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Publication Date

2017

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
IRVINE

Modernity in Transit:
Sexual Harassment, Public Transportation and Urban Mobility in Bandung, Indonesia

DISSERTATION

submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in Anthropology

by

Sana Sadiq

Dissertation Committee:
Professor Leo Chavez
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Professor Fatimah Tobing-Rony

2017

DEDICATION

To
my husband for his unconditional love and support
and to my son a countless source of inspiration

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people have contributed to the completion of this dissertation. First, I would like to thank the people of Bandung, Indonesia who were generous with their time and welcomed me into their homes. While all names have been changed to protect their privacy, their friendship and love will never be forgotten.

I would like to express the deepest appreciation to my committee chair, Professor Leo Chavez for his continued support, patience, and encouragement throughout my graduate career. Professor Chavez has served as a constant beacon of motivation, gently pushing me forward, all along asking important questions and demanding me to think outside the box. His enthusiasm for this project gave me the energy I needed to complete it.

It is with deepest appreciation that I also thank Professor Victoria Bernal for her continued mentorship and guidance. She has encouraged me to think broadly both in academic and professional terms and it is because of her encouragement that I have forged a deeper understanding of my scholarship and the importance of my work.

In addition I sincerely thank my outside committee member Professor Fatimah Tobing-Rony for her friendship and direction. Like all the women I met in Indonesia, she embodies the warmth and generosity I experienced there.

Lastly, this dissertation would not have been possible without the continued love and support of my husband. He is my foundation and words cannot describe the gratitude, love and respect I have for him. My son was born three years into my graduate program and everything I have written is with him in mind. May he have the strength and courage to pursue his passion in life and make a difference in this world in whatever way he can.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Modernity in Transit: Sexual Harassment, Public Transportation and Urban Mobility in
Bandung, Indonesia

By

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Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology

University of California, Irvine, 2017

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Safe travel and mobility in public space is critical for the emergence of women's autonomy and confidence, and is linked to greater economic independence and enhanced freedoms, and yet, safe public travel remains tenuous for most women in the Global South. This dissertation investigates the relationship between urban mobility and violence against women in public space. In Indonesia, the fourth most populous country in the world, public transportation systems are a powerful symbol of modernity and scientific progress and are tied to nationalist visions of economic development. Yet, the daily travels of urban women elicit a different set of imaginaries, ones defined by fear and anxiety from sexual assault. This dissertation interrogates increasing incidents of sexual harassment in public transportation against women, amid rapid urbanization in the capital city of West Java, Bandung.

Based on 12 months of ethnographic research, the dissertation reveals how urban women employ multiple social and cognitive practices to avoid risk and danger from assault in public space. It argues that an increasingly precarious urban landscape produces unique forms of "spatial feminist knowledge," amongst urban women. These women develop individualized coping strategies and techniques in order to travel safely in public space. In doing so, public transportation is littered with multiple social and cultural meanings of inclusion and exclusion, of mobility and of constraint. As sexual violence becomes endemic to the urban terrain, private mobility is seen as the only solution for safe travel, rendering public transportation a site of naturalized violence. Global attempts to *design out* fear and reduce violent crimes against women, with "women only" transportation systems yield to traditional yet popular forms of gender segregation. The dissertation concludes that despite such popularity, these emergent designs serve as red herring solutions to the deeper more complicated question of the role of women in a rapidly changing society.

Chapter 1: Introduction:

Taking an *Angkot* in the Paris of Java:

With a toddler in one arm and vegetables from the market in the other I made my way into the public minivan in Bandung, Indonesia by ducking my head and leaning forward just enough to make sure my son's head was safely inside. I grabbed a seat on the bench towards the back and gently moved the vegetables under my feet. I placed my son on the bench to my left, and as I looked up, there was a man seated directly across me. Our eyes quickly met, but I made nothing of it. My son insisted on standing-up on the bench instead of sitting down, and as I tried to get him adjusted, I now noticed that the man who was across from me, was now sitting very close to me on my right hand side. As more passengers boarded into the minivan, he moved even closer, and as the minivan began to start he firmly squeezed my thigh. I was facing my son when I felt the firm grab, my heart panicked, my stomach tied in knots, I immediately felt flush, anxious, and scared. I wanted to scream as loud as I could; instead I kept my head down, picked up my son, and quickly got off— leaving all the vegetables behind.

As I got out of the van I stood dazed on the dirt road. Once I realized the vegetables were in the minivan, the driver had been long gone. I immediately began to calm myself by quietly repeating, "I'm fine, I'm fine, I'm fine" thinking that if I said it enough times, I actually would feel it. But I didn't. A few minutes later, when I heard my son repeat, "me fine, me fine, me fine" I stopped out of embarrassment. I took a deep breath and decided to walk back to the market and get the vegetables I needed for dinner.

As I was sorting through tomatoes and onions in the market my feeling of anxiety transformed into anger. Why didn't I say something? Why didn't I hit him? Or yell at him? Or give him the evil eye? And how could I have forgotten the vegetable bag? My sense of insecurity

had turned into guilt and self-loathing, for not reacting in the way my rational self had expected. Instead of focusing on the egregious behavior of the man who felt entitled to grab my high, I spent the time in the market focused on myself, on what I should have done, replaying the scenario over and over again. When I was ready to go home the second-time, I waited in the same spot for the public minivan to approach. After 10 minutes, another van appeared and I was ready, this time with a well thought out repertoire of reactions. The van was empty and thankfully my ride home was uneventful.

This was not the first time I had experienced street harassment, but every time feels like the first time. That gut wrenching raw emotional response never wanes. For countless women living in urban areas in the global south, street harassment in the form of cat-calls, intimidating looks, pinches, and gropes are embedded into the everyday experience of transit. Everyday women must confront the possibility of such violence.

While there is a significant body of research that investigates violence against women by intimate partners in the context of domestic violence and battery; what has remained difficult to document are the systematic experiences of sexual violence and harassment by complete strangers in public space.

My dissertation addresses this gap in the current literature. It investigates the relationship between urban transportation systems¹ and violence against women in public space amid rapid urbanization. How do women navigate urban space, in a city that this experiencing large-scale urban redevelopment? What are urban women's coping techniques against forms of sexual harassment? And in what ways does anxiety over violence in public space restrict the political and personal lifeworlds of urban women? To answer these questions, I engaged in 12 months of ethnographic fieldwork from 2013 – 2014, with follow-up visits in 2015 and 2016 in the capital

¹ Transportation systems include the physical infrastructure, design and policy.

of West Java, Bandung, Indonesia. I relied on the public microbus as my only form of transportation in the city, and closely followed the everyday travel routines of working-women, students and housewives. I interviewed traveling women, transportation policy makers, activists, minivan drivers, and owners, to understand the daily complexity of transit and experiences of sexual harassment amid rapid urban development.

In Indonesian the word *angkot* is derived from two words: *angkutan* (meaning transportation) and *kota* (the word for city). Physically, angkots are not that different from their “microbus” lookalikes in Central and South America, “tuk-tuks” in Egypt, “share taxis” in South Africa “*dala dalas*” in Tanzania, or “*jeepney’s*” in the Philippines. They are all informal modes of public transportation.

The angkot is a small minivan with two seats in the front for the driver and a passenger. In the back, there is bench style seating with a capacity for ten to fourteen individuals. Some drivers usually add a wooden chair near the open bus style doors. This is perhaps the most uncomfortable seat in the angkot. Aside from the risk of falling out of the vehicle because of the proximity to the door, the wooden stool requires the passenger to sit with their back facing the driver, meaning once seated the passenger feels the vehicle moving backwards. However, in the stop and go traffic of the hot and humid urban city, any seat in the angkot may be unpleasant.

Angkots are painted differently according to city and route. For example in the capital city Jakarta, the angkots are red and light blue; in Bandung the angkots are green and orange. Different colors correspond to different cities.

Learning to “pickup” the appropriate angkot is an acquired skill. Angkots are meant to travel on fixed routes in the city with fixed pick up and drop off points; in practice angkots pickup and drop off passengers anywhere on a very loosely defined route. Standing on the space

where the paved road ends and where a sidewalk (if one could call it that) begins, a traveler must look at the oncoming traffic to spot the green and orange metal mass. Next, the passenger must gesture either with one hand, or with the correct posture and head nod, to the driver. The driver then assesses traffic conditions to pull over onto the left side of the road to board the waiting passenger. The match is never perfect, often times the driver erratically cuts through lanes to reach the passenger, only to have landed a hundred feet or so ahead or behind his target. The dance between angkots and passengers is never ending and has become a constant feature of the urban landscape.

Learning to “get off” an angkot is an equally acquired skill. Once seated, the passenger must remain vigilant about the route the driver is taking. Peeking out of the windows, once the passenger realizes that the destination is near, he or she must announce loudly “*kiri!*” (literally meaning left) to indicate to the driver to pull over to the left side of the road. Again, the driver must negotiate the traffic to pull over, either passing or falling short of the intended target. Here timing becomes critical, announcing *kiri* too late or too early to could result in extra walking to reach the intended destination.

As the dissertation shows, for women, taking an angkot entails other types of knowledge. Most importantly being vigilant about street harassment and other threats of violence; but also learning to manage bags of shopping while navigating the street, and carrying and looking after small children while getting in and out of the angkot. This gendered knowledge encompasses places and times to avoid the public street and the proper way for women and young girls to sit once inside. In my many travels in angkots, a frequent scene unfolds where a mother scolds her young daughter to sit upright with her legs tucked under the bench heels together. A practice inculcated in young girls with the parental hope of becoming habitual. This gendered knowledge

includes strategies to avoid harassment. Strategies can be as simple as wearing conservative style clothing, a wedding ring, or as complex as talking back to harassers. What is evident is that knowledge about traveling in the city is complex, gendered, and acquired through social interaction and experience. There is no unified experience of taking an angkot in the Paris of Java, but fragments are reproduced in the everyday practices and emotions of its users. Importantly these gendered experiences of the angkot are sensory as well as social.

It was learning these skills that gave me a sense of familiarity of life in Bandung and gave me knowledge about the daily struggles of its female inhabitants. I made new friends on angkots, I got harassed and felt fear on angkots, yet as I learned to navigate the urban landscape I became more confident and it was through this mode of transportation that the city of Bandung and its people welcomed me.

