrol officers or armed native constabulary – to help instigate and/or enforce attendance at the first meeting between the nurse and the villagers.[27]

The primary function of the infant and maternal welfare service was preventative. Gunther, when outlining the principles under which it was to be established, was very clear that no therapeutic services, diagnosis, or treatment of disease were to be administered through the service.[28] Partly this was about the prioritising of limited resources and staff. It also reflected a general shift in approaches to public health – with a focus on hygiene and the physiology of the body (and thus nutrition). As Joan Refshauge explained to a Mission Conference in 1954:

> Medical work today prefers the practice of preventative medicine as opposed to the practice of curative medicine. In this Territory it includes both though the accent is gradually being transferred to preventative medicine. Again health no longer means physical fitness or freedom from disease, but is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing. By our endeavour to build healthy adults then we mean adults who enjoy total health.[29]

The work of the service was not only to be about lowering infant and maternal mortality through clinical practice but also involved the encouragement of personal,

[25] PNGA: 247/1-4-1-16, Native Welfare Planning Committee; JT Gunther, Director of Public Health, Report submitted to committee, 1950 establishing principles under which Infant and Maternal Welfare Section to function, Infant and Maternal Welfare, p.3.
[26] Ibid.
[27] PNGA: 69/80-3-2/5716, SDAW – Health Education Infant Maternal Welfare; letter from Sister Joan Herbert to Dr J. Refshauge, Department of Public Health, 10 June 1955.
[28] PNGA: 247/CA23/6/31, Medical Infant and Maternal Welfare; JT Gunther, Director of Public Health, Native Infant and Maternal Welfare, 12 December 1950.
[29] Joan Refshauge quoted in Chilla Bulbeck, *Australian Women in Papua New Guinea: Colonial Passages 1920 - 1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge Uni Press, 1992), p.47.

domestic and village hygiene, and a focus on nutrition to build 'healthy children for healthy adulthood'. This focus on nutritional surveillance and hygiene practice involved nurses in the wider project of transforming village women's practices in line with European models of 'housewifery', a transformation long sought by missionaries and now authorised by the application of modern domestic science.[30] In many ways this 'homecraft' and domestic training aspect of their work – achieved via lectures on a range of public health topics delivered by the clinic nurse – overlapped with that of the welfare work of the Female Education Division.

By 1957 employed within the section were two European Medical Officers, 32 European trained nurses, two trained 'Mixed Blood' welfare assistants, and three trained 'Native' assistants. They were also in the process of training six 'Mixed Blood' young women, and 183 'Native' trainees (though this last figure included those who were being trained by Missions on behalf of the Service), four of whom were training in Fiji as nurses. Seventeen permanent clinics had been opened (five in Papua and twelve in New Guinea). In addition to the original training program for maternal and child health assistants begun in 1947 through the St Therese Maternity Hospital in Port Moresby, an Infant Welfare Training Centre had been established at Saiho in the Northern District (est. 1951), and another was underway in Madang. Eight Mission stations were running training programs recognised by the state, and a Midwifery Training School was running in Rabaul. There were also 'problem feeding' wards at Saiho, Wewak and Chimbu. When Joan Refshauge retired in 1963 to join the Queensland Department of Health, she could boast of having helped establish 21 central clinics, 528 village clinics, and 541 centres that were regularly visited by mobile patrols.[31] Over the course of the year over 150,000 children had attended clinics for treatment, and over 10,000 women for pre-natal care.[32] By 1970 it was estimated that over half of all expectant indigenous mothers were receiving antenatal care and almost as many postnatal care through Maternal and Child Health Clinics.[33]

[30] There was also, however, some limited acknowledgement of local conditions and existing knowledge and practice. Joan Refshauge, for example, advised all her nurses that it was sensible to incorporate local foods and recognise appropriate local remedies within health programmes. This would increase their programmes' likelihood of success, and help the nurses gain the trust and co-operation of villagers. Ibid, p.173 and see Papers of Joan Refshauge, NLA MS 7026, Folder 11; Speech delivered by Joan Refshauge to Mission Conference 18 November 1954.

[31] Denoon, "Refshauge, Joan Janet Brown (1906 - 1979)."

[32] Papua Annual Report 1963/64, p.245.

[33] Bell, Bignold and Mercado (1973), cited in William K. A. Agyei, *Fertility and Family Planning in the Third World: A Case Study of Papua New Guinea* (Kent ; North Ryde: Croom Helm, 1988).

THE FEMALE EDUCATION DIVISION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

After the war William Groves, appointed as Director of Education for the territories, announced his plans for his Department. Education, under Groves, was understood to encompass not simply schooling but the broad provision of assistance that would allow indigenous people to gradually adapt to the changing conditions brought about by colonial contact.[34] On this basis his new Department was administered under four sections or divisions: general and pre-vocational; technical; special services; and, lastly, female education. As Groves explained:

> The Female Education Division is intended to provide for special educational interests of women and girls, including Homecraft, Infant Welfare (in association with the Department of Public Health) Physical Education and Play, Handicrafts.[35]

In his proposed Five Year Programme for the Education Department in 1948, Groves was still warning of 'a dangerous state of disequilibrium' if the previous neglect in female education was not specifically addressed. To ignore it would make the general work of the Department much harder. 'Apart from the injustice of a situation of this kind,' he wrote, 'it seems obvious that the home influence of women may, in such a case, seriously retard educational progress'.[36] Complementing the work of the Female Education Division, a Women's Welfare Section was established at the same time within the Department of Native Affairs. There was considerable cross-over of staff, resources, and tasks between the Section and Division, though the attention of welfare officers, at least initially, was focused on catering for the needs of the wives and children of indigenous men attending teacher training at Sogeri.[37]

The officer chosen to head the Female Education Division was Barbara McLachlan. McLachlan, initially trained as a teacher at the Sydney Teachers' College, had gone on to complete a Bachelor of Arts at Sydney University specialising in Anthropology. Before arriving to take up her role in the Education

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[34] Peter Smith, "A Department of Native Development: W.C Groves and Non School Education 1946 - 55," in *Pacific Perspectives on Non Formal Education*, ed. Michael Crossley, Joseph Sukwianomb, and Sheldon Weeks (Waigani, Papua New Guinea: Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, Suva and University of Papua New Guinea Press, 1987), p.178, but see also Groves' own published writings on education as 'the advancement of the community as a whole' W C Groves, *Native Education and Culture Contact in New Guinea: A Scientific Approach, Being a Study of the Part That Education Might Play in the Social Adjustment and Future Development of the Natives of the Territory of New Guinea*, 1st ed. (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne Uni Press, 1936; reprint, 1977, AMS Press).

[35] NAA: A452; 1957/3985, Education-General-Papua New Guinea, 1946 – 1960; Statement by Director of Education: Summary June 1946.

[36] Papua New Guinea. Dept. of Education, *Proposed Programme of the Department of Education for the Five-Year Period, July 1948 - June 1953* ([Port Moresby: The Department], 1948), p.7.

[37] Papua Annual Report 1947/48, p.26.

Department she had taught in secondary schools in New South Wales. McLachlan continued her training after taking up her position, studying public health in the United States under a World Health Organisation scholarship. According to those who worked with her she was a capable, intelligent officer, with a strong vision for what she hoped to achieve.[38]

One of McLachlan's key early suggestions was the establishment of village Women's Clubs, the facilitation and support of which came to be one of the main activities of the division. McLachlan was, at least in part, inspired by a similar trend of social development activities in colonial Africa. The concept behind Women's Clubs no doubt had its origin in the Christian women's fellowships organised by missionary women from very early on across the British Empire. Following World War Two, homecraft clubs – as almost an extension of Christian women's fellowships – became the characteristic feature of state welfare provision for women throughout colonial Africa. Through the clubs African women were introduced to Western ideals of domesticity; they were taught 'domestic skills' such as cooking, baking, sewing, home decoration, basic hygiene and nutrition.[39] The early success in establishing these clubs across Africa was held up as a model for others, and taken up enthusiastically by colonial administrations across the Pacific.[40] McLachlan believed Women's Clubs were the best way to deliver education for adult women. Though the Clubs were run on an informal basis and attendance was oftentimes haphazard, it was felt they had a positive effect:

> If they meant that an ever growing number of women learnt how to have a clean home, how to take care of a child, how to cook nutritious meals, how to make and mend clothes – this was 'education' irrespective of numbers marked 'present' on a roll.[41]

By 1957 the Female Education Division was well established within the Department of Education. They had a staff comprising 10 European female employees and 11 indigenous female employees (with hopes to expand that to 15 by

[38] Paul Hasluck, *A Time for Building* (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1976), p.329.
[39] Karen Tranberg Hansen and American Council of Learned Societies, eds, *African Encounters with Domesticity* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1992); Amy Kaler, "Visions of Domesticity in the African Women's Homecraft Movement in Rhodesia," *Social Science History* 23, no. 3 (1999); and Jean Allman, "Making Mothers: Missionaries, Medical Officers and Women's Work in Colonial Asante, 1924 - 1945," *History Workshop* 38, no. 2 (1994).
[40] At the very first meeting of the Women's Advancement Committee, for example, a local provincial welfare officer's description of the successful establishment of women's clubs in Uganda was circulated to all members as an example of what could be achieved. PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; letter from Provincial Welfare Officer, Uganda to Welfare Officer, Dept of Ed, Port Moresby.
[41] PNGA: A/1/6, 6736 (EDU 17), Department of Education, Report to W.C. Groves, 6 June 1952.

the end of the year, and 20 by the end of 1958).[42] Five Girls Schools had been established across the territories: at Dregerhafen, Tavui (Rabaul), Kerema, Hanuabada, and Goroka (this last, named in honour of Camilla Wedgwood). By 1960 another had opened in Madang. A Welfare Centre had been established at Kaugere in Moresby. This was staffed full time by an Infant and Maternal Welfare sister, a pre-school teacher and an Assistant Welfare officer. Smaller centres had been built at Lae, Kavieng, Goroka, and Wewak. By the early 1960s the Division was producing, 'Talks for Women', a weekly radio slot that lasted 15 minutes and was broadcast daily during the Native People's Session in a variety of languages (10am – 10.15am in Police Motu on Monday and Wednesday, in Tok Pisin on Tuesday and Thursday, and in English on Friday).[43] A Women's Clubs Newsletter, an array of educational books, information pamphlets, and colour posters were being published by the Division and circulated via Women's Club networks.[44] And in addition a number of filmstrips directly targeted at indigenous women were under production.[45] In 1960 the administration was reporting over 150 Women's Clubs had been established in the colonies, with an estimated total membership of 7,500 women.[46]

'BUILDING TRUST'

From the perspective of the individual Departments of which they were a part, the work of the two female-targeted divisions (Infant, Child and Maternal Health and the Female Education Division) had very specific priorities and objectives. Outcomes could be – and were – measured by clear indicators such as clinic

[42] PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; Report by Special Committee Appointed to Consider Proposals for Education and Advancement of Women, 6 February 1957.

[43] Advertised in 1961 Women's Club Newsletter. Radio sets were distributed by the Department of Native Affairs to the various Districts so that villagers could listen in to the colonial administration's public programming broadcasts. NAA: A452; 1963/3951, Education and advancement of Native women – Policy – Papua and New Guinea 1960-1964; Report on Activities of Committee.

[44] In 1960, for example, the Extension Services Division of the Department of Native Affairs organised for the publication of the following titles through the South Pacific Literature Bureau: *Women of Mamayang (How to Start a Women's Club)*; *Things to do in Women's Clubs* – Books 1, 2, 3, and 4; and *The Game of Good Health*. A section of the Division of Extension Services' News Sheet *Our News* was devoted to 'women's interests'. Women's news was featured in a number of newssheets produced by Local Government Councils and in the *Papua and New Guinea Villager*. The Infant and Maternal Welfare Section of the Department of Health issued a regular newsletter circulated amongst villagers regarding their activities.

[45] Some of these were adapted from overseas examples, or produced externally. Many, however, were written and illustrated by women within the Department (in the case of the written materials). At least one of the film strips – *A Woman Called Gima* that described Women's Village Clubs – was scripted and narrated by a Senior Welfare Officer from the administration.

[46] NAA: A452/1; 1961/1046, Economic and Social Council Commission on the Status of Women; Brief for the Australian Representative on the Status of Women Commission, 1961. By 1965 club numbers had increased to some 600 across the two colonies, and in Papua alone 1000 women had participated in the colonial administration's leadership training. Papuan Annual Report 1964-65; New Guinea Annual Report 1964-65.

attendance figures, maternal and infant mortality rates, numbers of girl students in mission and administration schools, and the number of village women's clubs established, and their total membership. Subsequent historians have generally evaluated the work of the two divisions on the basis of these priorities, objectives, and indicators.[47] The administration, however, was clear that the work of the divisions included bringing indigenous women within the ambit of the state. The establishment of health clinics for mothers and children would allow for the slow easing in of the state into indigenous women's lives. Women's clubs would provide the social and political (and physical) space within which indigenous women could begin to participate as part of a broader colonial polity, as well as within local decision making processes.

Prior to the 1950s the various administrative powers of the state were in most rural contexts concentrated in the sole figure of the male kiap or patrol officer. For all intents and purposes he was government.[48] He took the census, collected taxes, ensured compliance with Native Regulations, adjudicated over disputes and criminal matters, and had control over the 'native' police and any medical officers who travelled with him. These government men interacted primarily with male village leaders. They observed rather than engaged with women. Where interactions took place between village women and male European officers – or the foreign indigenous men who travelled with them as police or medics – these were often of a sexual nature.[49] Some of these relations may have been consensual, but many involved varying degrees of coercion and force. The administration believed that as a result of this pattern of contact – either absent or alternatively (sometimes violently) coercive – indigenous women feared contact with colonial officers and generally lacked trust in government services. One of the key benefits of Women's Clubs was that they would 'bring women into more direct and frequent contact with Administration Officers'.[50] But it was primarily through the provision of medicine

[47] Denoon and Dugan, *Public Health in Papua New Guinea: Medical Possibility and Social Constraint, 1884 - 1984*, chapter 10; Donald Denoon, "Medical Services in Papua New Guinea 1884 - 1984," in *Papua New Guinea: A Century of Colonial Impact 1884 - 1984*, ed. Sione Latukefu (Port Moresby: National Research Institute and University of Papua New Guinea in association with the Centennial Committee, 1989, 1989); Reay, "Women in Transitional Society."; Marie Reay, "Politics, Development and Women in the Rural Highlands," *Administration for Development* 5 (1975); and J. Willis, "The Role of Women's Clubs in Png," *South Pacific Bulletin* Second Quarter (1975).
[48] See Anthony Yeates, "The Patrol Officers and Tom Kabu: Power and Prestige in the Purari Delta," *The Journal of Pacific History* 40, no. 1 (2005), p.71; James Patrick Sinclair, *Kiap: Australia's Patrol Officers in Papua New Guinea* (Sydney: Pacific Publications, 1981); C. D. Rowley, *The New Guinea Villager* (Melbourne: Cheshire, 1965; reprint, 1972), p.67.
[49] August Kituai, *My Gun, My Brother: The World of the Papua New Guinea Colonial Police, 1920 - 1960* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1998); and see chapter 6, this thesis.
[50] PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; Administration Press Statement No.1, 7 January 1960.

and general health service for infants by female officers – as agents of government – that the tangible evidence of the advantages of embracing change might be presented to village women. The Clinic would increase the presence, acceptance, and legitimacy of the state within village women's lives.

During the planning stages for the Infant and Maternal Welfare service in the late 1940s John Gunther recognised that the period of initial contact between government workers and village women would be a sensitive one. Establishing trust in this early period was crucial and Gunther called for a full investigation before work began in earnest to look into the problems of 'how best to get the co-operation of the women and maintain their confidence'.[51]

The administration worked off the theory that only 'one or two brave women' needed to come forward and visit the clinic when it opened for the first time in a village. The subsequent improvement in the health of their children would stand as proof to other mothers of the usefulness of engaging with such services. Barbara McLachlan, reporting on the success of the Infant and Maternal Welfare Division in 1955, explained:

> Perhaps no other influence is so potent a factor in reaching the women of the more backwards areas as infant welfare work since, in the long run, the needs of their children will overcome any and all objections to something new and strange.[52]

What is clear however was that the early stages of initiating contact were fraught, and contact was clearly made in the context of the full coercive force of the colonial state. On her very first visit to the village of Messima, nurse Joan Herbert reported that all villagers 'had gone bush' before her arrival. Villagers were worried that there would be severe repercussions for their failure to report the recent death of a child in the village. In order to ensure contact on her second visit Herbert enlisted the local District Officer and a native constable.[53] Nurses, health officers and welfare workers were themselves granted no formal powers of compulsion, however individual nurses resorted to significant personal coercion that they might establish an initial relationship. Joyce Walker, for example, a nursing sister with the Methodist Mission in Mendi, told of how she kidnapped a motherless baby away from the

[51] PNGA: 247/1-4-1-16, Native Welfare Planning Committee; JT Gunther, Director of Public Health, Report submitted to committee, 1950 establishing principles under which Infant and Maternal Welfare Section to function, Infant and Maternal Welfare, p.2.
[52] Barbara McLachlan, "The Women of Papua New Guinea - a Survey of Activities to Promote Their General Advancement," ed. Public Relations Office Territory of Papua and New Guinea Administration (Port Moresby: 1955), p.5.
[53] PNGA: 69/80-3-2, SDAW – Health Education, Infant Maternal Welfare; Letter from Joan Herbert, Sister to Dr J. Refshauge, Department of Public Health, 10 June 1955.

child's maternal grandmother so that she might 'save the baby' and prove to villagers the value of engaging with the clinic.

> I sat there and I thought and I prayed and I thought 'I've got to get their confidence somehow. I've got to get over to them I can help them'. I didn't know what to do. And I did a terrible thing I suppose because, after a while, I suddenly thought 'I'll snatch the baby' ...
>
> That's how I first started the work amongst the mothers and babies. However I do not recommend this method to others, I just did it in desperation on the spur of the moment.[54]

In her interview with historian Chilla Bulbeck, Walker described how 20 years later she visited the village for a government organised celebration of the Methodist mission's arrival in the village. To mark the day, villagers re-enacted first the missionaries' arrival, and then Walker's kidnapping incident:

> They re-enacted me stealing the baby and running; that was part of the ceremony ... They dressed up a person in a uniform like I had, they'd got it from the missionaries who were there then. They re-enacted exactly what had happened, me tearing down the hill and the women chasing. They thought it was a great joke ... They re-enacted me getting out a little collapsible table every morning and sitting out in front of the hospital and trying to get the women to come and bring the babies, and the women hiding in the long grass and 'ooh-aah', 'no-oo ah' and all that went on. A lot of it I didn't know went on. They were showing all the people who came just how hard it was for me to get a start and how they didn't trust us.[55]

In the end Walker explained she felt the kidnapping justified, because there was no other way to establish the villagers' confidence in her work but to show them that her nursing could help improve the health of the babies she treated. I understand the later re-enactment of the incident as a means through which the villagers' could reclaim this story and an implicit recognition of the context of colonial compulsion.

Sister Elizabeth Burchill, an infant welfare nurse working in the Infant and Maternal Welfare division in the early 1960s, also believed confidence in general medical services was built through first successfully treating babies and children. Writing of her experiences 'on patrol' through the densely populated districts outside of Wewak, she depicted for her readers the slow process of engagement with women:

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[54] Joyce Walker quoted in Bulbeck, *Australian Women in Papua New Guinea: Colonial Passages 1920 - 1960*, pp.113-114.
[55] Ibid, p.115.

> Where health has for so many centuries been bound up with superstition, it takes time to convert natives from their tribal beliefs and get them to a point where they will accept the medical facilities the Government offers. Once a village Medical Aid Post was established the Administration found *the best way of breaking down opposition* was to appeal to mothers through the services of the Infant, Child and Maternal Welfare branch.[56]

While Burchill limited her narrative to describe how a focus on children's health could facilitate acceptance of general Western medical practice, McLachlan applied the same observation within a broader frame. For thousands of women Infant Welfare Clinics were the first direct point of contact with the administration. McLachlan believed it was precisely in the area of infant health that indigenous women would be most likely to adopt 'new standards'.[57] She wrote,

> Acceptance of a new custom prepares the way for introduction of others ... the Clinics constitute a measure of proof that some of the new ways are worth a trial. So indirectly, Infant and Maternal Welfare Clinics do much more than improve the health of women and children ...[58]

Leanne Merrett-Balkos in her work on colonial intervention into maternity practices among Anganen women, explained that in the late 1960s and early 1970s the Catholic mission health sisters setting up clinics in the remote Southern Highlands continued this practice. They too focused on birthing and infant care when first establishing aid-posts as a means to introducing the health service generally.[59] Though the local Anganen women could see benefits of the clinics, they also clearly resisted attempts to sideline their own knowledge and practice. Soon after the establishment of the Clinic hundreds of women gathered to collectively protest, demanding the return of their placentas – the cutting, handling, and burying of which was symbolically crucial for reorienting themselves in terms of place and in terms of their gendered identity after the birth process.[60] The Sisters had been discarding these after birth. The Anganen women's collective action asserted rights over their own practice, and their negotiation – they agreed to continue attending, if the umbilical chord was returned to mothers – is evidence of both their skilful

[56] Elizabeth Burchill, *New Guinea Nurse* (Adelaide: Rigby Ltd, 1967), p.34, (my italics).
[57] McLachlan, "The Women of Papua New Guinea - a Survey of Activities to Promote Their General Advancement.", p.3.
[58] Ibid, p.6.
[59] Leanne Merrett-Balkos, "Just Add Water: Remaking Women through Childbirth, Anganen, Southern Highlands, Papua New Guinea," in *Maternities and Modernities : Colonial and Postcolonial Experiences in Asia and the Pacific*, ed. Margaret Jolly and Kalpana Ram (Cambridge Cambridge University Press, 1998.).
[60] Ibid, p.213.

arbitration and their willingness to adapt Anganen practice where they saw the benefits of this, but on their own terms.

Through both the Clubs and the Clinics the colonial state believed that the successful delivery of services and the setting up of consistent interaction between indigenous women and colonial officers would initiate a relationship between village women and the state. What is clear, however, is that this was no smooth process of winning confidence. Village women were often left little choice to engage with services, the full authority of the state was invested in the female welfare workers who came to establish welfare initiates within the village. This was a largely symbolic authority, but one which held power because as agents of state they could – and did – fall back on physical coercion and colonial force to maintain it. Despite this, village women did not simply accept or accede to new practice but took advantage of the aspects they felt would benefit them, and negotiated and resisted unwanted aspects.

Figure 2.1 Mrs Mary Kekedo with Mrs Barbara McLachlan, 1962, picture: W. Hartley

Figure 2.2 Infant and Maternal Welfare, Port Moresby, 1949, picture: V Gadsby

Figure 2.3 'Sister J Jones of the traveling clinics of the Maternal and Infant Welfare Section, weighing babies', 1950, picture: Bill Brindle (original caption)

Figure 2.4 'Medical call – appearance of vehicle which carries doctors and sisters of the infant and maternal welfare section of health services is a signal in native villages for mothers to bring children to the rest house for a medical check', Port Moresby, 1948, picture: V. Gadsby (original caption)

Figure 2.5 'Practical training in infant welfare being given to teacher trainees at Popondetta Higher Education Centre, 195-, picture: Bill Brindle (original caption)

Figure 2.6 'Teacher trainees enjoy dressmaking classes at Popondetta Higher Education Centre', 195-, picture: Bill Brindle (original caption)

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED ALONG THE WAY

The flimsy nature of the administration's support for the work of the two divisions revealed itself almost immediately. In 1950 the Native Infant and Maternal Welfare Division had access to only one vehicle. John Gunther, acknowledging the limitations put on the service as a result, admitted that some within Administrative circles were referring to it as 'a circus'.[61] Already in 1952 Barbara McLachlan formally raised her concerns regarding the lack of support from 'those in authority' for the work of her division:

> To date I am afraid it [the division's work] has been regarded as of secondary importance. Time and again, plans have been frustrated because of lack of money, materials, accommodation and transport. It is impossible to build up a sound system without these things. I have plans, syllabuses, ideas gleaned from reading, attending an international conference and from my own teaching experience – all that is needed is the recognition by those in authority that the education of girls is of supreme importance and requires and needs, perhaps more than any other section of the work, specially selected staff.[62]

Staffing was perhaps the most important factor. For McLachlan it was not simply that her division's staff were not specially trained or selected, there were just not enough of them. In correspondence with the Administrator she pointed out that while there were over forty European men employed as teachers for 'education of natives (boys)', only seven women had been employed to cater for women and girls' education. Even these seven were regularly given duties beyond the scope of the division's work:

> Two of these women are part-time teachers and all but one of them is 'helping out' with the supervision of men teachers and boys schools.[63]

In 1955 Paul Hasluck, as Minister, directed that the administration undertake a full evaluation of the administration's efforts towards 'raising women's status'. Barbara McLachlan was responsible for putting together a report, which included specific recommendations on the need for greater access to transport, locally produced training materials, and increased publicity regarding the work. In 1957 a new women's advisory committee was appointed to consider and implement the

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[61] PNGA: 247/CA23/6/31, Medical Infant and Maternal Welfare; JT Gunther, Director of Public Health, Native Infant and Maternal Welfare, 12 December 1950.
[62] PNGA File A/1/6, 6376, Access No. EDU/17, Department of Education, Report to His Excellency the Governor General, 10 July 1952.
[63] Ibid.

various proposals for the 'education and advancement of native women' laid out in McLachlan's report.[64]

However, by 1958 there had already been two attempts to sideline the work of the women's branch in the Department of Education – it was initially suggested the Female Education Division merge with another branch within the Department; a later proposal recommended additional duties be given to the branch. Both of these suggestions, McLachlan noted, would have further marginalised the welfare work being undertaken with women. By 1960 the Division had undergone a change in status and was made a Section under another secondary Division. Though the workload had increased, it was now 'only a very minor part of the duties of a very busy officer'.[65]

Apart from the obvious problem of staffing, the chronic shortages of basic resources for the Divisions' work was keenly felt and continued to plague the work of the Women's Committee throughout its administrative lifespan.[66] In terms of material resources the scarcity of available transport was the most frequently expressed concern. Without adequate transport the work of the Division was severely hampered and opportunities for the expansion of programs lost. Pat Ure described what it meant for the basic work of the division to be constantly short of transport:

> As there are no such things as telephones or telegraph services between villages, a Welfare Officer must plan her visits to villages well in advance. Quite often the Welfare Officer finds that transport is not available on the appointed day. She cannot at that stage let the women who are waiting in a village some 20 miles away know that she is not able to come, so thirty women lose a day's gardening and become very disgruntled in the process. The nett result is that when the Welfare Officer again visits the village, there will probably be three women.[67]

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[64] The Advisory Committee on the Education and Advancement of Native Women was made up of ten members: six officers of the administration, two representatives of the missions; two indigenous women representatives. Their first meeting was held 12 August 1957.

[65] Papers of WC Groves, New Guinea Collection; Minutes of Fifteenth Meeting held at Rabaul and Kavieng, 18 to the 21 July 1960.

[66] PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; Memorandum from Chairman, Central Advisory Committee to the Assistant Administrator, Advancement of Women, 21 July 1959.

[67] PNGA: 80/2/22, Pan Pacific SE Asia Women's Association; P. Ure, Women's Clubs in Papua and New Guinea, 17 April 1961. The administration also had to turn down offers from European women to help as volunteers working with Women's Clubs because of the lack of transport available. PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; P. Ure, Circular Report on Welfare Work for Women, Konedobu.

Despite interventions from the Administrator JK Murray, and again later by the Minister Paul Hasluck, asking that the Women's Committee's requests for additional transport be 'carefully considered', they continued to go unmet. Murray felt that this failure could, at least in part, be ascribed to the fact that the requests were made by women officers:

> I feel with regard to this matter that, while a man is courteous to women in social relations, I am very doubtful whether, when a woman asks for transport as a part of her business, she receives the same measure of consideration that a man would.[68]

Time and again the work of the two divisions came up against male officers' prejudice. Their sexism manifested in two ways – firstly women officers' work with indigenous women was not prioritised, secondly as women officers their opinions were not given equal weight with those of their male colleagues. Joan Refshauge, reflecting back on her time in the territories after her retirement, identified discrimination on the basis of being a woman as part of the everyday experience of women officers:

> I must say discrimination against women was not an issue in my heyday, but on looking back and writing this out I began to realise that there was discrimination, but it was accepted as a fact of life.[69]

Paul Hasluck recognised that progress for the work of the divisions was slow partly because male administrative officers were obstructive and demonstrated considerable 'male conceit' in their handling of women's welfare work.[70] He complained that even when as Minister he expressed concerns regarding the

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[68] PNGA: File 247, 1/4/1/45, Access No. 193J, Women's Central Committee, Department of Administrator's files Vol 2; K. Murray to C. Champion, Government Secretary, 14 Sept 1951.

[69] Bulbeck, *Australian Women in Papua New Guinea: Colonial Passages 1920 - 1960*, p.90. In a public talk addressing the topic of 'Discrimination Against Women in the Territory', Refshauge described many incidents in which objections were made by male residents in the territories about her being employed as a doctor. The Return Soldiers League (RSL) complained to the Director of Public Health when she was first employed because they did not want their men treated by her. Some of her male colleagues did not want to work with her or under her. As Refshauge explained, 'I was bailed up on more than one occasion and told quite plainly by EMAs [European Medical Assistants] 'I will not work under a woman – I have no intention of taking orders from a woman'. Refshauge's speech notes quoted in Bulbeck, *Australian Women in Papua New Guinea: Colonial Passages 1920 - 1960*, pp.88-89. Female extensions officers (*didimisis*) began to be employed within the Department of Agriculture, Stocks and Fisheries (DASF) in 1963. They too reported feeling they had entered a 'boy's only club', and that there was hostility directed towards them as women. Margaret Mason, one of the first *didimisis* (female agricultural extension officers), explained she 'knew without a doubt that to be seen as having any professional use at all she had to achieve at a high level compared to her contemporaries'. Margaret Mason quoted in Kim Godbold, "Didiman: Australian Agricultural Extension Officers in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea, 1945 - 1975" (Ph.D, Queensland University of Technology, 2010), p.93.

[70] Hasluck, *A Time for Building*, p.329.

slowness in implementing policy directions in this area the reply was general obfuscation on the part of the male senior officers:

> Behind the dusty curtain of silence I detected a rustle and a scurrying. The Administrator had delegated the problem to some busy little men at Port Moresby in the Departments of the Administrator and of Native Affairs and their sex prejudice and smallness of mind, as well as the old belief that only experienced male officers knew what was good for the native people, led them to concoct proposals for an organisation under their own direction carrying out their own ideas.[71]

In some instances issues of concern raised by female officers were dismissed out of hand. In 1950 the Women's Committee asked the Administrator to consider a review of current regulations in place to protect indigenous women from the sexual attention of white men (including colonial administrative officers) because they believed villagers' fears on this point were hampering women officers' efforts to recruit indigenous women for training. WR Humphrey, Director of Native Labour, was tasked with preparing a response to the concerns of the Committee for circulation. Stating wearily that the matters raised (the regulation of sexual relations between white men and indigenous women) had already been considered 'again and again' by those in 'high places' – had indeed been 'worn threadbare' – Humphrey concluded with barely disguised impatience:

> Finally, I must say there are too many generalisations in the paper put before me, and not nearly enough specific information supplied in support of statements made. Furthermore some of the statements themselves are obscure in their meanings ... I am not out of sympathy with the Women's Welfare Committee, their intentions are admirable, their concern most manifest; but there is little I can do to support them in the matters under review.[72]

When Barbara McLachlan returned at the end of 1955, having completed a World Health Organisation fellowship at the University of California, she submitted to the administration a number of reports surveying the current progress of 'women's advancement' in the territories, outlining future priorities, and recommending the

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[71] Ibid, p.329.

[72] PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; Acting Director of Native Labour, to The Chairman, Inter Departmental Committee, 17 October 1950. It is hard not to read Humphries' response as frustration at what he saw as the female officers' moralism in attempting to reform men's behaviour.

reorganisation of her division. The Reports were shelved in the Department of the Administrator for almost three years before any action was taken.[73]

In 1962 the Women's Committee was formally disbanded. The administration felt that the Committees had served their purpose; their work was now to be more fully integrated within overall developmental plans, and targeted women's welfare programmes merged into the 'community education' division within the Department of Education, or the general welfare work of the Social Development branch of Native Affairs.[74] It also reflected the view of many within the administration, even those that supported a focus on the extension of welfare services to women, that the work of the Women's Committees had not generated significant practical gains, and, as Gunther – by then Assistant Administrator – rather dismissively put it, had been about '"status of women" politics in Port Moresby'.[75] Welfare officers, many of whom continued their work with women within the new merged Division, baulked at outsider criticism that the progress of their work had been too slow. This, they said, was the simply the nature of the work. As one officer responded, replying to what she felt was an accusation of the work being simply 'window dressing': 'I have usually felt that our work is rather the reverse – nothing dramatic ever happening, just the slow monotonous grind.'[76]

WOMEN'S WELFARE WORK AND THE FEMINISATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION

That the early interactions between indigenous women and the state should be between white women and indigenous women was recognised as of particular importance to the administration. Women officers were to be employed within the two divisions because – as women – they were believed to have a better understanding of the challenges facing indigenous women. JK Murray, then Administrator, requested during the establishment of the Infant and Maternal Welfare Section that mainly female medical officers be employed within the section.

[73] Hasluck, *A Time for Building*, p.329.

[74] PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; Letter from Chairman Central Advisory Committee for the Advancement of Women to the Secretary, Department of the Administrator, 10 September 1962.

[75] This comment was made in the context of describing as a 'failure' the appointment and then resignation of one of two female extension officers in 1949, who after finding no encouragement for her work in DASF 'became involved instead in the "status of women" politics in Port Moresby' rather than work in the field'. NAA: 61/7585, Enquiry by Mrs Joan Tully re Employment of Women in Agricultural Extension Staff, P & NG; John Gunther to the Public Service Commissioner, 28 December 1961.

[76] PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; Letter from P. Rossell to M. Reay, 9 August 1965.

He advised that many more women medical practitioners were required, 'in order that contact with the native women shall be fully welcomed and effective'.[77]

The introduction of infant and maternal welfare clinics, as Donald Denoon has noted, was key to the opening up of the previously male dominated colonial medical service to European women medical practitioners. For the first time, (white) women were being welcomed as a positive force for development.[78] Proposals drawn up for the Social Welfare section and the Female Education Division of the Education Department made clear that these too were to be staffed with a substantial number of women officers in order that they might fully attend to the specific welfare needs of indigenous women and girls.[79] Proposed work on training indigenous peoples in citizenship, defined by the administration as the shaping of 'the individual's relation with community and social group', would require the involvement of female workers, for much the same reasons.[80]

The slow increase in the number of professional white women employed by the administration to do welfare work was part of a broader colonial trend, and followed on from changes 'at home' (in Britain and Australia). Historians of the colonial Pacific and Africa describe a similar process of feminisation of colonial administrations in their histories of colonial welfare and development programs from the mid 1920s onwards.[81] In the Pacific this shift was, at least partly, a result of the international advocacy and local efforts of Australian feminists and women's activists regarding welfare issues, particularly as they related to Australian indigenous peoples. From the 1920s onwards Australian women activists had begun to argue that as imperial citizens and as women-citizens (white) Australian women had a moral responsibility to ensure the 'special care of native peoples'.[82] At an international level this meant campaigning for and eventually attaining the appointment of Australian women as delegates to the League of Nations. At a more practical, local level they demanded a greater role for Australian women in shaping

[77] Murray quoted in Denoon and Dugan, *Public Health in Papua New Guinea: Medical Possibility and Social Constraint, 1884 - 1984*, p.86.
[78] Ibid, p.87.
[79] Appendix to the Papua and New Guinea. Administration. Social Development Planning Committee, "Report of the Social Development Planning Committee of the Provisional Administration, 23rd July, 1948," ([Port Moresby]: The Committee, 1948), pp.11-12.
[80] Ibid, p.13.
[81] See for example discussion of white women's employment within administration in Kenya - Joanna Lewis, *Empire State Building: War and Welfare in Kenya, 1925 - 52*, East African Studies Series (Athens, Oh.: Ohio University Press, 2000). p.20, p.11; for Zimbabwe see Kaler, "Visions of Domesticity in the African Women's Homecraft Movement in Rhodesia."
[82] British Commonwealth League Conference Report 1927 quoted in Fiona Paisley, *Loving Protection? Australian Feminism and Aboriginal Women's Rights 1919 - 1939* (Carlton South: Melbourne University Press, 2000), p.44.

Aboriginal policy, as well as in its administration through the employment of professional white women as welfare workers.

Australian feminists in their campaigns for the creation of an ethical state demanded that the state employ women in a variety of supervisory positions to protect women and children from predatory, violent and exploitative (white) men. As Vida Goldstein of the Women's Political Association of Victoria explained at the turn of the century:

> Wherever women and children are in subjection, *supervision by women* is necessary and women should vote to secure the *appointment of women* as inspectors of asylums, boarded out children, hospitals, schools and gaols.[83]

When in the interwar period Australian feminists and women activists took up the cause of Aboriginal women's oppressed conditions they similarly demanded state protection for Aboriginal women by white female protectors. Attending a 1929 Conference convened on the issue of federal Aboriginal policy Edith Jones, representing in this instance both the Australian Federation of Women Voters and the Victorian Women's Citizens Movement, argued forcefully:

> We want to help that woman [the Aboriginal woman], and I believe that help can only be achieved by the direct application of the mind of [white] women to this problem.[84]

White women, they argued, would better understand the needs of Aboriginal women despite their racial difference because as mothers and wives they shared an identity and a set of common experiences. Calling for a woman to be appointed to the 1934 Royal Commission into Aboriginal Conditions, Bessie Rischbieth, President of the Western Australian Services Guild, wrote in a letter to the *West Australian*: 'psychologically it is only women who can measure up the needs of native women.'[85]

As the century progressed, feminists achieved only a few small victories in increasing the number of female officers working for native women's welfare within

[83] Vida Goldstein quoted in Marilyn Lake, *Getting Equal: The History of Australian Feminism* (St Leonards, N.S.W.: Allen and Unwin, 1999), pp.58-59 (my italics).
[84] Edith Jones, quoted in Alison Holland, "Wives and Mothers Like Ourselves? Exploring White Women's Intervention in the Politics of Race, 1920 - 1940s," *Australian Historical Studies* 32, no. 117 (2001), p.296.
[85] Rischbieth quoted in Paisley, *Loving Protection? Australian Feminism and Aboriginal Women's Rights 1919 - 1939*, p.118. The Royal Commission's full title was the Royal Commission appointed to Investigate, Report and Advise upon Matters in Relation to the Condition and Treatment of Aborigines. As it turned out, only one Royal Commissioner was appointed – Perth magistrate Henry Moseley.

the various state bureaucracies.[86] Feminists' calls for the employment of female protectors were dismissed by the government on the basis that it was not practical to send women out to such isolated and difficult to reach regions, and that 'such appointments would serve no good purpose'.[87] They, nonetheless, continued to campaign on this issue. Within these campaigns, the employment of white women as professional welfare was asked for, as Marilyn Lake observed, not on the basis of an equal opportunity of employment but with reference to a female appreciation for the need to secure the protection of women and girls and women's willingness to confront and challenge white men's sexual abuse of Aboriginal women.[88]

In Papua and New Guinea when appeals were made after the war for female workers to be employed to fill welfare positions, these were framed quite differently.[89] They emphasised white middle class professional women – whether they were married and had children or not – as appropriate models of 'maternal citizenship' for indigenous women, whose traditional values and mothering skills had been judged inadequate, even corrupting. White women as welfare providers were rather paternalistically imagined as playing a maternal role or that of older sister. Rachel Cleland, for example, explained the mere presence of white women as having a reforming effect on indigenous women, 'just by being there, as women, wives and mothers, they had an incalculable effect'.[90] This was a sometimes ironic positioning, given the ideal they were supposed to be modelling and the reality that wives of administration officers and missionaries were often expected to leave their children for long periods of time so that they might accompany their husbands into the field.[91]

The administration's employment of women in welfare work was also a recognition of the gender structures of traditional indigenous societies, many of which imposed on women a general avoidance of men. In the mid 1960s, as the Public Service Commissioner was slowly working to identify and eradicate any discrepancies in the job descriptions (or duty statements) and pay rates of male and female positions within the administration, it was nonetheless recognised by those

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[86] Alison Holland, "The Campaign for Women Protectors: Gender, Race and Frontier between the Wars," *Australian Feminist Studies* 16, no. 34 (2001).

[87] Resolution of the 1937 (all male) Aboriginal Welfare: Initial Conference of Commonwealth and State Aboriginal Authorities, quoted in Ibid, p.37.

[88] Lake, *Getting Equal: The History of Australian Feminism*, p.59.

[89] Indeed concerns regarding the protection of indigenous women in Papua and New Guinea played out very differently (chapter 6, this thesis).

[90] See Rachel Cleland, *Grass Roots to Independence and Beyond: The Contributions by Women in Papua New Guinea 1951 - 1991* (Claremont, W.A.: Dame Rachel Cleland, 1996), p.1.

[91] Young children might be left with grandparents or other relatives in Australia, though they were sometimes brought with parents. Once children reached high school they were invariably sent to boarding school overseas (mostly to Australia).

working in welfare roles that, 'women's work must needs be done by women in this country.'[92]

While this emphasis on (European) woman to (indigenous) woman interaction led to a partial feminisation of the administrative public service, there were clear limits to this. It was only in certain areas of the administrative bureaucracy, those that were in line with feminine attributes of caring and nurturance that women workers were welcomed.[93] Refshauge, a qualified and experienced doctor at the time of her arrival in the territories, described going for an interview for a job in the Health Department in Papua New Guinea and being told by Halligan, Secretary of the Department of Territories:

> I would be welcome for they were considering starting infant and maternal care, and that was the only work I could do – 'because the Territory was a Man's Country, and men expected men to look after them'. I could never work in a native hospital except if (as was unlikely) babies or mothers were patients.[94]

The wages offered by the administration were generally too low to attract (at least in significant numbers) the highly qualified, committed nursing and teacher candidates from overseas that they were hoping for. As in Australia, women's wages were considerably under those of their male colleagues because they were envisaged not as a primary wage, but as a supplementary or ancillary wage.[95] By 1960 Joan Refshauge frustrated by the constant difficulties she faced in relation to nursing recruitment was strongly recommending improvements to benefits and conditions in order to establish 'an efficient career service' and attract more professional women to travel to the colonies.[96]

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[92] PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; Letter from P. Rossell to Marie Reay, 2 June 1964. (italics in original).
[93] Apart, that is, from clerical work. Women were employed within the Papua and New Guinea public service as receptionists, typists, and librarians from at least the 1930s onwards.
[94] Joan Refshauge quoted in Bulbeck, *Australian Women in Papua New Guinea: Colonial Passages 1920 - 1960*, p.87.
[95] In 1950 in the Department of Health a Nurse could earn between £270 and £294, and a Senior Nurse, £318 to £342. In 1950 in the Department of Health a Nurse could earn between £270 and £294, and a Senior Nurse, £318 to £342. In comparison the (mostly male) officers working as Medical Assistants (Grade 1) earned between £368 and £392 and the (again male) Senior Medical Assistants from £590 to £662. Though wages were higher and the disparity slightly less glaring in Education, salaries between female and male officers remained unequal despite the same or equivalent work tasks. An Education Officer (Female, Class 1A) could earn between £498 and £594, while her male counterpart received a salary somewhere in the range of £560 to £656. The Officer in Charge of the Female Division earned between £828 and £918. The salary of an Officer-in-Charge of other sections started at £950 and could be as high as £1040. See Papua Annual Report 1950-51, p.89.
[96] Refshauge quoted in Bulbeck, *Australian Women in Papua New Guinea: Colonial Passages 1920 - 1960*, p.94.

Difficulties recruiting meant that the administration was forced to rely on white women who had accompanied their husbands – administrative employees or missionaries – when recruiting for welfare workers, teachers, and nurses. While the number of white women in the colonies steadily increased from the 1920s onwards, it was not until the late 1960s that a significant number of single women began to arrive on the basis of an employment opportunity for themselves, rather than their husbands.[97] The fact that many of the women employed were married hampered the development of a fully trained, committed team. Following Australian policy, married women of all races were debarred from holding a permanent appointment in the Public Service. This meant that married women could only work on contract. Opportunities for training and promotion under these conditions were scarce. For individual women workers there was no permanency or long-term security, and they were unable to build up or accrue long-term employment benefits.[98]

Women, then, often did not see their work as part of a longer-term career, but rather as a temporary side job to bring in a little extra income. In some of the smaller or more remote regions this meant that a female officer simply could not be allocated. It also, invariably, had the effect that when a husband was reposted to a new area or branch, a not uncommon occurrence, then his wife would follow, leaving her job with the Department and very often bringing to a halt the work of the division (health or welfare) in her area.[99]

WHITE WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY LABOUR IN THE DELIVERY OF STATE WELFARE PROGRAMS

The work of the two divisions relied heavily on the volunteer labour of European women.[100] They worked as supervisors of Village Women's Clubs and/or baby clinics, and provided training in sewing, cooking, and sports. In particular their involvement helping to organise Women's Clubs was crucial to the successful spread

[97] See Ibid, p.99.

[98] Even Refshauge had to fight to have her full superannuation benefits paid out to her (as a result of the first few years of her employment having been under temporary contract). See Ibid, p.94. Refshauge described her own situation: 'This made me really mad – if fact I fought like a fish wife to no avail – I lost my wage status and was only worth a portion of a man, I've forgotten what portion. So even today I suffer, for my superannuation is still less. I had worked harder than most men and longer hours and so had my staff'.

[99] PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; Circular Report on Welfare Work for Women, P. Ure, 'Attention Welfare Officer', Department of Native Affairs, Konedobu.

[100] Lois Niall, "The Education of Native Women as an Aspect of Cultural Assimilation" (paper presented at the Camilla Wedgwood Memorial Lecture and Seminar (1st : 1959 : Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea) Port Moresby, 1959), p.86; and PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; P. Rossell (previously Ure) in reply to EA Robertson, Supervisor Publication and Adult Education, Northern Territory, 22 October 1964.

of the clubs throughout the territories.[101] The women who volunteered were generally the wives of colonial officers or missionaries; less commonly they were the wives of planters or plantation employees.

White women's motivation was often related to boredom and isolation. Following their husbands to remote rural locations, wives often found themselves with few activities to occupy their time, especially if they did not yet have any children. Pat Andersen – cut off from other Europeans and unable to speak the local language – told of volunteer welfare work as a way of finding her place:

> Nev [Andersen's husband] was running a hospital and I really had to find a role ... I was really looking for something to do. Later on I took first aid classes and sewing classes and things like that with the nurses and the wives of the medical boys.[102]

Of course Pat's description glosses over the fact that the role she 'found' was one that it was assumed she *should* take up. Teaching sewing, cooking, and first aid was exactly the kind of civic work deemed appropriate for white women. She was filling up time, but also fulfilling her responsibilities as 'good wife'. There was always an expectation that European wives of administrative employees – in remote areas especially – would act as assistants in whatever way they could for their husbands.[103] Thelma Price, a qualified nurse, and later President of the PNG Girl Guides, followed her husband Alec Price, a doctor, to New Guinea in the mid 1930s. She was never formally employed by the administration, but nonetheless took on the role of nursing sister alongside her husband, often training both indigenous men and women as orderlies as part of her volunteer labour. She explained her 'taken for granted' labour on the basis of necessity and as being in the frontier spirit of 'making do':

> I wasn't expected to and didn't do it as an employed person. I just did it. If the need was there, you hopped in and did whatever had to be done.[104]

During her time in the territories Rachel Cleland, wife of the Administrator Donald Cleland, became very involved in voluntary women's organisations and

[101] NAA: A452; 1963/3951, Education and advancement of Native women – Policy – Papua and New Guinea 1960-1964; Press Statement by the Director of Native Affairs July 28, 1961.
[102] Andersen quoted in Bulbeck, *Australian Women in Papua New Guinea: Colonial Passages 1920 - 1960*, p.66.
[103] See for example the following note from a local District Officer to a Senior Welfare Officer in Moresby: 'I advised the Welfare Officer ... that the Club was not operating. There is not much I can do if no one will offer to get it going again. I am trying to get my wife to take over but she has two young children and other commitments.' PNGA: 69/76-3-28, Social Welfare council – CWA of Australia; note on letter from MR Haywood to General Secretary CWA, Victoria, 14 November 1966.
[104] Thelma Price quoted in Cleland, *Grass Roots to Independence and Beyond: The Contributions by Women in Papua New Guinea 1951 - 1991*, p.78.

acted as a vocal external advocate for the administration's welfare work for women. Cleland noted that many of the women who came to the territories as wives very often became involved in efforts to improve the lives of the village women and children around them 'on their own account'.[105] In her autobiographical account of the early years of the administration of her husband, Cleland narrates her own personal passage to a commitment to work with indigenous women. Early on in the book she describes how, a few months after arriving in Port Moresby, Barbara McLachlan took her on her first visit to a village outside of Moresby. She was the guest of honour at the Christmas party of the Vabakori Village Women's Club.[106] Cleland described the day as 'significant', a 'turning point'. Impressed by both the work of the white women involved, as well as the progress and hospitality of the village women she met, this moment marked for Cleland the start of her 'own identification with the country'. She had felt a strong connection with the village women, one that presented to her a clear purpose or role: 'I began to find in the country and among its people something of what Don had found during the war'.[107] Cleland's commitment to women and her subsequent self conscious adoption of the role of mentor and guide to indigenous women established her as the exemplar of the good female colonial citizen, the perfect gendered complement to the male colonial officer.

Partly the administration's reliance on volunteer labour in these roles was due to a lack of funding. Partly, though, it was by design. Taking seriously the idea of the voluntary principle as an integral part of democratic society, the administration did not want the indigenous population to think that welfare provision was solely the responsibility of government. Outlining plans for the colonies' future welfare work, the Social Development Planning Committee warned in their 1948 report:

> though expert advice and assistance from trained members of the Social Welfare Section should invariably be called for, it is most undesirable that welfare work, which is intimately associated with social opinions and attitudes, should be regarded as nothing more than a Government matter. The calling in of independent European participation will not only increase the chance of success of particular activities, but should assist the Native

[105] Ibid, p.1.
[106] Rachel Cleland, *Pathways to Independence: Official and Family Life, 1951 - 1975* (Perth: Artlook Books, 1983), Bulbeck, *Australian Women in Papua New Guinea: Colonial Passages 1920 - 1960*, p.35.
[107] Cleland, *Pathways to Independence: Official and Family Life, 1951 - 1975*, p.36.

people towards a realisation that such activities are matters of community-wide responsibility.[108]

European volunteers' and female missionaries' involvement in welfare work would not only provide the extra bodies needed to extend welfare work to (mostly) rural areas at no extra cost, but as well these white women, in their capacity as volunteers, demonstrated to their indigenous charges an ideal of female 'active citizenship'.

Just as important as white women's direct voluntary involvement in government social welfare programs was their active participation in voluntary associations like the Girl Guides, Brownies, and Rangers; Contact Club and other associated Wives Clubs (these organised cross-racial social gatherings); the Red Cross; the Country Women's Association (CWA) and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA); and later local women's sports associations. The work of these organisations to improve the lives of girls and women in the colonies was seen as a necessary parallel to the efforts of the administration, and funding – though rather limited – was provided by the administration towards the various associations' work with local women.[109] Women officers employed through the administration in welfare roles regularly volunteered in at least one, if not a number, of these. Barbara McLachlan was a Roving Commissioner of the Girl Guides, as well as being on the Provincial Committee of the YWCA. Joan Refshauge similarly committed considerable energies towards establishing the Guides and the YWCA during her time in the territories. Pat Ure, a senior welfare officer within the administration, was a Guide leader in Hanuabada and the first Chairman of the YWCA in PNG. Miss Winifred Archer, in charge of handcrafts training in the Education Department, worked with the Red Cross.[110]

The role of the Country Women's Association was particularly important. Not so much in terms of the work that the local colonial (territories based) groups did – this was much more focused on creating a space for activities for white women within colonial society, and through until at least 1962 did not allow indigenous women as members – as the links that were actively fostered between Australian CWA

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[108] Papua and New Guinea. Administration. Social Development Planning Committee, "Report of the Social Development Planning Committee of the Provisional Administration, 23rd July, 1948."

[109] And was funded by the colonial administration, for example the Girl Guides Association received an annual grant-in-aid of £1,000 pounds. Other associations, as well as Missions, were granted ad hoc grants, e.g. £500 pounds granted to Methodist Mission Adult Education Centre in Rabaul in 1960 NAA: A452/1963/3951, Education and Advancement of Native women – Policy – Papua New Guinea; Assistant Secretary (Admin) to the Department of Territories, Advice re Territory of Papua and New Guinea, Advancement of Women, 20 December 1960.

[110] Cleland, *Grass Roots to Independence and Beyond: The Contributions by Women in Papua New Guinea 1951 - 1991*, pp. 17, 271.

branches and village women's clubs. Roger Thompson, a senior welfare worker, described the CWA as 'the spiritual and practical counterpart of these low level women's clubs'. He felt their aims were the same and any differences between them could be 'measured mainly in terms of sophistication'.[111] Coming out of discussions of how best CWA groups might assist the women of Papua and New Guinea at their Pan Pacific Conference in early 1961, Australian branches of CWA began to 'adopt' their very own village women's club.[112] The first adoption took place between the Moira branch and the Women's Club at Tari.[113] They sent skeins of wool so that Highlands women might learn to knit, as well as posters, magazines, and remnants of materials to be made into children's clothing. In return they received letters acknowledging their gifts and updating them on the women's progress.[114] Many branches donated sewing machines to 'their' clubs. Often welfare officers, however, seeking to encourage a self-reliant attitude among indigenous members, suggested CWA branch members purchase fundraising items as an alternative to sending gifts.[115] The most popular fundraising drive of this kind involved CWA branches sending across black plastic dolls that were then kitted out in local 'bilas' (traditional dress and decoration, this might include a grass skirt or tapa wrap, feathers, beads, face paint, and so on) and sold back to CWA members. In describing the relationship she felt CWA members were building between themselves and Papua New Guinean women and the effect that they might have, Mrs Ferris explained:

> We visualise many things from saving babies lives to influencing the politics of the whole Territory you know – (I am not really being sarcastic either) we do feel there is value in our aims and we hope that you do too.[116]

The CWA framed their adoption program as being 'a concrete objective towards International understanding'.[117] While the women envisaged this understanding or

[111] PNGA: 69/76-3-28, Social Welfare Council – CWA of Australia; letter from Roger Thompson to Mrs W. Watkins, 19 July 1965.
[112] PNGA: 69/76-3-28, Social Welfare Council – CWA of Australia; letter from Pat Ure to President, CWA, 25 May 1961. The CWA also provided funding for a scholarship for a Papua New Guinean woman to attend welfare training at Suva Training College in Fiji.
[113] PNGA: 69/76-3-28, Social Welfare council – CWA of Australia; letter from May Cameron to Miss Ure, 22 August 1961.
[114] Officers in Moresby regularly wrote to those working in the districts to lightly scold them for not ensuring indigenous women sent the appropriate 'thank-you' notes and updates. PNGA: 69/76-3-28, Social Welfare council – CWA of Australia, see in particular letter from JK McCarthy to Miss Clayton, 20 Feb 1967.
[115] PNGA: 69/76-3-28, Social Welfare council – CWA of Australia; see for example letter from Margaret Neate to Klinkhamer, Senior Welfare Officer, 25 October 1966, and letter from Phyl Clarkson, Welfare Officer to Mrs E Parberry of CWA, 1 December 1966. Village women, however, often organised to send gifts (*bilums*, baskets, other handcrafts) in return, rather than establishing fundraising projects.
[116] PNGA: 69/76-3-28, Social Welfare council – CWA of Australia; letter from Mrs Ferris to Ms Ure, 25 August 1961.
[117] Ibid.

solidarity on the basis of their shared experiences *as women*, they were the colonial elder sisters guiding their less sophisticated younger siblings. And some CWA members involved in the 'Village Aid' project more explicitly positioned themselves as 'saviour' in their role, as one member described it, 'educating such a primitive people'.[118]

CONCLUSION

When the administration turned its attention to indigenous women, their efforts were directed through the provision of welfare to women in their roles as mothers and wives. They would be reached through village women's clubs and infant welfare clinics. In the first part of the chapter I endeavoured to show that the work of these division was never simply envisaged as delivering services, but as that of building trust and extending the reach of the colonial state to encompass indigenous women within it. The way in which these interventions were framed by the colonial state – 'building trust' and the 'delivery of services' – suggests a relatively benign and equal relationship between those delivering and those who were engaged by it. This obscures the context of colonialism, and the fact that the full force of colonial authority was invested – and drawn on – by white women in their role as welfare workers.

It was primarily women who were employed to deliver these new female-targeted welfare initiatives. In the second part I explored the factors that led to this feminisation of the administration. I argued the women who participated in this welfare work, much like the British women Barbara Ramusack labelled 'maternal imperialists' in the Indian context, saw their role as that of 'socialis[ing] immature daughters to their adult rights and responsibilities'.[119] Far from being Bulbeck's curious 'onlooker' to the colonial project, both within and outside of the administration white women played a crucial and self-conscious role; their welfare work was the necessary complement to that of the patrol officer or kiap. White women in colonial society, both those employed and those who volunteered their time, along with those women members in branches of the CWA across Australia who sent gifts and 'took an interest', provided a blueprint of the 'modern' colonial female for an indigenous 'new woman'; one that was moral, responsible, appropriately active in her community and always cognizant of her place within

[118] PNGA: 69/76-3-28, Social Welfare council – CWA of Australia; letter from Mrs E Parberry to Phyl Clarkson, welfare officer, November 1966.

[119] Barbara Ramusack, "Cultural Missionaries, Maternal Imperalists, and Feminist Allies: British Women Activists in India, 1865 - 1945," in *Western Women and Imperialism: Complicity and Resistance*, ed. Nupur Chaudhuri and Margaret Strobel (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1992), p.120.

nation and within Empire. It was through this work reforming village women that white women in Papua New Guinea and Australia enacted and proved themselves as modern colonial citizens, and through which we can best understand the role they played as colonisers within the Australian colonial project.

3. Envisaging a 'new woman'

The Papua New Guinean woman as 'modern' mother and wife, 1945 – 1965

'Everyone admires a fine, health baby' Flipping through the pages of the March edition of *Pacific Islands Monthly* in 1959, only the most attentive of regular readers would have noticed the launch of a new Glaxo baby food advertising campaign. Glaxo had only just begun to advertise in the magazine and had initially with run with the company's traditional design – a buxom, bonnie European toddler sitting under the caption: 'I'm a healthy child ... thanks to Glaxo baby food' (see Figure 3.1).[1] As with the traditional design, the new one was illustrated elegantly and generous in proportion, spread across a full two thirds of the page (see Figure 3.2). The new advertisement, however, focused on Glaxo's potential consumers: that is, mothers. It featured three women – a Fijian Indian woman dressed in graceful sari, her long hair pulled back in a bun; a European woman wearing a high collared dress, pearls and stylish curled bob-cut; and a Melanesian woman in neat shirt and skirt over *sulu-i-ra* (a sarong skirt[2]) with her tight curls combed neatly into place. The women were drawn standing side by side around a baby's crib. Warm smiles played on their lips; their attention captured by what the reader was led to presume was a baby lying within. The design placement of text and logo over the crib so that the baby was completely out of view, strategically created ambiguity. The Glaxo baby – an imagined 'perfect specimen of health and happiness' – could have been the child of any one of the women pictured. These three women, distinguished culturally through an attention to their facial features, mode of dress, and the styling of their hair, were brought together in the advertisement as potential Glaxo mothers. 'Everyone', as the Glaxo tagline ran, 'admires a fine, healthy baby'.

A second advertisement in the series featured a Polynesian family – mother, father and daughter again dressed in culturally appropriate, though westernised, garb – standing proudly around the crib (see Figure 3.3). The two different designs along with the original were published in alternating issues of Pacific Islands Monthly

[1] The first Glaxo advertisement was run in the *Pacific Islands Monthly* in November 1958.

[2] This is Fijian rather than Tok Pisin, *sulu-i-ra* means literally 'the cloth below'. *Laplap* and *rami* are the Tok Pisin and Motu equivalents respectively. This dress style – of tailored loose shirt/dress (often in 'mother hubbard' style) was one common across the Pacific for indigenous women.

I'M A HEALTHY CHILD . . .

THANKS TO GLAXO BABY FOOD

Glaxo milk-food gave me the right start to a healthy, happy childhood. It's pure, nourishing and easily digested. There's no check to baby's steady progress with Glaxo.

Glaxo

PERFECT MILK-FOOD FOR BABIES

GLAXO LABORATORIES (N.Z.) LTD., PALMERSTON NORTH, N.Z.

Figure 3.1 **Glaxo Advertisement: European Baby, *Pacific Islands Monthly*, September 1959, p.127.**

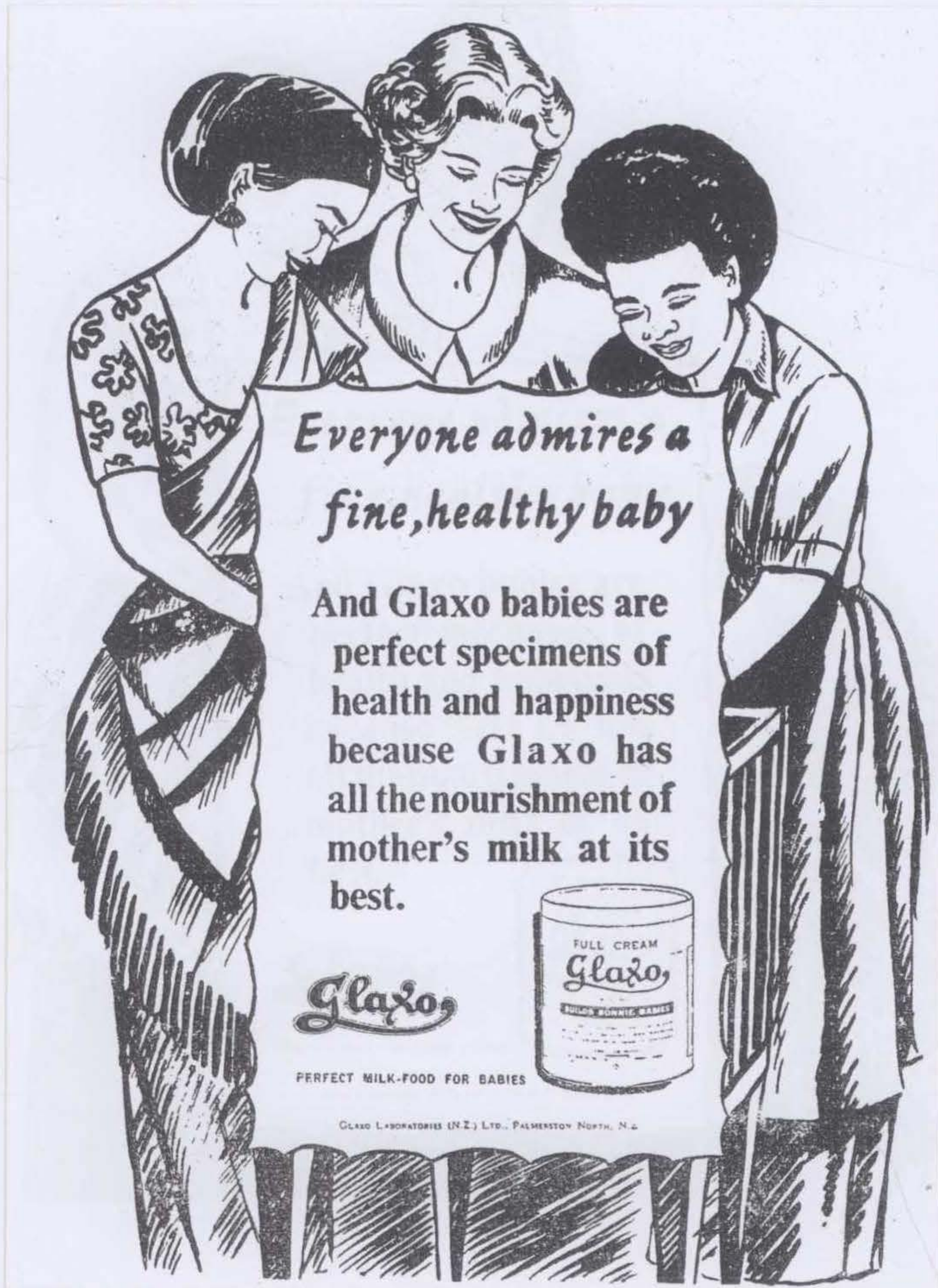

Figure 3.2 Glaxo Advertisement: Three women, *Pacific Islands Monthly*, March 1959, p.47.

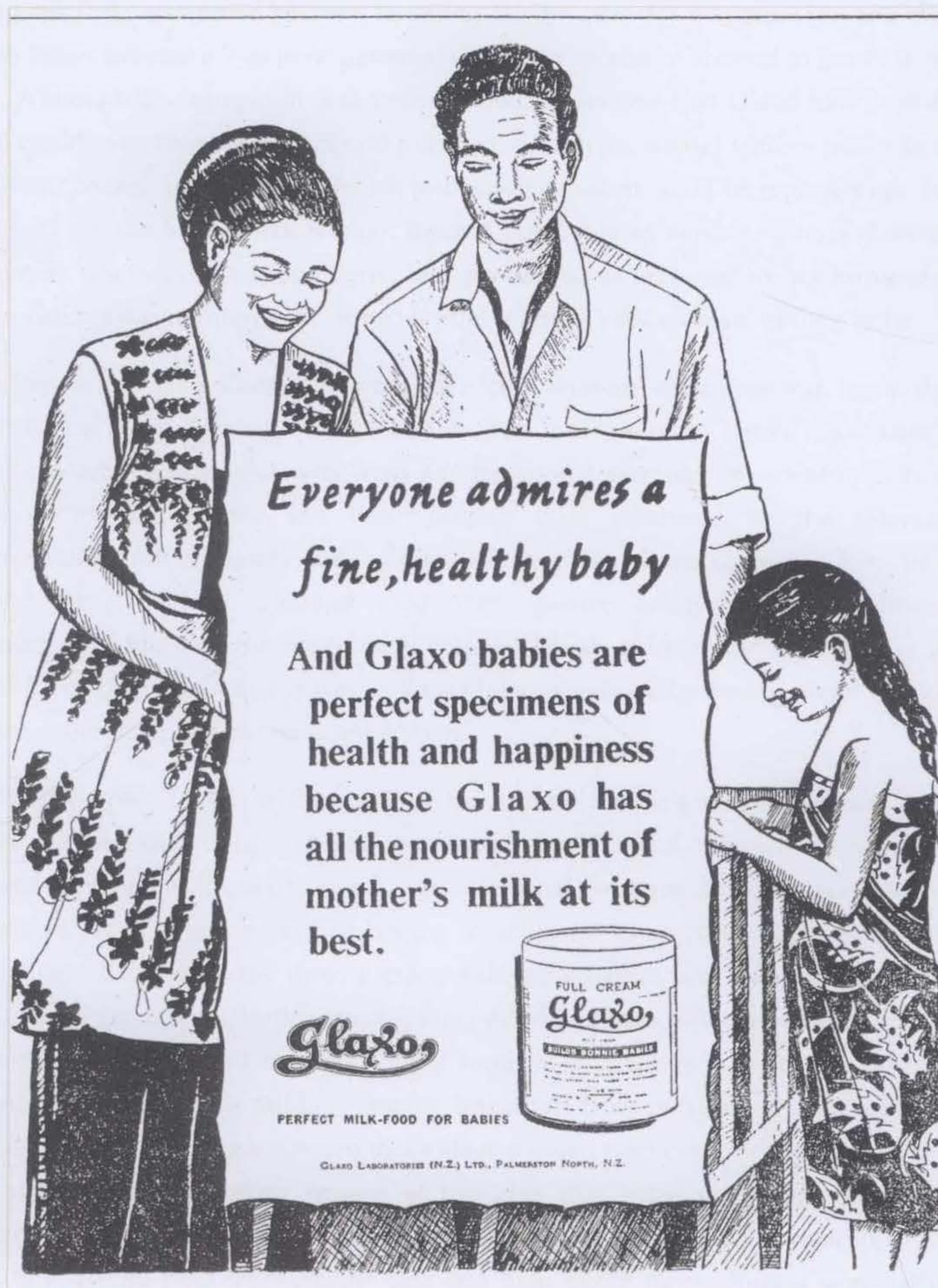

Figure 3.3 Glaxo Advertisement: Family, *Pacific Islands Monthly*, October 1959, p.71.

throughout the rest of the year. The new campaign, however, proved to be short-lived. By the end of the following year Glaxo had abandoned their new campaign and reverted back to the original design featuring a European child. Glaxo's attempt to expand their consumer base by targeting Pacific Islander communities and the Indian-Fijian community as new, potential consumer 'markets' seemed to have fallen flat.[3] Although the campaign was perhaps not the success that Glaxo had hoped, that it could even be conceived of and pursued – if only for a brief while – points to a significant change in the way in which indigenous women could be represented. In the Glaxo ad, the Melanesian woman figured positively as mother, wife, and even consumer. She was clearly 'modern', and positioned as an equal to her European and Indian female counterparts. Here was the colonial 'new woman' of the Pacific.

In Papua and New Guinea this colonial 'new woman' discourse was regularly deployed by the Australian administration. The 'new woman' figure – a 'better', more 'modern' mother and wife than her traditional counterpart – featured in a range of training guides and basic literacy texts produced by the colonial administration for a mainly indigenous audience. To those conjuring her, this colonial 'new woman' signified modernity, greater autonomy, and political advancement. She was the model new colonial female subject; and through her it would be made evident that it was in their maternal role indigenous women would best serve the state, and the state serve them.

In this chapter I look at the work of the administration's welfare officers and nursing sisters delivering colonial education, health, and welfare services to indigenous women through Infant and Maternal Welfare Clinics and village Women's Clubs. What were they hoping to achieve? How would they go about doing this? Examining the basic literacy aids, newsletters, and educational films produced by the administration during this period I unpack what was meant when welfare officers talked of creating 'better mothers and wives'. Apparent within administration efforts to guide women's transition from a 'primitive' to a more 'civilised' way of life, was a concern that village women might resist change. Equally evident, however, was their unease at the idea that some might too willingly embrace it, but change of the wrong kind. Women's practical involvement in Club and Clinic would help to overcome this and help guide them along a new path. Moreover, not only would women acquire new and appropriate domestic mothercraft skills through the Club and the Clinic, they would also learn how best to appropriately engage and enact their political subjectivity as colonial 'new women'.

[3] If Glaxo had been trying to tap into new 'consumer' constituencies, then the *Pacific Islands Monthly* was a curious choice of publication – its readership primarily the white colonial Planter and administrative communities.

AS MOTHERS AND WIVES ...

In 1955 Barbara McLachlan, in her capacity as Head of the Female Education Division, wrote to a local Mission teacher describing the objectives behind training programs being run through her division:

> The whole aim of our training, even in schools where the girls have reached the higher classes, is to make them better wives and mothers ... We want to see them so trained that they are able to develop their own personalities and, having married, set up Christian homes, where husband and children are healthy, well cared for and happy.[4]

The 1947-8 Annual Report of Papua, the first to be produced after the war and the first to convey the progress of the newly established Department of Education, had similarly reported education provided to girls and to women through the Female Education Division was directly intended to shape them into 'better wives and mothers in their village homes'.[5] In bringing women 'up to speed' with their male counterparts through new welfare programs and initiatives, the administration was envisaging for them a 'complementary' gendered role within the colonial state: indigenous women would be 'modern' mother and wife to the imagined male colonial self-governing subject. Indigenous women were to receive a colonial education that would appropriately equip them with the skills and knowledge for this, their new role.

When introducing the raft of new welfare policies, the administration could see that in its previous indifference towards indigenous women's welfare and educational needs colonial policy had placed indigenous women as mothers in something of a difficult position. Lois Niall, a Women's Welfare officer in the Department of Native Affairs, explained:

> The native mothers of today are in the unenviable and confusing position of the taught instead of being the teachers, in relation to their children.[6]

But while the administration acknowledged their previous neglect and recognised that if they continued to ignore women's welfare as they had done in the past problems might arise, they now nonetheless optimistically claimed women's

[4] McLachlan quoted from correspondence in Papers of WC Groves, New Guinea Collection; Section 5: Education of Girls and Women of William Groves, Volume 1 of Observations and Comments By The Director of Education on the Report of the Committee on "Investigation under Sections 10 and 12 of the Public Service Ordinance into the Administration, Organisation and Method of the Department of Education (August, 1954).
[5] Papuan Annual Report 1947/48, p.26.
[6] Lois Niall, "The Education of Native Women as an Aspect of Cultural Assimilation" (paper presented at the Camilla Wedgwood Memorial Lecture and Seminar (1st : 1959 : Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea) Port Moresby, 1959), p.87.

'backward' status as an 'opportunity'. As the 'bulwarks of tradition', women who were introduced gradually to new ideas and provided with appropriate training would help ease their community's transition to 'modernity'. In their role as mothers – and now *educated* mothers – Niall explained, indigenous women could help 'mould correctly many of the social and cultural attitudes' of their families. As conduits between the traditional and the modern, women would act as a bridge between the older and younger generations, and assist their village community 'to accept without jealousy' the new learning and attitudes of a younger generation.[7] Welfare activities, and Women's Clubs in particular, were praised for bringing 'the normally conservative older women' together with 'the younger members who more actively desire change'.[8] Inter-generational organising was particularly beneficial, explained welfare officers, because it would help 'achieve a balance between what could be ultra-conservatism and over-enthusiasm'.[9]

Women's role as wives was equally important in this process of the gradual introduction of change to the village; an important objective behind the new policies of education for village women was that there should be enough suitable wives for educated indigenous men. A generation of men newly trained as pastors, teachers, and medical officers required wives who would provide the home life and 'companionship' they had been taught to expect.[10] They needed a wife and 'helpmeet' who would assist them in efforts to train and modernise their fellow villagers. When the Female Education Division was first established in 1947 its aims were rather narrowly defined. The Division would 'cater for the needs of the wives and children of teachers and student teachers'.[11] The training of the wives of elite or advanced indigenous men was prioritised because it was felt that an uneducated wife would hold her husband back. As Jean Mannering, a missionary who lived in New Britain in the 1950s and early 60s, explained:

> If you trained a pastor teacher and didn't train his wife, married him to a girl from the bush who had no education, no training in hygiene and cleanliness,

[7] Ibid, p.87.
[8] Papers of WC Groves, New Guinea Collection; Box 3, File 13, Administration Press Statement No.1: Village Women's Clubs, 7 January 1960.
[9] Ibid.
[10] In a lecture given at the annual meeting of the Women's Auxiliary of the Australian Board of Mission in early 1944, the Anglican missionary Reverend O.J. Brady of Papua reported on the urgent need to establish a training institution for Papuan girls that would give them basic mothercraft and nursing skills. He explained this with relation to his work training native boys as pupil teachers at Garogarona College. When these boys returned to their own villages, he told the audience, they were often distressed to discover a marriage had been arranged for them with a 'heathen wife'. If indigenous women were educated this would improve their lot, as well as that of the men and the community as a whole. See "Training of Native Women," *The Argus* 20 May 1944.
[11] Papuan Annual Report of 1947/48, p.26.

> he felt ashamed of her. It was likely because he was ashamed of her, he might be angry with her, and she'd run back to her village. So it was to the advantage of all to have a wife who could live up to his standard of cleanliness.[12]

The Contact Club, established in 1963 in Port Moresby by the European wives of colonial administration staff, similarly prioritised the wives of an up-and-coming indigenous elite.[13] The club organised social engagements between white women and indigenous women, specifically targeting the wives of new indigenous Members of the Legislative Council. These women were considered, according to welfare officer Patricia Rossell (later Ure), 'generally simple village women with little education and practically no understanding of the western social field'.[14] While it was hoped that inter-racial friendships might develop between women through the Club, its main purpose was to instruct indigenous women in basic manners, comportment, and dress so that they would feel at ease in their new surroundings and might confidently stand by their husbands during required social engagements.[15] Following the lead of the Contact Club, the administration proposed to run formal training courses for the wives of indigenous Members, when, with the opening of a new House of Assembly in 1964, the number of indigenous representatives increased significantly. Rossell explained that the women were certainly capable of mastering the required 'social graces' and that the proposal was 'an excellent one':

> I have no doubt that the things learned by them at Port Moresby would be passed on to their friends at home. The confidence of the Members too, would be greatly enhanced by the course being given to their wives.[16]

The early narrow focus on the needs of the wives of 'the more advanced Native population' was necessitated by the administration's lack of funding, but with the slow expansion of the state's welfare program it was expected that eventually all indigenous women would be given the chance to learn the basics of good motherly

[12] Jean Mannering, as quoted in Chilla Bulbeck, *Australian Women in Papua New Guinea: Colonial Passages 1920 - 1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge Uni Press, 1992), p.223.
[13] Rachel Cleland, *Grass Roots to Independence and Beyond: The Contributions by Women in Papua New Guinea 1951 - 1991* (Claremont, W.A.: Dame Rachel Cleland, 1996), pp.251 – 252.
[14] PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; letter from Patricia Rossell to Director, Dept of Native Affairs, 13 July 1964.
[15] Cleland, *Grass Roots to Independence and Beyond: The Contributions by Women in Papua New Guinea 1951 - 1991*, pp.251 – 252.
[16] PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; letter from Patricia Rossell to Director, Dept of Native Affairs, 13 July 1964.

and wifely practice.[17] 'There was so much they wanted to learn', explained Rachel Cleland in relation to village women's motivation in attending Clinic and Clubs,

> not only western domestic skills, but also the social ones so that they could stand with confidence beside their husbands in a western social setting.[18]

DOMESTIC AND MOTHERCRAFT TRAINING

Motherhood and marriage had long been key areas of concern for those working to improve the 'status of the native woman' in the colonies of Papua and New Guinea. The mothering practices of indigenous women had been blamed for low birth rates and high infant mortality within indigenous communities. Customary marriage practices such as brideprice/wealth, arranged marriage, and polygamy were seen as contributing to the subjection of women within native society and leading to loveless, irreligious marriages. These two sets of separate, though closely connected, colonial concerns converged early on in missionaries' work with indigenous women. Through their work with women, missionaries sought to create an appropriately Christian female companion for new male indigenous converts. In many ways the colonial state's allocation of the role of 'modern mother and wife' to indigenous women in the post war period was a continuation and extension of the Missions' earlier – and ongoing – project of transformation. And yet in this context – that of the colonial state engaging with women as subjects of a colonial state – the state's welfare programs and policies, even as delivered by mission actors and heavily inflected with Christian ideals, took on different meaning.

By the 1950s what it meant to achieve a transformation in domesticity via homecraft and hygiene training – the imparting of sewing skills, cooking skills, and basic hygiene – held an additional, expanded meaning for white (bureaucratic) welfare workers. Two separate though not entirely unrelated shifts had taken place in the metropole in the intervening years. These significantly influenced colonial projects of 'domestication'. The first of these was the 'homecraft' movement which, through the first half of the early twentieth century in Britain and across Europe, encouraged middle and working class women via state and philanthropic mothercraft programs to 'professionalise' their mothering and domestic hygiene practices in line with modern scientific principles.[19] When indigenous women in the

[17] PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; Second Six Monthly Report on Progress of Implementation of Report Recommendations, 6 June 1958.
[18] Cleland, *Grass Roots to Independence and Beyond: The Contributions by Women in Papua New Guinea 1951 - 1991*, p.12.
[19] Anna Davin, "Imperialism and Motherhood," in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, ed. Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 1997).

colonies were being asked to transform their practice as mothers through the Welfare Club and the Clinic this was not simply, as in earlier attempts, that they might be good Christian helpmeets to their husbands. As wives and mothers they were also expected to be productively working for nation, and for their race.

Secondly the administration's village Women's Clubs, as a means of educating towards and a space in which to enact this broader active 'female' citizenship, also owed something to the political methods and philosophy of the philanthropic women's associations and the maternalist elements of the women's suffrage movement that emerged in the late nineteenth century in Britain and in the clubwomen movement of Canada, and the United States. These women's organisations and clubs took as their starting point a focus on the traditional sphere of home and family. Women's skill as nurturers of the physical, emotional and spiritual within the home could be applied for the benefit of the entire community. It was on the basis of their role as keepers of the home that they could enter into the public sphere.

THE CLUB AND THE CLINIC IN PRACTICE

In 1960 Patricia Ure, a senior welfare officer within the administration, and Maslyn Williams, a filmmaker who had worked on a number of 16mm educational and propaganda films for the Australian administration, worked together to produce *A Woman Called Gima*, a film about women's clubs in the territories.[20] The film was intended as a tool to help officers teach village women about the Village Women's Club – the purpose behind them and how they should ideally be run. Patricia Ure wrote the basic script and provided the voice-over narration of the film. Gima Kalo, Elizabeth Maori Kiki, Mary English, and Dora Tokas – all female indigenous welfare officers employed through the Port Moresby office, but coming from various regions across the territories – were the stars of the piece.

The film, 'a picture for the women of Papua and New Guinea', began with a short introduction describing the role of women across the territories. Everyday women worked in the gardens, prepared food for their families, and cared for children. They collected firewood, cleaned the home and the village, and did laundry. Whatever the differences in location or social organisation, these tasks were common to all. As was, the film strongly implied, the growing realisation that women must begin engaging with the training and education opportunities being offered by the administration to ensure they were doing their best for their family. 'More and more

[20] Ronald Maslyn Willams, "A Woman Called Gima: A Film for Women's Clubs," ([Australia]: Film Australia, 1963).

women also know that they must be beside their husbands, not behind them', the narrator told her audience as the introduction came to a close. 'And so they have started women's clubs'.

Women's clubs were envisaged as a gathering of women who came together on a regular basis – once a week, twice a month – to listen to talks from guest speakers (usually a welfare worker, nursing sister, or a local European female volunteer), undertake practical activities like sewing, cooking and craft, and fundraise so that they could buy the materials and resources required for club activities. A suggested 'model' meeting, the film suggested, might run as follows – the women of the village would assemble, begin their meeting with a prayer, call the roll, take stock of funds, listen to a lecture from an invited guest, do a craft activity, plan ahead for the next meeting and close again with prayer. In practice, women's attendance – because of their already heavy load of responsibilities – was haphazard. The success of the club very much depended on the capacity and enthusiasm of individual office bearers and the welfare officer responsible.

Infant and Maternal Welfare Clinics varied from place to place but usually involved a visit from a nursing sister, generally accompanied by a number of indigenous female assistants. Village women who presented themselves to the nurse were physically examined and weighed along with their children. A register of infant births and deaths was kept along with a record of any premature births, still-births, and neonatal deaths for each village visited. Often the nursing sister had prepared a lecture, the topics of which were very similar to those given in Women's Clubs. Subjects included, for example, 'Christian Marriage', 'The responsibility of a wife towards her husband', 'Care of the Child', or 'The Home'. In some areas, especially where missionaries had established permanent mission health centres, local women were being trained to run a basic form of Clinic that ran in addition to, rather than as a replacement for the professionally staffed clinics. These followed a format closely resembling that of the village Women's Clubs. Baiyer Mission, for example, described the activities of these locally run clinics as follows:

> Every Friday at the [village] teacher stations the mothers come bringing their babies and every child under five years receives an anti-malarial tablet on presentation of his card which is marked in the appropriate square and given back to the mother. We have an almost 100% attendance of these children each week. A meeting follows when a roll is called and the talk for the month is given. A sewing bag is kept at each station and those who wish to

avail themselves of the opportunity to do a bit of mending. The events of this day are carried out entirely by the women themselves at each place.[21]

COLONIAL TRAINING AIDS

Given the near blanket illiteracy of the adult indigenous women to be trained, welfare workers relied heavily on the use of visual aids such as posters, flannel-graphs and transparencies, and the integration of drama and demonstration within training. They adopted the 'active teaching' technique of 'Hear-See-Do', a training method involving group discussion, practical demonstration, and then supervision by trainers as women put the new ideas into practice. Teaching materials appropriate to the local conditions of the Pacific were relatively scarce, and so initially welfare workers made use of the resources available from colonial British-Africa, adapting them to the local Papuan context.[22] By the mid 1950s, however, the Department of Native Affairs had begun to produce and publish their own educational and literacy aids through the South Pacific Commission's Literature Bureau, along with a comprehensive set of illustrated posters.[23] These materials dealt primarily with the topics of housekeeping, health and hygiene, motherhood, and women's clubs.

Though designed to be as simple as possible and to convey the intended health and mothercraft lessons in the most direct manner, misinterpretation of the resources was perhaps inevitable. Maslyn Williams shared an example of this in his published memoir covering the period spent in New Guinea making films. He told the story of a nursing sister from the Maternal and Infant Welfare Service he had watched as she tried to teach the people of Goilala to keep all rubbish and food scraps together for later disposal away from the village via an illustrated poster:

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[21] PNGA: 69/81-2-21/6720, Social Development Native Newspapers Infant and Maternal Welfare Newsletters 1959; *Infant and Maternal Welfare Newsletter*, No. 13, 1959.

[22] African materials were available because 'mass education' campaigns run across British colonial Africa since the late 1920s had adopted similar training methods relying on pictorial training resources. But Lois Niall explained in the late 1950s the division had an 'undeniable and great need' for local materials. She requested the administration consider producing greater quantities of 'pictorial material in the form of posters, flannel-graphs, simply worded books and papers for the information and amusement of native women', Niall, "The Education of Native Women as an Aspect of Cultural Assimilation", p.87.

[23] These included, for example, *The Story of Two Women* (196?), *Ol Meri Bilong Mamayang, Wanpela stori bilong ol meri* (The Women of Mamayang, A Story for Women) (1962), Look after your children (1962), *How to use your sewing machine* (1964), *The Game of Good Health* and the inspiringly titled *Things to do in Women's Clubs*, Book 1: First 3 months – Book 4: Last 3 months. As part of the Women's Club Badge Scheme the following booklets were published in 1964 and 1965: No. 1. Nutrition badge; No. 2. Embroidery; No. 3. Sewing; No. 4. Laundry; No. 5. Baking; No. 6. Home decoration; No. 7. Cooking; No. 8. Home Safety & First Aid; No. 9. Knitting; No. 10. Recreation; No. 11. Home care badge; No. 12. Health Badge; No. 13. Home nursing; and No. 14 Infant Care. *The Story of Two Daughters*, a continuation of *The Story of Two Women* was published in 1966.

> The posters showed in a graphically clear way that dirt breeds disease ... One poster showed a rat nibbling at stray scraps of food left lying about the house by a village slattern. A complementary illustration showed a good housewife collecting into a heap every food scrap in sight, presumably for disposal. A feature of the layout was one fat and arrogant rat dramatically dominating a corner of the poster.

Williams went on to explain that in Goilala rats made up an important part of the villagers' diet, a diet otherwise low in protein. Villagers spent much of their time hunting for rats to eat.

> It had never previously occurred to them that one could, as it were, raise rats domestically for food by collecting all available food scraps into one place, thereby saving the rats the labour of scavenging and, at the same time, developing a simple habit-pattern in their feeding that would make them easier to catch. The people were grateful to the Government for sending this lady to show them such a simple and effective domestic trick.[24]

Williams' anecdote in many ways resembled anecdotes told by white colonial residents about misunderstandings with their native haus boi (the title given grown indigenous men who worked as domestics in colonial homes). These stories invariably mocked the boi for some silly mix-up made despite the 'clear' instructions of his missus, working to reinforce the racial distance between coloniser and colonised.[25] Though his story sat comfortably within this genre, Williams ascribed indigenous villagers with a sensible rationale for rejecting the strange lesson of the 'lady sent by Government'. Villagers were accustomed to food shortages and even famine during certain seasons, explained Williams, and 'it did not cross their minds that she had meant to teach them how to eliminate one of their principal sources of food supply.'[26] Emphasising the local context in his retelling, Williams' story seemed at once a 'parody of the native' and mild critique of the administration's efforts,

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[24] Ronald Maslyn Williams, *Stone Age Island: Seven Years in New Guinea* (Sydney: Collins, 1964), pp.133-134.

[25] Hank Nelson's *Taim Bilong Masta* explained the one thing white women in the territories had in common was their comic accounts involving the indigenous men who worked for them as domestics: 'The man told to starch the shirts put starch in handkerchiefs, singlets and underpants as well. The waiter instructed to serve the suckling pig with a lemon in the mouth and parsley behind the ears duly appeared with the pig held aloft, a lemon in his mouth, and parsley ...', Hank Nelson, *Taim Bilong Masta* (Sydney: ABC & Griffin Press, 1982), p.105. Sarah Chinnery, wife of the New Guinea anthropologist, recounted in her diary her amusement at her *haus boi* (male domestic servant) hanging a teapot doily on the wall beside her husband's collected 'native curios'. Sarah Johnston Chinnery and Kate Fortune, *Malaguna Road : The Papua and New Guinea Diaries of Sarah Chinnery, Edited and Introduced by Kate Fortune.* (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 1998), pp.54 -55. Ann Deland wrote to her family in Australia of the kitchen mishaps - bloater paste on rainbow cake, tomato sandwiches spread with jam - that took place when one didn't keep a strict eye on their *boi.* See Bulbeck, *Australian Women in Papua New Guinea: Colonial Passages 1920 - 1960*, p.121.

[26] Williams, *Stone Age Island: Seven Years in New Guinea*, p.134.

which – because of the administration's chronic shortage of staff and resources – involved the implementation of a generic programme of reform that could not account for local customs and conditions.

TEACHING THE 'GOOD' FROM THE 'BAD': *THE STORY OF TWO WOMEN*

The tenor of the literacy and training aids can be gauged from a description of one of the booklets, *The Story of Two Women* (and see Figure 3.4 – 3.7). *The Story of Two Women* told the story of two women Ava and Ibom who 'live in the same village, but do not live the same life'.[27] The format of the booklet was very simple. Trainers were provided with a brief, introductory narrative that was to be read out to their audience, the focus then shifted to the pictures as a discussion point: 'Remember to get the women looking at the pictures to talk about AVA and IBOM. Ask plenty of questions and make the women think'.[28] Example questions and answers were provided for each new picture and topic as a guide. Club members were asked to act out the scenarios depicted in the pictures.

One woman might play Ava, the nice, neat woman wearing white in all the pictures. Ava cleaned her house and her children every day. She attended church and clinic. She hung curtains and arranged cut flowers in a vase to decorate her home. She had a good relationship with her husband, cooking him hot meals and mending his clothes. She made sure his house was a nice place to come home to. Ava had a happy family. Another woman might take on the role of Ibom. Ibom was an ignorant and lazy mother. She seldom seemed to wash herself, her clothes, or her children. She didn't comb her hair. She had no knowledge of health or hygiene, and as a consequence her family was constantly sick. Hers was not a very happy family.[29] In the figure of Ava from *The Story of Two Women* readers were offered a clear template for a model modern indigenous mother and wife. She presented as a stark contrast to the negligent Ibom.

Asking women to play act the 'good' and 'bad' housewife was a common strategy within the genre of colonial training aid. Another of the administration's publications, *Things To Do in Women's Clubs: Book 4 – Fourth 3 Months*, suggested, for example, that plays be performed as a weekly club activity. Each week women were asked to role-play 'good' and 'lazy' women, with scripts to vary according to the week's suggested theme – which ranged from the importance of daily household routines, cleaning house, managing the Club, to the benefits of Local Village

[27] Lois Niall, *The Story of Two Women* (Port Moresby: Dept. of Native Affairs, and South Pacific Commission Literature Bureau, (196?)).
[28] Ibid, p.2 (capitals in original).
[29] Ibid.

Councils (one woman, for example, would think Council a 'silly' idea).[30] At the Club's end of year party women were encouraged to perform a play for their invited guests that drew together the various lessons learnt throughout the year to present a picture of the 'good and bad home'. *The Story of Two Daughters*, published as a continuation of Ava and Ibom's story in 1966, laid out their daughters' future lives. One looked bright, the other bleak, making clear that, as mothers, their choices had long term consequences for their children.

The contrast between the two mothers - of Ava and Ibom - *in The Story of Two Women* was accentuated through the use of simple visual illustrations within the text (see Figures 3.4 - 3.7). In Picture 1: Ava wears pristine white; Ibom wears dirty black. In Picture 2: Ava sweeps the floor as sunshine streams through an open window in her home, Ibom lies sleeping on the floor of her dingy house, wrapped in a dark blanket. In Picture 3: Ava launders her family's clothes under a bright sun; Ibom lazes nearby under the shade of a large tree. And so on. The narrative culminates with Ava, dressed in her Sunday best, walking with her family down a path that leads to the village church. Ibom, in the corresponding panel, sits on the ground with a baby crying in her lap and her naked son leaning listlessly against a fencepost. This litany in visual contrasts - white vs. black - mapped onto the text's none-too-subtle moral register - good vs. bad - of motherly and wifely practice.

The iconography of darkness and light was a commonplace within general rhetoric of Empire. Mission narratives, in particular, told of the bringing of Christian light to the dark heathen world of the native. A strong rhetorical temporal dimension was present within these; they were essentially 'before and after' tales of conversion and transformation. Before contact the colonized - sinful, degraded, repugnant - had lived in 'darkness'.[31] Missionaries offered them a chance at moral redemption; the 'light' came with conversion.[32] While in some ways suggestive of an

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[30] See Lois Niall et al, *Things to Do in Women's Clubs. [Books 1-4. First 3 Months - Fourth 3 Months]*, vol. 3 vols (Port Moresby: Dept. of Native Affairs, and South Pacific Commission Literature Bureau, 1962), pp.6, 12, 17, 32, 47.

[31] Regis Stella, discussing representations of Pacific Islanders - and specifically Papua New Guineans - has argued that the trope of darkness to depict indiscriminately indigenous peoples, their lives, and the surrounding landscapes signalled 'an absence of humanity and enlightenment [among Pacific Islanders], and associated them with the animal kingdom', Regis Tove Stella, *Imagining the Other: The Representation of the Papua New Guinean Subject* (Honolulu: Univeristy of Hawai'i Press, 2007), p.127.

[32] Though the time of darkness, which Missionaries claimed to have helped drag indigenous peoples out from, could also refer to the early colonial period when slave-masters, blackbirders, etc came to simply exploit the Pacific Islanders. Missionaries hoped to bring Pacific Islanders 'abundant life' - that is to save them not only from their heathen degradation, but also from the degradation threatened by unscrupulous exploitative actions of other white men who came to steal, kill, and destroy. See for example, Philip A. Micklem, *Darkness and Light in the Pacific* (Sydney: Australian Board of Missions, 194?).. For a discussion of tensions between missionaries and other white settlers over their treatment of

iconography of darkness and light the texts' visual oppositions were nonetheless no simple deployment of this. Within the administration's training texts, however, the opposed 'good' and 'bad' woman – visually keyed by the white and black of their clothing (they appeared to be in all other immediately visible respects the same) – were not presented as an example of the contrast between the primitive/traditional and the civilised/modern. Instead within the text indigenous women were being asked to choose between two very different roads to take towards a 'modern' life.

Helping guide women's choices regarding which modern habits and practices to adopt and which to reject was an important task for the welfare officer. Lois Niall, a senior welfare officer and illustrator for the booklets, explained that an important goal of the administration's program of informal education was to equip women with 'the necessary discernment which permits decision as to what part of our culture is acceptable and applicable'.[33] While the older colonial concern regarding the natural conservatism of women, older women in particular, was still evident, it did not serve to frame colonial interventions to the same extent as it had previously.[34] Instead colonial actors increasingly assumed that all communities were undergoing a process of change, and village women would have to adapt. The question was, how could they best do this? Confronted with modernity indigenous women may well become slovenly and lazy; they may adopt all the worst habits of the 'white man's world'. Troubled by the initial slow expansion of Club work, the Women's Central Committee explained their anxiety as related to a clear need to steer indigenous women along the right path:

> It is the feeling of this Committee that this work is most essential, as these people are in the throes of a transformation from their primitive mode of life to more civilised ways of living. Many villages are well off monetarily but here is a gross ignorance of beneficial ways of spending this money. Most of it is going towards luxuries and the essentials are being overlooked.[35]

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indigenous peoples, see David F. Wetherell, *Reluctant Mission : The Anglican Church in Papua New Guinea, 1891-1942* (St. Lucia, Qld.: University of Queensland Press, 1977), pp.231-2, 238-9, 262-271.

[33] Niall, "The Education of Native Women as an Aspect of Cultural Assimilation", p.84.

[34] With regards this older concern about women and conservatism see for example the Anglican missionary Reverend Walter John Durrad, who in an essay on depopulation complained about indigenous women's continued indifference to missionaries' entreaties to abandon mothering practices he judged inappropriate: 'The village dames gather round the newly born and the old time-honoured custom is followed. "*We* were brought up like that," is their defence, and it is impossible to convince a tough old hag that her method of child-rearing is wrong. She considers herself a living witness to its excellence.' Reverend J. W. Durrad, "The Depopulation of Melanesia," in *Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia*, ed. W. H. R. Rivers (Cambridge [Eng.]: The University press, 1922), p.16.

[35] PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; Minutes of Meeting of Women's Central Committee, 6 Sept 1951.

In more urban areas this transformation was compounded by the loss of land and subsequently a reduction in women's time spent labouring in their gardens. Welfare officers were concerned not just about how women might spend their husband's new wage, but also – and perhaps more importantly – their time. Miss Hamilton, a welfare officer in the Central District, reported to the Women's Committee in 1951 that as the village of Hanuabada became increasingly urbanised:

> The women have less to do than previously owing to lack of gardens. Unlike the men they have not found new interests and occupations outside the village ... If they had a [women's] centre it would be somewhere for them to go when they had nothing to do otherwise.[36]

Others in the meeting wholeheartedly agreed.[37] It was hoped that participation in Clinic and Women's Clubs, and in the sports and craft activities organised by government and mission would help keep women on the right track and provide them with 'new interests and occupations', lest they fall into an idle existence.

Ultimately the administration's program of informal education through the Club sought to educate village women with a new set of needs and standards. They wanted to 'make the women and girls aware of a real need for social and economic improvements'.[38] However it was important, explained welfare officers, that women's 'acquired needs and desires' corresponded with their 'possible level of present and future economic attainment'.[39] The officers' concern related not so much to expectations regarding future opportunities (or lack thereof) for women to enter waged work so much as an ongoing uncertainty as to the scale and pace of colonial economic development at the village level. Welfare workers stressed the importance that educators working with women and girls must adopt a 'completely realistic approach', and that their focus be on practical skills. Practical skills, however, included training in those basic 'social graces' ('etiquette, domestic skills and the like') that village women would feel comfortable introducing 'to their homes and their children'.[40]

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[36] PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; Minutes of Meeting of Women's Central Committee, 8 June 1951.
[37] See for example the comments from Cyril Belshaw, also present at the meeting in PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; Minutes of Meeting of Women's Central Committee, 8 June 1951.
[38] Niall, "The Education of Native Women as an Aspect of Cultural Assimilation", p.86.
[39] Ibid, p.86.
[40] PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; Minutes of Eleventh Meeting of Women's Central Committee, 21 April 1960.

THE STORY OF TWO WOMEN

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Figure 3.4 Cover, *The Story of Two Women*, 196-

5

QUESTIONS FOR PICTURE 1

a) AVA wears a white dress, she looks nice. Why?

b) IBOM wears a black dress, she does not look nice. Why?

c) AVA has happy children. Why?

d) IBOM has crying children. Why?

e) Are YOUR children like AVA's or IBOM's'

Figure 3.5 Picture 1, *The Story of Two Women*, 196-

7

QUESTIONS FOR PICTURE 2

a) Which woman is sweeping her house?

b) Which woman is too tired to sweep?

c) Why does AVA sweep the house?

d) How many times does she sweep in a week?

e) What will IBOM's house look like?

f) Why does AVA open the window?

g) Do YOU sweep the house out every day?

Figure 3.6 **Picture 2, *The Story of Two Women*, 196-**

33

QUESTIONS FOR PICTURE 15

a) Where is AVA and her family going?

b) Why do they go to Church?

c) How can the Church help them?

d) Does IBOM go to Church?

e) Is IBOM wise to stay at home?

f) Do YOU go to Church regularly?

Figure 3.7 **Picture 15, *The Story of Two Women*, 196-**

'THINGS TO DO IN WOMEN'S CLUBS' (LESSONS TO BE LEARNT)

Much of Ava's time, as wife and mother, was spent making her house a 'home'. The creation of 'home' – as both architectural and affective transformation of domestic space – was a crucial first step in the establishment of a civilised and Christian family life, as well as a crucial step of the process of claiming and colonising. Historians Nicholas Thomas, Margaret Rodman, and Margaret Jolly among others have described the ways in which missionaries and colonial administrations in the Pacific sought and effected change in settlement patterns, as well as domestic village residential dwellings from early on in the colonial period.[41] Mission buildings – the Mission church, classroom, Clinic, and, of course residences – were not simply serviceable structures, they served as emblems of progress and western civilisation. Elizabeth Burchill travelling through local villages in the far north of Maprik in the 1950s/60s as an infant and maternal welfare nurse, pointed to the architecture of local Mission stations as indicating the positive and civilising influence of the various Missions present in the region:

> We often passed quite close by a large mission compound with modern timber buildings. The lofty, iron roofed dwellings had freshly painted white walls, and brightly painted doors and louvred windows. It was impressive evidence of the civilisation brought by dedicated Europeans who are assisting to teach and train the natives living in the surrounding jungle.[42]

The project of transforming village dwelling residences was, however, much more than simply one of supplanting local materials for sawn-cut timber, louvred glass, iron roofing, and a lick of paint. Early missionaries, who were themselves often forced to construct their houses from basic local building materials – timber, thatched rooves, woven partitions, dirt floors – stressed that it was not what houses were made of, but the design, layout, and use that was of importance. They advised separate spaces for cooking, eating, and sleeping, and with regard this last aspect emphasised that parents be segregated from their children. And it was one thing to build an appropriate house, it was another thing altogether to make a 'home'.

The domestic training provided to village women often focused on the small things that a woman could do to create home. The white women who came to the

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[41] Nicholas Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994).p.140; Jan Rensel and Margaret Rodman, *Home in the Islands : Housing and Social Change in the Pacific* (Honolulu University of Hawai'i Press, 1997); and Margaret Jolly, "'To save the girls for brighter and better lives': Presbyterian missions and women in the south of Vanuatu, 1848 - 1870," *Journal of Pacific History* 26, no. 1 (1991): 27 - 48, pp.40 - 43; for similar discussion of the importance of 'home' making in the process of colonisation in Africa see John L. Comaroff and Jean Comaroff, *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination*, Studies in the Ethnographic Imagination (Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1992), pp.265 – 294.

[42] Elizabeth Burchill, *New Guinea Nurse* (Adelaide: Rigby Ltd, 1967), p.41.

territories as the wives of missionaries, colonial officers and Planters, carrying with them their Victorian notions of domesticity and wifely propriety, had themselves paid close attention to the creation of 'home'. Rachel Cleland, wife of the Administrator in the territories during the 1950s and colonial wife par excellence, described her transformation of a 'tiny three-roomed house' with its 'desolate, treeless, rock strewn' garden into a home:

> I made curtains, we put the carpets down, furniture from our Sydney house arrived, chairs were covered, pictures hung, other furniture locally made and installed and the result was a room that was large, cool and beautiful. We had designed and planted a garden and with the rain, the growth was fabulous.[43]

As 'good wives', white women prided themselves on their ability to make home in even the roughest of colonial environments; they brought a touch of civilisation to the rural outpost. 'We must not let ourselves "down" because we are amongst savages', wrote Margaret Whitecross Paton, a nineteenth century missionary stationed in the southern islands of Vanuatu.[44] Rather, the challenge for mission wives, according to Whitecross Paton, was to bring indigenous housing standards up to an appropriate Christian level, because, 'one's Home has so much influence on one's work and on life and character'.[45]

Through each individual woman's attention to 'good housekeeping' in her own home, overall village cleanliness would be achieved. The training provided to women via the clubs emphasised women's personal responsibility in ensuring the hygiene and health standards of the village. This was the first, or at least initial, priority in the work of the Women's Clubs.[46] The club president – charged with leading the weekly meetings – was tasked with frequently reminding club members that 'village cleanliness starts with women. What they do and the way they teach their children is what makes a village clean'.[47] Good housekeeping was achieved, club members were told, through a woman's careful planning of her daily chore routine. A suggested timetabling for daily chores was provided within training booklets and the benefits of good time management extolled: 'If a woman makes a plan for her work, she will finish it much more quickly, then she will be free to do

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[43] Rachel Cleland, *Pathways to Independence: Official and Family Life, 1951 - 1975* (Perth: Artlook Books, 1983), p.37.

[44] Margaret Whitecross Paton quoted in Margaret Jolly, "'to Save the Girls for Brighter and Better Lives': Presbyterian Missions and Women in the South of Vanuatu, 1848 - 1870," *Journal of Pacific History* 26, no. 1 (1991), p.40.

[45] Margaret Whitecross Paton quoted in Ibid, p.40.

[46] Niall et al, *Things to Do in Women's Clubs. [Books 1-4. First 3 Months - Fourth 3 Months]*, p.7.

[47] Ibid, p.12.

other things in the afternoon'.[48] Adherence to a routine would provide evidence of personal self-discipline and good character.

Surveillance of women's activity within their village homes was institutionalised through the Women's Club. Invited female European guests, the local clinic Sister, or club officials made weekly inspections of each member's home, checking that garbage disposal and latrines met 'approved health standards'.[49] The women's homes were judged against one another with advice given to club officials on how best to run inspections:

> The President and Secretary go to all the houses of all the women in the Club to see if they are well kept. They mark in a small book what each house and its grounds are like. At the end of the inspection, the President and the Secretary should have a talk about houses and decide which was the best. It is a big help if each person who is looking at the houses – the Secretary, President, and any others – takes a piece of paper and pencil to write down things about each house.[50]

Inspections were set up as a competition between women to encourage an interest in the continual improvement of the home. Small prizes – a packet of needles, a bottle of kerosene, a tin of milk – were given out for the best house.[51] During inspections judges were advised they should take special note if a woman had displayed flowers in her house, or had gone to the trouble to roll out a new mat – these were the things that would differentiate a clean house (worthy of praise) from a well kept home (worthy of a prize).[52] Inviting women to embark on the making of a better home, the last of the four booklets advising club leaders of activities for Women's Clubs took 'the home' as a focus for activities.[53] It republished instructions for arranging flowers in vases, decorating the home with nice clean mats ('they make the house look so nice'), and sewing homemade curtains and tablecloths.[54]

Sewing was another important feature of club activities. More important than learning how to sew curtains or cloths, however, was the acquisition of basic dressmaking skills. In clubs women were taught how to make clothing, how to mend clothing, and how to keep clothing clean. Richard Eves, writing on the Methodist

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[48] Ibid.[Book 4, fourth 3 months], p.5.
[49] Papers of WC Groves, New Guinea Collection; Box 3, File 13; Administration Press Statement No.1: Village Women's Clubs, 7 January 1960.
[50] Niall et al, *Things to Do in Women's Clubs. [Books 1-4. First 3 Months - Fourth 3 Months]*, p.15.
[51] Ibid, p.15.
[52] Ibid, p.16.
[53] 'We all decided that it was a good idea to have one big thing to think about for each 3 months ... we are going to think about your homes for the next three months', Ibid, p.2.
[54] Ibid, p.36 and Niall et al, *Things to Do in Women's Clubs. [Books 1-4. First 3 Months - Fourth 3 Months]*, pp.8 – 10.

missionaries in Papua and New Guinea, discussed the way in which the conflation of morality and physicality during the Victorian period led to an evangelical focus on bodily rehabilitation and a reconstituting of physical outward appearance in the Pacific. Nakedness, alongside lack of cleanliness and bodily comportment, became a focus for correction, and clothing became an especially significant marker indicating natives' successful conversion and moral reform.[55] Planters and traders also encouraged the natives' adoption of western clothing because cheap cloth material could be used as part of the small collection of goods used in place of cash to pay off indentured labourers.[56] Some even optimistically foresaw a new commercial opportunity and potential market. At the same time, however, concerns were raised regarding the natives' adoption of European clothing. From the late nineteenth century in the Pacific the evils of European clothing were being widely discussed by missionaries, anthropologists and colonial administrators.[57] Sir Hubert Murray, for example, discussed clothing as a 'source of danger to the natives' because he felt they would not wash them regularly, might wear them when wet, and may pass on clothing previously worn by the ill.[58] Through the first half of the twentieth century the Australian administration in both Papua and New Guinea passed various regulations to restrict the wearing of European clothing by natives on the basis that European clothing posed a health risk and had been a factor in the spread of disease among indigenous populations.[59]

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[55] Richard Eves, "Colonialism, Corporeality and Character: Methodist Missions and the Refashioning of Bodies in the Pacific," *History and Anthropology* 10, no. 1 (1996).

[56] Known as *ramis* or *laplaps* – a length of material which could be worn as a sarong – were a fixture within the box received at the end of a contract (the *bokis kontrakt*). The *bokis kontrakt* stands as somewhat emblematic of indentured labour, as in indentured contracts goods in a box were received much more often than actual cash. The box and the commodities came very quickly to hold value distinct from their use value. For a very interesting discussion of the 'trade box system', see Adrian Graves, "Truck and Gifts: Melanesian Immigrants and the Trade Box System in Colonial Queensland," *Past and Present*, no. 101 (November, 1983).

[57] See in particular the essays by W.H. Rivers, Dr Felix Speiser, Rev. W. J. Durrad, CM Woodford (late Resident Commissioner of Solomons) and Sir William MacGregor (previous Administrator for British New Guinea) regarding their discussion of clothing and the spread of disease. W. H. R. Rivers, *Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia* (Cambridge [Eng.]: The University press, 1922).

[58] J. H. P. Murray, *Papua or British New Guinea* (London: T. F. Unwin, 1912), p.378.

[59] Edward Wolfers catalogued the various legislative measures taken to regulate natives' wearing of clothing. In 1909 in Papua regulations were passed requiring natives wear loincloths. In 1917 the ownership of unsatisfactory clothing by natives was prohibited, in 1920 they were forbidden to wear any clothing covering the top half of their body. This was passed in New Guinea in 1923, though individuals could request special permission from an officer to allow them to wear a shirt. In 1941 in Papua, and 1946 in New Guinea an amendment to the Native Regulations was passed that allowed Western style clothing to be worn unless items were judged dirty, wet, or insanitary. In 1959 the power to pass regulations regarding the wearing of clothing passed from the *kiap* or patrol officer to the Local Village Council. Edward P Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea* (Sydney: Australia and New Zealand Book Co, 1975), pp.31, 46 – 48, 98, 122.

The administration's long held ambivalence regarding clothing was still apparent within the training guides. In *The Story of Two Women* Ava and Ibom were both dressed in dresses or blouses and skirts, they had adopted basic western style clothing. So too had their children and husbands. But where Ava was always well turned out ('Ava looks nice because she wears clean clothes ... She knows that every woman should look nice and neat'[60]), Ibom never took adequate care washing her own clothes, or starching her husband's. Her children's clothes quickly got 'dirtier and dirtier' and after not very long would 'fall to pieces'.[61] Not only did Ibom's negligence bring shame, readers were told, it brought disease.

In *The Women of Mamayang*, another training guide published in 1962, Ava again featured. Her village, the women readers were told, was close by to Mamayang. After seeing how well she had organised her village's Women's Club the Mamayang women invited her to come advise them on how to establish a club. She began by telling her audience that despite the need for women to now embrace change, it was 'no good' unless they adopted it appropriately:

> For a long time there were many women here in our country, in Papua and New Guinea, who did not know the best way to live. Now some live (stupidly) just like their grandmothers. There are some who wear clothes, but they don't wash their clothes. Clothes are no good if they are very dirty. If a woman doesn't know to wear clean clothes then it would be better for her to just wear a grass skirt.[62]

Part of what was at play when concerns were expressed about the appropriateness of native women wearing European clothing was a continuing, underlying ambivalence about the very idea of the 'modern' indigenous woman. As David Spurr has noted, colonial discourse regarding colonised subjects and the colonial project vacillated between contrary positions such that, 'a colonised people was held in contempt for their lack of civility, loved for their willingness to acquire it, and ridiculed when they acquired too much'.[63] Wolfers, writing on the common phenomenon of the Australian colonisers' discomfort with the 'improperly clothed semi-sophisticate', diagnosed this discomfort as 'the shock of recognition ... perhaps

[60] Niall, *The Story of Two Women*, p.6.
[61] Ibid, pp.6, 20.
[62] Papua and New Guinea. Dept. of Native Affairs, *Ol Meri Bilong Mamayang : Wanpela Stori Bilong Ol Meri* (Port Moresby: Dept. of Native Affairs and South Pacific Commission Literature Bureau, 1962), p.6.
[63] David Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire : Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing, and Imperial Administration*, Post-Contemporary Interventions (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1993),p.86.

a fear of unconscious parody of themselves'.[64] While missionaries and colonial administrators attempted to transform indigenous villagers' custom and practice in line with European values, indigenous efforts towards this were often mocked or dismissed.[65]

The colonisers' condescending bemusement at the native who too readily and too passionately adopted new modern ways was often expressed through patronising, 'harmless' colonial anecdotes. Judith Hollenshed, in her personal memoir about managing a coffee plantation in New Guinea in the late 1950s, shared an anecdote about giving away excess clothing to the indigenous women working at the station. She advised the station women of her plan, and asked them not to tell the other village women as there would not be enough clothes to go around if everyone knew of it. Word, however, spread quickly and many women from the surrounding villages turned up. Just as she feared, the station women got very little. Her feelings of frustration and dismay were quite evident in the postscript written to the incident:

> The aftermath of the debacle was when heading home from the new coffee block one day, I came across a generously built Alimp *meri* [pidgin for woman] carrying *kaukau* in a *bilum* suspended from her forehead and wearing the pink velvet matron of honour's frock. The hem trailed around her feet, the side zip was fully undone and agape, exposing rolls of grubby black flesh. The darts in the bodice failed in their task, the woman's slack breasts unable to conform to their shaping. I knew then I had made a double mistake. The poor soul had been reduced in appearance from a dignified human being to a grotesque caricature. Not much later, on driving home from Hagen one day, I came across Kum's *meri* wearing the fine French

[64] Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea*, p.46. See also Andrew Lattas, "Humanitarianism and Australian Nationalism in Colonial Papua: Hubert Murray and the Project of Caring for the Self of the Coloniser and the Colonized," *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 7, no. 2 (1996), pp.158-163.

[65] Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea*, p.46. See for example the following comment from Speiser in his essay on depopulation: 'One of the most pathetic contrasts in the islands is the lithe and glossy skin of the healthy native and the dirty, over-dressed Melanesian masquerading as a white man', Felix Speiser, "Decadence and Preservation in the New Hebrides," in *Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia*, ed. WHR Rivers (Cambridge [Eng.]: The University Press, 1922),p.31 FE Williams, Government Anthropologist, advised his readers through the *Papuan Villager*, 'You can never be quite the same as the white man; and you will only look silly if you try to be. When we see a native in European clothes we usually laugh at him'. Williams, *The Papuan Villager*, vol.4, no.1 January 1932, p.52. The following from a letter writer to *Pacific Islands Monthly* was equally blunt, though directed towards to a colonial audience: 'The Administration [is] advancing too quickly. The vast majority of natives in New Guinea have not advanced sufficiently in personal hygiene to be given a towel.' *Pacific Islands Monthly*, January 1951.

> jacket which had been my mother's. Not the frock but just the cropped jacket below which pendulous bare breasts peeped.[66]

This vision was echoed, though with less force, in Elizabeth Burchill's description of young native children who had given up the 'attractive grass skirt of the Pacific Islanders', and instead 'wore European clothing, usually a crumpled frock worn inside out, back to front, and crazily buttoned'. One small girl from the mission would visit Clinic, she wrote,

> enveloped in an outsize woman's crepe-de-chine blouse like a sack resembled the pathetic caricature of a fairy in a burlesque show, as the long sleeves of the garment flapped like wings with every movement.[67]

Despite some clear reservations, it was nonetheless expected that the modern indigenous woman, after acquiring the basics in social graces and comportment, would adopt western dress for herself and her family. Praise for the newly educated indigenous woman was often accompanied by a description of their appearance. Clothing highlighting the process of 'civilising'. Lady Cleland, reporting on the attendance of local girls and young women at a party in honour of Lady Slim, the President of the Australian Girl Guides, berated 'those fold [within white colonial society] who look down their noses' at the local women. They would 'have been really very surprised' as the young women had 'looked nice, and some were charming, in such pretty frocks'.[68] Similarly Elizabeth Burchill's description of her young female indigenous nursing assistant emphasised her efficiency and professionalism through a focus on how she carried her new attire:

> Her slimness was enhanced by a natural style of disciplined movement; such was her poise that she wore European clothes with an almost western elegance. She looked equally attractive in either impeccable nursing uniform or well-laundered cotton blouse and floral skirt favoured for off-duty casual wear.[69]

BRINGING WOMEN WITHIN THE STATE, WITHIN 'NATION'

The education that indigenous women received through Village Women's Clubs was acknowledged as 'academically negligible', but it was believed, nonetheless, to be practical. Welfare officers felt it was facilitating an important process: indigenous women were having their desire to learn stimulated and their outlook broadened.

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[66] Judith Hollinshed, *Innocence to Independence: Life in the Papua New Guinea Highlands 1956 - 1980* (Canberra: Pandanus Books, 2004), p.44.
[67] Burchill, *New Guinea Nurse*, p.55.
[68] Rachel Cleland's letter to family, August 1957 quoted in Cleland, *Grass Roots to Independence and Beyond: The Contributions by Women in Papua New Guinea 1951 - 1991*, p.166.
[69] Burchill, New Guinea Nurse, p. 29.

Clubs gave members 'a new level of self confidence'.[70] Maslyn Williams believed Women's Clubs provided the most practical framework through which women could be trained as 'educated women for educated men'. He continued,

> if they do nothing else, they at least give the women some basic experience in the simple forms of modern social organizing, and open up new fields of activity for them that run, in some measure, parallel to the expanding activities of their menfolk.[71]

The women who attended learnt how to organise their Clubs according to certain principles. They elected office bearers, kept minutes, accounted for their money and were encouraged to keep a written plan of their activities, in this way familiarising themselves, as Rachel Cleland described it, 'in the new ways of the modern world.'[72]

Women's clubs were envisaged as not only liberating indigenous women from conditions of ignorance and a poor quality of life through the provision of basic homecraft and hygiene knowledge, but also from what was understood to be their exclusion from political processes of decision making prior to the colonisers' arrival. The Special Committee appointed by Hasluck to oversee the reinvigoration of the women's advancement policy in 1957 had stressed that welfare officers should use the clubs as a means not simply for information exchange, but to provide women with a means to begin politically engaging in local-level decision making:

> This work should involve the assumption of leadership and responsibility by the people, and it is believed that this will best be effected by the promotion of women's clubs where the organisation is in the hands of the women themselves .... In this way a great deal of the village resistance to women's participation in public life can be overcome.[73]

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[70] PNGA: 69/14-1-34/1285, Social Welfare and Advancement of Native Women; Report by Special Committee Appointed to Consider Proposals for Education and Advancement of Women, 6 February 1957.

[71] Williams, *Stone Age Island: Seven Years in New Guinea*, p.60. Williams' film, *A Woman Called Gima*, cheekily – and quite directly - referenced this idea of the Women's Club as an alternative or parallel pathway for inclusion within the state specifically for women. The scene in which Mary, secretary of the Club, calls roll call was clearly played for comic effect by Williams. The drill of call and reply mimicked the colonial kiap's census taking – down to the exaggerated replies from a couple of cheeky club members who stood to attention and yelled, 'Yes Sir!' in reply to Mary's soft name call. 'Census' was something remembered well in the village, something that all had taken part in but which was very clearly directed at the inclusion – indeed enumeration – of village men, largely for the purposes of calculating native head tax and facilitating labour recruitment.

[72] Cleland, *Grass Roots to Independence and Beyond: The Contributions by Women in Papua New Guinea 1951 - 1991*, p.12.

[73] PNGA: 69/14-1-34/1285, Social Welfare and Advancement of Native Women; Report by Special Committee Appointed to Consider Proposals for Education and Advancement of Women, 6 February 1957.

Lois Niall, a Senior Welfare Officer within Native Affairs, told a conference gathered to discuss Native Education in 1959 that one of the main achievements of the Women's Clubs was that apart from helping women in their primary role as homemakers, they also assisted village women to recognise their 'secondary role as a member of the community'. She believed women's opinions about village matters were 'carrying more weight' when voiced through the medium of the Women's Club.[74] Through Clubs, agreed William Cottrell-Dormer from the Department of Agriculture, women could show leadership in leading the village community towards 'progress', and would provide 'an example of good citizenship for the next generation'.[75] The territories' draft statement for the UN Commission on the Status of Women in 1972 noted this as a key outcome of Women's Clubs:

> [The clubs] help women to improve their social status and *provide them with a formal channel for expression of opinion.*[76]

While the Club environment itself was envisaged as providing a forum for raising women's concerns – one legitimised by the state – welfare officers also sought through the club to encourage women's involvement in other formal colonial political institutions. During the 1950s as the system of Local Government Councils was established and expanded through the territories, welfare officers were tasked with informing village women of their rights in relation to voting and direct participation within the Councils. The Women's Club Newsletter – produced by the welfare division – often ran short articles reporting on individual women's success in Council elections:

> Many women are trying to find out all they can about their Local Government Council and to find out some of the ways women and the Council can work together. Women can also be elected to the Council and one woman who is a Councillor is MAURA VARO of TUPERSEREIA [sic] Village. She was Vice-President of the Bootless Bay Council in 1960 and is again a Councillor in 1961. It is very good that women can work with men on Councils. Maura Varo was helped to become a Councillor by the women of Bootless Bay. 453 women voted for the Council, and this is half the women who could vote.

[74] Niall, "The Education of Native Women as an Aspect of Cultural Assimilation", p.87.
[75] William Cottrell-Dormer cited in Kim Godbold, "William Cottrell-Dormer (1946 - 1961) and Agricultural Development in the Territory of Papua New Guinea" (paper presented at the Social Change in the 21st Century, Queensland University of Technology, 2006), p.5.
[76] NAA: A452/1; 1961/1046, Economic and Social Council Commission on the Status of Women; D.M Cleland, "Draft of a statement summarising progress being made in this Territory in the advancement of women", 8 November 1960.

> EVERY woman who pays her tax can vote. Women who have four or more children can vote without paying tax. Every woman should find out whether she can vote and each year should vote for the man or woman who can help her village and her country.[77]

The administration reported that the appointment of women to Village Councils often followed on from the setting up of a woman's club in the area.[78] But the work of the welfare officer was not simply to educate women about/in their political rights as colonial subjects, but to frame women's political subjectivity in line with a/the colonial polity. In published materials welfare officers addressed women as villagers, but also as subjects – even citizens – of a colonial state. When deciding on who to vote for as their Council representative, women were called upon to imagine beyond the limits of the village, to see themselves as members of a broader community – she ('every woman') should vote for that person who would 'help her village and *her country*'.[79]

Through the institution of the Women's Club the administration sought to establish a feeling of commonality or communion among the colonies' indigenous women subjects. The Welfare division's 'Talks for Women on the Wireless' advertised to its female listeners that it would inform them 'about the things women are doing in all parts of the country'.[80] The Women's Club Newsletter published updates on the activities of clubs throughout the territories, reporting on their achievements, but also attempting to draw the women of the different districts into conversation and an appreciation of their shared hopes and concerns as 'the women of Papua and New Guinea'. The promotional film, A Woman Called Gima, cast indigenous female welfare officers from all over Papua and New Guinea (from the villages of Hula, Hese, Hanuabada, and Teop) as a way to highlight indigenous women's shared or common experiences as village mothers and wives.

And the training programs run for leaders of Women's Clubs, as well as the substantial Women's Rallies organised which saw the assembling of Women's Club members from across Districts, were also seen as 'particularly valuable' because they brought together women of all ages and from different areas to work and socialise

[77] PNGA: 69/81-2-25, Social Development Native Newspapers Women's Club Newsletters 1961-1964; *Women's Club Newsletter*, September 1961, (capitals in original).
[78] PNGA: 69/14-1-34/1285, Social Welfare and Advancement of Native Women; Report by Special Committee Appointed to Consider Proposals for Education and Advancement of Women, 6 February 1957.
[79] PNGA: 69/81-2-25, Social Development Native Newspapers Women's Club Newsletters 1961-1964; *Women's Club Newsletter*, September 1961.
[80] Ibid.

together.[81] Welfare officers could thus describe the humble sewing machine at such events as a valuable 'medium for social and material contact':

> The women have a common interest in sewing and through this common interest are brought together out of their tight-knit tribal or district groups.[82]

It was hoped that the women participants would carry their encountered sense of shared community back with them, extending the nation – albeit a limited notion of this, one framed in terms of a very specifically colonial 'imagined community' – into the rural village.[83] Positioning indigenous women as part of a national community, responsible to 'their country' as much as to their local village, brought the indigenous female subject directly under the control of the colonial state at the same time as it recognised her as a modern female political subject (with voting rights and all) in the figure of mother and wife.

THE *PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA VILLAGER* AND THE INDIGENOUS WOMAN AS IMPERIAL SUBJECT

Indigenous women were invited to identify not only with other women of the territories, not only with 'the nation', but also to draw parallels between their lives and the lives of colonised women across Empire. A considerable number of stories printed within the *Papua and New Guinea Villager* – a literacy newsletter published by the colonial administration from 1950 through until 1960 – informed female readers of the educational and social progress of women in other (generally British) colonial territories, and invited indigenous women of Papua and New Guinea to imagine them as part of a broader imperial British 'family'.

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[81] *Women's Club Newsletter* (last issue of 1962) reported on a two day Women's Rally held at Kukipi station (in Gulf district). 700 women from 37 Gulf districts were involved. Training of Women's Clubs leaders was held in most districts. Marjorie Stewart from the South Pacific Commission ran courses for Women's Club Leaders when she visited the colonies. In 1960, for example, she conducted a one-week training course for female Welfare Officers at Wewak with representatives from Netherlands New Guinea and from British Solomons also in attendance. Similar training was also put on in Eastern Highlands, Gulf and Milne Bay districts. PNGA: 69/81-2-25, Social Development Native Newspapers Women's Club Newsletters 1961-1964; *Women's Club Newsletter*, 1962. Stewart was also asked to advise the administration on developing a general Training Programme for village leaders. NAA: A452; 1963/3951, Education and advancement of Native women – Policy – Papua and New Guinea 1960-1964.

[82] PNGA: 69/76-1-11/5590, Social Welfare Bougainville District 1948-68; 'Women's Welfare – Bougainville', 1957.

[83] PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; Circular Report on Welfare Work for Women, P. Ure, 'Attention Welfare Officer', Department of Native Affairs, Konedobu. For example the YWCA provided 'leadership' training on a weekly basis in Port Moresby throughout 1962, with regular attendance of around 12 girls. The training provided them with skills so that they might act as 'leaders' for various voluntary groups/associations within their village. They also staged special Leadership training events on an annual basis. PNGA: 69/81-2-25, Social Development Native Newspapers Women's Club Newsletters 1961-1964; *Women's Clubs Newsletter*, Vol 1, no. 3 1962.

The Papua and New Guinea Villager was the post war continuation of the government newsletter the Papuan Villager. First published in 1929 under the editorship of government anthropologist FE Williams, the Papuan Villager's intended audience was the newly literate 'brown man' and it was designed as a vehicle to promote 'native education'.[84] The eight-page newsletter was circulated to indigenous readers for free via the mission schools or could be subscribed to for two shillings. The Villager was to help the indigenous subject improve his English so that he might more effectively 'learn from the white man'. Williams, when he had first begun the publication, had hoped to elicit content from indigenous readers for the basic but glossy Villager. He did not succeed to any great extent, and instead most items were contributed in-house or from government officers or mission teachers. The content was generally a mix of sanitised news items, contributed stories (often translated local myths and transcribed interviews with model 'native' subjects), and basic health and 'civic' information. While stories relating to indigenous women were not entirely absent, the audience for the early Papuan Villager was clearly envisaged as male.

This changed after the war. The collation and publication of the newsletter became the responsibility of the newly established publications division within the Department of Education. Much of the responsibility for sourcing and writing content now fell to the Welfare division, and thus to the white women welfare workers newly employed within it. This resulted in a dramatic increase in the content that consciously addressed and encouraged a female readership. Immediately on recommencement of publication in 1950 a 'women's page' was included in the Villager. This was often accompanied by an indigenous illustrated woman figure – an active, nifty meri who, for example, played cricket, weaved baskets, washed her baby, and nursed those of others (see Figures 3.8 – 3.13). Apart from this dedicated page – which shared news of women's clubs and girls schools, health and cooking tips, and occasional invited 'letters' to women from missionaries or local teachers – there were also short written pieces interspersed through the newsletter that reported on Guides, nursing and female teacher training, the women's vote in local councils, health issues, and women's sporting and social activities.

[84] Michael W. Young et al, *An Anthropologist in Papua : The Photography of F.E. Williams, 1922-39* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), p.13. The *Papuan Villager* was financed under the Native Tax Ordinance – a head tax on indigenous men introduced by Murray in Papua and payable from 1918 onwards – on the basis that it would enhance 'native welfare and education'.

April, 1954 30

Women's Page

A SHORT time ago we had several little bits of interesting news from the various Women's Centres.

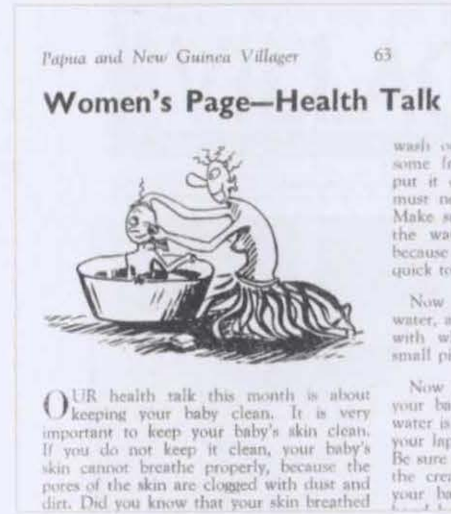
In the Moresby area the first women's club at Tatana Island was started on Friday, 19th February. The women held their own

Papua and New Guinea Villager

Women's Page

Classes for Women

THE second of the two-week training classes for women was held recently in Port Moresby. At the first class there


Papua and New Guinea Villager 63

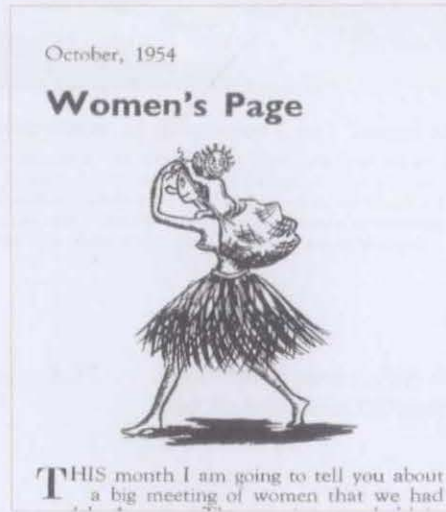
Women's Page—Health Talk

OUR health talk this month is about keeping your baby clean. It is very important to keep your baby's skin clean. If you do not keep it clean, your baby's skin cannot breathe properly, because the pores of the skin are clogged with dust and dirt. Did you know that your skin breathed

June, 1954 46

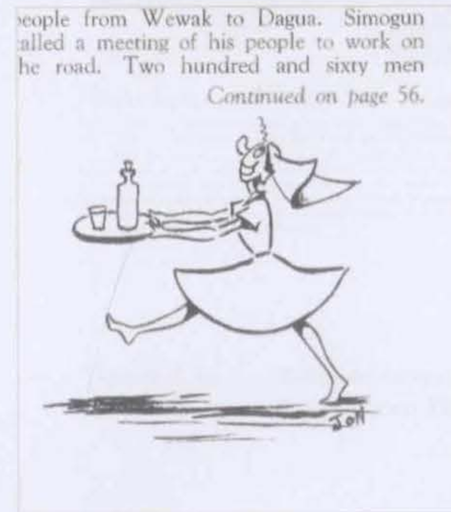
Women's Page

HAVE you been playing cricket lately? Perhaps you don't know how to play cricket? It is a good game. One person holds the bat and stands in front of the wicket (that is what the girl in this picture is doing), and someone else stands about 20 yards away and bowls a ball. The girl in the picture is trying to hit the


October, 1954

Women's Page

THIS month I am going to tell you about a big meeting of women that we had


eople from Wewak to Dagua. Simogun alled a meeting of his people to work on he road. Two hundred and sixty men

Continued on page 56.

Figures 3.8 – 3.13 **Illustrated indigenous women figure, Women's Page, *Papua and New Guinea Villager*, dates: various (see List of Tables and Illustrations for details)**

PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA

VILLAGER

Vol. 7, No. 3 — Department of Education, Port Moresby — MARCH, 1956

(Australian Official Photograph.)

Papuan Schoolgirls

CHILDREN from the village of Hanuabada at the London Missionary Society Mission School at Metoreia, Port Moresby, Papua.

Children in schools in this area are usually taught in Motu (their mother tongue) and in English.

PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA

VILLAGER

Vol. 7, No. 9. — Department of Education, Port Moresby — SEPTEMBER, 1956

Department of Education Girls' School at Kavari

A sewing class at the Administration Girls' School at Kavari, Port Moresby. Kavari is close to the village of Hanuabada. The girls are making aprons to wear in their cookery class. The Kavari School is a day school, so there are no girls living at the school. The girls come from many villages in the Port Moresby area. Girls also come from villages further along the coast, and stay with friends.

PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA

VILLAGER

Vol. 9, No. 10. — Department of Education, Port Moresby — OCTOBER, 1958

Boio Tutara, a Third Year Apprentice Bookbinder

THE first apprentices indentured under the Administration apprenticeship scheme in 1956 were signed on by the Government Printing Office.

The Government Printer, Mr. W. S. Nicholas, has nine apprentices at present, and in the annual apprenticeship examinations last November, Boio Tutara, who is one of the two bookbinding apprentices, came first in the printing section of the examination. Mr. Nicholas says she is equally outstanding in her practical work. The examination consists of English and arithmetic, for all apprentices, and a trade examination according to the particular trade of each apprentice.

Figure 3.14 March cover, ***Papua and New Guinea Villager***, **1956**

Figure 3.15 September cover, ***Papua and New Guinea Villager***, **1956**

Figure 3.16 October cover, ***Papua and New Guinea Villager***, **1958**

PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA

VILLAGER

Vol. 9, No. 11. Department of Education, Port Moresby NOVEMBER, 1958

ABORIGINAL GIRL PLAYING CATS' CRADLES

(Block courtesy Open Door, Church Missionary Society.)

Figure 3.17 **November cover, *Papua and New Guinea Villager*, 1958**

PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA

VILLAGER

Vol. 7. No. 8. Department of Education, Port Moresby AUGUST, 1956

(With acknowledgment to *U.N.E.S.C.O.* and Linen)

She will help her People (*See page* 59)

Figure 3.18 **August cover, *Papua and New Guinea Villager*, 1956**

PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA

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Vol. 9, No. 2. Department of Education, Port Moresby FEBRUARY, 1958

(Block courtesy *South Pacific Post.*)

Territory Children Meet the Queen Mother

Three Territory girls from schools in Charters Towers, Queensland, being presented to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, at Canberra on 26th February. They are (from left) Dawa Solomon from Milne Bay, Dine Dickson from Milne Bay, and Fide Juleno from Finschhafen.

Figure 3.19 **February cover, *Papua and New Guinea Villager*, 1958**

A significant number of the Papua and New Guinea Villagers' covers during this period were given over to photographs of Papuan and New Guinean women or girls.[85] Particularly popular as cover images were those that showed girls or women within the frame of 'schooling' or education, with a number also presenting women in their new professional roles as nurses, teachers, and, breaking a little with tradition, even apprentice bookbinders (see, for example, Figures 3.14 - 3.16).[86] There were, however, an almost equal number of covers featuring other colonised female subjects from across Empire. The cover image for August 1956, for example, showed fifteen year old Radijatou Mint Maouloud from Mauritiania in French West Africa, who was studying to be a nurse (see Figure 3.18). 'She will help her People', the headline read underneath it. Within the newsletter itself, a follow up small piece told Radijatou's personal story and urged Papua and New Guinean girls to follow her lead:

> The Department of Health in Papua and New Guinea is anxious to find girls who would like to train for nursing. They train at Suva or in the Territory. Are you interested?[87]

A significant proportion of the content of articles addressing Papua New Guinean women readers was focused on the 'new', exciting, often educational activities and interests of other female indigenous subjects throughout empire. Papua New Guinean women were being asked to not only take on a new role *as woman* for 'their people' (imagined as a broad indigenous 'native' 'people' that encompassed all within the territories) but also as imperial subject.

Indigenous women were also encouraged to think of themselves as imperial subjects via the frequent reportage and imagery of the royal family within the magazine.[88] The Queen featured as an 'imperial mother' role model. She presented an appropriately feminine, constrained example of empowered imperial womanhood. Reportage of the British royal family and their activities had been a significant feature within the earlier Papuan Villager. Now, however, women were

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[85] Of the 67 covers in the post war publication period February 1953 – May/June, 1960 (these were the issues I was able to access), 25 of those featured indigenous people. Eight of those were solely focused on indigenous women, eight were focused on indigenous men, nine featured a mix of the two sexes.

[86] Of the eight covers that featured women in the cover image, six were of indigenous women at school or an educational training facility. The cover shot for October 1958 featured 'Boio Tutura, a Third Year Apprentice Bookbinder'. Boio, readers were told, was one of the nine first apprentices to the Government Printing Office and 'had come first in printing section of the examination ... Mr Nicholas says she is equally outstanding in her practical work'. The cover image showed Boio deep in concentration as she bound a thick volume of the 1954 *New England Law Report* (see Figure 3.16).

[87] "She Will Help Her People," *Papua and New Guinea Villager* (August, 1956), p.59.

[88] The Queen and/or members of the royal family were also very popular subjects for the front cover of the *Papua and New Guinea Villager*.

being addressed directly and asked to relate to the Queen as fellow (though subject) women. So, for example, a letter published in the September 1953 issue of the Villager from London Missionary Society missionary Malaipeope Semese addressed to the 'dear mothers and sisters' of the territories concluded with the following advice:

> Women and girls, remember that the one who is now head of the British Empire and ruler of our family of nations is a Queen, one of your own sex.[89]

Similarly Rachel Cleland, wife of the Administrator, when talking to the young school girls of the territories in a broadcast over radio, urged them to remember that as women they had a special capacity to nurture and provide care. She asked the girls to look to the Queen as an example of true feminine beauty, because of the care and generosity she demonstrated:

> If you are happy, and want to make other people happy, if you are kind and generous it will show in your face and make you pretty ... The Queen has not got a really beautifully shaped face. And yet, when you see her, you think she is so beautiful that you have never seen anyone as beautiful before. Her beauty comes from her heart.[90]

After the Queen toured the Commonwealth for six months through 1953 and 1954, including a visit to Australia (in 1954), publicity shots from the trip were published in the Villager for the remainder of the 1950s.[91] Where possible, images associating indigenous women and the Queen were presented.[92] Additionally reportage heavily featured women like the head of the Girl Guides Lady Baden Powell, and the Governor General's wife Lady Slim who represented a very similar version of imperial mother womanhood, and provided a clear link into this figure of the Queen.[93]

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[89] Malaipeope Semese, "A Letter to Women and Girls," *Papua and New Guinea Villager* September, 1953, p.69.

[90] Rachel Cleland, "A Talk to Schoolgirls of the Territory," *Papua and New Guinea Villager* September, 1954, p.70.

[91] The Queen visited Papua New Guinea for the first time in 1974, and then again in 1977 and 1982. The Duke of Edinburgh visited the territories during his extended tour of the Commonwealth in 1956 – 57.

[92] This could be through mediated contact, see for example the 1958 cover shot of three young female students meeting the Queen Mother in Australia (see Figure 3.19). Photographs and the background story of two young women who met her on the same visit in 1956 were published in the same issue.

[93] See for example, 'Message from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II' which reported on correspondence between Lady Slim and the Queen: 'Her Majesty was most interested to ehar of Lady Slim's official visit to Papua/New Guinea and of the recent establishment of women's clubs for Native women'. *Papua and New Guinea Villager*, September, 1957, p.67.

Just as the Queen took on a maternal role as kind and wise matriarch over the British Empire, indigenous women were being asked to accept their new imperial subjectivity as 'modern' mothers and wives – safeguarding the health and happiness of their family, just as the Queen oversaw the happiness of her imperial subjects.

THE CLINIC AND THE CLUB AS *SITES* OF STATE

In both cases – that of Welfare Clinics and Women's Clubs – the sites on which service was provided or activities took place were imagined as a locus of state activity. As a physical *site*, the clinic or the club (often held in the same location) was deliberately intended to provide a space through which new, 'modern' sociality and political activity could be enacted.[94] Clinics and women's clubs were not everyday activities but they did run on a reasonably regular basis, anywhere from weekly to bi-monthly meetings depending on the region. Thus the location of the meetings or clinic was envisaged as providing within the village setting an 'ordinary', commonplace space of the state which would enable and facilitate more engaged civic activity for both women and men. Maslyn Williams, an Australian filmmaker engaged in the production of training documentaries for the colonial administration through the 1950s, recalled the following conversation with a local policeman in relation to the Clinics in the villages through which he travelled:

> He [the policeman] said that the people regarded the spot as a neutral meeting place where they could gather each fortnight when the Infant Welfare Sister came, the women and children attending the clinic, and the men holding informal courts and airing grievances before an impartial audience. If there were arguments or accusations that could not be resolved at these gatherings they would be held over until the Patrol Officer came.[95]

For the District Women's Sub-Committees responsible for dealing with the local requirements of Women's Clubs and Infant and Maternal Welfare Clinics the matter of a club house or designated space for meetings and Clinic (generally these were held in the same space) was a common, and prioritised point for discussion within meetings.[96] Often women negotiated to share the village men's clubhouses, which

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[94] See for example the description of the 'special women's day" hosted by the Baiyer Mission Clinic which was held on a monthly basis. The village teaching stations at which the women met had been transformed, the Newsletter informed its reader, into 'centres of the community' as a result of the clinic activities. PNGA: 69/81-2-21/6720, Social Development Native Newspapers Infant and Maternal Welfare Newsletters 1959; *Infant and Maternal Welfare Newsletter*, No. 13, 1959.

[95] Williams, *Stone Age Island: Seven Years in New Guinea*, p.259.

[96] See for example the following note from the Women's Central Committee Minutes in 1951: 'It was pointed out that the first problem to be dealt with would be the procurement of a building and the raising of funds to equip the building. After discussion of the matter it was decided by the two councillors of Hanuabada that they thought that part of the building

they used during Local Village Council sessions or for holding 'court' during the kiap or patrol officers' visits. McCarthy, Director of Native Affairs, outlined one such semi-formalised scheme run through the administration under the title, 'Project Club House':

> Native men had offered the use of their clubhouse to women for meetings. The women had agreed to repay the men by improving the clubhouse by providing curtains, keeping the club house clean, and planting flowers around the club-house.[97]

Alternatively women called on the men of their village to build a clubhouse for them (the task of constructing houses falling to men in most indigenous societies). Some women raised considerable funds towards the construction of their clubhouse; the women of Hanuabada, for example, raised 1000 pounds in 1962 so that they might have their own building rather than continue to use the Local Government Council Chambers.[98] Completion of clubhouses was regularly formally celebrated, with the District Officer and his wife, and (indigenous) members of Local Council in attendance.[99]

Village women's organising and fundraising for clubhouses was encouraged by the administration. Men's participation in helping with construction was, in many cases, seen as evidence of an enlightened change in their attitude towards women: 'the yard stick adopted, is, that a Club House be constructed'.[100] Women and men's co-operation in building the houses was invariably praised by colonial officials as displaying an appropriate and welcome 'initiative' on their part. Women's club-houses – decorated appropriately with curtains, flowers and hand woven mats – were very public spaces; a site within the village which was clearly a women's space, but which was marked 'modern' and 'political' and authorised through/via the state. The colonial project of domestication that asked indigenous women to enact

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which is to be used as Council Chambers could be made available to the women.' PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; Minutes, Meeting of Women's Central Committee, 6 July 1951.

[97] NAA: A452; 1963/3951, Education and advancement of Native women – Policy – Papua and New Guinea 1960-1964; Press Statement by the Director of Native Affairs July 28, 1961.

[98] PNGA: 69/80-2-1/5615, Social Welfare Advancement of Women Central District 1960 – 1963; Report by Welfare Officer, April – May, 25 June 1962.

[99] See for example Visit to Bougainville District, May 1962 Report by Senior Welfare Officer re Gogohei Club House launch: 'The house was built entirely on the people's own initiative and is a credit not only to them but to the manner in which Mrs Clancy has encouraged the Club to stand on its own feet.' PNGA: 69/80-2-11/5619, Social Development Advancement of Women Bougainville 1957 – 1963; Report by Senior Welfare Officer, Visit to Bougainville District, May 1962.

[100] PNGA: 496/ARC6A917/BN7, Bougainville District Annual Report; Annual Report – Bougainville District 1961 - 62. See also PNGA: 69/80-2-11/5619, Social Development Advancement of Women Bougainville 1957 – 1963; Report of Welfare Officer, Visit to Sohano, Bougainville District, 19 March – 24 March 1959.

themselves as political subjects – a subjecthood clearly figured as 'better mother and better wife' – was one which, though focused on the home, nonetheless did not seek to restrict women to the home, but asked her to enact her civic responsibility as homemaker in the public sphere. The club house and the clinic (often one and the same building) stood as both embodied/physical site of state and symbol of the new public, political role envisioned by the state for the indigenous woman.

CONCLUSION

Within this chapter I demonstrated the ways in which the colonial administration hoped through the Club and the Clinic to claim a space in women's lives within the village. They relied on club meetings and clinic days as a moment of interaction between village women and the female welfare workers, nurses and medical officers, who – as agents of state – might introduce and build trust in the work of government. They also hoped, of course, to transform traditional customary practice; to modernise this. I have argued in this chapter that for those in colonial society there were clear limits to how far they believed indigenous women could appropriately be expected to 'modernise', and that administration programs for 'women's advancement' were very much about ensuring women did not modernise in the 'wrong way'.

For those working in the welfare divisions of the colonial administration there was no question change was coming. The Club and the Clinic allowed the colonial state an entry point into, as well as a certain level of surveillance over women's lives, and a measure of control over what they felt was an inevitable process of change. Through these programs the administration mapped out for the indigenous woman a model of the modern colonial and imperial female subject, and encouraged them to consider themselves members of a wider community that encompassed not only nation, but also empire.

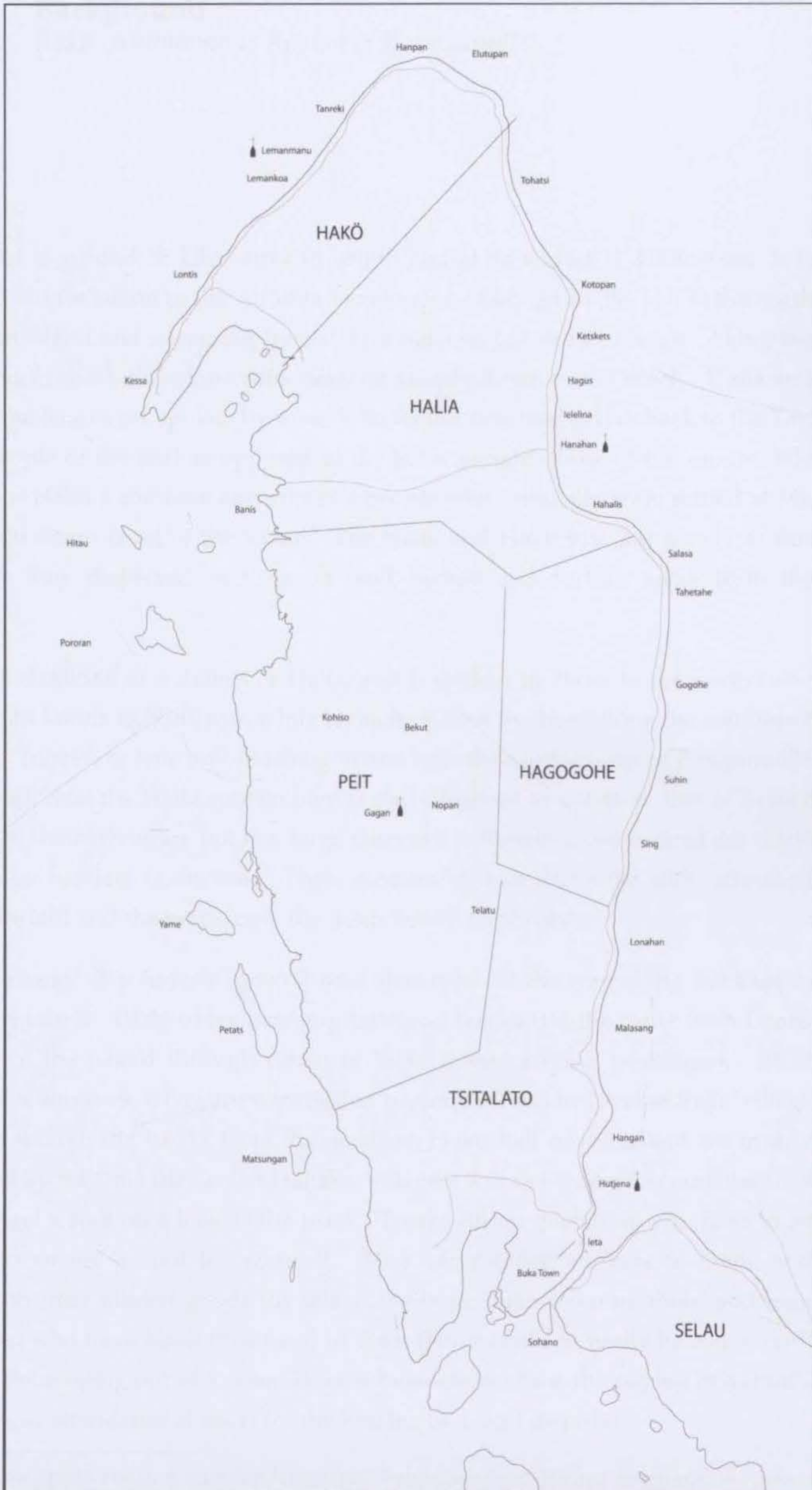

Figure 4.1 Map of Buka Island, Autonomous Region of Bougainville

Background

Buka, Autonomous Region of Bougainville

Buka Island is around 55 kilometres in length and at its widest 17 kilometres. It is the second largest island of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, just to the north of the main island and separated from it by a narrow, but deep passage. Along the east and north coast, limestone cliffs descend steeply down to the beach. Halia and Haku are the languages spoken by those who would link themselves back to the Tasi people (people of the sea) as opposed to the Solos people (those of the mountain).[1] Both groups claim a common ancestry in a people who originally were settled at Mt. Bei on the western coast of the island. The Halia and Haku say that slowly as this tribe grew they dispersed, settling on land further and further away from the mountain.

Haku is classified as a dialect of Halia, and is spoken by those in the north coast villages from Lontis to Elutupan, while Halia is spoken by those along the south-east coast from Tohatsi to Ieta, and reaching across into the northern tip of Bougainville itself (though here the Halia spoken here is also classified as a dialect, that of Selau). The villages themselves are not one large clustered settlement, but instead are made up of smaller hamlets again, *hans*. These modern *hans* sit above the cliffs, stretched between the cliff and the main road, the 'John Teosin Highway'.

The 'highway' is a *karanas* (gravel) road that runs all the way along the eastern coast of the island. Early every morning transport trucks run the route from Lontis at the tip of the island through down to Buka town carrying passengers. Most villages have someone who runs a truck and passengers will be loyal to their 'village truck'. So though the trucks from the northern Haku half of the island are mostly already full by the time they reach Hahalis, villagers will not worry too much as they will likely get a spot on a local Halia truck. Trucks fill up quickly so you have to be up early to ensure a spot for yourself. They carry office workers to town, and women with their market goods for sale at the large Buka town markets, and men and women who have *bisnis* (business) in town (*bisnis* could as easily be a chat with friends as the scoping out of a potential new business venture, the paying of a child's school fees, or attendance at court for the hearing of a land dispute).

[1] Solos people speak solos, a separate language. Petats, another distinct language, is spoken by the people living on the islands off the west coast of Buka island.

While some await this transport, school kids trundle down the main road with books in one hand and lunch wrapped in banana leaf in the other. They will walk anywhere up to 30 minutes to reach their local primary school. Women cut across the 'highway' to follow paths that lead off from this inland towards their gardens. They leave early (as soon as morning chores are done) so that they might work in their gardens before the heavy heat of the late morning and early afternoon hits. Those left in the village for the day will shelter from the heat in the middle of the day when the sun is at its hottest under houses or large mango trees.

CUSTOMARY SOCIAL ORGANISATION AND PRACTICE

The Halia and Haku share very similar traditional social organisation and practice. They are matrilineal: land, one's clan, and positions of authority are inherited through the mother. Chieftainship is hereditary, and both men and women can be regarded as chiefs. Male chiefs are *tsunono* in Halia and Haku, female chiefs are known as *teitahol*s among the Halia, and *tuhikau* among the Haku. Though tsunono inherit their power (through their mothers and their sisters, the *teitahol*), they must also act in the interests of their clan to keep their position of authority. There are four main clans, *Nakaripa, Naboen, Nakas* and *Natasi,* and these are made up of a number of different lineages. Though women hold the chiefly position of *teitahol,* in many ways this has more sacred or symbolic value than socio-political power.

Buka Island is fertile, covered in soil rich from volcanic loam. Mainly subsistence horticulturalists, the Halia and the Haku today rely mainly on sweet potato and taro (taro, as the traditional staple, is the clear preference of most though less prolific), though a variety of other greens are now grown. Fish and *kapul* (cuscus or possum) along with the ritual consumption of pig provide dietary protein. Store bought tin fish, rice, two-minute noodles, and tea and coffee are also regularly consumed.

Most people on Buka derive their income from agricultural or marine produce.[2] The two main export crops (and those grown by individuals as cash crops) are copra (smoked coconut kernel) and cocoa. All along the inland side of the 'highway' running up and down the island, there are old and new coconut groves. Here children, fathers and mothers 'work copra': plant *kru* (seedlings), clean the ground, collect coconuts, husk them, smoke them, remove the meat, pack the dried kernel. Makeshift smoking houses are constructed nearby each small plantation.

[2] R. M. Bourke and T. Betitis, "Sustainability of Agriculture in Bougainville Province, Papua New Guinea," (Canberra: Land Management Group, Department of Human Geography, 2002)., pp.74 – 78.

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Contact with Europeans occurred reasonably early for the peoples of Buka. Explorers first began travelling through and to Buka Island in the late eighteenth century. From the mid nineteenth century onwards Buka men were involved in indentured labour. Some were recruited by force, others voluntarily signed on to work on plantations mostly in Rabaul, but as far afield as Samoa, Fiji, and Queensland. Under German rule the recruitment of Buka men to indentured contracts increased, and some were even enlisted to serve as German 'irregular peace keeping forces'.[3] Despite the District being closed to labour recruitment in 1935 (because of population concerns), men continued to travel outside the district for waged labour opportunities. European planters in the twentieth century, having alienated large tracts of land in the north and on the west coast of the island, established coconut plantations and began to export copra.[4] From the 1930s onwards villagers also produced a small amount.

Catholic Marists were the first missionaries to arrive in Buka. They established a mission station on the west coast of the island in 1910, and by 1922 had stations at Hanahan and Lemanmanu along the east coast and at Gagan in the centre of the island.[5] Methodists also established a mission on the west coast at what came to be known as Skotolan. Today people most on Buka would identify as Christians, mainly Roman Catholics, but there are also followers of the United Church, Seventh Day Adventists, and other Pentecostal and evangelical churches. The traditional beliefs of the Halia and Haku are often translated through Christian belief, and vice versa.

HAHALIS WELFARE SOCIETY

It is impossible to talk about Buka and the changes to its landscape – the physical, but also social and political changes – without explaining something of the Hahalis

[3] This, alongside a dysentery epidemic in 1905, was blamed for the marked decline in the island's population between the 1880s and the beginning of the First Wold War. In 1888 the population was estimated as being somewhere between 12 – 15,000. In 1914 it was recorded as approximately 6,800. Eleanor Rimoldi, "Relationships of Love and Power in the Hahalis Welfare Society of Buka" (Ph.D, University of Auckland 1982)., p.118; Romeo Tohiana, "The Hahalis Welfare Society of Buka, North Solomons Province: Its Establishment, Subsequent Development and Eventual Decline, 1960 - 1980" (Hons., University of Papua New Guinea, 1982)., p.31.