The Paris of Java, Bandung Indonesia

Bandung, located about 75 miles from the capital megacity Jakarta, is Indonesia's third largest city with a population of nearly 3 million inhabitants in the city center.² What was once an idyllic colonial town has now emerged as Indonesia's second largest metropolitan area (Bandung Metropolitan Area, BMA), with a total of 8 million residents which includes the fast emerging suburbs and satellite townships. After Dutch colonial independence Bandung became the capital and administrative city of West Java (Java Barat). As the population continued to

² The research site for this project is located in Bandung, Indonesia which is the second largest metropolitan area in Indonesia and is the administrative capital of West Java. The area of West Java is largely populated by the Sundanese ethnic group. The Sundanese people (*Orang Sunda*) are roughly estimated to be around 40 million, and are the second largest ethnic group in the Indonesian archipelago, outnumbered only by the dominant Javanese ethnic group. According to Robert Hefner (1990), while Sundanese culture is similar to Javanese culture in some features, there are other characteristics that do not overlap.

grow, road infrastructure lagged behind. Today many residents, including Bandung's mayor Ridwan Kamil, feel a looming transit crisis on the horizon.

Once defined by a historic railroad, Bandung's relationship with Jakarta remains culturally strong. There are roughly twenty-five higher education schools in Bandung, and there is a vibrant collegiate atmosphere. The Institute of Technology Bandung (ITB) is the most prestigious technical university in Indonesia, and receives students from all over the country. With many art and technology schools Bandung has produced a small colony of young artists. The textile industry in Bandung is the largest in the country and contributes to a vigorous business climate and shopping haven for tourists. Yet, unlike the capital Jakarta, or other urban centers such as Yogyakarta and Surabaya, angkots remain the most common form of public transportation. Appealing to college youth as well as lower-middle class city dwellers the angkot system of transportation remains strong in the Paris of Java.³

What will happen to this mode of transportation as the current transit and infrastructure crisis deteriorates? As overcrowding on angkots persists, women will be disproportionately affected. Mayor Kamil proposes a much glamorized mono-rail system for the city and is seeking international funding. But what will the mono-rail mean for Bandungs female inhabitants? Affordable safe transportation is essential for women's autonomy and access to the urban outdoors. Mobility within the city is critical for both women who are increasingly incorporated into the economic sector, and women who manage households and care for the young and elderly. Whatever the future may bring, it is clear that transportation and mobility is essential to urban life, and more so for women.

³ The Paris of Java (*Parijs van Java*) designation came to Bandung (then spelled Bandoeng) when, in 1880, a historical rail line was constructed connecting it to the colonial capital Batavia (modern day Jakarta). Hotels, luxury cafes and shops sprouted up to serve the planters (who came down from their highland plantations) and weekend travelers from the capital that came seeking relief in the cool hillside climate.

Against the backdrop of individual experiences, this dissertation investigates gendered mobility in the urban city. In showing how women negotiate urban space, I hope to counter narratives of victimization and seek to open new spaces for thinking about the importance of transportation in the lives of female urban residents.

Sexual Harassment in the Field and Back at Home

Experiences of sexual harassment became the object of my study, these experiences were situated “over there,” in an anthropological field half way around the world. Harassment against women in public space was an unfortunate common practice, not limited to a specific area, or historic period. The object of my study was timeless and borderless. I knew this first hand, experiencing cat-calls and unwanted glares and touches in Los Angeles, New Delhi, and Kuala Lumpur before living in Indonesia.

Street harassment as a timeless and borderless violence became increasingly apparent while I was in the field, as I read about the increasing cases of sexual violence “over here” at home. Advice given to me by fellow urban women in Bandung, to not be “lazy” in public space, to remain vigilant, and to dress modestly; was being widely broadcast and questioned by an increasingly assertive female population in America, on college campuses and in corporate companies. While I was studying in Irvine, I was collecting and searching stories of sexual harassment in Indonesia, and while living in Indonesia I was inundated by similar stories happening in America.

The statistics of sexual assault on college campuses in the United States is more than alarming it is heartbreaking. 1 in 5 female college students will experience a sexual assault during their college education according to the documentary “The Hunting Ground” which made

it explicitly clear, that on college campuses young, intelligent women were being targeted, objectified and reduced to sexual objects solely by virtue of their gender. Half way around the world in Bandung, Indonesia, a similar type of objectification was taking place, but one that was unarticulated, a violence that was nameless, unspoken, and very rarely questioned. Unlike the systematic data collection, surveys, awareness campaigns, solidarity marches, help groups and online tutorials regarding sexual violence that have proliferated in recent years in the United States. The women in Bandung, Indonesia relied on more diffuse, invisible and hidden forms of labor and knowledge to deal with threats of violence, fear and anxiety posed by precarious environments.

While social scientists and policy experts will immediately point to the contrasting realities, varying social, cultural, and geo-political differences between the experience of college aged women here in the U.S. and traveling urban women “over there” in Indonesia, I could not help shake that gut intuitive feeling that these two experiences of gendered violence were at some very basic level connected, related, and linked to one another.

Both these experiences were inexplicably tied by the fact that violent acts were directed and done directly onto women’s bodies, which were objectified by men who exerted power and produced harm. In both instances, gendered violence (rape and harassment) were problems for women, in that their bodies became the recipients of violence, precisely because of its anatomical, social and cultural expression. Despite the geo-political difference between women in Bandung Indonesia, and women in America, the common denominator to the violence and the fear, was the simple fact they were both women. “Womanhood” became the shared material experience, across geopolitical divides that brought together these two experiences, despite being worlds apart in other ways.

However the difference in the details and experiences matter. The divergent ways gendered violence is expressed in Indonesia, and in the United States, index the multiple ways in which the category of woman is more diffuse, complicated, contingent, and specific to particular ways of being. This recognition, of both commonality amid difference, enables and powers deeper understandings of what it means to be a woman and how the concept of womanhood is constructed by specific conditionalities. Feminist and postcolonial critiques have pointed to the intersectional nature of subject positions, as gender identities intersect and cut across other sources of identity (religion, class, race etc.) in complex ways (Mohanty 1991, Barret and Phillips 1992). The lived experiences of women generally exceeds a single category, as the meanings of their various positions are complexly shaped by larger socio-cultural ideologies.

From *Ibuism* to *Wanita Karir*:

In Indonesia, state discourse on proper gender roles emerged from Sukarno's post-colonial regime of Guided Democracy (1945-1967), and was re-imagined and solidified in Suharto's authoritarian New Order regime (1967-1998). Djajadiningrat-Niewenhuis (1992) refers to this as state imposed *ibuism* (*ibu* refers to mother in Indonesian). *Ibuism* is then a reference to state discourses, practices, and actions that construct the mother as an ideal personhood, such that women are overly represented as housewives or mothers of development, ascribing them particular roles in nation building which are firmly located in the domestic realm of hearth and home. Suharto's New Order regime instantiated a normative vision of women's primary role as wife and mother, taking her place in a family in which the husband wielded patriarchal authority. The goal was to inculcate a unitary national model of domesticated femininity based on the Islamic concept of women's *kodrat* (biological/natural role). This

understanding of family life and gender relations extended beyond society, thus a state imposed gender order formed a vital rationale for the paternalistic nature of the authoritarian regime itself (Martyn 2005).

Katheryn Robinson has argued that the New Order gender regime, with its “inherent hierarchical vision and offer of a patriarchal dividend to men by their privileged position in the family was contrapuntal” to the democratic and gender equity goals that emerged in the nationalist movement (Robinson 2009: 5). Ironically it was this very image of the *ibu* – of the mother struggling to provide for her family during the East Asian Financial crisis of 1997 that touched and moved people to protest during the 1998 democracy movement. As Budianta (2002) argues, women were disproportionately affected by the repressive state and expressed their opposition out of sheer frustration and necessity. The family as a model of national unity was the hallmark of Suharto’s New Order regime, however in the waning days of his rule it was mobilized against him.

It was in the democracy movement in Indonesia, during the collapse of Suharto’s New Order regime, where a shift in gender politics began to emerge. For example, national holidays celebrating a specific image of women as upright citizens (Kartini Day and Mothers Day) by the New Order regime, were reimagined and replaced by women as bearer’s of rights in a newly democratic post-Suharto nation (Robinson 2009).

The fall of the Suharto regime opened the archipelago to a period of reform, officially known as Reformasi. This post-Suharto period was marked with an opening up of the freedom of speech, regional claims to autonomy, a push-back against the military, and a revival in political Islam. The era brought in a proliferation of political parties, forty eight political parties

participated in the 1999 legislative election, when during the Suharto period only three political parties were allowed to exist.

Islam inflects the conduct of everyday life in the archipelago, it influences gender interactions between men and women, and the role of gender in national politics. Nowhere was this clearer than in the public debates over whether Megawati Sukarnoputri⁴ had the right to be president as a woman after the fall of Suharto. The possibility of a woman president leading a Muslim majority nation was a precursor to a new phenomenon in Indonesian society, that of deriving meaning from textual interpretations of Islam, rather than through *adat*— the pre-Islamic customs and traditions in the archipelago. It also meant a reimagining of national ideologies of appropriate womanhood. In such debates surrounding the appropriate role of women in contemporary public life, Islamic parties such as *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* (PPP) aggressively compete for space. For example, as discussed in chapter 3, the controversial 2004 Indonesian Law on the Elimination of Violence in the Household (Law No. 23/2004), Islamic political parties and other organizations were successful in eliminating provisions against polygamy, claiming it a natural right of men under Islamic law. The role of Islam in the everyday lives of women and the politics of the nation continues to be vigorously negotiated.

The meanings of an Indonesian national identity and the appropriate role of women in Indonesian society has been publicly problematized since the fall of Suharto. His regime was marked by an official certainty about these categories, and the state regulated coherent meanings through authorized definitions. The transition from state imposed *ibuisism* to the more emergent concept of “*wanita karir*” or career woman, is being paved by a new generation of Indonesian

⁴ Megawati Sukarnoputri was the leader of the political *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan* (PDI-P) that won the largest share of votes in the 1999 elections. She spent most of her political career leading an opposition to Suharto’s authoritarian rule. Her political influence came from being the daughter of Sukarno, the founding president of independent Indonesia.

youth, both men and women, who model their identities and roles on unique and culturally appropriate interactions and interpretations of a cosmopolitan globalization (Jones 2010a, 2010b). As the future direction of the nation remains delicate, the role of Indonesian women as bearers of a new emerging national identity and modernity is being negotiated and contested through everyday practice.