[4] The first plantation on Buka Island was established at Dewau by a European in 1909, very quickly. Soroken was established soon after, around 1912. Tohiana, "The Hahalis Welfare Society of Buka, North Solomons Province: Its Establishment, Subsequent Development and Eventual Decline, 1960 - 1980"., p.34.

[5] Another two mission stations were built, one at Hahela in 1932, and another at Gogohe in 1962. Hugh Laracy, *Marists and Melanesians: A History of Catholic Missions in the Solomon Islands* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1976)., p.85.

Welfare Society. After the Second World War a number of radical, locally emergent, political movements sprung up across the territories. The Hahalis Welfare Society was one among many such movements.[6] These were locally led, autonomous movements that were generally antagonistic towards local Administrative rule, but which embraced some of the changes that contact with Europeans had brought and indeed often sought to transform or 'modernise' local, traditional practises or custom. The administration sought to contain these by labelling them 'cargo cults', and channelling the organising efforts of those involved into government institutions like the co-operative society or Local Village Council.

The Welfare Society initiated at Hahalis half way up the east coast, was eventually to extend its influence over the North and East coast of the whole island, and to reach across into the northern regions of mainland Bougainville. They are even said to have received membership dues from as far away as East New Britain. It had a very large number of supporters: in 1966 Francis Hagai, one of the leaders of the Society, claimed 7,000 supporters of a total 15,000 population in the local region. And it ran for a very long time. In 1960 it was officially registered as a cooperative society, but it had its roots in earlier organising in the 1950s.[7] It was strong throughout the 60s, began to falter in the 1970s, and by the 1980s had pretty much ceased to operate, having failed to deliver to all the economic benefits it had promised.

Welfare, as the Society is mostly referred to, often took the lead in identifying local needs, for instance water tanks, roads and permanent housing. Their efforts at establishing plantations and agricultural projects were some of the earliest and certainly the most extensive amongst indigenous Bougainvillean populations. From the early 1960s Welfare members were heavily involved in communal (*'wok bung'*) cash cropping for the society. In 1965-66 the local District Officer estimated that the 12 villages included in the Society were producing up to 400 tons of copra per year,

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[6] The Hahalis Welfare Society shared many important features with these others: movements such as Tomy Kabu's Purari Kampani in the Papuan Gulf, Yali and his 'rehabilition scheme', Paliau's Nupela Pasin in Manus, and the Maasina or Marching Rule in Malaita,. See Robert Francis Maher, *New Men of Papua : A Study in Culture Change* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1961); Theodore Schwartz, *The Paliau Movement in the Admiralty Islands, 1946-1954*, Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History ; (New York,: 1962), Laracy, *Marists and Melanesians: A History of Catholic Missions in the Solomon Islands;* Peter Lawrence, *Road Belong Cargo : A Study of the Cargo Movement in the Southern Madang District, New Guinea* ([Melbourne, Vic.]: Melbourne University Press, 1964); and see also G. W. Trompf, *Melanesian Religion* (Cambridge, England ; Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

[7] Max Rimoldi and Eleanor Rimoldi, *Hahalis and the Labour of Love : A Social Movement on Buka Island*, Explorations in Anthropology (Oxford ; Providence: Berg, 1992)., chapter 3.

which sold locally would return somewhere around $32,000 per annum.[8] Their ethos, later articulated as 'one ground, one fruit of the ground and one people', entailed the reform of land distribution, work routines, and sexual practice; a reorganisation of production and reproduction.[9]

By the early 1960s Welfare had come into conflict with the local Catholic missionaries who had been a strong influence in the area since their establishment of mission stations on the east coast in 1922. The District Annual Reports of the period describe church attendance as having been 'decimated' as a result of Welfare, so the Church's disapproval is not surprising. In addition to this the church was incensed at Welfare's sexual reforms: reforms which allowed a much more relaxed moral code for its followers than the church was willing to ignore.

The Australian colonial administration for its part was never quite sure what to do about Welfare. It believed there to be 'ancestor worship, cult mentality and fanaticism' simmering just below the surface.[10] In the early 1960s the administration, worried about Welfare's expanding influence, began its efforts in Buka to introduce Local Councils. Welfare members understood this, quite correctly, to be an effort to quell or co-opt their organising initiatives and rejected the idea of the Councils outright. They refused to pay tax to the Councils, and in February of 1962 the administration moved in with armed reinforcements. Some 800 men were arrested in Hahalis in a violent clash, with casualties overwhelmingly on the side of Welfare. Sent to jail, most of the men after appeal were released or had their sentences reduced. Welfare adherents were not demoralised by the events or arrests, but rather took strength from them.

After this early and violent clash with the movement in 1962 over taxes the administration took Welfare seriously as a political and economic local venture, if one they considered to be financially unsuccessful with 'doubtful' accounting systems and perhaps dishonest leaders.[11] The administration recognised that 'economic success' was not necessarily the main attraction for Welfare members:

> The main feature appears to be that, as far as the Members are concerned, it is an organisation run, controlled and created by Natives, and there are no Europeans telling them what to do.[12]

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[8] PNGA: 496/ARC6A917/BN7, Bougainville District Annual Report; Annual Report – Bougainville District 1965/66, p.23.
[9] Rimoldi and Rimoldi, *Hahalis and the Labour of Love : A Social Movement on Buka Island.*
[10] Ibid.
[11] PNGA: 496/ARC6A917/BN7, Bougainville District Annual Report; Annual Report – Bougainville District 1965/66, p.23; Annual Report – Bougainville District 1962 - 63, p.5.
[12] Ibid.

Other critics, most prominently the Catholic Mission, dismissively labelled all the Welfare's efforts as 'cargo-istic'.

The Welfare's modernising impulses, bearing fruit in the appearance of stores and permanent houses in Welfare strongholds, compelled the Catholic mission, and as well the administration, to compete with Welfare to provide their own parallel development projects, and to increase the resources they distributed to the area. The administration reported on numerous occasions that the people of Buka Island 'set the pace' for political development: 'What the Buka Island people do the rest of the District will sooner or later do'.[13] It was unclear whether the administration regarded this as a result of the competition set up between those in the various factions (Welfare vs. Council), or if they felt that it was something inherent within the social organisation of Buka societies that such organisation (producing Welfare and Council) had occurred in the first place.

Tensions continued between the administration, the missions and the Halia; and they also continued amongst the Halia themselves who split into factions known as 'Welfare' and 'Council'. Yet this division wasn't clear-cut. Some council adherents invested money in welfare, worked Welfare plantations, visited the contentious 'baby gardens' (one of the manifestations of Welfare's sexual reforms), all the while criticising Welfare as 'cargo cult' from the Council platform. Eventually, despite the uneven, but generally antagonistic relationship between the administration and Welfare, the colonial administration and the Local Council were forced to recognise Welfare as an enduring feature of the political landscape and one that would have to be worked with.[14] By the 1970s even old Council adherents were 'making peace' and were recognising that many of the plans and ideals of the leaders of the Hahalis Welfare Society were not dissimilar to those now being proposed by new Provincial government leaders.[15] Yet Welfare ultimately collapsed. This was due in large part to the fact that many of its supporters were not happy with what they judged to be its failure to deliver real economic benefits, and with the unequal distribution of what profits it did make.

THE BOUGAINVILLE 'CRISIS'

The Hahalis Welfare Society was in many ways the anti-colonial movement the colonial administration itself had interpreted it to be, and served as evidence of the

[13] PNGA: 496/ARC6A917/BN7, Bougainville District Annual Reports; 'Political Development - Trends in Native Thought and Attitude', Annual Report - Bougainville District, 1959-60, p.31.
[14] PNGA: 496/ARC6A917/BN7, Bougainville District Annual Reports.
[15] Eleanor Rimoldi, "Relationships of Love and Power in the Hahalis Welfare Society of Buka" (Thesis (Ph D), University of Auckland, 1982., 1982)., p.66.

Halia and Haku's desire for autonomy. When Bougainville Copper Limited sought to establish an open cut copper and gold mine at Panguna in Central Bougainville in the late 1960s there was also resistance from the local landowners against the imposition of this. This common struggle against the colonial administration helped build a shared regional identity and secessionist sentiment throughout Bougainville, support for which only increased in the lead up to Papua New Guinean independence.

More recently Bougainville was involved in a drawn out secessionist conflict. Between 1989 and 2000 a secessionist war, often referred to as 'the Crisis', took place on the island.[16] Many thousands died (mostly Bougainvilleans) as a direct result of the conflict. Under the peace accord Bougainville negotiated for a greater level of autonomy (it is now an Autonomous Region) and for a referendum on independence within ten to 15 years of the agreement coming into effect.[17] Bougainvillean women (including of course the women of Buka), have played an important role in peace negotiations and the subsequent period of reconciliation and post-conflict recovery, drawing on their customary role and status as mothers (mothers of the land, as well as mothers of combatants).[18]

[16] Though the peace process began in 1997, an accord was formally negotiated between the Papua New Guinean National Government and Bougainville Rebels in 2000.
[17] This was to take place 10 – 15 years after the signing of the Peace Accord in 2000. A. J. Regan and Helga Griffin, *Bougainville before the Conflict* (Canberra: Pandanus Books, 2005)., introduction.
[18] Josephine Sirivi and Marilyn Havini, *As Mothers of the Land: The Birth of the Bougainvillean Women for Peace and Freedom* (Australian National University: Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, 2004); Helen Hakena, Peter Ninnes, and Bert Jenkins, eds., *Ngos and Post-Conflict Recovery: The Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency, Bougainville* (Canberra, ACT: Asia Pacific Press and ANU E Press, 2006).

Figure 4.2 Along the east coast at Hahalis looking north, Buka Island, 2007, picture: Jemima Mowbray

Figure 4.3 Nahire, Hahalis, Buka Island, 2007, picture: Thiago Oppermann

Figure 4.4 John Teosin Highway, Buka Island, 2007
picture: Thiago Oppermann

4. Halia and Haku mothers, hard times in the village

Motherhood and change, Buka Island, 1950 – 2007

There is a *karanas* (gravel) road that stretches from the northern most tip of Buka island, down along the northeast coast to the main township. Village hamlets are now built along this road – the John Teosin Highway - on either side. When you walk along the road you are visible to villagers from where they sit under their houses, but you cannot necessarily see them. While I was in Buka I trekked up and down along this dusty road almost every day. On these walks those women that passed by me on the road met me with an informal Tok Pisin greeting, *'moning missus, yu go we?'*, or the equivalent in Halia, *'tsibong, alu elami m'e?'* (Morning! Where are you going?). Those greetings, however, that were sung out anonymously from the village precinct, their author unseen by me, were more direct: *'Eh, misis! Yu stap gut?! Na bebi bilo' yu we?'* 'Hey white lady, are you well? So tell us, where is your baby?'

These roadside requests to produce my baby – half serious, half in jest – were not the only time or place that I encountered women's curiosity regarding my childlessness. Invariably when I sat down to chat with women in the village our conversation would at some point come around to children – if I had them, when I would have them, why I did not yet have them. As the women in Basbi, the hamlet I lived in, grew more comfortable with me they began to tease me incessantly about conceiving, 'why not have a baby while in Buka?' The baby would be of this place, 'a true Buka baby'. My host mother Grace became adept at fending off such demands for me. She delivered my defence with great gusto, borrowing the line she had heard me dish out many times: 'Tsss, Leave her be – first she must finish her studies'. One day, however, after a morning spent in the gardens Grace and I sat alone together drinking tea in her smoky hauskuk (kitchen). As the afternoon's rain began to fall she broached the topic of children. 'Jemima', she said, 'I know first you must think of your studies, but don't forget that to have children is a wonderful thing.' Grace is a vivacious woman, well known for telling hilarious stories delivered loudly and accompanied by outrageous bursts of laughter – from her and her audience. On this occasion, however, her tone was soft and serious. I felt she had been thinking this over a while. Taken aback, I did not immediately know how to respond. 'Be careful. Don't leave it too long,' she continued, 'You don't want your womb to turn to stone'.

Inquiring after my children, or my plans to have children seemed to me to be an attempt by the women of Buka to create an immediate connection with me, because though we had the fact of being women in common, what this meant in our lives – for reasons of race and class and place to name just a few – was more different than same. I was from Australia and was white, well educated, well travelled, and reasonably well off. They had mostly been born in the village, had never left the island, generally had basic literacy, and struggled daily to raise monies towards the everyday basic necessities for their families and school fees for their children. Their shock and expressed confusion, and indeed their pity, when it became apparent I was childless at 30 by choice seemed to me a moment of further recognition of this difference and distance between them and myself.

The Halia and Haku are matrilineal, as everyone told me immediately on their discovering I was doing research about Buka, 'we follow the mother' ('mipela bihainim mama'). Children among the Halia and Haku are automatically classed as members of their mother's lineage (they belong to the matriclan). In Halia and Haku *pinaposa* (lineage) can also be referred to as *a toa ngorere*, 'one umbilicus', and members are spoken of as coming from *a toa bosu*, the 'one womb'. It is through lineage that a person determines, among other things, claims over land, relation to *tsunono* or chief (and thus, their own status), and relationships of avoidance and co-operation. Women are thus mothers: mothers of the ground, reproducers of the lineage.

In her ethnography on knowledge and practices relating to reproductive health on Nuakata Island in Milne Bay, Shelley Marrett reflected on what her 'being woman' meant for her relationship with the villagers with whom she was living while conducting fieldwork research. She explained she was prompted to such reflection when the Papuan (but not local) male community health worker she was tailing insisted that she, as a woman, would be in a better position to gain local village women's confidence and trust than he was.[1] Though recognising her 'sexed body' as tied to different cultural discourses and practices, and critical of a feminism that had its basis in an assumption of a universalist or essentialist experience for women, Mallet admitted – uncomfortably – to an inability to shake the feeling that she, as woman, held a shared set of fundamental experiences and knowledge with Nuakata women based on a shared potential to bear children:

> In this sense, the spectres of maternity and heterosexuality infused my notion of being woman. Further I assumed that these shared forms and

[1] Shelley Mallett, *Conceiving Cultures: Reproducing People & Places on Nuakata, Papua New Guinea* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2003), p.66.

potentialities would provide us with a basis to speak and build relationships with one another.[2]

Mallet's response and Buka women's attempts to draw me on my plans for children, and the quick intimacy of the relation that could build from these discussions, speak to the force of the body – of corporeal experience and potentiality – in the shaping of subjectivities. Western feminist thinkers have explored this extensively, many arguing that our ability to conceive and carry a child through to labour is an essential or constitutive condition of 'being woman'.[3] Maternity, even the possibility of it, is imagined as providing connection between all those in bodies 'sexed woman'. This romanticisation of the 'bodily' mother, however, has been widely critiqued for all those mothers, and indeed *women*, it fails to represent.[4]

And of course being a mother and what is often imagined as the shared experience of maternity has, as Margaret Jolly has noted, just as frequently divided women.[5] This acknowledgement prompts not simply questions regarding what maternity and motherhood have meant in different places at different times but also those of how and why certain mothering practices, labour, and skills have come to be valued over others, with certain groups of women classed 'good mothers', and others vilified as incompetent, careless, and unfeeling. The classification of mothers as 'other' has invariably been made along the axes of race, class, and ethnicity. In the Pacific colonial context the valuing of certain practices has consistently – and problematically – been framed, Margaret Jolly suggests, as a 'contest between

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[2] Ibid, p.72.

[3] Mary O'Brien sees the 'moment of birth' as crucial in constructing a particular biological relation to her child, and creating an embodied consciousness of this. Ruddick looks to 'maternal practice' to establish her argument regarding a distinctive way of thinking and understanding for women, though she claims – I think not completely successfully – not to be assuming here a 'universal' 'maternal perspective'. Julia Kristeva writes a phenomenological account of the maternal relation, how pregnancy, birth, lactation and so on break down or disallow barriers between mother and child. Iris Marion Young's work was focused on bodily experience and the phenomenological creation of a female subjectivity (linked to female subordination) that included pregnancy and birth, but that was not exclusive (or restricted) to this. Mary O'Brien, *Reproducing the World: Essays in Feminist Theory* (Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 1989); Sara Ruddick, *Maternal Thinking: Towards a Politics of Peace* (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1989); Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980) see in particular chapters 6 and 9; and Iris Marion Young, *On Female Body Experience: 'Throwing Like a Girl' and Other Essays* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[4] Mothers who, for example, adopt, foster, fall pregnant by alternative means. Women who, for example, are unable to fall pregnant or choose not to, or who 'mother' without taking on full guardianship of a child. See Ellen Ross for an excellent critique of the romanticisation of motherhood literature emerging in 1980s feminist scholarship. Ellen Ross, "Review: New Thoughts on 'the Oldest Vocation': Mothers and Motherhood in Recent Feminist Scholarship," *Signs* 20, no. 2 (1995).

[5] Margaret Jolly, "Other Mothers: Maternal 'Insouciance' and the Depopulation Debate in Fiji and Vanuatu, 1890 - 1930," in *Maternities and Modernities : Colonial and Postcolonial Experiences in Asia and the Pacific*, ed. Margaret Jolly and Kalpana Ram (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p.177.

tradition and modernity'.[6] This is a framing that mapped neatly onto the colonial 'civilising' trope: colonial actors were saving women and their children as they modernised the 'primitive', traditional mother.

When Europeans colonised the south Pacific they were quick to criticise indigenous people's parenting, and in particular to label indigenous women as neglectful mothers. From the beginning of the twentieth century missionaries and the colonial state were involved in attempts to 'modernise' indigenous women's maternal practice. 'Improving' or modernising practice involved both the medicalisation of maternity (practices relating to the maternal body and birthing) and the disciplining of the maternal relation (on whom and how mother love was distributed). Such attempts at reform were never simply a moral project of civilising and enlightenment (though they were this too). They were also very clearly understood as practical interventions required to ensure a continued labour supply in the colonies and increasingly as a way of bringing indigenous women under the control and surveillance of the colonial state as this became a priority in the period following the Second World War.

This chapter is largely concerned with how Halia and Haku women experienced the changes regarding motherhood and mothering practice that were taking place in the village. What did it mean to be a mother? What was expected of mothers, and how was this changing? How were colonial interventions aimed at indigenous women as mothers perceived, and how did women engage with them? Many of the changes to village 'family life' taking place during the period after the war were not necessarily due to direct state intervention, but related to broader changes within the village, though nonetheless occurring as a result of colonialism and contact. The Halia and Haku themselves were clearly involved in directing attempts at the reform and transformation of family life as they came to adopt – even embrace – some aspects of 'modernisation'. For women the various changes had mixed results.

I begin by outlining how colonial critiques of indigenous mothers served to justify colonial interventions into women's lives first by missionaries, then in the second half of the twentieth century, by the colonial administration. I then assess colonial interventions directed at mothers in Buka, examining what changes were hoped for, what changes occurred, and what drove that process of change. Attention to women's personal narratives about their own maternal practice, and their memories and narration of their mothers' practice is revealing of the strategies, struggles,

[6] Margaret Jolly, "Introduction - Colonial and Postcolonial Plots in Histories of Maternities and Modernities," in *Maternities and Modernities : Colonial and Postcolonial Experiences in Asia and the Pacific*, ed. Margaret Jolly and Kalpana Ram (Cambridge Cambridge University Press, 1998.), p.1.

accommodations and agency of the women on whom colonial interventions were focused.

However the exercise of women's agency – the uptake or rejection of certain practices – should not, as Margaret Jolly has made clear, 'be construed as a matter of voluntaristic choices, as if choosing between modes of mothering is akin to wheeling a supermarket trolley'.[7] Jolly's point here is that agency is structured and constrained not only through gender, but also a subject's class, ethnicity and race (and when talking of village women's lives add in categories of age, status, levels of education attained, and capacity to earn an income). Women's mothering 'choices' can only be understood with reference to the particular circumstances in which women's decisions were made. With this in mind, I shift in the last part of the chapter from a general discussion of change and Halia and Haku motherhood and maternal practice, to a closer examination of stories two women told me of their childhoods. These stand out from others shared with me in the women's assessment of their mothers as having neglected their rights as children. Through these two narratives of maternal neglect I identify and attempt to unpack the new 'rights' discourse that emerged out of the post-Crisis context in Bougainville as a way of talking about and, indeed articulating, new (and old) expectations of what it means to be a 'good mother'.

THE INDIGENOUS WOMAN AS 'BAD MOTHER'

In colonial literature and reportage on Papua and New Guinea the poor parental care indigenous peoples were said to show towards their children was one of several aspects of traditional social life offered as evidence of the 'brutal', primitive nature of 'native society'. Travelling through Papua in 1911, Mr Riley, one of two Australian politicians on a tour of the colony, praised the efforts of missionaries stating that the native children lucky enough to be educated on mission stations had been 'rescued from a living death' in the village.[8] Lilian Overell in her 'ethnographic' travelogue *A Woman's Impressions of German New Guinea* published between the wars, wove together cannibalism and an indigenous lack of paternal instinct in one lurid paragraph:

> In one district of New Ireland today there are no children under ten. Three of four years ago there was a severe famine there and all the young children were eaten. None have been born since. When questioned as to the scarcity of children the *luluais* reply, 'Mary no like'. Not far from Rabaul a father was

[7] Ibid, p.1.

[8] Report of two Australian MPs' tour of Papua, "The Papuan Trip," *Sydney Morning Herald* 7 July 1911.

annoyed at the persistent crying of his little son and in a rage chopped off his head. Then the whole family ate the corpse. So even near the white settlements the cannibal instinct still survives.[9]

Her description of indigenous customary practice (here and in much of the rest of the book) reads as trope rather than ethnographic observation, but contemporaries cited the book as evidence of her authoritative knowledge of New Guinea.[10]

Missionary narratives from the field were replete with examples of cruel customs that involved young children and infants. Invocation of the 'innocent native child' justified missionary intervention, and encouraged generous donations from congregations back 'home' to fund their efforts. Reverend JT Field's report on the progress of the Methodist Foreign Missions to a public meeting in South Australia in 1911, for example, relayed in some detail the successful work of the Bromilows of Papua. The 'heathen, howling cannibal savages' among whom they were working were slowly being brought safely under the influence of the missions. This was a slow process, one that oftentimes necessitated direct intervention. Mrs Bromilow, he told his audience, had 'once rescued a native child from being buried with his dead mother, as was the custom among the natives'.[11] Gideon, the child who had been saved, had not only survived but now showed 'every promise of becoming a successful preacher'.[12] Narratives of neglect assured their European audiences that missionaries were the natives' only chance for spiritual but also literal salvation.[13]

Indigenous women were singled out as particularly culpable. Stewart Firth has written of the way in which the category of 'the Native' was created by the coloniser in order to successfully manage indigenous populations in the Pacific colonial territories. This was a category very clearly sexed male.[14] Extending this, Vicki Lukere observed perceptively that alongside 'the Native' – a lazy, unenthusiastic male labourer – stood his female counterpart, 'the Native Mother': a callous,

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[9] Lilian Overell, *A Woman's Impressions of German New Guinea*, Second Edition ed. (London: The Bodley Head Ltd, 1929).

[10] See for example "Amusements. New Guinea. Miss Lilian Overell's Experiences," *The Mercury* 24 September 1924.

[11] "Church Intelligence: Methodist Foreign Missions," *The Advertiser* 29 September 1911. See also W.E. Bromilow, *Twenty Years among Primitive Papuans* (London: The Epworth Press, 1929), which devotes all of chapter 7 to the efforts of the LMS missionary and his wife to reform the practice of child burial.

[12] "Church Intelligence: Methodist Foreign Missions."

[13] See also Andre Dupeyrat, *Mitsinari; Twenty One Years among the Papuans* (London: Staples Press, 1954). French missionary and publicist Dupeyrat, for example, described the 'dark side' of the New Guinea 'natives' among whom he worked. He reported that when he arrived the locals still practised 'sorcery, cannibalism, the slaughter of babies and old people and bestial forms of paganism.'

[14] Stewart Firth, "Colonial Administration and the Invention of the Native," in *The Cambridge History of Pacific Islanders*, ed. Donald Denoon, et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

unfeeling, and overworked maternal figure.[15] Within colonial texts indigenous mothers were routinely described as ignorant, slovenly, and superstitious, lacking in an appropriate level of maternal feeling towards their children. Reverend Charles Abel of the early established Kwato mission station famously made the following cutting observation of the mothering instincts of the local indigenous women:

> It seems a terrible thing to say of any human beings ... but it seems true of these people among whom I live, that they do not know what love is ... I know of no animal, except perhaps the duck, which is more careless in attending to its young that the average Papuan mother.[16]

Mothers on occasion had shown their children kindness, he wrote, but 'their interest never rises to what we know as love'. The vague affection witnessed was 'mere animal propensity compared with the love that reigns in a Christian mother's heart'.[17] Artist Ellis Silas, recalling his 'quaint adventures' in the Trobriand Islands, recounted the following 'confounding' story of indigenous mothering practice for an Australian and European audience as testament to native mothers' callousness:

> A white man was once walking along the beach when he saw a native woman deliberately throw her very young infant into the water. She stood quietly watching its struggles, and the white, convinced that she was trying to drown the baby, ran to the spot. Before he could reach it, however, the woman calmly pulled the child out of the water and went off. Next day the same thing happened. The woman was merely teaching the child to swim.[18]

The perceived cruelty and heartlessness of the indigenous mother was ascribed to the hardship involved in the indigenous way of life. A traditional, brutal existence had inured women to their own natural emotional response. Everyday life was a constant struggle, and love – romantic love, parental love – in this context was a luxury.[19] Avoidance of pregnancy and the practice of 'sparse' parenting were

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[15] Vicki Lukere, "The Native Mother," in *The Cambridge History of the Pacific Islanders*, ed. Donald Denoon, et al. (Cabridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). Following the logic of contemporary child experts' psychoanalytic and behaviourist theories regarding mothers 'back home', the blame for 'the lazy native' could be placed squarely at the feet of his 'native mother'. Her maternal deficiencies, in particular her lack of discipline, were to blame.

[16] Rev. Charles Abel quoted in Russell W. Abel, *Charles W. Abel of Kwato : Forty Years in Dark Papua* (New York Fleming H. Revell, 1934), pp.50 – 51.

[17] Rev. Charles Abel quoted in Ibid, p.51.

[18] Ellis Silas, *A Primitive Arcadia: Being the Impressions of an Artist in Papua* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1926). This passage from Silas' memoir was also published in a number of Australian newspapers, including *The Canberra Times*, as an excerpt for publicity. See "Life in Papua, an Artist's Quaint Adventures," *The Canberra Times* 25 November 1926.

[19] Regarding romantic love, see for example this paragraph in which Rev J. W. Durrad explains the pragmatics of partner choice in Melanesia given the harsh conditions of village life: 'Women even more than men are the survival of the fittest, for no man will marry anyone incapable of working. A girl with a physical weakness will remain unwanted. One would find no chivalrous youth marrying a weak girl to whom he would devote his strength

explained as avoidance of additional work by already overworked women.[20] Overell, for example, explained her observations regarding infanticide and the use of abortifacients with reference to women's workload. 'The women,' she wrote, 'are not very anxious to have children. A family adds to their burdens, and their men folk give them very little help.'[21] Concern regarding 'depopulation' compelled the administration to pay more attention to the conditions under which women lived, Papuan Administrator Sir Hubert Murray stating in 1932:

> Our fight against depopulation will be a losing fight, unless we can discover the motives which influence women in refusing to become mothers, and having realised these motives, succeed in removing them.[22]

Colonial reforms to indigenous society were supposed to result in an easier life for the indigenous woman, allowing her to better meet her duties as a mother. William Groves, who later went on to become Director of the Department of Education after World War Two, wrote an early essay on culture contact that came to be widely referenced by those discussing and debating 'good native administration' between the wars.[23] In the essay he outlined that part of any good 'native education' would include efforts to 'make life less arduous and less exacting for the women'.[24] He recommended practical reforms, calling for an improvement in housing, personal hygiene, food production, diet, and the acquisition of European materials. These changes would 'simplify their everyday lives' and give women more time to care for their children and to 'enjoy some of the refinements of life which European contact will make increasingly available'.[25] Only then would they be ready and able to 'contribute their part to the general development and uplift [of the colony]'.[26]

That indigenous women were to contribute to the colony as mothers – that is, as reproducers of labour – was evident when, in a discussion on labour recruitment and the need for the territories to increase their populations just after the war, the

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and help. Such romance is not to be found in Melanesia.' Reverend J. W. Durrad, "The Depopulation of Melanesia," in *Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia*, ed. W. H. R. Rivers (Cambridge [Eng.]: The University press, 1922), p.19.

[20] Ibid, p.14.

[21] Overell, *A Woman's Impressions of German New Guinea*, 90, p.90, See also Felix Speiser, "Decadence and Preservation in the New Hebrides," in *Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia*, ed. WHR Rivers (Cambridge [Eng.]: The University Press, 1922). Here Speiser explains the indigenous woman's motives for abortion as the desire for an easy life unburdened by children, and the wish to disappoint a brutal husband.

[22] Sir Hubert Murray quoted in Rimoldis, *Labor of Love*, p.46.

[23] W C Groves, *Native Education and Culture Contact in New Guinea: A Scientific Approach, Being a Study of the Part That Education Might Play in the Social Adjustment and Future Development of the Natives of the Territory of New Guinea*, 1st ed. (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne Uni Press, 1936; reprint, 1977, AMS Press).

[24] Ibid, p.68, (my italics).

[25] Ibid, pp.68 – 69.

[26] Ibid.

Chairman of the Inter Departmental Committee on Indigenous Welfare declared that:

> the Department of Education could help by having female officers point out to the native women that it is most important to have children; the whole future of the native people is tied up with their population.[27]

Bad mothering was not just viewed as a personal moral failing by the colonisers. 'Ignorant native mothers' could be blamed for the high child mortality rates among indigenous communities.[28] Traditional mothering practices were believed to be placing a check on population growth and contributing to depopulation in the region.[29]

'THE PROBLEM OF DEPOPULATION' IN THE PACIFIC

Margaret Jolly and Vicki Lukere have written extensively on the way in which efforts at reforming indigenous women's mothering practices across the Pacific, and specifically in the Fijian and Vanuatu context, were closely connected to colonial concerns regarding declining indigenous populations, or 'the problem of depopulation'.[30] Jolly, citing Anna Davin's important early work on motherhood and imperialism, saw this as comparable to and indeed an extension of late nineteenth century and early twentieth century anxieties in the metropole regarding working class mothers' immoral influence in the 'domestic home' (their promiscuity and consumption of alcohol) and their inadequacy as mothers (their carelessness and lack of discipline). There is clear resonance between the disapproval focused on working class British mothers and mothers in the Pacific Island colonies. As Jolly argues,

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[27] PNGA(69/80-3-2, SDAW – Health Education Infant Maternal Welfare; Jones, Head of District Services and Native Affairs, Minutes of Inter Dept meeting, 12 April 1949.

[28] From the late nineteenth through the early twentieth century missionaries, administrators and anthropologists worried over the 'problem' of depopulation in the Pacific, debating amongst themselves whether the causes they identified (the indigenous use of contraception, abortion, and infanticide and their demonstrated lack of concern or consistent care and discipline for their children) were innate features of pre-colonial indigenous society or whether they were introduced, or at least exacerbated by, colonialism. See the various contributions to W. H. R. Rivers, *Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia* (Cambridge [Eng.]: The University press, 1922). See also New Guinea Annual Report, 1921/22, section 153; J. H. P. Murray, *Papua or British New Guinea* (London: T. F. Unwin, 1912), p.375; J. H. P. Murray, "Review of the Australian Administration in Papua from 1907 to 1920," (Port Moresby: Edward George Baker; Government Printer, 192?).

[29] See Andrew Lattas, "Humanitarianism and Australian Nationalism in Colonial Papua: Hubert Murray and the Project of Caring for the Self of the Coloniser and the Colonized," *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 7, no. 2 (1996), pp.147 – 149.

[30] Jolly, "Other Mothers: Maternal 'Insouciance' and the Depopulation Debate in Fiji and Vanuatu, 1890 - 1930."; Lukere, "The Native Mother."; and see also Vicki Lukere, "Mothers of the Taukei: Fijian Women and the Decrease of the Race" (Ph.D, Australian National University, 1997).

> both were singled out for maternal deficiency – for the dirt and dark of their houses, for their unhygienic forms of birthing and nurture, for their poverty, or for the simple fact that they were both workers and mothers.[31]

Irresponsibly neglecting their primary duty to nation – motherhood - British working class women were accused of putting at risk the nation's most important resource - the 'British race' - and as a result Empire.[32] These anxieties translated into a class-based maternalism in which middle class women, viewed as the ideal, competent mother (whether or not they had children), instructed their working class charges on appropriate care through state endorsed measures such as mothercraft classes delivered by charitable of voluntary organisations, health visits to the home, and competitions for bonny babies.[33] In the colonial context, as Jolly makes clear, the class-based maternalism endorsed by the British state was present in the colonies in the form of a race-based maternalism. White women – as employees of the state, missionaries, or simply as volunteers – were relied on to model appropriate motherly practice for indigenous women.

Though concerns regarding depopulation were consistently voiced, there was variation among Pacific administrations in terms of how effectively or extensively surveillance and intervention measures aimed at indigenous women could be introduced. Jolly argues that in Fiji, where the preservation of the Fijian race and culture was prioritised, a more interventionist approach was taken.[34] In the late 1890s a Commission was established to inquire into the 'decrease of the native population' and recommended a whole range of measures. Some of these related to the effectiveness of administrative practice and infrastructure delivery, some to reform of village organisation. The remainder were focused on 'improving' the mothering and sexual propriety of indigenous women.[35] In Vanuatu, on the other hand, the political context of colonial rule (Vanuatu was under joint condominium

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[31] Jolly, "Introduction - Colonial and Postcolonial Plots in Histories of Maternities and Modernities.", p.9.

[32] Jolly, "Other Mothers: Maternal 'Insouciance' and the Depopulation Debate in Fiji and Vanuatu, 1890 - 1930.", pp.178-182.

[33] Ibid, pp.180-181; and see Anna Davin's important early essay, 'Imperialism and Motherhood' (1978), reprinted as Anna Davin, "Imperialism and Motherhood," in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, ed. Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 1997), pp.89-90.

[34] Jolly, "Other Mothers: Maternal 'Insouciance' and the Depopulation Debate in Fiji and Vanuatu, 1890 - 1930.", p.182.

[35] Women were to be subject to inquests into their infant's deaths, even where babies were stillborn or had miscarried. Deterrents against abortion were to be toughened and more frequently and effectively carried through. Other reforms included the encouraging of the use of cow or goat's milk by mothers, the improving of infant's diets, the enacting of legislation to prevent neglect of children, the provisioning of rewards for early marriage and large families, and the encouraging of 'hygiene missions' to be carried out by European women (generally from mission women). Lukere, "The Native Mother."

rule between France and Britain) meant less investment in the preservation of indigenous custom and culture meant that the solution offered for a shortage of labour was imported 'Asiatic' labourers, rather than a focus on decreasing infant mortality rates.[36] The project of transforming indigenous mothering and maternity practices was left to the missionaries.

In Papua and New Guinea a lack of resources also meant this work, at least in the first half of the twentieth century, was largely left to the missions. Believing depopulation was in large part a result of immoral and unsanitary traditional practice, missionaries felt that their work in this area would be achieved through the discouragement of this. In their place they encouraged the native's adoption of a new set of moral values and Christian behaviours. Anthropologist Adam Reed explained that Wesleyan Methodists working among the Massim in Papua felt their work in curbing the flagrant sexual promiscuity of women (and the channelling of any ensuing surplus energies into more Christian pursuits) had helped preserve indigenous life and address the issue of depopulation.[37] Reverend Ben Butcher of the London Missionary Society boasted in 1928 of the success of combined efforts by the missions and administration to transform the local peoples' outlook and traditional practice in the Kikori Delta. This was work that must continue, he stressed, 'if the race is to survive'.[38]

Apart from missions' general work 'civilising' and Christianising indigenous communities, more focused interventions were also carried out. Taking seriously the admonishment 'suffer the little children', missionaries determined infant mortality to be one of the most serious problems facing the local population. Female missionaries were considered best placed to attend to this. As the Methodist Sisters Corfield and Gibb explained, 'The saving of the race depended largely on our women'.[39] From the very start of their work with indigenous women in Papua and New Guinea, female missionaries introduced training in basic physiology and hygiene into their curriculums, alongside the promotion of certain marital and domestic ideals aimed at transforming village women into Christian homemakers.

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[36] Jolly, "Other Mothers: Maternal 'Insouciance' and the Depopulation Debate in Fiji and Vanuatu, 1890 - 1930."

[37] Adam Reed, "Contested Images and Common Strategies: Early Colonial Sexual Politics in the Massim," in *Sites of Desires, Economies of Pleasure: Sexualities in Asia and the Pacific*, ed. Lenore Manderson and Margaret Jolly (Chicago, Ill.: Chicago University Press, 1997), pp.68 – 69.

[38] "Increase or Decrease? What Recent Reports Show (Pacific Natives)," *Sydney Morning Herald* 3 July 1928.

[39] Corfield and Gibb quoted in Diane Langmore, *Missionary Lives: Papua 1874 - 1914* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989), p.173.

Though content for missionaries to play the more active role in this work, the two colonial administrations did introduce a number of measures addressing (though some only indirectly) the problem of depopulation. Limits were placed on the number of men that could be recruited for plantation work in areas where population decline had been identified as a problem.[40] Various Native Regulations were passed discouraging adultery, divorce and desertion, and allowing for intervention in situations of venereal disease.[41] Abortion was formally criminalised in 1913 in Papua, and native birth control prohibited in New Guinea.[42] From 1921 onwards a baby bonus of five shillings was paid to fathers of families with four or more children, with an extra shilling paid for every additional child.[43] In the 1930s the Papuan administration took some tentative steps towards the delivery of infant and maternal welfare services, but this was very quickly abandoned when they deemed the costs prohibitive.[44]

After the Second World War, the administration's provision of welfare to women via infant and maternal welfare clinics and women's clubs were clear attempts to make 'modern mothers' of village women. The Buka women I interviewed remembered these attempts to colonise the maternal. In the next section I turn to Buka women's oral histories to make sense of the Clinic and the Club as policy practically experienced – what did these mean within village women's lives? How and why did village women engage with colonial medical and welfare services?

THE CLINIC IN BUKA

Soon after the relocation of colonial district headquarters to Sohano in 1946 a hospital was established on the small island. Medical services were provided at Sohano

[40] See for example the New Guinea Annual Report 1921/22 which reported that in New Ireland and Larongai (New Hanover) prohibition across most of the islands had been in place for some time due to evidence of serious population decline, (paragraph 152).

[41] Reed, "Contested Images and Common Strategies: Early Colonial Sexual Politics in the Massim.", pp.57 – 59.

[42] Such a ban, though, was largely ineffective given the practical limits of detecting and regulating this within the village setting.

[43] Edward P Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea* (Sydney: Australia and New Zealand Book Co., 1975), p.32; Planters, concerned about the consequences that a drop in local population numbers might have on the long term availability of labour, also intervened occasionally. Feeling the colonial state's measures to be ineffective, the German merchant and planter Heinrich Rudolph Wahlen instituted a payment of 5/- for every healthy child born to a local woman in the Ninigo Islands where he had established plantations at the turn of the century. 'Every child born had to be considered as capital for me. The more natives in the group, the less labourers I had to recruit elsewhere'. H.R. Wahlen, "How I Repopulated the Ninigos," *Pacific Islands Monthly* 1952, p.77.

[44] Attempting to build co-operation between administration and missions, two government nurses were appointed by Walter Mersh Strong, Chief Medical Officer of Papua, to work at mission stations training indigenous mothers in infant care. Donald Denoon and Kathleen Dugan, *Public Health in Papua New Guinea: Medical Possibility and Social Constraint, 1884 - 1984* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p.39. And see chapter 2, this thesis.

hospital for anyone who might seek to access them, but most villagers continued to come into contact with medical services through the missions.[45] This was true of infant and maternal welfare care, an area in which the missions had made some attempt to provide specialist care.[46] From the late 1950s nursing Sisters held regular clinics at village aid posts at the mission stations across the island (Hahela, Gagan, Hanahan, Lemanmanu, and from 1962 Gogohei), with women travelling from surrounding villages to attend. At Clinic they weighed babies, provided antenatal advice to expectant mothers, postnatal advice for infants, and noted down any births and deaths of children in the village.[47] They also encouraged women to attend hospital to give birth.

Among older Buka women there was some initial resistance to going into hospital to give birth. Some felt it was important to stay in the village to give birth because their ancestors (their spirits, invested in the place) would help the women, easing the birthing process and making the baby come quicker.[48] Others described their attendance at the hospital and the clinic as having occurred simply because of proximity to colonial health services. Born in 1937, Clara Kolihana told me she had given birth to ten children. During the first three of her pregnancies Clara's husband had been working for the colonial administration and they lived on the small island of Sohano where the administration's headquarters were based. Living on Sohano she could easily attend the administration hospital during her pregnancy. Indeed she felt that given her husband was employed by the administration she could not avoid it. When the attending doctor had concerns about the birth, he organised for her to travel to Nonga Base hospital in Rabaul for a caesarian. She described the experience of giving birth in hospital:

> We went to Nonga, and then I started to feel the pains from the child. I felt it and told my husband. He went and got the nurse and I told her – I've got pain now. They told me then that I was forbidden to eat. I wasn't allowed to

[45] Romeo Tohiana, "The Hahalis Welfare Society of Buka, North Solomons Province: Its Establishment, Subsequent Development and Eventual Decline, 1960 - 1980" (Hons., University of Papua New Guinea, 1982), pp.37 – 38.

[46] In 1928 the Methodists at Skotolan had established a baby care centre, driving the Marists along the east coast of the island to begin providing some kinds of basic medical service also at their mission stations. The first Catholic mission to do so on Buka was at Hahela in the south (near Buka town, established 1932). They had established an aid post at Hanahan by the 1950s. In the late 1960s they were also running one at Lemanmanu mission, and by the early 1970s the Catholic Sisters had added a maternity ward onto their small hospital. This loose timeline pulled together with reference to Hugh Laracy, *Marists and Melanesians: A History of Catholic Missions in the Solomon Islands* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1976), pp.90 – 92; Mary Tenevi, 29 October 2006, Lemanmanu; Sister Lorraine Garasu, 5 March 2007, Chabai.

[47] PNGA: 69/80-2-11, Social Development, Advancement of Women Bougainville; Social Development, Bougainville District Report 1961/1962.

[48] Marietta Rumina, 20 February 2007, Hanahan.

eat and they got ready to cut into me. They cut me for one child only, for this first born of mine – Robert. They operated on me and then I slept.

All the nurses looked after this baby boy of mine. They looked after him because you understand I wasn't strong after this ... We stayed there for what must have been close to two months. I didn't get to breastfeed my baby. And then I tried after two months and the baby fed, and they let him go with us. We returned home on the ship [from Nonga to Sohano].[49]

Her next two children were born in the hospital at Sohano, and the following seven – after she had moved back to Elutupan – were born in the village. Clara's description of giving birth in the village suggested a more solitary experience than that at Nonga:

No-one came to help me. It was just me. I pulled together my courage (*'taitim bun bilong mi'*, drew on all my strength) so I could give birth. It was just me alone. Once I'd given birth then the other village women would hear the baby cry, and then they would come cut the baby's cord, that was it.

I would finish, then I would rest. But there was not one person who would bring food for myself and my family. So okay, then when I could I would carry the baby and go out to the bush and carry back sweet potato.[50]

Clara's description is interesting in its contrasting evocations of the experience of the hospital and of the village. Her experience of the hospital is one marked by attention, efficiency and expertise, but also distance (she didn't get to breastfeed or care for her baby for two months). By contrast, birthing in the village was narrated as an isolated, no fuss experience ('it was just me alone'), but one in which the immediacy of work and the intimacy of care (she carried the baby as she worked) immediately following this was clearly apparent.

The Halia and Haku did not have women who customarily took on the role of village midwife. As with Clara's experience, women more commonly delivered unattended, though many talked about receiving help from older women on hand during labour.[51] Female relatives (often the woman's mother and her in-laws) brought food and helped care for older children in the weeks immediately following birth.[52] After birthing women were given 'bush medicines': various herbs to 'get rid of the blood' and 'clean out the stomach'. Special 'magic' was performed to protect

[49] Clara Kolihana, 21 February 2007, Elutupan.
[50] Clara Kolihana, 21 February 2007, Elutupan.
[51] Jessia Marise, 21 February 2007, Elutupan; Celestine Masirei, 9 Nov 2006, Hahalis.
[52] Jessie Marise, 21 February 2007, Elutupan; Marietta Rumina, 20 February 2007, Hanahan.

mothers and their newborns.[53] Though there were no traditional birthing attendants or midwives, this specialised knowledge had been invested in individual women. Many believed that now with the passing of the old women who had held this knowledge, this knowledge was now lost.

By the 1960s the administration reported a growing number of women – though still a clear minority – were attending Clinic during pregnancy and a number were going into hospital to give birth, especially where, as in the case of Clara, complications were expected.[54] When I asked why women began to attend clinic and to give birth in hospital rather than in the village I was often given short, one-word answers: 'education', 'development'. Marietta Rumina – born in 1953 in the village and raised and still living in Hanahan – was particularly blunt in her reply to this question, 'now we have hospitals and schools and churches'.[55] I read her tone here as implying she thought my question redundant: women attended because they wanted to take advantage of the benefits of development. When I pressed further, women told of being actively encouraged by the local Catholic Sisters (in Buka, nursing sisters were generally attached to the local Catholic Mission stations and Clinics). Marietta described the Sisters' involvement:

> The Sisters they encouraged them to go to the hospital to give birth. And to go to clinic when they were pregnant. So that's how they ... well they got used to going to the hospital then ... Because the Sisters would say, 'no, you can't give birth in the village because the baby could die, and perhaps the mother will die'. Because there was no medicine to give you [in the village], no medicine to stop the blood from flowing.[56]

Most women gave birth (and still give birth) in the village, unless there were expected complications. There was a general sense among women that giving birth at hospital was safer because of access to medicines and medical staff. However, actually attending hospital for the birth, located as it was at Sohano, was not an easy, even accessible, option for most. Celestine Masirei, 45 and mother of three daughters, had given birth to all three children in the village:

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[53] Marietta Rumina, 20 February 2007, Hanahan Marietta, for example, described the use of kambang – ground up limestone – to protect mother and child from bad spirits or devils. This was put on the head of the bed in which the baby and mother slept.
[54] PNGA: 69/80-2-11, Social Development, Advancement of Women Bougainville; Social Development, Bougainville District Report 1961/1962; Sister Lorraine Garasu, 5 March 2007, Chabai.
[55] Marietta Rumina, 20 February 2007, Hanahan.
[56] Marietta Rumina, 20 February 2007, Hanahan.

C: I gave birth in the village. Because these times there wasn't a car [transport, generally a truck] that was close by. So I had the babies in the village.

J: Was it hard giving birth in the village?

C: No, it's the same as in the hospital. Just the same.[57]

I interpreted Celestine's response here to imply not so much that she understood the actual experiences as 'just the same', but that given her personal circumstances giving birth in the village was an equivalent and an *appropriate* choice.

When information about western contraceptive methods became available women were keen to acquire and share this. By the late 1960s the administration's earlier concern regarding depopulation had shifted, and they had begun to focus on the need for population control and family planning.[58] In 1967 the Director of the Department of Public Health, Dr Roy Scragg, directly involved in collecting detailed information on fertility and demography on Buka Island, warned that 'unrestrained fertility cannot proceed without harm to the family or the country or both'.[59] While in some areas family planning advice was introduced into existing administration delivered infant and maternal welfare programs in the early 1960s, in Buka infant welfare was left 'wholly in the hands of the Ladies of the Christian Missions' until the mid 1960s.[60] Sisters at mission aid posts and hospitals shared limited information about family planning with village women: this was almost entirely restricted to information about the rhythm method. One village woman, in her early 40s when I interviewed her and a mother of six, talked about learning 'the rhythm method' from a nursing sister. When she found that it worked well for her she passed it on to other women in the village, 'I listened to her advice and it was four years, might even be five, that I didn't fall pregnant. And so I told the other women about this'.[61] Other forms of contraceptives were available, but only from the government clinic at the Sohano hospital. Distance prohibited easy access to most of these in any case, as travelling to the government clinic at Sohano – where these were on offer – was a

[57] Celestine Masirei, 9 November 2006, Hahalis.
[58] The colonial administration formally introduced family planning as part of its health policy (to be delivered via the Department of Public Health) in 1968. The number of family planning clinics increased and the services provided expanded from 1974, when the International Planned Parenthood Federation began to fund services in Papua New Guinea. The policy on family planning had had no real impact on fertility levels by the 1980s. William K. A. Agyei, *Fertility and Family Planning in the Third World: A Case Study of Papua New Guinea* (Kent ; North Ryde: Croom Helm, 1988), p.15.
[59] Max Rimoldi and Eleanor Rimoldi, *Hahalis and the Labour of Love : A Social Movement on Buka Island*, Explorations in Anthropology (Oxford ; Providence: Berg, 1992), p.46.
[60] PNGA: 69/80-2-11, Social Development, Advancement of Women Bougainville; Social Development, Bougainville District Report 1961/1962.
[61] Grace Garei, 3 November 2006, Hahalis.

significant trip (by truck and then boat) for most women on the island.[62] Nonetheless when Eleanor Rimoldi was in Hahalis during the 1970s she reported women were familiar with most Western contraceptives:

> When I first came to Buka some of the women would ask me what birth control European women used, and they already had objections to the things I mentioned – the pill made you overweight and tired, the injection did the same (and people were afraid of it), the IUDs made you lose too much blood, weakened you and fell out when you worked hard carrying heavy loads. As far as I could ascertain the diaphragm was not offered at the clinics. Condoms were not mentioned as any solution to the problem. Bush medicines were said to be effective for some women ...[63]

Halia women's enthusiasm for new methods was not a rejection of traditional kastom knowledge. While children had always been strongly desired, I was told that it had also always been desirable to space them out and this had been achieved in a number of ways that included plant contraceptives, as well as certain customary practices that helped control conception.[64] Both customary and new Western contraceptive methods were employed, the choice between them depending on women's personal circumstances. One Hanahan woman's description of her family planning history makes this clear:

> They [older women] used to give us *diwai* (herbs/bush plants) to space children. The first time I used it, but it didn't work. Then I got good instructions and it worked properly – the last time. And later I bought a book, *What a teenage girl should know*. The whole village came to read it.

[62] Eleanor Rimoldi, "Relationships of Love and Power in the Hahalis Welfare Society of Buka" (Ph.D, University of Auckland 1982), p.276. During the crisis in the 1990s when women were particularly keen to use it, effective contraception was extremely hard to access. Many discussed with me their fears of pregnancy, childbirth, and infant care during this time – it was something to be avoided at all costs. Many adopted traditional methods, and a number confided in me they had practiced abstinence so that they would not fall pregnant.

[63] Ibid, p.277.

[64] Previously, when virilocal residence had been more common, new mothers had been expected to take their newborns to live with maternal relatives for a time so that maternal kin might develop a close attachment to the child. This helped to cement a child's claim to land and avoid future conflicts, but also the mother's absence helped space pregnancies. A number of women also mentioned that during pregnancy and when a child was very young, a mother would abstain from intercourse. In the 1920s Blackwood reported on a fading practice in which men abstained from sexual intercourse with their pregnant wives up through until the expected child was born and grew old enough they could hold a bow (if a boy) or carry a *teil* (if a girl). This was done so that the child might not be weakened. From all accounts this seems to have disappeared soon after Blackwood reported on it, sometime before the Second World War. Rose Tehoei Hagai, 3 November 2006, Hahalis; Cecilia Beseke, 17 February 2007, Hahalis; Beatrice Blackwood, *Both Sides of Buka Passage : An Ethnographic Study of Social, Sexual, and Economic Questions in the North-Western Solomon Islands* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935), chapter 4.

> Everyone was interested. I read this. And I read about a particular kind of contraceptive system that I used after, this was before I had my last born.[65]

Buka women's accessing of medical services and adoption of new practices was negotiated on the basis of their changing personal circumstances and whether they had the required time, energy and in some cases resources (for example money and transport) to do this, and only to the extent they judged these (a judgement made from a very personal vantage point) to be of benefit. For these women there was no simple equation that positioned 'modern' or introduced practices as better than customary ones. People dipped in and out of colonial and customary knowledge and practice, deploying a hybrid of the two.

THE CLUB IN BUKA

Mrs Atkinson, the wife of the District Officer, set up the first women's club in the Buka district in November of 1957 on Sohano Island, where the headquarters of the administration were then located. Membership was made up of the wives of indigenous men working for the administration – a mixture of peoples from all parts of Bougainville as well as across New Guinea. A number of Halia and Haku women lived on the island because their husbands worked for the administration. Mary Tenevi's father was the driver for the District Commissioner. Her mother was involved in the club. Mary, born in 1947 and a young girl when her mother began attending the women's club, gave a basic description of club activities that was very similar to those found in the archives, 'women would come and train women how to sew, cook, clean and help all the women learn about cleanliness'.[66] There was also basic fundraising (the collection of shells for sale), a 'Hygiene Squad' (made up of selected members of the club) who inspected members' homes daily, and an annual Baby Show.[67] In 1960 Miss Madden, wife of a local officer, reported proudly on the show to the Moresby welfare division:

> We had 62 entries this year. They all received a cake of soap on entry. The children were really lovely; they were well dressed, healthy and well nourished.[68]

Madden's enthusiastic reporting of the Baby Show demonstrated the emphasis placed on the clubs as avenues for entry into a new 'colonial motherhood'.

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[65] Namosi Tousala, 17 October 2006, Hanahan.

[66] Mary Tenevi, 29 October 2006, Lemanmanu.

[67] PNGA: 69/80-2-11, Letter from KC Atkinson to Assistant Administrator, 26 November, 1957 re Advancement of Women; Social Development, Bougainville District Report, 1959/1960.

[68] PNGA: 69/80-2-11, Social Development, Advancement of Women Bougainville; Miss Madden to Ms Pat Ure, 23 August 1960.

Welfare workers were proud to report women seemed keen to take part in the clubs, describing the expanding network of these on the island. In 1961 the women of Gogohei asked the administration for help establishing a club there. By the beginning of 1963 the district welfare officer was reporting on clubs on Buka island at Sohano, Ieta/Manob, Hutjena/Hangan, Malasang, Lonahan, Telatu, Suhin, Gogohei, and Hanahan.[69] Attendance of these ranged anywhere from seven ('disappointing') at Suhin to around 70 ('surprising') at Hanahan.[70]

Christine Hotsia was very involved in the Women's Club at Hanahan from its very inception. She reported that around 30 village women attended the Hanahan club meetings, coming from Hanahan all the way through to Tohatsi. Club meeting days were held in the afternoon on Thursdays, the government initiated 'community work day'. A white woman, Mrs Clancy, the wife of the *kiap*, travelled from Sohano to run the club with the assistance of the Sisters from Hanahan and young educated women like Christine.

> C: They saw all the young women who couldn't go to Asitavi [the newly opened girls high school] – they saw them and thought, these women should learn something too, and they brought them together. They taught them sewing, so they could sew clothes. Lots of different kinds. Handsewing, not with a machine.
>
> J: Sewing by hand, that is hard!
>
> C: But it was good! You didn't need money for a machine. It was easy for everyone. Everyone would sell something too.[71]

Rose Willy, born in 1954, explained her attendance during the 1970s was all about learning new things: new dress making skills, new recipes for scones and cake, learning about discipline for 'the house, all areas, children too'.[72] Many women enjoyed the social aspects – the weekly club meetings, but also there was particular mention of the various new sports introduced to women through the club: netball, basketball and volleyball.[73] Overwhelmingly, however, clubs were talked about in terms of fundraising. This could be group fundraising, such as the selling of shells, or woven baskets or baked goods towards a club goal: the purchase of a sewing

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[69] These new clubs were no doubt partly encouraged by a visit the previous year from Miss English and Miss Ure, two welfare officers from Port Moresby, who toured the district explaining what the clubs were about. PNGA: 69/80-2-11, Social Development, Advancement of Women; Report of Welfare Officer Miss L. Niall. Visit to Sohano, Bougainville District, 19 March – 24 March 1959.

[70] PNGA: 69/80-2-11, Social Development, Advancement of Women Bougainville; EA Liddle, Bi-Monthly Report on Women's Clubs, Bougainville District, September/October 1963.

[71] Christine Hotsia, 3 October 2006, Hanahan.

[72] Rose Willy, 5 November 2006, Hahalis.

[73] Helen Topuan, 13 March 2007, Saposa.

machine or materials for projects. It also very commonly, as Christine's answer above reflects, referred to women's drawing on the skills learnt at the club – sewing, cooking, market projects – to generate a small income for themselves.

The government's women's clubs were not remembered as having been a platform through which women might engage in broader politics or raise issues affecting women for discussion within the community or with the administration. As Rita, an older woman (born just before World War Two) explained:

> I think it was only recently that women, and women's groups started talking to Government. Now only, not before. This group I was talking about, this one that the white woman had been running [the administration run women's club] – I didn't hear that they used to say anything to Government.[74]

They were, however, understood very clearly as being part of the genealogy of contemporary women's groups. Government clubs were recognised as the immediate predecessors of Christian women's groups in Buka, as well as the later local grassroots non-denominational women's NGOs. Christine Hotsia felt that though they hadn't at the time been intervening in local council or government work, women gained leadership skills and confidence through their participation in government Clubs:

> I've seen that all the women who were in the club – they are leaders now. They go first (*ol i go pas*). They can speak out. They lead all the women, because they got a little bit of knowledge [through the clubs]. And afterwards we set up a KWA [Catholic Women's Association].[75]

Clubs engaged village women who sought to learn new skills as mothers, except these skills were utilised in ways often unintended by the state. They were seen as something fun to do – a break from the ordinary - but primarily women participated because of the skills and resources they might gain. Sewing, cooking, and the sharing of craft knowledge was put to use by village women in their role as mothers, but for purposes of income generation. Amy Kaler, writing about the women's homecraft movement in colonial Rhodesia, observed that the white women delivering welfare services to African women never had the same power of force to impose new practice on women (compared to say, their male colleagues over African men's labour practices).[76] African women's participation in clubs was, she argued,

[74] Rita, 23 January 2007, Elutupan.
[75] Christine Hotsia, 3 October 2006, Hanahan.
[76] Amy Kaler, "Visions of Domesticity in the African Women's Homecraft Movement in Rhodesia," *Social Science History* 23, no. 3 (1999).

therefore not simply a question of the imposition of or resistance to colonialism. Kaler writes:

> ideas about domesticity, and the institutional apparatus that actualised these ideas, were a potent resource that women (and, to a lesser extent, men) of both races could appropriate and use for their own individual and collective ends; and they did so with great vigour.[77]

Halia and Haku women similarly came to these clubs to draw from them as a resource. They took what was useful, and carried over their now practiced leadership skills into later women's organisations. Today in Buka these range from women's church fellowships, to sports organisations, to non-governmental agencies and provide a venue through which women have – from the mid to late 1970s onwards, but especially after the 'crisis' – begun to engage politically and make demands for representation and over rights.

MOTHERHOOD AS OBLIGATION AND THE OBLIGATIONS OF MOTHERHOOD

For those women of high rank among the Halia and Haku – *teitahols* – motherhood was, and remains, a clear reproductive obligation. A *teitahol* was considered to be the *origin of the tsuhana* (the clan house), of the *tsunono*, and of the lineage. As a chiefly woman she must bear children: at least one daughter and one son – to ensure the continuation of her lineage.[78] Her daughter inherits her status, and her son – by virtue of his relationship to his sister, the new *teitahol* – will be given the rank of *tsunono* (chief). If she does not bear children (and specifically a daughter and a son) her line will die out with her.[79] The importance of this might be underlined by a story shared with me by Cecilia, an older woman in the village and a *teitahol*. She told me that the story was a story of a dream that was also the story of her first child. Blackwood, in her ethnography from the 1930s, described dreams among the peoples of Buka as being understood as a message from the ancestors: 'sometimes the people who are dead come and talk to us'.[80] Such dreams are regarded as true or prophetic (rather than *gammon* – or *giaman*, untruthful – dreams).

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[77] Ibid, p.274.

[78] She will be encouraged to have as many children as possible, just in case she loses a child to sorcery. Though always a concern, the risk is felt to be much greater for those of high status lineages.

[79] Even if she has a son (or sons) but no daughter or vice versa (daughter/s, no son), this is seen as a failure. Her son will be recognised as *tsunono*, but because there is no *teitahol* the mother's younger sisters (if they have more children) may well have their status ceremonially enhanced so that they make pass on the position of *teitahol* and *tsunono* to their children instead to ensure the lineage continues. Rimoldi, "Relationships of Love and Power in the Hahalis Welfare Society of Buka", pp.68 – 69.

[80] Blackwood, *Both Sides of Buka Passage : An Ethnographic Study of Social, Sexual, and Economic Questions in the North-Western Solomon Islands*, pp.546-547.

Cecilia explained the background to the dream story was that she had taken a long time to fall pregnant with her first born. In the story, a man from her clan who had been working as a cook in Kieta on Bougainville arrived back in the village soon after her first child was born. He had fallen asleep one night, dreamt of the birth of a young baby girl, and on waking had set forth immediately to travel to the village:

> So he came and he laughed. This was his way, he laughed and said, 'It's true too! Because I dreamt it and I came to see'. He had been asking already in the village and everyone who was there, they told him: 'yes she has already given birth to a girl'. And he sat there and laughed and laughed. 'Really, is it true, I'll go see myself'. He came upon us and laughed. 'Let me see if it is true'. Then he came and held Halenga and laughed. He was so happy to see we had a young girl.
>
> He hadn't been happy [before that] we had only been looking after the brother's children. I must have children ... If no, then look after your brother's children. [But ...] you must have children yourself.[81]

Although there is an obligation of reproduction, and though most Halia and Haku women say it is good to have children and presume that women will have children, those who did not or could not do so were not ostracised.[82] Beatrice Blackwood did not see any evidence that stigma attached to a woman for being unable to conceive.[83] They were – and are – considered compassionately, regarded by others with sympathy or pity.[84] Women who are not able to give birth to a child, or who have

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[81] Cecilia Beseke, 17 February 2007, Hahalis.

[82] In the interviews I undertook I was told by a number of women that in the past there had been some chiefly women, known as *oha*, who had chosen not to marry or have children. These women - distinguished by the many initiation scars or markings across their bodies, across their thighs, back, chest, and cheeks – were respected, some men were even said to be afraid of them. Where a *teitahol* became *oha*, the responsibility for continuing the lineage then fell to her sister. Eleanor Rimoldi explained the motivation behind a woman becoming *oha* as protection of the lineage by way of shielding it and redirecting any jealousy-related poison/sorcery. See Fieldnotes (author), date; Rose Tehoei, 3 November 2006, Hahalis; Rimoldi, "Relationships of Love and Power in the Hahalis Welfare Society of Buka", p.267.

[83] Blackwood, *Both Sides of Buka Passage : An Ethnographic Study of Social, Sexual, and Economic Questions in the North-Western Solomon Islands*, p.139. She noted, for example, that a man could not divorce his wife on the basis of her inability to conceive. If he wished, however, he could decide to take a second wife. During my fieldwork it was clear however that it was – and still very often *is* - assumed that when a couple cannot fall pregnant or have only a few children (one or two) poison has played some part in their infertility, and there is some suspicion or fear/danger attached to their situation.

[84] Across the Pacific adoption, or fostering has been recognised as a common route to motherhood for women who, for whatever reasons, do not have their own biological children. See Vicki Lukere, "Conclusion, Wider Reflections, and a Survey of Literature," in *Birthing in the Pacific : Beyond Tradition and Modernity?*, ed. Margaret Jolly and Vicki Lukere (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), p.186. Fostering in Buka does not imply a complete break with the biological parents, the child frequently visits with their biological parents (or at least the father if the mother had died) and their siblings. They call both sets of parents 'mother' and 'father', and their biological siblings, 'brothers' and 'sisters' and are classed as the children of their biological parents with regards genealogical lineage.

only had a small number of children (just one or two), as the above testimony outlines, frequently foster a relative's child, raising them as their own.

Many women told me their mother had given birth to up to 12 children, but that at least two or three of her children (their siblings) had not survived into adulthood or even early adolescence. As women's access to medical treatment for themselves and their children has increased, however, the rate of infant mortality among the Halia and Haku has dropped significantly (as it has throughout Papua New Guinea).[85] Now many women complain that women are having too many children. Those women who do not space out their children properly are berated and talked about with disdain (foolish women, they weren't disciplined, they didn't plan properly). During interviews I was told that women traditionally had not liked to have a large number of children in the family – it was hard to feed so many mouths. I found it difficult, however, to separate out women's present anxiety about overpopulation from their accounts of the past, especially because many of the women I interviewed told me their mothers had given birth to at least eight children, and secondary sources suggested a traditional preference for large families.[86]

Many women described how when they became a mother they recognised themselves as 'grown' or adult women. The arrival of a woman's first child marked their transition to adulthood, and their assumption of certain personal, family, and kastom responsibilities. One woman who had long resented her family's arrangement of marriage with a much older husband, described coming to terms with this once she had her first child.

> And then I had a baby and at this point it opened up my mind. I was a mother and so I realised I must act like a mother. I lost all thoughts of pain and unhappiness about being married in this arranged marriage because now I had a child and had to act like a grown woman.[87]

Talking about the role her father had played as a leader in the village, Martha Tonang explained that it was only once she had had children that she felt she could assume a leadership position in the village: 'And I thought now that I've become a mother I feel that I can exercise all this that I learnt from him'.[88] Once women had

[85] Agyei, *Fertility and Family Planning in the Third World: A Case Study of Papua New Guinea*. It is important to note, however, that rates of maternal mortality have not reduced significantly.
[86] Tohiana, "The Hahalis Welfare Society of Buka, North Solomons Province: Its Establishment, Subsequent Development and Eventual Decline, 1960 - 1980", p.7; Rimoldi, "Relationships of Love and Power in the Hahalis Welfare Society of Buka", pp.278, 286-288, 333-334. Regarding effects felt by women as a result of overpopulation see chapter 8, this thesis.
[87] Severina Penevi, 29 October 2006, Lemanmanu.
[88] Martha Tonang, 7 November 2006, Lemankoa.

children they were also much more likely to begin participating in public discussions regarding the land matters of their clan, attempting to secure their children's rights to land.[89] In practical terms, however, the primary responsibilities and obligations that women took on when they became mothers were those of everyday subsistence.

THE EVERYDAY WORK OF BUKA MOTHERS

Women who did not yet have children did much of the same work as mothers in the village, but according to those I interviewed, 'their work was lighter than the mothers'.[90] They were freer to spend time as they chose, 'so after [daily chores] they would go and relax and have a good time'.[91] When interviewing women I found actually distinguishing the work of mothers from those of women without children to be quite difficult. If I asked what the work of women without children was, it was assumed I was referring to young women who had not yet had children. My questions asking about what mothers' work in the village had been were often glossed as questions about the work of women.

Mothers were responsible for the basic subsistence of their family, and apart from the help received from men to clear land, they were responsible for all other work in the gardens. They prepared the ground, planted, weeded, harvested, and carried back garden produce for the family. This was work women often performed together.[92] Christine Hotsia remembered, 'There were no lazy women back then. Mothers worked hard in the garden. They worked together and would often work hard for two or three days, and then take a day off for rest.'[93] Others described their mothers as particularly disciplined,

> **S:** She [my mother] was always going for gardening, never missing a day.[94]
>
> **N:** My mother had six children. Every day she worked in the garden, and we would follow her. My mother was a very hard working woman.[95]

Women collected firewood, carried water, did the laundry, prepared food, and cared for children. For a time in the early 1960s followers of the Hahalis Welfare

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[89] Roselyne Kenneth, "Land for Agriculture - Silent Women: Men's Voices," in *Bougainville before the Conflict*, ed. A. J. Regan and Helga Griffin (Canberra: Pandanus Books, 2005), p.383.
[90] Veronica Giobun, 20 October 2006, Hanahan.
[91] Veronica Giobun, 20 October 2006, Hanahan.
[92] To clarify, women did not work their gardens together. Each woman was generally responsible for her own garden. But they would leave together, take breaks together, and occasionally holler out to one another as they worked. This is not a hard and fast rule of course, on occasion women will contribute/help with labour in each other's gardens.
[93] Christine Hotsia, 3 October 2006, Hanahan, See also Rose Willy, 5 November 2006, Hahalis; and Martha Tonang, 7 November 2006, Lemankoa.
[94] Saline Girana, 4 March 2007, Hahalis.
[95] Namosi Tousalia, 17 October 2006, Hanahan.

Society, recognising women had traditionally been unfairly loaded with too much of the work of subsistence, reversed gendered roles. Men – including tsunono (chiefs) – were forced to take on women's work and, as anthropologists Max and Eleanor Rimoldi explained it, 'feel the pain the women had felt all those years'.[96] Women who had been a part of Welfare told me of this 'experiment', but they said the results had not lasted very long after it was first initiated.[97]

It was also a mother's responsibility to pass on appropriate knowledge about custom, to both young boys and girls – although of course there was much knowledge and practice that was gender specific.[98] For young girls this meant training them with gardening skills. Most women remembered that as young children they had from very early on followed their mothers to the gardens, and when old enough they planted their own small plots. Agnes Gohul, born in 1937, remembered the small tasks her mother and other women would ask her to help with:

> Back then I was little and I couldn't hold the big digging stick and dig the deep holes needed for planting the taro. So I would go and help the women with little tasks like weeding, or carrying rubbish and heaping it together. I would help them. I would carry my own little *woksak* [a woven basket] back. They would teach me how to weave these, and how to carry them back to the village [loaded with produce].[99]

Josephine Tsiperi, born some 30 years later, described also planting her own small garden. The produce from this was not only for family consumption, but served also as goods for sale at market:

> I told you my mother was a woman who would plant things to sell in order to get money. Well I followed her in this. I learnt this from her. So me too, I

[96] Rimoldi and Rimoldi, *Hahalis and the Labour of Love : A Social Movement on Buka Island*, p.148.
[97] Rose Tehoei, 31 December 2006, Hahalis; Cecilia Beseke, 17 February 2007, Hahalis.
[98] So Josephine Tsiperi could talk about aspects of custom as being only appropriate to be shared between females or between men: 'In terms of learning *kastom* – we, us girls, we would get it from women. Boys would get taught by men. I mean sometimes they would do it with the whole clan – they would sit down, meet, and when they were having these meetings, discussions – they would touch on kastom during this time. Men must know about these things. Women must know about these. But in terms of kastom – this is the responsibility of mothers.' Josephine Tsiperi, 20 October 2006, Hanahan. Jessie Marise explained some stories (or knowledges) are shared only from mother to daughter. She told me of her mother introducing her to the *lilihane* (spirits of the ancestors) of her place. She took her down to the sea edge, to a certain spot where huge boulders mark the entrance to a passage of water that leads straight out through the reef. This is where her clan's *lilihane* - described as small snakes, though some are huge, and big enough to fight with dogs – reside. The stories and knowledge she learnt from her grandmother she shared with her daughter. 'They are not anyone else's stories. They belong to me, and my mother and my grandmother before her'. Jessie Marise, 21 February 2007, Elutupan.
[99] Agnes Gohul, 29 October 2006, Lemanmanu.

> would follow whatever my mother was doing, whatever little things she was planting. I'd go to the market and sell things until I was big enough to go to school and then I stopped doing this.[100]

In this way young girls learnt not only the skills associated with gardening, but also those to do with marketing – what to grow, how to bundle it, and how much to sell it for.

This shift from simple subsistence to gardening for both family and for the market that emerges when these two testimonies are placed side by side, points to the expansion in mothers' responsibilities taking place through this period. A mother's work encompassed providing the basics of subsistence for her family, but what constituted 'basics' increasingly included goods that could only be purchased with cash.[101] A good mother was now required to generate income to cover the costs of those things now needed by her family in the everyday – clothes, food, kerosene, transport money, and so on. Though their husbands, if waged, were ostensibly expected to contribute towards subsistence costs, very often their incomes were (and women report this as a continuing issue) spent on alcohol or other luxury goods. Within women's oral testimonies it became clear that they felt that the heaviest burden was that of school fees. Though fathers were certainly obliged to provide monies towards this, it was generally mothers who came up with the cash (through additional labours done specifically towards generating monies for these). And it was mothers who were blamed when monies could not be found.

From the 1950s onwards Buka women as mothers engaged in cash-cropping and in 'making projects' (marketing agricultural crops) to earn a small income. They often did this intermittently – as and when they needed the monies. The income they earned was then distributed straight back into the subsistence costs of their families. Because this work was not consistently done (as in waged labour), and money was not (and could not be) be accumulated, this work – though income generating – was regarded and valued simply as an extension or subsidy of women's basic subsistence work in the garden. It is mother's work, work for the household, and as such was – and is – seen as reproductive labour rather than recognised as economically productive work (and see chapter eight, this thesis.)

[100] Josephine Tsiperi, 20 October 2006, Hanahan (from Lonahan).

[101] As Josephine Tsiperi had described, in the case of her mother: 'My mother used to work garden and sell produce [from it] to get money. Another way was to work copra. But most of it – the money my mother collected to pay my schoolfees – she got it from planting gardens. Because she found it very hard to work copra by herself. But copra she did work it a little, but mostly she planted things – all different kinds of things that she would then get money for to help out. For school fees, for clothing.' Josephine Tsiperi, 20 October 2006, Hanahan.

REMEMBERING CHILDHOOD: TWO STORIES OF 'HARD TIMES'

Two women's stories of their difficult childhoods and their mother's 'neglect' provide an insight into how expectations as much as the actual experience of motherhood was transformed through this period. These are not 'typical' stories, nonetheless the challenges these women's mothers faced, and equally those that the women confronted as children, are revealing of the various and complex ways in which colonialism impacted generally upon the family in Buka. Equally instructive is the way in which these two women drew upon the vocabulary of 'rights' to articulate the changes and challenges they faced. This was no straightforward deployment of a rights discourse, but one translated and given force through the customary matrilineal understanding of women's role within the family.

SUSAN PEREMA'S STORY OF HER CHILDHOOD[102]

> My name is Susan Perema*. I am 47 years old. My mother gave birth to me at Sohano Island – at the big hospital there at Sohano. My mother, her home was at Lemanmanu, that's the big name. The small place [settlement] was Han* where we are now. My father was from Nissan Island, but my father – his ancestors migrated and came to Buka and they came and settled here at Lemanmanu.[103]

Susan lives in a good permanent house in Lemanmanu that she shares with her husband John, her youngest daughter, and her youngest brother's children. She has adopted her younger brothers' children and is raising them as her own. Lemanmanu is her mother's place, where her mother's family has claims to land. This is where she grew up. Her immediate family – her brothers and sisters - are all now widely dispersed. The houses alongside hers belong to them, but are currently either unoccupied or on loan. Though Susan herself never finished high school, all her siblings were well educated. They completed school and went on to further training. One of her older brothers lives in Buka town and works as an electrician. Another two are in Port Moresby, one working for the local television station EmTV and the other for the *Post Courier*, the national newspaper. Her older sister studied at the University of Papua New Guinea, worked as a flight attendant, then married an English man and now lives in Australia.

Susan began her interview with me by locating herself in terms of her *graun* or place. She then very quickly moved on to tell me, as she described it, 'the sad things

[102] (*) Here I have used an alternate name (a pseudonym) because the nature of the story shared is intimate and relatively sensitive. Other identifying details are similarly changed.
[103] SP*, October 2006, Buka.

about [her] life'.[104] She was born in 1959. When she was young her mother and father joined the Hahalis Welfare Society, a movement she regards as a cult. They were committed to the Society and worked collectively on establishing plantations for cash crops. As a result of their work with Welfare she felt her parents had not looked after their children well, often leaving them in the village alone.

They had, however, ensured she – and all her sisters and brothers – went to school. She told me that her father had departed from Welfare's position in this regard. Before joining Welfare he had been a teacher and catechist, trained by the Marists at Lemanmanu mission. As a catechist he helped school villagers in prayers and prepared them for baptism and their first communion.[105] This, Susan told me, had instilled in him a strong belief in the value of education. He made sure that his children were able to attend the mission school, even when this meant working his own copra, over and above the labour he had committed to Welfare. And even when faced with opposition from other Welfare adherents:

> There was also some men – some of the members of the cult – who tried to force him to stop sending his children to school: 'The white men will fool you all' ... This was their talk. But my father was adamant.[106]

Susan's father died in 1966, when Susan was just seven years old. Her youngest brother was just a baby. There were seven children now left for her young mother to look after by herself. Her mother had no brother, and other male relatives did not offer any help. Her little sister was 'taken' by Welfare to be cared for, 'this cult had come and taken my little sister. They took her to Hahalis and she didn't go to school after this. She lost all her rights to go to school'.

In order to make money for school fees for the rest of her children Susan's mother, along with Susan and her younger brothers, worked copra. They cut the grass, cleaned the plantation, heaped the coconuts, husked the coconuts, broke them in two, smoked them, removed the smoked flesh from the shell, and then bagged it up. The smoked coconut kernel was packed into sacks to sell to the Chinese traders from town. The limited income they generated from this helped pay for school fees for most of the children, but it left her mother struggling to keep a roof over their heads, and to provide clothing for them. In the end Susan had to sacrifice her schooling. A

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[104] Ibid.

[105] The work of indigenous catechists was vital to the Catholic missions. They – alongside indigenous (protestant) pastors - are generally regarded as key to the spread of Christianity in the Pacific. Laracy, *Marists and Melanesians: A History of Catholic Missions in the Solomon Islands*, p.62.

[106] SP*, October 2006, Buka.

number of times Susan's voice broke as she recalled the desperate situation of her childhood:

> We would wander around and try and find some spare space in people's houses. But people didn't want to give a small space for you to go and sleep or settle in, no way. So you just think how stupid we looked – carrying our little broken raggy piece of *laplap* for covering ourselves as we wandered around looking for a place to sleep. So we shared small spaces in people's places for, well I'm not sure how many years.[107]

She told of the lengths her mother went to for the children:

> So you know where my mother used to get our *laplaps*. She used to find them on the beach. Everyone used to throw out their *laplaps* into the ocean and the salt water would suck it back in and clean it. And if my mother was walking along the beach and saw a piece of *laplap* that was good – well my mother would collect this and wash this again in the salt water. She would dry it. And this she would bring to us to wear. And this was our clothing.[108]

According to Susan no one in the village offered help. Her testimony offers a rebuttal to the romanticisation of traditional village life as generously communal, with support available for all:

> My mother for so long carried the burden of us children. She had 'trauma' [English word used], because she was looking after seven children. She struggled with us children, and getting money for us to go to school because we were interested in schooling. My mother wasn't slack, she continued to try and make it possible for us to go to school. She herself worked for the money. But for how many years and for how many children? Because we don't have uncles. You know before there weren't any people (men) who would help you. You had to look after yourself – that was how it was in those days.[109]

The stress of caring for her seven children alone – of not always making do – eventually resulted in her lashing out at her children:

> It was very hard for her to look after us without our father. We didn't have any money. She got worse and used to hit us. For me it was the worst – she used to hate me the most. She hated me. If I did one thing wrong – if, for example, she said to me – 'you go wash this pot in the saltwater at the

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[107] Ibid.
[108] SP*, October 2006, Buka.
[109] Ibid.

> beach'. If after 5 minutes I wasn't finished, she would yell at me and then hit me. She used to hit me hard, over and over and then I ran away.[110]

Susan always returned home however, because she worried about her younger brothers and sisters and also about the welfare of her mother.

In 1974 her mother remarried. When the wife of her husband's brother died he followed custom and remarried Susan's mother – his dead brother's wife. From this point forward things became easier for the family. Indeed, the fortunes of the family underwent a complete reversal. Her brothers furthered their education after high school and went on to get well paying jobs. Her older sister married a very well off Australian man. This new wealth was fed back through the family who remained in the village. All of a sudden, Susan noted archly, she had many, many uncles:

> It was at this point suddenly we were made aware that we had uncles. My mother had male cousins. Now we had all these relatives who were supposedly very close to us.[111]

Despite her family's comfortable and (economically) secure situation in the closing years of her life, Susan's mother was haunted by those earlier times. As she grew older she suffered dementia and was constantly anxious, caught still in the memory of her experience of poverty and the helplessness she had felt as a mother raising her children alone in the village.

> So I think her thoughts went back to when we were little and what had happened then. Her thoughts must have been the same – what if I was to stay again with my children and it was the same again where we had no house? And so her brain went crazy ... she was stuck back in this time when we were wretched and homeless.[112]

BRENDA TOPU'S STORY OF HER CHILDHOOD[113]

> I'll tell you about when I was little. I was born on the beach at Kotolana, this was where I grew up. This was just before we all moved to the top of the cliff.[114]

Brenda Topu was born in 1963 on the beach at Kotolana, her village home built upon a stretch of white sand beach half way up along the eastern coast of the island. She comes from a large family, and was the third born of ten. Her mother is a Nakaripa

[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid.
[112] Ibid.
[113] (*) Here I have used an alternate name (a pseudonym) because the nature of the story shared is intimate and relatively sensitive. Other identifying details are similarly changed.
[114] BT*, October 2006, Buka.

woman, her father a Naboen, neither coming from a chiefly line. Though Hahalis is her mother's land (*ples*) and is where she now lives, she grew up in the small hamlet of Kotolana in Hanahan, her father's people's *ples*.

Before I started prompting her with interview questions, I asked if she wanted to tell me anything in particular. Brenda began, just as Susan had, by telling me where she was born and her ground. She then told the following account of her early childhood.

While she was growing up, her father worked for the Catholic mission at Hanahan. Each day after he finished work for the church he spent the rest of the afternoon doing the work traditionally allocated to men in the village: clearing gardening ground, and hunting or fishing. Her mother did the work common to all village mothers – that of gardening, collecting water and firewood, caring for the children. This changed, however, when Brenda began her schooling. This was the late 1960s and the Hahalis Welfare Society was strong in the village. Her mother joined 'Welfare' along with the rest of her matriclan. Everyday, early in the morning, her mother left the hamlet to work alongside her older brother and other siblings and other Welfare members clearing the bush and establishing copra and cocoa groves.

Brenda's father was not supportive of his wife's involvement with Welfare, or from her labouring away from home as a result of membership. Given his close association with the mission – who were virulently opposed to Welfare – it was no surprise he was part of the rival village 'Council' faction. Her parents fought constantly over her mother's membership of Welfare, and about the time she spent labouring for the society: 'My father was often angry and would say – don't bother with Welfare, come and the two of us will stay with the children and plant something [copra] for them'.[115]

As she told me the story of her childhood it became clear that Brenda had also been hostile to her mother's involvement in Welfare. She was a very bright student, coming first or second in class every year. This was hard work. Especially because alongside attending to her studies she was caring for younger siblings, preparing them for school in the morning and making sure the family had dinner each evening:

> But let me tell you a little about the time when I was small and went to primary school. Every morning I would get up, and I – me – I would cook food for myself. Lunch for myself, and then I packed lunches for all my brothers and sisters. Made lunch and packed it for them ... I would work. Get up early in the morning, prepare food, wrap it. Then we would go to

[115] Ibid.

school. When we came home in the afternoon, I couldn't come and play. I would have to go find *kaukau* [sweet potato, a diet staple] and firewood and carry it back to the house.[116]

With her mother absent, and as the oldest female sibling she was forced to take on the work that a mother generally did:

> I would get up in the morning, cook food, go to the bush, bring firewood, wash things. All this is the work of a mother, but I was doing this.[117]

While her mother was away 'working copra' for Welfare, Brenda had done the daily household chores and acted as mother to her younger brothers and sisters. Along with her brothers, she had helped her father plant cocoa plantations for the family. Brenda identified this labour of caring for her siblings while she herself was still a young child as an abuse of her rights:

> Now that I'm an adult I look at this and I say my mother was abusing me with this kind of action. My rights as a child.[118]

DISCUSSION

There are a number of things that become clear from these two narratives. Firstly that while women did much of the work of subsistence, men also played a very important role helping to raise children and provide for the family. For those women who could not rely upon the support of the father of their children or alternatively an uncle, raising children and caring for the family was a struggle.[119] Without this male support, there was no one to help provide *abus* (protein), supplement the family income, or build shelter. Nor was there a male voice (generally an uncle) to intervene and support them in securing their rights, or those of their children, over land.

Secondly both women's articulation of mother's neglect through reference to how this had impinged upon their access to a formal western education points to the way in which this was increasingly regarded as a right. This was also apparent in the testimony of Namosi Tousala. Reflecting on her role in women's groups and peace negotiations during the Bougainville 'Crisis', Namosi shared her feelings of guilt

[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid.
[119] The father's crucial role in helping raise his children is recognised in the customary feast exchange of *hispepei* (an affinal prestation). This involves an exchange (between groups, of cooked goods for raw) of a large quantity of taro and a pig (still alive) to thank the father for having helped raise healthy children, who are classed as part of the mother's lineage.

with me about not being there for her children, and specifically not making sure they got a good education:

> I felt very strongly that we had to create a good situation, we had to negotiate and bring back peace for us, especially for my family and our island of Bougainville. I really wanted to do this work.
>
> But I didn't think too much about my children. Me, my opinion – I think that I neglected my children at this time. Because I was thinking about peace coming back to Bougainville, I used to leave them here and wasn't here to care for them and couldn't take care of [ensuring] their education.[120]

That her children may have missed out on educational opportunities is something that she regrets, especially as this was something she felt her parents had failed her in (she was forced to withdraw from high school because of an arranged marriage).

Lastly from the two accounts it would seem that there was, at least for some, a changing emphasis on what the cultural role of mother meant. Among the Halia and Haku, being mother, I was told, meant reproducing the lineage. This encompassed an obligation to have children, but was not defined by this alone. As an example, I was told that in the past a *teitahol* (a chiefly woman) could be required not to have children or marry, so that she might shield her lineage from poison and sorcery. She was known as *oha* and her younger sister's children instead acted as *gohus* (the heirs of the lineage). It was precisely in the *oha*'s decision *not* to have children that she ensured the reproduction of the lineage.

In Brenda's account of her childhood she is critical of her mother for having accompanied her lineage to join the Hahalis Welfare Society and work communally to earn monies towards the modernisation of the village. This is a messy picture in which it seems her mother gave loyalty to Welfare, because of her loyalty to her lineage. Welfare, however, was involved in a project that transformed customary practice and belief, especially with relation to how the value of labour and rights to land were distributed among its members. In Brenda's narrative of her childhood there is a clear expectation that the value generated through a mother's labour (here monies) would feed through to the nuclear family. Her mother's failure to prioritise the nuclear family unit, and specifically her children, over a more communal grouping (be that lineage, or the new communal constituency of 'Welfare') was understood as neglect, or a failure to take account of her children's rights.

[120] Namosi Tousala, 17 October 2006, Hanahan.

Perhaps most interesting within both accounts was the women's deployment of the idea of neglect and their identifying of this with reference to the rights of the child. In the interviews I undertook with women on Buka, especially for women under the age of 60, reference to 'rights' was not particularly rare.

As a result of the secessionist war on Bougainville, commonly referred to as 'the Crisis', Bougainvilleans have been the recipients of 'rights' and peace-building training (see background to Buka, this thesis). This has meant the discourse of rights among educated Bougainvilleans is a commonplace within conversations, deployed frequently alongside 'development', 'capacity building' and – perhaps slightly less frequently – 'civil society'. Women in the village when talking about relationships with men, and specifically violence within a relationship, will quite easily draw upon the language of rights to highlight or draw attention to the problem.

In many ways the discourse of rights as they relate to women in Bougainville, and among the Halia and Haku of Buka, are made sense of or translated through women's customary role as mother's of the ground, and in Buka, as *teitahols* (female chiefs). It is their customary role as mothers, now combined with the Christian – and especially Catholic – idea of the pure, sacred mother, that gives power to and legitimates women's claims to 'rights', and through this their claims to participate in the political sphere (in Bougainville this came to the fore during the period of peace negotiations, when women claimed rights to take part in this process).

References to the rights of the child (as distinct from 'women's rights'), especially to make clear the responsibilities of the mother, were more rare. It is important to note that the three women I have mentioned above who did make this reference had all taken part in 'rights' training, and been involved in peace and later 'capacity' building in the village. Nonetheless their use of this rights discourse to articulate 'neglect' identifies perhaps a changing sense of the relationship between woman and child, and woman and lineage. A child, as an individual, has rights. Her (or his) mother fails in their role as mother if these rights are not met. The concept of mother as an individual with individualised responsibility (to her children) is one ancillary to an idea of individualised blame.

CONCLUSION

Buka women's memories of the Club and the Clinic, and their observations regarding how and why they came to adopt new practices and access new services (and equally why they often didn't) makes clear that they did not simply privilege colonial knowledge and practice as 'modern' and therefore 'better' or more desirable. Everyday practice was a mix of the colonial and customary practice. The decision to

adopt or reject services was one that depended very much on the personal circumstance of the individual women at that particular moment. The colonial state did not have an unconstrained ability to impose what they believed were 'proper' notions of domesticity on indigenous women, and thus the Club and the Clinic presented indigenous women primarily with opportunities, though not necessarily always those the colonial state had imagined they were providing.[121]

Changes to women's experience and expectations of motherhood were shaped less by explicit state interventions directed at maternal practice than they were by broader economic policies of colonial development, and the encroachment of a cash economy (and more broadly, capitalism) on women's lives. 'Modern' mothers were responsible for ensuring the healthy, hygienic and disciplined upbringing of their children, and were considered in this way to be carriers of modernity and agents of transformation. This ideal did not reference subsistence or household labour outside of the home, yet good mothers in the village through this period were being required (and continue to be required) to undertake labour for income simply to support their family's subsistence needs.

As well as an expansion in the work of mothers during this period – that is, in the work that mothers undertook to ensure they provided basic subsistence for their family – a distinction in women's role as mothers of the lineage and as mothers of children, I argue, was emerging. This was apparent in the ways in which Buka women articulated to me stories of mother 'neglect'. Drawing on a discourse of 'rights' that had become familiar to Bougainvillean women in the context of post-'Crisis' peace negotiations and the period of reconciliation through the 1990s and early 2000s, this deployment drew upon Halia and Haku matrilineal ideology, and yet was taken from a foreign framework. In some ways rights articulated in this way worked to undermine traditional ideologies in that they posit a relationship between mother and child as one between individuals, and specifically one in which a mother holds responsibilities for her child in her individual capacity as mother. Yet, the women's recognition of 'neglect' was certainly not an act of labelling their mothers 'bad mothers', nor was it evidence of their adoption of a nuclear family model and an individuated personhood. Rather it worked to highlight the tensions apparent for women as they attempted to translate new understandings of motherhood, and the obligations that attached to women as mothers through a framework that takes as central an understanding of mother rooted in Halia and Haku customary practice.

121 Kaler, "Visions of Domesticity in the African Women's Homecraft Movement in Rhodesia.", p.274.

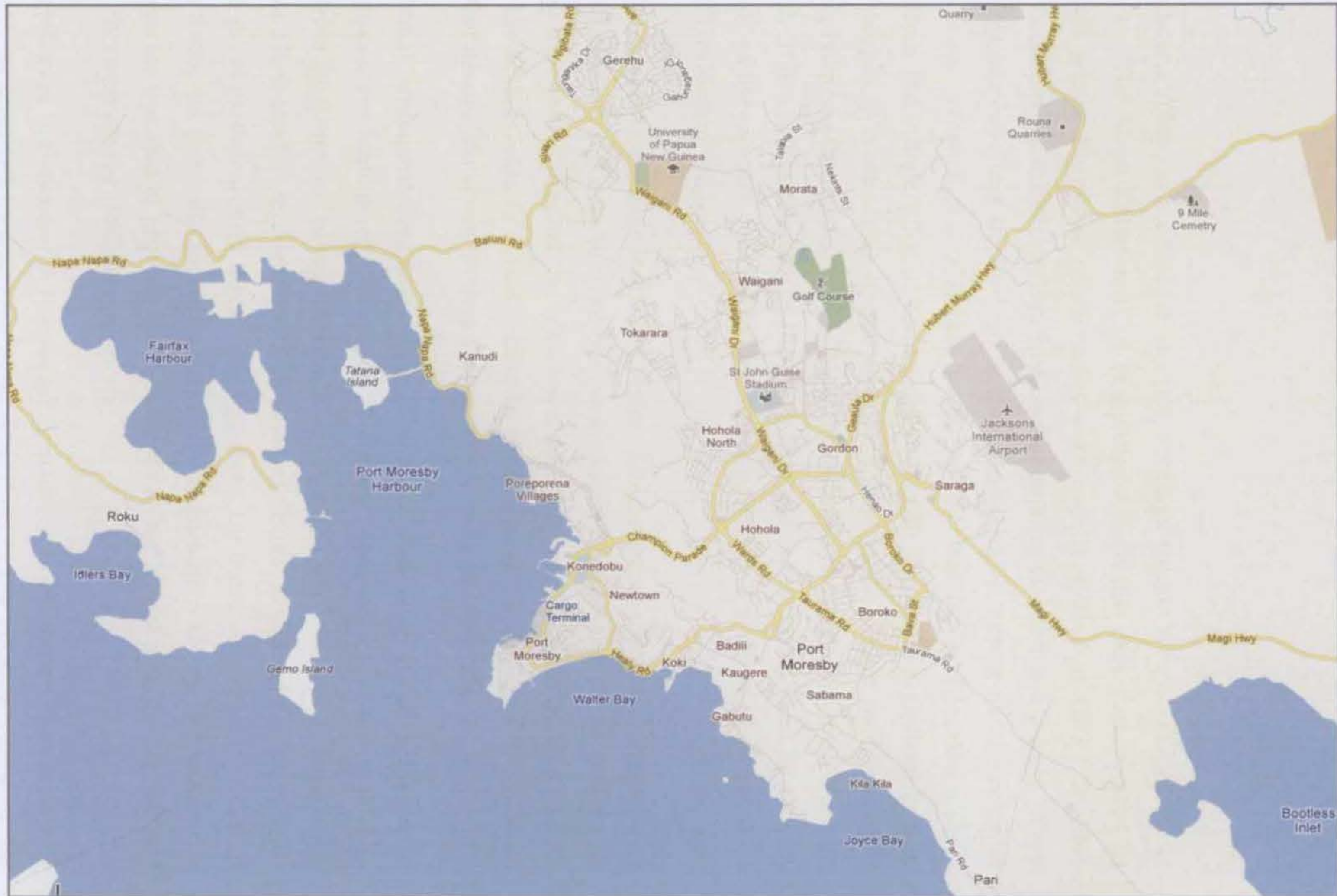

Figure 5.1 **Map of Poreporena Villages (Hanuabada), Port Moresby Harbour, source: Google maps.**

Background

Hanuabada (Poreporena), National Capital District

Hanuabada is a village in the middle of a city, a village around which a colonial port town grew. The Motu-Koitabuans of Hanuabada were the very first peoples in Papua with whom European missionaries permanently settled in 1873. In 1884 Papua was declared a British protectorate, and soon after claimed as a colony. Very quickly Port Moresby was decided on as the administrative centre for the colonial administration. When first established the European township was located a short distance from the village. But of course the township expanded significantly – in terms of people, in terms of its spatial stretch. In the 1930s a main road was built connecting Hanuabada in with 'town'. Now the village is surrounded on all sides by the capital. It lies just to one side of the city's business centre and almost literally in the shadow of the recently constructed pristine white barbed walls of the Australian diplomatic residential complex.

It is also famously a village built over water. Long, narrow plank walkways (*nese*) stretch precariously out over the harbour, with simple houses built either side these. Large tree trunk stilts support the walkways, and the houses that they lead to. At low tide the water clears to reveal a muddy beach under the houses closest to the shore. Most houses, however, sit over water at both low and high tide.

Residential settlement now occurs on land also. Reaching a half a kilometre inland, houses are haphazardly scattered along the slope of a low hill that rises steadily from the shoreline along the length of the small harbour around which the villages of Hanuabada are positioned. Houses are built close together here, with very little or no garden around them. Food gardens, for those very few families that still have them, are generally located a good 10 – 15 minute walk up and across the hills. These are not able to provide subsistence for a family, but usually supplement the more common diet of store bought foods.

The small gaps in between the houses are considered public space, thoroughfares which serve as shortcuts between the various sections of the villages. Some of the larger corridors have become more formal pathways, kept clear and smooth by constant use. Others may be only temporary clearways, and you follow them at your own risk (the ground is uneven, the paths liable to landslide, and various obstacles

may appear along the way, such as planks from not quite finished houses that jut out at precarious angles into the pathway). There are two main sealed roadways that run through the village, though they are not well maintained. One of these – Boe Vagi Road – leaves the village to join the new cross-town Freeway just outside the village boundaries. These two roads take cars but also serve as large public pedestrian walkways. They carry the great majority of the pedestrian traffic, and this includes not only village residents but also 'outsiders' from neighbouring squatter settlements who frequently walk through the village to get to the freeway and 'town'.

Hanuabada is constantly abuzz. People run along the narrow pathways between family homes carrying laundry and cooked foods to cousins or aunties. They wander down the main road, calling out to friends as they scout for an extra body to make up a team for an impromptu game of cricket or volleyball. Friends gather at the end of *iduhu* (family clan) walkways to chat about their day and hear the latest gossip. Women earn monies, with a small stall beside their homes, or alongside a pathway or main road. Here they put out their marketable goods (perhaps betel nut, mustard and lime; lollies or chewing gum; or a Tupperware container full of fried scones) and a lidded jar for money.

Along the main roads there are a number of large trade stores, most owned and operated by Chinese families. These sell basic groceries – two minute noodles, tin fish and Ox and Palm; washing powder and soap; salt, oil, and matches –, as well as an assortment of random 'luxury' items – an umbrella, new t-shirts, perhaps a small transistor radio –, and everyday goodies – drinks, lollies, ice-cream and hot take away food –. There is a marketplace next to one of the larger stores up on the hill above the shoreline, and another next to the water on the border between Tanobada and Hanuabada. At both you can buy fresh fruits and vegetables (what some Motuans now jokingly refer to as 'real food', as opposed to the introduced foods of rice and two minute noodles and tinned meat which are now local staples) and, of course, *buatau*, *ahu* and *vaga* (betel-nut, lime and mustard). Market goods are not generally sold by people from Hanuabada. Sellers are 'outsiders' who come from nearby settlements and sell their own garden goods or act as small time merchants, on-selling items bought from the main markets in town.

'HB', as it is affectionately known, is a village and yet has all the markers of a modern urban settlement. The houses, though somewhat ramshackle, are mostly built with permanent materials. There is electricity, water and sewerage infrastructure (though this is very basic, and constantly not working or in need of

repair).[1] Public transport connects the village in with town, large tradestores operate within the boundaries, residents from surrounding squatter settlements walk through and hang about along the main road. The majority of village residents rely on waged employment rather than subsistence gardening for their basic food needs.

'THE GREAT VILLAGE'

Hanuabada literally translates as 'the great village', but is actually a cluster or complex of smaller villages in which two groups of people live together – the Motu and the Koitabu. When Europeans first arrived in Papua the Motu and Koitabu peoples in various villages along the coast had already intermarried, and were living peaceably together. In Hanuabada this was certainly the case, though the smaller villages within the larger cluster were clearly distinguished as either 'Motu' or 'Koitabu'. They remain distinct today, though the division now is not nearly so clear-cut.

The Motuan people speak Motu, an Austronesian language, and live along the Eastern peninsula coastline in a stretch of villages reaching from ManuManu, north-west of Port Moresby, down to GabaGaba further east. Motuans have generally been divided by scholars into two groups, the 'Western' and 'Eastern' Motuans. Those who live in Hanuabada are regarded as part of the larger Western Motuan tribe. The Western Motuans today live in settlements from Pari village (approximately 6.5km east of Port Moresby) extending westwards all the way across to ManuManu village (about 50 kilometres from Moresby).

The Koitabu (also known as Koita), speak a non-Austronesian language that is part of the Koiari language family - a family whose relatively large number of speakers spread across the mountain ranges behind Moresby and over the Owen Stanley Range. The Koitabu are said to have come originally from the mountains progressively moving their settlements from further inland closer to the coast. Co-residence with Motuans in village settlements began a long time prior to the coming of Europeans, though there always remained many exclusively Koitabu villages along the coast.[2]

The oral traditions of the Motuan people suggest that the location of the village cluster of Hanuabada on the inner shore of Port Moresby's harbour is recent.

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[1] See for example Chris Gregory, "Hunting for Water in Port Moresby," *Anthropology Today* 13, no. 4 (1997).

[2] Around the Port Moresby region there are, for example, the exclusively Koitabu villages of Kourabada, Akarogo, Kila Kila, and Dogura.

Settlement on the shoreline is estimated to have occurred around 1850.[3] Oral traditions, evidence from archaeological excavations and geneologies of present day Motu-Koitabuans indicate individuals had strong links across, and often moved between, the various Motuan villages situated along the coast prior to the arrival of the Europeans. The villages themselves were frequently relocated. Indeed, the permanence of residential settlement on their present day village sites seems to be an outcome of the colonial presence.[4]

The village cluster of Hanuabada is today more accurately known as Poreporena. There is some confusion within the literature regarding whether Hanuabada refers to smaller village(s) within larger cluster of Poreporena, or the other way around. People in the village told me that Poreporena is the correct term for the village cluster, but that village residents and outsiders generally refer it to as Hanuabada. For the purposes of this thesis I talk about the village cluster as Hanuabada (this includes the smaller villages of Hohodae, Hanuabada, Tanobada, Elevala, and Kuriu).

CUSTOMARY SOCIAL ORGANISATION AND PRACTICE AND THE CHURCH

The social organisation of the Motu and Koitabuans in Hanuabada is centred on the *iduhu*, the clan. Iduhu are patrilineal descent groups that reside together. Each iduhu has its own walkway (*nese*) along which houses are built either side. Each house will hold anywhere up to four familes, or twenty to thirty people. The main clan house belongs to the traditional clan leader and will be first built over the sea (closest to land). The clan leader (*iduhu kwarana*) determines who can live where (along the walkway, but also within the clan boundaries on land). There are currently 18 Motuan and eight Koitabu *iduhu*s in Hanuabada.

Europeans first arrived in the village of Hanuabada in the 1870s. Sailor-explorers had previously travelled through, but missionaries from the London Missionary Society (LMS) were the first to establish a permanent settlement. On their arrival in late 1873 the LMS immediately negotiated for land from the Motu-Koitabuan peoples, setting up their mission station on a ridge above the village in an area now known as Metoreia. The arrival of the LMS missionaries – first the South Sea Islanders as emissaries, and then Europeans – is felt by Motuans to be of particular significance in the village's history. Two memorials commemorating the arrival of the Rarotongan missionary Ruatoka and British missionary William George Lawes

[3] Jack Golson, "Introduction to Taurama Archaeological Site, Kirra Beach," in Second Waigani Seminar (University of Papua New Guinea, Port Moresby: 1968), pp.5, 7.
[4] Ibid.

are situated in key locations within the village.[5] The story of Ruatoka's arrival can be told by most people in the village.

The Motu and Koitabuans of Hanuabada embraced Christianity, absorbing many Christian practices, beliefs and values within or as Motuan custom or tradition. Under the missionaries' influence many customary practices were abandoned: traditional dancing for example, as well as the traditional feasts and exchange rituals (*hekara* and *turia*) connected with the dancing. The *hiri*, a large annual trading expedition, and the making of clay pots (pots were traded for sago on the expeditions) both ended some time around the 1930s.[6]

The influence of the United Church (the descendant of the LMS) remains very strong, although there are a number of other denominations in the village. The leader of each of the clans is very often also a deacon of the church, and so will lead their families in both clan and church business. But new *lohia* (men of renown, coll. chiefs) have also emerged through their leadership in church activities (or through their success in business, or in provincial or national politics). Most women participate in church fellowship and Christian women's groups and are heavily involved in fundraising for the church through the locally initiated annual competitive church fundraising event of boubou.[7]

HANUABADA AFTER THE WAR (WORLD WAR TWO)

During World War Two the village was evacuated and an extensive fire destroyed the settlement. Previously the houses had all been built of traditional materials, but after the war houses were rebuilt as permanent structures using timber and galvanised iron.[8] Houses have traditionally been built over the water to protect the Motu-Koitabu peoples against their enemies. After the war pressures the pressure of

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[5] The Ruatoka memorial commemorates the arrival of Ruatoka after invitation to come to the village from a Hanuabadan man, Lakani Toi. This memorial is fenced off for protection from vandalism. It is located on the 'main drag' of the village, in front of the Tubumuga iduhu clan house. It reads (in both English and Motu): 'In memory of Lakani Toi who, in 1873, on this spot welcomed and protected those who brought the gospel to this village. A stout hearted and generous man. His name will always be remembered.' The Lawes memorial (a stone cairn with plaque), built first, is located next to the Poreporena Uniting Church at the site of Lawe's original homestead. The Lawes memorial reads: 'On this site stands the house of Reverend W. G. Lawes of L.M.S, the first white missionary to settle in Papua in November 21, 1874'

[6] Murray Groves, "Dancing in Poreporena," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 84, no. 1-2 (1954); Percy Chatterton, "Interlude between Two Worlds: Hanuabada in the 1930s," *Journal of the Papua and New Guinea Society* 4, no. 1 (1970).

[7] Monies raised through these events is today in the hundreds of thousands of Kina. See also Chris Gregory, "Gifts to Men and Gifts to God: Gift Exchange and Capital Accumulation in Contemporary Papua," *Man* 15, no. 4 (1980).

[8] Ian Downs, *The Australian Trusteeship, Papua New Guinea 1945 - 75* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1980), p.41; Lucy Mair, *Australia in New Guinea*, 2nd ed. (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1970 [1948]), p.23.

an increasing population led to construction of houses along the rising slope adjacent to the shoreline.

By 1949 the evacuated villagers had returned and the village had been mostly rebuilt. As well Hanuabada had established their own, functioning 'Native Village Council', the first in the territories. The council didn't have any formal powers but discussed issues such as public amenities and village hygiene, and was seen both by those in Hanuabada and by some in the administration as an initial movement towards self-management of village affairs. The Hanuabada Social Club was set up around the same time as the Council, and by the end of 1950 was reported to have 100 members of both sexes.[9]

Administration and academic commentator alike regarded the Motuan peoples of Hanuabada as relatively 'sophisticated' and advanced.[10] By the late 1940s they had integrated into the introduced cash economy and had extensive knowledge of, and experience dealing with, the colonial administration system. A household census undertaken in 1951 by the social anthropologist Cyril Belshaw found 82% of all men surveyed were employed for wages, almost all in skilled or semi-skilled jobs.[11] This stood in contrast to the rest of Papua New Guinea, in which employment levels in the village were very low and generally, those few employed were in low skill occupations, such as working on plantations. The colonial administration felt Hanuabada to be a good example of 'successful acculturation'. They were believed to have benefitted greatly from the early and close contact afforded by the village's proximity to the administrative centre.

Although there was concern that indigenous women across the territories were being 'left behind' as their menfolk 'developed', the administration was optimistic that Motuan women, being so close to the colonial administrative centre, would catch up speedily. The Papuan Annual Report of 1952 made special note of Motuan women's progress in integrating into the colonial labour market, primarily as

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[9] An indigenous initiative, it enjoyed the thorough support of the administration, which boasted in 1950: 'The membership represents a progressive element in the village and already they have introduced a Fijian type 'rami' as village 'dress' and are considering village hygiene ... The Club undertakes the arrangements for weddings of its members, is stimulating interest in canoe racing and is, as well, taking an increasing part in village politics'. Papuan Annual Report 1949/50.

[10] Annette Rosentiel, "The Motu of Papua New Guinea: A Study of Successful Acculturation" (Ph.D, Columbia University, 1953); Cyril Belshaw, *The Great Village* (London: Routledge and Kegan, 1957). And see Papuan Annual Report 1949/50; PNGA: 69/76-3-11; Club and Institute, Hanuabada; 69/80-2-1-, Social Welfare, Advancement of Women C/D, 1957 – 1967.

[11] Belshaw, *The Great Village*, pp.48-9, 66. The total number of men surveyed was 328 (and excluded school pupils). The census was undertaken in the smaller village of Hanuabada (excluding Elevala). The total population of Hanuabada in 1951 was 1121 (616 male, including 101 infants; 503 female, including 102 infants). Belshaw, The Great Village, pp.32, 46.

seamstresses and domestics. It expressed a hope that Motuan women's labour market involvement might lead to an increase in their local status and personal freedoms.[12]

CONCERNS IN PRESENT DAY 'HB'

Today the population of the village sits at well over 10,000 people. Far from being the prosperous indigenous village settlement envisaged mid century, today it has some of the highest levels of unemployment, poverty and disease in the country. Motuans feel economically and politically marginalised, as was explained to me by one village resident, Mabel Gavera, during our interview: 'we as a group are suffering, we are running the risk of becoming a ghetto'.[13]

Many Motu-Koitabuans within Hanuabada now talk about a feeling of disenfranchisement within the new independent state. They feel politically and economically marginalised as traditional indigenous villagers residing in an urban setting, explaining this puts them at a double disadvantage. They are unable to equally access infrastructure benefits (benefits such as power, water, sewerage) that are available to other urban citizens.[14] While urban regulations to do with planning and development do not apply for the village, neither are those in the village entitled to the rural development funds allocated by provincial governments. Mabel explained it to me:

> You see at the policy level the Government is not treating us fairly. They are considering Motu Koitabu villages - we are physically part of the city – and yet they consider us as rural.[15]

Certainly Motu-Koitabuans continue to draw a strong distinction between themselves and other residents of the city. This is their place: *they* are the traditional owners of the land on which so many from across Papua New Guinea have come to settle. They consider themselves a strong, resilient village community, though one often 'left behind' in terms of development.

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[12] Papuan Annual Report 1951/52, p.46.
[13] Mabel Gavera, 9 June 2007, Hanuabada.
[14] The lack of a properly functioning sewerage system is highlighted constantly as a particular problem. Currently most waste washes out under the walkways of the houses. The health consequences of this are particularly concerning.
[15] Mabel Gavera, 9 June 2007, Hanuabada.

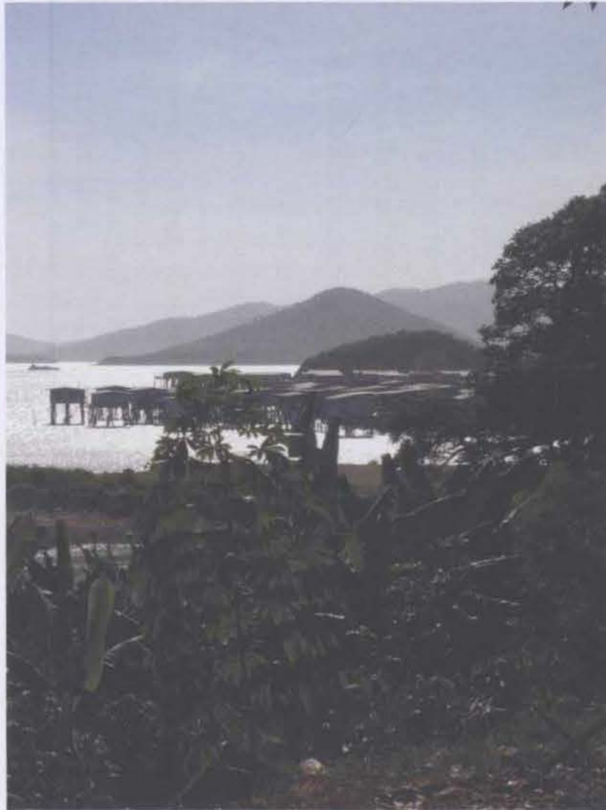

Figure 5.2 Overlooking Hanuabada village from Konedobu, 2007, picture: Jemima Mowbray

Figure 5.3 Boe Vagi Road, Hanuabada, 2007, picture: Jemima Mowbray

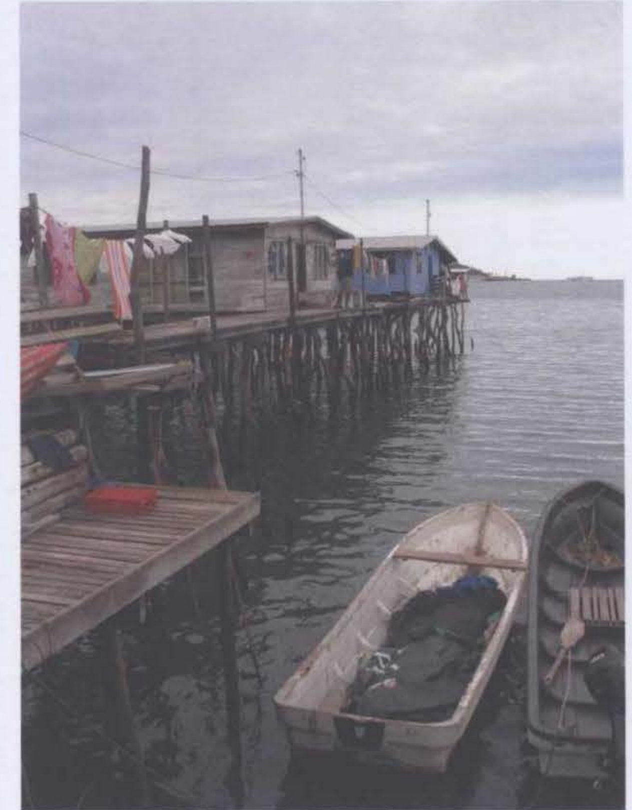

Figure 5.4 Looking out over the Gunina clan *nese* (walkway), Hanuabada, 2007, picture: Jemima Mowbray

5. 'This is Motu Custom'

Marriage in transition, Hanuabada village, 1950 – 2007

In her book on white women's experiences in the territories Chilla Bulbeck relayed the following comic account of 'cultural confusion' as shared by Pat Murray, the daughter of a white plantation owner who had grown up in the Highlands of New Guinea before the war. Murray told the story of how when she married in 1951 she moved to her new husband's plantation, which was not too far from where she had grown up. Very soon after the wedding – the following Sunday morning – thirty-five local indigenous workers from her father's plantation, in full tribal dress, came to retrieve her:

> It soon transpired that they thought Dad and John were a pretty poor pair of males to allow a perfectly good able-bodied working female to be carried off from under their noses, and they had come to take me back ... It was all I could do not to burst out laughing, and our house staff who were local New Irelanders were in the kitchen listening into this, and they were in convulsions of mirth. I said, 'Look, your fashion is that the man marries and joins the wife's clan and so on. Our fashion is the woman marries and she goes with her husband and her father and brothers will not allow her to marry a man if he is such a man rubbish that he cannot provide a home, and a livelihood for her. If he can't do that she won't marry him. This is our fashion and it's quite different from yours. Yours is a good fashion for you and this is a good fashion for us'. Anyway I had to go through this in the usual kanaka style about three times over in different phraseology and finally they got the message.[1]

This story does not simply highlight that culture contact had two sides, and two different sets of misapprehensions.[2] Murray's telling of the story, as amusing anecdote, understands the 'confusion' of the Highlands men as humorous not simply because of the misunderstanding and difference in white and indigenous practice but because the men had naïvely assumed that the white (wo)man might be incorporated into their cultural logic of relating. Murray's narrative conclusion

[1] Pat Murray quoted in Chilla Bulbeck, *Australian Women in Papua New Guinea: Colonial Passages 1920 - 1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge Uni Press, 1992), pp.122-123.

[2] Of course, when Murray retells this moment of confusion, she now invests her narrative, her interpretation as authoritative – able to understand and capture the motivations and intent of the Highlands men who had come to 'retrieve her'.

underlined her reading of their response as absurd in its presumption. She explained to the men that they each (the white and the indigenous cultures) had their own 'fashion', and this fashion was good, or appropriate, for those within it. It was, of course, not quite so simple, and Murray's anecdote works to draw attention to, in its very elision, the inequitable balance of power between the two parties involved in the misapprehensions that were an invariable part of 'cultural contact'. The ways of the indigenous inhabitant were never simply understood by the coloniser as 'good for them'. This was certainly the case in the sphere of marriage.

As discussed in chapter three, 'the married couple' became a crucial locus of missionary and colonial administrators' post-war efforts to construct new and modern female indigenous subjects. Women were to be turned into 'modern' wives, and in particular it was the wives of educated and advanced indigenous men who would be groomed by welfare workers to lead the way and provide an example to their village sisters. Special measures were taken – social engagements with expatriate (white) women were arranged, public lectures on hygiene and social matters were organised, and training in cooking, sewing and 'the art of conversation' provided - to ensure that wives kept abreast of their husband's advancement. In this way these women would, as Dr Joan Refshauge expressed it at the time,

> exert a power for good ... [and] be a great asset to him [their husband] in his home and in his own sphere of activity.[3]

Wives were envisaged as playing the role of helpmeet to their husband within a companionate marriage, a union envisaged primarily as existing between two individuals. Marriage, however, looked quite different from an indigenous perspective.

In Papua and New Guinea customary practices relating to marriage varied widely between different indigenous groups, but there were a number of common characteristics. Marriage was generally understood as something that joined families and clans, not as something simply between two individuals. On becoming a wife, a woman did not simply enter into a relationship with her husband, but into a set of relationships entailing certain rights and obligations between clans and wider kin networks. Communities of people were bound together through the union. In nearly all traditional societies betrothal was arranged by parents, or clan leaders or chiefs, sometimes with the knowledge of the couple involved but also often without. Consent was sometimes sought, in some instances it was simply presumed. As well

[3] Joan Refshauge, "Memorandum for the a/Director of Public Health, Port Moresby, Subject: Advancement of Women," in *Papers of Dr Joan Refshauge* (National Library of Australia, August 15 1957).

most, if not all, groups practised a form of bridewealth. Invariably fitting within a larger system of transactions, bridewealth exchanges involved a ceremonial exchange of wealth given by the family of the prospective husband to his future wife's family. In the past bridewealth might be paid in any mixture of garden goods, pigs, traditional 'monies', and sometimes land. Increasingly, as indigenous societies became more integrated within the colonial cash economy, they began to involve substantial cash payments. This presentation or payment was necessary before the marriage could be recognised as complete. Payment might be expected before the 'marriage event', or could well be the final step in the process of marriage. Polygamy – marriage between one man with more than one woman – was reasonably common.[4] As was levirate marriage (glossed as 'brother-sister exchange' in some instances), in which a widow was obligated to marry her deceased husband's brother.[5]

Customary marriage presented a number of problems to those involved in the colonial project. Missionaries, administration officers, and colonial legislators argued among themselves about how much they might reform indigenous marriage. In particular they argued over how to eliminate polygamy and the problem of 'child brides', and what they should do about the widely practised indigenous customs of arranged marriage and brideprice.[6] How were they to understand these practices? What did they mean for the status of women? What changes were taking place as a result of colonial contact, and were these for the better? Was legislation to enforce change warranted, and would it work?

I begin this chapter with a brief account of the debate between the missions and the administration over legislative reform to colonial marriage regulations in the immediate post war period. While the missions and the administration were divided in their opinions on how best to promote change within indigenous societies, their discussion of custom and indigenous women's status within this debate evidenced a shared understanding of custom as lowering women's status. I then shift focus, to sketch out the ways in which Motuan women narrated to me their entering into

[4] Polygny (several wives) was common in Papua and New Guinea, rather than polyandry, the reverse of this in which a woman took more than one husband. Though isolated instances of polyandry have been observed in Papua and New Guinea these were exceptions rather than standard practice in any indigenous society. It is worth noting polyandry was practised in other Pacific places, for example the Marquesas Islands.

[5] For the sake of clarity, it should be explained levirate marriage is not to be confused with direct brother – sister exchange. It refers here to the practice of the marriage of a widow to her husband's brother after the death of the first husband.

[6] As I explain later in the chapter I generally use the term 'brideprice' within this chapter (except where sources use a different term) mainly because this was the way it was talked about and translated for me by Motuan women and men in Hanuabada (but see further discussion at end of this chapter).

marriage in the 1950s through into the early 1970s and their negotiation of practices such as betrothal (arranging a marriage) and brideprice. Motuan women were often critical of these practices, but their discussion of these suggested a somewhat more complicated picture of what customary marriage practice might mean for women in a society undergoing significant change as a result of colonialism. Here I mean both the practical implications of brideprice practice within the lives of women, but also what such practice means or signifies for women in terms of their cultural identity. Within the chapter brideprice – the ways in which it is understood, has changed, and is now talked about – is used as a focus for thinking through some of these issues.

COLONIAL INTERVENTION REGARDING CUSTOMARY MARRIAGE

In the interwar period when feminists became involved at an international level in discussions over how best to protect indigenous women of the colonies, the need to reform indigenous marriage practices was placed at the centre of the debate.[7] British feminists in India had been advocating for colonial regulation to abolish the practice of child marriage since the mid nineteenth century. The publication of Katherine Mayo's (notorious, and even at the time widely critiqued) *Mother India* in 1927 revitalized such efforts. The British feminist Eleanor Rathbone through the League of Nation's Child Welfare Committee, and Norwegian advocate Valentine Dannevig as a member of the League's Permanent Mandates Commission campaigned to raise the legal age of marriage.[8]

When the League of Nations passed the international Slavery Convention of 1927 feminists deployed the new definition of slavery contained within this to bolster arguments for the abolition of certain customary marriage practices.[9] They argued practices such as polygamy, infant betrothal, and brideprice positioned women as the property of men, allowing for their exchange or barter as objects. If states took

[7] For evidence of feminist advocacy and colonial administrative responses to their concerns see BNA: CO847/11/12, Africa: Status of Women of Native Races, 1938. See also discussion of League efforts in United Nations. and Boutros Boutros-Ghali, *The United Nations and the Advancement of Women, 1945-1995*, United Nations Blue Books Series (New York: Department of Public Information, United Nations, 1995), pp.19 – 22. Those involved included Eleanor Rathbone MP, Nina Boyle, and M. M. Ogilvie Gordon.

[8] Susan Pedersen, "Metaphors of the Schoolroom: Women Working the Mandates System of the League of Nations," *History Workshop Journal* 66, no. 1 (2008).

[9] The definition within the Convention understood slavery as 'the status of a person over whom all or any of the powers attaching to the rights of ownership are exercised'. In 1930 the British Commonwealth League's annual conference formally requested the Heads of Commonwealth Nations consider the issue of female slavery as a matter of priority at their upcoming conference on 'Imperial Responsibility and the Less Forward Races'. And in 1933 a special League of Nations Conference raised the slavery of 'native' women as a main point of discussion, and the Permanent Slavery Committee of the League was encouraged to particularly focus their attention on female imperial 'native' subjects. See Alison Holland, "Wives and Mothers Like Ourselves? Exploring White Women's Intervention in the Politics of Race, 1920 - 1940s," *Australian Historical Studies* 32, no. 117 (2001), p.33.

seriously their obligations under the new Convention they would address the issue of native women being treated as domestic slaves within their own societies. Fiona Paisley and Alison Holland's work has highlighted early women's activists' efforts in the Australian context in raising awareness of the vulnerable situation of Aboriginal women. Mary Bennett and Edith Jones, in particular, were vocal in their condemnation of the indigenous practices of polygamy and bridewealth as allowing for the 'bartering' of women – as property – across the frontier.[10] Bennett, for example, strongly appealed for the prohibition of polygamy in settled areas, arguing that Aboriginal women would be better off in Christian monogamous marriages for two main reasons. They would be in a stronger position in relation to their husband within their marriage, and so much less likely to be bartered to a white man. And because in Western Australia the chief protector could only become the legal guardian of Aboriginal children whose parents were not legally married, a monogamous Christian marriage – recognised as legal where tribal marriage was not – would assure Aboriginal women their rights as mothers over their own children.[11]

In Papua and New Guinea it was not feminists, but primarily missionaries who were involved in pushing for reform to customary marriage practice. The key concern with relation to this for missionaries of all denominations was the promotion of monogamy within marriage; monogamy was regarded as essential within a Christian marriage. It was considered particularly crucial to conversion, and was required of all converts. Missionaries suggested that women suffered under polygamy, earlier wives might be 'thrown away' for a new one and their children left without a father.[12] While missions asserted considerable influence over those they had converted, they felt the administration could do more to assist in reforming indigenous marriage practice.

In Papua the Marriage Ordinance of 1912 – 1914 allowed that indigenous subjects could, if they wished, be married according to European law, and have these marriages registered. In New Guinea, however, indigenous subjects had been restricted from European marriage on the basis they did yet understand the full implications and obligations of this contract.[13] When the colonial administrations of

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[10] Fiona Paisley, *Loving Protection? Australian Feminism and Aboriginal Women's Rights 1919 - 1939* (Carlton South: Melbourne University Press, 2000), pp.89-90, 108-110; Holland, "Wives and Mothers Like Ourselves? Exploring White Women's Intervention in the Politics of Race, 1920 - 1940s.", pp.298-301.

[11] Holland, "Wives and Mothers Like Ourselves? Exploring White Women's Intervention in the Politics of Race, 1920 - 1940s.", p.300.

[12] David F. Wetherell, *Reluctant Mission : The Anglican Church in Papua New Guinea, 1891-1942* (St. Lucia, Qld.: University of Queensland Press, 1977), p.289.

[13] In New Guinea indigenous subjects were excluded from the Marriage Ordinance. Under Native Regulations – Native Administration Regulations 65 (1A) – there was provision to regulate native marriage. The regulation recognised native customary marriage and native

the two territories were merged after World War Two, moves were made to ensure legislation in the two territories was consistent. The missions saw in this their opportunity to push for more interventionist policy in relation to indigenous marriage. At the Missions Conferences of 1947 and 1949 they passed unanimous resolutions requesting the administration revise current marriage legislation so that New Guinea legislation might fall in line with that of Papua. In addition they asked that 'Native Custom Marriage' should be allowed to be registered, except in cases where polygamy was involved. Indeed they called for polygamy (and polyandry) to be declared illegal.

This placed pressure on the colonial administration to act. They responded by appointing anthropologist Charles Julius to collect and collate information on customary marriage practice from all District Commissioners, report on what effects the implementation of the missions' recommended policies might have for 'native' social organisation, and suggest an appropriate course of action for the administration. The report took over two years to produce. Debate and discussion on the issue continued through the 1950s.

Though not always agreed on issues to do with 'native governance', the representatives of the various missions were agreed on this. It was a human right, they argued, to have one's marriage – Christian or customary – legally recognised by the state. In addition they felt the administration should more actively discourage polygamy. As the debate progressed they added arranged marriage, sister exchange, brother-sister exchange and brideprice to their list of practices in need of prohibition.

The response from administration personnel – from patrol officers, district commissioners, crown law officers, all the way through to Department Directors – was also surprisingly consistent. In principle they agreed with the missions that a form of Christian marriage was desired, but did not believe legal prohibition of customary marriage practices would work to discourage these. They felt, in any case, apprehensive about forcing change to occur 'too rapidly', before indigenous societies were ready. This might lead to social and moral degeneration.[14] And they

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marriage celebrated by a Minister (i.e. Christian Native marriage). These were recorded in village census books, but had no formal documentation (such as a certificate). Recognition was not the same as registration, and they were not accorded the same legal status as a registered civil (be it Christian or not) marriage as under the Ordinance. For example, under the Native Labour Ordinance if a wife accompanied her husband to a plantation, the employer would have an obligation to help support the wife. This was not enforceable for those married according to native customary marriage.

[14] Roberts, Director of Native Affairs, warned 'primitive society may degenerate into a socially and morally amorphous mass', PNGA: 69/7-2-5/1269, Native Marriage Customs 1955 – 65; Correspondence with the Government Secretary, 15 December 1954; Correspondence with Secretary, Department of Territories, 20 June 1953.

considered the missions' championing of the registration of marriage as simply a means of discouraging divorce. Registration would make separation and divorce generally much more difficult to obtain than it presently was under custom. In the opinion of administration officers this was not only impractical and undesirable, but given there was no administrative support to outlaw practices like polygamy, blanket registration of customary native marriage may 'in effect, validate [the unwanted] aspects of native customary marriages'.[15]

In raising their requests to discourage and/or prohibit these native marriage practices the missions framed their appeal, at least partly, as a concern for women's status.[16] Sister-exchange, brother-sister exchange, child betrothal and brideprice were aspects of custom objected to as a matter of 'human rights'.[17] These practices, the missions asserted, allowed for young women and men (and sometimes girls) to be forced into a marriage against their individual will and consent. Missionaries also drew attention to the limited nature of the provision within current regulations that extended protection to a woman being forced into marriage without her consent. Under the New Guinea Native Regulation 65 (2) the Administrator was empowered to intervene to:

> forbid the marriage of a native woman in accordance with native custom if the woman objects to the marriage and has been educated in European surroundings, or has acquired European habits to such an extent that, in the opinion of the Administrator, it would be a hardship to compel her to conform to native custom.[18]

A similar provision existed in Papuan Native Regulations.[19] But as Reverend Dwyer pointed out, protection was only offered to those women deemed 'educated' or sufficiently Europeanised by the administration:

> Does this mean that a Native woman, according the mind of the Administration, is not allowed to refuse to be married according to Native

[15] PNGA: 69/7-2-5/1269, Native Marriage Customs 1955 – 65; Report to the Director, Department of District Services and Native Affairs, 26 March 1952. It was impractical, they argued, because it would require a significant amount of administrative resources to oversee and to adjudicate in situations of divorce. It was undesirable given the shifts to make divorce more easily obtainable in the West, and the problems that arose in situations where divorce was not allowed (concerns for abandoned wives, illegitimate children, etc).

[16] See in particular Mr Ure's contribution within Legislative Council Debates on the proposed Marriage Ordinance, *Legislative Council Debates*, 25 September 1956, p.26.

[17] Resolution (15) of the Missions Conference of 1952 and 1954 summarised in PNGA: NA/14-1-21, Native Affairs, Native Marriages; Letter from AA Roberts, Director to the Government Secretary, 15 December 1954.

[18] PNGA: NA/14-1-21, Native Affairs, Native Marriages; Charles Julius, Anthropologist, Report, Native Marriages, 21 April 1952, p.6.

[19] Ibid.

custom unless the Administrator tells her, 'Yes, it is all right [sic] because you have been educated. Is that what it means?[20]

Charles Julius, in his written report, felt obliged to address the question of what effects these various marriage practices had on women's status. In his report he defined women's status 'from the limited point of view of customary law' as being their position in relation to others in the community, and the degree to which they could act as 'free and responsible' members of a community.[21] On this basis he judged European women's status in their communities as easily higher than that of indigenous women. He assessed the low status of women in Papua and New Guinean societies as tied to their heavy reliance on women's economic production. Because women's labour was so highly valued, they were effectively legally positioned as economic objects or assets and their labour power claimed as property by men. He thought practices such as polygny, levirate marriage, and brideprice helped to sustain the legal position of women as property, but was not the cause of it. In his opinion it was only through economic development, not legislation, that change with regards women's status – and a decrease in the marriage practices concerning the missions (and others) – would occur. In agreement with many of the statements he had received from local and district officers on the issue, he recommended greater effort be made towards the education of women, pointing to the administration's recently established welfare programs (see chapter two, this thesis) as a good start towards this.[22]

The Marriage Bill (aimed at ensuring consistency between the colonies) was still being debated during the last sitting session of the Legislative Council in 1956. By then little attention was being paid the effects of customary marriage practice for the 'status of women'. Discussion regarding the Bill – in the Council, in the press – had instead shifted focus to the question of who held the appropriate authority to make a judgment on the 'capacity of the native' to understand and enter into the solemn contract of marriage. The proposed Bill had introduced the requirement that the prospective indigenous couple must first seek the permission of their District Officer before entering into a legal marriage. This effectively constituted a restriction of the powers granted to religious ministers under the earlier Papuan legislation. Concern was also expressed that District Officers, under the new proposed Bill, were to be given powers to divorce a married couple. The debate had very quickly become

[20] Rev. J. Dwyer, *Legislative Council Debates*, p.28.
[21] PNGA: NA/14-1-21, Native Affairs, Native Marriages; Charles Julius, Anthropologist, Report, Native Marriages, 21 April 1952, p.13.
[22] PNGA: NA/14-1-21, Native Affairs, Native Marriages; Charles Julius, Anthropologist, Report, Native Marriages, 21 April 1952, pp.12-16.

about who knew 'the native' better, and who should 'guide and regulate' their 'development': the missionary or the administration officer?[23]

It would be wrong to suggest that the deliberations and debates that took place within the Legislative Council were completely divorced from the lives of everyday villagers, certainly these had ramifications for indigenous subjects. But while debate carried on in the temporary chambers of the Legislative Council in the Red Cross Hall on Ela Beach Road, just down the road Motuan women carried on with life. And this, of course, included all things to do with marriage: flirtations and furtive meetings, family arrangements and romantic engagements, Christian ceremonies and customary brideprice exchange.

In the next section of this chapter I move to examine what marriage looked like in Hanuabada village in the period following the war, and coming through to the present day. How had customary marriage practices changed? How were they now considered, and remembered? Motuan women's shared opinions on customary marriage practice, and in particular brideprice, were no less passionately felt than those shared by members of the Legislative Council some fifty years earlier. They did, however, evidence a much more messy, but grounded understanding of the complexity of customary practice and how this played out within women's lives.

'THIS IS MOTU CUSTOM'

'Marriage lies at the heart of Hanuabada life', Cyril Belshaw – one of two main ethnographers of Hanuabada – wrote in 1957.[24] He explained that a family's reputation relied on finding a suitable 'match' for their eligible young men and women, and then successfully completing the elaborate ceremonials required within the marriage process. From an early age, children were taught what was expected of them. Young men were required to save up substantial wealth before being able to marry. The ceremonial events of marriage involved hundreds of people – immediate family, extended kin, and friends/allies – and the complex system of gift giving and

[23] Director of Native Affairs, AA Roberts objected particularly strongly to what he saw as the widening of powers to authorise non-administration personnel (mission representatives) to grant permission for 'natives' to marry. He explained, 'In the view of this Department ... the Administration itself should be in a position to guide and regulate the development of social situations arising from the marriage of Natives.' (this was a correction from an earlier draft which read 'control the development'). PNGA: NA/14-1-21, Native Affairs, Native Marriages; Letter from Director of Native Affairs to Secretary for Law, re Native Marriage: Draft Marriage Ordinance 1956.

[24] Cyril Belshaw, *The Great Village* (London: Routledge and Kegan, 1957), p.112. The other ethnographer of Hanuabada being Murray Groves (son of William Groves – Head of the Department of education). Groves, however, worked more generally among the Western Motuan peoples. Annette Rosentiel also wrote on the Motuans of Hanuabada for her 1953 thesis, Annette Rosentiel, "The Motu of Papua New Guinea: A Study of Successful Acculturation" (Ph.D, Columbia University, 1953).

exchange, crucial to the marriage process, bound all participants in ongoing relationships of reciprocity.

Motuan customary marriage practice, even when Belshaw was writing, had changed substantially since contact, especially under the influence of the missions.[25] As other customary practices had become or were in the process of becoming obsolete, customary marriage rituals became a crucial means for allowing the accumulation and demonstration of status and prestige within the village. A number of the women I spoke to told me that energy and resources funnelled into brideprice and the marriage ceremony had increased. Descriptions of the huge sums of money involved, and the pomp and ceremony of brideprice, were often followed with a resigned smile (and what I read as a small hint of irony): 'but, this is Motu custom'. Some explained inflation simply with reference to the entrance of cash into the village economy, but others explained the steep climb in 'prices' in terms of the general 'loss of culture' they felt had taken place since colonisation.[26] Many other aspects of Motuan customary practice and tradition are no longer a pressing feature within village people's lives. Motuan traditional dancing and the *hekara* and *turia* feast cycles associated with this, the *Hiri* trading expeditions, and traditional tattooing of young women have all ceased (see Background: Hanuabada, this thesis). As a result, more monies and cultural resources are invested in brideprice. With so much else 'lost' or disappearing Motuan marriage has become an increasingly visible and vital way of enacting Motuan cultural identity.

ARRANGING A MARRIAGE (BETROTHAL) - *DAEDAE*

Customary marriage consisted of a number of stages, each of these marked by a ceremonial event involving exchange. First came betrothal; families had to come to an agreement that a marriage would take place. In the past the arranging of a marriage, referred to as *ima varo kwato* (literally 'the tying of hands'), was to have been done by older members of the family while the two people involved were still very young, even infants.[27] However, most of the women who had marriages

[25] Marriage practice and ritual in indigenous societies across the territories has been affected by colonial contact. Acknowledging that the institution of marriage is always undergoing change, Richard Marksbury has nonetheless argued that marriage practice in the Pacific is 'in transition'. He goes further arguing that though extremely diverse, marriage practices not just within Papua and New Guinea but across Oceania faced with 'the same stimuli to change' (colonial influence) have become more alike, or at least 'less diversified'. R Marksbury, "Marriage in Transition in Oceania," in *The Business of Marriage*, ed. R Marksbury (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993), p.4.

[26] Mabel Gavera, 9 June 2007, Hanuabada.

[27] This stage was supposed to have involved tying a small piece of string around the wrist of the two young infants to mark them for eventual marriage (hence: '*ima vara kwato*'). Still today gifts which are said to symbolise or resemble the '*ima varo kwato*', such as *toea* (shell

arranged for them that I spoke to were young women when betrothal took place. Bonnie Sisia was around sixteen when *daedae* was arranged for her. Her parents had both passed away, and so her eldest brother and uncle were approached:

> My husband's relatives, they came up to the house and asked my big brother. They arranged for me to get married, announced that they wanted me to be the wife for my [now] husband ... this is called *Daedae*.[28]

Daedae entailed sending over of the groom's female kin (though not his mother) to make a representation on behalf of the groom and discuss the proposal of marriage with the potential bride's family. Agreement did not signify engagement, but rather marked the young woman and man as no longer 'available'. Other eligible young men knew after *daedae* was made, that they could no longer pay court to the betrothed woman. As one woman told me, 'once a mark is put on the woman then ... the door is already closed.'[29]

Families often chose potential partners on the basis of status, or because of an existing friendship between parents. Most Motuan women told me, however, that families selected prospective brides because of the young woman's demonstration of respectful behaviour and her proven capacity for hard work. As Idau Raho, born in 1933 and married in 1948, explained:

> If they see a girl, they would see ... if she wasn't really 'walking around' in the village, if she spent most of her time in the house doing housework or if she was quiet in the community – that's when they would select that lady. So they'll pick a day ... for them to go over to the lady's house ... and tell the parents of the lady, 'Oh we like this lady because she is so hardworking and she is not into walking around in the village too much. We can see that. So we want our boy to get married to her'.[30]

Just after passing her Grade 4 exams at the local mission school, Idau had been forced to leave to take care of her brothers and sisters, because her mother had fallen sick and then quite quickly passed away. Idau said she had no time for socialising in the village, and was instead 'all the time just in the house being responsible for the kids'.[31] Her parents-in-law had chosen her on this basis. When brideprice was paid,

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wealth) or *doa* (pig tusk), are exchanged. See description in Lahui Ako, *Upstream through Endless Sands of Blessing* (New Delhi: CBS Publishers and Distributors, 2007), p.530.

[28] Bonnie Sisia, 26 June 2007, Hanuabada.

[29] Belle Arua, 24 May 2007, Hanuabada.

[30] Idau Raho, 23 July 2007, Hanuabada.

[31] Idau Raho, 23 July 2007, Hanuabada.

she explained that it was very large for the time. 'People were saying, it's because you're a really good girl. That's why the brideprice is so big'.[32]

Sexual modesty and propriety in a young woman was also a sought after quality. Belshaw reported that by the mid 1950s pre-marital sex was quite common among young people, though not approved of.[33] Young people 'courted', and entered into relationship, but had to do this clandestinely. They were gossiped about if seen publicly talking with a young man: 'They'll say, 'shame on you! He's coming you are already on your toes going to talk to him. Shame on you!'[34] It was easy to develop a reputation. Geua Asi, had grown up with her grandparents. They were missionaries and travelled all around Papua taking her with them. When she returned at the age of 16 she explained that she had a 'clean' reputation because she had been away from the village through her early teens,

> The reason why the parents of that man chose me was because I hadn't been staying in the village. All my life I was out of the village. So when I came here [back to Hanuabada] the parents of the man they were like 'oh she is new and she hasn't gone out with any boy. So we would like our son to get married to her'.[35]

Marriage by arrangement did not necessarily mean the young woman was not involved in the decision. Some families did not consult the young woman, but others asked for a girl's opinion before continuing the negotiations. When *daedae* negotiations began between her brothers and uncles and her future husband's family, Bonnie Sisia explained they first consulted with her before completing arrangements:

> So the people who were present – my side people – the big brothers and the uncles, they said to my [potential] husband's side people: 'It's alright, you came and we accept it. But then we have to ask the lady first. Ask her first and if she says alright then we can come and approach you [to continue].[36]

Others agreed that families, after considering the boy's character and deciding to go ahead, were obliged to consult the young woman, and may well reject the potential suitor if she objected, 'oh yes, the lady's parents will say, 'Oh we asked the girl but she didn't like [the idea], so sorry we won't accept.'[37]

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[32] Idau Raho, 23 July 2007, Hanuabada.
[33] Belshaw, *The Great Village*, pp.176 – 177.
[34] Idua Raho, 23 July 2007, Hanuabada.
[35] Geua Asia, 16 June 2007, Hanuabada.
[36] Bonnie Sisia, 26 June 2007, Hanuabada.
[37] Idau Raho, 23 July 2007, Hanuabada.

Many of those who were consulted, however, described feeling a great deal of pressure to 'consent'. Loa Gari was 17 in 1949 when her parents arranged her marriage. She told me she had no idea of courtship, or dating, or even of marriage. When her future husband's family approached her parents they immediately answered for her. It was only after engagement (maoheni) that she was actually asked for her answer. As she explained to me, however, 'I had no choice but to go with my parents' decision. So I just took the offer, let's say, and said yes to my husband.'[38]

Many attempted to resist their family's pressure at first, but faced great difficulties – arguments, isolation, even eviction. Geua Asi described the pain she felt at going against her parent's will when she told them she did not want to marry. She had been raised by her grandparents who were early LMS catechists. Travelling with her grandparents for so long, helping them with gardening and daily chores in the foreign villages they visited as catechists, had delayed her education. After her grandparent's retirement from preaching, she began schooling at the newly opened Kavari Girls School, which was enrolling older female students. She had been there only a short time when her marriage was arranged. Initially she was resolute in telling her parents she did not want to marry the young man they had arranged for her – she did not know him, she was keen to continue her schooling. But they were persistent, and placed a great deal of pressure:

> It was a bad hurt for me. The pain ... everyday I was living in the same house with my parents and they were expecting a yes ... but I didn't want to give it, so I was avoiding them. It was really hurting, every day of my life. Even the food I ate hurt me, it caused me pain.[39]

Geua held out for as long as she could ('on it went, went and went'), but eventually felt she had no choice but to give in. 'What else could I do?', she asked me rhetorically. I asked Geua if she had anyone she could go to for support in this situation – her grandparents, other family, the village councillors? She shook her head. Recourse to (even knowledge of) colonial legislative protections was not common.[40] After Geua agreed to marry the young man things went back to normal between herself and her parents.

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[38] Loa Gari, 26 June 2007, Hanuabada.

[39] Geua Asi, 16 June 2007, Hanuabada.

[40] Uncommon, but it did occur. There is evidence of a number of cases in which Motuan women sought the administration's help in invalidating marriages, which they had been coerced into. While women rarely initiated colonial intervention (generally this was done by an older uncle or male relative) women often sought some form of guarantee of protection from officers so that they might leave marriages during the process of the investigation. See, for example, the casenotes of the colonial investigation into 'the purported marriage' of Soge

Pamata Gera, born in 1952, also came into direct conflict with her parents when they attempted to arrange her marriage in the late 1960s. She described herself as an independent young woman. After completing Grade 9 she had already found herself a job with the Public Health Department as a typist. She did not accept her parent's choice of husband:

> The boy's parents they wanted their son to get married to me. And they brought everything: pigs, armshells, money for my parents. And my parents – they agreed, but I didn't agree. It wasn't my will, it wasn't my decision.[41]

Knowing that it would not be enough to simply say 'no' to her parents, Pamata explained how she sought to undermine their plans by actively seeking another boyfriend, someone she herself had chosen. 'I wanted to destroy everything, [because] I wanted to choose myself', she explained. Pamata's decision had serious repercussions. Her parents threw her out of the family home, and she was forced to take refuge with a maternal aunt. When she did find a man that she wanted to marry – she met him in the workplace, he was a malaria service supervisor – she sought reconciliation with her parents. The process of reconciliation was slow and could only begin once her new fiancé repaid in full the brideprice payments her parents had received – and then had to return – from the family of the original 'arranged' match.[42]

Of the small sample of women interviewed just under a third had taken part in an arranged marriage, almost all of these from the older generation who had been married during the 1950s.[43] Only one woman from the younger generation interviewed (Pamata Gera, born 1952, her story mentioned above,) had her parents attempt to arrange her marriage for her. That most respondents talked of their marriage as being a result of their own choice suggests a marked transition through the fifties and sixties from 'arranged marriage' to marriage based on 'choice', that is, a marriage initiated by the couple themselves. Under the influence of the Church, and as the village became progressively more incorporated within the colonial state – as both men and women attended school, joined in novel forms of social and political organising, and entered the lower tier of the colonial administration's workforce –

Ofia and Oive Bobora' in which Oive, a 14 year old girl, had given her consent to the marriage only after being physically beaten by her relative. Correspondence April – May 1956 re 'Purported Marriage: Soge Tofia and Oive Bobora'. PNGA: NA/14-1-21A, Anthropology and Ethnology, Social Anthropology, Native Marriage Customs; Copy Report re Purported Marriage – Soge Ofia and Oive Bobora, 2 May 1956.

[41] Pamata Gera, 24 May 2007, Hanuabada.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Half of all women interviewees married before the 1960s had had arranged marriages. No woman interviewed who had been married after 1960 had gone through with an arranged marriage (though the parents of one woman had attempted to arrange a match for her in 1970, she had refused and deliberately sought out an alternative husband of her own choice).

women's appraisal of the possibilities of marriage partner open to them shifted. They still sought their parents' approval for their partners, but now took advantage of the increasing opportunities to meet with and socialise with young men outside of the traditional restrictions (even if this meant, after initial introduction, a 'covert' rendezvous).

Many women described a process of active negotiation between parents and their young daughters regarding their choice of husband. Parents increasingly arranged marriages following the customary process, but they chose partners for their children based on the friendships they had witnessed developing between young people, or after being approached by their children to begin the daedae process.[44] In the past such friendships had been rare – or at least not visible – because social controls within the village had been much stronger, restricting socialising between the sexes. Even for those engaged to marry, courtship was not encouraged. Geua Asi explained she had no chance to get to know her parent's choice of fiancé before their marriage. 'Spending time together, talking together,' explained Geua Asi, 'that wasn't on'.[45] Belle Arua, born in 1936, was the eldest in her family and the only one of her siblings to have her marriage arranged. She described not being able to get to know her future husband properly until after the marriage ceremony in 1955. This was four years after her father had arranged the engagement:

> I was engaged in 1951, but before and after this I didn't even have courtship with him, not until after marrying him. I used to go around and see the family of the boy. Help them out with gardening, just go and stay with them. Chat with them. But I didn't actually talk with my fiancé.[46]

Increasingly, however, women were able to meet with young men – prospective husbands – and get to know them through schools or some form of training, or through groups like Girl Guides and Scouts. After an initial encounter the women might shyly seek a young man out in the public space of the village square, or organise a clandestine meeting to get to know each other better. Go betweens (friends, siblings, cousins) were found to slip quietly between houses to arrange meeting times. Naomi Goava, a young woman in the 1940s, described how this worked:

> We had our accomplices and friends to send for us ... say if you were a boy you'd send a male friend ... to go and let this girl you were admiring know that you had interest in her. It was then up to the girl to say yes or no. But

[44] Gimana Loi, 13 July 2007, Hanuabada; Naomi Goava, 5 July 2007, Hanuabada.
[45] Geua Asi, 16 June 2007, Hanuabada.
[46] Belle Arua, 24 May 2007, Hanuabada.

when my [prospective] husband sent for me this was a time parents were very, very strict with their daughters. My father wouldn't let me go out. And boys, young boys and girls they were not allowed to stand in public and converse. So we'd do it secretly. They'd [the male suitors would] send somebody to go and get the girl. If she consented she'd come along and he'd express his interest.[47]

Paruru Abe described similar sneaking around taking place over twenty years later:

> Whenever we had the chance we would meet outside at night. I would send a torchbearer or something [a messenger]. When I could slip out we would arrange it. He would tell someone and ... we would have people coming to and fro, carrying out the plans and then that's how we used to meet whenever we could.[48]

In some situations in which parents were initially unhappy with the choice of partner, the young couple were able to eventually win them over. Naomi told of how her family disapproved of her suitor (with whom she had been secretly meeting) because of his father's colonial criminal record.[49] He suggested elopement. She refused. She did not, she said, want to bring shame on her family or herself, especially because she was a Sunday school teacher at the time. 'There are ways, means of trying to settle this', she told her future husband. He was a well-educated young man who already held a good job within the colonial administration and was an elected Councillor within the Local Village Council. Being employed, he (along with his family) could offer a generous brideprice. She felt that this helped in the end to sway her previously hostile family:

> They yielded and [pause] well I'm sure some of my relatives consented half-heartedly. Anyway it's a long story but in the end they paid my brideprice and we got married in church.[50]

Naomi felt she needed to pay brideprice because she was a Sunday school teacher. Though her fiance's suggestion of elopement involved a Christian marriage, avoiding brideprice was out of the question for her. Naomi's example makes clear the way in which respectability and status in the village as a Christian and as a Motuan woman, was dependent upon a blend of customary and Christian values and practice. Despite their involvement in the colonial debates on marriage, the London Missionary Society (and later the United Church) in Hanuabada were

[47] Naomi Goava, 5 July 2007, Hanuabada.
[48] Paruru Abe, 7 July 2007, Hanuabada.
[49] It should be noted that the justice of the conviction during the early colonial period was challenged by Sinaka Goava formally in the 1950s.
[50] Naomi Goava, 5 July 2007, Hanuabada.

tolerant of brideprice in the village, because they believed it gave a certain security to the union (strengthened the ties). Almost all the women I spoke to whose brideprice had been paid, held a church ceremony after this. Without this they would have been shamed. But church marriage without brideprice was equally unacceptable.

When denied an active role – or voice – in discussions about their future husband, women nonetheless spoke their desire through actions rather than words: Pamata Gera sought out another boyfriend that she might 'destroy everything'; others fell pregnant. An announcement of pregnancy forced the hand of parents, who would then generally, though reluctantly, concede to their children's wishes in order to safeguard the family's reputation. Toi Dago, in her late teens when she had her first child in the early 1960s, described how her relationship, previously frowned upon by her family, came to be accepted when they heard the news she was expecting.

> We were going out and when he wanted to talk to me he was coming to the house but not coming into the house. He would come and we would tell stories at my verandah. [My family didn't approve of him, so] it was just continuing like that until I was expecting my first born and then the family already knew that it was him – he was showing his face, going to the house. So they didn't talk. They just accepted it and his side people and my side people, they knew from then on ... well that was it.[51]

Colonisers claimed 'choice' and marriages based on romantic love would be indicative of a rise in women's status. Yet 'romantic love' and 'choice', as many scholars have noted, were still only a relatively novel aspect of western courtship and marriage.[52] These concepts – love, choice – have also been strongly critiqued for the way in which they function in this context to effectively obscure the inevitability of women's entry into marriage, and the fact of marriage as an inequitable labour contract for women.[53] Talking about their experiences of courtship and engagement it was clear that Motuan women – whether they described their marriage as one of choice, love, or arrangement – felt marriage was inevitable. And while many described actively seeking a marriage partner based on 'romantic love' or individual 'choice', they did not see this as abrogating customary obligations and responsibilities. 'Choice' was simply a reordering of these.

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[51] Toi Dago, 29 June 2007, Hanuabada.

[52] Lisa O'Connell, "'Matrimonial Ceremonies Displayed': Popular Ethnography and Enlightened Imperialism," *Eighteenth-Century Life* 26, no. 3 (2002); Penelope Ann Russell, *For Richer, for Poorer : Early Colonial Marriages* (Carlton, Vic. Portland, Or.: Melbourne University Press;International Specialized Book Services, 1994).

[53] Gayle Rubin, "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex," in *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, ed. Rayna R. Reiter (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975); Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Cambridge: Polity, 1988); and Diana Leonard, *Sex and Generation: A Study of Courtship and Weddings* (London; New York: Tavistock Publications, 1980), p.262.

PREPARING FOR THE BIG DAY: 'WEAVING A WEB OF DEBT'

After *daedae* (the betrothal) the next step in the marriage process was (and is) an exchange known as *maoheni* ('the giving of yams'). *Maoheni* was colloquially translated for me as 'the engagement', because this is what it marks. Only close family contribute towards the *maoheni,* which consists of a small presentation of goods (a mixture of garden foods, pigs, traditional wealth – *toea* and *doa* -, and nowadays cash) made to the girl's family. Once completed it was very rare that the marriage did not go ahead. Soon after completion the families of both bride and groom sit down together and arrange for a day in which to ceremonially present the *davabada* ('the big completing payment'). It is the handing over of *davabada* that is thought of and talked about as *the* brideprice event. For *davabada* the groom's family will reach out to their wider networks of family and friends and pool together all wealth possible, in line with their status and ambitions within the village.

In the past these two payments – maoheni and davabada - were very clearly spaced out. The time between engagement and main payment could be many months, if not years. Often the timing depended on a good series of harvests – as garden goods made up a much larger proportion of payments and were actually grown by the families themselves. Women told me that since around the 1980s the separate payments have come more often to be made together. They remain, however, clearly differentiated because different groups of people are asked to contribute to the two payments, and these must then be distributed in different ways through the extended iduhu kin network.[54]

Today when a man and/or his family have decided that they will make brideprice he must first save a significant amount of money himself. This will show to his family that he is serious. Once he has amassed enough he can call together his family for a small feast. Attendance at the feast will signal his kin's approval and support (though in reality, I was told, they cannot not come). Once everyone has eaten, the young man and his close kin will tell those invited that he would like to

[54] Parents are the main recipients of both. They will decide on exactly how to distribute payments. The manner of sharing out the much smaller payment associated with *maoheni* is more discretionary than the later payments. In general it will be allocated to inner members of the household. *Aivara* (the main monies and *toea* of the *davabada* carried on poles) will be distributed broadly through to both the mother's and the father's side of the family (their respective *iduhu*). An additional payment, *gadoroho,* is also be made directly to the parents. This is known as *gadoroho,* and is carried separately from the *aivara*. While the bride's parents can choose to, and generally will, distribute a little of this, it is understood to be *their* payment, and they will retain the largest portion. See Groves for a more detailed description of how payments are distributed to various 'categories' of kin. Murray Groves, "Western Motu Descent Groups," *Ethnology* 2, no. 1 (1963), p.25. Men are seen as primary members of an *iduhu* and so will have priority over the secondary members (women, here: sisters). They have this secondary status because they have married out (or will) of the clan.

make brideprice. Discussion then begins as to whether or not the family (the immediate family, but also and more significantly the *iduhu* or clan) thinks they currently have the required resources. Has the young man saved a large enough sum as a starting point? Is the *iduhu* capable of collecting enough for a respectable brideprice, one that will reflect well on their 'status' within the village? Are there any other brideprice payments planned in the near future?

If the family decides to go ahead they will announce their intentions broadly and start the process of asking others to contribute. The contribution of an aivara can come from an *iduhu*, or where the clans have a close relationship there may be many aivara from one *iduhu*, each family within the iduhu making a contribution. Even within a family, if there are two eligible sons then they may both decide to send an aivara. By both sons contributing to the *dava bada* they each accumulate debt that will later go towards their own future brideprice payment. Immediate kin – brothers, sisters, and parents - are required to contribute generously towards an aivara, cousins are expected to organise one. Contributions are welcomed from broader kin and friendship networks or whoever else feels that they want to. Once a commitment has been made to contribute, a family (or an individual) then becomes involved in organising their own *aivara*, reaching further out to friends and family to accumulate funds and goods for their pole.

The family will send out papers (a formal letter or invitation) calling for contributions to friends and family with whom they don't already have an *imadava* (literally 'hand prize', but translated for me as money debt). Contributions to the *aivara* are recorded diligently in books kept by the family, with details taken of the exact amount of cash or *toea* or any other goods (commonly flour, sugar, rice, *boroma* (pig) or miscellaneous like *kiapas* – bags –, plates, etc). The owner of the *aivara* now has an *imadava* with the person who contributed. This imposes an obligation on the groom to later contribute to this party's future brideprice (or alternatively a brideprice they are obliged to help with). The holder of the debt will expect this to be repaid with a large degree of interest. I was frequently told repayments were required to be double the original contribution. Debts – or *imadava* – cannot be transferred to some other kind of ritual or custom expense (for a funeral, etc), but if the person accumulating debt – the owner of the *aivara*, or at the lower level the person who just made imadava by contributing to somebody's *aivara* – has already paid their own brideprice then the debt can be transferred and repaid later to help towards the brideprice of a close relative of the contributor. Siblings of the groom, however, do not accrue *imadava* because their contributions towards brideprice payments are obligatory.