Interventions

The specific interventions in this dissertation are to reveal the micro negotiations of gendered-power relations that are embedded in the everyday geography of urban space. Giving voice to women and their hidden labor and knowledge of urban space, draws attention to the details of urban travel that may get overlooked, or that are taken for granted. Women who experience fear during travel in urban space on a daily basis are primarily focused on these micro details, the intuitive feeling of being watched, the detailed and specific way a man may look, and where he may put his hands. They are aware of how fast the vehicle is moving, whether the window is open or not, how many other people are present, and how many are fellow women. They know where their purse is and where inside their purse their cell phone is, they know how to change their compartment, to ever so slightly shift body weight in order to turn the other way, to tuck their feet under the bench, and lean against the window, and to do so quietly, meticulously, gracefully. They measure the distance between themselves and others seated next to them. They notice the peeling tinted film on the windows, and the ripped up upholstery. To any unknowing passenger in the vehicle, these details are overlooked; in their view, they may just see a tired women leaning against the window waiting for her stop to come. The emotions behind that image, the carefully thought-out scenarios bubbling in her head and the anxious

sentiment coursing through her veins remains hidden, masked behind the veil of routinized urban transit. A key aim of the dissertation is to reveal these mechanisms and to highlight a gendered perspective on the man-made built environment.

Despite these experiences of fear amid freedom and mobility, women through their carefully constructed awareness of the urban landscape, express for themselves brave acts of agency. Lowering ones gaze, holding a purse tighter, or reciting prayers silently in ones head, at first glance may seem like fearful acts that portray victimhood, anxiety, and worry; however in this dissertation I argue that such tactics, practices, and routines are in fact agentive, for it through these specific and culturally appropriate responses that women are able to find comfort and solace amid a precarious and ever changing urban landscape. These daily routines of travel provide reassurance and anchor a women's sense of self and enhance her confidence, despite feelings of overexposure and vulnerability.

Outline

In chapter 1, titled "The Gender of Infrastructure" I argue that infrastructure systems are not gender neutral, they in fact have a gender. I retool recent of scholarly work on infrastructure in anthropology, which highlights the overlap between material objects and the social and cultural experiences of urban development and economic progress, by adding a gendered lens (Urry 2007; Dalakoglou and Harvey 2012; Larkin 2013).

Gender emerges as a significant point of departure for an investigation of the broader networks and actors that make up an infrastructure because gender as an analytic lens highlights the pervasiveness of power differentials, socially constructed categories and equity issues at the heart of urbanism. Understanding infrastructure as gendered conceptually opens up modes of

investigation that other analytic lens may foreclose, disregard, or otherwise leave unexamined (Law 1999, Larkin 2013). Gendered infrastructures highlight what Soja (and other feminist geographers) have termed the “spatialization of patriarchal power,” a specific geography of patriarchy embedded within the very fabric of urbanism and everyday life in the city (Soja 1989, 2010; Massey 2005). Similarly, I show how the transportation infrastructure of Bandung, contours everyday gendered interactions between men and women thus turning mundane spaces into gendered places (Low 2000, 2003; Low and Lawrence-Zuniga 2005).

In Chapter 2 titled “Slow Violence in Fast Times” I examine the socio-legal concept of street harassment. I investigate street harassment from the lens of structural violence, gender violence and legal violence. As a messy amalgam of all three, the street harassment of women in public space captures the systemic nature of gender inequality, in which specific legal and cultural conditionalities lead to micro-climates of violence. Women experience street harassment as layered with multiple meanings of significance, which then radiate outward with enduring effects. The broader argument this chapter advances is that the prevalence of street harassment in public space and fear from it represents and manifests a “slow violence” which is occurring in fast times (Nixon 2011).

In Chapter 3, “Spatial Practices” I focus on the importance of narrative form in the construction of a feminized social identity. I examine the ways in which women construct the meanings and experiences of harassment through specific narratives that reflect broader changes in Indonesian society (Hefner 1990; Martyn 2005). Based on in-depth interviews with women in Bandung, Indonesia who have experienced sexual harassment in public transit. This chapter investigates how these women negotiate urban space. The chapter follows the daily travel routines and urban spatial practices of a group of women to understand their spatial knowledge

of the city, and reveal the private strategies women develop to avoid risk and harm. In this chapter I connect theories of urbanization with place making to explore how women construct, assemble and resituate knowledge of urban space based on sensorial experiences (Newcomb 2006; Notar 2012). These spatial practices suture together meaning making processes of claim making to urban infrastructure (Koskela 1997; 2000). They highlight when and where female bodies can be in public space safely and what actions are needed to ensure bodily integrity.

In Chapter 4 “Pink Transit and the Limits of Urban Citizenship” I examine global attempts at redesigning public transportation to reduce violence crimes against women. Scholars and city planners alike have drawn on new science and emergent technology to trace out the ways in which women can travel safely in public, however these emergent designs yield to traditional (yet popular) forms of gender segregation, with “pink” gender segregated “women only” compartments and platforms for buses and light rail systems. As modern transportation systems rely on traditional forms of gender segregation, I argue that despite the popularity of these systems, they remain red herring solutions to the more effusive problem of violence against women (Marcus and Clifford 1986; Low and Smith 2006). I conclude that at its core, street harassment emerges as an enduring form of violence against women precisely because it scratches the surface of a far more complicated and timeless question; what is the position of women in a rapidly changing society?

The intellectual contributions of this dissertation emerge from its location at the intersection of feminist anthropology, urban anthropology, and Southeast Asian studies. By investigating violence against women in public transportation and the consequence this carries for female social and economic participation, this project hopes to contribute to the growing

body of research on the politics of mobility and transportation, and the gendering of public policy and infrastructure in the global south.

Chapter 2:

The Gender of Infrastructure

Local media in Bandung was abuzz this foggy September morning as the newly elected mayor of Bandung, Rizdwan Kamil, bicycled into the open-air parking lot that housed numerous parrot-green minivans. As an avid bicycler, mayor Kamil openly promoted bicycling as a healthy and environmentally safe way to travel in the city, he in fact instituted every Friday as an unofficial “bike to work day” in the city. Sporting a bright red helmet and matching wind-breaker jacket, Mr. Kamil departed from the look of most Indonesian politicians and bureaucrats. His distinctively modern sensibility appealed to many of the cities contemporary, tech savvy, eco-friendly millennial’s and youth. Major Kamil came to this unpaved parking lot to trade in his bicycle for the day and instead shuttle around passengers as an angkot driver in the city. Today was the first ever Angkot Day, a herculean effort organized by a small group of passionate, motivated, recent college graduates, who in there words were “fed up with *macet* [traffic congestion].”

On Angkot Day, the route along Kebong Kalapa - Dago (one of the 38 public minivan routes in the city) would be free for passengers from 5am to 7pm. The angkot drivers for that route would be paid upfront for their labor, thus eliminating the need for them to drive erratically to pick up passengers, or engage in long wait times to fill up the minivan. The objective was for passengers to experience what an efficient and safe angkot travel looked and felt like.

In an open air café, the organizer of the event, Seterhen Akbar explained, “the goal is to show that every angkot can be operated more quickly, orderly and comfortably” adding that “passengers would no have qualms about using the public minivans if they were quick and comfortable.” Over coffee he explained that the basic premise of Angkot Day was to encourage

the city to improve the existing public transit system; not necessarily build costly new infrastructure and introduce costly new transit systems.

Angkots are synonymous with the urban landscape in Bandung. They represent a symbol of mobility and urban infrastructure, and have informally become a mascot for the city. You can find the image of the green angkot on all forms of souvenirs from Bandung. It is commonly seen on t-shirts, bags, magnets, keychains, postcards and stickers. Any visitor to the city will immediately notice their presence on public streets and in front of major tourist attractions. For locals, it is not uncommon to see visitors taking selfies in front of and inside the angkot.

Seterhan, like many residents of Bandung, is fed up with the constant congestion and traffic jams that plague his city. Bandung's sister city Jakarta, is internationally known to have the worst traffic conditions in the world. In 2015, Jakarta was ranked number 1, as *the most* congested city in the world, according to the Castrol Stop-Start Index. This index examined traffic conditions in 78 cities and regions around the world (excluding India and Vietnam). The index used data shared anonymously by millions of TomTom navigation device users around the world to measure the average stops and starts made per kilometer within each city, which was then multiplied by the average distance driven per year (Citation).

Responding to the survey, Jakarta Governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, commonly known as 'Ahok', acknowledged the reality of Jakarta's notorious traffic congestion saying "Of course it is. So long as Jakarta doesn't have a decent rail-based mass transportation system, we will always be congested," he said (Jakarta Post). Even for the governor of the national capital, traffic congestion seems inevitable and constant.

Similar sentiments are felt in the neighboring city of Bandung. Many residents in Bandung, openly worry that their city will eventually become just like Jakarta, defined by urban

density, traffic congestion, pollution and crime. Seterhan, the organizer of Angkot Day, shares those concerns. As a new father he worries about what his city will be like for his daughter. Anxiety about the future of Bandung is what motivated him to organize his “social experiment” (his words)—free public transit, free angkots.

The event was widely hailed as a success. Individuals who did not typically use the angkot system to travel were lured in by the free ride. Most people opted to park their motorbikes and cars at homes, or use the angkots for smaller trips up and down the Kebong Kalapa – Dago route. The angkot drivers were also pleased with the event, not only were they paid up front for their labor, they relished in the media attention that came with the Angkot Day.

Angkot drivers in Bandung, as in much of the archipelago, are barely able to earn a living wage. Many drivers struggle to pay the daily rental charge from angkot/minivan owners. Passenger numbers are quickly decreasing, and fuel prices (which drivers are responsible for) are increasing. The media attention that came with the newly elected mayor’s decision to work with the drivers, thus symbolically stepping in their shoes for the day, was energizing for the drivers. They hoped that the media and political attention would lead to an increase in ridership, and thus an increase in their standard of living.

A year after Angkot Day, I met Seterhan again, and asked him about the broader impact of the Angkot Day event. He replied with guilt “I feel like I let the driver’s down, they want to do another Angkot Day, to make it more regular, but how am I suppose to get the funds to do it again?” Seterhan’s interest in urban mobility was supported by a perfect storm of interests. He had crowd funded the entire Angkot Day experiment through various digital platforms, and when larger social interest groups such as the Bandung Creative City Forum and Greeneration Indonesia came on broad, his vision slowly unfolded into a reality. But how could a social

activist, researcher and entrepreneur like Seterhan get the stars to align again? He was feeling pressure from the angkot drivers, just when others had moved on to different causes.