In the end it is the groom that will be responsible for the bulk of the debt accumulated for his brideprice. The process of brideprice and recording payments and debts has now become formalised and, to some extent, streamlined. Once the *aivaras* are presented to the bride's family they are meticulously noted down and an account of all final contributions kept by the groom (often in a nicely bound accounting book, with a back-up of all information in an Excel document). The groom has now accumulated enough *imadavas* that he (and his wife) will be paying these off for years to come.

23

JOHN OALA DAERA LAKANI
MAOHENI BONA DAVABADA
SATURDAY 26TH. MAY, 2007

AIVARA BIAGUNA: IMA DAVA: MATAMATANA:

DAVA KOHUDIA		MONI (Kina)	TOEA	RICE 20Kg	RICE 10KG	SUGAR 15 x 1KG	SUGAR 20 x 500g	FLOUR 10Kg	FLOUR 500g	BOROMA	KOHU HAIDA		
1	MAOHENI				2	2		2					
2	AIVARA												
3	GADOROHO												
4	TOTAL												

KOHU IHAMOMOKANIDIA

Buka inarina tauna: Ladana Signature Date / May / 2007

Ihamomokanina tauna: Ladana Signature Date / May / 2007

Aivara biaguna: Ladana Signature Date / May / 2007

KOHU IABIDAENA: (Hahine ena kaha)

Iabidaena tauna: Ladana Signature Date / May / 2007

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Figure 5.5: **An example of a *davabada* payment form. Three copies of the above form must be made: a white copy goes to the bride's family, a green copy to the groom's, and a pink copy is kept by the contributor of the money and goods, Hanuabada, 2007 picture: Jemima Mowbray**

Figure 5.6: **One family unit (the Gera family) organises the wealth and goods they will send for maoheni, gadaroho, and aivara payments, Hanuabada, 2007, picture: Jemima Mowbray**

BRIDEPRICE IN THE VILLAGE – AN INTERLUDE

It had been a long day. It was close to dusk on a Saturday in May and Nancy, my friend and interpreter, had invited me to the village to take part in a dava kara, *a brideprice event that her family was contributing towards. Nancy and I had finished our part in the events of the day and were sitting outside her clan's family house by the side of Champion Road, the main road that stretches along the shoreline through Hanuabada. We leant against a tree and watched as small groups of between five and ten women paraded joyously past us. The traffic was intermittent, but building constantly. The women were on their way to the home of the bride's parents'. On their shoulders they carried an* aivara *– a long pole, sourced from the mangroves, adorned with kina notes and toea shells, and decorated with balloons, streamers and other 'special' goods. The* aivara *is, quite literally, a 'branch of wealth'.*

The women in each group were dressed in glorious, matching festive garb. Every group's costume was different, though the uniforms all seemed to be a variation on a theme: colourful cotton skirt matched with plain t-shirt, or – more extravagantly – well tailored meri *blouse in patterned fabric worn over a simple* laplap *(a wrap or sarong). Earlier in the day Nancy and I had also carried a pole down this road and we still wore our own matching skirts: a simple affair made from lightweight green cotton.*

The light was now fading and Nancy assured me the big finale to the day's event was close. Certainly the village was buzzing. About eight groups of women, each with a pole heavy with goods, had lined up next to one another in the clearing where normally a cricket match would have been underway. A crowd had formed. They sat – much like Nancy and myself – outside their houses on verandahs, gangway stoops, or plastic chairs brought out and lined up along the road. We all waited expectantly for the bride herself to appear. She would accompany the largest aivara, *the contribution of the groom's brothers, as it travelled to her parents' home.*

When the bride appeared, walking down the wharf towards the gathered crowd, there was a collective gasp and then cheers. She was dressed in smart blue meri blouse. Around her neck hung a heavy rope of toeas *(shell wealth), frangipanis were tucked in her hair. On her head she wore a crown made from K50 notes. The young girl beside her (her daughter) sported a matching crown. Her attending 'bridal party' were smartly dressed, their outfits finished off with fancy dress party hats.*

As we watched the bride lead off a procession of aivaras *through the village, I noticed Simon, Nancy's cousin, was watching us. I must have caught his eye because he wandered over. Smiling at me he asked, 'So have you thought about why we [Motuans] do this? Do you know?' I started to mumble a reply, but he had already begun answering his own question. 'Status, Yes – that's it.' He pointed across at the parade of aivaras and shook his*

head, seemingly critical of events, 'It's over the top, isn't it?' But then his tone softened, and he chuckled to himself, 'We just want to show off!'

Fieldnotes, 27 May 2007

Figure 5.7 **Women walking back from having delivered an *aivara*, Hanuabada, 2007, picture: Jemima Mowbray**

Figure 5.8 ***Toea* to be paid as part of the *dava bada* (brideprice), Hanuabada, 2007, picture: Jemima Mowbray**

Figure 5.9 **Young woman carrying an *aivara* to the main clanhouse of the bride's family, Hanuabada, 2007, picture: Jemima Mowbray**

Figure 5.10 Bridal party (close), dusk, Hanuabada, May 2007, picture: J Mowbray

Figure 5.11 Bridal party, dusk, Hanuabada, May 2007, picture: J Mowbray

COLONIALISM AND ITS IMPACT ON BRIDEPRICE

Brideprice in Hanuabada is a very big deal. 'Everyone in Papua New Guinea knows', one young Motuan woman proudly told me during a conversation on the topic, 'that brideprice is biggest in Hanuabada'.[55] Certainly the peoples of Central province, and in particular the Motuans, have acquired (and fostered) a reputation throughout the country for the large size of their brideprice payments. In Hanuabada my informants reported brideprice figures of K150,000 in 2006, and another of K175,000 the year before.[56] Granted these were not ordinary payments. They were explained as being high prestige amounts that had brought considerable status to the families involved. At the lower end, payments, I was told in 2007, started at around K15,000.[57] The grand scale of brideprice payments among Motuans is a matter of both notable pride and great angst.

Within this chapter I have referred to the wealth exchanges made within the Motuan system of marriage payments as 'brideprice' rather than the more commonly adopted anthropological term 'bridewealth'. Anthropologists have generally preferred bridewealth because it underlines marriage exchanges as distinct from western commercial transactions, and taking place as gift rather than commodity exchange.[58] I use 'brideprice' primarily because Motuans themselves translated and talked about their practice in this way. While my intention in this was not to imply an appraisal of the Motuan system as one of simple commodity exchange – that is, akin to the actual sale and purchase of a bride – it was clear that among the Motuan women and men that I spoke with, many critiqued current practices of brideprice as being just that.

Much recent anthropological literature on brideprice practices in Papua New Guinea has interrogated the logic of varied individual systems, seeking to understand the ways in which this has been transformed as a result of colonisation and integration within the cash economy. Dan Jorgensen, for example, has described the bridewealth practices in Telefomin in the early 1990s as having been transformed to the extent that women were effectively thought of by their fathers as 'trade stores'

[55] Fieldnotes (author), 12 May 2007.

[56] Personal communication with Nancy Gera and Elia Morea, Fieldnotes (author), 30 May 2007. To give reference to the relative scale of payments – in Buka a high status amount for a brideprice would be anything from K8,000, and K5,000 would be much more common. The highest brideprice anyone could recall being paid at the time I undertook fieldwork in 2007 in Buka was K15,000.

[57] What is acceptable, I was told, very much depends on the circumstances. For example families who have no income coming in, or in situations where a girl has fallen pregnant out of wedlock, a modest K5,000 might be seen as an acceptable amount.

[58] Chris Gregory, *Gifts and Commodities* (London: Academic Press, 1982), p.106. Thus bridewealth is believed better at conveying exchange of payments as a means of creating and symbolically representing relationship/ties of solidarity between kin groups at marriage.

to be used as a means for securing cash resources.[59] Similarly Laura Zimmer Tamakoshi noted men in some indigenous societies referred to women as their 'tradestores', 'tractors' and 'capital assets'.[60] Both Jorgensen and Tamakoshi observed that these labels were not simply evidence of the value placed on women's labour, but also indicated the designation of female productive capacity as men's property, something that might be exchanged as a means for men to secure cash resources.

The literature on transformations to bridewealth practice has made clear that critical examination of the practice and its transformation has not been restricted to the academy, but has consistently taken place within indigenous communities as they have found themselves progressively more integrated within the nation-state and, with it, capitalist social relations. The process of contemporary (local) reconsideration is perhaps most explicitly 'on show' when it materialises as published debate in the Post Courier (the Papua New Guinean national newspaper) over the meaning of brideprice and its continued relevance.[61] Or in similar debates in academic and advocacy forums – Papua New Guinea's first female lawyer Meg Taylor, as a young student at the University of Papua New Guinea in the 1970s put forward a forceful argument against brideprice,

> I do not wish to go into a detailed account on the 'bride price' and its conflicting values, but I wish to make it clear that this exchange of women, a reciprocated payment or a transaction, is one facet in Papua New Guinea society, which suppresses women in their striving for status. As long as a cash price for a woman exists she will be considered to be no more than a piece of furniture and will be unable to gain recognition as a human being.[62]

Contestation is evident in recent disputes appearing within the courts, in which women have legally contested their family's right to exchange them for a

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[59] Dan Jorgensen, "Money and Marriage in Telefolmin," in *The Business of Marriage*, ed. R Marksbury (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993).

[60] Laura Zimmer Tamakoshi, ""Wild Pigs and Dog Men": Rape and Domestic Violence as 'Women's Issues' in Papua New Guinea," in *Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, ed. Carolyn Brettell and Caroline Sargent (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 2005), p.553.

[61] Colin Filer has examined the ideology of one such debate through analysis of letters on the subject published within the letter pages of the national newspaper, the *Post Courier*, in a four month period (Oct 1979 – Jan 1980). Colin Filer, "What Is This Thing Called 'Brideprice'?," *Mankind* 15, no. 2 (1985).

[62] Meg Taylor quoted in Dianne Johnson, "The Government Women: Gender and Structural Contradiction in Papua New Guinea" (Ph.D, University of Sydney, 1984), p.197. For an example of similar arguments made by Papua New Guinean male intellectuals at the time, see Paul Matane, "Bride Price Vs. Education for Girls in the Highlands of New Guinea," *The Journal of the Papua and New Guinea Society* 1, no. 1 (1966).

brideprice.[63] And it is clear in certain choices made by women, such as those of the Huli women interviewed by anthropologist Holly Wardlow who explained to her that they had decided to become *pasinja meri* (passenger women – women who exchanged casual sex for money) after realising their male kin saw them and treated them '*olsem maket*' (like market goods).[64] Becoming 'passenger women' denied their male kin any future bridewealth payments, and in effect repudiated the system.

Reassessment is perhaps just as apparent in more everyday acts, as when Simon shared his throwaway line 'it's over the top, isn't it?' Said to me in exasperation at the end of a long day, it provides one small, but clear, example of local village critique: a pointed evaluation of the way in which the payment – though it has always been an occasion of competitive clan pride – has become a 'commoditised transaction', and the event, an ostentatious display of 'conspicuous consumption'.

REMEMBERING BRIDEPRICE

How did Motuan women explain brideprice for me? *Davabada* payments were described as 'compensation' to the bride's parents for the efforts and wealth expended in raising her, now that they would be losing her labour.

> The meaning of it [brideprice] was because the lady was brought up by the parents. Because they've been looking after her since she was small until she is ready to get married ... It is like paying for her – to take her away from the parents to go and live with the man. And you know the lady is going to bear children for the man, and stay with the in laws and do the housework for the in-laws and that's why they pay the brideprice. It's like paying her off from the parents.[65]

Idau Raho explained that when her (prospective) husband's people approached her father and his brothers to make representations for marriage (*daedae*), she felt it was her duty to say 'yes': 'How [else] am I going to pay back your [the family's] cost of looking after me growing up?'[66]

[63] Martha Macintyre, "'Hear Us, Women of Papua New Guinea!': Melanesian Women and Human Rights," in *Human Rights and Gender Politics: Asia-Pacific Perspectives*, ed. Anne-Marie Hilsdon, et al. (London ; New York: Routledge, 2000), p.166.
[64] Holly Wardlow, "Anger, Economy, and Female Agency: Problematizing "Prostitution" And "Sex Work" Among the Huli of Papua New Guinea," *Signs* 29, no. 4 (2004), p.1035. Wardlow explained that for these women the decision to become a 'passenger woman' was not one made based primarily on economic factors, but a choice made after male kin ignored acts of violence perpetrated against them. They became 'passenger women' in order to take themselves outside of the bridewealth system and ensure their male kin no longer profited from them.
[65] Hanua Mea, 17 July 2007, Hanuabada.
[66] Idau Raho, 23 July 2007, Hanuabada.

Brideprice was also explained to me as proof of commitment. Mary Kidu married her husband in 1979, and a year later – after the birth of her first child – he paid her brideprice. 'Brideprice is a sort of legal agreement between the husband and the wife's people' and his payment of brideprice was the traditional equivalent of sealing the marriage 'contract'.[67] The brideprice, explained Oru Vani, ensures commitment from both partners, 'It confirms that the marriage will stick together, will go on.'[68] Marriage binds two families, and the brideprice signified stability and the indissolubility of marriage. It transferred the bride to her new husband's *iduhu*, and as Mary Kidu (only half) joked, 'After the marriage they take me over to the men's side and I will stay there forever!'[69] Once brideprice is paid the new bride will reside with her husband's family, will perform household and – in the past – garden chores for her in-laws, and will provide children who will belong to the husband's iduhu. While the wife retains limited rights to claim land, property and incoming transacted wealth she became a 'secondary' member within her own original clan.

The quantity and variety of goods and the value of the brideprice payment rose dramatically in the hundred years after colonisation. Over the last 50 years in particular, there has been a significant change in brideprice payments in terms of both the proportion of garden goods to cash, and of garden grown goods to store bought foodstuffs. By way of example, Geua Asi recalled her 'generous' brideprice in 1959 as having included the following: £700, some toea, 70lbs sugar, 112lbs brown rice, 56lbs white rice, and some pigs.[70] At the brideprice event I attended in 2007 the following monies and goods were presented: K80,000, 2015 toea, 207 bags of rice, 14 pigs, 142 bags of sugar, 104 bags of flour, ten doas (pigs tusks) and a range of other miscellaneous goods – 16 bunches bananas, three bags sweet potato, ten string bags (and see Table 5.1 for further examples of brideprice in the period 1904 through to 2007). Even this example from the late 1950s, however, was markedly different in regards variety of goods and mixture of the wealth than brideprice in the village had

[67] Mary Kidu, 21 July 2007, Taurama.
[68] Oru Vani, 17 July 2007, Hanuabada.
[69] Mary Kidu, 21 July 2007, Taurama. Among the Motu, however, there is an old proverb: 'You can buy our sister's body, but you cannot buy her bones.' This expresses the proprietary interest of the *iduhu* in the women born to it and makes clear that while women are transferred at marriage to their new husband's clan, she is taken back at death. Thus limited rights can be conferred on her children or claimed through them. Groves, "Western Motu Descent Groups.", p.28.
[70] Geua Asi, 16 June 2007, Hanuabada.

Date	Brideprice payment	Source
1870s	10 *toea* (white armshells), two shell necklaces (about a yard long), a pig and an axe	Rev. William Turner (1878) as quoted in Seligman (1910)
1904	43 *toea* (armshells); 3 pigs; 100 dog's teeth	Seligman (1910)
1914	98 *toea*; 10 dog's teeth; 6 pig's tusk; 23 bundles taro; 67 yams; 78 bunches bananas; 45 bundles sugarcane; 5 pigs; 6 turtles; 1 dugong; 3 fishing nets; 1 canoe and oars; 5 spears	Lahui Ako (2007), p.75.
1929	£160; 42 armshells; 1 pig	*Papuan Villager*, 1929, p.43.
1930s	*Estimate* 60 – 100 *toea;* £20 – 100; A few pigs; 10 – 20 bunches bananas; 100 – 300 yams; and miscellaneous: canoe paddles, fishing nets, etc.	Percy Chatterton (1970)
1951	£180; 194 *toea;* unrecorded amount of pig tusks, dog's teeth, foodstuffs and other miscellaneous	Cyril Belshaw (1957)
1975	K3, 245; 836 *toea;* 67 bags of rice; 14 bunches bananas; 31 bags of sugar	*Pacific Islands Monthly*, 20 June 1975
2007	Maoheni and Dava bada (aivara, gadoroho) combined K80,000; 2015 *toea;* 207 bags of rice (64 x 25kg, 143 x 10kg); 14 pigs (1 pig, however, died); 142 bags of sugar (72 x 15kg, 70 x 10kg); 104 bags of flour (75 x 10kg, 29 x 500g); 10 *doas* (pigs tusks); and miscellaneous: 16 bunches bananas, 3 bags *kaukau* (sweet potato), 10 *kiapas* (string bags)	Fieldwork notes (Jemima Mowbray), 26 May 2007

Table 5.1: Examples of observed/recorded Brideprice payments, 1904 – 2007 demonstrating process of inflation as Motuans were integrated as wage labourers within the cash economy.

Figure 5.12: A truck arrives carrying store bought goods for the Brideprice payment, Hanuabada, May 2007, picture: Jemima Mowbray

Figure 5.13: Unpacking the Brideprice, Hanuabada, May 2007, picture: Jemima Mowbray

been only 10 years earlier. In 1949 when Naomi Goava married the kinds of wealth exchanged were quite different. She explained that though her husband was employed and contributed a significant amount of cash as part of her brideprice payment, in general brideprice was made up of traditional monies, *bilas* – feathers, and so on – and locally grown garden foods:

> **J:** So when you were first married and brideprice was paid what was it like at that time?
>
> **N:** Whatever money you had. Whatever money you had. Mostly it would be in the form of armshells and traditional *toea* and bird of paradise plumes.
>
> **J:** So feathers were used?
>
> **N:** Yes, they were very valuable at the time. And garden food stuffs. Now you have bails of rice and sugar and all that. At that time they had garden food like bananas. Whole bananas. And yams.
>
> **J:** And was rice and flour already being used within brideprice?
>
> **N:** No that was just starting. If a bail of rice was put amongst the vegetables then you know that would still be valued very highly because at that time it was very, very rare. But nowadays garden food is less and it's flour, rice, and sugar.[71]

All the women I talked to noted inflation, most judging brideprice in their time to have been a much more affordable affair.[72] Even so, many were still paying back debts accumulated as a result of their brideprice. One woman told me, her brother and his wife were still paying off their brideprice debts accrued some thirty years ago.[73] By the late 1970s traditional bride price exchanges were said to be generating a higher level of money circulation than export oriented rural development projects for Motuans in the villages along the East coast of Papua.[74] In Hanuabada the levels of cash exchanged were equivalent to those of the Eastern Motuan neighbours, if not higher.

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[71] Naomi Goava, 5 July 2007, Hanuabada.

[72] See for example Loa Gari: 'It wasn't a struggle at that time because the amount of money contributed was just low. The extended family would come and help and so ...' Loa Gari, 26 June 2007, Hanuabada.

[73] Mabel Gavera, 9 June 2007, Hanuabada.

[74] Writing in 1981 Renagi Lohia claimed that amongst the Motu people, the highest cash money payment within a brideprice at the time was around K20000. In Gaire the highest recorded was 19000 (in 1979); in Barakau 17000 (in 1980), and in Tubusereia 15000 (in 1981). Renagi Lohia, "Impact of Regional Brideprice on the Economy of Eastern Motu Villages, in Post Independence Economic Development of Papua New Guinea" (paper presented at the Institute of Applied Social and Economic Research, Port Moresby, 27 - 29 October, 1981), p.197.

OBLIGATIONS IMPOSED

Most women who had held jobs before they got married told me that once married, they almost immediately left employment.[75] Bonnie Sisia had been an assistant teacher, but stopped teaching in 1951 when she got married. When Pamata Gera married her husband in 1970 she immediately resigned from her job at the Department of Health, 'I didn't want to go to work anymore because John [her new husband] was already working and so I had to be a housewife'.[76] Also of the later generation interviewed Mary Kidu, who had been working for the Girl Guides in a trainer role, had to resign when she got married in 1979.[77] The ideal of a new wife leaving her work was based on the expectations and responsibilities that came after marriage. When I asked why women left waged employment after marriage Paruru Abe, one of the few employed women I interviewed *and* one of the younger women I interviewed (she was 54 at the time of interview), explained: 'Well, that's the old ways. Because they paid the brideprice they [the new bride] should go and look after the in-laws, cook for them, do their housework and so on'.[78]

A new wife was expected to take on much of the domestic labour in her new husband's household. She was expected to rise early and clean the house, mind children, do laundry, fetch water and firewood, and go to the gardens. Apart from when she was attending to these chores she was expected to remain at the main home much of the time so that she would be on hand to greet and show full hospitality to any of her in-laws that came to visit: 'the work of the new wife is hard, not easy'. [79] Oala Mia, married in 1965 to a man of her own choice, testified to the hard work involved:

> [There is] no sitting around and doing nothing. Waking up, do tea. Make breakfast for the in-laws to have. After having breakfast get back to wash the plates. After washing the plates go wash the clothes for the whole family. Hang them. After hanging them you have to chop the firewood. And carry the firewood and start the lunch again. Feed them, wash the plates again. Go collect the clothes. You have to collect the clothes when they are hot. So when you come, fold them and go put them in their

[75] Most women I talked to had left their jobs, but explained that many women remain employed after marriage or actively sought employment after marriage depending on their economic and education situation – on whether their new husbands had a waged job or were otherwise able to adequately provide for their family (some men were famously productive hunters or fishers).
[76] Pamata Gera, 24 May 2007, Hanuabada.
[77] This was both because of the Motuan expectation that a wife would not work, but also because of her employment conditions, 'it was a sort of contract thing. We had to stay single!', Mary Kidu, 21 July 2007, Taurama.
[78] Paruru Abe, 7 July 2007, Hanuabada.
[79] Hebou Taboro, 21 July 2007, Taurama.

> respective places. Then when you get back from folding the clothes then go back to make dinner. Then start preparing dinner for the people who come back from work. So you do the fire for dinner again.[80]

I asked her how she had felt about this exhausting routine of daily chores,

> I had no choice. I just had to do it because of the husband. He'd already bought me off. I had to be the first one to wake up and last person to go to sleep.
>
> During this time, you are doing this and that and hanging the clothes and some of the relatives will go up and visit. You, come and make tea for the visitors ... so you leave those things and come and make tea for them and then go back to work, and then come and gather the things. You are more like a slave![81]

'He'd already bought me off', 'you are more like a slave!' – women quite comfortably identified the system of brideprice as one in which their labour was bought. Those who resisted pressure placed on them by in-laws, were publicly berated and shamed. Hanua Mea described the haranguing a new bride could face, 'they tell her off in front of the whole village, "You don't know nothing, you have no idea about housework. You are useless."'[82] Though the women I interviewed did not bring up physical violence, researchers and Papua New Guinean women activists have testified to how brideprice is often thrown in the face of women complaining about their husband's domestic violence (the logic goes: her husband has paid brideprice and so now it is his right, and certainly no-one else's business, if he is violent towards his wife).[83] Mabel Gavera, who had been married once and entered into a defacto relationship after this, told me directly that she felt the current brideprice system positioned women more or less as commodities. The only way to get around this now, she thought, was to avoid brideprice altogether. Mabel – whose first husband didn't pay brideprice – explained to me,

> My sister's husband didn't pay brideprice either ... but my family doesn't want to chase it up. [Because] actually my sister is a very independent woman and prefers that he doesn't pay it over. Otherwise she'll become owned by his family and will have to work her guts out for them.[84]

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[80] Oala Mia, 13 July 2007, Hanuabada.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Hanua Mea, 17 July 2007, Hanuabada.
[83] Richard Eves, *Exploring the Role of Men and Masculinities in Papua New Guinea in the 21st Century: How to Address Violence in Ways That Generate Empowerment for Both Men and Women* (Caritas, 2006), pp.26 – 28.
[84] Mabel Gavera, 9 June 2007, Hanuabada.

MOTUAN WOMEN EVALUATE CHANGE

Noting the evident inflation of wealth and quantity of goods that nowadays make up the brideprice many women told me they felt brideprice had become too much of a 'competition'.[85] There were many young people, they felt, who now over-commit themselves to a very large brideprice payment. They feel 'things had gotten out of hand'. Mabel Gavera, for example, reported feeling helpless as witnessed situations in which people who had no money and couldn't afford to send their children to school were contributing large amounts to brideprice for status reasons.[86] In the end it was the newly married couple, she told me, who nowadays are left with the huge debt.

As a result of this inflation brideprice is no longer performed before cohabitation or children in an increasing number of cases. Sometimes a church wedding takes place (not instead of brideprice, but as the initial step in a marriage), but not always. The amount of wealth needed prohibits the performance of the process in its 'correct' order. Belle Arua explained this:

> But now what people are doing is they've combined the whole thing and then marriages are not arranged properly now. Boy and girl they meet and they decide to get married. So the parents will have to just pay something just to mark their friendship or their marriage. Not like in my time. In my time it was strict that the girls was marked [betrothal arranged]. And the girl waited until she was properly married before she had children. Now people do it the other way round.[87]

Others told a similar story:

> This time, now, boys and girls they – because they love each other - they get married. Even though the husband, the boy is not working they just go ahead getting married because of love. They love each other. Some of the people now, some of them they don't even pay brideprice. The kids are already grown up, some already married and they didn't even do brideprice yet because of living ... living is really hard. Where would they get the money to do that?[88]

In fact, many of the younger women I interviewed (those married after 1965) had delayed their brideprice payments for a few years so that their husbands' family could pull together the required funds.

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[85] Mary Kidu, 21 July 2007, Taurama; Belle Arua, 24 May 2007, Hanuabada.
[86] Mabel Gavera, 9 June 2007, Hanuabada.
[87] Belle Arua, 24 May 2007, Hanuabada.
[88] Hanua Mea, 17 July 2007, Hanuabada.

While the older women understood and accepted that inflationary pressures and financial constraints had made it impossible for many couples to perform brideprice before marriage, they nonetheless were worried that the changes they were witnessing to such a fundamental aspect of Motuan custom was leading to breakdown in families, and in the community. Of particular concern to some older women was that young people were no longer waiting to marry until they could save monies towards a brideprice. They were going ahead and marrying and having children at an early age. As Bettia Tom explained when I asked her about the changes:

> A lot of changes have taken place. The young girls and the young mothers, they don't follow the traditional life. What we are. They just want to go their own way. They want to get married underage.[89]

These marriages, she explained, did not necessarily last, and there were many young girls left in the village to raise their children as single mothers. Naomi Goava agreed, 'We [Motuans] don't follow custom so much anymore ... And [now] even girls are getting married and having babies as young as 16 or 15.'[90]

While those that delayed did not come in for particular criticism or complaint, the fact of delay was taken to be indicative of a general breakdown of the 'proper' following of customary marriage process. Wahgi Toua, an older Motuan man I was introduced to because of his knowledge of custom (he had even held the position of land titles officer for the Motu Koitabu Council), told me in exasperation, 'brideprice is still strong, but it isn't the same at all. No-one does these things properly anymore'.[91] The wider issue of not following customary practice was seen as deeply troubling. Paruru Abe, a devout Christian, noted that many Motuans now embrace Christianity as tradition and worried, 'we don't have much respect for our [indigenous] traditional customs and ways of life'.[92] In many ways not paying brideprice was diagnosed as part of the wider problem of 'loss of tradition', other symptoms being young husbands' failure to provide for their family adequately and spending their incomes on gambling or drinking or other luxuries.

The issue of cultural identity and tradition is a thorny one for the Motu-Koitabuan peoples of Hanuabada. People that I talked to during my fieldwork often raised

[89] Bettia Tom, 21 July 2007, Taurama.
[90] Naomi Goava, 5 July 2007, Hanuabada.
[91] Wahgi Toua, 12 May 2007, Hanuabada. I was introduced to Wahgi, an older Motuan man, because of his knowledge of custom. He had held the position of land titles officer for the Motu Koitabu Council (a position of authority in which the officer was expected/required to hold considerable knowledge of local custom and history).
[92] Paruru Abe, 7 July 2007, Hanuabada.

concerns about what they perceived as the 'dying out' of custom in the village. Wahgi sadly shared with me his concerns for the younger generation:

> They know nothing of the customs and traditions of their people. They don't remember the dances and can't tell you the stories.[93]

He was worried Motuans would become a dispossessed people: a 'landless proletariat' (these were his words), not only dispossessed of their land, but also of their culture. Mabel Gavera relating to me how she had come to re-embrace Motuan culture after rejecting it during her youth, explained:

> Now I just love it [but] I'm so angry that it's been taken from us. We're supposed to be unique but now everyone else says ... your dancing: well you've just copied that from the Polynesians. We've lost our customs.[94]

Other women in their formal interviews with me lamented the general lack of respect shown towards customary practice and traditional ways of life.[95] Many spoke of it as having been much stronger in their youth (in the 1940s and 50s), but in the process now of slowly 'fading away'. Outsiders, including Motuans from other villages surrounding Moresby, also talk about Hanuabada as having 'lost' their Motu traditions, and point to what they allege are the village's 'city problems' of drunkenness and delinquency.[96]

Brideprice continues to be a central, crucial aspect of Motuan marriage. And indeed because of the impact colonialism had on cultural practice in the village, it is now embraced as a symbol of Motuan custom in the village, even as customary practice of brideprice (for example in the types of wealth exchanged, the amount exchanged, and the process of this) has itself simultaneously undergone significant transformation. For women the contemporary meaning and effect of brideprice is ambiguous. It confers status and firmly establishes her place within her husband's family. Many women see brideprice – and the amount paid – as a direct reflection on their worth. Moreover the lack of brideprice can be a source of great shame: villagers will gossip about this behind the back of both husband and wife. Disruption of brideprice practice is felt by many to have contributed to the increase in underage marriage, and (informal) divorce/separation and general family breakdown in the village. And yet Motuan women were, nonetheless, quite critical of the practice – of the heavy obligations it placed on a wife to work hard for her husband's family (they

[93] Wahgi Toua, 12 May 2007, Hanuabada.
[94] Mabel Gavera, 9 June 2007, Hanuabada.
[95] See for example Paruru Abe, 7 July 2007, Hanuabada.
[96] See Michael Goddard and Deborah Van Heekeren, "United and Divided: Christianity, Tradition and Identity in Two South Coast Papua New Guinea Villages," *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 14, no. 2 (2003), p.148.

now 'owned' her labour), and also of the inflation they had witnessed which had resulted in cash becoming the primary good within the payment, and the amounts required increasingly unaffordable.

Some women take advantage of the fact that villagers now show understanding to those who have not paid brideprice and actively avoid the payment knowing that in not having their brideprice paid a wife gains a measure of independence. She is, to some extent, released from expectations of labour (physical and affective) placed on a wife by her in-laws. And a husband's failure to pay brideprice can always be used, I was told, as ammunition by a woman in dispute with her husband or his family: 'But you haven't even paid my brideprice yet!'

CONCLUSION

Colonial interventions regarding marriage began, in general, from the presumption that reforms to customary marriage practice would positively affect women's status. While colonial actors debated the best way to approach reform, Motuan women were themselves negotiating change within custom – taking advantage of new opportunities to meet young men and socialise and fall in love. For many women in Hanuabada choosing their own husband, something they certainly sought to do when the opportunity presented itself, was not, however, a noted moment of freedom or release from custom (though many resisted their parents strongly so they might make such a choice, this was not necessarily presented as something new or outside of custom). Motuan women understood entering marriage (by choice, or by arrangement) as a much more complicated process of entering into obligations: to one's husband, but much broadly to his family and clan.

Women's assessment of change was most mixed and most ambivalent (between women, even within each woman's own assessment) when it came to brideprice. In the interviews I did there seemed to me to be an apparent tension between, on the one hand, women's recognition of brideprice as it has come to be practiced as being oppressive for women. They identify that the exchange of such large amounts of wealth, and specifically cash, can mean women feel 'bought' and can be trapped into obligations and, of most concern, within abusive relationships. On the other hand women also expressed attachment to brideprice, an attachment indicative of their desire to assert a sense of strong Motuan cultural identity in the context of a felt 'loss of tradition'.

6. 'Protecting' indigenous women?
Sex and (colonial) subjectivity

In early 1950 a missionary in New Ireland waylaid Percy Spender, the Minister for Territories, while he was on tour through New Guinea. Rev. Father Fleming of the Catholic Mission in Kavieng approached Spender at a public meeting to advise him of a case that had recently come to his attention. A local Chinese trader, a resident in town, was said to have seduced two native female domestics employed in his household. The two young women were still currently living in his house, acting as his mistresses. The Father demanded Spender intervene. Surely this situation could not be permitted? Put in a sticky situation, and unable to immediately confirm if, indeed, the situation contravened colonial labour legislation, Spender responded by publicly recommending that the Government prohibit native women from going into the homes of Chinese residents at night.

Later that week, upset they had been singled out, a deputation of representatives from the local Chinese community met with Spender in Rabaul. They asked whether the Government was really going to prohibit native women from going into only Chinese homes at night, or whether legislation enacted would cover all residences. Chastened, the Minister replied, 'I am only concerned about the protection of the native girls.'[1]

At Spender's behest, draft legislation preventing native women being on the premises of any non-native persons between the hours of 6 pm and 6 am was placed before the Executive Council for approval.[2] The Bill was passed in August of 1951 as

[1] NAA: A452 (A452/1), 1957/2586, Native Women's Protection Ordinance - Papua and New Guinea; Administrator to The Secretary, Dept of External Territories, 21 April 1950.

[2] NAA: A452 (A452/1), 1957/2586, Native Women's Protection Ordinance - Papua and New Guinea; Note re Minister's Visit – Chinese Deputation, April 1950. Similar legislation passed for the purposes of regulating intimacy between indigenous women and white men had been earlier passed in 1911 in the Northern Territory. See Ann McGrath, *Born in the Cattle: Aborigines in Cattle Country* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1987), pp.84-85. Interestingly, Edward Wolfers claimed the Bill was passed at the insistence of indigenous male leaders. Edward P Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea* (Sydney: Australia and New Zealand Book Co, 1975).p.128, 141. See also Nigel Oram, *Colonial Town to Melanesian City: Port Moresby 1884 - 1974* (Canberra: Australia National University Press, 1976), p.157. This was also a contemporary opinion; when debating its repeal 11 years later (it was a short lived Ordinance) various members of the Legislative Council discussed the Ordinance as having originated in requests from indigenous people themselves. See in particular Mr Watkins: 'They were certainly asked for by the native peoples themselves',

the Native Women's Protection Ordinance. An amendment in 1954 added further restrictions, prohibiting Europeans (or other non-natives) from entering proscribed Native villages after 9pm. Those who caused or permitted breaches would be fined one hundred pounds or faced a six-month jail sentence. Members who spoke on the amendment Bill during Legislative Council Debates were adamant that these restrictions were essential, 'for the protection of Native women'[3]:

> It is a long felt need that undesirable people, entering Native villages at night, should be stopped. Some of these people have not been giving Native women good advice or constituting a high standard of moral living.[4]

In this chapter I consider the Native Women's Protection Ordinance, as one among a host of measures employed by the administration to limit sexual relations between European men and indigenous women in the period following the war. Through the 1950s the colonial administration increasingly expressed concern for the need to 'protect' the moral and sexual welfare of the 'native woman'. Measures like the Ordinance were suggested and some successfully introduced, and restrictive regulations already in place were more strictly enforced. Sexual relations between the colonised and the coloniser – whether of a consensual nature or not – were discussed within these conversations as disruptive of the moral and social order in the colonies and regarded as having appreciably dangerous consequences for race relations, and consequently for 'good native administration'.

Previous histories have made only cursory mention of the Native Women's Protection Ordinance. Ian Downs, in his insider's account of the post-war administration, briefly outlined the Act's immediate provenance but gave no interpretation of either its implications or the circumstances behind it.[5] Chilla Bulbeck provided more context. Analysing colonial society between 1920 through 1960, Bulbeck recognised that as the colonies became more established, middle class manners and mores, especially with relation to sexuality, became increasingly dominant. Limited measures to 'protect' indigenous women from the casual sexual attentions of colonising men were introduced.[6] The Native Women's Protection

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Legislative Council Debates, 7 March 1962, p.346. And also Mr Taureka: 'I realize that at the time when it was introduced the Ordinance was asked for by my people, but perhaps the time has come when we should think about it again, and an adjournment will allow this to be done.'*Legislative Council Debates*, p.347.

[3] Mr Whittaker, *Legislative Council Debates*, 3 November 1954, p.35.

[4] Mrs Booth, Ibid, p.35 See also Reverend Ure's comment on the amendments: 'It is with regret I support this Bill. It think it is a terrible indictment of our civilisation that such a Bill is necessary. But it is.' Rev D. E. Ure, *Legislative Council Debates*, p.35.

[5] Ian Downs, *The Australian Trusteeship, Papua New Guinea 1945 - 75* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1980), p.71.

[6] Chilla Bulbeck, *Australian Women in Papua New Guinea: Colonial Passages 1920 - 1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge Uni Press, 1992), p.202.

Ordinance was cited by Bulbeck as a measure introduced to enforce the ideal of 'restraint'. Edward Wolfers' Race Relations interpreted the Act as the sealing of the 'last avenue for miscegenation' in the territories.[7] Patricia O'Brien and Anne Dickson-Waiko following Wolfers, similarly understood the legislation to be aimed at stemming a perceived threat of miscegenation in the colonies.[8] Dickson-Waiko concluded that the Act 'reinforced and entrenched two racially segregated systems under colonial management, constituting a form of apartheid in all but name'.[9] Though useful, these evaluations failed to adequately position the Ordinance as part of a marked shift in the administration's response to inter-racial relationships during this period, and to understand the Bill along with the more general concern to 'protect' Native women embodied in it, within the wider context of a changing political and social colonial climate.

SEX AND RACE AND EMPIRE

Feminist historians of Empire for some time now have been analysing the ways in which white colonial societies' anxieties over racial boundaries and racial dominance frequently manifested in strenuous efforts to regulate the most intimate aspects of life in the colonies.[10] Domestic arrangements, family planning, marriage and, of course, sexual morality and sexual practice were matters into which the colonial state actively intervened. Women's comportment, their mode of dress, sexual propriety and their choice of sexual partner all came under scrutiny.

Very nearly absent from the early colonies, white women were admonished once they began to arrive in greater numbers for their supposed incompetence at

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[7] Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea*, pp.128, 139, 141.

[8] Anne Dickson Waiko, "Colonial Enclaves and Domestic Spaces in British New Guinea," in *Britishness Abroad: Transnational Movements and Imperial Cultures*, ed. Kate Darian Smith and Patricia Grimshaw (Carlton: Melbourne Uni Press, 2007).; and Patricia O'Brien, "Remaking Australia's Colonial Culture?: White Australia and Its Papuan Frontier 1901 - 1940," *Australian Historical Studies* 40, no. 1 (2009).

[9] Dickson Waiko, "Colonial Enclaves and Domestic Spaces in British New Guinea.", p.221.

[10] Most famously Ann Laura Stoler in her early article on the topic, Ann Laura Stoler, "Tense and Tender Ties: The Politics of Comparison in North American History and (Post) Colonial Studies," *The Journal of American History* 88, no. 3 (December 2001).; but see also Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1995).; Ann Laura Stoler, "Geneologies of the Intimate: Moments in Colonial Studies," in *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule*, ed. Ann Stoler (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2002). More generally and for the colonial context see also Ann McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Conquest* (New York: New York University Press, 1995).; and Antoinette Burton, ed., *Gender, Sexuality and Colonial Modernities*, Routledge Research in Gender and History (London: Routledge, 1999). For the North American context see the collected essays in Ann Laura Stoler, ed., *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* (Durham ; London: Duke University Press, 2006).; Martha Hodes, ed., *Sex, Love, Race: Crossing Boundaries in North American History* (new York, N.Y.: New York University Press, 1999).; and Kathleen Kennedy and Sharon Ullman, eds, *Sexual Borderlands: Constructing an American Sexual Past* (Columbus, Oh.: Ohio State University Press, 2003).

maintaining appropriate colonial relations with 'the native'. Generally limited in their contact with colonised populations, disapproval focused on their interaction with their native servants. White women were characterised as either rigid, racially intolerant memsahibs or alternatively as careless and overly familiar mistresses to their male 'native' servants.[11] Indigenous women, on the other hand, were generally regarded as politically irrelevant, coming only into colonial view in respect of their sexual and reproductive capacities: that is, as the degraded wife and incompetent 'native mother' or alternatively as the promiscuous seductress or the naïve, sensuous, 'dusky maiden'.[12]

Sexual relationships between the colonised and the coloniser, even just the idea of them, were especially fraught with meaning. However in their calls for further examination of the regulation and functioning of the intimate sphere, feminist historians have made clear that sexual violence and anxieties over sexuality within colonial society cannot be read as purely metaphorical indices of tension.[13] As Ann Stoler has written, 'the politics of intimacy is where colonial regimes of truth were imposed, worked around, and worked out.'[14]

In the Papuan context, colonial anxieties over sexuality were most clearly articulated in the passing of the Papuan White Women's Protection Ordinance of 1926. The legislation was a response by Sir Hubert Murray, Lieutenant Governor at the time, to the escalating demands of the territory's white community that action be taken to protect white women from the supposed dangers of sexual assault by 'native' men. The Papuan Ordinance introduced capital punishment for men found guilty of raping or attempting to rape a white woman, life imprisonment for indecent assault, and imprisonment and public flogging for a range of other 'peeping tom'-like offences. The legislation was considered, even at the time, unusual in its blatant

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[11] Chilla Bulbeck, "New Histories of the Memsahib and Missus: The Case of Papua New Guinea," *Journal of Women's History* 3, no. 2 (1991). See also Helen Callaway, *Gender, Culture, and Empire: European Women in Colonial Nigeria* (London: Macmillan, 1987).; Claudia Knapman, *White Women in Fiji: The Ruin of Empire?* (North Sydney, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1986).; and Amirah Inglis, *Not a White Woman Safe: Sexual Anxiety and Politics in Port Moresby, 1920 - 1934* (Canberra: ANU Press, 1974).

[12] Sharon W. Tiffany and Kathleen J. Adams, *The Wild Woman : An Inquiry into the Anthropology of an Idea* (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman Pub. Co, 1985).

[13] Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2002), p.7; Pamela Scully, "Rape, Race and Colonial Culture: The Sexual Politics of Identity in the Nineteenth Century Cape Colony, South Africa," *The American Historical Review* 100, no. 2 (1995), pp. 335 – 359. And for a critique of the way in which scholars of empire previously used the sexual submission and possession of Oriental women by European men to stand for colonial possession and act as iconography of colonial rule see Ann Laura Stoler, "Making Empire Respectable," *American Ethnologist* 16, no. 4 (1989), pp.365 -366.; Tiffany and Adams, *The Wild Woman : An Inquiry into the Anthropology of an Idea*, p.30.

[14] Stoler, "Tense and Tender Ties: The Politics of Comparison in North American History and (Post) Colonial Studies.", p.843.

specification of the race of the victim.[15] While penalties prescribed within the Bill would, strictly speaking, have applied equally to a white man found guilty of assault as to a 'native', the context and debate surrounding the passage of the Bill made it immediately apparent that the legislation was intended solely for the territories' indigenous male population.[16] Once passed through the Papuan Legislative Council a copy of the Ordinance was sent to every District or Division Magistrate with instructions to make sure the natives understood that 'any interference whatever with a white woman or girl will in future be dealt with much more severely than in the past'.[17]

Fears for the sexual safety of white women were equally strong in New Guinea. In 1934 amendments to the New Guinea Criminal Code made it an indictable offence for a European woman and a native man to enter into a consensual sexual relationship with one another unless they were legally married.[18] The penalty for such relations – applicable to both parties – was up to one year's imprisonment.[19]

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[15] Such blatant racial identification of the victim in legislation was rare across the British Empire, but in practice such discrimination was common. For example laws in the Cape Colony in South Africa in the early nineteenth century distinguished penalties on the basis of the marital status of the victim – acting as a loophole in cases where working class and black women (less likely to be legally married) were the victims. Scully, "Rape, Race and Colonial Culture: The Sexual Politics of Identity in the Nineteenth Century Cape Colony, South Africa.", p.344. See also discussion of the practical application of miscegenation legislation in post emancipation America in Eva Saks, "Representing Miscegenation Law," *Raritan* 8, no. 2 (1988), pp. 39 – 69 and Peggy Pascoe, "Shameful Matches: Regulation of Interracial Sex and Marriage," in *Sex, Love, Race: Crossing Boundaries in North American History*, ed. Martha Hodes (New York, N.Y.: New York University Press, 1999), pp. 464-490.

[16] A.P. Lyons, Director of Public Works, made this clear in his statement opposing the death sentence of Stephen (Maimademi), an indigenous man found guilty under the Ordinance: 'Despite the fact that the provisions of that Ordinance are agreeable to a European offender as well as a black one, it is universally believed by European residents in the Territory that they were framed to punish only black offenders'. Lyons quoted in Jan Roberts, *Voices from a Lost World : Australian Women and Children in Papua New Guinea before the Japanese Invasion* (Alexandria, N.S.W.: Millennium Books, 1996), p.99 See also Amirah Inglis' discussion regarding the debate on the introduction of flogging and also her note on Murray's assertion in the Papuan Annual Report 1925/26 that penalties proscribed in the Act would apply to 'any person' found guilty, in Inglis, *Not a White Woman Safe: Sexual Anxiety and Politics in Port Moresby, 1920 - 1934*, pp.75-79.

[17] Government Secretary to ARM, Rigo, 13 January 1926 quoted in Inglis, *Not a White Woman Safe: Sexual Anxiety and Politics in Port Moresby, 1920 - 1934*, p.83. Along with this a summary of the effects of the Ordinance was published in many local languages and distributed with the Ordinance document.

[18] See Sections 9 and 10 of the Criminal Code Amendment Ordinance of New Guinea, Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea*, p.101. Administration documents relating to the offences often summarised them formally as: 'Defilement of European woman by native with consent', and 'Consent by European woman to defilement by native'. Until 1963 any marriage between a non-native and a native (male or female) had to have the District Officer's express permission. See New Guinean Marriage Ordinance 1935. The first official marriage between a New Guinean male and a European female did not occur until the early 1960s. John Kaputin was the first Papua New Guinean to marry a white woman in 1962. Albert Maori Kiki, *Kiki: Ten Thousand Years in a Lifetime; a New Guinea Autobiography* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1968), p.95.

[19] In 1938 a European woman in Rabaul was charged with allowing (voluntarily permitting) 'a native, other than a native to whom she was married, to have carnal knowledge of her'.

Continued protest and vigilantism throughout the early 1930s by the local white community in Rabaul led, in 1937, to the drafting of legislation modelled on the White Women's Protection Ordinance.[20] While this was never enacted, amendments were made to the New Guinea Criminal Code to bring penalties closer in line with those laid down in the Papuan legislation (see Table 6.1 for details).[21]

Historians who have examined 'black peril' fears in the territories have agreed that the colonisers' fears for the safety of white women were not based on any real threat from indigenous men, but sprang from European insecurities regarding the nature of colonial rule and the colonisers' desire to clearly define racial and class boundaries in the territories.[22] The height of the colonial 'panic' in Papua and New Guinea coincided with a period of rapid social change in the two territories. As Martha Hodes has noted for the North American context, white anxieties about interracial sex were not timeless, but emerged in very particular social, political and economic circumstances.[23]

Amirah Inglis' careful examination of the context and motivation behind the White Women's Protection Ordinance in Papua pointed in particular to the changing social composition and structure of the main urban township, Port Moresby, during the period when fears were at their most hysterical.[24] An increasing number of white women were settling in Port Moresby through the twenties. New to colonial life, Inglis observed, they were regarded as both vulnerable innocents in need of men's protection and hapless mistresses to blame for 'exciting' local men with their indiscreet conduct in front of native *haus bois*[25] (domestic servants).[26] At the same

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See Susan Keays, "Sinabada or Misis: The Experiences of Expatriate Women in Colonial Papua and New Guinea, 1872 - 1942" (Ph.D, University of Queensland, 1995), p.275.

[20] The legislation would have been similarly entitled 'White/European Women's Protection Ordinance 1937' had it successfully been passed. NAA: A518; G840/1/3, Native Offences Against White Women - New Guinea; and also Legislative Council Debates, Sixth Session, 25th August 1937, pp.17-18.

[21] See New Guinea Criminal Code Amendment Ordinance 1937, passed 25 August 1937. Inglis suggests that the new Ordinance was never passed because by 1937 local legislators in New Guinea feared the (League of Nations) Mandate Commission would disapprove of the explicitly discriminatory legislation. Inglis, *Not a White Woman Safe: Sexual Anxiety and Politics in Port Moresby, 1920 - 1934,* p.145.

[22] Ibid.; Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea,* pp.56 – 58; Bulbeck, *Australian Women in Papua New Guinea: Colonial Passages 1920 - 1960,* pp. 208-209; D.C. Lewis, *The Plantation Dream: Developing British New Guinea and Papua, 1884 - 1942* (Canberra: Journal of Pacific History, 1996), p.252; Dickson Waiko, "Colonial Enclaves and Domestic Spaces in British New Guinea.", pp.219-220; and Roberts, *Voices from a Lost World : Australian Women and Children in Papua New Guinea before the Japanese Invasion,* pp. 93 – 99.

[23] Martha Elizabeth Hodes, *White Women, Black Men : Illicit Sex in the Nineteenth-Century South* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), p.1.

[24] Inglis, *Not a White Woman Safe: Sexual Anxiety and Politics in Port Moresby, 1920 - 1934,* pp.57 – 88.

[25] Colonised adult men employed to do domestic duties such as cooking, cleaning and laundry were generally referred to as '*haus bois*', reflecting the patronising attitude of Europeans towards colonised subjects (i.e. they were seen as childlike and inferior) as well as

time an increasing number of indigenous men were coming to Moresby. They came to seek work, to trade or to visit with friends and relations residing there. White residents expressed concerns that these indigenous men were being 'over-exposed' to the influence of 'civilisation' and were, as a result, becoming 'insolent' and 'cheeky' in their dealings with the white man. The novelist Beatrice Grimshaw, writing in the 1930s, remarked in relation to 'black peril' concerns in Papua:

> Twenty years ago it hardly existed. Civilisation, however, generally brings some trouble of this kind in its train.[27]

The eruption of calls for more severe penalties to protect white women from sexual assault spoke to white colonial society's inherent anxiety at the idea of 'native' intrusion into the banal but intimate, everyday, domestic spaces of the coloniser. To maintain 'white prestige' the Papuan white community felt it necessary to maintain their social – and physical – distance from the 'native'. Inglis' analysis here agreed with Pamela Scully's assessment of similar 'black peril' fears in the colonial African context: fears for the sexual safety of white women spoke to the colonisers' deeper 'anxieties and ambivalence about the appropriate limits of the civilising mission'.[28]

Anne Dickson-Waiko's conclusions regarding the passing of the legislation pushed further. She explained that the arrival of white women in the colony increased cohabitation of white women with black men (as mistress and domestic servant in white colonial homes). This meant that the previously inconceivable – that is, sexual relations between a white woman and a black man – was now conceivable. Even the suggestion of such relations, argued Dickson-Waiko, threatened white men's confident authority in the colony. Not only did this imply the loss of their control over 'native' subjects but also over white women:

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the emasculation involved when adult indigenous men took on the domestic role within the colonial household (women's work).

[26] As just one example among many, Sir Hubert Murray told the Minister of State for Home and Territories Senator George Pearce in 1926: 'The white women are largely to blame for the Commission of these offences and that the security of the old days will not return until the white women themselves realise this, and insist upon a more restrained attitude towards young native men and boys'. Murray quoted in Roberts, *Voices from a Lost World : Australian Women and Children in Papua New Guinea before the Japanese Invasion*, p.94.

[27]Grimshaw quoted in Amirah Inglis, *The White Women's Protection Ordinance: Sexual Anxiety and Politics in Papua* (London: Chatto and Windus for Sussex University Press, 1975), p.vii See also Editorial from the August 1949 *Pacific Islands Monthly* regarding a visit from Evelyn Cheeseman (a single white female travelling around PNG by herself): 'In the past they have been fortunate enough to avoid trouble. It is to be hoped their good fortune continues. Too often the wilder the natives the safer they are. But natives are becoming more civilised now – and less safe', *Pacific Islands Monthly*, August 1949, p.47.

[28] Scully, "Rape, Race and Colonial Culture: The Sexual Politics of Identity in the Nineteenth Century Cape Colony, South Africa.", p.338.

> White women cohabiting with native men ... revealed colonial men's inability to control white women's sexuality, in marked contrast to colonised men, whose control over colonised women's sexuality was often extreme, proscribed by customary practices of polygamy, arranged marriage and bride price in many cultural settings in New Guinea.[29]

As Dickson-Waiko went on to explain, citing the oral accounts of Papuan men, consensual intimate relations between white women and black men did occur, although these were irregular and always clandestine.[30] Her analysis suggests that what was at issue was not simply the racial colonial order; but rather that this *itself* was predicated upon a gendered hierarchy in which white men presumed right of sexual access to and sexual control over 'their' women. Pertinent here is Carole Pateman's assertion of the patriarchal underpinnings to modern civil society and governance. In *The Sexual Contract* Pateman rewrote the story of 'original contract' – in which individuals (sexed male) surrender their 'natural freedom' for 'civil freedom' under the protection of the State – to include 'the sexual contract'. The original pact, she explained,

> is a sexual as well as a social contract: it is sexual in the sense of patriarchal – that is, the contract establishes men's political right over women – and also sexual in the sense of establishing orderly access by men to women's bodies.[31]

The creation of a civic brotherhood established the 'law of male sex right' over women, a right which extended 'to all men, to all members of the fraternity'.[32] Pateman qualified this. Although not attempting a detailed analysis of what a re-reading of the story of the 'original contract' might imply for hierarchies of race, she did make clear that those who were said to make the original contract were white men, and as white men,

> their fraternal pact ha[d] three aspects; the social contract, the sexual contract and the slave contract that legitimize[d] the rule of white over black.[33]

Sarah Benton, in what was both critique and expansion of Pateman's argument, agreed that the notion of fraternity could never include *all* men; that it existed as

[29] Dickson Waiko, "Colonial Enclaves and Domestic Spaces in British New Guinea.", p.221 Agreeing with Dickson-Waiko, Chilla Bulbeck's explanation of the White Women's Protection Ordinance spelt out the proprietarily logic underlying such fears. Bulbeck, *Australian Women in Papua New Guinea: Colonial Passages 1920 - 1960*, p.20.
[30] Ibid, p.220. Regarding early residents' recollections re liaisons between white women and black men see also Inglis, *Not a White Woman Safe: Sexual Anxiety and Politics in Port Moresby, 1920 - 1934*, , pp. 20-21.
[31] Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Cambridge: Polity, 1988), p.2.
[32] Ibid, pp.109-110.
[33] Ibid, p.221.

much to assert the solidarity of an exclusive band of men over other men, as to exclude women.[34] The political notion of fraternity assumed for those within it a shared link to and rights over 'family and sex and land'.[35]

In an insightful article dissecting Franz Fanon's argument on the psychosexual dynamics of race in his foundational text *Black Skin, White Masks*, Gwen Bergner deployed Luce Irigaray's notion of women as 'fetish objects' to analyse Fanon's dismissive construction of black women who entered into sexual relationships with white men as 'pathological' and 'neurotic'. Irigaray contends that women are often understood as 'commodities for exchange' in 'transactions' undertaken by men. In this formula, women's value lies not in their use but in their possession, and it is through such an economy of exchange that women – as 'fetish objects' – establish relations between men.[36] Bergner, transposing this to the particular context of relations between men in the colonies, writes:

> If women function as commodities mediating social and symbolic relationships among men, then colonialism may be contested largely through the ability of black men and white men to control the exchange of 'their' women. For example, white men succeed in colonizing black men to the extent that they are not subject to black men's dictates regarding 'their' (black men's) women (i.e. black women).[37]

Applying Benton and Bergner (following Irigaray) to the Papuan context, white men's increasing anxiety for the safety of white women through the 1920s might be understood as alarm at the idea of native men asserting their 'sex right' over white women and, in doing so, laying claim to fraternal status with the coloniser.

This framework is also useful for thinking through the very different set of anxieties that manifested in calls for the protection of indigenous women's sexual and moral welfare in the 1950s. Indigenous men, in this period, were beginning to be recognised as political subjects by the colonial state. Recognition of indigenous men as political, not simply colonised, subjects meant at least two things. Firstly it implied that the administration needed to recognise indigenous men as having 'rights' with regards to the sexual activity of 'their' women. White men could no longer simply claim sexual rights to indigenous women without taking account of the reaction of that woman's relevant male relatives (that is, white men would have

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[34] Sarah Benton, "Gender, Sexuality and Citizenship," in *Citizenship*, ed. G. Andrews (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1991), pp.160-161.
[35] Ibid, pp.160-161.
[36] Luce Irigaray as summarised by Gwen Bergner, "Who Is That Masked Woman? Or, the Role of Gender in Fanon's Black Skin, White Masks," *PMLA* 110, no. 1 (1995), p.81.
[37] Ibid, p.81.

to take account of indigenous men as consenting parties). Secondly it entailed an intensification of efforts to institute stricter colonial segregation between the races. Social – and even physical – segregation was necessary so that indigenous men did not mistake the recognition of rights over 'their' women, as rights over all women. Recognition of political subject-hood did not mean political (or racial) equivalence and/or equality.

EARLY COLONIAL ATTITUDES TO RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN WHITE MEN AND INDIGENOUS WOMEN

While relationships between indigenous men and white women were regarded as abhorrent, indeed unthinkable, those between white men and indigenous women were tolerated by the white colonial community throughout the early period of colonial rule.[38] Through the early colonial period a number of white men – overwhelmingly of a particular class (traders, miners and plantation workers mostly) – entered into formal marriage arrangements with indigenous women.

Most unions were, however, only temporary or episodic in nature, and the men involved in them attempted to limit their association with other villagers. In these more casual encounters the men may well have used force, or at least the threat of force their colonial authority carried. The administration itself recognised that an indigenous woman's 'apparent consent' could be 'mere submission' resulting from indigenous women's 'fear of a brandished gun'.[39] In a rape case from 1953, the Chief Judge of the Circuit acknowledged in his written verdict that:

> some degree of doubt must always exist as to whether a native woman really consents to the sexual act of any person who, in her eyes, must be obeyed by her (i.e. such persons as policemen and 'kiaps').[40]

Though frowned upon, these unions were however never as provocative as those between white women and black men. Since colonial labour legislation effectively locked out indigenous women out of white urban 'enclaves', these unions generally did not occur in spaces occupied by Europeans. Generally relationships or encounters were enacted in a village or rural area, sites outside the purview of white

[38] Dickson Waiko, "Colonial Enclaves and Domestic Spaces in British New Guinea.", p.220; Inglis, *Not a White Woman Safe: Sexual Anxiety and Politics in Port Moresby, 1920 - 1934*, p.13; and Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea*, p.127 This was also the case across much of the British Empire in Africa, see Ronald Hyam, *Empire and Sexuality : The British Experience* (Manchester, N.Y.: Manchester University Press, 1990), p.106.
[39] PNGA: 405/GH47-54, Native Women Protection Ordinance; PJ Quinlivan to Crown Law Officer, 30 July 1953.
[40] Ibid.

society. These relationships did not offend the racial or gendered colonial order in the same way sexual relations between a white woman and a black man did.[41]

Toleration did not imply the approval of all interracial unions, but rather a means for their management. These otherwise undesirable relationships were tolerated only under certain circumstances. Colonial residents often explained the practical condoning of white men's sexual relations with indigenous women on the basis that these were 'inevitable' given the small number of European women in the colonies and men's assumed, innate 'sexual urge'. Harry Hugo, a Planter in New Guinea, described attitudes to relationships with indigenous women before World War Two thus:

> You had to be careful that you didn't let the white man down ... [but] taking a native girl and sleeping with her was not letting him down; just one of those things, nature ... well nature's nature, isn't it; black, white or brindle.[42]

Class boundaries were central to the framing of such responses. Little attention was paid to 'lower' class men who entered into sexual relations with local women. Richard Eves has observed the common colonial assumption that only men of a certain class and masculine character possessed sufficient moral fortitude to resist temptation.[43] While lower working class men, 'cheap whites', were warned of the dangers of transgression, they were also almost always forgiven these as long as they did not flaunt them. Flaunting such relationships was proof a man had 'gone native'. White men 'gone native' were considered irredeemably lost, cast to the margins of white society. On the other hand, middle class white men and those in positions of authority were expected to be more circumspect, to refrain and display a gentlemanly sexual self-restraint in line with contemporary classed notions of appropriate masculine sexuality. Age too played a role. A young man, irrespective of class, was thought too inexperienced to know better. He could be forgiven his indiscretions.

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[41] For a discussion of this same double standard as it played out in the pre Civil War American South see Peter W. Bardaglio, "'Shameful Matches', the Regulation of Interracial Sex and Marriage in the South before 1900," in *Sex, Love, Race: Crossing Boundaries in North American History*, ed. Martha Hodes (New York University Press, 1999), p.113.

[42] Harry Hugo quoted in Hank Nelson, *Taim Bilong Masta* (Sydney: ABC & Griffin Press, 1982), p.169.

[43] Eves' discussion of the classed character of colonial society, and the way in which sexuality was crucial to this, was made in the context of a commentary on author and adventurer Louis Becke's tales of entering the 'primitive' realm of the Pacific. Richard Eves and Nicholas Thomas, *Bad Colonists: The South Seas Letters of Venon Lee Walker and Louis Becke* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1999), pp.136-142. The white man 'gone native' was explained not simply as the low class white man unable to resist his own nature, but was thought to be compounded by the degeneration caused to the white race when living in the physical and social environment of the tropics. See also Patricia O'Brien, *The Pacific Muse: Exotic Femininity and the Colonial Pacific* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006), chapter 5.

The official position of the various colonial administrations was not always openly lenient and depended greatly on the attitude of those in charge. In Papua, William MacGregor, (Administrator from 1888–1898), agreed with the Missionaries of various denominations who protested against the unions on the basis of their immorality and the ill-will created towards all white men when deception, violence or coercion were involved.[44] MacGregor was even said to have considered introducing legislation to protect indigenous women from the attentions of European men but settled, instead, on simply prohibiting Government officers from sexual relations with native women on pain of dismissal.[45] Succeeding administrations wavered in their formal stance upon the issue. During the Royal Commission of 1906 Sir Hubert Murray famously attacked Captain Barton, then Administrator, for sanctioning interracial relationships. He claimed Barton had pronounced it 'a good thing for an officer to keep a native woman because he thereby learnt the language'.[46] Murray told the Commissioners that he, himself, condemned such unions because they gave relatives of the native woman undue influence over the Government officer involved. Once in office, however, Murray's publicly proclaimed disapproval noticeably softened. Dr John Gunther, Director of Public Health, concluded after some inquiries into the matter in 1955 that while it was not particularly clear what the administration's policy had been prior to World War Two it seemed that Sir Hubert Murray had not held:

> any strong view when these relationships took place away from the station and caused no disharmony. It was said that he [Murray] stated that officers in social isolation were entitled to these illicit relationships provided the Administration was never brought to criticism.[47]

In New Guinea, the German Imperial administration's attitude was generally believed to be more permissive than its Papuan counterpart. Brigadier General

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[44]For a brief account of MacGregor's opinions in regard this matter see R.B. Joyce, *Sir William MacGregor*, Oxford Uni Press: Melbourne, 1971, pp.163-165. See also Nelson, *Taim Bilong Masta*, pp.45 - 46. For examples of instances in which missionaries vocally objected to their fellow colonisers' behaviour towards indigenous women see Hank Nelson's history of goldmining in PNG, *Black, White and Gold*, ANU Press, 1976, p.39, 159-160; and Robin Anderson and Bob Connolly, *First Contact: New Guinea's Highlanders Encounter the Outside World*, Viking Penguin: New York, 1987 p.236. Missionaries themselves were, however, subject to rumours and accusations of misconduct towards native women. See David F. Wetherell, *Reluctant Mission : The Anglican Church in Papua New Guinea, 1891-1942* (St. Lucia, Qld.: University of Queensland Press, 1977), pp.241, 267-268; Diane Langmore, *Missionary Lives: Papua 1874 - 1914* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989), pp.245-6.

[45] Wetherell, *Reluctant Mission : The Anglican Church in Papua New Guinea, 1891-1942*, p.267. Macgregor was known to have stood down officers on the basis of their 'improper relations with native women' (for example in the case of Robert Kennedy, a Resident Magistrate). He did, however, also recruit to the administration white men known to be involved with village women. See Nelson, *Taim Bilong Masta*, p.46.

[46] Hubert Murray quoted in Nelson, *Taim Bilong Masta*, p.46.

[47] PNGA: 251/182, Offences – Native Women Report; Gunther to Cleland, 28 January 1955.

Wisdom, the Administrator of New Guinea from 1921 through to 1934, captured the conventional colonial Australian estimation of German rule when he reported:

> Every employer could and did flog his employees, and it was practically impossible to find a white man, except the Missionaries, who had not his mary [an indigenous woman].[48]

Registered marriages between white men and non-white women were comparably higher in New Guinea than in Papua. Almost a quarter (23%) of married white men in New Guinea were partnered to non-white women in 1904. This figure fell over the next 10 years, though still in 1913 it was the case that almost one eighth (12.3%) of all white men married in the colony had a 'native' wife (see Table 6.2). This was seen as an unavoidable, rather than ideal, situation. The administration believed the remedy was the immigration of more white women to the colony. The New Guinea Annual Report of 1909 noted with satisfaction an increase in the number of European women coming to the colony and the fall in marriages between white men and 'coloured' women:

> A comparison with the figures for previous years shows that the number of marriages with coloured women has declined and that the number of European wives migrating to the Protectorate is steadily rising. It is not yet possible to judge whether this gratifying tendency will persist.[49]

The German administration hoped that with improvements to hygiene and housing conditions for white residents, and a general rise in the colony's living standards they might successfully encourage white women to accompany their husbands to New Guinea.[50]

Through the first half of the twentieth century, a number of different legislative and regulatory measures to manage and contain sexual relations between white men and indigenous women were introduced in the two colonies. In 1916 in New Guinea a directive was issued prohibiting 'interference with native women' by field staff,

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[48] Brigadier General Wisdom quoted in Roger C. Thompson, "Making a Mandate: The Formation of Australia's New Guinea Policies, 1919 - 1925," *The Journal of Pacific History* 25, no. 1 (June 1990), p.75. The Australian administration was scathing of the Germans, and adopted a particularly righteous tone in their reporting on German policies regarding indigenous women. Regarding the German administration's leniency in the use of employed female workers as a sexual bribe to secure contracts with male indentured workers see Stuart Reed, *The Making of Modern New Guinea* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1943), p.146.

[49] New Guinea Annual Report 1908/1909 as published in Dymphna Clark and Peter G. Sack, *German New Guinea, the Annual Reports* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1979), p.396.

[50] Ibid.

similar to that issued by Macgregor in Papua in 1902.[51] In 1922 the Native (Half Caste) Children Ordinance was passed in Papua, the result of advocacy on behalf of 'native women' by Bishop De Boismenu of the Roman Catholic Mission.[52] The Act provided for maintenance monies for the mother of a 'neglected' 'half caste' child. A similar Ordinance was enacted in New Guinea in 1934.[53] After 1935 in New Guinea a district officer's written permission was required for any registered marriage between an indigenous and a non-indigenous person.[54]

Labour legislation implemented by the administrations in both territories early on had also served, to some extent, to 'protect' indigenous women from the unwanted attentions of European men. Indigenous women were excluded completely from indentured labour contracts on plantations. And although married indigenous women were allowed to work as domestic servants under contract, restrictions were placed on the recruitment of single indigenous women. Only a married European woman in possession of a special permit could employ an unmarried indigenous woman. This form of restriction continued even under the early Labour Ordinances of the post war period. As was the case for much of colonial Africa, this meant that in both Papua and New Guinea, it was generally indigenous men who were recruited for domestic work in the colonial homes of white society.[55]

THE CONSTRUCTION OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S SEXUALITY

Protection against rape and sexual assault (by either indigenous or white offender) was legislated for under the Papuan and New Guinean Criminal Codes, both of which were based on that of Queensland. Penalties were less severe and the laws always less strictly enforced in cases involving indigenous women than for those involving white women.[56] This distinction had much to do with the common

[51] Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea*, p.81.
[52] NAA: A11804/1, Papuan Native Women. See also Inglis, *Not a White Woman Safe: Sexual Anxiety and Politics in Port Moresby, 1920 - 1934*, pp.18-19.
[53] This was the Deserted Wives and Children Ordinance 1934.
[54] Similar legislation had been in place in Queensland since amendments made in 1901 to the Aboriginal Protection Act (1897), see Ann McGrath, "Consent, Marriage, and Colonialism: Indigenous Australian Women and Colonizer Marriages," *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 6, no. 3 (2005), paragraph 1.
[55] During the early period of colonial rule in the territories there were some differences in the labour legislation of Papua and New Guinea, which meant there were higher numbers of women working as domestics in New Guinea (although the overall figure was still low). This did not continue for long once New Guinea became a mandated territory after World War One. The existence of a predominantly male domestic work force was also the case in many British African colonies also. See Karen Tranberg Hansen, "Body Politics: Sexuality, Gender, and Domestic Service in Zambia," *Journal of Women's History* 2, no. 1 (1990).; and Deborah Gaitskell, "Housewives, Maids or Mothers: Some Contradictions of Domesticity for Christian Women in Johannesburg, 1903 - 1939," *The Journal of African History* 24, no. 2 (1983).
[56] In 1913 legislation was introduced to protect women from assault by native men (see the Government Gazette of 1913). Under Queensland code of law introduced in 1888 there was provision for the punishment of European men who raped native women. Regarding

colonial notion of indigenous women as more sexually promiscuous than their white counterparts; the belief that while they may not have necessarily been immoral (because in their innocence they did not understand the implication of their actions) they were certainly not chaste.[57] Michael Leahy's descriptions of local Highlands women in his diary during his famous 'exploratory' expeditions in the region during the 1930s reflect such opinion. In it he labelled indigenous women either 'black harlots', or alternatively demure 'seductive damsels'. In one register he damned them for their promiscuity, in another admired them their 'natural' sexuality.[58] In both, however, they appear as highly sexualised subjects actively seeking out sexual relations with the foreign men they came into contact with. The colonial trope of the sexualised indigenous woman – be she dark temptress or innocent flirt – functioned to effectively mark indigenous woman as primitive 'Other'; her raw female sexuality stood in deep contrast to a nineteenth century middle class European ideal of cultivated sexual restraint.[59] So effective was this 'othering' that when the White Women's Protection Ordinance was enacted in January 1926 Murray could write to the Minister of State for Home and Territories excusing the discriminatory provisions of the Act on the grounds that:

> Doubtless there are native women who set the highest value on their chastity, but they are the exception; and the rape of an ordinary native

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enforcement see Inglis, *Not a White Woman Safe: Sexual Anxiety and Politics in Port Moresby, 1920 - 1934*, pp.72, 79, 116-117.

[57] See for example Malinowski's observations of Trobriand women's sexual behaviour in his published work and field notes. Bronislaw Malinowski, *The Sexual Life of Savages in North-Western Melanesia : An Ethnographic Account of Courtship, Marriage, and Family Life among the Natives of the Trobriand Islands, British New Guinea*, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1932). Regarding his fieldnotes see Michael W. Young, *Malinowski: Odyssey of an Anthropologist, 1884 - 1920* (New Haven ; London: Yale University Press, 2004), p.402 – 404. Adam Reed critically discusses Malinowski's representations of indigenous women's sexuality in Adam Reed, "Contested Images and Common Strategies: Early Colonial Sexual Politics in the Massim," in *Sites of Desires, Economies of Pleasure: Sexualities in Asia and the Pacific*, ed. Lenore Manderson and Margaret Jolly (Chicago, Ill.: Chicago University Press, 1997). A conservative social moralism continued to infuse (and confuse) descriptions of indigenous women's sexuality by white commentators. In 1968 the anthropologist Sidney Greenfield could still label the sexual behaviour of women in the Trobriands as highly promiscuous and liken them to prostitutes simply because premarital sex was a feature of adolescent life. See Sidney Greenfield, "The Bruce Effect and Malinowski's Hypothesis on Mating and Fertility," *American Anthropologist* 70, no. 4 (1968). For a strong (contemporary) feminist critique of Greenfield see the response in the following issue Ann Chowning, "The Fertility of Melanesian Girls, Labratory Mice, and Prostitutes: A Comment on the 'Bruce Effect'," *American Anthropologist* 71, no. 1122 - 1125 (1969).

[58] They were 'perfect specimens of womanhood to whom the sexual act is as natural and innocent an act as nature intended it to be'. Excerpts from Michael Leahy's diary quoted in Robin Anderson and Bob Connolly, *First Contact* (New York, N.Y.: Viking, 1987), pp.236-8.

[59] O'Brien, *The Pacific Muse: Exotic Femininity and the Colonial Pacific*, chapter 4.

woman does not present any element of comparison with the rape of a respectable white woman.[60]

Amirah Inglis in her detailing of the passage of the Bill reported all members of the Executive Council were in agreement with Murray that the distinguishing of the victim's race within the legislation was necessary. The Council was unanimous that the principle on which this distinction was based – that the rape of a white woman constituted a more serious crime than that of an indigenous woman – was sound.[61]

[60] His Excellency to Minister for Home and Territories, 12 January 1926, quoted in Inglis, *Not a White Woman Safe: Sexual Anxiety and Politics in Port Moresby, 1920 - 1934*. p.72. Compare this to the 1843 statement by a Cape Colony magistrate, Judge Menzies, regarding whether the death penalty should be abolished in the colony as it had been in the metropole: 'It is certain that women in the lowest ranks on whom rape has been committed suffer much less injury from degradation in the opinions of their associates, than would be occasioned to women in a higher rank of life ... the injury occasioned to them by their being ravished is not so great as to make it expedient to endeavour to prevent its occurrence by taking the life of the offender' Menzies quoted in Scully, 'Rape, Race, and Colonial Culture', p.346.

[61] Ibid, p.74.

Offence	Papua		New Guinea Criminal Code	Queensland Criminal Code	United Kingdom Sexual Offences Act 1956
	White Women's Protection Ordinance	Criminal Code (for Papuan victims)			
Rape	Death Sentence	Life Imprisonment	Death sentence or Life Imprisonment	Life Imprisonment	Life Imprisonment
Attempted Rape	Death Sentence	14 years	Life Imprisonment	14 years	7 years
Indecent Assault	Life Imprisonment	2 years	14 years	2 years	2 years

Table 6.1: Penalties for sexual offences under various legislation as at 1958

Year	Marriage status of white male residents		Number of White men married to non-white women	
	Unmarried	Married	No.	Ratio**
1903/1904	291	43	10	23%
1908/1909	431	74	6	8%
1909/1910	n/a	62	9	14.5%
1912/1913	860	179	22	12.3%

Table 6.2: Marital status of white men in New Guinea

** Percentage of this type of marriage (as opposed to marriage between a white male and white female).

Note: all figures come from New Guinea Annual Reports as published in Dymphna Clark and Sack (ed.), *German New Guinea, The Annual Reports*, (1978). The above years were the only Reports to provide marriage status statistics for white male residents.

YEAR	Half Caste/Mixed Race population		TOTAL 'Non Native' population	
	NG	PAPUA	NG	PAPUA
1916		341		
1921	69	158	3173	2078
1933	195	227	5216	2173
1947	573	503	6200	3239
1951	1300		14300	
1954	2300			
1961 (adult population)	509	325	9794	

Table 6.3: Non Indigenous Population in territories of Papua and New Guinea (according to Annual Reports, 1954 Census figures, 1961 Cabinet Briefing figures) Figures collated by author.

THE NATIVE WOMEN'S PROTECTION ORDINANCE 1951 AND OTHER REGULATORY MEASURES

The Native Women's Protection Ordinance gazetted in August of 1951 was only one of a number of concurrent instances in which the administration directly addressed the question of how best to manage inter-racial relationships. In June of 1951, following a report from the anthropologist Cyril Belshaw in which the problem of Europeans in the village was raised, a curfew – known as the 'Proposed Prohibition of Entry of Non-Natives' into Hanuabada – was suggested and discussed within administrative circles, and eventually debated within the Local Village Council (see chapter seven, this thesis). And one year earlier, while the *Native Women's Protection Ordinance* was making its slow progress through the legislature before being submitted to the Federal Executive Council, the newly formed Women's Central Committee had formally requested the Administrator review existing 'Offences Against Morality' regulations – in place to prevent prostitution – to determine if the regulations might be amended to include provisions restricting sexual unions between white men and young 'native' women.

These various instances originated under quite different circumstances. The Women's Committee's concerns were raised after Dr Joan Refshauge, Head of the new Infant Welfare Division in the Department of Health, proposed at one of their monthly meetings in late 1950 that the administration construct a Native Girl's Hostel in Port Moresby. The hostel would house young female trainees under strict supervision. Her suggestion was prompted, she explained, by a recent case in which she had been forced to refuse a request for training for a number of indigenous women because she had been unable to guarantee their safety in Port Moresby. As the minutes explained:

> She was keen for them [the girls] to come in but because of what had happened in the past, she was not prepared to have these girls. Living at the Hospital as they do, no responsibility was taken for these girls after work had ceased.[62]

She told the Committee that in the past there had been a number of incidents in which young girls had come to Moresby for training and had started secretly seeing European men. The girls, previously practical nurses and 'good in the field', altered on entering into these clandestine relationships. They had become insolent in their dealings with hospital staff and stubbornly refused to listen to their families' protests

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[62] PNGA: 69/14-1-34/1285, Social Welfare and Advancement of Native Women; Minutes of a Meeting of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Native Development and Welfare, 20 October 1950.

against the relationships.[63] Refshauge's suggestion of a hostel sparked off much broader discussion among the Women's Committee members about the consequences of inter-racial relationships (specifically those between indigenous women and white men). Members shared with one another personal accounts of troubling conversations with male village leaders who raised concerns over the treatment of indigenous women by white men. At the conclusion of their discussion the Committee decided to formally write to the Administrator and ask that he appoint an appropriate Administrative Body to revisit existing 'Offences Against Morality' regulations, with an eye to addressing the following 'detrimental effects' they believed resulted from 'the indiscriminate and commercial consorting of European men with native women':

> the effect on the welfare of native women, girls and men; the indirect effect on the welfare of European women; the disease factor; the half-caste problem; procuring; apparent condoning attitude of the Administration towards consorting.[64]

There was considerable slippage between consensual and non-consensual sexual activity during discussions in this and subsequent meetings, though consent was not an issue that was ever directly broached. This omission stands in contrast to the advocacy of Australian feminists, who, earlier in the century had stressed the absolute 'sanctity of the female body' in their calls to tackle 'the question' of sexual relations between Aboriginal women and white men on the colonial frontier.[65] Australian feminists had not shied away from complicating their understanding of 'consent' in the context of frontier relationships, and labelling this – given the context of contact – as sexual abuse.[66] The officers of the Women's Committee, however, did not want their concerns to be dismissed as simply female 'moralism'.[67] They emphasised the administrative difficulties that such relations had presented, explaining that their concerns had arisen primarily because European men's

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[63] Ibid.