It was clear that after the Angkot day, initial interest in the angkots and the plight of angkot drivers, soon wore off. Most residents in Bandung returned to using their private vehicles and motorbikes to travel in the city, and those who could not afford the luxury of private mobility, remained reliant on the public minivan service, which due to higher fuel costs and staggering ridership remains chaotic in its operations.

The Angkot Day was a sobering lesson for the young social activists and entrepreneurs organized by Seterhan. They had learned that while most residents in Bandung complain about the looming transit crisis ahead, very few individuals are willing to give up on private mobility in exchange for the traditional public transit system. As Seterhan noted, “maybe the solution is to just wait for a modern transportation infrastructure, until then, the angkots are a dying system.”

Joshua Barker and Johan Lindquist argue for a new type of anthropological methodology, one which identifies, interrogates, and contrasts “key figures” against the backdrop of modernity as a way to investigate sociocultural changes over time. They argue that “key figures” represent distinct characters that emerge from broader processes, characters that develop over time and uniquely interact with one another. Modernity becomes the backdrop for a discussion of these key figures because it highlights “the pervasive effects of capitalism and commodification, a deep ambivalence about older figures of authority, and the emergence of new claims to authority” (Barker et al. 2009:38).

Their method of understanding modernity through key figures is similar to the way Raymond Williams identifies “keywords” as particular sites for investigation of conceptual formations and their contestations (Williams 1985). The article identified 14 distinct figures of

Indonesian modernity, which included diverse characters such as a Muslim television preacher, a person with HIV/AIDS, a career woman and street children. All 14 key figures in their article represent diverse socio-economic positions throughout the archipelago at a unique moment in time.⁵

The key figures methodology is useful in identifying the emergence of certain types of people at important historical junctions. The emergence of street children during economic decline, preachers and religious community groups during a period of Islamic revival, and the visibility of career women during economic growth and liberalization, all index the interplay between the formation of unique identities against the back drop of changing times. In all these instances, specific categories of people come to represent larger socio-cultural, political or economic processes taking form. However, the key figures methodology may have the unintended consequence of stereotyping unique groups and unifying their experiences, desires, and outcomes, inadvertently highlighting stereotypical characteristics over more nuanced, enduring, and complex subjectivities.

In what follows, I apply the key figures methodology, and view it not through the lens of a particular type of person, but instead view it through the materiality of the angkot and the multiple interactions that different types of people have with this material object of socio-economic value. The angkot emerges as a “key figure” because it uniquely interacts with various emergent socio-political identities, and deeply resonates with multiple variances those interactions produce. Seterhans relationship to the angkot starkly contrasts with angkot drivers and owners, who are more intimately connected to the angkot system. In ways such as this, the angkot deeply structures distinct social, political, cultural and economic formations among diverse individuals.

⁵ Post-Suharto dictatorship (and post-New Order politics).

In this chapter I represent the Bandung angkot as a figure of Indonesian modernity, because it uniquely brings together and simultaneously divides people in the urban city. As a symbol and unofficial mascot of Bandung it offers an urban imaginary of mobility *and* uncertainty. I examine how the angkot represents a ‘thirdspace’ of modernity, what I call a *transit space*, one that is wedged between the traditional dichotomies of public and private space. As such, the angkot is caught in a unique web of social, political, and economic interactions between diverse peoples and technologies.

The enduring yet precarious nature of the angkot transit system points to broader questions of efficient and safe urban mobility, contrasted against the erratic daily experiences that some public infrastructures elicit in the global south. I begin by exploring the gender of this urban infrastructure, and reveal what it means for infrastructure to be *gendered*.

The Gender of Infrastructure

I met pak Endi at a popular *warung* (roadside food stall) near the Dago angkot depot. Pak Endi was an angkot owner who rented out his minivans to drivers along the Kabong Kalapa-Dago route. We were meeting this October morning to discuss his participation in the Angkot Day ‘experiment’ organized by my interlocutor Mr. Seterhan. Over sweet ice tea (*ais teh manis*) and a plate of traditional fritters (*gorengan*), he described his entire life story, how he ended up in the angkot business, and the challenges that face him. Towards the end of our time together, I asked him about the future of the angkot system and its relationship to the other transit systems that the mayor’s office was proposing, he replied by using a gendered metaphor to describe the angkot:

“The angkot is a female space, most of our riders are mothers (*ibu-ibu*) and housewives (*ibu rumah tangga*). They are dependent on the angkot. Motorbikes and automobiles, those are used by men. If a family can afford a motorbike the husband will use it and his wife and children will use the angkot. You know, the angkot is safe (*aman*) for women, but the new transportation system (monorail) that will not be safe for women. Everyone close together and cramped. The future will be like Jakarta.”

Pak Endi’s remarks immediately sparked a range of questions, which I quickly scribbled down in my notebook, “Does infrastructure have a gender? Is infrastructure gender neutral? What does it even mean to say that infrastructure is gendered?”

In this section, I argue that there are three ways to analyze the gender of infrastructure. Gender emerges as a significant point of departure for an investigation of the broader networks and actors that make up an infrastructure because gender as an analytic lens highlights the pervasiveness of power differentials, socially constructed categories and equity issues at the heart of urbanism. Understanding infrastructure as gendered conceptually opens up modes of investigation that other analytic lens may foreclose, disregard, or otherwise leave unexamined. Gendered infrastructures highlight what Soja (and other feminist geographers) have termed the “spatialization of patriarchal power,” a specific geography of patriarchy embedded within the very fabric of urbanism and everyday life in the city (Soja 1996). I argue that transportation infrastructures like the angkots of Bandung, become the gendered fabric of an urbanism which contours everyday life for its residents.

Infrastructure as material object:

First, we have to think of infrastructure as merely material objects (pipes, wires, concrete, steel, paper etc.), which create or support other objects that people engage with. In this understanding of infrastructure as material object, gender may appear neutral or non-existent. The materialities of objects in and of themselves do not have a gender. For example, roads are essentially just arrangements of concrete, tar, wires, and paint. In this initial basic view, these objects and their material properties appear gender neutral. However, a deeper investigation of material objects highlights how materialities produce deeply complex systems of affect and representation. Affect, the emotions and sensorial experiences of an individual, are mediated through and projected onto the simple material objects that collectively form an infrastructural system. Here it is important to point out that affect is not only an embodied and enduring range of emotions and experiences, affect in and of itself is a gendered phenomenon.

At first glance the minivan transit system in Bandung appears to be a loosely coordinated yet highly erratic form of transportation in the city. The green minivans that dot the urban landscape are both loved and vilified by local residents. Angkots in Bandung represent a unique iconography of the urban city. Their green image is sported on various souvenirs and decals, they are instantly recognized, yet each minivan is unique. Some angkots are newer with shiny paint jobs and clean interiors, while the vast majority are older with ripped up seating, rusted metal and peeling tint film on the windows. Others are “modified” with large speaker systems and graffiti like artwork, they are “done up” by young drivers who feel that if they are going to drive around the city for 10 hours at a time, they might as well do it “in style”.

Contrastingly, there are other angkots who are adorned with more religious effects, prayer beads dangling from the rear view mirror, a Quran tucked above the driver’s sun-

protector, with a recording of Arabic verses faintly playing in the background. All of these material objects convey deeply enduring (and gendered) forms of affect. One could argue that each angkot, represents the unique sensibilities of their drivers or owners, sensibilities which are conveyed through the various material objects that make each minivan unique. Since all angkot drivers in Bandung are men, the angkots signify a masculine space and masculine sensibility about “style” or “religiosity” or “piousness”. The angkots and their material effects are understood as private property, owned, operated and controlled by men. In Bandung, only men drive and own angkots, and thus claim the spaces of public transit as masculine. Passengers who travel in the minivans feel this claim of ownership by the drivers; the space of the minivan is not communal, it is rather a unique form of male private property *lent out* to the public. Drivers often scorn passengers to sit closer to each other to make room for others, or they scorn them for littering, or carry too many bags that crowds the limited interior. This claim over space, and the material people and objects that inhabit it, further reflect the masculine sensibility of transit infrastructure.

Infrastructure as circulation and organization of material objects

Second we examine the circulation and organization of material objects, and highlight how interactions with such objects express complex cultural forms. In this second view of infrastructure, the analytic lens is focused not just on the material objects that make up an “infrastructure,” but also on who has *access* to that infrastructural system. In this second view, the organization of objects refers to the planning and design of objects for use or consumption. Specifically, I am referring to how material objects are constructed and designed for use and then circulated by others.

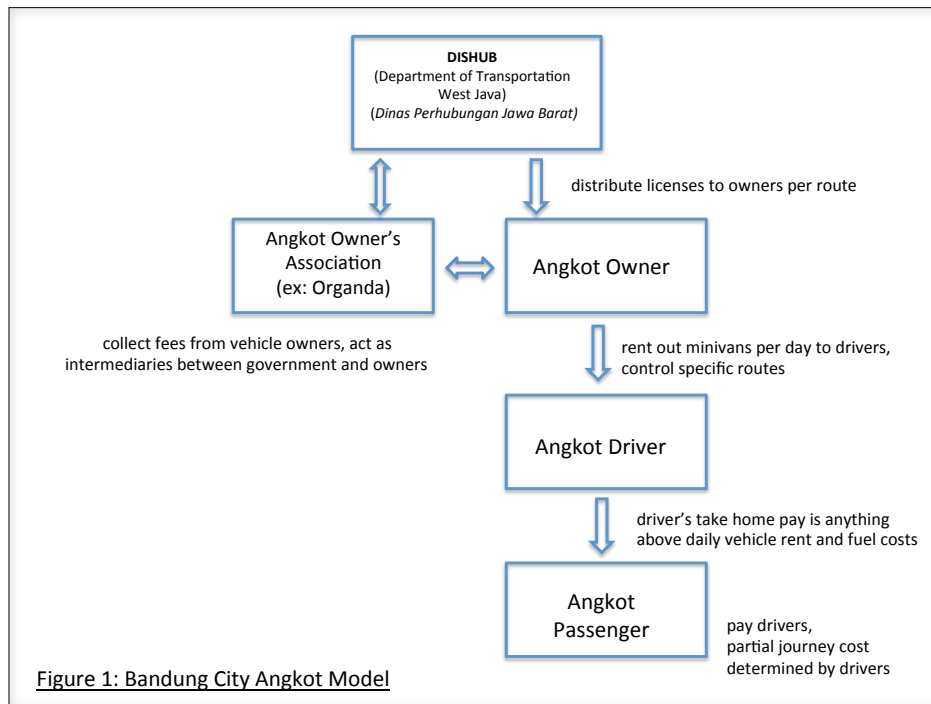
Planning of infrastructure may be thought of as a technical process in which sophisticated tools and methods are brought to bear on public concerns. However, it is important to stress that the entire planning process involves decisions and choices between sometimes competing interests and values. In this view, planning (and policy making in general) are value judgments at its most basic core, in which infrastructure emerges as an outcome. As such, infrastructure in this second view is two pronged, it is material object but more importantly, it is also a unique value-laden arrangement of that object, which privileges certain concepts and constructions over others. The design, organization, and arrangement of material object becomes an important analytic point of departure precisely because it questions who is allowed to design for whom? Who has access to the wider infrastructural system, and importantly who does not?

Material objects that make up an infrastructural system in this regard are mediating devices, which bring together (or pull apart) an assemblage of people, ideas, and things (Larkin 2008). In this second view of infrastructure, by asking who has organized the system and who has (or does not have) access to it, infrastructure emerges as the conduit of broader socio-cultural and economic contestations in which gender emerges as a significant point of departure. The turn in anthropology to study infrastructures as cultural forms, thus layer the organization and interaction of material objects on top of deeply enduring socio-political formations of inequality, justice, power, and order. If the first view of infrastructure is based on material objects, this second view of infrastructure is based on a deep entanglement between broader social-political interfaces with those objects and the assemblages that sustain them.

For example, the Bandung angkot system is designed and implemented by the Department of Transportation West Java (*Dinas Perhubungan Jawa Barat, DISHUB*). The angkot system is a licensing system, in which the minivan owner's apply for licenses along the

38 routes in the city. Each vehicle can only operate one route, and once the license is granted to the minivan owner, the owner rents out the angkot to drivers who operate that route. DISHUB solely determines which route the minivans operate, and how many angkots are assigned to each route. Each owner of the minivan must also become a member of a transportation owners association, the largest of which is *Organda*, (Organization of Land Vehicles). These owners' associations maintain relationships with licensing and regulatory authorities and act as intermediaries in case of traffic offenses and accidents. Importantly they maintain monopolies on access to specific routes in the city. No vehicle may operate unless the vehicle owner or driver is a member of an association and has paid membership fees. The entire transit infrastructure in Bandung is designed and implemented by these two authorities, the licensing agency (DISHUB) and the various owners associations.

Here the power and authority of efficient public transit rests on the parochial shoulders of a bureaucratic regime and its clients. The angkot transit planning design, creates unique patron-client relationships, with the potential for corruption (in the form of kick-backs) between licensing agencies and minivan owners (and their associations). Monopolizing the transit infrastructure, these two authorities have essentially created a rigid system that is inflexible to change. Those at the top of the chain enjoy their position over others (see figure 1). Licensing authorities exert power over angkot owners' associations, who then exert control and demand fees from angkot owners, who exert power over drivers through rent seeking behavior. The drivers thus over charge passengers and engage in erratic and sometimes dangerous driving in order to seek out a decent living wage.



In the province of West Java, the angkot travel fares are determined by mayoral decree and range from 2000 IDR to 6000 IDR. The fares are designed to be inclusive of low-class residents in the city, who cannot afford private vehicles. In practice, solely angkot drivers determine fares. The mayoral decree specifies the full-distance fare of each angkot route. However, fares for part-distance journeys are at the discretion of the driver. Most passengers travel only on a small proportion of the designated route, yet drivers can charge for the full route length. Many passengers complain about this inconsistency, because the same portion of a route can cost different amounts varying solely on the driver's discretion. As one fellow angkot rider complained to me "Bandung has two mafias, first land mafia, second transportation mafia."

It is evident that passengers' origins and destinations are much more diverse than the limited route network currently in place and that a high proportion of passengers must use two or more angkot routes, and pay two or more fares, to complete their journeys. For this reason, the

average fare paid per journey may be double the average fare per boarding. What was initially designed as a low-cost transit system is in fact too expensive for most low-class residents in the city.⁶

The Bandung angkot system reflects the interests and experiences of the individuals and groups that maintain power over this infrastructural system. Men in positions of power manage all significant nodes of transit policy, from licensing agreements, to route determination, ownership and vehicle operation. As such, the entire system is operated from a male perspective, determining and deciding the overall contours of the transit infrastructure.

By highlighting the planning of infrastructure, and who has access to it, this second mode of analysis highlights how issues around infrastructure operate in the field of power and inequality. Feminist concerns with infrastructure planning and organization are expressed within the context of prioritizing equity issues. Bandung's transit infrastructure is planned and organized by men (some in a position of great power), but it impacts *all* segments of society in unique ways (women, children, low-class residents). It is this link, between planning and its effect on society, where a gendered lens becomes critical. Gender encourages one to think about how the organization of infrastructure produces inequality and inaccessibility. Gender as an analytic framework highlights variances in experience and access, power differentials, and the structures and logics that keep them in place. Stressing the gendered nature of infrastructure means investigating both positions of power and conditions of vulnerabilities, with the intent goal of bridging the gap between the two.

⁶ Some residents claim that the public-transit system is in fact *more* expensive than purchasing a motor-bike. The real cost of private mobility they argue is not the motorbike itself, it's the petrol, maintenance, and parking fees needed that makes private mobility out of reach.

Infrastructure as meanings and practices around objects

A third view of gendered infrastructure highlights how varying interactions with infrastructure generate culturally significant meanings and practices. These meanings and practices emerge from contestations over access *to*, and the planning and organization *of*, an infrastructural system. In this third view, infrastructure emerges as a system of gendered objects precisely because the organization of an infrastructural system disparately impacts the experience of and access to that system. As Brian Larkin has argued, infrastructure, refers to “this totality of both technical and cultural systems that create institutionalized structures whereby goods of all sorts circulate, connecting and binding people in collectivities” (Larkin 2008:6). Highlighting infrastructure as *gendered*, then emphasizes the ways in which infrastructural systems become institutionalized structures of gendered meanings and practices, which circulate, connect, but also segregate and isolate, people into collectivities. This third analytic view brings into focus how questions of access and organization impact experiences of infrastructure, governing subjectivities and importantly the meaning making processes that follow from the interplay between people and object. Gendered infrastructure in this understanding emerges as contingent form, reliant on the various nodes of consumption deeply embedded within forms of sociality.

If the second view of infrastructure highlights how power and inequality form the core of infrastructural design and planning, this third view of infrastructure stresses the representations, meanings, and practices that emerge from such processes. This third view decenters the focus on technology and planning, instead bringing forward the varying forms of interaction and meanings generated by infrastructural systems as a whole. Meanings and practices attached to the whole system elucidate how claims to urban infrastructure are mediated by varying subject positions such as class, gender, race or religion.

In Bandung, the urban transit system as a whole is in a continual state of flux. Passengers who rely on the public minivans, and private vehicles that share the road with the minivans, each develop unique meanings and practices around this infrastructural system based on their unique subject positions and experiences.

For example, it is common knowledge in Bandung that the public minivans do not follow a clear time-table nor do they comply with designated pick up/drop off locations. Angkots pick up and drop off passengers anywhere on a loosely defined route. They also engage in long wait times at certain unofficial designations, in order to fill up (or overfill) the minivan. Thus the angkots are viewed as completely erratic and unpredictable.

In order to deal with the precarious nature of the public transit system, passengers have developed unique practices and meanings associated with travel in the city. For example, before I began following Gina, a 26 year old manager at a retail store, to work in the morning and evening, she was quick to give me advice on what I should wear and bring during our 40 minute commute. Her instructions over the phone were clear, to wear modest clothing, always bring water to stay hydrated, comfortable shoes, and bring a bag/purse that can be zipped shut, as a precaution against petty theft. When we met in person on our first day, I meticulously documented the way Gina picked up angkots, the unique gestures she used to get their attention to pull over, how she would sit in the same seat on each angkot (next to the window), and reject an angkot if that seat was unavailable. She had an entire repertoire of movement and alternative back up plans in case her angkot unexpected took a different route, or decided to wait unpredictably at a stop to fill up more passengers, or pull over at a gas station unannounced. Throughout my conversations with Gina, it was abundantly clear that she harbored deep

resentments against the entire transit system as a whole, for its ballooning commute times and increasingly unsafe and uncomfortable spaces for women.

Gina often compared her commute to that of her younger brother Tito (who is also reliant on the public minivan). She noted how her brother did not have to worry about clothing when he travels by *angkot*. Gina, on the other hand, is painstakingly careful to dress modestly (but also fashionably). She resented the fact that she had limitations on what she could wear in public transit. She noted two limitations: first, clothes for public transit must be loose fitting, because one is sitting in a cramped (often hot) environment, the clothes must be loose and not tight. This led to the second limitation, they must mask the body figure, not accentuate it. Attire for public transit must cover a woman's backside and chest and not expose any skin, because the *angkot* requires one to bend forward and crouch down while getting in and out, the backside and chest must not reveal any skin. Gina added that tight clothing and exposed skin elevated the risk of getting unwanted looks or other forms of harassment.

Gina, wears a *jilbab* (hijab) and covers her hair in public. When I asked her if her *jilbab* made her feel more or less of a target for harassment, she quickly noted that her *jilbab* made no difference, because one could wear the “*jilbab* in a fashionable way”. She added, “I still feel unsafe when wearing my *jilbab*, what would happen to me if I didn't, I don't want to know.” When using the *angkot*, she says she must to wear it in a simple style, in an effort not to attract attention. She further noted, that if she had a car, she could dress anyway she wanted, there was more privacy. She was trying to save up enough money for a car, but it was difficult because her savings ended up going towards other unexpected household emergencies, such as medical bills for her ill mother. If she had a car (private mobility) she felt she could wear brighter bolder colors, and tighter more fashionable tops and long skirts. Her personal choice of dress was thus

mediated by social restraints set in motion by a larger transit system dominated and occupied by men. Fear of harassment in public space set limits on what was acceptable and what was not; these social limits were set only for women in public space (they did not apply to her brother), and thus restricted her creative self-expression.

Gina also noted that Tito never worried about what he carried with him when he traveled. He could carry all sorts of expensive gadgets (his computer tablet for example). On the other hand, Gina felt that being a woman made her a unique target for petty crime; she therefore had to think carefully about the risks of traveling with expensive technology. Fear of crime impacted her decisions regarding jewelry. She would never travel wearing expensive jewelry, made of real (*asli*) gold or silver. When asked if her brother felt the same way about an expensive watch for example, Gina shrugged her shoulders, replying; “I don’t think he notices.”