[64] PNGA: 69/14-1-34/1285, Social Welfare and Advancement of Native Women; Secretary of the Women's Welfare Committee to the Administrator, 11 September 1950.

[65] Marilyn Lake, *Getting Equal: The History of Australian Feminism* (St Leonards, N.S.W.: Allen and Unwin, 1999), chapter 5 and Fiona Paisley, *Loving Protection? Australian Feminism and Aboriginal Women's Rights 1919 - 1939* (Carlton South: Melbourne University Press, 2000), chapter 4. Also note that earlier discussions about white women's safety vis-à-vis indigenous men had also failed to distinguish between forced and voluntary liaisons between New Guinean men and European women, though for altogether different reasons. See Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea*, p.99.

[66] Lake, *Getting Equal: The History of Australian Feminism*, chapter 5.

[67] PNGA: 69/14-1-34/1285, Social Welfare and Advancement of Native Women; Inter-Departmental Committee, Minutes of Meeting, 20 October 1950.

'interference' with native girl trainees had 'disorganised both work and future plans of the Departments of Public Health and Education.'[68]

Apart from these various proposals for legislative reform, the colonial archives from the early 1950s onwards reveal an intensification of the administration's internal surveillance of white officers' behaviour in the field and a stricter enforcement of the long-standing colonial directive proscribing sexual relations between field staff and local women. While officially officers were under threat of dismissal for relations with native women, the policy had not been strictly followed before the war. John Gunther, in 1955, believed it reasonable to assume that at least 50% of field officers might have 'succumbed' at some stage or other.[69] Very few officers were ever dismissed over such acts. However, by the 1950s this was changing. In 1955 Paul Hasluck, as Minister for Territories, initiated an internal investigation into incidents of sexual misconduct by administration officers in the field after a series of small 'scandals'. Reporting on all instances of alleged 'offences towards native women' within his own Department (Public Health) as part of the investigation Gunther explained:

> I am going somewhat further back [in my report] than the Honourable Minister has requested, as I wish to establish the fact that we have attempted to control this disgraceful behaviour.
>
> ... Since 1946 I have closely questioned pre-war officers of the New Guinea and Papuan services as to how this problem was tackled. It does not seem to have been.
>
> ... I mentioned that I had gone further back than the Minister had specifically requested. I did this to show the change in our attitude of approach. Before 1950 I can only remember one case brought to my attention officially ...[70]

The growing unease of those within administration regarding these unions led to the circulation of a confidential Memorandum from the Director of District Services and Native Affairs, JH Jones to all field staff.[71] Officers were reminded of the long standing administration policy prohibiting sexual relations with native women and given clear warning that those found guilty of such an offence would be dismissed

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[68] PNGA: 69/14-1-34/1285, Social Welfare and Advancement of Native Women; Secretary of the Women's Welfare Committee to the Administrator, 11 September 1950.

[69] PNGA: 251/182, Offences – Native Women Report; Gunther to Cleland, 28 January 1955.

[70] PNGA: 251/182, Offences – Native Women Report; Gunther to Cleland, 1 February 1955. Gunther gave details of investigated instances of misconduct for the previous five years rather than the requested three.

[71] Discussion of circulation in PNGA: 251/182, Offences – Native Women Report; letter from John Gunther to Donald Cleland, 28 Jan 1955.

from service.[72] Sent around twice in 1952 (in January and then August of that year), a policy circular was again distributed in 1955. Paragraph two of the circular explained:

> The qualities of self discipline and self control are essential in all officers who have, in the course of their duty, to deal with natives, and unless an officer's conduct is at all times beyond reproach, he cannot properly carry out his task, nor inspire and maintain the confidence and respect of the native – so absolutely necessary to good native administration.[73]

The number of field officers dismissed as a result of breaches of this policy increased significantly through the fifties. Between 1950 and 1952 a total of five cases were investigated, between 1952 and 1955 the number had risen to 18.[74] Of those investigated, three officers were dismissed and nine allowed to resign.[75] Discrepancies between Departments with regards to the seriousness with which offences were treated led to Huxley's 1955 confidential Memo reminding all Directors of the need for strict enforcement of the policy:

> *Every case* of an officer suspected of having had sexual relations with native women must be promptly and thoroughly investigated and a full report of the incident together with the result of the investigation should be furnished immediately to this office.
>
> ... It is then encumbent [sic] on the Departmental Head to take the severest disciplinary action, and *in every instance* consideration must be given to a recommendation for dismissal from the Service.[76]

Even in those relationships between administration officers and local women which became formalised through marriage – relations understood as not strictly falling under the policy – dismissal was a possibility. Thelma Jackson's study on changing colonial administration policy in Papua in the post-war period documented several examples of administration officers being stood down from their jobs as a result of their marriage to Papuan women.[77]

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[72] PNGA: 405/GH47-54, Native Women Protection Ordinance; JH Jones to All Members of District Service and Native Affairs Field Staff, 15 August 1952.

[73] PNGA: 251/182, Offences – Native Women Report.

[74] PNGA: 251/182, Offences – Native Women Report; D.M. Cleland, Administrator to PMC Hasluck, Minister for Territories, 26 March 1955.

[75] Ibid.

[76] PNGA: 251/182, Offences – Native Women Report; Public Service Commissioner, Circular – Subject: Discipline – Relations by Administration Officers and Employees with Native Women, 4 January 1955 (my italics).

[77] Thelma Jackson's honour thesis, *Australians in Papua: the Effect of Changing Government Policies on Attitudes* (1988), quoted in Bulbeck, *Australian Women in Papua New Guinea: Colonial Passages 1920 - 1960*, p.203. The archives also suggest this took place. JE Cattell was

And though marriage between indigenous women and white men was not prohibited, it provided an additional avenue for the management of inter-racial relations. In New Guinea laws regarding marriage required that a non-native must seek the written permission of a District Officer if he wanted to marry an indigenous woman.[78] The archive files documenting the processing of requests demonstrate clearly the determined efforts made by District Officers to dissuade European men from 'mixed race' marriages.[79] Even in Papua, where no such condition applied, relationships were kept under surveillance. In 1951 the District Commissioner for the Central District wrote to the Director of District Services and Native Affairs warning:

> General miscegenation, de-facto unions and marriages ... are becoming increasingly prevalent ... and rapidly assuming the proportions of a minor social problem.
>
> ... the general position is watched as constantly as possible, particularly from the procuring and liquor supplying aspect. My constant reply to those who seek information about the pros and cons of a union with native women is to put all facts before them and advise them: 'Don't'[80]

Another administration officer, in his report on an investigation into a dispute arising from a case of inter-racial marriage, described 'marriages of this nature' as 'almost always travesties of law or morality'.[81] He explained that in the best interests of the men involved he had always advised against such unions. And though Papuan officers did not have the formal power to withhold consent, often this was unnecessary. The social censure, even ostracism, that faced those seeking approval or simply advice – in the case of Papuan applicants – was enough to dissuade many.

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investigated for having a young girl in his house and though no charge could be laid under the Public Service Ordinance for his actions (which he explained were 'honourable' – he has asked the local missionary to marry them) it was recommended his probationary period not be confirmed. When he was later transferred and eventually married a woman from Hanuabada he was again denied a permanent position. He resigned, obtained permission to take his wife to Australia, and left the colony. PNGA: 251/H-H-14/182, Report – offences against native women 1955; Appendix A, Gunther's Offences Towards Native Women Report. See also Andrew Lind, "Inter-Ethnic Marriage in New Guinea," *New Guinea Research Bulletin* 31 (August 1969), pp.28 – 30. Though Lind notes that loss of employment in the 1960s occurred more frequently in the private sector than in the public service.

[78] See New Guinea Marriage Ordinance 1935. This requirement of written consent was not repealed until the passing of the Marriage Ordinance of 1963.

[79] PNGA: NA14-1-21(1), Native Affairs: European Native Marriages, see also PNGA: 405/GH47-54, Native Women Protection Ordinance; Ian Downs to Administrator Cleland, 1 November 1954.

[80] PNGA: NA14-1-21(1), Native Affairs: European Native Marriages; A/District Commissioner, CD to the Director, District Services & Native Affairs, 31 August 1951.

[81] PNGA: NA14-1-21(1), Native Affairs: European Native Marriages; A/Assistant District Officer, Central District, Investigation: Marriage between Mr R.A. Cavanagh (European) of Moale Plantation near I5ARD and Lohia-Eno (f) (Papuan) of Hohodae, 31 August 1951.

One applicant, on withdrawing his appeal against an initial refusal, expressed his remorse in a personal note to the officer who made the decision:

> I now realise that you only wished to help me but a man can be a dam [sic] fool at times, can't he? ... I sincerely hope that we will still be good friends and that you will drop me a few lines which I would very much appreciate.[82]

What is immediately apparent is that concerns for 'protecting' indigenous women were generally framed as relating to the proper governance of 'the Native' and the maintenance of Administrative control. So, for example, PJ Quinlivan, a law officer on circuit with the Chief Justice in New Guinea, described sexual relations between Administrative officers and local women as a 'trap':

> I call it a trap, not only because the woman possibly would not be the most wholesome available, but also because the village from which she comes would immediately cease to be under *full effective Administration control*.[83]

Horrie Niall, District Commissioner of Morobe, justified refusing consent for a marriage between Mr E Foad, a European man and Wonom Rakele, a 'Native New Guinea Woman', both known to him and judged to be 'of good character', on the basis that this was:

> *a District policy matter* ... Past experience has shown me that such marriages have never been a success, and have always tended to cause disruption in normal village life ... The relations between natives and Europeans in this District are very good, and one of the reasons for such good relationships is, in my opinion, the fact that there are not any Europeans married to native women.[84]

'DRAWING A LINE': THE CONTEXT BEHIND THE SHIFT

During the Pacific war Australian and American soldiers were strongly discouraged from fraternising with 'the natives' or even from going into villages more than was necessary. And they were given explicit warning against having sexual relations with indigenous women. In a booklet distributed to all those serving in Papua and New Guinea, troops were told of 'three golden rules' for dealing with 'the native', a figure understood implicitly as male and whose goodwill was of crucial importance in deciding 'whether we win or lose the Battle of New Guinea':

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[82] PNGA: NA14-1-21(1), Native Affairs: European Native Marriages; Ted Foad to Horrie Niall, 4 December 1953.
[83] PNGA: 405/GH47-54, Native Women Protection Ordinance; PJ Quinlivan to Crown Law Officer, 30 July 1953, (my italics).
[84] PNGA: NA14-1-21(1), Native Affairs: European Native Marriages; District Commissioner to The Director, Department of District Services, 23 October 1953, (my italics).

Remember three things in any village – gardens, pigs and women. They are of basic importance in the lives of New Guinea natives, and interference with any of them will bring trouble to you and your mates. Don't forget this. Stick it in your hat.[85]

If a soldier was to enter into a relationship with a local woman, the booklet warned, then they must recognise that there were two parties to consider:

(1) the women themselves, (2) their menfolk.[86]

The booklet continued,

42. If the woman is not consenting, then intercourse is just rape – whether the victim be white or brown. Under the laws of New Guinea it is a hanging matter.
43. If the men (husbands, fathers or brothers) are not consenting, then it is at least a very serious kind of interference. If they do not seek their revenge, they will at least clear out, taking their women with them, and you will lose their co-operation.
44. In any case, an affair with a native woman is not a love match; it is a deal. You are expected to pay.
45. The personal risks are granuloma, gonorrhoea, and (where the Japanese have got there first) syphilis.[87]

Warned of the financial costs and health risks of venereal disease, soldiers were also cautioned about the other consequences of having sexual relations with local women. They might 'lose the co-operation' of village men. Replete with references to 'the old timers', and a 'humane and sensible' Australian colonialism, the booklet asked soldiers, as white men and representatives of the colonial order, to remember their 'very important obligation' as guardians of 'white man's prestige' in any

[85] William Groves and FE Williams, 'You and the Native: Notes for the Guidance of Members of the Forces in their Relations with New Guinea Natives', 12 Feb 1943, reprinted in Paula Brown, *The Chimbu: A Study of Change in the New Guinea Highlands* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Schenkman Publishing Company, 1972), pp.131, 136. The 'three golden rules' was a commonly relied upon aphorism in the territories. So much so that Paul Hasluck begins his chapter on land policy in his memoir, *A Time for Building*, with the following: 'There was as saying in the Territory that the chief causes of trouble were land, pigs and women. Most disputes were about land, pigs or women ... The things of greatest importance in the eyes of the native people were land, pigs and women – in that order.' See Paul Hasluck, *A Time for Building* (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1976), p.114. This repetition does not speak to the veracity of the maxim so much as the continued valency of a long standing colonial sentiment of white superiority that relied upon the condemnation of the 'native's treatment of 'native' women'.

[86] 'You and the Native' in Brown, *The Chimbu: A Study of Change in the New Guinea Highlands*, p.136.

[87] 'You and the Native' in Ibid, p.136. It is interesting to note that rape was a hanging matter for white or brown victim in New Guinea because of the white settler community's lobbying in New Guinea for legislation along the lines of the Papuan White Women's Protection Ordinance. This was a somewhat ironic result. When the Criminal Code was modified to bring penalties in line with the White Women's Protection Ordinance (discussed earlier in chapter) no discriminatory specification of victim's race was included. See above Table 6.1: Penalties for sexual offences under various legislation as at 1958.

dealings with 'the native'.[88] During the war the Australian coloniser was forced to respect indigenous men's (sexual) rights over 'their women' when – reckoned as 'real or potential allies'[89] – their co-operation was required.

After the close of the Second World War, the 'co-operation' of indigenous men was no longer required in the same way. And yet, partly as a direct result of their involvement in the Pacific war, indigenous men, for the first time, were beginning to be imagined as political subjects rather than simply colonised ones. Indentured contracts were abolished, and the slow process of establishing a wide network of indigenous Local Government Councils had begun.[90] The administration made much of the new Local Councils, which were supposedly 'nurseries for democracy'.[91] Indigenous Co-operatives for selling agricultural crops such as copra were given practical encouragement.[92] In the new Legislative Assembly convened at the end of 1951 three indigenous members were appointed. By 1961, when the colonies' Legislative Council was established, this had increased to six indigenous representatives popularly elected and another six appointed.

At the same time the colonial administration was facing local indigenous opposition in the form of a variety of autonomous local movements – for example Tomy Kabu's Purari Kampani in the Papuan Gulf, Paliau's Nupela Pasin in Manus, and the beginnings of what would become the Hahalis Welfare Society in Buka. The fundamental concerns of these movements were political and economic (though all were often dismissed as simply 'cargo cults' by colonial observers). They pointed towards local autonomy and included strong anti-colonial, if not proto-nationalist, sentiments.

Decolonisation and colonial rebellions in other parts of Empire also contributed to the Australian colonial administration's realisation of the insecurity of colonial rule

[88] 'You and the Native' in Ibid, p.144.
[89] 'You and the Native' in Ibid, p.131.
[90] See Ian Downs for an overview of the establishment of 'embryo local authorities' via the Native Authorities Section (part of the Department of District Service and Native Affairs) from 1950 onwards, Downs, *The Australian Trusteeship, Papua New Guinea 1945 - 75*, pp.31-32.
[91] A memorandum describing the main objectives of the new Local Government Policy, stated the first of these as being to 'provide a medium for teaching natives to assume a measure of responsibility for their local affairs in accordance with democratic procedure'. Local Government Memorandum No. 1 quoted in Robert Waddell, "Local Government Policy in Papua New Guinea from 1949 - 1973," *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 21, no. 2 (1979), p.188. But both Waddell and, more recently, Huntley Wright have demonstrated the way in which Councils were regarded by key officers within the administration as an 'administrative instrument' and a means for controlling (and slowing) social and economic change. Huntley Wright, "Economic or Political Development: The Evolution of 'Native' Local Government Policy in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea, 1945 - 1963," *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 48, no. 2 (2002).
[92] Downs, *The Australian Trusteeship, Papua New Guinea 1945 - 75*, pp.33-34.

(see Figure 1.3).[93] The early detection and containment of feelings of resentment among indigenous men by the administration was increasingly important. District reports routinely reported on race relations, flagging issues of concern for the attention of those in Moresby.[94] Newspaper and radio reports, along with films were routinely censored for inappropriate moral and political content. When race riots broke out in Africa at the end of the 1950s officers worried about their potential political impact in the Australian territories.[95] One suggested a locally produced version of ABC news broadcasts to censor out unwanted reports of the riots,

> [otherwise] many of our indigenes may wrongly conceive the idea that riots are a short cut to self government, and adopt this pattern ... The natives are very impressionable.[96]

It was in this context of growing international pressure to introduce self-government for indigenous subjects of the colonies – and limited local practical reforms towards this – that the safeguarding of colonial prestige became a sober governing priority.

SEGREGATION AND THE 'PROBLEM' OF INTERRACIAL RELATIONSHIPS

In 1955 the Public Service Commissioner TA Huxley wrote a confidential memo to all Department Directors regarding relations between administration officers and indigenous women. In it he stressed the importance of colonial staff maintaining an appropriate social distance from the local population. He reminded Directors:

> Every member of the Administration should be conscious of the dignity associated with his status as representative of the Administration and any default on his part, particularly in relation to the peoples coming within his sphere of influence or control could bring about a loss of confidence and

[93] See for example, "Land Buying in New Guinea: European and Native Relations (Letters to the Editor)," *Sydney Morning Herald* 2 February 1954.

[94] The 1955/1956 district report for Bougainville, for example, included the following warning in its section on 'Native Situation and Development': 'The natives' attitude towards Europeans is still directed towards the individual and not Europeans as a community. On the whole, Europeans are respected, but in cases where they are lax in dress or habits, they are likely to be despised.' PNGA: 496/ARC6A918/BN9, Bougainville District Plans, 1955 – 56.

[95] Though the officer in this instance was not specific about which riots he was referring to, these were likely to have been reports regarding the MauMau Uprising in Kenya (1952 – 1960). The administration displayed consistent concern in relation to the effect that news of anti-colonial rebellion might have for the colonies' indigenous subjects. Mau Mau loomed large. PNGA: AD/33/7/3, Advancement of Women; JT Gunther, Assistant Administrator, Memo to District Commissioners, 12 November 1957.

[96] PNGA: 854/16-6-1, Questions Native People Sessions.

> respect which would inevitably cause irreparable damage to the prestige enjoyed by this Administration.[97]

White prestige secured the administration's ability to govern; this was particularly the case given the Australian administration's very limited resources. As Sir Hubert Murray explained in 1925 with reference to Papua where 'a handful' of white officers attempted to govern an indigenous population then estimated at approximately 250,000, 'it will readily be understood that the prestige of the white man is a matter of utmost importance'.[98] If an officer risked the prestige of his office by 'indulging in sexual relationships with native females', he simultaneously risked losing control in the area.[99] A 'lowering of prestige in the eyes of the native', the Administrator Donald Cleland warned his European audience in 1953 over radio broadcast, was dangerous because 'it is not long then before lack of respect degenerates into contempt – contempt not only for the persons but also for the law'.[100]

Admonishment was directed quite clearly at 'a certain type of low European', as the Bishop of New Guinea's speech during repeal discussions for the Native Women's Protection Ordinance graphically revealed:

> The necessity and need [for the Native Women's Protection Ordinance] in the first place arose because that type of European was admitted into the Territory ... it is a reflection too on the powers that be for allowing that low type of European to come into this Territory, and to degrade the community rather than to uplift it.[101]

All white men had to, as Cleland put it, 'be above reproach'.[102] The standards and behaviour of all within colonial society – missionaries, traders and miners, plantation managers and administration officers, with their varying histories and motives with

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[97] PNGA: 251/182, Offences – Native Women Report; Public Service Commissioner, Circular – Subject: Discipline – Relations by Administration Officers and Employees with Native Women, 4 January 1955.

[98] NAA: A518/H141/3, Films – Papua and New Guinea – Captain Frank Hurley; Hubert Murray, 'Photographing Natives in Papua', December 14 1925.

[99] PNGA: 251/182, Offences – Native Women Report; Public Service Commissioner, Circular – Subject: Discipline – Relations by Administration Officers and Employees with Native Women, 4 January 1955.

[100] PNGA: 404/P.67, Native Offences Against Women; Broadcast by His Honour the Administrator, 1 March 1953.

[101] Bishop of New Guinea, *Legislative Council Debates*, 12 June 1962, p.44. It is also indicative of the class aspect of the legislation that the first man to be convicted under the ordinance was Charles Henry Martin, a driver from Papua. He went before the court on the February 11 1952 charged with permitting a female native to reside with him. In his defence he said he had met the girl a month previous and, after taking a liking for her, had asked her to marry him to which she agreed. Martin had been charged with theft, and was given a custodial sentence of a month for the charge relating to cohabitation concurrently with the charges for theft. *Pacific Islands Monthly*, March 1952.

[102] PNGA: 404/P.67, Native Offences Against Women; Broadcast by His Honour the Administrator, 1 March 1953.

regards to contact with indigenous populations – were increasingly expected to accord, as Bulbeck has observed, with middle class values and practices.[103] Joan Refshauge during formal discussions regarding the need for regulations against inter-racial sexual unions had reported on 'a line being drawn between "white men" and "*Taubada*"' (the Motuan word for 'sir/master').[104] What she meant by this was that villagers themselves were developing a distinction between what she might have termed 'low class white men' and those who deserved their respect. Jessie Wyatt, a 'Port Moresby housewife' and author of the booklet *A Guide To Newcomers To Papua-New Guinea* (1957), described the same distinction in her advice to new female arrivals in the territories in language which echoed Refshauge:

> There seems to be growing up among the native people the habit of classifying Europeans. While some are referred to as *Taubada* and *Sinabada*, others are referred to simply as 'white man' ... It is really up to us to earn the title of *Sinabada*, or *Taubada*, and see that we keep it.[105]

There was disagreement as to how to ensure the appropriate behaviour of Europeans, especially with regards intimate relations between indigenous women and white men. Throughout discussions of proposed legislative regulations, individuals within the administration argued against the regulation of European behaviour through legislation. They felt strongly that morality could not be imposed through regulation; it must simply be left up to higher officers to provide a moral example to their younger colleagues, to lead by example.[106] But while they disagreed on the means to ensure it, all agreed that white prestige must be maintained.

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[103] Bulbeck, *Australian Women in Papua New Guinea: Colonial Passages 1920 - 1960*, p.202.

[104] PNGA: 69/14-1-34/1285, Social Welfare and Advancement of Native Women; Minutes of Meeting of Women's Central Committee, 3 November 1950.

[105] Jessie Wyatt, *A Guide to Newcomers to Papua – New Guinea ... By a Port Moresby Housewife*, Oct 1957, Country Women's Association, p.6-7. See also the review of Wyatt's *Guide* in *Pacific Islands Monthly*, November 1957, p.133. Reports on race relations in District Reports also noted that indigenous peoples were no longer according respect simply on the basis of 'white skin'. See, for example, the following passage from the Central District Annual Report 1956/57 reporting on Native Attitudes towards Europeans: 'The native observes the European daily in streets, in shops and offices, and in such a relatively large population, there is inevitably a greater proportion not only of actually undesirable types of Europeans, but also of Europeans very largely unversed in the ways of natives. The native notes the words and actions of the European and does not accord respect merely to skin colour. The native is beginning to differentiate between Europeans, and the onus is coming to rest more and more upon the European of ensuring by his words and his standards of conduct that he merits the natives respect and confidence – they are no longer accorded to him merely because he is addressed as 'Taubada', or referred to as 'Biaguna'(Master). In fact since the war the mode of references to Europeans has changed from Taubada (Master) to Tau Kuru Kaur (White Man) to Nou Taudia (foreign people) and I believe this change is very significant politically.' PNGA: 496/ARC6A9110, Central District Annual Report, 1956-1962, BN10, Department of Administrator files Vol 3.

[106] Humphries, Acting Director, Department of Native Labour to the Chairman, Inter-Departmental Committee 17 October 1950 Humphries: 'Legal sanctions for the maintenance

Fundamental to discussions of the 'problem' of inter-racial relationships was the constant, niggling fear that indigenous men's 'resentment' of colonial rule might spark off at any moment; provocation of any kind was best avoided. When Barbara McLachlan talked to the Women's Committee's concerns at the Inter Departmental meeting in October of 1950 she explained that, as a result of interracial relationships, 'the attitude of the natives to the Europeans was such that it could constitute a very real danger'.[107]

That interracial sexual unions could have very real, very practical, indeed 'dangerous' consequences was an opinion widely held within the administration. Where those with 'colonial authority' carried out inappropriate relations with indigenous women they put the lives of their fellow officers at risk. In 1955 Gunther, writing about the 'farcical' response of certain administration personnel to warnings against such unions, cited one example which he believed had resulted in officers' deaths:

> I am firmly convinced that it was the [promiscuous] behaviour of a Patrol Officer at Telefomin previous to the going there of Szarka and Harris that that [sic], more than anything else, caused their tragic deaths.[108]

Quinlivan's 1953 circuit report, summarising the verdict of a rape case against two Native Police, also referenced the dangers involved:

> In it, he [the Chief Judge] referred to the large number of cases where decent people entering a supposedly new area had been killed by the natives because some persons had been in the area earlier and had played around with the women. Because of these incidents in the past, His Honour said he regarded the matter as one of very grave concern, hence the severity of the sentence.[109]

McLachlan's warning, though, referred to a different sort of 'danger': that of breaking the coloniser's 'sacred trust' and thereby losing the authority to govern

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of moral ideals and principles would be out of place in a democracy. Human character can not be changed by law and regulation, but only be conviction derived from instruction and example.' See also various comments of Committee members within PNGA: 69/14-1-34/1285, Social Welfare and Advancement of Native Women; Inter-Departmental Committee, Minutes of Meeting, 20 October 1950. Compare with similar expressed sentiments from Cecil Cook, Chief Protector in NT in 1929 and Royal Commissioner Henry Moseley in 1934 in regards protection against the sexual abuse of Aboriginal women by white men. 'It is not practicable to impose morality by regulation. The result would be to increase the number of technical offenders without diminishing the evil'. Cook quoted in Paisley, *Loving Protection? Australian Feminism and Aboriginal Women's Rights 1919 - 1939*, pp.91, 118 – 120.

[107] PNGA: 69/14-1-34/1285, Social Welfare and Advancement of Native Women; Inter-Departmental Committee, Minutes of Meeting, 20 October 1950.

[108] PNGA: 251/182, Offences – Native Women Report; Gunther to Cleland, 28 January 1955.

[109] PNGA: 405/GH47-54, Native Women Protection Ordinance; PJ Quinlivan to Crown Law Officer, 30 July 1953.

over their 'native' charges. She went on to explain that where she had been working in the field she had not been very far from the Dutch boundary with West Papua. The villagers among whom she was working were, she said, 'thinking and talking and feeling [emotional]' about this issue of European relations with native women. This posed a 'very real danger', she explained, 'as [because], if that is the attitude of the people who are in our trust, then we don't know to whom they may turn if they lose faith in us'.[110] Refshauge was equally explicit when she put her case to the Inter-Departmental Committee about the need for protective regulations for native women and the consequences should the administration fail to tackle the issue:

> This country is of strategic importance to Australia and therefore must be held. It can only be held through its own people and therefore we cannot hope to hold the country if we cannot hold the people, and we cannot hold the people if we cannot hold their respect.[111]

THE 'HALF-CASTE PROBLEM'

A secondary concern within these discussions was the 'problem of the half-caste'. Described variously as 'half-caste', 'mixed blood', 'part native' and 'mixed race' (the last being the favoured term by those who self identified / self described as such) they were considered as constituting a separate minority social group or class within colonial society. There was, however, some confusion among both indigenous communities and administration as to who could be considered 'half-caste' or mixed race – a distinction important because of the variance in legal status between the 'half-caste' and the indigenous subject. This uncertainty was often clearly apparent, as when Merari Dickson, one of three Papua New Guineans appointed as a representative on the first post-war Legislative Council, asked a series of questions regarding 'half-caste status' during Council session in 1952. He enquired of Steven Lonergan, the Government Secretary:

1. What group of people are called 'half-castes'?
2. Is it a fact that only those people whose parents are of Asian descent are called 'Half caste'?
3. Do all the Regulations for natives include 'half-castes'?[112]

Confusion was hard to avoid given that assessment of the legal status of a 'mixed race' person was made on an individual basis. Those who adhered to or adopted the

[110] PNGA: 69/14-1-34/1285, Social Welfare and Advancement of Native Women; Minutes of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Native Development and Welfare, 20 October 1950.
[111] PNGA: 69/14-1-34/1285, Social Welfare and Advancement of Native Women; Minutes of Meeting of Women's Central Committee, 3 November 1950.
[112] Merari Dickson to SA Lonergan, *Legislative Council Debates*, 26 February 1952.

customs and practices of their indigenous relatives were classed and treated legally as a 'native'. Where an individual, however, was able to show that they had been living 'in the manner of a European' – that is, that they dressed as a European, lived in 'European-style' accommodation, had previously socialised with Europeans and spoke English as their first language – they would not legally be considered in the same way as a 'non native'. The main implication of being 'non native' was that a mixed race individual was exempt from the manifold provisions of the Native Regulations. It was also possible to acquire additional 'rights'. A 'mixed race' individual could, for example, apply for a permit to travel overseas (generally under the sponsorship of a European and often for schooling purposes) or alternatively to attend a 'European-type' school within the territories. After 1948 they could apply for a permit that – if they were deemed to be of suitable character – allowed them to buy and consume alcohol, something previously restricted only to the European and Chinese residents of the territories.[113] That they could be classed, on occasion, as a 'non native' did not mean, though, that their legal status was equivalent to Europeans or even that of other 'non natives' (Chinese, Malays, and so on) in the territories. The employment conditions and scales of pay for 'mixed race' persons were set well below those of their white colleagues. As well their citizenship status was exactly the same as that of a 'native': in Papua they were classified 'Australian citizens with no automatic right of entry to Australia'; and under the mandate system in New Guinea they were 'Australian Protected Persons'.

The actual size of the 'mixed race' population in the territories was hard to determine. Recorded figures often varied quite significantly from year to year (see Table 6.3), and in general were believed to underestimate the 'mixed race' population; an unavoidable situation given that many preferred to live with their mother's people and hence would be classified as 'native' for Administrative purposes.

'Mixed race' population information was often classified into further sub-groups indicating parental racial origins. A 1961 briefing paper for the Australian Cabinet, for example, provided population figures for the following categories of 'mixed blood' persons: European-Asians, European-Natives, Asian-Natives, and Native-Natives (i.e. children with one parent who was a 'native' of other Pacific Islands and

[113] From 1948 through until 1956 mixed-race persons (male) could apply to the Government Secretary for a permit to drink alcohol. Permits were granted to selected mixed race persons on the basis of an application and a character report from the police. From 1956 onwards all mixed race persons were granted this right. Not until 1962 were Indigenous people granted the right to purchase and consume alcohol. See B. G. Burton-Bradley, "Mixed Race Society in Port Moresby " *New Guinea Research Bulletin*, no. No. 23 (1968), p.5.

one who was a 'native' of the territories).[114] It was imagined that these various 'sub-groups' felt the effect of their 'mixed' heritage differently. The 'problems of mixed blood marriages', one 1959 administration report explained, was most evident amongst those with a 'white father – native mother'. This particular 'admixture of blood':

> are described as 'full of complexes'. They complain of vague, ill defined illnesses; they are subject to slights and social pressures. A large number of these are seen in RABAUL.[115]

The acuteness of the harmful effects for particular groups was explained with reference to the physical expression or manifestation of the mixed genes in the individual:

> The main problems in the causation of psychological maladjustments appear to be related –
>
> (i) in the white admixtures, to the dark colour of the skin. Varying shades do not appear to confer any specific immunity;
>
> (ii) in the Chinese-native mixtures, to the 'crinkliness' or otherwise of the offspring's hair. Straight hair confers more immunity than does curly.[116]

Where visible 'difference' in physical attributes was exhibited by an individual it was believed increased social ostracisation from the parents' racial groups would occur. This concern for the individual 'mixed race' person translated to a broader concern for the 'mixed race' community.

Of those who identified as 'mixed race' the vast majority lived in Rabaul and Port Moresby, the two urban centres of the territories. Although there were reportedly divisions among them – between those of a European-Native and Asian-Native background, and along class lines – they nonetheless generally socialised together, settled in the same residential areas (or suburbs) and thought of themselves, and were thought of, as a community.[117] By the 1950s their presence 'as a community' was being regarded by social welfare officers working in and around Moresby as an increasing source of tension within the district:

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[114] NAA: A5818 ,Volume 13, Agendum 560, Citizenship Status of Mixed Blood People in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea.
[115] NAA: A452/1; 1958/2822, White Women's Protection (Papua) Repeal Ordinance.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Burton-Bradley, "Mixed Race Society in Port Moresby ", pp. 6-8 In his report Burton Bradley, using research undertaken during 1963, identified 3 different classes of 'mixed race' persons : upper, middle and lower.

> These people do not mix well with the native peoples and unfortunately the type of Europeans with whom these people mix is low. Their attitude towards the Administration is one of resentment.[118]

They were reported as dissatisfied with the general inadequacy of services provided by the administration, especially in the areas of housing and employment for which there were acute shortages. Alongside these practical concerns, observers stressed the social dislocation felt by those within the mixed race community, being – as they were – effectively marginalised from both European and indigenous communities. Social segregation measures that formally applied to natives – exclusions from cinemas, public bars, hotels and European section of stores – were invariably informally enforced upon those within the 'mixed race' community. On the other hand, indigenous groups were said to resent the 'mixed race' community their higher wage scales and their drinking rights, and to be concerned about the possibility of their potential future claims over indigenous-owned land.[119]

The 'mixed race' population were described as a community 'in between'. Paul Hasluck described them as 'outcasts living at a depressed standard'.[120] The anthropologist Camilla Wedgwood in 1954 wrote of their social position:

> Their determination to assert themselves as socially superior to the Papuans is only equalled by the determination of the European community to reject them as social equals. As individuals and as groups they are socially tragically maladjusted.[121]

The various descriptions of the 'maladjustment' of the 'mixed race population' were likely influenced by the idea of the 'marginal man', a concept borrowed from sociology and commonly applied within academic analyses of 'mixed race' communities by the fifties.[122] According to Everett Stonequist's description of the 'marginal man' in his influential 1937 book of the same name, he was stuck between

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[118] PNGA 76/1/1, Social Welfare Central District, Social Development Central District.

[119] Ibid.; see also Mr Vuia regarding 'Mixed Marriages', *Legislative Council Debates*, 28 May 1957, p.29 and Mr Simogun regarding Land leading to Asians and Persons of Mixed Blood, *Legislative Council Debates*, 29 May 1957.

[120] Hasluck, *A Time for Building*, p.31.

[121] Camilla Wedgwood, 'A Survey of the Education of Women and Girls in the Pacific', May 1954, Manuscript, p.67.

[122] For the original development/presentation of the concept of 'marginal man' see Robert Park, "Migration and the Marginal Man," *American Journal of Sociology* 33, no. 6 (May 1928).; and Everett Stonequist, *The Marginal Man* (New York: Charles Schribner's Sons, 1937).. For examples of how this was being applied within anthropological and sociological analyses of 'mixed' communities see M. Tumin, "Some Fragments from the Life History of a Marginal Man," *Character and Personality* 13, no. 3 (1945).; A. M. Lamont, "Affective Types of Psychotic Reaction in Cape Coloured Persons," *South African Medical Journal* 25, no. 6 (1951).; and John Mann, "Group Relations and the Marginal Personality," *Human Relations* 11, no. 1 (January 1948).

two worlds; associated with both but belonging to neither.[123] As a result of 'his' conflicted status he was liable to develop a number of personality traits indicative of 'maladjustment'. Stonequist explained:

> His racial status is continually called in question; naturally his attention is turned upon himself to an excessive degree: thus increased sensitiveness, self-consciousness, and race consciousness, an indefinable malaise, inferiority and various compensatory mechanisms are common traits in the marginal person.[124]

Not all 'marginal men' were expected to exhibit the traits with the same intensity. This would depend on the individual's own social identification as well as their general social position. Significantly 'maladjustment' was understood to be a consequence not of some form of inherent biological degeneration associated with 'racial mixing', but as a result of the *social* situation most mixed race individuals found themselves in.[125]

The administration's 'half caste problem' was, then, primarily one relating to how best to manage their social dislocation, this 'in between'-ness. Hasluck's position on the mixed race community was that they must choose to align themselves either with the European community or their indigenous community so as to 'reduce the non indigenous population to one integrated immigrant group' and thereby minimise the potential for racial disharmony.[126] He believed that faced with this choice most would choose to identify with the European community, but that this would only be possible if they were accorded the same legal and social status as Europeans. Addressing the issue of inequality of status for the mixed race community was not, however, a straightforward matter. At the end of 1949 when the administration announced that mixed race persons would be allowed to travel on Government buses provided for Europeans - provided they were reasonably dressed - Port Moresby's white residents immediately complained. The Moresby correspondent for the Pacific Islands Monthly explained the residents' concerns:

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[123] Stonequist, *The Marginal Man*. While Stonequist used the concept of the 'marginal man' primarily to discuss the situation of the 'racial hybrid' or 'mixed blood' he made clear he felt it could be usefully applied for others in similarly dislocated circumstances. He gave as examples the second-generation immigrant, 'the Jews', and Europeanized Africans or 'Westernised Orientals'.

[124] Everett Stonequist, "The Problem of the Marginal Man," *The American Journal of Sociology* 41, no. 1 (July 1935), p.6.

[125] As Stonequist explained: 'The racial hybrid is likely to be a marginal character, not because of his mixture of blood viewed as biological fact, but because his mixture places him in a certain social situation.' Ibid, p.7.

[126] Hasluck, *A Time for Building*, p.31. This accorded with the assimilationist policies in place for Australian Aboriginals at this time.

> Some women said they feared that natives would have less respect for them once they saw them mingling with half-castes ... At present any effort to merge half-castes into the European community will result only in a serious drop in European prestige.[127]

In an editorial published alongside the news report it was explained that while most residents felt mixed race persons had the potential to be 'worthy folk', equal to Europeans 'in all the qualities of good citizenship', this depended greatly on the environment in which they were raised. The author distinguished between two classes of 'half caste' in the Pacific: those who were born of legitimate or formal unions and those of informal or casual unions in which the European father – either unknown or of a 'low class' – was unlikely to take any responsibility for the child. The author explained that in the first case – to be found mostly in Polynesia and Micronesia – the mixed race child had a European background and their life, 'not so far removed from that of the poorer Europeans'.[128] As a consequence the child would be 'socially acceptable and economically valuable'.[129] This stood in direct contrast to the situation of most 'half-castes' in Melanesia who were said to fall into the second class:

> When the half caste child is left to grow up, without direction, in a primitive Melanesian native community, it seldom is different, in mentality and social usefulness, from the natives. If it should be different in mentality, and made sensitive to the stigma of its birth and status, it can become socially dangerous and undesirable.[130]

The solution, according to the author, was for the administration to take steps to discourage all except legitimate unions between whites and 'natives', and,

> if there should be unwanted illegitimate babies, then it will see that they are taken early into proper care and training, and given a chance to develop European status.[131]

To grant blanket 'European status' to all mixed race persons would be a precarious decision with the likely consequence of weakening the influence of Europeans over 'the native'. The risk was that 'the native' might feel confident enough to start asserting their own claim to status. The correspondent warned:

[127] 'Our Correspondent', "Tragic Problem of the Half Caste: New Guinea Administration Takes One Blundering Step," *Pacific Islands Monthly* 1949, p.28.
[128] Editor, "Environment, Not Mixed Blood, Is the Trouble," *Pacific Islands Monthly* 1949, p.29.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Ibid.
[131] Ibid.

If Colonel Murray [then Administrator] thinks this is unimportant, he should try to imagine his own reaction if one of his houseboys greeted him with cordial familiarity.[132]

This reflected the feelings of many within the white community, even those who had previously advocated for improved conditions for 'mixed race' peoples. They now worried that granting rights to the 'half-caste' might trigger broader demands from 'the native' for equal status and equal rights with the white settler community.

Discussion within the administration mainly focused around 'illegitimate' unions in which European fathers had not taken responsibility for the resulting children. Refshauge, at the Inter Departmental Committee meeting in 1950, argued that the administration itself had to take responsibility for the consequences of policies that did not do enough to discourage such unions. 'We', she told the meeting,

> are the guardians of these people and are indirectly responsible for the half caste children produced, the Administration should provide a home for these children where they could be reared and educated for a responsible life in the country.[133]

Members of the Inter Departmental Committee at the meeting felt that it would be inappropriate to take children away from their mothers but did agree with Refshauge when she suggested that a stricter enforcement of the Native (Half Caste) Children Ordinance of 1922 (the only piece of legislation to directly acknowledge and legislate with regards to 'mixed race' persons) might act as a deterrent to the 'transient' European men who they felt were mainly responsible for the 'problem'.[134] They also agreed to hasten the proclamation of amendments – already in the pipeline

[132] Correspondent', "Tragic Problem of the Half Caste: New Guinea Administration Takes One Blundering Step.", p.28.

[133] PNGA: 69/14-1-34/1285, Social Welfare and Advancement of Native Women; Minutes of Meeting of Women's Central Committee, 3 November 1950.

[134] Ibid. Two years later Ian Downs, the District Commissioner in the Eastern Highlands, was concerned enough about the situation of the 'half caste child' to suggest that marriage be made compulsory for any white man desiring to enter into a relationship with a native woman. PNGA: 405/GH47-54, Native Women Protection Ordinance; Ian Downs to Administrator Cleland, 1 November 1954. It is interesting to note that it was a representative of the Women's Welfare committee who suggested the state take responsibility for the child (i.e. take the child away from their mother) and raise them within a state funded institution. Refshauge's recommendation stands in contrast to the actions of white women activists involved in welfare advocacy who lobbied the Australian state in the first half of the Twentieth century, arguing it was an Aboriginal mother's right to maintain custody of her child, see Paisley, *Loving Protection? Australian Feminism and Aboriginal Women's Rights 1919 - 1939*, pp.83, 144.

– to the 1922 Ordinance that would raise the level of maintenance from £26 to £52 per annum.[135]

DIFFERENT 'CODES OF CONDUCT'

The physical segregation that these various proposed and introduced measures entailed was not a new feature of colonial organisation. The suggested curfew in Hanuabada was, as JK Murray happily conceded, only the reverse equivalent of the curfew provisions of the Native Regulations that all indigenous people were required to follow.[136] The early British colonial policy of protectionism that carried through under subsequent Australian colonial rule resulted in a raft of Native Regulations concerned with every aspect of life – from what 'natives' could wear, to where they could swim or plant coconuts, to how loud and how late they could dance. These had succeeded in not only actively prohibiting 'equal status' between black and white but also, through the curtailing of movement and residence for indigenous peoples in urban areas, proscribing any real degree of physical proximity between the races.[137] Curfew provisions under the Regulations had been in place in Papua since 1906, and in New Guinea since 1923. Advocates of segregation consistently made reference to the sexual safety of white. Through the fifties reforms were slowly introduced to repeal discriminatory measures enforcing segregation, mainly as a result of outside pressure.[138] The administration met with vocal resistance from white residents.[139]

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[135] These amendments were, in fact, pushed through by the end of the year and resulted in the repeal of the 1922 Act and the proclamation of a new Ordinance – the Part Native Children Ordinance 1950 – (gazetted 21 December 1950).

[136] PNGA: NA14-6-20, Native Affairs – Dr CS Belshaw; JK Murray, Administrator, to JH Jones, Director of District Services and Native Affairs, 26 January 1952.

[137] See Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea.* for a comprehensive outline and discussion of the Native Regulations, and Dickson Waiko, "Colonial Enclaves and Domestic Spaces in British New Guinea.". Percy Chatterton describes calls from the European community in the 1930s to build a fence around along the edge of Lawes Rd to make the enforcement of a 'native' curfew in the white residential area more effective, see Percy Chatterton, *Day That I Have Loved* (Pacific Publications, 1980), p.10; and see also Ian Stuart, *Port Moresby : Yesterday and Today*, Rev.ed. ed. (Sydney: Pacific Publications, 1973), p.252.

[138] The liberalisation of curfew laws in New Guinea, occurred through the mid to late 1950s. They were removed progressively in three stages (in 1954, 1956 and 1959), largely as a result of concerted pressure from the UN Trusteeship Council which formally expressed 'hopes' and recommendations in relation to this in their 1956, 57 and 58 resolutions, though these concerns had been raised previously. See W.E. Tomasetti, *Australia and the United Nations: New Guinea Trusteeship Issues from 1946 to 1966*, vol. 36, New Guinea Research Bulletin (Boroko, Papua New Guinea: July 1970), p.27.

[139] See for example reports of protests to the Rabaul Town Advisory Council against the relaxing of 'native' curfews in Rabaul in 1952. 'Our Correspondent', "No Controls for Town Area Natives P-N.G," *Pacific Islands Monthly* 1952, p.94. See also debates over the retention of a 'Europeans Only' sign at Ela Beach in Port Moresby. PNGA: 82/77-1-1, Swimming Areas; Minutes of Meeting of Town Advisory Council, 17 March 1958; and 'A Special Writer', "Poor, Mixed up Kids: The Dilemma of Port Moresby's No Bathing Sign," *Pacific Islands Monthly* April 1958, p.35.

In advocating policy that reinstated a physical segregation, administration officers deployed a discourse that posited a clear distinction between European and 'native' moral 'codes of conduct'. This was, at one level, an expression of paternalistic relativism that sought to respect indigenous customary practice:

> Dr Refshauge said that we should show the people that we respect their code and in return they will respect ours ...
>
> Mr Cottrell-Dormer stated that among themselves they are very strict; their code may be different to ours but they are very strict in that code.[140]

The 'two codes of conduct' discourse also, however, fitted nicely within the frame of 'incommensurable difference', which had always provided reactionary commentators with an argument for continued discriminatory practice. Letters published in the Pacific Islands Monthly continuously complained of League of Nations and, later, United Nations 'acolytes' and other 'do-gooders' who talked incessantly of the welfare of the 'natives' and, increasingly, of the need for a multi-racial society. These 'soapbox' protests, they argued, failed to recognise that segregation was, in fact, in the interests of the indigenous population. As one such critic elaborated when reporting in early 1952 on the opening of a racially integrated school:

> Europeans talk of segregating the dark races – the sovereign and the servile. How do we know the dark races wish to be absorbed in our so-called Western civilisation? ... As for natives absorbing the white man's moral codes: to me, that is a retrogressive step.[141]

Ann Stoler has observed that 'racial distinctions and social reform ... were not contradictions but complementary political impulses, created out of the same cloth'.[142] The introduction of political reforms and welfare initiatives for the indigenous population did not necessarily imply a lessening of social and racial distinction between the colonies' white citizens and their indigenous populations. The raft of new regulations and measures to 'protect' indigenous women through the

[140] PNGA: 69/80-2-0, Social Welfare, Advancement of Native Women Policy; Minutes of Meeting of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Native Development and Welfare, 20 October 1950.

[141] *Pacific Islands Monthly*, May 1952, p.28. In many ways this echoed sentiments of an earlier era. Charles Reed of Samoa expressed similar sentiments but with slightly different purpose in a letter to Pacific Islands Monthly in 1935. Reed wrote: 'Their [the indigenous population's] interpretation of life has been on a different plane to ours for years/ages past – why not leave it so? They will be compelled to absorb our 'model' social and ethical standards. In such circumstances, the native pines away. He loses heart and abandons all interest in life, and soon disappears.', Charles Reed, *Pacific Islands Monthly* May 1935.

[142] Stoler, "Tense and Tender Ties: The Politics of Comparison in North American History and (Post) Colonial Studies.", p.845.

1950s made clear that, just as fears for white women's safety had been used as a justification for segregation, calls for the 'protection' of indigenous women could serve the same purpose.

'OUR WOMEN': INDIGENOUS INTERVENTION INTO THE DEBATE

By the end of the 1950s the legislative expression of concerns for the welfare of 'native women', the Native Women's Protection Ordinance, was looking outdated. Between 1957 and 1962 much of the two colonies' explicitly discriminatory legislation had been repealed, largely as a result of continued pressure for reform from United Nations Visiting Missions. The White Women's Protection Ordinance had been one of the first pieces of legislation to go.[143] It was repealed in 1958. In 1962 debate began regarding the repeal of the Native Women's Protection Ordinance. For the first time indigenous voices entered the debate.

Of the twelve indigenous members on the Legislative Council in 1962, three out of the twelve expressed opposition to the Bill. They did not feel that indigenous people were yet ready to step from out under protective legislation. Miss Alice Wedega (later Dame), the sole female indigenous representative on the Council, expressed this most clearly. 'Many people,' she wrote, 'have not yet learnt to choose the right way of life; they need help and protection'. She accepted the legislation was discriminatory, but countered:

> These laws show the right kind of discrimination. They are made to protect the young, the indigenous, the ignorant and the immature.[144]

Wedega in her speech went on to place young women at the centre of the debate. Strongly influenced by Mission arguments she judged them not yet ready to come out from under the 'protection' of the colonial state, even if such protection impinged on their liberty. Doubt over young women's capacity to take on the new 'responsibility' of managing relationships with men without the watchful eye of male kin was regularly expressed by colonial actors. As Rachel Cleland expressed in an article on 'pioneering women' for the *South Pacific Post* (Port Moresby):

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[143] Though not without considerable debate. While legal regulations against consensual relationships between white women and indigenous men were removed around the same time, strong social restrictions remained. Hank Nelson describes an incident from the 1960s in which a young indigenous student at the newly opened University of Papua New Guinea was threatened with a gun by a European member of staff for starting a relationship with his daughter. See Nelson, *Taim Bilong Masta*, p.181.

[144] Miss Wedega, *Legislative Council Debates*, 12 June 1962, p.441.

It is not easy for [a] girl to go from the shelter of the village where her chastity is the responsibility of her father and other male relations, to being a person on her own.[145]

Wedega, expressing a similar concern, worried young indigenous women might be too easily influenced by the bad elements of Western ways. They were still children.[146] But while Wedega's speech seemed to dismiss *some* indigenous women's capacity to make their own decisions (younger women, 'girls'), it also very clearly laid claim to a position of political 'matriarch' for older indigenous women. Explaining her position on the Bill Wedega told the other members of Council,

> I have discussed this with many women of my own race and without exception we all feel that it should not be repealed ... Teenage children are always hard to control; they always want to have adult things too soon ... This ordinance was brought in to help parents protect their girls.[147]

The presumption in Wedega's statement was that regulation would impinge upon younger women, but hand back some measure of control and influence (lost due to modern colonial influences) to older village women in their role as mothers.

The other eight indigenous members who addressed Council, spoke forcefully in favour of repealing the legislation.[148] Many felt that indigenous women had been badly treated by white men. Some were even entirely opposed to the idea of mixed race-relations. They supported the repeal because they could see that 'protection' was predicated on legislative discrimination and continued segregation. One member, Mr Bonjui, in his speech calling for repeal, asked his colleagues rhetorically:

> What is the purpose of this law? Why does this law put the men of Papua and New Guinea on one side and the European men on another side? Why does the Government want to separate the races? ... The Europeans can look after their women and the natives can look after their women.[149]

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[145] Rachel Cleland, "Pioneering Women," *South Pacific Post* 15 September 1961, p.28.
[146] In her statement arguing for the necessity of a good Christian home life as the basis of a good sound nation, she explained, 'the girls of our country are ignorant and immature and they still need protection'. Miss Wedega, *Legislative Council Debates*, p.441.
[147] Miss Wedega, Ibid, p.441.
[148] The breakdown of indigenous opinion on the Bill was as follows: Wedega, Tobaining, and Kibunki spoke in opposition; Guise, Brokam, Agaundo, Kuradal, Paradi, Jubilee, Sigob and Bonjui spoke in support; Taureka only addressed Council to ask for an adjournment of debate early on so that Indigenous members might properly consider the Bill, but his statement did indicate that he thought perhaps circumstances had shifted for indigenous peoples from when the Ordinance was first introduced (when, he implied, support had been forthcoming). See *Legislative Council Debates*, pp.345-347; *Legislative Council Debates*, 11 June 1962, pp.425 – 427; *Legislative Council Debates*, pp.440 – 445.
[149] Mr Bonjui, *Legislative Council Debates*, p.444.

Others expressed frustration that a double standard continued to exist in relation to inter-racial relationships. Despite the Ordinance, European men remained virtually free to enter into relationships with indigenous women and to marry them, while indigenous men were forced to avoid interacting with white women at all for fear of being 'black listed' from urban townships, or even arrested. Repealing the Bill, John Guise argued, would

> make a clear statement in this Council for every councillor to hear, that Papuans and New Guineans should enjoy all the liberties and rights in everyday practice which European people enjoy.[150]

Despite some disagreement among indigenous representatives, the male representatives seemed to agree on one thing. These were 'their women', and they were ready to take back responsibility for their women's moral guidance.

The European members of the Council, apart from those representing Missions, were also supportive of the Bill to Repeal.[151] They agreed that this form of paternalistic discrimination could no longer be justified, despite its protective intent. Along with other responsibilities being placed on their shoulders indigenous peoples must now be trusted with the responsibility of safeguarding their women's sexual morality.[152]

If, as Bergner contends, 'colonialism may be contested largely through the ability of black men and white men to control the exchange of "their" women' the successful repeal of the Bill must surely have evidenced, as Guise sought to assert, a shift in the nature of the power exerted over Papuans and New Guineans (understood as male).[153] The introduction of the Bill was in some ways evidence that the colonial state recognised indigenous men as political, not simply colonised, subjects; it recognised their rights over 'their' women. At the same time the Bill sought to segregate the indigenous and European communities, in realisation of what political recognition might entail. The repeal, on the other hand, was evidence of a maturing of this recognition. Indigenous men still held rights over 'their

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[150] Mr Guise, Ibid, p.444.

[151] The exceptions being Mission representatives – the Bishop of New Guinea and Rev. J. McGhee – and the one female European member, Mrs Bates. Bates cited the coming introduction of alcohol as the factor pushing her to oppose repeal of the Bill. She felt that given indigenous women also would have access to alcohol, social interaction in which European men and indigenous men and women were present could lead to 'brawls, bloodshed, or worse' within the village. See *Legislative Council Debates*, pp.345-347; *Legislative Council Debates*, pp.425 – 427; *Legislative Council Debates*, pp.440 – 445.

[152] See in particular the statement of Mr Foldi, *Legislative Council Debates*, p.427.

[153] Bergner, "Who Is That Masked Woman? Or, the Role of Gender in Fanon's Black Skin, White Masks.", p.81.

women', but by 1962 the inevitability of a multi-racial society forced the displacement of blatant policies of racial segregation.

Only one member of the Legislative Council, Mr Slaughter, discussed his support for the repeal of the legislation on the basis of indigenous women's right to liberty (it was indigenous women after all who had their movement curtailed in order to 'protect' them[154]). Slaughter, a European, called for the repeal because, 'the young ladies of this country who are growing up now and being educated should be given the free right to movement'.[155] This was the first, and perhaps only time, that indigenous women figured in the 'protection' debate as subjects 'advanced' enough to be regarded ready (and deserving) of the same standard of political rights as others within the colonies.

CONCLUSION

Calls for the protection of women have invariably – in the colonial context, but well beyond – been a pretext for other agendas. Discussions regarding the various measures to restrict relationships between European men and indigenous women were presented as concern for the welfare of indigenous women. Throughout this chapter I have argued, however, that driving the introduction of restrictive regulations and legislation was the colonisers' anxieties over the effects that such relations might have for the administration's relationship with and ability to govern indigenous *male* subjects.

Colonial officers worried over the short and longer term consequences of the lowering of white prestige in the colonies; and over indigenous men's potential 'resentment' at European men for taking 'their' women. While there were certainly some concerns voiced about the consequences of relations for indigenous women (their being kept back from training, education and employment opportunities), especially by women welfare workers, these were always reframed within wider debates to emphasise the 'bigger picture' issue of governance. Finally, indigenous women's sexuality was positioned within these debates, by male and female commentators alike, as primarily the responsibility and the possession of their male kin. While indigenous men's political subjecthood was increasingly being recognised by the colonial state, indigenous women – even as they staked their own claims – remained positioned as dependent subjects.

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[154] Indigenous women were, under the original Ordinance, placed under curfew in all urban centres. It was only in 1954, in an amendment to the Ordinance, that European men were excluded from 'designated' villages during curfew hours.
[155] Mr Slaughter, *Legislative Council Debates*, p.426.

7. (Not quite) Black and White

The politics and possibilities of 'mixed' relationships in Hanuabada

> Some of them [the whites] were teachers ... coming and seeing their students to tell stories and like that. Some of them [the whites] were just coming to see the village. But the men! They were coming to 'cruise around' at night [pause] They had a crush on the ladies, the Motuan ladies. And some of them were trying it on!![1]
>
> **Oala Mia, 2007 (talking about Hanuabada in the 1960s)**

> There had been liquor in the village that day, and a Hanuabadan obviously under its influence, and with three girls standing beside him, called vociferously to the Europeans to come over. I walked on and came across two more Europeans walking down the road by the Co-operative Store, and two sitting disconsolately on a large stone nearby. Another was leaving the house of a former Village Constable, a man notorious for his ambition to use girls as a source of wealth. I turned back from Meteoreia [the Mission compound area], and found that this group was engaging some young boys in earnest conversation. A police patrol truck passed through on the main road, and then turned back again. In a few seconds all the Europeans I have referred to had disappeared and were not to be found. Informants later said they were in a search for women, but whether or not this was true, their actions were suspect.[2]
>
> **Cyril Belshaw, 1957**

In the last chapter I examined some of the factors driving the administration's early calls for more effective measures to 'protect' indigenous women from the sexual advances of white men. What was evident within the colonial administration's internal discussions on managing interracial relationships, as well as in the more public debates during the passage and later repeal of the Native Women's Protection Ordinance was that 'protective' concerns as expressed by colonial officers (both male and female) and indigenous men were not so much about indigenous women's personal welfare – whatever that might mean – as much as they were about good

[1] Oala Mia, 13 July 2007, Hanuabada.
[2] Cyril Belshaw, *The Great Village* (London: Routledge and Kegan, 1957), p.236.

'native' governance, the policing of racial and class boundaries, and men's continued (and inalienable right to) control over 'their' women. Notably absent from these discussions, as is so often the case, were the voices of the very women supposedly in need of 'protection'.

In this chapter I look at interracial relationships between Motuan women and white men in Hanuabada village during the 1950s and 1960s to illustrate the way in which the tensions surrounding these relationships (so apparent in the last chapter) played out at the local village level. Located as it was next to the colonial township and port, the issue held particular salience in Hanuabada – here, unlike most other villages in the territories, the presence of whites in the village was an everyday occurrence. Formal discussions about how best to manage interracial relationships were initiated here before being taken up more generally across the administration.

Anthropologist Cyril Belshaw lived in the village from the end of 1950 to 1951, undertaking ethnographic research for a study concerned with 'the welfare of Hanuabada'.[3] The colonial archives of the Central District from this period document the debate on a proposed village curfew for Europeans taking place within the administration and the Local Village Council. Drawing critically from these two sources, in the first half of this chapter I provide a sketch of the interactions taking place between white men and Motuan women in the village at the time, and villagers' reported responses to these. The colonial administration strongly disapproved of the presence of 'low class' white men in the village. They worried over what kind of influence the men might have on village life and the local resentment that might result from casual relationships, and took steps to regulate these. Again in these published and archival accounts little focus was given to the responses of the Motuan women themselves. In Belshaw's account, in which he is positioned as a distanced observer, women were portrayed as passive – their involvement in relationships recorded as a consequence of the machinations of suspect Europeans, scheming young Motuan men, and materialistic relatives. In administrative correspondence and the records of Village Council discussions they were subjects indirectly referenced, but on whose behalf decisions were regularly made and regulations enforced. Men in this version of events were clear agents, women silent figures willing always to accommodate the decisions made by the men around them.

Of course Motuan women had their own reasons for entering into relationships and their attitudes towards these and experiences of them varied. Attempting to

[3] Ibid, p.ix.

bring women into the conversation I turn for the remainder of the chapter to oral histories undertaken with Motuan women during my fieldwork. Here I foreground the ways in which Motuan women talk about and reflect back on village women's (and in some instances their own) participation in interracial relationships. What did they think of white men's presence in the village when they were young – was it a nuisance? A threat? A thrill? How did one meet a white man? Which young women in the village were getting involved with them? Why? What were the expectations of Motuan women involved with a European man? What did the women being interviewed make of such relationships?

The Motuan women I interviewed remembered relationships and interactions with white men in various ways. These different accounts, however, all evidence a certain ambivalence. It is an ambivalence that highlights the tension between women's desire for the freedoms and status that came, if only fleetingly, with these relationships and the potential dangers – loss of reputation, abandonment, and isolation – that entering into them posed.

'SAUCE FOR THE GOOSE, SAUCE FOR THE GANDER': TROUBLE IN THE VILLAGE

On any given day in Hanuabada in the fifties you might have found a few whites wandering through the village: casual sightseers making their way along the main road up to the Co-operative Teashop, perhaps stopping off at the local Mission school to observe a class in progress.[4] The weekends were the busiest times. Visitors came to 'The Great Village', so easily accessible from town, curious to see close up the houses built on stilts over water, to witness village life, perhaps to take a good snap of children at play or a young Hanuabadan girl in romantic South Sea pose.[5] Every so often a cruise ship would put in at port and a boatload of tourists descend on the village. On these occasions the local Motuans might even stage a public dance and set out their handicrafts on makeshift mats by their houses, hoping to make a cash sale.

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[4] Ibid, p.236. Percy Chatterton described a similar situation with regards tourists to the village in the 1930s, Percy Chatterton, *Day That I Have Loved* (Pacific Publications, 1980), p.15. See Chatterton's description of tourists: 'Sometimes cruise ships full of rich Americans would include Port Moresby in their itinerary. Some of them were delightful folk ... Others used to infuriate me by walking through the school commenting to one another on my pupils as if they were animals in a zoo.'

[5] The Motuans, with their lighter skin and wavy but straight black hair (as opposed to tight curls) could fit, more than most Melanesians, within the 'Polynesian romance' trope so familiar to white visitors at the time. As well the particular history of Motuan's early contact with 'South Sea Islander' missionaries meant that many elements of Polynesian dance and song had been appropriated/adopted into Motuan culture, particularly within the village of Hanuabada. A number of informants mentioned the white tourists who came to the village to take photos, see for example Mairi Karo, 26 June 2007, Hanuabada.

Residents of Hanuabada, it was reported, did not seem to resent the white visitors' curiosity and the administration seemed happy for this class of visitor – the tourist or the casual day tripper – to enter the village.[6] But a cursory excursion to the village was one thing, 'association' with villagers quite another. While the tourist continued to be encouraged, in the early 1950s administration officers in the Welfare, Health and District Services departments began expressing concern that 'low class' European men were drinking and gambling in the village with local men, and that some were having intimate, 'unwholesome' relations with local women.[7]

Officials were not the only ones to notice the problem in Hanuabada. In September of 1950 social anthropologist Cyril Belshaw and his wife Betty arrived in Hanuabada to spend a year in the field, living on the outskirts of the village. The publication that resulted from this research – an ethnography entitled The Great Village (1957) – was focused on the problem of welfare and attempted a constructive critique of the administration and local missionaries' efforts at tackling this. Belshaw's belief in the usefulness and practical application of anthropology, which had so clearly guided his emphasis on welfare in his book, was evident even during his fieldwork.[8] While in the village he did not simply observe. He became practically involved with the problem of developing and implementing effective native welfare policy.[9] One area in which he expressed particular concern was that of interracial relationships, specifically sexual relations between white men and Motuan women.

In his second quarterly research update to the administration, submitted in June of 1951, Belshaw raised the issue of European visitors to the village. He noted that Europeans' presence was a factor in the increasing gambling and drinking problems within the village and that the administration's effort at curbing the problem through

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[6] Belshaw, *The Great Village*, pp.235-236, Chatterton, *Day That I Have Loved*, pp.15 – 17. See *Guide to Port Moresby*, (Port Moresby: Press of Papuan Courier Ltd., April 1938). for an example of formal encouragement of white tourists to visit Hanuabada: 'One of the features of a visit to Port Moresby is inspection of the large village of Hanuabada. In this village of about 2,223 natives, the indigenous people may be seen living very much as they have lived from time immemorial' (Booklet is not paginated).

[7] PNGA: 496/ARC6A9110, ARC6A921, ARC6A922, Central District Annual Reports 1956 – 72.

[8] Belshaw when laying out the theoretical orientation of his ethnography explained he felt a researcher after coming into personal contact with the subjects of 'his' study could not step aside from the problems they faced, but instead 'he must ask himself, what contribution can anthropology make to the advancement of their welfare?', Belshaw, *The Great Village.*, p.3.

[9] Belshaw's Research Reports directly discussed numerous other welfare matters and his opinions were referenced widely within Welfare files, for example re indigenous women's advancement PNGA: 80-2-0/1285, Social Welfare Advancement of Native Women Policy; and re tuberculosis and other deficiency diseases, see PNGA: NA/16-2-2, Medical and Health Welfare Clinic, HB. See also Belshaw's various articles published in *Australian Outlook*, 1950 on 'certain Administrative problems'.

police patrolling had proved ineffective.[10] In the correspondence that followed between Belshaw and the Administrator, Colonel JK Murray, Belshaw put forward an alternate remedy:

> My own solution, which I will just summarise here, would be something on the following lines, if politically practicable. To counter some of the European abuses it would seem fair to place a curfew upon European entry into the village after a certain hour, just as there is a curfew upon Papuans in the town ... I would also rigorously exclude Europeans from living in the village.[11]

It was well known to the administration that some Europeans were illegally selling and supplying alcohol to villagers despite a prohibition on supply in place since the commencement of colonial rule.[12] Both administration and anthropologist felt that the type of European venturing into the village for an evening visit was not the type of white man likely to set a good example to the villagers. They were, Belshaw complained, 'seldom the best agents of culture contact'.[13] Their presence, wrote Murray in loaded tone, contributed 'to the lowering of standards in the village in ways which will be obvious enough'.[14] Though never explicitly stated in this early correspondence it was clear that the increasing number of what were termed 'inappropriate' relationships between European men and village women were a particular concern to all involved.[15]

In The Great Village Belshaw was less reticent about his concerns. Though he acknowledged that 'under certain circumstances one could imagine mixed marriage to be a useful and praiseworthy venture with positive value', his observations in the book regarding casual relations and even long term 'mixed' partnerships were overlaid with a heavy moralism.[16] He was suspicious of the 'unsavoury' European men involved, critical of their use of liquor to seduce young Motuan girls, and concerned about what he regarded as an increasingly pervasive sexual commercialism in the village.

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[10] PNGA: NA/14-6-20, CS Belshaw, Statement of Research, 2nd Quarter 1951, 30 June 1951. See also Belshaw, *The Great Village*, pp.219-220.
[11] PNGA: NA/14-6-20, CS Belshaw to Colonel Murray, Administrator, 14 July 1951.
[12] In Papua the restrictions regarding native alcohol consumption had been in place since the declaration of the protectorate (in 1884). In New Guinea similar restrictions were imposed by the New Guinea Company and continued on when the German Government was handed back administrative responsibility in 1899. See Edward P Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea* (Sydney: Australia and New Zealand Book Co., 1975), pp.39, 63.
[13] Belshaw, *The Great Village*, p.240.
[14] PNGA: NA/14-6-20, Native Affairs – Dr CS Belshaw; J.K. Murray to J.H. Jones, Director of District Services and Native Affairs, 26 January 1952.
[15] See Belshaw's discussion of the problem in his section on race relations in Belshaw, *The Great Village*, pp. 231-242.
[16] Ibid, p.238.

Belshaw's suggestion of a curfew was broached with Ivan Champion, then acting Director of District Services and Native Affairs, though the exclusionary reach of the curfew was expanded to include all 'non Natives'. Murray made clear in internal correspondence regarding the regulation that he found it equally 'undesirable' for 'non-Europeans from incoming ships [to be] present in Hanuabada at night time'.[17] Champion was clearly annoyed at the seeming sidelining of District Services in the conversation, but he put forward no objections and declared that in fact he had long been thinking of suggesting just such a recommendation.[18] He believed the Village Council would be supportive and asked that a request be sent on to the Crown Law Officer to draw up the necessary amendment to the Native Regulations Ordinance.[19] By the start of the following year Administrator Murray had put his full formal support behind the proposal, stating clearly:

> I do not think it would be unfair to suggest that what is sauce for the goose may also be sauce for the gander, and if we prohibit native people without passes being present in Port Moresby after 9pm, similarly we might prohibit Europeans, Malays, etc. being in Hanuabada village after 9pm.[20]

'THEIR ACTIONS WERE SUSPECT': REPORTED RELATIONS BETWEEN MOTUAN WOMEN AND EUROPEAN MEN

In *The Great Village* Belshaw gave a detailed account of the associations between European men and Motuan women he had witnessed during his year of fieldwork. He described a series of casual encounters – of short term and/or episodic sex – as well as a number of more serious relationships.[21]

It was quite common, Belshaw reported, for European men after a night of drinking to stumble drunk into the village and proposition local women in a casual, rather amateur fashion. The men's casual overtures were generally met with immediate rejection, and they were forcibly expelled from the village by angry male relatives of the young women.[22] On occasion, however, a girl (and/or her relatives) might be more open to his advances, and the couple would discreetly move to a more private space away from prying eyes. Other European men came to the village

[17] PNGA: NA/14-6-20, Native Affairs – Dr CS Belshaw; JK Murray to JH Jones, Director of District Services and Native Affairs, 26 January 1952.
[18] PNGA: NA/14-6-20, Native Affairs – Dr CS Belshaw; Acting Director, District Services and Native Affairs, to the Government Secretary, 3 August 1951.
[19] Ibid.
[20] PNGA: NA/14-6-20, Native Affairs – Dr CS Belshaw; JK Murray to JH Jones, Director of District Services and Native Affairs, 26 January 1952. Murray's throw away line 'sauce for the goose' referred to the curfew imposed on natives in town at the time through the Native Regulations.
[21] Belshaw, *The Great Village*, pp.237 – 240.
[22] Ibid, p.237.

on a regular basis to pay court to a particular woman they had taken a fancy to. Belshaw regarded many of these men suspiciously, reporting a number had spuriously begun marriage negotiations simply to gain 'sexual advantage'.[23] The men, Belshaw observed, often quickly broke off the engagement after they had taken advantage of the woman. Others, he admitted, were more sincere in their intent and Belshaw recorded two mixed marriages in the year that he lived in Hanuabada.[24] Despite rumours circulating within white circles at the time Belshaw dismissed fears of prostitution in the village. He felt that while this may happen on occasion it was certainly not widespread. He did express concerns, however, that a form of 'sexual commercialism' was beginning to 'pervade certain quarters of the village'.[25]

According to Belshaw the attitude of villagers to European men's presence in the village and to their advances varied. Some didn't mind the men coming into the village – especially if they brought liquor – but disliked their courting of Motuan women. Some strongly opposed both the men's presence and their interest in Motuan women, highly suspicious that the men who came into the village at night came for 'one thing and one thing only'. In instances of simple sexual proposition Belshaw noted that Motuan men often responded by verbally abusing the European man and calling in the native police to 'shoo' him away. Where a more serious or long lasting relationship was implied, villagers had on occasion called in white authorities – missionaries or District Service staff – to investigate and ensure appropriate intent on the part of the suitor. They also turned to the authorities if they felt the girl had been wronged. In early 1951, for example, relatives of a young Motuan girl asked the Village Council and local court to intervene in a case involving an unemployed European man, already married and the father of several children, who had seduced the girl promising her marriage.[26] After she fell pregnant and he abandoned her, the Village Council stepped in and asked that the administration

[23] Ibid, p.238.

[24] It is quite likely that there were more than this. Archive files suggest at least one other marriage during this period PNGA: NA14-1-21(1), Native Affairs: European Native Marriages; A/Assistant District Officer, Central District, Investigation: Marriage between Mr R.A. Cavanagh (European) of Moale Plantation near I5ARD and Lohia-Eno (f) (Papuan) of Hohodae, 31 August 1951. Belshaw himself refers to the planned marriage between a 'motor bicycle riding' European and the daughter of LMS adherents, but was unsure if it had already taken place by the time he left the village in September 1951 See Belshaw, *The Great Village*, p.237.

[25] Belshaw, *The Great Village*, pp.239 – 240, In support of Belshaw's assessment that there was little prostitution in the village see also a contemporary independent report (written just a little later) L.R. Foster, "Survey of Native Affairs, Port Moresby Area," (Port Moresby: Department of Native Affairs, 1956). Foster concludes that prostitution did occur in the Moresby area but involved mostly Kikori and Hula women.

[26] Belshaw makes reference to this case in his letter to the Administrator, , PNGA: NA/14-6-20, Native Affairs – Dr CS Belshaw; JK Murray to JH Jones, Director of District Services and Native Affairs, 26 January 1952 and reports on it in his ethnography Belshaw, *The Great Village*, p.238.

make an example of the man by deporting him for his improper courting of a young village girl.[27] In addition they asked that Europeans generally be made to abide by the curfew set for natives and stay out of the village between the hours of 9 pm and 6 am.

It was evident, however, that some village men not only supported but facilitated contact. In some instances reported by Belshaw young Motuan men had acted as brokers or 'go-betweens', arranging casual sex between local women and European men in return for cash payment. Others simply provided a room for a meeting, distracted guardians, or provided a false alibi for the girl. Once courting had begun, it was quite common for family members of the young woman to exert pressure on her white suitor to make a more serious commitment. Their primary motivation in this, Belshaw surmised, was material gain. High status and/or economic benefit was thought to accrue to a family when a woman was intimately connected with a European:

> ... they [the parents] had their eye 'on the main chance'
>
> ... the uncle held to his opinion that a marriage could be arranged and would be of advantage
>
> ... they [the girl's parents] believed they stood to gain materially from the match.[28]

Overall Belshaw judged the situation to be disturbing, writing sympathetically of the predicament of those anxious villagers who felt powerless to 'control their own neighbours'. In Belshaw's estimation the majority of Hanuabadans bitterly resented the behaviour of European men who came to the village to court Motuan women. The curfew restrictions he suggested in his report to the administration would protect villagers not only from white men but also, wrote Belshaw, 'if need be from themselves'.[29] His use of the rhetoric of 'protection' referenced not only Motuan women, but also local men. They were in need of protection from their own base instincts and the immoral influence of 'low class' white men.

The administration had long attempted to control the type of white man with whom indigenous subjects came into contact. Concerns about the dangers of contact with 'undesirables, communists, prostitutes and agitators' had resulted, for example,

[27] Deportations of Europeans was made possible through Section 10A of the Immigration Restriction Ordinance (1925) in Papua and the Immigration Ordinance (1932) in New Guinea. Both pieces of legislation allowed the deportation of any immigrant to the territories who had been there less than 5 years and who endangered the 'peace, order and government of the Territory' or who 'repeatedly acts in a manner which is inimical to the best interests of the natives'. See correspondence in PNGA: NA/14-6-20, Native Affairs – Dr CS Belshaw.

[28] Belshaw, *The Great Village*, pp.237, 239, 238 respectively.

[29] Ibid, p.240.

in an informal policy of not allowing native labour to serve on vessels travelling to foreign ports: 'Such contact are [sic] not in the interests of this country, nor are they good for the natives themselves'.[30] As discussed in the previous chapter colonial concerns about 'low class whites' generally circled around three recurring themes: concern over the introduction of bad habits and/or dangerous ideas to natives; suspicions that white men had turned 'beachcomber' and were exploiting the natives; and fears regarding white prestige (i.e. that white men's behaviour would lead to the native losing respect for white authority). Variations on all three of these arose in the internal discussions on the need for a curfew on Europeans in Hanuabada.

All officials in the Central District, whether they supported the introduction of a curfew or not, expressed concerns that 'low class' white men entering the village were having a 'bad influence' on villagers around them.[31] Belshaw noted that card playing was rife in the village. Though no one would play in front of him (he was seen as too respectable and villagers hid their cards when he approached), he knew gambling was taking place on almost every street corner every day. Drinking, forbidden for natives, was equally prevalent. White men's participation in the gambling and drinking in the village (facilitation even – they were known to bring in alcohol), along with their casual womanising, undermined the work of missionaries and welfare workers hoping to create moral colonial subjects of their native charges.

Particular censure was reserved for those European men who were believed to be 'taking advantage' of the native – borrowing money from villagers, seeking temporary accommodation with them and sharing in their modest rations and/or garden foods. European men who married Motuan women, although generally viewed more favourably than those involved in casual encounters, met with disapproval if they failed to keep their family according to 'European standards', to live 'after the manner of Europeans' after marriage. During discussion of the Hanuabada curfew specific reference was made to the worrying case of Mr Cattell. Cattell, a junior member of the administration's medical Department, had married a young woman from Hanuabada and moved temporarily to live with her family in what Belshaw reproachfully described as 'her already overcrowded home'.[32] Although he had married the young woman according to local traditions and also

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[30] PNGA: 247/CA24/4/1/12, Department of Administrator, Entry of Natives into Australia; Letter Acting Director of Native Labour to Government Secretary, 21 June 1950.

[31] In addition to the curfew, it was also recommended that the Arms, Liquor and Opium Prohibition Ordinance be amended to provide for stricter penalties for the provision of alcohol to natives. PNGA: NA/14-6-20, Native Affairs – Dr CS Belshaw; Director, Department of District Services and Native Affairs, 4 August 1951.