The angkot system emerges as a gendered infrastructural system because gender is mediated through the unique meanings and practices that encompass the interaction between people and object. Gina and Tito’s varying perceptions of personal safety differentiate the gendered experiences and meanings of urban transit. These varying experiences elucidate how infrastructure so intimately impacts and contours the daily life choices of individuals. As such, infrastructure as a gendered system highlights the importance of varying experiences and interactions that impact larger socio-political processes of (safe) access to the urban outdoors. Gina’s trepidation at dressing the way she wants, reinforces the angkot as a public domain of male dominance and thus a zone of insecurity. Her brothers seeming lack of such awareness highlights his alternative experience, in which the angkot is a space of familiarity, demarcated through an ease of access signified by his male gender.

Evaluating the gender of infrastructure highlights how infrastructure operates on multiple levels concurrently. Infrastructural systems index not only material, technical and bureaucratic functions (associated with power and inequality), but also point out how the mobile spaces of transit mediate varying exchanges between people and ideas (ideas about appropriate dress, safety, access). Transportation infrastructures in particular, emphasize how access to public space is deeply entangled with broader ideas about the propriety of women, and their appropriate place within the realm of the public sphere.

Transportation is uniquely situated at the junction between the conditions and experiences of everyday life, and larger developmental goals associated with broader notions of “modernity,” epitomized by large infrastructural investments. As such the angkots of Bandung represent an infrastructure that is past its prime. It represents the dream of an old, worn-out promise of modern mobility for the masses. Highlighting the gendered nature of this infrastructure punctuates the emergent fault lines at play. As women become increasingly visible in public space and increasingly rely on public transportation systems, traditional notions of gender rub up against contemporary realities of modern mobility. In the next section, I show how the presence of women in transit space complicates the traditional dichotomies of public and private space. As such, transit space emerges as a major fault line between a traditional past and a much sought after future.

Transit Space as ‘Thirdspace’

In the first two sentences of the introduction to *Thirdspace*, Edward Soja writes,

“My objective in *Thirdspace* can be simply stated. It is to encourage you to think differently about the meanings and significances of space and those related

concepts that compose and comprise the inherent *spatiality of human life*: place, location, locality, landscape, environment, home, city, region, territory and geography” (Soja, 1996:1) emphasis in original.

I read spatiality as a deeply enduring, lived, actionable experience of one’s built environment and surrounding infrastructure. For the residents of Bandung, the “inherent spatiality of human life” manifests itself through the daily experiences of transit, the ubiquitous task of getting from point A to point B, safely and on time. Transit, the condition of being *en route*, impacts the residents of metropolitan areas in unique ways. For the residents of the megacity Jakarta, *macet* (traffic congestion) has deeply interpolated daily life in unique (and often frustrating) ways. Jakarta’s experience with rapid development and urbanization casts a wide shadow, fanning anxieties about a looming transit crisis in neighboring Bandung. But aside from the daily grind of getting from point A to point B, spaces of transit and the condition of transit, reveals another type of spatiality, one which disrupts traditional orderings of space. In this section, I examine transit space as an emergent “thirdspace” of sociality, a space uniquely situated between the traditional dichotomies of public and private space.

In *The Production of Space*, Henri Lefebver argues that there are two types of spaces; the first is representations *of* space, and the second is representational spaces. Representations *of* space refers to conceptualized space. He defines it as “the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers, and social engineers... with a *scientific bent*. All of whom identify *what is* lived, and *what is* perceived with *what is* conceived” (Lefebvre 1992: 38) emphasis mine. This space is held by those is a position of power, it is a dominant space in society because from this vantage point, one has the capacity to privilege, demarcate, and order space *for others*. In

Bandung this space is occupied by government planners, bureaucrats, engineers and auditors; individuals who have collectively conceived, created and implemented the current angkot transit system. In such a view, public space, and the spaces of transit are both malleable (or extremely rigid) to fit the needs of those in political or economic power.

Representational space is space that is “directly *lived* through its associated images and symbols” (Lefebvre 1992: 39, emphasis in original). Representational space is the space of ‘inhabitants’ and ‘users,’ this space encompasses a wider system of symbols and signs that are associated with certain spaces and their material objects. For example the angkot space is associated with social restrictions on appropriate dress for Juli, while for her brother Tito the angkot simply signifies mobility. Even still for angkot owners like pak Endi, the angkot represents his livelihood and a source of income that is slowly diminishing. In ways such as this, transit space and the angkot infrastructure that inhabits it, take on larger meanings and practices by individuals, each of whom have unique interactions with that space.

Moreover, representational space may passively be experienced and internalized by others. In this interpretation, representational space becomes an ambient setting, which utilizes physical space as a signaling device for broader meanings and associations. Angkot drivers who adorn their minivans with Islamic effects such as prayer beads and Quranic stickers, are consciously creating an ambient setting punctuating piety and religiosity. Contrastingly, other drivers who modify their minivans with loud sound systems, and punk rock graffiti are instead signaling a more youthful and rebellious identity.

The contradictions inherent in interactions between these representations *of* space and representational space, is what Lefebvre famously develops as the contestations over “the right to the city.” As he later notes, “spatial contradictions ‘express’ conflicts between socio-political

interests and forces; it is only *in* space that such conflicts come effectively into play, and in doing so they become contradictions *of* space” (Lefebvre 1992:365 emphasis in original).

Contestations over space, highlight the emergence of “spatial practices” which encompass the interaction between a person’s daily reality (daily routines) and their urban reality (the built environment associated with ones routines). For Lefebvre spatial practices form the core of urban experiences, in which daily life (and its attendant routines) overlap with a specifically constructed built environment and infrastructure. This overlap produces deeply enduring socio-political meanings that interpolate individuals in unique ways; and this is what he refers to as the “production of social space”.

In Bandung, the spaces of transit, specifically the sidewalk, the street, and the angkot, become the representational spaces of both mobility and insecurity. The sidewalk, the street, and the angkot encompass a dichotomous vision of movement and also paralysis, mobility and immobility, density and singularity. For women, transit space emerges as a space of possibility, filled with the potentialities of access to the urban outdoors, while simultaneously encompassing a zone of insecurity, social restriction, and fear. Moreover, transit space in Bandung also occupies a ‘representation *of* space’ for urban planners, designers, government officials and social activists⁷. For these individuals, the spaces of transit prove to be uniquely static and difficult to change precisely because they are intrinsically embedded within economic and political systems of patronage. From their vantage point, transit space in Bandung emerges as a battleground for urban infrastructure modernization. As such the angkot transit system as a whole emerges as a battle target that needs to be isolated and reinvented or legislated out of existence with emergent technology (such as light rail transit or a monorail system both of which the current mayor of Bandung has vigorously campaigned for). In this view angkot drivers and

⁷ such as Seterhan mentioned in the narrative at the stated of this chapter

owners are precariously positioned, for their entire livelihood and way of being is on the line, shakily nestled between an unsatisfied public and equally unsatisfied government.

The experiences of multiple actors engaged with public transit infrastructure in Bandung, highlight how public space and public transportation produce diverse meanings and practices based on their varying positions. Angkot riders (both men and women) angkot owners and drivers, and government licensing authorities all engage with the transit system in unique ways and approach it differently. Each of these unique vantage points in turn highlight a range of expectations regarding public transit, and thus create a field of contradictory and contested space. This is what makes public space, and particularly public transit so unique, those who inhabit it construct its meanings and practices. At the same time, public space and public transit (as a form of infrastructure) govern and contour what those possibilities can be and how they can be expressed.

Soja's use of the word "thirdspace" is strongly based on Lefebvre's formulations. He argues that firstspace forms the basis of epistemology, of concrete material spaces that can be empirically mapped and quantified, (this is Lefebvre's' representations *of* space). Secondspace, refers to how those conceived ideas about material space are represented and (re)imagined, in unique patterns and orders *en infinitum*, (this is Lefebvre's representational space). Finally, arriving at thirdspace, in which first and second space are synthesized and then translated into a "potentially emancipatory praxis" (Soja 1996: 22).

My use of "thirdspace" builds on Lefebvre and Soja's formulations, in which spatiality is a deeply enduring, lived, actionable experience of the build environment. As such I argue that transit space becomes the battleground for emergent conflicts over who can (and cannot) have (safe) access to the urban doors. Transit space as thirdspace, is thus positioned as an

inbetweenness, in which the lived experiences of daily life rub up against the changing realities of broader urban (and political) processes. There are eight characteristics of transit space that make it uniquely placed between traditional dichotomies of public and private space. These eight characteristics indicate how transit space emerges as a site of deep conflict interpolated by broader socio-cultural processes.

Transit space in Bandung is one that is centered on the movement of bodies and goods that are neither in private, nor completely public space. This is what makes angkot transit space so unique, it is a form of public urban transportation, which is reliant on privately owned vehicles, operated by non-government employees. Angkot drivers hold allegiance to minivan owners (who pay drivers their daily income); they do not hold allegiance to any government or regulatory agency. As such, this transit space becomes economic space, not just for the owners and drivers who rely on ridership fees as a source of income, but also for the riders themselves who depend on angkots as their only mode of transportation to get to work or school. Public transit becomes essential to riders who need to commute to work because without urban mobility these residents would find it very hard to engage in employment.

This quality is also what makes transit space a routinized space. Riders that rely on public minivans to get to work or school, follow the same (or similar routes) everyday. Reliance on this mode of transit in the city produces repetitive and routinized practices and meanings, such that picking up an angkot and getting off an angkot becomes a 'second nature'. These routinized practices consist of behaviors and interactions that people engage in on a daily basis with enduring effects of familiarity. Importantly, this routine behavior is social, (it is not insulated) and it requires social interaction.

For example, while living in Bandung I would walk down a small hill with my three-year-old son every morning to pick up an angkot at an intersection commonly referred to as ‘gandok.’ During our walk down the hill we would see the morning routines of the shopkeepers that lined the street. Some were brushing dirt away from their small patch of sidewalk and lining their wares to sell for the day. Food sellers were busy chopping away at vegetables they bought from the early morning markets. Others were starting small barbecue fires to begin roasting and frying fish to offer at lunch. Our morning routine on the way to school overlapped with the routines of others. We smiled, nodded our heads and said ‘good morning’ (*salamat pagi*) to all those we encountered on our way down the hill. These interactions may not necessarily lead to conversations or chitchat, but it demanded one to be cognizant of the people around you. Our morning walk to pick up an angkot became familiar; it created connections not only with people, but also with objects. My son memorized where the big cracks in the sidewalk were, which ones he could jump over, which ones he had to walk around. He knew which pieces of concrete were stable and which ones were uneven and wobbly. I learned how to cross a heavily congested street with a toddler in my arms. I became cognizant of sewage run off and where the blind spots of traffic were most likely. The street and the sidewalk was not just a transit space, a space of mobility, for many urban residents like us, it was also a routinized social space.

The socialness of transit space emerges as an outcome of urban density. For example, my morning routine with my son in Indonesia was drastically different from that of our suburban home in the United States. In Bandung, our day was punctuated with multiple levels of social interaction with various people, (the people we saw as we walked down the hill and the people that sat next to us in the angkot). In our suburban setting, our entire morning routine occurred

without interacting with anyone else, largely because most suburban settings like ours required individualized auto-mobility.

The social and urban nature of angkots, (and public transit in general) draws attention to transit space as gendered space, as discussed in the previous sections. Women especially must be vigilant about their environments while traveling by public minivan, to be watchful of crime or harassment. This in turn highlights how men and women have uniquely different practices and meanings regarding public transit in Bandung. Such varying experiences underscore how public transit infrastructure emerges as a gendered space.

Lastly, public transit is a space of both mobility and agency. Traveling in the urban city, getting from point A to point B is a mobile act but it also has a deeper meaning. Mobility broadly defined has come to mark the contemporary human condition. Conceptually, it has been linked to themes of freedom, connectivity, progress and development (Urry 2000).⁸

Mobility in the urban cities like Bandung carries these attributes. Being able to travel outside the home, for work or leisure, encompasses both a feeling of freedom and progress but also necessity. Modern urban living demands that individuals, both men and women, have access to the urban outdoors as a way to productively engage with employment, schooling, leisure and other forms of consumption. Therefore, transit space as mobile space reflects the idea that mobility in daily life articulates and enables individual agency while simultaneously being

⁸ Mobility is read in positive spatial terms (as in “upward mobility”) in relation to class and socio-economic status; it has been read as something that one strives for, and if unattainable, unfortunate or regrettable (Leitchy 2002). Mobility has also been associated with various claims on citizenship and the ability to travel and engage in movement freely; in this regard it is linked to life opportunities, and quality of life. Gender, individual income and citizenship status greatly influence one’s ability and natural right to engage in movement (physical, socio-economic or political) (Chavez 1998, 2008).

structured by it. In this view the precarious nature of transit space that impinges on mobility also restricts individual agency.

Transit space is a space for the expression of agency because it indexes how public mobility is entangled with a sense of possibility, confidence, and personal growth, all of which is required when living in urban settings. To be able to travel in the city is a critical expression of a distinctively modern sensibility. Walter Benjamin's nineteenth century depiction of Baudelaire's *flaneur*, a lone male stroller walking through a Parisian arcade, exemplifies this sentiment. Benjamin's depiction of the *flaneur* was a man who was at ease in public space, in tune with his role in observing the beauty of the distinctively modern urban setting arising around him. The *flaneur* represented freedom and intellectual curiosity amid a changing social and cultural landscape. Importantly, these romanticized writings highlight the *flaneur* (a Parisian man) and *flanerie* (strolling and people watching) as a masculine domain because the public street is constructed and internalized as a masculine space. However this same privilege is not afforded to women, as their female bodies are seen as out of place in public.

Take for example the case of Miss Elizabeth Cass who was arrested in South London for streetwalking (prostitution) on Regent Street in June of 1887, around the time of Baudelaire's writings. A police officer had seen her being accosted by multiple men in the evening. Coming from a respectable North London family, she profusely protested her innocence, stating that she was simply out to buy a pair of gloves, and was ambushed by uncouth individuals. The animated court case that followed produced numerous testimonies to validate Miss Cass's character. The public campaign against false accusations demanded "the right to be private in public," for respectable women to be as "safe in Regent-street as in their own drawing room" (Walkowitz 1998:9-10). Eventually the magistrate dismissed the streetwalking charge, but strongly cautioned

Miss Cass that no *respectable* woman would be found *walking alone* on Regent Street at nine in the evening.

The public street has long been identified as a masculine space. As depicted in these accounts, the street in nineteenth century Europe, as in much of the world, has been a space where women were restricted, a place of male dominance. In that time there were clear norms regarding social geography concerning where, when and with whom, women could be out and about. One could argue that not much has changed in much of the world today.

The problem of street harassment, and official blindness to it as experienced by Miss Cass, has no geographical or historical borders. It is a violence that is commonly experienced by many contemporary women as a matter of daily routine. Yet this form of harassment deeply complicates broader understandings of violence in transit.

Similar to the changing social and cultural landscape of London and Paris in the nineteenth century, Bandung, like many cities in the global south are experiencing an equally powerful changing landscape. Rapid urbanization, increasing female participation in the workforce, and economic and social liberalization are changing the traditional dynamics that once contoured urban living. For women to engage in urban mobility, freely and safely, without a male chaperon is a relatively modern phenomenon. Now as women are increasingly present in public space and are more visible in terms of education and employment opportunities; transit space emerges as a contested 'thirdspace'

Conclusion:

In "Gendering the city, gendering the nation" Rachel Newcomb (2006) argues that contestations over everyday public spaces reveal fault lines in discourses of modernity; the

cracks where ideologies are contested, debated, and transformed in locally meaningful ways. Her ethnography in Fes, Morocco articulates the relationship between local everyday practices and how they speak to larger changes and debates across a nation. In doing so Newcomb highlights how the traditional dichotomy between public and private is complicated by the increasing emergence of mixed gender spaces, such as cafes or mixed gender exercise clubs. In these everyday sites of negotiation, individual women draw on local discourses of shame or hospitality to rationalize their activities. In doing so they are using cultural discourses of competing ideologies and transforming them for their own ends. For example she notes that the Moroccan state characterizes female citizens as simultaneously modern, secular and Islamic, however *in practice* each of these competing ideological discourses are expressed in divergent ways.

Newcombs analysis of contestations over spaces which are neither public nor private is particularly useful in understanding similar phenomenon in Bandung. As women increasingly become more visible in public space, transit space emerges as a deeply contested site. Newcombs work in Fes, Morocco highlights how everyday activities (such as going to a café, or a gym) complicate the traditional dichotomy of public and private space. Similarly in Bandung, Indonesia, the increasing presence of women in angkots specifically, and in the public sphere more broadly (higher education, corporate employment, or government jobs) challenge long held beliefs on the proper role of women in society. Moreover it shows how both public and private space become the main battlefield for discourses of modernity and cultural change.

Thus far this chapter has examined the gender of the public transit infrastructure in Bandung and has located transit space as contested, wedged in between classical understandings of public and private space. Transit space emerges as a contested site precisely because the increasing visibility of women disrupts the traditional public private dichotomy. The gender of

transit infrastructure in Bandung has been analyzed through the various meanings and practices associated with the angkot. For angkot drivers the minivan represents their livelihoods, if they fail to pick up enough passengers the diminished daily take home earnings will literally leave them hungry at night. For public planning bureaucrats the inability to effectively regulate angkots delays much needed public infrastructure investments, further thwarting transit improvements even as the tide of a major transportation crisis crests in the horizon ahead. For individual angkot users like Gina, gender mediates and governs her experience with public transit, so much so that she feels restricted in what she can wear, what she can carry with her, and when and where she can go out. All the while, her brother Tito seems oblivious to such constraints and finds angkot travel relatively easy if not irksome, a sentiment largely mediated by his male gender. For a social activist and entrepreneur like Mr. Seterhan, whom we met at the beginning of this chapter, the public transit crisis continues to push him in new and innovative ways. His most current project is to create a ridership cooperative with the Kebong-Kelapa angkot route, and to find ways to physically upgrade the minivans with an online mobile app that tracks angkots and predict wait times. For these individuals the Bandung angkot indexes unique, contrasting, and specific subjectivities, and thus reveal complex expressions of agency. In ways such this, the angkot public minivan emerges a deeply contested site of contrasting practices and representations, and thus emerges a figure of Indonesia modernity.

In the next chapter, I examine how women's fear of harassment in public space mediate their experiences of urban space more broadly. At its core, street harassment emerges as an enduring form of violence against women precisely because it scratches the surface of a far more complicated and timeless question; what is the position of women in society?

Chapter 3

Slow Violence in Fast Times

The sky looked clear the October day that I waited for public a public minivan with Chandra in front of an abandoned building in north Bandung. Chandra looked like the quintessential urban Indonesian college girl. Short wavy dark hair pinned back, lose fitting Levi jeans with a plaid button up shirt, scuffed sneakers, and a shoulder book bag draped on one side. Her casual nonchalant look masked her deep her thoughtfulness.

Standing on the edge of the street, we both looked at the oncoming traffic in the hopes of seeing a brightly colored parrot-green angkot in the horizon. Chandra was my guide for the day, but quickly became a close friend. I followed her throughout the city. Though she was just a few years older, I could see my younger self in her; she was curious, adventurous, and deeply committed to making a difference in her world. Like many single women in Bandung, she was completely dependent on local public transit. The angkot was her only ticket to the urban outdoors.

As a sign of her resilience and determination, Chandra was just one of a few women to graduate from the Institute of Technology Bandung (ITB), Indonesia's premier science and technology university. She received her undergraduate degree in biology but joking says she never uses it. Her real passion was to work with children. There is nostalgia in the way she speaks of the city. Our travels in the city were littered with her childhood memories, playing in the park over here, eating fried rice from the kiosk that use to be there, or secretly holding hands with her first boyfriend under that tree.

Chandra grew up in Bandung and of deep concern to her is the way the city is changing. Massive buildings popping up overnight, mega universities taking over residential areas, and a

compounding traffic crisis are only a few of the problems she sees. Piling-up trash, increasing smog and pollution, unsafe and overcrowded streets, all of these are commonplace to her Bandung of today.

After a few minutes we see a minivan approaching in the horizon, the street is congested with motorbikes swerving in and out of lanes in a vain attempt to inch ahead of the pack. As I glance over, I can see Chandra briefly stepping forward and gracefully lifting her right hand and index finger nodding to the driver in the angkot ahead. This gesture was done with such ease that one could easily overlook the dangerous fact that she was basically standing in front of oncoming traffic on a very busy street. The angkot stopped a few feet ahead and we quickly rushed over to get in.