[32] PNGA NA/14-6-20, Native Affairs – Dr CS Belshaw; CS Belshaw to Colonel Murray, Administrator, 14 July 1951.

within the Catholic Church, the administration remained sceptical of his intentions because he had gone to reside after the marriage at his new in-laws' 'shack'.[33] The proposed curfew would help to eliminate problems of this kind because it would, as Champion wrote, 'no doubt prohibit Europeans from living in the village'.[34]

These early discussions about managing the white presence in the village at night did not reference white prestige as explicitly as later administration wide debates on the issue. It was clear, however, that those advocating the curfew felt that the hypocrisy of the administration attempting to enforce prohibitions on alcohol and gambling while at the same time 'low class' whites entered the village to supply liquor and participate in card games could not help but diminish respect for the administration. For Belshaw this was indeed a large part of his motivation in calling for action. His position on indigenous access to alcohol was usually progressive. He felt Motuans had proven themselves able to drink responsibly and suggested that rather than a blanket ban on alcohol the administration should introduce the legal supply of beer to villagers via a 'controlled canteen'.

> In my view the people are able to take a limited quantity of liquor, and the main objectives of policy might be to see that the amount of alcohol consumed was not damaging personally or socially, and that the financial effect was not harmful. At present the main result is that liquor is consumed at 'black market' prices, often in concentrated strengths, and the prestige of the law diminishes.[35]

The black market, facilitated in part by certain sections of white colonial society, undermined the colonial administration's authority. Similarly, Belshaw argued that European men's bad behaviour in the village led to resentment amongst Motuan men. Indigenous men had long been placed under curfew to 'protect European women', but here were white men in the village pestering Motuan women with no consequence. Belshaw pointed out that this double standard was perceived clearly by Motuans and came with its own consequences:

> European arbitrariness in this respect is accepted; after all the Europeans have the power of the law in their own hands to do with as they like; but the

[33] Belshaw, *The Great Village*, p.238.
[34] PNGA: NA/14-6-20, Native Affairs – Dr CS Belshaw; Acting Director, District Services and Native Affairs, to the Government Secretary, 3 August 1951. It is interesting to note, however, that the 1954 curfew provisions of the Native Women's Protection Ordinance 1951 allowed for European residence in the village, but only if the local District Officer had granted approval for this.
[35] PNGA: NA/14-6-20, Native Affairs – Dr CS Belshaw; CS Belshaw to Colonel Murray, Administrator, 14 July 1951, see also Belshaw, *The Great Village*, p.217.

exercise of power in a discriminatory way, with no adequate protection for many who are in need, does not endear authority to the Hanuabadan.[36]

THE (UNSUCCESSFUL) PASSAGE OF THE 'PROPOSED PROHIBITION OF ENTRY OF NON-NATIVES INTO HANUABADA' (1951)

It took nine months for a formal proposal on the curfew, the 'Proposed Prohibition of Entry of Non-Natives into Hanuabada', to be raised for discussion at a meeting of the Hanuabada Village Council. Hanuabada was one of the first villages in the territories to have a functioning Village Council, an elected body granted limited local government powers. Until 1950 a nominated Council had been in existence, but this had held little legal authority. In 1949 the Ordinance Relating to Native Village Councils empowered councils to pass binding 'rules' for all residents of a village, and to levy taxes and fees on them.[37] The first Hanuabada Village Council elected after the ordinance passed was made up of seventeen representatives, all of them Motuan men – though women could and had, in reasonably large numbers, voted in the 1950 Council elections.[38] The Council, according to the accounts of District Services, 'showed much independence of outlook, some notable initiative, and ... a reasonable competence in most matters'.[39] While the Council did not have the power to pass the required regulations to enforce a curfew (as it entailed regulating the movement of Europeans), their endorsement of the proposal would have emboldened the administration in their moves to amend Native Regulations to allow for a curfew.[40]

MJ Healy, the District Commissioner for the Central District, was present at the meeting in which the idea of the curfew was raised and he guided discussion. Healy

[36] Ibid, p.240.

[37] The Native Village Councils Ordinance 1949 came into effect in December 1949. Under the Ordinance, each council elected a President and Treasurer, and the administration provided a full-time indigenous clerk. The Councils were required to meet monthly, and each meeting was to be attended by a District Officer. District Officers often came to dominate proceedings. Huntley Wright, "Economic or Political Development: The Evolution of 'Native' Local Government Policy in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea, 1945 - 1963," *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 48, no. 2 (2002), p.198.

[38] In the first election under the provisions of the new ordinance universal adult suffrage had been practised. In the following election a year later (in September of 1951) Belshaw states that only tax payers or legally exempted adults could vote. All men, except those with a special exemption, had to pay tax. Women could elect to do so. Belshaw reported in his ethnography that many women had elected to pay tax during during the period under his observation, and they did this simply so that they might be entitled to vote in the Council elections.In 1951 294 women elected to pay tax and voted (as against 651 men and 69 immigrants). Belshaw, *The Great Village*, pp.78, 221.

[39] Ibid, p.222.

[40] The Crown Law Office advised that the most direct way to effect a curfew directed at Europeans would be for the Executive Council to amend the current Native Regulations. See various correspondence, PNGA: NA/14-6-20, Native Affairs - Dr CS Belshaw; Correspondence between Director of District Services and Native Affairs and the Crown Law Officer, September – October 1951.

offered three different proposals for the consideration of Council, all of which limited the entry of 'non-natives' into the village but to varying degrees. The first suggested a total prohibition or curfew against all non-natives' presence in the village between the hours of 9 pm and 6 am. The second allowed for free entry into the village, but proscribed entry into individual villagers' homes except where express permission from the Council and the local District Commissioner had been granted. The last, the least restrictive of the three, called for an automatic prohibition against Europeans (or other non-natives) who had previously been convicted of an offence from entering the village within the suggested proscribed hours. None of the proposals received the support of the Village Council. When the Director of District Services, JH Jones, returned from leave he wrote to the Government Secretary to advise him that on the basis of 'the expressed opinions of the Council' no curfew restrictions should be imposed.[41]

The Village Council's rejection of the curfew resolutions in 1951 came as a surprise to the administration. Throughout much of the preceding year there had been correspondence back and forth between the office of the Administrator, his Department, the Crown Law Department and the Executive Council, discussing the best way to effect a curfew.[42] The administration believed, as did Belshaw, that most villagers resented the behaviour of European men towards the women of the village. They had been sure they would have the support of the Village Council for the curfew, their confidence at least partly based on the Council's earlier request – made in the context of a specific complaint – for restrictions to be placed on Europeans' entry into the village. Healy's report to the administration on the meeting, however, made clear why the Council had rejected the proposal: the segregation implied within the proposal had been unwelcome, had even offended Councillors. The Councillors rejected the first two resolutions outright on the grounds that they did not allow for villagers to socialise with Europeans. They were particularly reluctant to consider the second resolution as the restrictions outlined within it affected villagers, requiring them to seek the permission of a District Officer before inviting a European into their home. They were very aware of the potential for 'protective' regulations to be used as a means to police the actions of Motuans rather than

[41] PNGA: NA/14-6-20, Native Affairs – Dr CS Belshaw; Acting Director, District Services and Native Affairs, to the Government Secretary, 3 August 1951.

[42] See various correspondence, PNGA: NA/14-6-20, Native Affairs – Dr CS Belshaw; Correspondence between Director of District Services and Native Affairs and the Crown Law Officer, September – October 1951.

Europeans. Healy noted 'the whole tone of the [Councillors'] discussions was that no restrictions should apply to the HANUABADIANS themselves'.[43]

Six months after the Local Village Council rejected the curfew proposal, the Native Women's Protection Ordinance was passed through the Legislative Council (see chapter six).[44] This meant a woman from the village could not be in a European (or 'non-native') home after dark, unless married and accompanied by her husband.[45] When an amendment to the 1951 Ordinance was passed placing a curfew on entry for Europeans into specified Native villages in 1954, Hanuabada was one of the first to be 'proscribed'. However the Ordinance had little effect and was rarely policed.[46] Anecdotal accounts of expatriates living in Port Moresby suggest that white men's night-time visits to the village were still common practice well into the late 1960s.[47] In the 'Kiddies' Korner' column of the locally produced monthly magazine Black and White, an overtly racist satirical colonial publication, the column's author 'Cheerful Charlie' explained to the 'girls and boys' reading that he couldn't afford to 'go South' (to Australia) for his holidays and instead was stuck travelling only as far as 'Hanuabada – by bus from the Top Pub'.[48] Charlie's comment was caustic, referencing the well-known habit of many white men to go down to the village after drinking in town in the hope of obtaining sex. Patricia Reid noted from personal observation that it was common knowledge while she was living in Moresby in the 1960s that white men regularly entered into the village for the purpose of procuring

[43] PNGA: NA/14-6-20, Native Affairs – Dr CS Belshaw; District Commissioner, Central District to Director District Services and Native Affairs, 10 March 1952, (capitals in original).
[44] It is somewhat ironic that presumably because of the early efforts and attention paid to the issue of the curfew by the Village Council some scholars were later to inaccurately (see chapter 6, this thesis) claim the Ordinance had been passed specifically at the insistence of the male leaders of Hanuabada village. See for example Nigel Oram, *Colonial Town to Melanesian City: Port Moresby 1884 - 1974* (Canberra: Australia National University Press, 1976), p.157; Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea*, pp.128, 141.
[45] This was relaxed somewhat in 1957 (as explained in chapter 6, this thesis) when an amendment allowed single women permission to reside or be in the premises of a non-native if accompanied by her mother or father, or some other guardian by native custom.
[46] When the administration began to debate repealing the act Court statistics were provided regarding prosecuted offences under the Ordinance. Information was only recorded for the years 1952 – 1955. In that time only five men (two Europeans, three Natives) were convicted of 'causing or permitting female natives to be on premises occupied by non-natives during prohibited hours' in Papua. Eight men in New Guinea (six Europeans and two Natives) were convicted. The administration interpreted such statistics as suggesting that 'the problem is not of very serious dimensions', rather than this being a reflection of the ineffectiveness of the policing of such laws. NAA: A452; 1963/3341, Native Women's Protection Ordinance - Papua and New Guinea; Papua and New Guinea – Discriminatory Legislation – Native Women's Protection Ordinance 1951 – 1957.
[47] Patricia Mary Reid, "Whiteness as Goodness: White Women in Png and Australia, 1960s to Present" (Ph.D, Griffith University, 2005), p.97.
[48] Cheerful Charlie, 'Kiddies' Korner', in *Black and White*, February 1969 quoted in Ibid, p.97 *Black and White* was only short-lived. It began publication in November of 1966, but was forced to cease publishing in August 1969, when Percy Chatterton moved an amendment to the Discriminatory Practices Ordinances in the House of Assembly. Oram, *Colonial Town to Melanesian City: Port Moresby 1884 - 1974*, p.165.

sex, and that they would often carry with them a lead filled length of rubber piping – colloquially referred to as 'kanaka bashers' – to protect themselves from the irate relatives of village women.[49]

Two main points clearly emerge from a close examination of the Hanuabada curfew debate. Firstly though colonial officers felt men's presence in the village was undesirable, and their casual sexual courting of Motuan women was a constant embarrassment to 'respectable' colonial society, they nonetheless felt ambivalent about passing protective legislation that restricted European men's liberty. Their mixed feelings on this point might partly account for the subsequent lack of enforcement of protective regulations once legislation was pushed through at the Minister's request. Secondly the Hanuabada men (councillors, etc) who vocally objected to 'mixed' relationships and on whom the administration had relied for support for the curfew regulations, recognised these 'protective' segregationary measures rested on a paternalistic presumption of native incapacity. That is, they rejected the view that a native's liberty, unlike that of his white counterpart, could without question be curtailed when this was deemed 'in their best interests', or as Murray expressed it, when 'this is desirable in all interests'.[50] 'Protection' on this basis was just as unacceptable to Motuan councillors at the start of the decade as it was for later indigenous political leaders who called for the repeal of the Native Women's Protection Ordinance at the end of the 1950s (see chapter six, this thesis).

MOTUAN WOMEN TALK ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS WITH WHITE MEN

Belshaw's discussion of relationships between European men and Motuan women in his ethnography said very little about Motuan women's attitudes towards and experiences in these relationships. Perhaps Belshaw had been unsuccessful at eliciting a response about such relationships from Motuan women, but most likely he had not tried. In my interviews with Motuan women I found most women were still quite reticent to talk directly about intimate or potentially controversial topics such as casual sexual relations. Women were more likely to be drawn on the topic when it led smoothly on from a discussion of marriage, or alternatively Europeans' general presence in the village.

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[49] Reid, "Whiteness as Goodness", p.97.

[50] PNGA: NA14-6-20, Native Affairs – Dr CS Belshaw; JK Murray to JH Jones, Director of District Services and Native Affairs, 26 January 1952 (my italics). Murray is discussing here the general support of colonial society for curfews placed on native people's movement in the Port Moresby township. Curfews provisions were made through the territories' Native Regulations, a set of regulations that governed every aspect of life for indigenous subjects on the basis that these were 'in their best interests'. Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea*.

Relationships between Motuan women and white men were remembered and retold in a number of ways, reflecting the varying economic and social position of the women interviewed both at the time they entered or observed the relationship, as well as at the time they were remembering or narrating it to me. Many colonial commentators, as well as later scholars, have rather dismissively summed up indigenous women's involvement with European men as simply a means for their families to acquire wealth and status.[51] It was certainly the case that entering into a longer term sexual relationship with a European man often meant greater access to monies and goods and property for indigenous women and their families. The oral accounts of Motuan women however, suggest that they, as much as their families, actively negotiated their role within encounters and relationships and came to these with a much broader, more complex set of motivations.

MEETING A WHITE MAN

When I asked Motuan women how it was that Motuan women came to meet white men socially Belle Arua, who was in her teens through the 1950s, explained that their presence in the village was quite common when she was young:

> That time [the whites coming included] missionaries, or tourists. They used to come down and see the village and go back again. The tourists were in the bus – you know the really big buses. They used to fill them up and come all the way right around the village. Sometimes we'd escort them through the village and to the walkways. And some of the walkways [over the water, leading to houses] were not really good so we used to sometimes carry them or grab them by the hand and walk them properly.[52]

Hanua Mea, born in 1937, also remembers that many whites came through the village when she was a young girl. They would visit the local store and have a look around. Those who came regularly developed friendships with villagers:

> During that time there were lots of Australians living around town. And they were coming to the village ... [to] where the Co-operative store and the Milk Bar was. So these whites were coming in to see the village and most of the time they were going to eat there [the Milk Bar]. Eat there or have

[51] See for example PNGA: 251/182, Offences – Native Women Report Gunther to Cleland, 28 January 1955; Oram, *Colonial Town to Melanesian City: Port Moresby 1884 - 1974*, p.163 and Thelma Jackson, "Australians in Papua: The Effect of Changing Government Policies on Attitudes, 1945 - 73" (Hons, Griffith University, 1988), p.49. For an example of later scholarship that continued to read indigenous/black women's motivation in entering a relationship simply (and pejoratively) in terms of economic benefit, see Franz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1968), pp.57 -59.

[52] Belle Arua, 24 May 2007, Hanuabada.

> something good there. And from that, them coming often – they would make friends with the village men too.[53]

While many of the women recalled the regular stream of tourists, as well as missionary and colonial officers (district officers, nurses, teachers), others told of night time visits from white men.[54] These men were 'coming to look for girls'. Oala Mia, a teenager in the 1960s, recalled:

> Some of them [the whites] were teachers ... coming and seeing their students to tell stories and like that. Some of them [the whites] were just coming to see the village. But the men! They were coming to 'cruise around' at night [Pause] They had a crush on the ladies, the Motuan ladies. And some of them were trying it on!![55]

In the evenings there was a fair amount of socialising going on in Hanuabada. Motuan boys and girls had quite a fair amount of freedom in the village at night after the war.[56] Many adolescent girls, like their male peers, were able to attend dances, film screenings, and parties where they might engage in frivolous flirtations, perhaps enjoy a forbidden swig of illegal alcohol from a handed round flask or sit in for a round during a game of poker or *laki* (a popular card game involving gambling).[57] Oala, whose parents had passed away (so perhaps less restricted than others her age), remembered nightlife in the village before she was married (in 1965) as a time for socialising: you could meet young men in this way. Young women sat together, but the young men were never far away:

> There were these young men coming from the other clans, especially the Hohodae ones. They would come and tell stories with us. They would play guitar or ukulele and try and catch our eye. And they had a crush on us and would try and talk to us.[58]

This nighttime socialising (in public spaces) represented a significant change in what was regarded as permissible social interaction between the sexes. Chatterton, a missionary living in the village between the wars, reported that when he was living there teenage girls had been kept on a very tight rein by their parents. Teenage girls and boys were allowed to publicly socialize in couples. Girls had to keep their distance from young men, and those 'seen speaking to, or even standing near the young man to whom her parents betrothed her was considered to be highly

[53] Hanua Mea, 17 July 2007, Hanuabada.
[54] Toi Dago, 29 June 2007, Hanuabada; Oala Mia, 13 July 2007, Hanuabada.
[55] Oala Mia, 13 July 2007, Hanuabada.
[56] Belshaw, *The Great Village*, pp.176 – 177.
[57] Ibid, pp.176 – 177.
[58] Oala Mia, 13 July 2007, Hanuabada.

immodest'.[59] Descriptions of 'courting' from older Motuan women who were teenagers before the Second World War, and from younger women recounting their grandmother's experiences verify Chatterton's account. Sixteen years older than Oala, Naomi Goava explained how it had been when she was young,

> this was a time [before the war, when] parents were very, very strict with their daughters. My father wouldn't let me go out. And boys, young boys and girls they were not allowed to stand in public and converse.[60]

To avoid their parent's disapproval, clandestine meetings were often organised between young women and their male suitors.[61] Though prohibition against open flirtation or courting still existed, general socialising between young women and men was much more prevalent after the war. Young women were increasingly out and about at night, though often still mixing with other girls of their age.

Colonial officials had noticed women's increasing presence in 'public' spaces in the village, especially at night. LR Foster's Survey of Native Affairs for the Port Moresby area in 1956 reported that in the village of Hanuabada in particular there were now 'too many young girls hanging about with too little to do'.[62] Some of these, he wrote, were 'best described as 'good time' girls'.[63] Motuan parents felt there was little they could do to stop this however. Belshaw reported that 'despite stern denials on the part of parents' he believed meetings - and even premarital sex - were universal.[64] Parents, of course, worried that this would harm their daughter's reputation and therefore her marriage prospects (see chapter five, this thesis), but since the majority of young couples who publicly courted went on to marry, most villagers did not talk about those involved in night time assignations as 'immoral', even where sexual relations were known to have taken place. Things were more difficult, however, for young girls who began relationships with foreign men (be they European or indigenous). They were encouraged to avoid relationships of any kind with men outside of the village, because they would very quickly earn themselves a reputation and marriage with these men was not so assured, or even necessarily approved of.[65] As Oala Mia remembered:

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[59] Percy Chatterton, "Interlude between Two Worlds: Hanuabada in the 1930s," *Journal of the Papua and New Guinea Society* 4, no. 1 (1970).
[60] Naomi Goava, 5 July 2007, Hanuabada.
[61] Naomi Goava, 5 July 2007, Hanuabada; Mabel Gavera, 9 June 2007, Hanuabada; Geua Asi, 16 June 2007, Hanuabada; Paruru Abe, 7 July 2007, Hanuabada.
[62] Foster, "Survey of Native Affairs, Port Moresby Area."
[63] Ibid.
[64] Belshaw, *The Great Village*, p.177.
[65] Pamata Gera, 24 May 2007, Hanuabada; Geua Asi, 16 June 2007, Hanuabada; Asiani Igo, 5 July 2007, Hanuabada. Relationships between Motuan women and non-Motuan indigenous men were just as controversial as those between Motuan women and European men, if not

> The girls who were locked up, or not locked up but their parents were strict on them, they would get scared when the white men would call out to them. They would get scared. And other kids beside them would say, 'I'm going to go and tell on you. That white man is showing [interest]!'[66]

I asked her if there were young women were interested in going out with white men.

> Oh yes! These *other* ones, they would be willing. Like prostitutes. No, not really prostitutes, but like prostitute types.[67]

The women were 'prostitute like', but not prostitutes – an important distinction. Interviewees explained that women who entered into temporary sexual unions with white men were not regarded by those in the village as prostitutes, even where an exchange of liquor, cash, or goods had taken place. Just because a woman entered into a temporary relationship with one European did not mean she was necessarily amenable to similar relationships with other Europeans. And though it might be understood as short-term or even just a one off episode, Motuans did not generally regard the encounter as simply a commercial transaction.

Meetings with white men in the village were commonly described as occurring in the following way: white men entered the village at night, often driving their own vehicles in. They would come initially to see Motuan men that they had made friends with, but would use this opportunity to flirt with local girls. Once they had struck up a conversation with a particular girl, the man might invite her to take a ride with him.[68] Oala described what would happen next:

> They [the Motuan girls] will go with them [the white men]. Once they call they'll just go and they'll [the white men will] get them in the car and just go and they would ... [coyly] I *don't* know![69]

Others were not so reticent about what the couples got up to:

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more so. A small number of marriages had, in the past, been negotiated between Motuans from Hanuabada and their trading partners from the Gulf (Daru, Kerema, etc), but as more male migrants moved within the city limits from the Gulf to settle permanently, the numbers of these marriages began to grow. These relationships with men from groups who the Motuans had traditionally traded with were viewed more favourably than those being established between Motuan women and other foreign indigenous migrants. The 'foreign' men marrying Motuan women in the late 1950s, early 1960s were mainly from Papua – Kerema, Hula, Samarai, etc – rather than New Guinea, as Highlanders had not moved down to Moresby in any great number. When they did start to migrate to Port Moresby, Motuan women were advised by their parents to keep their distance.

[66] Oala Mia, 13 July 2007, Hanuabada.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Oala Mia, 13 July 2007, Hanuabada.

[69] Ibid.

They were somehow meeting, booking rooms in the hotels and like that, and then going out ... and that's how they were getting pregnant.[70]

Pregnancy occurred reasonably frequently. The women explained that in situations where the girl fell pregnant they were unlikely to receive any support from the man. Motuan women were left to raise the children by themselves:

T: The whites who were working, like the Americans, working in the ships they were just coming over and making the ladies, the girls, pregnant and then going back again. That's what was happening.

J: When they fell pregnant was there any way of making sure the girls and the children would be looked after?

T: No, they [the men] were just coming and doing that and running away. They were not even looking after the [children] ... It was the ladies' hard job now to look after their child, their responsibility.[71]

The children of such unions were accepted within the village, and the family of the woman generally supported the mother. It was not uncommon for the woman to go on and marry a Motuan man who would then raise the child as his own.[72]

No women from the village talked to me about being forced by a white man or being pressured by male kin to enter into sexual relations with a white man. Traumatic experiences are not something easily shared. Though I was with a young Motuan woman well known to them this was generally the first time they had met me, they had no reason to feel comfortable about talking about this with me, and even in situations where consent was not in question most Motuan women were reluctant to speak frankly about intimate matters. The interview situation was also one in which there was often a crowd of people sitting with us, listening in to an older auntie tell important stories of her life – it was not a confidential situation. As well, I was very clearly understood by the Motuan women I interviewed as a white woman, and as Australian. They may well have felt apprehensive about sharing accusations against white men with me.

But coercion (sometimes violent) clearly did take place. Belshaw, for example, noted that while Motuan women could sometimes be the initiator or instigator in a relationship with a European man, they were more often put under pressure to enter

[70] Toi Dago, 29 June 2007, Hanuabada. Toi, born in 1944 and married in the early 1960s, was talking about the village in the 1960s and 1970s.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Ibid. Toi reported that in recent years a number of these children have as adults attempted to find their Australian fathers or – though more rarely – the Australian father has attempted to make contact with his adult child.

into sexual associations and were frequently 'at the mercy of parents or relatives who used her to obtain wealth and privileges'.[73] He relayed in detail one such event described to him in which a young girl was tricked into accompanying a young Motuan man to an empty room. The girl was locked in the room with a white man who proceeded to sexually harass her, 'to interfere with her skirt'.[74] In this instance she was only saved from a violent encounter by the unexpected return of one of the house residents. The next night the same local man hassled her sister promising 'money, liquor and anything she wanted' if she would go to a room alone with a European man. Her sister was forced to run to their father for protection.

'YOU SHOULD HAVE TRIED TO GET YOURSELF ONE!'

For Motuan men the brokerage of casual or temporary sexual relationships between European men and Motuan girls brought immediate material benefits in the form of cash or liquor or other valuables. Motuan women themselves did not benefit materially from casual relations to anywhere near the same extent (and in fact their involvement could result in later violent repercussions against them[75]). Their motivation to voluntarily enter into these was not nearly so clear-cut. Though no women during interviews admitted to having had a brief sexual encounter with a white man, two main suggestions were offered as to why a woman might do so. One informant described the women who engaged in casual unions with foreign men as 'party girls', keen to gain access to liquor, take a spin in a car, and/or enjoy a fling.[76] More often it was suggested that the women hoped an encounter might lead to a longer term or more permanent relationship. White men were regarded as an excellent prospect for marriage because they were able to offer a high brideprice (and so bring the woman considerable social status within the village). With their higher incomes they offered their future wife a measure of economic security and generally better physical accommodation and access to Western conveniences (radios, sewing machines, washing machines, etc). They might even take their new wife back to Australia.

Given the specifics of local histories of contact and cultural practice Motuan women's description of their experiences resonate with but do not mirror exactly in those given by indigenous women in other regions. In *First Contact* Robin Anderson and Bob Connelly describe how local women negotiated new domestic and sexual relationships with the white and other foreign men entering the Highlands for the

[73] Belshaw, *The Great Village*, p.177.
[74] Ibid, p.239.
[75] See also Ibid, p.239.
[76] Toi Dago, 29 June 2007, Hanuabada.

first time in the 1930s.[77] Not long after the outsiders arrived local men began brokering their sexual access to local women. Various forms of wealth were exchanged with a local woman's family – pearl shells, steel implements – in return for some form of relation with the woman, ranging from a casual encounter through to marriage. Women in Hagen traditionally had had some say over who they might marry, but ultimately a woman's male kin decided a husband for her. Though her consent was sought, much pressure was placed on a woman to agree with male kin's decisions. When Hagen men began negotiating towards marriage or some form of sexual liaison between local women and the strangers/newcomers (some coastal indigenous men, some white men) the young women recalled for Anderson and Connelly that at first they were terrified. As one woman explained:

> **Woman 1:** My people gave me to the strangers to get their wealth. I was just a young girl. My breasts were still small. The strangers paid for me and the other girls with shells and steel axes. They were wealthy and bought many more girls. I was the first.
>
> **Q:** Did you want to be married to them?
>
> **Woman 1:** No, no! We were terrified. We cried: Mother! Father! We thought they'd eat us. In fact they were kind to us.[78]

Anderson and Connelly note that given the women's position in Hagen society, they would have found it quite difficult to resist the pressure of their male kin to participate in relationships. They describe women's involvement as 'strange and possibly humiliating' for them, but that such feelings may well have been tempered by 'the satisfaction of knowing they were bringing wealth to their clans'.[79] They note, however, that the women, despite their youth and any initial fear or reluctance, were very quick to turn the situation to their own advantage. One young woman, Dau, told Anderson and Connelly of how as a result of the wealth accumulated through brideprice she personally came to be more regularly involved in high status transactions, distributing shells during other marriage negotiations and trading sessions:

> They gave fifty shells for me but no pigs. All my bridewealth went to Ndika Opa – a relative on my mother's side. Later when I was married I'd give shells out to my own people. When they got my bridewealth they were able to get more women for the men in their own clan ... They became quite

[77] Robin Anderson and Bob Connolly, *First Contact* (New York, N.Y.: Viking, 1987).
[78] Robin Anderson and Bob Connolly, "First Contact," in *The Highlands Trilogy* ([Australia]: Arundel Productions, 1983), (timestamp: 46:30).
[79] Anderson and Connolly, *First Contact*, p.142.

> wealthy because of me and made long *omaks* because of all the shells I'd been given for my bridewealth.[80]

She also described how she and Meta, another Hagen woman married to a foreigner, became important figures in the village because they were able to find out and pass on important information through their husbands and living at camp.

> Meta and I became the intermediaries. We said to our people, 'Look here! We're women! We're from here! They haven't eaten us yet, so don't be frightened'.[81]

Another Hagener, Yamka Miti, verified Dau's self assessment as cultural intermediary:

> Afterwards people like Dau and Meta translated for us. These women were the ones who told us what the white men were saying. They must have picked up the language, married to coastal men. Through them we could communicate a little and find out more about these strangers.[82]

Deborah Carlyon tells a very similar story in *Mama Kuma*, her biography of her grandmother Kuma Kelage. Kuma, the first born daughter of the first wife of a high ranking chief, was born in 1928 and raised in the village of Sipamange in the Sina Sina mountains, Chimbu province. She first met her future husband – an Australian patrol officer, Malcolm John Warrick – when he came through the village to take census.[83] The area in which Kuma lived had not been in contact with the white man for long, and she was the first woman from her area to marry one.[84] After marrying Warrick, she quickly fell pregnant to him in 1944, just before he was transferred to Aitape to fight in the Pacific War. Warrick never returned and Kuma heard from the colonial government that he had died during the war.[85]

Carlyon describes Kuma's initial meeting with Malcolm Warrick as a moment of personal connection. But she also stressed Kuma's interest in the new, different world from which Warrick came and which he opened up to her. When Kuma decided to travel on patrol with Warrick as a young girl, her father and male relatives came to take her home because they were worried for her safety – they had

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[80] Nengka Amp Dau, quoted in Ibid, p.146.
[81] Nengka Amp Dau, quoted in Ibid, p.146.
[82] Yamka Miti, quoted in Ibid, p.146.
[83] Deborah Carlyon, *Mamakuma : One Woman, Two Cultures* (St Lucia, Qld.: University of Queensland Press, 2002), pp.27 – 30.
[84] Ibid, p.62.
[85] Later her family – her daughter and granddaughter – were to discover that the administration believed he had committed suicide. Ibid, pp.167-168.

heard from nearby villages that white men had raped young local girls.[86] Kuma refused to go with them. Carlyon explained this resistance came from 'Kuma's desire and hunger for the new' – the opportunity for new experiences, access to new foods, tools, and other valuables.[87] As a result of her friendship and later marriage with Warrick, Kuma became an important cultural 'broker', negotiating the introduction of new tools and ideas into the village. As Carlyon wrote:

> Those [in the village] who spoke of their memories told how, as a young girl, Kuma was vital in the discovery of the *mangare gage* [white men]. She took change by the hand, held it and led it.[88]

One Sipamange elder remembered:

> She [Kuma] showed us the tomahawk, the kina and girigiri shells, paint, knives, bush knives, and cloth. It was through Kuma that the Sina Sina came to have these. We still use the tomahawk and bush knives today in the village.[89]

Because of Kuma's fearlessness towards 'contact' – epitomised by her marriage to Warrick, but evidenced by her general embrace of change – Kuma's brother referred to Kuma as 'our first leader'. She was a woman but she had, her brother explained, 'the spirit of a man. She was our leader'.[90]

Motuans were among the first people in Papua and New Guinea to come into contact with white men, and certainly to live with or close by them in any sustained way. Because of their very particular history of early contact and sustained engagement Motuan women entering into casual or even permanent relationships with white men did not play the role of cultural intermediary in the same way. Though for individual families a woman involved with a white man may still act as broker into white colonial society, her role as intermediary did not hold the same prominence because access – at least for Motuan men – was not as rare or difficult to achieve. It was still the case, however, for those Motuan women who had missed out on a colonial education or waged employment (the vast majority) that relationships with white men offered access to a world they otherwise had no way of entering.

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[86] Ibid,p.39.

[87] Ibid,p.36 Travelling with Warrick on patrol before they were married Kuma experienced many, many new things – different kinds of foods she had never seen or tasted (e.g. tinned foods), new animals she had never seen (e.g. horses), new ideas and technologies that were completely foreign (e.g. money) ... and sometimes terrifying (e.g. aeroplanes). Carlyon, *Mamakuma : One Woman, Two Cultures*,pp.40 – 42.

[88] Carlyon, *Mamakuma : One Woman, Two Cultures*, pp.2-3.

[89] Ibid, p.64.

[90] Ibid, p.65.

When I was interviewing individual Motuan women on this topic, the women sitting with us listening in to an interview would often laugh and tease the older woman about whether or not she had ever succumbed to a white man's charms. They would lightheartedly berate her if she replied in the negative. As Nancy, my translator during interviews, joked to an older woman who had started describing the way white men hung about the village flirting with young girls, 'well, you should have tried to get yourself one!'[91] The humour and teasing that took place during interviews around women's sexuality and their control over it flagged the subject as something central to social life as well as something around which women held conflicting feelings. Humour in social situations, as Michael Billig has argued, can be used to discipline (through ridicule) those who do not comply with social norms and values. On the other hand it can function to question these same norms and values – making light of accepted social constraints, testing their limits, offering an opportunity – if only momentary and necessarily abstracted - for their evasion.[92] The generally raucous response from Motuan women to any mention of white men's sexual interest in Motuan women, and the more gentle, playful ribbing by Motuan women of those who claimed to have shunned the men's advances suggests a continuing ambivalence on the part of Motuan women around their participation in such relationships.

Casual relationships with white men – narrated from a distance in terms of both experience (the women narrating them on the whole had observed, rather than entered into them) and lapsed time – were still strongly disapproved of. Engaging in public flirtation for Motuan women was remembered as dangerous. Casual sex or even public flirtations with white men (or other foreigners) affected a women's reputation. Young women who flirted or hung about on the streets were no longer considered 'good girls', they were 'party girls'.

A woman's sexual modesty was key to her 'respectability' and social standing in the village and within her local Christian community (significant within Motuan villages given the influence of the mission).[93] Potential in-laws judged a woman on this aspect of her behaviour before agreeing to a marriage between families/clans. And yet the idea of a relationship with a white man remained a tantalising

[91] Nancy Morea in interview with Oala Mia, 13 July 2007, Hanuabada.

[92] Michael Billig, *Laughter and Ridicule: Towards a Social Critique of Humour* (Sage, 2005).

[93] Almost all of the women that I interviewed in Hanuabada I had met through church networks. The emphasis placed on risk, respectability and reputation in these women's testimonies was, of course, heavily influenced by their Christian belief and practice. Though not all women in Hanuabada are in women's fellowships, or even practicing Christians, the church is a significant part of life in the village and I do not believe these women's accounts were unusual or uncommon.

opportunity, something clearly desired. Casual relationships could be thrilling – the young women who chose to flirt or jump in the car with a white man were breaking with tradition and making their own decisions about when and why and with whom they would enter into sexual and/or intimate relations. Relationships with white men offered women the opportunity of new experiences and access, albeit often limited and temporary, to a new world outside of the village. And for most Motuan women the only way to meet white men or foreigners was through an offer of a casual sexual relationship. Many of the women who accepted these offers risked the loss of their respectability but hoped to make something more of what was initially only a temporary or episodic arrangement.

MARRYING A WHITE MAN

Sometimes, though not often, such hopes were realised. In one of my interviews I was told second-hand about a marriage that took place after a young woman fell pregnant, after engaging in a seemingly casual relationship with a white man. When he looked to be abandoning her, she sought help from her relatives and they in turn asked the colonial authorities to place pressure on the young man to meet his obligations to the girl. Her story was told to me during a conversation about the 'success stories' of the family:

> **D:** And you know they [her mother's siblings] came out of school very successful and they got good jobs and most of them well they've gone well. Another auntie, second last, she married an English man [an Australian who spoke English] and now she lives in Brisbane, Australia.
>
> **J:** How did she meet the Englishman?
>
> **D:** He was a businessman here.
>
> **J:** And he used to come down to the village?
>
> **D:** Yes, yes. And he had a public bus business that he used to operate along here. And I think that's how he met my auntie. They were just going around together sometimes. My auntie was staying with us at the time. He gave her a child and then his contract or his visa expired so he was due to fly back. And then my auntie complained to my father about her being pregnant, being impregnated by him. My father went and saw the District Commissioner ... so they held on to his passport and asked him, summoned him to come and say, admit that it was his child and all that. Eventually arrangements were made and my father helped him renew his visa and they got married in church and they settled here.[94]

[94] Naomi Goava, 5 July 2007, Hanuabada.

Relationships that progressed on to marriage did not necessarily, or even often, begin in this way. Cyril Belshaw observed that it was generally the more 'sophisticated' Motuan woman who entered into long-term relationships with European men. By this he meant women who had some formal education, held waged employment in town, and dressed in a 'European style'.[95] These women, he argued, were more likely to be in a position to make initial acquaintance and then establish genuine friendship with a man from outside the village. The women I interviewed seemed to agree with Belshaw's assessment. A high proportion of the inter-racial marriages discussed during interviews were described as resulting from initial contact made between a Motuan woman and a European man in the workplace. Meeting men through the workplace meant the women were able to interact with, and become friends with the man first. Mabel Gavera, who married an Australian man when she was 22 years old, reflected that it took a while for romance to begin after meeting her future husband while working at the Reserve Bank, 'We were colleagues at first. We met at work and then the romance only started later on'.[96] Interviewees who had personally entered into long-term relationships consistently made it clear that a prior relationship was established with their future husband before sexual intimacy took place. This signalled their respectability, that is – they were not like those other Motuan women who jumped into casual sexual relationships with white men!

Some longer-term partnerships, however, came about because of friendships that developed between Motuan men and working class European men at work. Oala Mia described how three white men became good friends with her brother while operating bulldozers alongside him at Curtain Brothers (construction contractors in Port Moresby). As a result of this friendship they eventually came to live in the village for a little while:

> Somehow they came and they were staying in the No. 2 [clan] house [on the Tubamaga wharf]. But then they decided to come and stay here [at the main clan house] and there were three of them staying with me! Yes three of them

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[95] Belshaw, *The Great Village*, pp.239 – 240 Nigel Oram, reporting an increase in inter-racial marriages across the territories in the 1960s, claimed most of these were between European men and well educated indigenous women (Oram, *Colonial Town to Melanesian City: Port Moresby 1884 - 1974*, p.163) There was a clear connection, of course, between women achieving a basic level of education – at least primary, but more often some level of secondary schooling – and being in a position to obtain waged work. The idea that women who had received a higher level of education were more likely to marry a white man was fairly commonly expressed within the oral interviews, and not just among Motuan women but also those interviewed in Buka, Bougainville. Reflecting on her missing out on formal education as a young girl, Talmits, an ambitious Halia woman from Buka, asserted to me: 'If I'd gone to school I would've beaten you all [other village women], gone to uni, and married a white man'. Talmits Hagai, 5 November 2006, Hahalis

[96] Mabel Gavera, 9 June 2007, Hanuabada.

> staying! Their names were Billy, Peter and Bobbi. One of them got married to my cousin. And now they [the cousin and her husband] are living in Australia.[97]

Though much less common, women told me that a number of 'mixed' marriages had come about after European men expressed interest in finding a Motuan wife to marry in the village during a visit.[98] When European men were keen to meet a nice Motuan woman, young Motuan men were enlisted as informal matchmakers.[99]

CONTEXTUALISING CONSENT AND 'FREE CHOICE'

> She went to school in Australia, high school. And she tells me it had a huge effect on her. She began to hate her own people, her own culture – she felt it was inferior. She even went so far, she told me, as to marry a white man. (She said this as though this would be inconceivable to me – such a very big thing ... and so I think it probably was, for her and for her family). Then later she realised, as she grew up and became a more mature woman, that she didn't love him but had married him for the wrong reason: because he was a white man.
>
> After saying that she'd been turned against her culture, she laughed and said, 'and now I've gone the other way, I just love it.[100]

Just as some Motuan women had been pressured into casual sexual relationships, not all women were happy to enter into long-term relationships with white men but felt constrained to 'consent'. One example found within the Native Affairs files on 'European/Native Marriages' provides evidence of the pressure placed on Motuan women by male relatives. An official report from the Assistant District Officer investigating the marriage of Lohia Eno, a young woman of Hohodae[101], and Mr RA Cavanagh of Moale Plantation, determined that Lohia's consent to the marriage had not been given freely.[102] The investigation was initiated a month after the wedding when Lohia's father and uncle had complained to the Port Moresby District Office

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[97] Oala Mia, 13 July 2007, Hanuabada.

[98] Andrew Lind reported in his 1969 monograph on mixed marriages in the territories, that some European men held a preference for marrying a local indigenous woman; a number expressed their belief to Lind that local women were more likely than their European counterparts to be 'submissive, loyal and devoted wives'. This speaks volumes with regards some white men's attitude towards indigenous women, but is not particularly informative about actual relationships or indigenous women's customary role within marriage. It tells us nothing about indigenous women. Andrew Lind, "Inter-Ethnic Marriage in New Guinea," *New Guinea Research Bulletin* 31 (August 1969), pp.20-22.

[99] Nancy Morea, personal communication, 24 May 2007, Hanuabada.

[100] Fieldnotes (author), 2 June 2007.

[101] Hohodae is one of the 5 smaller villages that make up the village cluster of Hanuabada.

[102] PNGA: NA14-1-21(1), Native Affairs: European Native Marriages; A/Assistant District Officer, Central District, Investigation: Marriage between Mr R.A. Cavanagh (European) of Moale Plantation near I5ARD and Lohia-Eno (f) (Papuan) of Hohodae, 31 August 1951.

that her new white husband had not paid the promised brideprice. When questioned by the officer Lohia, only 14 years and nine months old at the time of the investigation, agreed she had answered *'oibi'* (yes) during the marriage ceremony, but explained her assent during the ceremony was given only because she had been instructed by her uncle and father that she must. During the officer's questioning Lohia requested permission to leave the plantation where she was now living with her husband and return home to her village. She told him she was lonely and frightened staying on the plantation. The District Officer was hesitant to give her 'permission' to leave, reporting his cautious reply to her as follows:

> whilst it is much better that husband and wife live together, she was quite entitled to live where she liked, but also that her husband was quite entitled to chastise her for leaving him.[103]

No prosecution was made, the marriage remain legally recognised as such, and the colonial officer felt obliged to warn the young, scared woman who appealed for his help that her husband had every right to 'chastise' her (a rather ambiguous term). At least in this particular case, when Lohia actively sought 'protection' it was not forthcoming.

When narrating how she came to marry a white man, Mary Gado[104] also expressed a lack of choice and talked of the isolation that could come after marriage to a foreigner. The constraints as articulated by Mary pointed, however, to a very different experience and set of problems from those indicated above. Mary was clear that she had personally chosen to marry her husband – she had met him at work, established a friendship, and then after a period of courtship accepted his proposal of marriage. However talking about her marriage many years later, Mary, now divorced, was critical of the influence her colonial education and the prejudices embedded within this. She retrospectively explained her choice to marry a white man in the following way in our interview:

> When I got this scholarship [from the administration] and went to school in Australia ... I developed a lot of funny values. I mean I couldn't help it. I had no idea what was happening to me ... Generally it threw me off in the sense that I acquired a lot of false values. Then I started judging the village and thinking of my people as lower class and all that. And this was just something personally happening to me without me knowing. It was later on

[103] PNGA: NA14-1-21(1), Native Affairs: European Native Marriages; A/Assistant District Officer, Central District, Investigation: Marriage between Mr R.A. Cavanagh (European) of Moale Plantation near I5ARD and Lohia-Eno (f) (Papuan) of Hohodae, 31 August 1951.

[104] (*) Here I have used an alternate name (a pseudonym) because the nature of the story shared is intimate and relatively sensitive. Other identifying details are similarly changed.

that I realised what had happened to me ... It actually affected my early adult life because I then allowed this white man to marry me. And I really didn't have any control over it.[105]

As she grew older she realised that she had married him for the wrong reasons. She had married him, she explained, because he was a white man. In some ways Mary's critical reflections on her decision to enter into the relationship echo the vocal critiques of mixed marriages made through the 1970s and 80s by elite Papua New Guinean men.

In a useful gendered analysis of the relationship between sexuality and nationalism in Papua New Guinea Laura Zimmer-Tamakoshi argued that educated, elite Papua New Guinean men effectively politically marginalised educated, elite Papua New Guinean women after independence by creating a divide between these women (generally living in an urban context) and their village sisters, painting them as 'sexually promiscuous westernised women living in selfish abundance in town'.[106] Partly this was done through the public castigation of women who adopted westernised dress and make up. Male politicians, church leaders, and correspondents to local papers argued this was evidence of urban women's rejection of Melanesian culture and values. Their responses to women who married or were involved in sexual relationships with white (or non Papua New Guinean) men were particularly vitriolic.[107] In the new literature emerging out of the recently established university, young indigenous male writers and poets such as Justin Yatu, painted these women as the 'dupes' of their white boyfriends, as having fallen prey to the seductions of white civilisation.[108]

Mary's account is seemingly in agreement with this assessment, but the resemblance is superficial. Her full account of the relationship and its eventual disintegration provided a rather more nuanced picture than that painted by Yatu et al. Mary described many positive aspects to her relationship with her husband. In

[105] MG*, June 2007, Hanuabada.
[106] Laura Zimmer Tamakoshi, "Nationalism and Sexuality in Papua New Guinea," *Pacific Studies* 16, no. 4 (1993). See also Evelyn Hogan, "Two Liberations or One: Gender Ideologies in Papua New Guinea 1971 - 1981" (Hons, Australian National University, 1981).
[107] For a particularly public example of this see Dianne Johnson's analysis of the 'Nahau Rooney affair'. Rooney was a female politician embroiled in a political scandal in relation to the Papua New Guinean judiciary in the late 1970s. She was charged with contempt by the court for her vocal critique of the foreign members of the Supreme Court. What was a legal and political debate soon became focused mainly on Nahau Rooney herself: her appearance, personality, sexuality, and choice of partner. In particular it was said that her white radical husband had put the ideas in her head. She had been seduced, and she had been susceptible because she was a woman. Dianne Johnson, "The Government Women: Gender and Structural Contradiction in Papua New Guinea" (Ph.D, University of Sydney, 1984), chapter 9.
[108] Zimmer Tamakoshi, "Nationalism and Sexuality in Papua New Guinea.", p.80.

particular she credited her husband with persuading her to continue her education and get a university degree, encouraging her to plan towards and pursue a professional career – something she had previously not seriously considered. Zimmer-Tamakoshi noted in her research that those educated Papua New Guinean women who stated they actively sought non Papua New Guinea men as long terms partners explained they did so on the basis that they felt these men would be more supportive of their educational and professional ambitions.[109]

In Mary's case support was forthcoming. At least initially. Cracks in the relationship began to appear after she graduated. At this point she began to feel that her husband 'didn't really respect my degree'. When he began talking about moving the family so that they might raise their two children in Australia, she realised she didn't want to move away with him. Instead she sought a divorce.[110]

This decision was not an easy one. Not only did it mean leaving her husband and rebuilding her life without him, it also meant separation from her two daughters. Her husband retained custody of the children, and when he left for Australia he took them with him.[111] Mary felt that it was in their best interests to remain with their father, because he could provide them with educational opportunity and financial security. She had decided for herself to stay located – socially, physically – close to the village, but felt that she could not make the same decision for her children, believing this would effectively cut them off from the privilege and opportunity their father could offer them

Though Mary explains she had been turned against her own culture and taught to believe it was inferior, and that this had heavily influenced her decision to marry a white man, her narrative of the actual relationship sits uneasily with the trope of 'silly woman seduced' offered by early indigenous male writers. Fundamental to this trope was a false comparison between the promiscuous urban woman vs. good village woman. According to this binary the urban girl lost her morals and her work ethic in the face of the glamour of a promiscuous, affluent Western lifestyle, and the village girl, submissive and hard working, adopted a 'traditional' subservient role in relation to her male kin. When Mary explained her motivations in entering the

[109] Ibid.

[110] After the break up of her relationship with her first husband Mary went on to have a long successful career in the private sector. She eventually even ran for a seat in provincial government. Though unsuccessful, Mary's running for a seat and staging a full election campaign is recognised as a notable achievement for anyone, but especially a woman, in Papua New Guinea. In her personal life, Mary remarried, had another child, and again divorced. She now lives with her sister's family in the village, along with her youngest daughter.

[111] She has remained in close contact with her two eldest daughters, and remains on good terms with their father.

relationship there was no suggestion of an attraction to some liberatory promise of promiscuity, rather it was the respectability of being married to a white man that had been so appealing. And according to Mary, her relationship began to break down at the point when her husband's support for her career began to waver. The marriage finally collapsed after he decided – without consulting her – that the family should move to Australia, a decision that would further isolate her away from family and village life. Mary's narrative of her relationship, instead suggests an emergent confidence that allowed her to see through the false promise that entry into colonial white society necessarily offered a woman higher status or greater freedom, and the corresponding lie that 'traditional' society could not accommodate women's decisions to take hold of the new opportunities offered via colonial education and waged work and make their own futures.

CONCLUSION

Meeting a white man, flirting with him, perhaps marrying him, these could be exciting, but also risky activities for a young Motuan woman in the period following the war. The politics of respectability was strong within the village; it was just as strong within white colonial society. By the early 1950s concerns about inter-racial relationships – those between Motuan women and white men – were being raised formally within the colonial administration, and as a result measures to restrict interaction were raised for discussion and debate within the Local Village Council.

Perception of sexual threat or danger was not one sided, Motuan men were active in discussions about the threat of white men to 'their women', and were keen to insulate Motuan women from relationships with outsiders (and, perhaps more to the point, relationships outside of their control). They were, however, alert to the ways in which suggested measures to regulate these relations positioned them (indigenous men) in a particular and paternalistic relation to the coloniser. Motuan men continued to complain to the administration about the behaviour of some European men in the village, but rejected the restrictive regulations they proposed.

Motuan women spoke about white men being in the village in a way that suggested this had been quite common. European men had entered into the village and socialised with young men. They had also made friends with and entered into relationships – some casual, some much more serious – with women from the village. For women in Hanaubada this could be 'just a bit of fun': an escape from the ordinary, an escape from tradition and parental observation. Others were forced into relationships. Others again, developed serious relationships based on mutual trust, respect and affection, though of course these relationships came with many

challenges. Mary's story provides one very personal example of the challenges in negotiating the politics and possibilities of a 'mixed' relationship. Women's stories – though often ambivalent, and sometimes contradictory – stood in clear contrast to the earlier colonial discussions in which the possibility of Papua New Guinean women's agency, even their informed decision, had been denied.

8. *'Ol meri bilong wok'* (Hard working women)

Women and work

In Parts Two and Three of this thesis I looked at the way in which women in Buka and Hanuabada talked about some of the changes taking place within their villages as a result of colonialism, and how these had affected them with specific reference to motherhood, marriage and sexuality. When the colonial administration decided in the post war period to engage women as colonial subjects this was clearly envisaged as engagement premised on both the recognition and transformation of their roles as mothers and wives. Interventions were focused on regulating and managing indigenous women's behaviours and practices within the appropriately feminine, domestic sphere of the home and the family. Though the colonial state came to rely upon the heavy labour undertaken by indigenous women in the village, they regarded it as a problem – if not 'the problem' – of 'women's status' in the colonies.

This chapter draws on a blend of fieldwork, oral histories and archives to examine how colonialism affected women's everyday work: what they did, how they did this, and how it was valued (by both the colonial state and within their own village communities). Women in Papua New Guinea remain largely subsistence agriculturalists. Within the traditional pre-colonial gendered division of labour of most indigenous societies, women had been responsible for garden work, the collection of firewood and water, and the care of children. They have continued to undertake this work, even as they have taken on extra labour – generally cash-cropping and small-scale marketing. The colonial state, though forced to recognise – if not formally acknowledge – women's contribution, did not encourage women's expansion of their work to include labour regarded by them as economically productive. In this chapter I document indigenous women's early exclusion and then continuing marginalisation by the state from work that generated or brought in an income.

Buka women recognise the practical impact of their continued marginalisation, often articulating this to me through a discussion of education. These two things – education and employment – are understood by the women of Halia and Haku as connected, and they desire both. They feel that it is through education and employment that they might put themselves in a position form which they can

successfully assert their rights, make decisions, and take control of their lives and the lives of their families and their children.

'OL MERI BILONG WOK', *HARD WORKING WOMEN*

The women of Halia and Haku are hard workers; nothing stops their daily labour. Rain or shine they will visit their gardens. The women may plant or harvest, they may just weed. But there is always work to be done. Invariably something will be carried back for the afternoon and evening meal. A makeshift *teil* or *woksak* (a carry basket) to transport garden foods home will be quickly woven from the leaves of nearby coconut palms, and strung to their backs with a strong but surprisingly soft chord made from the beaten bark fibre of a banana tree. Walking to the garden now involves a trek of anywhere up to 30 minutes, tools and knives in hand. For those lucky enough to own one, perhaps a jolty wheelbarrow will be brought along to carry tools there and produce back. Once home again, water must be fetched, laundry must be done, firewood collected, the lunch and evening meal prepared. Though unemployed (or 'intermittently employed') husbands may pitch in, it will also fall to women to look after their young children.

Before the 1950s, and in some areas the 1960s, villages were to be found on the beach and women's gardens were planted close-by, directly above the villages along the cliffs. Coming under Administrative 'control' meant pressure was placed on indigenous peoples to live in village communities with easily definable and mappable boundaries, as this was more convenient for government officers on patrol.[1] Villagers were also encouraged (and occasionally forced) to reside nearby to a cleared path or road, which they would then be given the responsibility to maintain. The kiap would regularly check whether they were keeping it clean and clear.[2] On Buka Island villagers were encouraged by patrol officers and other administrative officials to move their residential clusters to the top of the cliffs, alongside the cleared path, soon to be new highway (built in the early 1960s). The introduction of indigenous managed cash-cropping had already begun in earnest by then (around the mid 1950s), and plantations were generally established on land just the other side of the new road. As a result gardens got pushed further and further inland to their present position in the bush, ranging some 1.5 to 5 kilometres inland. This has meant a much further walk for a woman carrying her family's foodstuffs

[1] Edward P Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea* (Sydney: Australia and New Zealand Book Co., 1975), p.5. For the case of Buka see Romeo Tohiana, "The Hahalis Welfare Society of Buka, North Solomons Province: Its Establishment, Subsequent Development and Eventual Decline, 1960 - 1980" (Hons., University of Papua New Guinea, 1982), p.5.

[2] C. D. Rowley, *The New Guinea Villager* (Melbourne: Cheshire, 1965; reprint, 1972), pp.33-34.

Figure 8.1 Women working in the garden, Hahalis, Buka 2006, picture: Jemima Mowbray

Figure 8.2 The gardens: *kaukau* (sweet potato) planted in mounds, Buka 2006, picture: Jemima Mowbray

Figure 8.3 **Women work copra. Carrying coconuts to be broken and then smoked. Hahalis, 2006. Picture: Thiago Oppermann**

Figure 8.4 **Handing over coconuts at the *smukhaus* (smoke house) built in the bush. Hahalis, 2006. Picture: Thiago Oppermann**

and firewood back home. It has also meant a daily climb up and down the steep limestone cliffs, the women clutching multiple buckets and empty plastic bottles to fetch the water needed for drinking and cooking and washing, up from the main water source on the island: the *kukubui* or fresh water springs along the beach.

Much has changed over the last 100 years or so, and the lives of contemporary Halia women do not very closely resemble those of their great grandmothers whose husbands were among the first to have travelled over to plantations in Rabaul, returning at the end of their contracts with their *bokis kontrakt* (labourer's case) packed with *rami* (a square piece of material used as clothing), iron pot, and some beads.[3] Axes and knives, rice and noodles, school fees, imported second hand clothes, even mobile phones, are now a part of everyday life. Yet many women tendered to me the simple routine of daily labour, and especially their work in the garden, as evidence that not so much had really changed at all. When Grace, my host mother, helped me to plant a small (token) taro garden in an allotted area of her own garden land, we used cuttings she had sourced. Grace told me, 'We plant this taro, same as my ancestors planted. It is the same plant, the same shoot that goes back into the ground'. The stick taro (the stem cutting) was a tangible connection between Grace and her ancestors, as was our labour.

When I went with women to the gardens I was slowly introduced to a variety of small things that had to be done each time a woman visited the gardens. I was told I must periodically call out in a small wordless holler while I worked so that other women working would hear me and know I was in the gardens. I had to build a small fire before I started work so that others – nearby in their gardens, or even back in the village – would see the smoke and know I was hard at work. And as we walked back home, tired from gardening, I would be reminded to find a flower or bright leaf from the bush along the side of the path and stick it in my hair so that on arrival back in the village there would be no confusion as to where I had been. These were things, I was told, that had been done by Halia women since *bipo tru* (long ago). This was *kastom*. A good Halia woman is, and always has been, industrious. These small habits help signal to others your worth, the women explained. They show everyone that you are *'meri bilong wok'* (a hard working woman).

In the stories shared with me by Motuan women, work in the garden held equal significance. But for women of Hanuabada, memories of the garden were particularly affecting because they were memories something now lost. Bonnie Sisia, born in 1934, explained that when she was young she would go everyday with her

[3] Tohiana, "The Hahalis Welfare Society of Buka, North Solomons Province: Its Establishment, Subsequent Development and Eventual Decline, 1960 - 1980", p.27.

mother to work in the gardens, and then carry back food, and fetch water from the nearby springs.[4] Later when she was married her family made gardens further out at Hohola. They would travel together: 'my parents, my aunties and my uncles, my parents in law, we would go together as a group, go for gardening'. She told me, 'Those times the living was really good.'[5] This was a recurring refrain attached to the remembering of making gardens: 'life was good back then', 'the food was alright, we were never getting sick. Life was alright, always good', 'those were the good times'.[6] These are memories laden with nostalgia; they reveal a yearning. Mabel Gavera, born in 1950 and of a later generation, remembered weekends spent at the family gardens at Laloki, land that was a reasonably long drive from the village and previously used for hunting:

> As a little child our parents used to take us to the gardens. And we'd go say Friday evening and come back Saturday evening with Sunday being a church day. Every weekend. And we were growing bananas, yams, taro, sugar cane.

Her nostalgia became evident as she went on to reminisce about her childhood as a time of abundance of 'real food'. 'Real food' is garden food.

> We call it real food because otherwise the staple food is rice. We only eat it [rice] just to sustain our lives. Most people if they want quality food they go for local food, real food. [laughing] We call it real food.[7]

Mabel explained that nowadays 'real food' is eaten in large quantities only during customary celebration or ritual – during the funerary feast of *laihi dairi*, or during a celebration of brideprice exchange (see chapter four). Fresh fruit and vegetables are more expensive than rice and noodles, so at other times people eat it only when they can afford it: 'because we can only buy it now'. Her family stopped gardening, she told me, around thirty years ago.

> We don't have land anymore. Well it is still our land, but we don't have access to it anymore because of the law and order problem.[8]

[4] The natural waterholes that are close by to the village, and to which Bonnie refers here are no longer in use partly because they cannot provide for the much larger population of the village, partly because of the *raskol* problem in contemporary Port Moresby. Finding enough water is a constant problem in Hanuabada because of irregular water supply to the village, and broken down infrastructure. See Chris Gregory's evocative discussion for Elevala, Chris Gregory, "Hunting for Water in Port Moresby," *Anthropology Today* 13, no. 4 (1997).
[5] Bonnie Sisia, 26 June 2007, Hanuabada.
[6] Asiani Igo, 5 July 2007, Hanuabada.
[7] Mabel Gavera, 9 June 2007, Hanuabada.
[8] Ibid.

Since contact, Motuans have gradually had more and more of their lands alienated from them. When the London Missionary Society first arrived in 1873 they immediately negotiated for land to build their station on. In 1884 when Papua became a British protectorate it was very quickly decided that the colonial administration would establish itself at Port Moresby. Land around the Port – the gardening and hunting lands of the Motu-Koitabuans – was forcibly acquired for settlement and development, or simply declared 'waste and vacant' and claimed as a safety valve for colonial expansion.[9] After the Second World War this loss of land was compounded as indigenous migrants from across the colonies (Papua and New Guinea) began moving into Moresby in increasing numbers, establishing squatter settlements on lands traditionally used by Motuans as gardens and hunting grounds.[10] At first this meant the moving of garden grounds to locations outside of the perimeter of the urban township of Moresby, to Laloki, and other similar grounds. These, too, soon became untenable. The gardens were so far from the village, theft of garden produce was frequent and villagers held concerns for the safety of women left alone in the gardens, so far from the village.[11]

Today very few people in Hanuabada have access to garden lands, and even among those who do still garden in the limited land they have they are unable to live off their garden for subsistence. Gardening as an everyday practice and as a means of subsistence was already irregular by the 1960s, and most women I spoke to dated the end of gardening (as a tenable subsistence practice) to the late 1970s, early 1980s. Women in their interviews with me were quite explicit in articulating the links between the loss of their garden land – their means to subsistence – and an increase in disease in the village and general poverty: 'now life is really hard. In the olden times, when I was young, there were gardens ... If you didn't have any money, you could always go the garden. But not now'.[12] The increase in disease, and in particular diabetes, was quickly identified as being a result of a poor diet consisting

[9] D.C. Lewis, *The Plantation Dream: Developing British New Guinea and Papua, 1884 - 1942* (Canberra: Journal of Pacific History, 1996), p.40. This pattern of large-scale land alienation was uncommon in Papua New Guinea. Only really the Motuans of the Central District and the Tolai on East New Britain had lands alienated to the extent that they are now primarily semi-urban populations reliant on waged labour for subsistence.

[10] Some of this settlement of land was negotiated between migrants and Motuans, especially where they had prior relations as a result of pre-contact trading networks. I was told by a number of women that the early squatter settlements at Badhihagwa were mainly people from Kerema and Western Province (more generally). Motuan land owners negotiated, encouraged even, the settlement as they wanted protection of their garden lands and felt they could secure them by giving permission to their old trading partners (and allies). Slowly, however, these settlements grew and took over all garden lands, and the land has come to be effectively claimed by the settlers as their own. Much of the squatter settlement on Motuan lands was, however, outside of their control and was largely unregulated by the colonial administration.

[11] Hanua Mea, 17 July 2007, Hanuabada.

[12] Toi Dago, 29 June 207, Hanuabada.

of largely cheap, processed foods. They also pointed to the high rates of unemployment within the village, and, shaking their heads, would tell me that because there are no gardens, families have nothing to fall back on: 'now we can see that we are in poverty. Most of the families are in poverty'.[13] The loss of gardens, of course, held a particular consequence for women, previously primarily responsible for subsistence work – they became increasingly dependent on their husbands and other male kin. As Idau Raho explained:

> Those times, they were good. Because we were not relying on the husband. We could go ourselves and do gardening for the family to survive – on local food.[14]

WOMEN'S CONTINUING ROLE IN SUBSISTENCE

Artist Elizabeth Durack observed in the 1970s that Papua New Guinean women continued 'loyally, stubbornly even' to take on the majority of subsistence work.[15] For most women in Papua New Guinea this has remained their main economic activity. Though colonial observers regularly noted women's continuing responsibility for the gardens in an ambivalent tone, à la Durack, Papua New Guinean women, by contrast, have been vocal in their pride in their continuing role in the gardens, and their agricultural skill. These are skills that have been passed on from mother to daughter over generations involving not only specific practical skills but also often special cultural knowledge or 'garden magic'.[16] Gardening was something women commonly did together, and the garden was designated, if only informally, as women's space, a space away from the eyes of men. Here women gossiped and exchanged news as they laboured. When I was staying in Hahalis I noticed many village women would playfully tease one another by pointing out a woman's plots as being in need of weeding, describing them as *'ol gaten bilong wokmeri'* (the gardens of a working woman/career woman). There was some shame attached to buying garden foods at the market, as though this was an admission your gardens were not growing well.[17]

The significance of Buka women's continuing role in subsistence in the village – the status it brings, the leverage it provides them – is made clear when thrown into

[13] Geua Asi, 16 June 2007, Hanuabada.
[14] Idau Raho, 23 July 2007, Hanuabada.
[15] Elizabeth Durack, *Face Value; Women in Papua and New Guinea* (Sydney,: Ure Smith, 1970), p.18.
[16] For example Motuan women practiced sexual avoidance before planting and again at harvest. The Halia, in the past, had dusted a ground root and leaf mixture onto stems of taro before planting to ensure successful propagation.
[17] On a number of occasions my host mother admonished me for bringing home greens from the market because people would think her gardens couldn't provide enough foods for us.

relief against the situation of Motuan women who, having lost access to garden lands and other natural resources (water and firewood), are now completely reliant on income from waged employment - sometimes their own, more commonly, their husband's. But while Buka women evince a great deal of pride in their gardens and in their role in subsistence, they also recognise they are trapped by it; it is a burden.[18] The substantial amount of time and energy involved in garden work leaves them little time for other activities.

The changes that have occurred in the village as a result of colonialism have not lightened women's load. Colonial officers acknowledged that what they termed the 'advancement of the indigenous people' had increased women's work. Tools introduced through contact had decreased men's workloads, but there had been no comparable reduction for women. Indeed on top of their subsistence work (planting, tending, and harvesting gardens) there were now additional expectations placed on women. The situation was described in the 1964-65 Annual Report for the Bougainville district:

> The men [now] also have tended to want larger, cleaner houses, more clothes for all the family, and more sophisticated foods. In addition, women are required to work alongside their men in planting and harvesting cash crops.[19]

On top of new additional chores, even women's labour involved in traditional subsistence had increased. Women travelled considerably further to their gardens, as these were pushed further and further inland to accommodate cash crop plantings. The additional distance required travelling to and returning from the gardens with garden produce in tow, adds to what is already significant labour. Similarly on the smaller islands surrounding Buka, an increase in population and thus an expansion of the areas needed for residential settlement has meant gardens must be made on the mainland. Rachel Tsen, who is from Saposa Island just south of Buka Island, explained the consequences for women:

> Island life was hard, Jemima. Especially island life after, well it came to be we can't grow gardens here on the island. We had to start to paddle and go to the mainland. And so half of our energy was used then just to paddle. And then we go and work garden and by the time we'd done some the

[18] This is my observation from fieldwork and interviews, but see also Eleanor Rimoldi, "Relationships of Love and Power in the Hahalis Welfare Society of Buka" (Ph.D, University of Auckland 1982), pp.294 – 300.
[19] PNGA: 496/ARC6A917/BN7, Bougainville District Annual Report; Annual Report – Bougainville District 1964/65, p.33.

energy is gone and then we would paddle back again. So it was really hard work.[20]

Though very welcome, the drop in infant mortality and a general increase in access to health services led to an increase in the population.[21] Now there are too many people and not enough land, women often say.[22] They complained the land and the sea were no longer as productive as they had been when they were younger. In the past, I was told, people had followed strict customary laws about where they were allowed to fish or go hunting:

> Before there were laws you had to follow – in the bush and the saltwater. In some areas you couldn't go there. It was forbidden. You couldn't swim there – don't want to scare away all fish. Chiefs would charge this man if they went and swum here. Now they don't follow laws ... you can't find fish and shellfish too. Only a little.[23]

The rules about where you could hunt and fish and even swim had helped ensure sustainable practice. Many of these rules have been abandoned or were no longer as strictly observed, mainly as a result of the increasing pressures to use all available land and sea resources in the context of a growing population and at the same time villagers' growing need for cash. So at the same time that hunting and fishing – the work of men – became less efficient and less productive forcing families to rely more heavily on women's garden work, pressures on land resulted in generally less garden land, a higher intensity use of this and smaller yields.[24]

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[20] Rachel Tsen, 13 March 2007, Saposa.

[21] National Research Institute Papua New Guinea, *Papua New Guinea District and Provincial Profiles* (Boroko, Papua New Guinea: The National Research Institute, March 2010); William K. A. Agyei, *Fertility and Family Planning in the Third World: A Case Study of Papua New Guinea* (Kent ; North Ryde: Croom Helm, 1988).

[22] The increase in land disputes, for example, was identified as being a direct result of overpopulation. The conjunction of a rapidly increasing population and the development of cash crop production on the island in the 1950s led to growing pressure on land and increasing tensions and conflict between individuals and clans. When I interviewed them in 2007, most women believed land disputes had not been so prevalent and certainly nowhere near as fraught when they were children. Historically patrol officers had begun to identify this in the mid 1950s. According to a district patrol report from Buka in 1954: 'Land disputes have been prominent only in the last four or five years, coincident with the development of copra production and almost invariably concern land on which groves already exist or are being newly planted' PNGA: 496/ARC6A917/BN7, Bougainville District Annual Report; Annual Report – Bougainville District 1954/55, (part 4).

[23] Christine Hotsia, 3 October 2006, Hanahan Prohibition on swimming had ensured the ecosystem of the reef fish and shellfish (the *abus* – protein - that women had traditionally collected) was left undisturbed and could continually be replenished.

[24] Land cannot be left fallow for as long and cropping periods are extended, as well unfavourable land previously rejected is now used. Land shortage has also meant that firewood is harder to source. Women also report that reef fish are no longer as plentiful as they once were (again larger numbers relying on the same resources). See R. M. Bourke and T. Betitis, "Sustainability of Agriculture in Bougainville Province, Papua New Guinea," (Canberra: Land Management Group, Department of Human Geography, 2002), pp.75 – 78.

As the passage from the Bougainville Annual Report makes clear, Buka women were also working alongside men in establishing cash crops. In 1948 copra trading on the island resumed again after the war, with villagers embarking on a significant extension of village plantings of coconut groves.[25] Patrol officers complained that the peoples along the north east coast were being foolhardy in their enthusiasm for cash cropping (this despite the administration's encouragement), neglecting subsistence to take on cash cropping.[26] These complaints suggest that from the very start of village cash cropping indigenous women (primarily responsible for subsistence) were quite extensively involved in copra production. Women also came to be involved in the marketing of introduced crops like peanuts and watermelon and other crops newly introduced by didimen. By the mid 1950s half of all stallholders at the main market in Buka town were women, and at Karola they made up the majority of those marketing (though Karola was traditionally a women's barter market rather than a market based on exchange for monies).[27]

Though women often provided equal labour to that of men towards cash crop production, very rarely was the income derived from this shared equally with them.[28] On the other hand, the income that they made through marketing – and could hold on to – was relatively insignificant as an income source compared to that which could be generated through cash cropping.[29] Women were not equal recipients of the monies generated through development, and any income they did generate was spent primarily on family subsistence. As I argued in Chapter Two, because women's involvement was less regular (though not necessarily less intensive), and because of the way in which women's income was spent (on family – food and other basic goods, clothing, school fees) this labour was generally regarded as an extension of their subsistence work or work of the household. Even when women began to engage and indeed play a significant role in commercial economic production this went unrecognised by the state. That women continued to be disregarded as economic actors by the colonial state after the war is clear from colonial policies that first excluded, then marginalised women from agricultural production and waged labour. It is to these that I now turn.

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[25] Max Rimoldi and Eleanor Rimoldi, *Hahalis and the Labour of Love : A Social Movement on Buka Island*, Explorations in Anthropology (Oxford ; Providence: Berg, 1992), pp.77 – 78.
[26] Patrol Report cited in Ibid, p.77.
[27] PNGA: 496/ARC6A917/BN7, Bougainville District Annual Report; Annual Report – Bougainville District 1958-59, p.32.
[28] M. Nakikus et al., *Papua New Guinea: Women in Development Sector Review* (Port Moresby: UNDP, 1991).
[29] B. R. Finney, *New Guinea Entrepreneurs: Indigenous Cash Cropping, Capital Formation and Investment in the New Guinea Highlands* vol. No. 27, New Guinea Research Bulletin, (Canberra, : Australian National University, New Guinea Research Unit,, 1969).

POST WAR 'WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT': THE INDIGENOUS MAN AS 'PEASANT FARMER'

After the Second World War those within the administration and the Australian Government believed economic development in the territories should take place through indigenous agricultural enterprise.[30] Huntley Wright has described the general reform of Australia's colonial policy in the immediate post war period – Murray and Ward's announced 'new deal' – as the reconciling of priorities of Australia's strategic interests in colonial development and a concern for indigenous welfare through the administration's efforts at promoting the 'peasant farmer'.[31] Local Government Councils introduced in 1949 were intended, argued Wright, primarily as tools of area administration able to exert 'close and continuous control' over local production. Essentially they would be a local institution kept under the watchful eye of the administration that would oversee local economic activity and encourage an increase in the intensity of indigenous labour. The administration's management of labour and land via Councils would work in tandem with village co-operatives and a new programme of agricultural extension to transform a largely subsistence economy into a commercial one.[32] Agricultural extension officers (or *didimen)* oversaw the programme run by the Department of Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries (DASF). Providing training in 'scientific agricultural methods', they aimed to encourage and extend village-based cash cropping so that village plantations might be run commercially. It was assumed indigenous men would provide the labour in the drive towards the colonies' economic development.

The administration was clear on the importance of separating out subsistence agriculture from commercial agriculture: you could not simply graft cash cropping

[30] Kim Godbold, "Didiman: Australian Agricultural Extension Officers in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea, 1945 - 1975" (Ph.D, Queensland University of Technology, 2010), chapter 3. See also Ian Downs, *The Australian Trusteeship, Papua New Guinea 1945 - 75* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1980), p.31.

[31] Huntley Wright, "Economic or Political Development: The Evolution of 'Native' Local Government Policy in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea, 1945 - 1963," *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 48, no. 2 (2002). And see Downs, *The Australian Trusteeship, Papua New Guinea 1945 - 75*, p.31.

[32] This was, Wright argues, in accordance with an agrarian doctrine of development. Wright described an agrarian doctrine of development as entailing 'plans for strengthening that attachment [to customary landholdings] whilst changing the terms of occupancy'. This involved transforming subsistence agriculture to a situation of individualised small holdings and the intensified (agricultural) economic activity of the small holder primarily via cash cropping. Wright, "Economic or Political Development: The Evolution of 'Native' Local Government Policy in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea, 1945 - 1963.", pp.200 – 202. See also Huntley Wright, "Protecting the National Interest: The Labor Government and the Reform of Australia's Colonial Policy, 1942 - 1945," *Journal of Labour History* 82 (2002), pp.74 – 76. For a general description of plans for the transformation of a subsistence economy to an agricultural commercial one, see Diana Rosemary Howlett, *Papua New Guinea : Geography and Change*, Revised, expanded, metricated ed., Nelson Australia Paperbacks (Melbourne: Thomas Nelson (Australia), 1973), p.1.

onto existing subsistence practice. They believed it was only through creating a 'new sphere' of production that indigenous farmers would accept and implement the ideas and advice of extension officers.[33] The plan for indigenous development relied then on a gendered division of labour in which indigenous men managed village plantations and the production of economic commodities, and indigenous women would continue to provide the labour for basic subsistence for the household.

This flags one of the colonial administration's constant conundrums: while women were relied on to continue subsistence labour in the village, this was regarded as inappropriate work for a woman. It took away from her time and energies in her role as mother and wife, which in line with nineteenth century Victorian middle class notions of appropriate femininity should be centred on the 'hearth and home'. Indigenous women's traditional role as the primary subsistence producer within indigenous societies was blamed for her low status, hence the common descriptors of 'drudge', and 'beast of burden'. Working with villagers since the start of the colonial project in the Pacific in the late nineteenth century, European missionaries had been most responsible for cultivating the 'cult of domesticity' among their indigenous charges. These ideas continued to underpin the administration's program of welfare for women after the Second World War.[34]

Those involved in women's welfare work had accordingly made some efforts to encourage men to take on more of the general gardening work (related to food production). At a meeting of Women's Committee in September 1957, for example, a discussion of indigenous men's concerns about the time spent in Women's Clubs taking time away from women's essential work in the garden led to the following recommendation in relation to future Club work:

> Men should be encouraged to do the gardening instead of women and it was suggested that a competition should be held for best garden made by men with, perhaps, a flower arranging competition for the women.[35]

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[33] Wright, "Economic or Political Development: The Evolution of 'Native' Local Government Policy in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea, 1945 - 1963.", p.201.

[34] See for example comments from the Administrator Captain Barton regarding women's situation in the British New Guinea Annual Report of 1903: 'Until the male natives take a larger share of the work in the gardens, and so relieve the women of their hard toil, an improvement of their domestic status, with well nourished and numerous children, cannot be expected.' cited in Jennifer J. Martins, "Women and Underdevelopment in Rural Papua New Guinea" (Hons., Flinders University, 1977), p.30. For a later example see W C Groves, *Native Education and Culture Contact in New Guinea: A Scientific Approach, Being a Study of the Part That Education Might Play in the Social Adjustment and Future Development of the Natives of the Territory of New Guinea*, 1st ed. (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne Uni Press, 1936; reprint, 1977, AMS Press), pp.67-69; and refer chapters 2 and 3, this thesis.

[35] PNGA: 69/14-1-34/1285, Social Welfare and Advancement of Native Women Policy; Minutes of the Second Meeting of the Advisory Committee on the Education and

The general training program and suggested activities for Women's Clubs emphasised a woman's role as homemaker, largely neglecting their role in the gardens. This aspect of indigenous women's work was acknowledged only in limited ways, for example 'time in the garden' was a task fitted into the new daily chore rota that women were encouraged to draw up to maximise their efficiency.[36]

This was the contradiction inherent to the colonial 'civilising' project as it related to indigenous women: women were to be shifted into the domestic role as homemaker and housewife rather than agricultural producer if their status was to be improved, and yet the development priorities of the administration and those of colonial capitalism consistently required women shoulder the greater part of subsistence labour in the territories. Early Administrators in the two territories had felt the continuation of women's subsistence labour in the village was necessary while men were being recruited for indentured labour on plantations (see below). In a spatial reading of this gendered division of labour Anne Dickson-Waiko persuasively argued that early protectionist policies regarding labour recruitment in Papua helped create a new labour hierarchy in which indigenous men's paid labour undertaken in the 'public' colonial domain was regarded as more important than subsistence agriculture in village gardens (regarded by the coloniser as, in effect, a personal, domestic space).[37] This was a racialised as well as gendered distinction between the village as a domestic space, and colonial urban townships as the public domain.[38] Indigenous women's work was marked as 'domestic', but this was a 'domesticity' of a different nature to that envisaged within the Victorian ideology of separate spheres. It was a classification, however, that allowed colonial agents to regard the subsistence work of women as secondary to the labour of men. Men were recognised as active economic agents, women's work was ignored.

When indentured labour contracts were abolished after the war and the administration framed policy around the necessity of strengthening and developing indigenous agricultural production, this was done on the understanding that it was utopian to think peasant subsistence could provide anything but a primitive standard of living. David Fenbury, described by Wright as the architect of the new

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Advancement of Women, 13 Sept 1957. See also PNGA: 69/14-1-34/1285, Social Welfare and Advancement of Native Women; Director, Department of Education to Director, Department of Native Affairs, 3 January 1961.

[36] Lois Niall et al., *Things to Do in Women's Clubs. [Books 1-4. First 3 Months - Fourth 3 Months]*, vol. 3 vols (Port Moresby: Dept. of Native Affairs, and South Pacific Commission Literature Bureau, 1962).

[37] Anne Dickson Waiko, "Colonial Enclaves and Domestic Spaces in British New Guinea," in *Britishness Abroad: Transnational Movements and Imperial Cultures*, ed. Kate Darian Smith and Patricia Grimshaw (Carlton: Melbourne Uni Press, 2007), p.216.

[38] Ibid, pp.216-217.

local government policy and a key driver of post-war welfare and development policy, was clear on this point:

> The ideal of the sturdy peasant proprietor, farming his piece of tribal land [...] is a rosy dream incapable of being realised.[39]

Wright described the administration's end goal as being the individualisation of smallholdings geared towards eventual commercial production.[40] While indigenous men were being trained to cultivate commercial cash crops, it was expected that women would again continue to provide a subsistence base for families that would subsidise this stage of economic development. The administration hoped that concerted attention towards promoting 'economic advance' would help eventually to free women from subsistence work. Money obtained from cash cropping, or men's involvement in waged labour, could be used to purchase introduced food and to construct permanent housing. The newly established Local Councils were also expected to play their part, helping to build water supply facilities and other infrastructure in the villages.[41] This was the long-range plan for women; through indigenous economic development women's subsistence burden would eventually be eased, allowing her to re-focus her energies on her (nuclear) family and the home.[42]

VILLAGE WOMEN'S MARGINALISATION FROM AGRICULTURAL TRAINING

Village women remained in the gardens undertaking the labour of subsistence, but as cash crept into the village economy they began also to cultivate new crops as market goods and they took on a significant share of the work of cash cropping alongside indigenous men. Yet the training in commercial agricultural practice delivered by colonial *didimen* was targeted almost exclusively at men.

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[39] David Fenbury quoted in Wright, "Economic or Political Development: The Evolution of 'Native' Local Government Policy in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea, 1945 - 1963.", p.197. The distinction being drawn was that between a peasant subsistence farmer and a peasant 'farmer' developing his capacity for agricultural commercial production so that he might eventually develop land holdings as plantations that would enable a profitable trade in agricultural commodities.

[40] Ibid, p.201.

[41] Water tanks were a priority for Councils in the early period of their introduction. The administration felt that successful supply of water tanks to villages in Buka would act as 'a tangible sign' for villagers of what a Council could accomplish. PNGA: 496/ARC6A917/BN7, Bougainville District Annual Report; Bougainville District 1961/62, p.16.

[42] See for example Australia. Commission on Higher Education in Papua and New Guinea. and George Currie, "Report of the Commission on Higher Education in Papua and New Guinea," (Canberra: The Commission, 1964), p.98. Currie in his report, cited *The Ashby Report* (a document similar to Currie's own report produced for colonial Nigeria in 1959) which explained the need for greater domestic science training on the basis that as the (male) farmer became more 'scientific' in their approach to the land, the ensuing development would allow and require women to become 'more scientific in their approach to their homes and children.'

The first post war Administrator JK Murray, had recognised indigenous women's role within subsistence, calling for the new Department of Agriculture to employ 'a staff of women who can make easy contacts with other women' and teach them new agricultural methods.[43] In 1948 two Australian women graduates were taken on as agricultural extension officers (as didimisis). Both had left this work by the end of 1949, one because of illness, the other due to marriage and a general lack of support for her work.[44] After their departure there was no effort made to recruit any more women, and in fact it became policy that women be disqualified from field positions within the Department.[45] This was justified on the basis that European women would not be able to cope with the isolation involved and appropriate accommodation would be hard to organise. Reticence was clearly also related to unspoken, but inferred fears for white women's (sexual) safety in villages remote from administration control (see chapter 6, this thesis). Bob Curtis, a *didiman* in the 1950s and 1960s in the territories, explained to historian Kim Godbold that he felt *didimisis* were a good idea in a 'restricted sense'.[46] Their usefulness (working with women) had to be weighed up against the extra work required to protect them, 'We may have been overprotective, but in our view there was a need'.[47]

In the early 1950s Barbara McLachlan suggested again that agricultural training be made a part of educational programs geared towards young women and girls. Nutrition was a critical aspect of the training that was being provided through her department and through the Clinics run by the Infant and Maternal Welfare Section of Public Health. McLachlan could see that if her officers were hoping to introduce a new element into the local diet, they would have to convince village women of the benefits of the crop not only in terms of it being a good addition within a meal, but as something that could be easily and successfully grown. For McLachlan it made perfect sense that women, as 'the gardeners in this country' be trained first in new agricultural techniques.[48] Additionally, experiments with new crops should be trialled in girls' schools. If a crop was found to be particularly suitable to a particular climate and/or geography it was the women who would need to be convinced of its

[43] JK Murray quoted in Godbold, "Didiman: Australian Agricultural Extension Officers in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea, 1945 - 1975", p. 92.
[44] Ibid, p.93.
[45] While women were employed within DASF there were only a 'very small number of opportunities' for women and these were mainly in the 'laboratory situation'. They were excluded from positions which involved work in the field. NAA: 61/7585, Enquiry by Mrs Joan Tully re Employment of Women in Agricultural Extension Staff, P & NG.
[46] Bob Curtis quoted in Godbold, "Didiman: Australian Agricultural Extension Officers in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea, 1945 - 1975", p.94.
[47] Bob Curtis quoted in Ibid, p.94.
[48] Barbara McLachlan, 10 July 1952, Report to His Excellency the Governor General quoted in Penny Palmer, *Girls in High School in Papua New Guinea: Problems of the Past, Present and Future*, Eru Research Report No. 23 (Port Moresby: Educational Research Unit, UPNG, 1978).

usefulness to ensure the crop's successful introduction to an area. Girls' schools could trial the crop, teach techniques for planting and sustainable harvesting, and also then show young women how to cook it.

There had also been some discussion within the Department of Agriculture about the need to broaden efforts to include training for village women. In 1961, for example, regional agricultural officer William Cottrell-Dormer called for the employment of female extension officers, criticising the Department's lack of attention to providing training for village women as creating a program 'seemingly one-sided and futile'.[49] Cottrell-Dormer had targeted women in his own training programs in Milne Bay, working through Women's Clubs to give information to women about new methods and the general organisation of garden work.[50] However it became quite clear there was not much support within the Department for Cottrell-Dormer's suggestion when a review of the policy excluding women from field positions by the Public Service Commissioner was undertaken in late 1961.[51] The review had been initiated as a result of the advocacy of Mrs Joan Tully, a lecturer at the University of New England. She had written to Minister Paul Hasluck in protest when two of her female students had their requests for vacation employment with the administration turned down by DASF. She believed they had been rejected on the basis they were women.

Frank Henderson, Director of the Department of Agriculture, told the Commissioner he was not supportive of any reform, claiming, 'the normal woman cannot handle this type of work'.[52] Against his wishes, the Commissioner recommended the opening of cadetships to women, with the proviso that there be a ratio of one female field officer for every five men.[53] Henderson still found fault,

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[49] Cottrell-Dormer in an article on Rural Extension for the Papua New Guinea Agricultural Journal quoted in Godbold, "Didiman: Australian Agricultural Extension Officers in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea, 1945 - 1975", p.92. As a further example, see PNGA: 69/14-1-34/1285, Social Welfare and Advancement of Native Women; Director, Department of Education to Director, Department of Native Affairs, 3 January 1961.

[50] See Gunther's description of Cottrell Dormer's efforts in the field: 'Probably the best piece of social education we have done in any concentrated way was Mr Cottrell-Dormer's work in Milne Bay arousing the women's interests there. Mr Cottrell-Dormer as a worker in this field was somewhat unique.' NAA: 61/7585, Enquiry by Mrs Joan Tully re Employment of Women in Agricultural Extension Staff, P & NG; John Gunther to the Public Service Commissioner, 28 December 1961. See also Kim Godbold, "William Cottrell-Dormer (1946 - 1961) and Agricultural Development in the Territory of Papua New Guinea" (paper presented at the Social Change in the 21st Century, Queensland University of Technology, 2006).

[51] NAA: 61/7585, Enquiry by Mrs Joan Tully re Employment of Women in Agricultural Extension Staff, P & NG.

[52] NAA: 61/7585, Enquiry by Mrs Joan Tully re Employment of Women in Agricultural Extension Staff, P & NG; F. Henderson to N. Thomson, Public Service Commissioner, 21 December 1961.

[53] Others within the administration, however, were keen to see more women officers involved in extension work. John Gunther, then Assistant Administrator (Services) argued strongly

stating his strong concerns that given the limited opportunities for women in Australia his Department would find itself variously 'inundated', 'swamped' and 'cluttered up' with women, and that this would 'seriously effect [sic] the efficiency of the Department'.[54] To assuage his fears, it was directed that within the first few rounds of selection only one female candidate be recruited and that the policy be subject to review. A female extension officer was taken on in the next round of recruitment and began work in 1963. However, as a result of the restrictive concessions won by Henderson by 1970 only seven of the 139 agricultural extension officers employed by the Department were women.[55]

The almost exclusive employment of men as didimen had the consequence that indigenous women were largely excluded from the training being provided within the villages. Indigenous women were reticent to approach a white male government officer; for some it was culturally taboo.[56] Male officers, for their part, generally focused their attentions on village men. The result was that women continued to work with traditional hand implements, while indigenous men were trained to use and operate new kinds of equipment and given information about and access to a whole new range of crops.[57] When village women seemed unenthusiastic about adopting new methods their male kin had been trained in but which they had little familiarity with, they were labelled conservative or superstitious and their (understandable) reluctance used as further evidence that men should be the primary targets for training. Despite the increased numbers of both white and indigenous didimisis (female officers) by independence, Nahau Rooney could still complain in 1975 of the marginalisation of women from village agricultural extension training programs:

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that if women officers were not recruited, village women would soon lose respect for the work of the Department. He also spoke glowingly of the extension work undertaken by female officers in the Infant and Welfare Division of the Department of Public Health and the Department of Native Affairs. NAA: 61/7585, Enquiry by Mrs Joan Tully re Employment of Women in Agricultural Extension Staff, P & NG; John Gunther to the Public Service Commissioner, 28 December 1961.

[54] Again these concerns were based, he argued, on the additional logistical requirements of employing women, and the limitations they faced undertaking isolated work because of their sex. NAA: 61/7585, Enquiry by Mrs Joan Tully re Employment of Women in Agricultural Extension Staff, P & NG; N Thomson (Public Service Commissioner) to Secretary, Department of Territories, 21 March 1962.

[55] Godbold, "Didiman: Australian Agricultural Extension Officers in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea, 1945 - 1975", p.92.

[56] H. Zimmerman, "'Women in Field Work': A Survey on Problems of Papua New Guinea Women Working as Extension Officers," (Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea: Research Section, Psychological Services Branch, Public Service Board, 1975), pp.13, 21, 35.

[57] Howlett, *Papua New Guinea : Geography and Change*. Ester Boserup noted gendered access to new technologies was a consistent pattern across territories under colonial rule. Ester Boserup, *Woman's Role in Economic Development* (London,: Allen & Unwin, 1970), p.53.

> When the agricultural officer comes to the village he calls a meeting of all men and explains to them a new agricultural technique, cash crop, use of fertilisers, etc. When it comes to implementation, the women are the ones who get their hands dirty; they are the ones who dig, plant and harvest. Yet they are excluded from discussions.[58]

This was not simply about the gender of extension officers, it was also about the type of agricultural work village women did (or were expected to do). Subsistence agriculture was a low priority for the Department and its officers, and very few resources were allocated to this – in terms of either research or training work.[59] Women were traditionally subsistence agriculturalists, and the administration was not interested in seeing women extend their subsistence efforts to undertake commercial agricultural work. When McLachlan, Murray and Cottrell-Dormer argued for agricultural training for women, they had done so with reference to the need for social development alongside economic development. Proposed training for women would be limited to basic garden maintenance, and the introduction of new crops for family consumption. It would help women as mothers in their (domestic) work in the gardens and in the home, not encourage women to be participants within an agricultural economy, that is within cash cropping. When formal agricultural training was offered to indigenous students in 1952 no women were taken on as recruits, and they were excluded from the program up until the early 1970s.[60]

WOMEN AND WAGED WORK: INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S EARLY EXCLUSION FROM INDENTURED WORK

In the early colonial period the indenture of women was prohibited in Papua and only slightly less restricted in New Guinea (see chapter one).[61] Indigenous Women

[58] Nahau Rooney, "What's a Fair Go for Women?," in *The Pacific Way: Social Issues in National Development*, ed. Sione Tupouniua, Ron Crocombe, and Claire Slatter (Suva, Fiji: South Pacific Social Sciences Association, 1975), p.119 and see Marie Reay, "Politics, Development and Women in the Rural Highlands," *Administration for Development* 5 (1975), p.11.

[59] Dianne Johnson, "The Government Women: Gender and Structural Contradiction in Papua New Guinea" (Ph.D, University of Sydney, 1984), p.238.

[60] The first Agricultural Training College was established by the administration in 1952 at Mageri Agricultural Station, just outside of Port Moresby. Kim Godbold, honours thesis, pp.149, 151. Mrs Dessie Wirua was the first *didimeri* (indigenous female extension officer) in the territories. She commenced training in 1962 at Taliligap Extension Centre in East New Britain, and was one of the first women to attend the Rural Development Assistant's Course in Tagak, near Kavieng in 1973. Cecilie Benjamin, "Pioneer Didimeri - Mrs Dessie Wirua," *Harvest* 3, no. 3 (1976). The first large-scale intake of female students was in 1975 when 30 young women were enrolled at Vudal Agricultural College for the first time. Susanne Bonnell, "Women at Vudal Agricultural College," *Administration for Development* 5, no. Oct. (1975).

[61] In New Guinea Section 26 of the Native Labour Ordinance provided that 'a married woman may, with her consent and with the consent of her husband, be recruited if her husband is recruited by the same person, and if it is intended by all the parties that husband and wife

could be contracted to work within white households as amahs (nannies) or as *hausmeris* (domestic workers), although only if in the company of their husbands or guardians or if employed by a non-indigenous woman. On a number of occasions Planters had made formal requests to the administrations asking them to allow for the indenture of women, or at least to more freely allow their engagement on plantations alongside their husbands.[62]

The most seriously considered of these requests was that put forward by Mr Wallace Westland, the newly appointed manager of the Papua Rubber Plantations at Manu Manu and Kanosia, just north of Port Moresby. In January 1908, the Government Secretary of Papua sent his proposal as a circular to various selected individuals – missionaries, planters, and a small number of public servants – canvassing their opinions.[63] Westland argued that the exclusion of women from the native labour force made no economic sense, justifying this not so much on the basis that the inclusion of women would be a boost to the pool of labour available, but instead by arguing that indigenous men would be more likely to sign on and to renew their indentured contracts if their wives were encouraged to sign on alongside them:

> I consider that no semblance of permanence can be attained with any big force of labour until they are permitted to have their women with them, and to, in some measure, enjoy a reflection of that 'home life' which is so dear to all men – black, white, brown or yellow.[64]

If plantations could retain their male workers they might overcome the problem of the high costs and great effort involved in training new workers, or as Wallace put it, 'breaking in ... a fresh force of men'.

According to Wallace's scheme then, women would be brought to the plantations primarily in the role of wife and homemaker. Married women would be signed on alongside their husbands to do the 'light' work of weeding, hoeing, sewing and

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shall work together at the same place'. In Papua women could, under the Ordinance, 'accompany their husbands to their place of employment and may work for payment if they desire but they cannot be signed on'. NAA: A518/213-2-2, Native Labour – Papua and New Guinea – Employment of Native Women; Memorandum on the Employment of Married Women, 1925.

[62] Formal requests made in 1908 and 1921 in Papua, and in 1939 in New Guinea (a Commission which inquired into native labour legislation in New Guinea in 1939 was directed to examine the question of the employment of women on plantations, deciding it should not be permitted. NAA: A518/213-2-2, Native Labour – Papua and New Guinea – Employment of Native Women.

[63] The event of the distribution of the circular and solicitation of responses to it by the administration was later termed 'The 1908 Plebiscite'.

[64] NAA: A518(A518/1), S840/1/5, Indenture of Native Women – Papua; Wallace Westland to Minister of State for External Affairs, 12 May 1908.

handicrafts.[65] Under Westland's scheme a portion of garden lands would be allocated to each family unit and thus women would still be able to provide foodstuffs for the family, and men's wages could still be kept at a minimum.[66] In fact Westland outlined a scheme for recreating what were essentially 'model villages' on plantation land, but villages kept under the firm control of plantation owners.[67] This would guarantee plantation owners a constant labour source, one brought up under the authority of the plantation. Wallace was quite explicit about his expectations regarding the broad improvements he believed would result from the proposed scheme:

> I trust, by fair treatment, good food, and fortuitous environments, to convince the natives that estate life is not the drudgery his present fears depict it to be, and I hope in time he will come to regard the estate as his home, settle here, and raise a generation of labourers that will be infinitely better than its parents, from the fact of having been born and reared in an atmosphere of organized effort and strict discipline.[68]

Westland's proposal thus offered a solution to the nagging problem of labour shortages and allowed for the 'civilising' of the 'the native population'. Doubtless a consideration – though an unspoken one – in this conversation, was that in overcoming the shortage of women such a scheme would also address 'the problem of homosexuality' on plantations.[69]

Thirteen of the 23 formal responses received by the administration were supportive. Those who wrote in support – mostly planters and administration officers – qualified their support by noting the need for various safeguards, suggesting for example that only the recruitment of local women would be

[65] Westland also suggested suitable single men currently working under contract might be given sufficient 'trade' or 'cash' to go and buy themselves a wife ('the native custom' he explained) on the proviso that the newly married couple would then sign on for a minimum three year period. NAA: A518(A518/1), S840/1/5, Indenture of Native Women – Papua; Wallace Westland to Minister of State for External Affairs, 12 May 1908.

[66] A pattern followed in colonial Rhodesia (now Zambia) in the copper mines, and also on West Indian plantations. Carmen Diana Deere, "Rural Women's Subsistence Production in the Capitalist Periphery," *Review of Radical Political Economics* 8, no. 1 (1976), p.10.

[67] A 'native overseer' would be employed as Corporal and would be held responsible for the discipline and sanitary conditions of 'his village'.

[68] NAA: A518(A518/1), S840/1/5, Indenture of Native Women – Papua; Wallace Westland to Minister of State for External Affairs, 12 May 1908.

[69] Some were more open in discussing 'the problem'. See for example Felix Speiser, "Decadence and Preservation in the New Hebrides," in *Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia*, ed. WHR Rivers (Cambridge [Eng.]: The University Press, 1922). Geoffrey Gray outlines anthropologist E.W.P. Chinnery's novel 'solution' in Geoffrey Gray, *A Cautious Silence: The Politics of Australian Anthropology* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2007), p.47. And see Adam Reed, "Contested Images and Common Strategies: Early Colonial Sexual Politics in the Massim," in *Sites of Desires, Economies of Pleasure: Sexualities in Asia and the Pacific*, ed. Lenore Manderson and Margaret Jolly (Chicago, Ill.: Chicago University Press, 1997), p.58.

appropriate. Missionaries generally opposed the plan, arguing that women would face significant 'moral danger' on plantations and that there would be a very real risk of 'lowering the birth rate' if women were signed on.[70] 'Moral danger' hinted at missionary fears that women might become involved in prostitution on plantations; this concern was expressed much more directly by missionaries in other forums.[71] The missionaries found perhaps unlikely allies in the residents of Woodlark Island (a community of miners) who went so far as to organise and submit a petition to the Legislative Council protesting against the proposal.[72] The proposal eventually stalled before it could be tabled in the Papuan Legislative Council.

While Sir Hubert Murray had been supportive of Westland's proposal in 1908, he was later to argue strongly against the indentured labour of women. When he published *Papua of Today* almost 20 years later he reflected:

> The scheme was attractive enough, but on examination it was seen that the result would be the economic ruin of the natives, and their transformation into landless men, entirely dependent on the plantation for a livelihood; it might ensure a cheap labour supply, but it is hardly consistent with the theory of the 'sacred trust'.[73]

The general argument presented by Murray and others against the employment of women whenever this was suggested was that keeping women in the village would mean men working indentured contracts would always return, and 'village disintegration' could be controlled.[74]

The constant debates over women's employment on plantations makes clear the various tensions between the objectives of individual planters and the interests and objectives of the colonial administrations, and the constraints the administration faced. When the Planters suggested taking on women to work on the plantations, they saw this as a simple solution to their labour problem. They would be able to

[70] These were the expressed opinions of Reverend Saville of the London Missionary Society (LMS), and Reverend Newtown, but see also the responses from Reverend Rich of the LMS (employment of women on plantations would be 'a real source of evil ... as the native moral sense is not very advanced') and Reverend Gilmour of the Methodist Mission (signing on women 'would certainly assure the decrease of the race'). NAA: A518/213-2-2, Native Labour – Papua and New Guinea – Employment of Native Women; Schedule of replies received to the Government Secretary's Circular 08/1625, 1908.

[71] See for example "The Evils of Native Barracks System: Planters Discuss Remedies," *Pacific Islands Monthly* 1935, p.29.

[72] NAA: A1, 1909/8884, Question in Parliament by Mr Bowden regarding the employment of women on plantations in Papua.

[73] J. H. P. Murray, *Papua of Today or an Australian Colony in the Making* (London: P.S. King and Son, 1925), p.116.

[74] NAA: A518/213-2-2, Native Labour – Papua and New Guinea – Employment of Native Women; Memorandum on the Employment of Married Women, 1925. See Ibid; J. H. P. Murray, "Review of the Australian Administration in Papua from 1907 to 1920," (Port Moresby: Edward George Baker; Government Printer, 192?).

draw on larger numbers of workers, and also retain more of their male workers (who otherwise would return to the village and their families at the end of a contract). They would also bring indigenous subjects more directly under their management and control. Those in the administration often cited humanitarian concerns when presenting their opposition (though individual officers were not always opposed, as in the example of the 1908 Plebiscite). Of course other factors beyond the welfare of the natives came into play: the colonial administrations were short on money and staff, especially in Papua. They did not have the resources to keep under 'control' a population not contained within the limits of the village, or a landless proletariat, which the administration feared would be the consequence of the women leaving the village.

In the end, women's exclusion from indentured labour was in the interests of the Planters, despite their assertions to the contrary. In common with plantation economies across the colonised world plantations in both Papua and New Guinea would never have turned a profit without the unpaid labour of women in the village.[75] In Papua and New Guinea the wages of indentured labourers – invariably recruited from outside of the local area, so migrant labourers – were reckoned on the basis that they were single men and thus designed to cover (just barely) the basic subsistence of a single male. Women's labour in the villages, not simply through subsistence but also the collection of firewood and water, preparation of foods, and their caring for and raising children, effectively subsidised the plantation. As both Azeem Amarshi and Peter Fitzpatrick pointed out, this occurred in two ways. Firstly the provision of homes and a subsistence base allowed capitalist plantations to pay male labourers an absolute minimum wage. Additionally women's labour in the village provided what was essentially a social security system for displaced workers and the elderly.[76] It was primarily women who had to bear the extra labour load their absence implied, forced to take on – often with some reluctance – what had traditionally been considered men's subsistence work (clearing land, building fences, building houses, and so on) as well as, in some instances, their customary obligations.[77]

With wages for indentured labourers frozen from the turn of the century through until after World War Two there was very little to no capital accumulation by

[75] Donald Denoon and Catherine Snowden, eds., *A Time to Plant and a Time to Uproot: A History of Agriculture in Papua New Guinea* (Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea: Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, 1981), p.4.
[76] "The Plantation System" in Azeem Amarshi, Kenneth Good and Rex Mortimer, 1979, *Development and Dependency* Oxford Uni Press, p.30; Peter Fitzpatrick, *Law and State in Papua New Guinea,* Law, State, and Society Series ; (London ; New York: Academic Press, 1980), chapter 1.
[77] Martins, "Women and Underdevelopment in Rural Papua New Guinea", pp.33-34.

plantation labourers and indigenous women saw very little in return for their husband's absence: perhaps a calico *rami* (cloth used for clothing), an iron pot, or some beads brought back at the end of their husband's contract. Although these were desirable consumer goods and no doubt brought some prestige for the women who possessed them, the inflow of these items effectively devalued local handicraft skills such as *tapa* cloth making (paper bark cloth often with intricate design work) and pottery; skills traditionally associated with women.[78]

In Hanuabada, for example, the gradual decline of the *Hiri* trade as Motuan men entered into waged employment meant the end of women's pot making in the village.[79] The *Hiri* was an indigenous travel and trading network involving an annual expedition in which men voyaged west to stay with trading partners in the Gulf and exchange clay pots – made by women – for sago. Motuan women owned these pots. Male crew members were obliged to take the clay pots of their wives, mothers if unmarried, sisters, and women to whom they were arranged to be married. They would also take the pots of kinswomen to whom they owed a debt or with whom it was important they maintain a social relationship.[80] Pot making had constituted a significant economic industry for the Motuans. The annual expeditions of 1885 and 1886, not very long after contact with Europeans, were estimated to have involved trade of somewhere between 20 - 30,000 clay pots exchanged for around 150 tons of sago.[81] Pot making – a significant undertaking, entailing both skill and heavy labour[82] – had provided women with social and economic status. It had also provided them, not unimportantly, some measure of creative satisfaction.

None of the women I interviewed in Hanuabada had ever made a pot. Cyril Belshaw reported in 1950 that the practice had already ceased by the time he had arrived in the village, and that he found only one woman who still had the skills and

[78] S. Bailey (Honours thesis) cited in Palmer, *Girls in High School in Papua New Guinea: Problems of the Past, Present and Future,* p.17.
[79] See Cyril Belshaw, *The Great Village* (London: Routledge and Kegan, 1957), p.65
[80] Murray Groves, "Motu Pottery," *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 29, no. 1 (1960).
[81] Nigel Oram, "Pots for Sago: The *Hiri* Trading Network," in *The Hiri in History: Further Aspects of Long Distance Motu Trade in Central Papua*, ed. Tom Dutton (Canberra, ACT: Australia National University Press, 1982).
[82] See the following description of the process, observed in August 1921 by Sarah Chinnery, wife of New Guinea government anthropologist and herself something of an amateur ethnographer: 'The women work [the clay] up to a suitable state, and afterwards mould it, kneading and patting it into shape with little pieces of wood and their hands. When the pots are well and truly shaped, they are set out to dry in the sun, then baked in open wood fires ...During the firing, women hold two long sticks and turn the pot occasionally. It is a very hot, tedious job, as quite big furnaces need to be kept going for hours.' Sarah Johnston Chinnery and Kate Fortune, *Malaguna Road : The Papua and New Guinea Diaries of Sarah Chinnery, Edited and Introduced by Kate Fortune.* (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 1998), pp.24-25.

any practical experience of making clay pots.[83] Women did, however, talk nostalgically with me about the use of clay pots by their mothers in their childhood.[84] This included pots known as *uro* – wide mouthed round cooking pots used over the fire – but more commonly women talked about carrying *hodu* back to the house as children. *Hodu* were narrow necked round pots used for collecting and holding drinking water. The end of women's pot making constituted a considerable shift in Motuan women's economic role, and this alongside the devaluation of subsistence labour as men entered the waged labour market led to the general relegation of Motuan women to a secondary role as economic actors. Once gardening as subsistence practice virtually ceased in the early 1980s women, unless in waged employment, became completely dependent upon their husband's earnings.

Though not on the same scale as the *Hiri* trade or holding the same cultural significance for Halia peoples, in Buka the trade of clay cooking pots by the women of Malasang for intricately woven baskets made by women in surrounding Halia villages was also significantly affected by the entry of replacement commodities. Though no longer made with any regularity, occasionally older women might make a pot. I chanced upon a recently baked Malasang cooking pot at a market stall on the side of the road one day while walking back from an interview. When other Halia women found out I had bought a Malasang pot they told me they were jealous, and I had been very lucky to find one. Just as Motuan women had fondly remembered the pots of their childhood, the women of my household in Basbi proceeded to regale me with stories of childhood meals slowly baked by their mother in a Malasang pot sat squat in the fire.

POST WAR CHANGES TO POLICY REGARDING EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN

After the war the colonial administration policy continued to prohibit women from employment under contract or agreement. They were permitted under legislation to do domestic work, but only as casual workers. In 1950 the Native Labour Ordinance was modified to allow women to work in any area of work, but still only as a casual worker. In 1951 there were a total of 392 women employed in the territories; by 1954 this had increased to 544.[85] Most of these women were employed in private domestic service positions, but a number also worked for the administration on casual contracts as medical orderlies and assistants. This figure compares with the xxx indigenous men on labour contracts on plantations and in various low level skilled

[83] Belshaw, *The Great Village*, p.65.
[84] For example Belle Arua, 24 May 2007, Hanuabada; Oala Mia, 13 July 2007, Hanuabada; Naomi Gavera, 5 July 2007, Hanuabada; Bonnie Sisia, 26 June 2007, Hanuabada.
[85] NAA: A518 (A518/1), P213/2/2, Native Labour – Papua and New Guinea – Employment of Native Women

and non-skilled positions within the colonial administration and private enterprise. Slowly through the early 1950s colonial labour legislation was reformed to allow for women to be employed more easily, though there was still clear hesitation about this, particularly on plantations.[86]

The Women's Committee re-appointed in 1957 to consider women's education and advancement in 1957 were keen to see an expansion in the employment of women. They called for a publicity campaign to help 'break down the traditional antipathy of male natives' towards the idea, and to overcome women's reluctance.[87] The 'economically independent woman' was presented as a new 'third role' (after 'mother' and 'wife') for women in the territories.[88] In general those advocating for women to enter the workforce had very clear ideas about what would be gender appropriate employment for women. Most proposed women could replace men in domestic service roles, and would suit those female vocations that George Currie explained in his 1964 Report on Higher Education were 'traditionally, and naturally ... the preserve of one sex': teaching, nursing, secretarial work, dressmaking and cooking.[89] The Women's Committee, agreeing in the main, was less circumscribed in their suggestions. They proposed women might also 'work alongside men' in roles ranging from clerical laboratory, postal and stores assistant through to light factory worker and radio announcer.[90]

Most advocates imagined indigenous women entering to the workforce to fill newly created positions within the colonial administration's own new welfare departments. The administration's new policies regarding welfare provision to village women relied upon indigenous women to do the bulk of the work on the ground. While European staff might initially deliver some of the programs in the villages, it was envisaged that eventually they would step back primarily oversee or manage an indigenous female staff. In the long run indigenous female workers – in their roles as welfare assistants, nursing assistants, child-care assistants, and teaching

[86] Paul Hasluck made sure that the colonial administration seriously considered the impact of women's employment, including what effect their employment on plantations might have for women's fertility. NAA: A518 (A518/1), P213/3/2, Native Labour – Papua and New Guinea – Employment of Native Women and see Robert Porter, *Paul Hasluck : A Political Biography* (Nedlands, W.A.: University of Western Australia Press, 1993), p.104.

[87] PNGA: 69/14-1-34/1285, Social Welfare and Advancement of Native Women Policy; Report by Special Committee Appointed to Consider Proposals for Education and Advancement of Women, 6 February 1957.

[88] Lois Niall, "The Education of Native Women as an Aspect of Cultural Assimilation" (paper presented at the Camilla Wedgwood Memorial Lecture and Seminar (1st : 1959 : Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea) Port Moresby, 1959), p.88.

[89] Australia. Commission on Higher Education in Papua and New Guinea. and Currie, "Report of the Commission on Higher Education in Papua and New Guinea.", p.98.

[90] PNGA: 69/14-1-34/1285, Social Welfare and Advancement of Native Women Policy; Report by Special Committee Appointed to Consider Proposals for Education and Advancement of Women, 6 February 1957.

aides – would be responsible for the practical delivery of welfare programmes.[91] Partly this was about the costs involved in employing European female staff, but it was also felt that indigenous women would more easily gain the trust of other village women.[92] To meet the administration's new staffing requirements after the war, training opportunities for indigenous women had to increase significantly.[93]

THE TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN IN WELFARE ROLES

Before the war a very small number of indigenous women had received basic medical training from or worked as teaching assistants for the missions.[94] After the war missions expanded their nursing training for women to provide training in Infant Welfare and Midwifery on behalf of the Department of Public Health.[95] By 1950 the Public Health Department had begun to deliver similar basic nursing, midwifery and infant child-care training themselves, and to actively recruit young village women between the ages of 16 and 21 to take part. The young women selected for training had to be of 'good character, enjoy good health, and be able to read and write in English'.[96] The two-year training courses were offered through the

[91] PNGA: 247/1-4-1-16, Native Welfare Planning Committee. From the mid 1930s the British Colonial Office had similarly been placing emphasis on educating African women as 'assistants', who might act as 'agents' of the state within societies undergoing significant and rapid change to ensure the work of the various colonial departments might be made more permanent, see Joanna Lewis, *Empire State Building: War and Welfare in Kenya, 1925 - 52,* East African Studies Series (Athens, Oh.: Ohio University Press, 2000), p.55.

[92] In 1965 Thomas Aitchison, Director of District Administration, suggested that village women might be employed by Local Councils rather than the administration, to deliver training in homecrafts and hygiene. Teaching resources would be provided by the administration, and they would be supervised by the local welfare officer. Requiring very minimal training he emphasised their wages would be very low, allowing increased recruitment and a rapid expansion of the relevant training programs. PNGA: 69/14-1-34/1285, Social Welfare and Advancement of Native Women Policy; Thomas Aitchison, Director of Dept of District Administration to all District Commissioners, 2 August 1965 .

[93] John Gunther, for example, expressed his desire in 1952 to employ an additional 200 women to various roles within the Department of Public Health over the next three years. NAA: A518/P213/3/2, Native Labour – Papua and New Guinea – Employment of Native Women; letter from Jones, Director of Department of District Services to the Government Secretary, 16 September 1952.

[94] Roy Scragg, "Medical Tultul to Doctor of Medicine," in *A History of Medicine in Papua New Guinea : Vignettes of an Earlier Period,* ed. B. G. Burton-Bradley (Kingsgrove, N.S.W.: Australasian Medical Publishing, 1990), p.27; Lucy Mair, *Australia in New Guinea,* 2nd ed. (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1970 [1948]), chapter 12; Donald Denoon, "The Idea of Tropical Medicine and Its Influence on Papua New Guinea," in *Health and Healing in Tropical Australia and Papua New Guinea,* ed. Roy MacLeod and Donald Denoon (Townsville: James Cook University Press, 1991).

[95] In 1946 the Anglicans began training Papuan nurses at Dogura and Eroro Mission stations, see Chilla Bulbeck, *Australian Women in Papua New Guinea: Colonial Passages 1920 - 1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge Uni Press, 1992), p.265; PNGA: 69/80-3-2, Social Development and Advancement of Women - Health Education, Infant Maternal Welfare, 1947 – 1963; letter from J.T. Gunther, Director of Public Health to Director of Native Affairs, 29 March 1956.

[96] PNGA: 69/80-3-2, Social Development and Advancement of Women - Health Education, Infant Maternal Welfare, 1947 – 1963; Course Training for Papuan Nurses in Midwifery and Care of Infants, 19 December 1950.

St Therese Maternity Hospital in Port Moresby, and at Saiho in the Northern District. In 1958 a formal nursing course was established in Port Moresby: 12 women and six men enrolled in the first year. Nursing training centres were established alongside government hospitals as these were built in other main administrative centres through the 1960s.[97] Training for nursing aides was begun in 1964, recognising the large numbers of women with basic education who remained in the village after schooling who might play a role in delivering basic health and educational information.[98]

The initial impetus for the administration to establish a program of teacher training for women came with the publication of Camilla Wedgwood's 'Memorandum on Native Women Teachers and their Training' in 1946.[99] In 1948 when the Sogeri Education Centre was opened, the wives of the married teachers recruited for formal training were required to also undergo training in craft, infant welfare and other manual arts. They were often expected to act as teachers alongside their husbands in village schools. In 1955 a teacher-training course specifically for 'native girls' began running through the Poppondetta Education Centre in the Northern District as part of the administration's 'Emergency Teacher Training Scheme'.[100] The very first year long course ran with twelve young women from across the territories. On completion graduates were sent back to their home districts to work as Assistant Teachers under the supervision of European women teachers at Native Girls Schools. While the syllabus for the course was identical in most respects to that of male teacher trainees, the girls took additional classes in home cooking, mothercraft, sewing, home nursing and handicrafts. Formal training for indigenous women to work as welfare workers was provided through Ahioma Training Centre in Milne Bay from 1961 onwards.

Initially the administration found it difficult to fill the female indigenous trainee and assistant positions because of what they described as a 'dearth of qualified females'.[101] However, when in the mid to late 1960s women's increased access to

[97] The first major government hospital for both indigenous and non Indigenous patients was opened in 1957 in Port Moresby.

[98] Donald Denoon and Kathleen Dugan, *Public Health in Papua New Guinea: Medical Possibility and Social Constraint, 1884 - 1984* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p.31.

[99] S. Geno Roakeina, "Past and Future for Girls and Women in the Education System: An Overview " in *Women and Education in Papua New Guinea and the South Pacific*, ed. Eileen Wormald, Anne Crossley, and University of Papua New Guinea. Faculty of Education. (Waigani, Papua New Guinea: University of Papua New Guinea Press, 1988), p.15.

[100] NAA: A518(X818/1/6), Education Papua and New Guinea, Native Teacher Training Centres; Media Release No. 17: First Teacher Training Course for Native Girls, 24 February 1955.

[101] Butler, Acting Commissioner, Office of the Public Service Commissioner, 15 Dec 1960 re Butler to The Secretary, Department of Territories, Establishment – Positions of Welfare Officer (F), Department of Native Affairs (NAA, 1960 – 64 Advancement of Women file)

educational and training opportunities began to pay dividends indigenous women were employed within the administration not only in trainee or assistant roles but also as formally qualified welfare officers, nurses, and teachers. The Papuan Annual Report of 1954-55 recorded 17 indigenous female nurses, one indigenous female medical assistant, and 51 female medical orderlies under the employ of the Department of Public Health.[102] By 1973 there were 941 fully qualified female indigenous nurses employed within the public service.[103] By 1960 around 30 indigenous women were being trained as teachers each year, and in 1964 there were 427 indigenous female teachers employed throughout Papua and New Guinea.[104]

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST FEMALE WORKERS ON THE BASIS OF SEX

Even as the number of women in waged work slowly increased because of the encouragement of the administration and their provision of training, women continued to face discrimination in the workplace, not least in the public service.

There were two main ways in which women faced formal discrimination in the Public Service on the basis of their sex: gender wage inequality and the marriage bar. In 1957 anthropologist Cyril Belshaw, noting many Europeans were now calling for indigenous women to be drawn into the workforce, had expressed concerns women's waged employment may be detrimental to daily life. He suggested it would impact on family life, but also warned that women's wages were so low any income earned would remain significantly lower than the value of the subsistence work it replaced.[105] Belshaw was referring to the very low wages paid women in non-professional positions, for example domestic service roles. Wages for indigenous women who were in 'professional' positions were however still significantly lower than those of indigenous men. Dianne Johnson found substantial disparity between the wages of Papua and New Guinea male and female officers in the Public Service, but also expatriate workers throughout the 1960s. This was, she noted, 'a clear index not only of sexual discrimination but also of racial

[102] Papuan Annual Report 1954/55, p.144.
[103] NAA: A452; 1962/4449, Enquiry by the United Association of Women re voting rights in Papua and New Guinea 1961 – 1964; Letter from Minister for Territories to the President of the United Association of Women, 11 November 1964.
[104] NAA: A452; 1962/4449, Enquiry by the United Association of Women re voting rights in Papua and New Guinea 1961 – 1964; Letter from Minister for Territories to the President of the United Association of Women, 11 November 1964.
[105] Belshaw, *The Great Village*, p.55.

discrimination'.[106] An indigenous female officer working for the administration during this period earned less than half the wages of her foreign male counterpart.[107]

The marriage bar, which excluded married women from permanent employment in the Public Service, was introduced in the territories in line with Australian legislation. Under the bar, married women had been able to work for the administration on a contract basis (and often did), but their status had been insecure, they had not had access to many employment benefits (such as superannuation and long service leave), and they did not receive the same training and development as their male counterparts. Various attempts were made to challenge the policy through the 1950s, pointing to the policy's unfair and discriminatory nature, as well as its operational inefficiency.[108] Joan Refshauge was a particular advocate for its removal, reporting her indigenous female staff found it confusing and a clear disincentive to continuing on with further training.[109]

The administration's discriminatory employment practices resulted in external criticism on a number of occasions. In 1961 and again in 1966 the International Labour Organisation asked the administration to provide comments on their continued application of a marriage bar and gender-based wage difference.[110] As it had always done, the administration justified the policies on the basis it was simply following Australian practice.[111] When the Commonwealth Conciliation and

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[106] Johnson, "The Government Women: Gender and Structural Contradiction in Papua New Guinea", p.20.

[107] In 1964 an indigenous female officer earned 43% of the salary of a male expatriate worker in the same position. In 1968 this had dropped further to a mere 40%. Johnson noted a female expatriate worker would earn less than her male expatriate counterpart, but her salary would be higher than either a male or female Papua New Guinean. Dianne Johnson, "Aspects of the Legal Status of Women in Papua New Guinea: A Working Paper," *Melanesian Law Journal* 7, no. 1&2 (1980), p.20.

[108] Ms Doris Booth OBE (Member of the Legislative Assembly of Papua and New Guinea) challenged this aspect of the Bill during the passage of the Public Service Bill in 1953, *Legislative Council Debates*, 16 - 23 November 1953, p.27 Minutes of Tenth Meeting of Women's Central Committee, 18 January 1960, and see in particular the formal memorandum that resulted from the discussion on 'Public Service Status of Married Native Women': R. Thomson, Chairman, Advancement of Women Committee, Memorandum re Married women in the Public Service 8 February 1960 in PNGA 69/14-1-34/1285 (Social Welfare and Advancement of Native Women Policy); "Background Papers," in *Public Service Commissioner's Conference* (Port Moresby: Territory of Papua and New Guinea, Government Printer, 1969).

[109] Joan Refshauge to Chairman, Advancement of Women Committee, 3 February 1960 in PNGA 69/14-1-34/1285 (Social Welfare and Advancement of Native Women Policy).

[110] See PNGA: 82/92-2-20/347, ILO Inquiry into Discrimination Employment against Women on Basis of Marital Status; Secretary, International Labour Organisation to Secretary , Department of Territories, 1961 and PNGA: 69/14-1-34/1285, Social Welfare and Advancement of Native Women Policy; Warwick Smith, Secretary of Department of Territories to Administrator re the International Labour Conference's recommendation concerning the Employment of Women with Family Responsibilities (1965), 3 February 1966.

[111] See for example the response to UN Convention 1951 on Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value by Acting Administrator. NAA: A518/P213/3/2,

Arbitration Commission introduced the principle of 'equal pay for work of equal value' in 1969 in Australia, legislation was passed quite quickly to similarly ensure the elimination of salary difference on the basis of sex in the territories. It took them seven years, however, to act on the passing of an amendment in 1966 to the Australian Public Service Act to remove the marriage bar.[112] The marriage bar particularly affected women's promotion pathway in the long term and led to a national Public Service dominated by men continuing into the post-independence period.[113]

BUKA WOMEN, WAGED WORK, AND EDUCATION

When I interviewed Buka women, the questions I asked about waged work invariably were answered with a reference to education: an expression of gratitude (to parents, to teachers) that they received the education required to get a job, or alternatively their regret at having missed out on an education and thus a whole range of opportunities. Education became representative of waged work, or at least the main way in which women could articulate their aspirations in relation to this. This came from their very clear understanding that waged employment relied on acquiring an education beyond primary school.[114] Many Buka women explained their differential access to secondary education and further vocational training as having excluded them from 'the good life', or at least a *better* life.

Most women when asked about whether their parents had sent girls to school, said they felt that there had been just as many girls as boys at their primary school and that parents were generally keen to see all children get an education, they 'valued education'. They told me girls continuing on through to high school and to further training was a different matter altogether.

Though available statistics for the district suggest that the enrolment of girls in Bougainville was slightly higher than that at the broader national level, girls have nonetheless been at a clear disadvantage in terms of access to education in the region

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Native Labour – Papua and New Guinea – Employment of Native Women; Ministerial Advice re Employment of Native Women – International Conventions, 15 August 1952.

[112] Mina Siaguru, "Women in the National Public Service - Terms and Conditions of Employment," *Administration for Development* 5, no. 13 - 17 (1975).

[113] Andrew Cunningham, "Women in Trade Unions in Png," *Administration for Development*, no. Oct. (1975), p.24; Johnson, "The Government Women: Gender and Structural Contradiction in Papua New Guinea".

[114] Romeo Tohiana describes this appreciation of education as key to early mission recruitment of adherents who wanted to gain basic literacy and potentially jobs with the administration and mission, and thus material wealth. Tohiana, "The Hahalis Welfare Society of Buka, North Solomons Province: Its Establishment, Subsequent Development and Eventual Decline, 1960 - 1980", p.37.

(see Table 8.1).[115] In 1950 females constituted less than a third of primary enrolments in the Bougainville district, this had improved to around 45% of enrolments by the 1960s. It was, however, in post-primary schooling that the disparity was clearest: at the secondary level female enrolments fluctuated slightly but never rose above 28% of enrolments in the period up until 1970.

Girls in Buka faced a number of barriers to accessing education. Schools were often a long way from village settlements. Describing Hanahan Primary School in the early 1950s, Christine Hotsia, who was born just before the war, explained:

> At this school there were boys and girls, all these children who had to come from Tohatsi through to Hahalis. They used to all come here to this one school. No, no ... it was from Gogohe through to Sing. Those from Gogohe would sleep here at the station. ... And from Hahalis and Tohatsi they would come every morning and then go back to the village. So there were houses for boys on this side, and houses for girls on this other side close to the cliff, near the sisters. On Fridays they [students from distant villages] would all go back and then come back again on Mondays.[116]

Year	BOUGAINVILLE DISTRICT				PAPUA & NEW GUINEA					
	Primary		Intermediate /Secondary		Primary		Intermediate /Secondary		Vocational /Technical	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1950	69%	31%	73.5%	26.5%	63.5%*	36.5%	...*	...*	...*	...*
1961	55%	45%	76%	24%	61%	39%	82%	18%	93%	7%
1965	54%	46%	77.5%	22.5%	61%	39%	79%	21%	92%	8%
1970	54%	46%	72%	28%	63%	37%	72%	28%	76.5%	23.5%

Table 8.1 Percentage male to female enrolments in schools (both administration and mission), 1950 – 1970, source: Department of Education, 1960 – 1972. 'Comparative staffing and enrolments statistics: Papua New Guinea education system.

[115] No figures were available for this period for Buka Island alone. Helen Geissinger, writing in the late 1990s, noted that girls from the islands had traditionally been at a slight advantage in terms of access to education because generally within island cultures (Bougainville, New Ireland, East New Britain and Manus) women have held higher status within their own societies relative to their mainland counterparts. Girls in Bougainville had historically had the highest level of enrolment among the provinces. Helen Geissinger, "Girls' Access to Education in a Developing Country," *International Review of Education* 43, no. 5/6 (1997), p.429.

[116] Christine Hotsia, 3 October 2006, Hanahan.

Many young students slept in simple houses under the supervision of the mission staff, and would have to bring food supplies for the week when they returned to school on Monday morning. The long distances children were required to travel meant girls were less likely to be enrolled. Girls were required to help their mothers in the gardens to provide subsistence for their families. If a girl had to travel away for schooling, the loss of her labour impacted heavily on families (and particularly her mother's workload). Additionally the distance girls were required to travel from villages to school raised fears for their safety, both in terms of the threat of physical assault as well as the threat of sorcery.

When parents did not have enough money to send all their children, they prioritised their sons' education over their daughters'. This was a calculated decision: educated sons held a higher value to their parents than did their daughters. Jessie Marise, born in 1947, described how her family had been very poor while she was growing up. Her father had died when she was young and her mother had no siblings to turn to. Her mother struggled to find monies to send her and her brother to school each year:

> To earn a little money we would sell kerosene. My mother used to do this – borrow money from one man and then buy a full drum of kerosene and we would sell it on in the village. And that is how she paid our small fees. But it was hard.[117]

Jessie had loved school and having done well in her studies planned to continue on to high school. Her brother, however, told her the family would not have enough money to send both of them through high school. Jessie had gotten into the government run high school at Hutjena and the school fees required were significantly higher than those at the mission run primary school they had been attending.

> My brother was in Grade 5 and I had just heard that I had gotten in to Hutjena and he said to me, 'Jessie, you can't go to school'. And I said, 'why not?' 'No-one can pay your fees. You must get married!'[118]

Though she had been intent on continuing her education Jessie understood she did not have much choice,

[117] Jessie Marise, 21 February 2007, Elutupan.
[118] Ibid.

> Okay, I said to him, but brother if I have children, then who will help me when they are ready to go to school, who will pay *their* school fees? And he made a promise to me then, he said, 'I promise I will help you. I want you to marry because we are struggling for money'. So I said yes.[119]

For the next few years Jessie and her new husband, a teacher earning a regular wage, supported her brother through high school and continued to support him when he went on to university. Her brother became a Chief Magistrate within the Papua New Guinean courts and has fulfilled his promise, paying the school fees for all nine of her children.

> This was his promise. He tells my children, if not for me your mother would have been working too, but because of me – I ruined it for her. But I say, no – you didn't ruin it for me. You were thinking of the future. We couldn't both go to school at the same time.

Though she expressed great regret at not having continued on to high school, at a more pragmatic level Jessie felt that given that men were more likely (and remain more likely) to secure higher paying and more permanent jobs, the decision to send her brother had been the right decision.[120]

Jessie's story of missing out on school was a common one among the women I interviewed. Born almost 20 years later Saline Girana told of her experience:

> My brother and I, we did Grade 6 together. The two of us together and so my father said, 'it is really hard to pay for school fees for the two of you. One of you must remain in the village.' And so they pulled me out of school. I stayed back in the village and my brother, they let him continue there with schooling. They said to me, you must stay in the village now because, in relation to custom too, all women must live in Buka. What if I had gone and got married to [a man from] another place?[121]

It was customary attitudes regarding women's role like those held by Saline's parents rather than economic reasons that were given most frequently to explain why women's schooling had been cut short. In common with parental concerns observed throughout rural Papua New Guinea, Buka parents worried that if a girl had to travel away to attend school she might fall pregnant, refuse to marry the husband her parents had arranged, or find herself a husband from outside the village

[119] Ibid.
[120] Ibid.
[121] Saline Girana, 4 March 2007, Hahalis.

before an arrangement had been made.[122] As Christine Hotsia explained to me when I asked why the chiefs had been hesitant to allow her to attend the newly opened St Mary's High School at Asitavi to train as a teacher:

> The chiefs, it was important to them that us girls stayed in the village. Because they felt we must get married. What if we were to go to another place and we died, or if we married another man [of another place]. This was the kind of thinking they had, this was the main idea – for us women the most important thing was that we must get married, get married and have plenty of children for the clan so that we continue the lineage.[123]

Education was something highly valued by all the women I spoke to, especially by those who had not been able to continue their education or not been able to access it in the first place. Patricia Johnson, writing in the early 1990s, argued that girls' traditional (and continued) disadvantage in accessing education in Papua New Guinea had been a key factor in the increasing disparity between men and women's, and especially rural women's, access to wealth and political power (measured by Johnson in terms of access to political office).[124] For families and individuals it was access to income that was considered perhaps the most valuable or desired outcome of (a Western) education. As Johnson explained,

> While the government may phrase education policy in terms of national development and human resources, the parents who are responsible for sending their children to school are more immediately concerned with the impact of education on their children's future occupations and, thereby, on their incomes.[125]

The positive relationship between educational achievement and income was clear to the Buka women I interviewed: 'I think back on what I did [leaving school] and I get cross with myself. Because I ruined my chances, didn't I?'[126] Young women who did not go on to high school, or dropped out before graduating generally came back to the village and got married. They took on the work of mothers in the village – basic subsistence labour, caring for children, caring for older relatives. Namosi Tousala, born in 1960, described what it was like for those who 'dropped out':

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[122] Beatrice. Avalos, *Women and Development in Papua New Guinea* (Canberra, A.C.T. :: National Centre for Development Studies,, c1994.), pp.10 – 12; Boio B. Daro, "The Papua New Guinea Woman in Education - Today and Tomorrow," in *Education in Melanesia, Waigani Seminar (8th : 1974* ed. J. Brammall and Ronald J. May (: Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea: Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University and the University of Papua New Guinea 1975), p.323.

[123] Christine Hotsia, 3 October 2006, Hanahan.

[124] Patricia Lyons Johnson, "Education and the 'New' Inequality in Papua New Guinea," *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 24, no. 3 (1993).

[125] Ibid, p.189.

[126] Rita, 23 January 2007, Elutupan.

> They'd finish and then they'd just stay in the village doing nothing really (*stap nating long ples*). When girls they finished Grade 6 and 'drop out', then they only have one choice – they work garden, that's all.[127]

There were not many options open for earning monies. Many joined their husbands working copra or cocoa. Alternatively, or in addition, they made 'projects': a small garden crop they could market. Many had a day set aside each week to travel to town to sell this produce at the main Buka market. Some sold scones or betelnut or smokes in the village.

Educational achievement was thus considered crucial for women to access employment and a regular and reliable income, and thereby a measure of independence. Older women who attended school when it was, as they described it 'just the A-B-Cs' (though in Buka they often called them the 'a-e-i-u's[128]), said that by the time they were mothers, things in the village had changed and they had hoped that their children would go further with education so that they might get a job.[129] For those women of the younger generation (up to 50 years old) who had continued on to high school, the importance of 'doing well' at high school was tied to their future goal of attaining waged employment. When asked what they had wanted to do after high school, though many had held a preference regarding vocation they also made clear that they were ultimately happy with any training that led to good paid employment. Rachel Topu, born in 1958, had dreamed of training to be a didimeri (an agricultural extension officer). The year she left school Vudal Agricultural College in East New Britain had closed off their intake. When she realised her parents would not allow her to travel as far as Poppondetta or Mount Hagen (the locations of the other agricultural colleges) she knew '[she] had no choice'. Instead she enrolled at Arawa Technical College in the south of Bougainville.

> Did I always want to go work in an office? No, not at all. My first choice was to become an agriculturalist ... it was okay though, I just wanted to get work.[130]

Cathleen Kopkop, born in 1966, and trained and employed as a teacher explained:

> When I was in Grade 10, the big thing I was thinking about and looking forward to was would I get a good result, so that I would be able to go on

[127] Namosi Tousala, 17 October 2006, Hanahan.
[128] Older women over 65 referred to this, and generally dropped the 'o' in the run of vowels. These were the first letters they learnt at mission school they told me.
[129] Cecilia Beseke (born 1936), 17 February 2007, Hahalis.
[130] Rachel Topu, 6 November 2006, Lemanmanu.

and find good work or not? ... I really wanted that I would be one of these financially employed women.[131]

Carmelita Toahei, born in 1965, similarly was concerned to find 'good work':

> My thoughts had been – I must get work, and get a salary. And if I can earn my own money, hold it in my hands, then I'll be able to do all those little things for my home and my village that I'd like to see happen.[132]

Carmelita's turn of phrase, 'earn my own money, hold it in my hands', highlighted the importance she – and many women I spoke to – placed on earning their own wages so that they had a measure of control over money. Domestic violence against women is a serious, pervasive problem in Bougainville, as it is throughout Papua New Guinea.[133] A number of the women I interviewed in Buka told me of violence they had been subject to within their marriages. Economic independence meant more than simply greater autonomy in terms of deciding what income could be spent on, but also that women had more freedom to leave abusive relationships. They had more control over their lives.

CONCLUSION

After World War Two the colonial administration decided agricultural development and the transformation of village economies from agricultural subsistence to commercial production was key to the colonies' future. Indigenous men were to be the key economic agents in driving this transformation, and indigenous women were marginalised from the training provided to men to enable them to do this, and actively sidelined by policies that presumed men's rights over land and over any income generated from that land. When the administration began to reform labour legislation to encourage more indigenous women to work, the opportunities presented to them were generally limited to appropriately 'female' occupations. Women now found themselves – because of their limited access to education (in real terms, and relative to men) – marginalised from waged work. Women who were able to find a job, were still paid less and placed in a more insecure position than their male colleagues.

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[131] Cathleen Kopkop, 20 October 2006, Hanahan, (from KetsKets).

[132] Carmelita Toahei, 20 October 2006, Hanahan.

[133] Martha Macintyre, "'Hear Us, Women of Papua New Guinea!': Melanesian Women and Human Rights," in *Human Rights and Gender Politics: Asia-Pacific Perspectives*, ed. Anne-Marie Hilsdon, et al. (London ; New York: Routledge, 2000); Laura Zimmer Tamakoshi, ""Wild Pigs and Dog Men": Rape and Domestic Violence as 'Women's Issues' in Papua New Guinea," in *Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, ed. Carolyn Brettell and Caroline Sargent (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 2005); and see Richard Eves for a discussion of the extent of the problem in contemporary Buka. Richard Eves, *Exploring the Role of Men and Masculinities in Papua New Guinea in the 21st Century: How to Address Violence in Ways That Generate Empowerment for Both Men and Women* (Caritas, 2006), pp.21- 23.

The work of women today remains primarily that of subsistence agriculture. They are proud of their work in their garden, but recognise the many ways in which this locks them out of various other opportunities. They are particularly aware that despite the value they place on it, it is generally devalued – both within the modern capitalist economy, and increasingly within customary/traditional economies (as commodities slowly creep in to replace traditional wealth often produced by women).

Anne Dickson-Waiko observed that Papua New Guinean women's exclusion from mainstream colonial life – including their limited access to employment and educational opportunities – had meant that 'ultimately it was men who were trained to man the state apparatus at independence.'[134] In many ways women are today still marginalised from both education and employment. Halia and Haku women's articulated sense of a continued exclusion from education and waged work was attended clearly by a desire to participate in these and other activities because these allowed women greater control over their own lives. It was also very clear from women's testimonies that they have always regarded themselves as productive, active contributors of labour, and as the nature of what constitutes 'work' has changed women have sought to be a part of and participate in this change, asserting their value and their place within present day village communities.

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[134] Anne Dickson- Waiko, "Women, Individual Human Rights, Community Rights: Tensions within the Papua New Guinea State," in *Women's Rights and Human Rights; International Historical Perspectives*, ed. Patricia Grimshaw, Katie Holmes, and Marilyn Lake (Basingstoke, Hampshire Palgrave, 2001), p.59.

Conclusion

I began this thesis by placing it in the context of contemporary Papua New Guinean women's expressed or felt distance and dislocation from the post-colonial state. When I asked Susan Talmits Hagai of Hahalis village on Buka Island what independence had meant to her, she had told me:

> I'm not a woman who has much to do with government, so for me it is hard to tell you ... us women who just stay in the village we don't have much to say about these things.[1]

And yet in exploring the history of the Australian colonial state's engagement with indigenous women in the period leading up to independence, and the effects of Australian colonialism generally for indigenous women's lives, it is clear the state was never absent. It has, in numerous ways, had an impact upon the lives of those living in the village. Despite Talmits' assertion – 'we don't have much to say about these things' – she, along with the other women I interviewed in the villages of Buka and Hanuabada, had many stories to tell of the changes they had seen over the course of their lives. Colonial authorities hoped to transform indigenous women's lives, and fashion a 'modern' mother-wife subject. The stories women told reflected their clear sense of themselves as 'modern' and demonstrated the ways in which they have actively participated in the changes taking place as well as the constraints or challenges they faced in doing so. Talmits' life story, and the way in which she narrated this to me, both implicitly and explicitly encompasses the various aspects of village women's relationship to the colonial state that I have sought to engage with in this thesis.

'MI MERI BILONG WOK', I'M A HARD WORKING WOMAN: TALMIT'S STORY

Susan Talmits Hagai was born in 1962 at the mission school at Skotolan on the west coast of Buka, where her mother had been a student, and her father a teacher. She told me she had been lucky to be born at the mission, as otherwise she may have died at birth:

[1] Talmits Hagai, 5 November 2006, Hahalis

> We were the third born – us two, we're twins: me and Sawa [her brother]. So this time, when [my mother] was pregnant with the two of us, Sister was still there at Skotolan. She stayed and looked out for my mother when she was pregnant with us.
>
> My mother and I were very lucky that Sister was there when I was born. When I was born I was unconscious, and my mother too she fell unconscious (*'mi dai na mama bilong mi dai wantaim mi'*). Only my brother was alright at the birth.[2]

When she was still a young child her parents joined the Hahalis Welfare Society and they moved back to the small *han* of Mounrahana in Hahalis to live. Talmits' parents decided it was not safe for her and her older sister to attend school at the mission: it was too far to walk and the risk of poisoning, or attack was too high. Her brothers, however, were allowed to attend. When Hahalis Primary was opened in 1974 (after consistent campaigning of the administration by those in Welfare), Talmits explained she felt she was already too old to go.

Talmits' marriage was arranged. When she was 18 her husband's *lain* – his lineage – visited her parents and began arrangements. She had not known what was happening, but one day his family appeared and wrapped a *laplap* (a sarong) around her and her *bubu* (grandmother).

> I went and sat down with my *bubu*. She said, 'look at this *laplap*'. I said, why the *laplap*? They wrapped it around me. They've organised that you go will marry Saline.
>
> Now I was speechless. I couldn't say anything. I didn't know what I was going to do. Really I didn't want to marry. I didn't want to get married yet. [But] I was happy, that's all. I was happy. It was like this, our custom. Our Chiefs – if they wanted this woman to marry this man and they come with a *laplap* and they put it around your *bubu*, then you – this woman – you don't have any way of avoiding this marriage. The chiefs have decided.[3]

She quickly moved on. Discussing her husband's family's high status (he is part of a particularly high ranking lineage on the island), she posed and then answered a rhetorical question for me:

[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.

Now I'm just a village woman, I've got no rank. So why then did they look at me – a nobody ['*wanpela meri nating*'] – and decide on me to marry him?' Because I am a hard working woman! ['*Bikos mi meri bilong wok ya!*'][4]

Throughout our interview Talmits made clear that despite her having been excluded from formal education she had made the most of all opportunities (she was a hard worker, a very driven woman). Where she could she attended the training that was available in the village through women's organisations:

So when I was living with my parents, all I did was work. I was a hardworking woman. I didn't go to school, but I would work at all different kinds of things. I worked so hard that I would beat all those women who'd gone to school ...

I was able to cook all those foods, all the recipes that white people cooked. I'd just have one look and I'd be able to do it.[5]

When she talks to women of her generation who were able to go to school but are still now stuck in the village, she told me that she invariably falls to teasing them. She jokes:

If my parents had let me go to school I would have been a uni woman, no really. I would've beaten all of you who went on to Grade 10. If I'd gone to school I would've beaten you all, gone to uni, and married a white man.[6]

As a young girl she had started to plant 'projects', and when she became a mother she began marketing in earnest, keen to earn a little money that would give her family some security. Talmits sold peanuts, watermelon and other small side crops at side-of-the-road markets and occasionally at the main market in Buka town. In our interview she indicated proudly with an expansive movement of her arm to the house that we sat under – a simple, Western style house built raised off the ground on stilts with sawn timber and kapa (tin) roof – and explained: 'This house is a house built from copra and peanuts and all my different market goods.'[7]

The small economic projects (including individual cash cropping of copra) that financed Talmits' house were her initiative. Though her husband had helped, she had had to coax him into this:

My husband, he would get cross with me. 'We should go and work with Welfare [working copra for Hahalis Welfare Society]', he would say. 'This

[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.

kind of work, we can't go eat it tomorrow, when can you eat this? You can't eat it for a long time. We should plant something that we can eat tomorrow or soon.'[8]

She told me some of the other village women told her she is doing men's work.

Well the women say, 'only men should be involved in the work to do with getting things done for the family.' But I tell them, 'and why is it men who must do this? All of you, you must start this off, you women. Men will see this and they will help you ... I say, 'Me, I'm the one who has started all this work towards our house.[9]

Talmits also explained to me her role helping to build a house of an altogether different kind. She, along with other women of her lineage, invested significant labour and energies into the building of her lineage's *tsuhana* (a men's house, the chief's house). In the mid 1990s, Talmits who had been living with her husband's family, was called back to her mother's land because the chiefs were planning on (re)building their *tsuhana*. This is no simple matter, and if things are done incorrectly the lineage can bring bad luck – even death – upon itself.

Women's labour is central to the construction of a *tsuhana*, as they must tend the special gardens known as *las*.[10] These are gardens established specifically for the purpose of producing the food required for the various stages of exchange and feasting that are part of the process of building the house. The women tend the gardens, it is they who will tell men when and if the tubers are ready to harvest. Talmits was being called back to her mother's land two years before the house was to be built, because her uncles needed her to start the organising and planting in preparation.[11] Talmits explained that the chiefs had said:

Talmits you must move back now because this thing really needs a woman like you because at a time like this when we comes to *singsing* [to sing and

[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.
[10] The importance of *las* was been explained to me by another woman in the following way: There must be a special garden, a taro garden that the women plant. And when it is ready then this big feast will take place. To get rid of ... we say it gets rid of all the 'dirty' [*korkoriena*, personal 'relics' of the dead] of the man who has just died. They will cut their hair. They will cut their hair then prepare the food. The food will be eaten by everyone else in the village. Therese Loahin, 24 October 2006, Hakets (from Hanahan). Women are able to influence the timing of feasts in this way.
[11] She was not the *teitahol* (the chiefly woman, the eldest sister) of her *lain* (her family group), as she was a younger sister. While she would have customarily been expected to contribute, it was not her responsibility to co-ordinate. However her older sister, whose husband worked in town and earned a regular and relatively large income, was ignoring the chiefs (*'em sa' sekim tok bilong ol'*) and had shown herself to be completely uninterested in shouldering what she, in line with many other younger women today, perceive to be the burdens of *kastom* (custom).

dance and feast] – this is not a time for rest and you are a woman who will work hard.

Talmits presented the story of her life as the story of a hard-working woman. Although this is only one part of one story it nonetheless highlights that an understanding of the ways in which colonialism has affected indigenous women's lives must start from and locate itself with reference to very specific, local histories of time and place and custom. What strikes me about Talmits' story is the way in which custom and tradition are never separate from the 'modern' and 'development'. By her own account, she has been excluded from certain aspects of the state's project of modernisation: in particular formal schooling and employment opportunities. But she has always made the most of others, accessing informal training and selling copra and making 'projects' to earn monies towards food for her family, school fees for the children, and a modern house. Equally, Talmits asserted her value as a worker in terms of the custom work she had done, planting gardens and preparing foods for significant ceremonies in the village. She also made clear her very 'modern' renegotiation of traditional gender relations and the gendered division of labour. What becomes evident as soon as you attend to the particular of her story is the presence of the state – though never definitive – in her life. Talmit's story in many ways touches on the different aspects dealt with within this thesis.

This thesis started in the colonial archives of Papua New Guinea and Australia, but then moved on to explore the particular and personal ways in which indigenous women experienced colonialism, and in particular the colonial state and its various programs and policies directed towards 'reforming' village practice and 'raising women's status'. Within it I have traced the shift in policies regarding indigenous women beginning with early colonial policies of 'neglect' in which indigenous women were regarded as 'backward, and 'conservative', positioned as key to holding back change and maintaining the traditional organisation and structure of the village. After the war indigenous women in the village came to be seen as 'a bridge' between generations, and as conduits for change. They were now expected, as mothers and as wives, to play a central role in indigenous societies' transition to 'modernity'. Of course, the colonial state had a very particular idea of how this 'mother-wife' subject should look and what she should do.

Drawing on the archives of the colonial administration to examine post war colonial policies and programs specifically focused on indigenous women, I demonstrated in the first three chapters of this thesis that it was largely through welfare initiatives (and specifically the Club and the Clinic) that the colonial state – and the white women delivering these services – attempted to reform and remake

village women as 'modern' colonial, and indeed imperial, subjects. I have argued that it was in these attempts that white women, both in the colonies and (though to a much more limited extent) within Australia, were able to enact and prove their own colonial citizenship. Their project to remake village women as colonial 'modern subjects' was, however, one that was fragmented, often contradictory, and met with only limited success.

The stories women told within oral history interviews made clear that women themselves sought to transform their lives, and engaged with and reacted to colonial interventions in ways perhaps unexpected by the colonial state. Buka women's narration of how motherhood (and childhood) were experienced through this period, and Motuan women's stories of entering into marriages, and the ritual and ceremony that attended this, point to the messy entanglement of indigenous practice, colonial policy and colonial and customary attitudes to these events. As mothers Halia and Haku women engaged with colonial medical and educational welfare services as and when they felt these could be of benefit. Women in their everyday practice as mothers drew upon a blend of customary and colonial knowledge. In Hanuabada brideprice persisted as an important customary practice for Motuan women. And yet Motuan women clearly recognised the sometimes oppressive obligations and relations it established, particularly as village relations and custom came under the influence of colonial policy and Christian teachings. This highlights the complex, often fraught process women faced (and continue to confront) in negotiating the everyday realities of custom, but also the changes brought about to custom and within it as a result of colonialism and contact.

Colonial policy to 'protect' (rather than reform) indigenous women was often equally contradictory. This is evident in the post war colonial discussions about 'protecting' indigenous women, which were generally focused on how to regulate sexual relationships between indigenous women and white men. This was a period in which much was changing in the colonies – and internationally – and though the problem of 'protection' was framed as a concern for women's welfare, the anxieties apparent within the contemporary debates and correspondence on the issue evidence a colonial preoccupation with good 'native' governance and the policing of racial and class boundaries. As indigenous men through this period came to be recognised as political, not simply colonised, subjects, control over indigenous women's sexuality – understood within these conversations as the responsibility, even property, of their male kin – came to figure as representative or symbolic of this recognition. Stories shared about this from Motuan women made clear that relationships between Motuan women and white men of course varied, and were not

always entered into freely. Yet what was also clear was the distance or disjuncture between women's experience and the way this had been represented by those within colonial society as well as by other indigenous men (including, of course, Motuan men).

In many ways, I argued in the thesis, it was the colonial administration's policies regarding labour and economic development that most affected women's everyday lives. In the first half of the nineteenth century the protectionist policies regarding colonial labour legislation had meant women were largely excluded from employment in the colonies. After the Second World War – though the administration did not encourage their participation – Halia and Haku women were very involved in the increasing cash cropping activity and marketing of garden goods taking place as part of the administration's policy to shift village agricultural practice from subsistence to commercial production. When the colonial administration began to employ indigenous women within welfare positions, and to reform labour legislation to allow for their employment in other areas, it was clear that women were keen to take advantage of opportunities to secure waged employment. Buka women explained their enthusiasm for waged work on the basis that it gave them a limited measure of economic autonomy and thus some control over their lives. Also apparent in the oral histories, and in women's continuing daily practice was women's own sense of themselves as active, productive and working members of their communities. Remaining marginalised from education and employment, Haku and Halia women were nonetheless vocal about their frustration about this marginalisation, and their attempts to overcome or work around this.

This thesis has focused on the complexity of the day to day, and on how colonialism was experienced, with a focus on its effects as they related to women's work, motherhood, marriage and sexuality (that is, aspects of production, reproduction, kin relations and exchange). Colonialism in this context was not simply represented by the black letter of official colonial policy, but also the changes it precipitated: the introduction of western goods and a cash economy, and the incorporation of villages within a global capitalist system (albeit on the margins of this). While it is hard to draw generalisations it is clear that indigenous women's workload, and the constraints and demands in particular of women's domestic or household labour, increased through this period. Provision of welfare through female-targeted policies and programs in the village failed to transform indigenous women's role as mothers and wives in the ways they had envisaged. But they did provide an entry point into, as well as a certain level of surveillance over village women's lives. The policies of the colonial state that sought to 'protect' women – to

safeguard them from the 'dangers' of sexual relations with white men, and from employment (or hard labour) on plantations – meant that in many ways, despite the significant shift in colonial policy after World War Two, indigenous women remained – ideologically, and also in many ways practically – 'locked in the village'.

The structure of this thesis placed two histories side by side. Firstly it presented a history of the colonial state's delivery of welfare to women that drew on sources from the archives. It then threw up something of a response to this with the stories of the everyday that were woven through the oral testimonies of the women from Buka and Hanuabada. Two different histories emerged out of these, histories that did not always sit comfortably together. These histories, and their awkward fit, did not simply reflect the different 'culture' of colonial society and the local, traditional societies they were attempting to bring under control and to engage, but also reflected the very different nature of the sources on which I drew to construct each history. Different logics of history and of memory are apparent in the two: in the organised, bureaucratic archives of the administration which were intended to document the work of the state; and in the memory-based narratives that women shared with me, telling of the small and the big events and the important relationships they had experienced. These were stories of the past that also, of course, reflected very much on indigenous women's contemporary preoccupations and concerns. They revealed the ways in which the effects of Australian colonialism are still felt and negotiated within village women's lives today. The stories the women shared provided a different starting point and a different set of priorities from which to attempt to understand Papuan New Guinean women's experience of the colonial past and the challenges they continue to face in the postcolonial future.

Appendix 1 List of women interviewed

Women interviewed, Buka Island

Name	Date of interview
Agnes Gohul	29 October 2006
Barbara Motsi Tanne	7 October 2006
Brenda Tohiana	13 February 2007
Carmelita Toahei	20 October 2006
Cathleen Kopkop	20 October 2006
Cathy Behis	29 October 2006
Cecilia Beseke	17 February 2007
Celestine Masirei	9 November 2006
Christina Hotsia	3 October 2006
Clara Kolihana	21 February 2007
Gillian Tokes	15 March 2007
Grace Garei	9 November 2006
Helen Topuan	13 March 2007
Hona Holon	6 November 2006
Jessie Marise	21 February 2007
Josephine Tsiperi	20 October 2006
Juliana Maiah	4 October 2006
Lucy (Lemankoa)	7 November 2006
Marietta Rumina	20 February 2007
Martha Hattie	7 November 2006
Martha Tonang	7 November 2006
Mary Tenevi	29 October 2006
Monica Kirin	6 November 2006
Monica Rartsie Taga	1 March 2007
Namosi Tousala	17 October 2006
Netti Tsara	15 March 2007

Name	Date of interview
Orphina Talmits	7 November 2006
Rachel Topu	6 November 2006
Rachel Tsen	13 March 2007
Rita (Elutupan)	23 January 2007
Rose Tehoei	3 November 2006
Rose Willy	5 November 2006
Saline Girana	4 March 2007
Salome Latu	3 March 2007
Salome Ringin	13 March 2007
Salome Kabobu	25 October 2006
Severina Penevi	29 October 2006
Sister Lorraine Garasu	5 March 2007
Susan (Petats)	15 March 2007
Susan Talmits Hagai	5 November 2006
Therese Loahin	24 October 2006
Veronica Giobun	20 October 2006

Women interviewed, Hanuabada

Name	Date of interview
Asiani Igo	5 July 2007
Belle Arua	25 May 2007
Bettia Tom	21 July 2007
Bonnie Sisia	26 June 2007
Geua Asi	9 June 2007
Gimana Loi	13 July 2007
Hanua Mea	17 July 2007
Hebou Nou Taboro	17 July 2007

Name	Date of interview
Idau Pipi Raho	23 July 2007
Loa Gari	26 June 2007
Loa Tamarua	26 June 2007
Mabel Gavera	9 June 2007
Mairi Karo	26 June 2007
Mary Kidu	21 July 2007
Mary Mase	16 June 2007
Naomi Goava	5 July 2007
Oala Mia	13 July 2007
Oru Vani	17 July 2007
Pamata Gera	24 May 2007
Paruru Abe	7 July 2007
Toi Dago	29 June 2007

Appendix 2 Glossary

Halia	Meaning (English)
bosu	womb
gohus	heirs of lineage, first born son and daughter of *teitahol* (the new shoot)
han	small named settlement (within a village)
korkoriena	personal belongings of the dead (dirty, polluted), burned or buried during ritual occasions.
kukubui	freshwater spring
las	special taro gardens, planted for the feasts and exchange involved when a *tsuhana* is to be built.
lilihane	spirits of the ancestors
ngorere	umbilicus, matrilineage
oha	chiefly woman who chooses not to marry or bear children
pinaposa	lineage
teil	work sack for carrying back garden goods or firewood.
teitahol	sister and mother of *tsunono*, woman chief
tsuhana	clan house / chief's house
tsunono	male chief (hereditary)
tuhikau	female chief (in Haku)

Motu	Meaning (English)
aivara	long poles on which wealth tied and delivered to bride's family during brideprice ceremony.
ahu	lime
boroma	pig
boubou	annual competitive church fundraising event

Motu	Meaning (English)
buatau	betelnut
daedae	betrothal (involving brideprice)
davabada	main brideprice payment
davakara	ceremony / ritual event in which brideprice (*davabada*) exchanged
doa	pig tusk
gadoroho	part of the *davabada* (brideprice) payment that goes to the bride's parents (does not need to be shared).
headava	wedding
Hiri	Motu trading expedition
hodu	clay pot for holding drinking water
iduhu	family clan
iduhu kwarana	clan leader
ima varo kwato	arranging a marriage
imadava	money debt (accumulated during/for purposes of brideprice payment)
kiapa	string bag
laihi dairi	funerary feast/ritual, this officially ends the mourning period for the person who has died.
lohia	important man
maoheni	engagement
nese	walkway for clan houses
oibi	yes
Sinabada	European woman (polite)
Taubada	European man (polite)
toea	traditional shell money
uro	clay pot (wide mouthed) for cooking
vaga	mustard

Tok Pisin	Meaning (English)
abus	meat or protein
bilas	traditional dress and decoration
bilum	string bag
bipo tru	long ago
bisnis	business
bokis kontrakt	indentured labourer's case
bubu	grandmother/father and also grandchild
didiman	male agricultural extension officer
didimisis / didimeri	female agricultural extension officer (European/indigenous)
diwai	plant/tree
giaman (old. gammon)	untruthful, liar
haus boi (boi)	male domestic servant (lit. house boy)
hauskuk	kitchen
hausmeri	female domestic servant
haussmuk	smoking house (for copra)
kapa	tin roofing
kastom	custom / customary
karanas	coral gravel
kaukau	sweet potato
kiap	patrol officer
kru	seedling (also brain, sprout)
lain	lineage / family group
laki	popular card game involving gambling
laplap	wrap or sarong
luluais	village government officer (indigenous)
meri	woman
meri bilong wok	hard working woman / career woman
meri blouse	dress (mother hubbard style garment for women)

Tok Pisin	Meaning (English)
missus	European woman (polite)
pasinja meri	'passenger woman', a woman who exchanges sex for money
ples	land / place / village
raskol	criminal
singsing	sing and dance / feast
stap nating long ples	'doing nothing', 'unemployed' in the village
tapa	bark cloth
Tok Pisin (pisin).	Papua New Guinea Pidgin English
wok bung	co-operative / communal work
woksak	woven basket for carrying back garden goods or firewood.

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