We ducked our head and made our way into the van, when we noticed three other men sitting inside, all with torn jeans and visible tattoos. As we exchanged glances uneasiness came over us. Chandra's usual confident nature immediately changed, she was not smiling, her head was down, and her shoulders crouched forward. I looked down and followed her to the back where we sat next to each other. The silence in the minivan was deafening.

Something had come over us, in one instance we were confident women joking and talking with ease, in the next we became crouched silent creatures anxiously waiting for our stop to come. Fear is a primal emotion, it indicates that something is wrong and needs attention. The emotion of fear can be triggered instantly and cause physiological changes: a faster heartbeat, a higher blood pressure, quicker deeper breathing.

The twenty minutes it took to reach our destination felt like a lifetime. As we paid the driver and got out of the minivan, the thoughtful, cheery Chandra I knew emerged. Even though nothing had happened in the van (the three other men did not touch or even look at us) *something*

did happen. I could not shake that feeling of uneasiness, a faint fearfulness lingered like a toxic drug slowly wearing off. Chandra looked at me and started to say something, but then looked away. The tension and anxiety from the travel in the minivan was fresh and present, more importantly, it was *nameless*. In that moment I realized, that for Chandra, fear—that silent psychic violence of “what ifs” - was more than just simply daily routine. The fear we experienced was a common gendered experience of public transit.

While nothing happened in terms of sexual assault in the minivan during my travel with Chandra that October day, something *did* happen; something subtle yet powerful that goes to the heart of what we mean in anthropology by subjective and meaningful experiences. Both our demeanors changed almost instantaneously upon entering the vehicle and seeing the men. Physiologically, my heart began to beat a little faster, Chandra’s shoulders crouched forward, and we both lowered our gaze. Ironically, I felt a heightened sense of my surroundings even as I tried not to attract attention towards myself. Fear, anxiety, and stress was running through my blood and racing through my mind. Though noticeable and deeply felt by both of us, this was a temporary state of emotions. As soon as we arrived at our destination, those feelings slowly began to fade to relief, but they left an indelible imprint on my memory and state of mind, underscoring what it means to be a woman using public transportation.

Fear as a site of gendered violence

What produces anxiety, stress, and fear in public transit and what happens when such insecurity becomes a part of one’s daily routine? Observers of urbanization have long linked urban forms with an increase in the emotion of fear. Fear of violence has been a sustaining trope in the study of cities and metropolitan areas (Bannister and Nick 2001; England and Simon

2010). In such understandings, fear of crime may outweigh actual crime as a social and economic problem, one that implicates long held racial, ethnic, or religious tensions that may be at the core of wider social or cultural phenomenon.

Disaggregating actual crime from criminal victimization first came to light with the emergence of national crime surveys in the United States in the 1960's (Hale 1996). Criminal victimization refers to the belief that one is susceptible to becoming a victim of crime regardless of whether a crime has been in fact committed. Similar studies in Britain at that time confirmed the belief that the fear of crime impinged upon the well-being of a significant proportion of the population, even though the actual threat of crime was meaningfully lower (Stephen , et al. 1997; Hale 1996). Distinguishing between actual crime and a perceived threat of crime emerged as two separate but inter-related social problems. Actual crimes rates are markedly different from perceptions of crime, highlighting broader social issues at play. The fear of crime, the raw emotion regarding well being, emerges as a more complicated, nuanced, and deeply embedded social phenomenon. Fear in these instances produce dynamic effects, it is experienced as a very real threat that may be rooted in deeply problematic forms of racial or ethnic discrimination (Chavez 2001, 2008). Unbalanced perceptions of fear versus actual crime rates highlight the complexity of urban life, in which the close proximity of varying life forms creates a laboratory of tightly bound difference.

Unlike the national crime studies carried out in the United States or Britain, what follows below does not attempt to disaggregate between fear from sexual harassment and the actual *occurrence* of sexual harassment.⁹ I suggest that by attempting to disaggregate fear of

⁹ In Indonesia, occurrences of harassment, as documented by official police crime reports are woefully low. Common knowledge and practice strongly suggest that women in Bandung rarely officially report experiences of harassment. None of the women I interviewed during fieldwork ever reported their experiences with harassment to the police.

harassment from actual incidences, one limits the ability to fully understand women's experiences of urban life. I argue that by foreclosing the actual event of harassment, and opening up to investigation the imaginative psyche of fear, in which the potentialities of sexual violence take on a life of their own, fear from harassment becomes just as violent (and ethnographically rich) as any actual instance of harassment.

It is in this space, that fear of possible violence systematically and structurally alters the life worlds of urban women. So even though "nothing" may happen it is critically important to document that in fact, something does happen. Emotions and feelings rush the body and mind, significantly altering one sense of self and security, these feelings produce strong effects and constructions, which dramatically create and reassemble the urban landscape as zones of security and insecurity. Fear becomes a critical sight of investigation because fear produces, primes and governs spatial practices. A narrow focus on actual incidences of street harassment eclipses the way fear and raw emotion so intimately grips the social and spatial lives of urban women.

As a socio-legal concept, the street harassment of women has been generally categorized under the vast rubric of violence against women. Similar to other forms of gendered violence, street harassment and sexual harassment are legal terms that are focused on isolating violent crimes by clearly identifying distinct perpetrators. In such a view, violence against women can only be prosecutable based on evidence against an apparent perpetrator. In reality, street harassment and fear from it more broadly infiltrates all aspects of a women's urban experience.

The broader argument this chapter advances is that the prevalence of street harassment in public space and fear from it, represents and manifests a "slow violence" which is occurring in fast times (Nixon 2011). Rob Nixon's idea of slow violence, while used to study the

environmentalism of the poor, eloquently captures the complex and nuanced reality of many urban women, in Bandung and beyond, and it is worth citing in entirety.

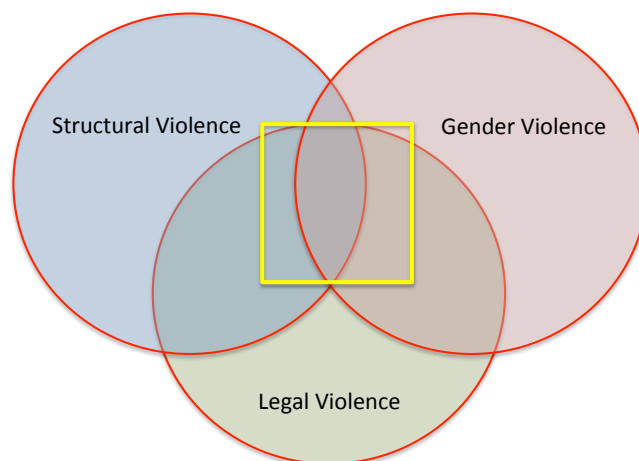
“By slow violence I mean a violence that occurs gradually and out of sight, a violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space, an attritional violence that is typically not viewed as violence at all. Violence is customarily conceived as an event or action that is immediate in time, explosive and spectacular in space, and as erupting into instant sensational visibility. We need, I believe, to engage a different kind of violence, a violence that is neither spectacular nor instantaneous, but rather incremental and accretive, its calamitous repercussions playing out across a range of temporal scales. In so doing, we also need to engage the representational, narrative, and strategic challenges posed by the relative invisibility of slow violence.” (Nixon, 2011:2)

Slow violence emphasizes a gradual, not spectacular devastation; that emerges in incremental ways, and represents a formless threat, that delivers near fatal repercussions in a dispersed fashion. The very idea of slow violence, challenges long held beliefs on the traditional characteristics of violence: as a “highly visible act that is newsworthy because it is event focused, time bound, and body bound” (Nixon 2011:3). When violence is spectacular, it is news worthy, attention grabbing, demanding and contemplative. What Nixon so accurately point out, is that bombastic, loud, visceral, acts of violence, such as “falling bodies, burning towers, exploding heads, avalanches, volcanoes, and tsunamis” pale in comparison to stories of pain and devastation, that accrue over time. Slow moving cataclysms then require a different orientation

to garner intervention. This challenge of visibility forms the bedrock of concerns regarding sexual harassment in public *and* private space. There is no way for Chandra and I to make visible the fear we felt in transit that day. Like countless women who suffer in silence, there is no clear bodily injury, bruised mark, or visible wound. The namelessness of what happens in transit indexes the representational challenges of slow violence in fast times.

In this chapter I investigate the conditions that render street harassment as slow violence. I investigate street harassment from the lens of structural violence, gender violence and legal violence. As a co-constitutive amalgam of all three, (see figure 2 below) the street harassment of women in public space captures the systemic nature of gender inequality, in which specific conditions slowly lead to micro-climates of violence. As such women experience violence as layered with multiple meanings of significance, which then radiate outward with enduring effects.

Figure 2: Situating Street Harassment



Street harassment as structural violence

In this section I examine the relationship between street harassment and the literature on structural violence. What possibilities for justice, respect, and intervention open up if we include street harassment as a form of structural violence? What implications does linking street harassment and structural violence have for our understanding of gendered violence? And, what opportunity does viewing street harassment as structural violence open for women's agency and mobility in urban areas?

In repositioning the socio-legal concept of street harassment as a form of structural violence, I tether it to systematic experiences of fear and anxiety. Traditionally the concept of structural violence has been associated with poverty and inequality (Bourgouis), the denial of medical aid (Farmer, 2005) and development assistance (Gupta, 2012) to chronically deprived generations of minority communities. Scholars locate structural violence at the systemic edge of chronic deprivation, a border zone between humanitarian assistance and immanent death. The use of structural violence in this way has been used to understand both the limited opportunities and the agentive power of those paralyzed by inequality in its extreme forms. Can we locate structural violence at the first instances of harm in which *systematic fear* equally structures feelings, sentiments, and behaviors of those in less powerful positions? In this understanding of structural violence, fear from sexual violence or harassment is just as powerful as chronic economic or social deprivation. In fact, in many instances these factors may be linked and compounded by one another.

The term structural violence was first coined by Johan Galtung in an essay in the *Journal of Peace Research* (Galtung, 1969). Key features of his original article defined the contours of

structural violence in opposition to personal or direct violence. This dichotomy (between structural and direct violence) is an important defining element, which reemerges in the work of Paul Farmer, Akhil Gupta and Veena Das, (discussed below) as well as by Philippe Bourgois (1989, 2003) and Nancy Scheper-Hughes (1993).

Structural violence in Galtung's original formulation was a type of violence which was "built into structure;" synonymous with social injustice, this violence was indirect, invisible and silent (Galtung 1969: 173), and was significantly associated with a type of psychological harm.

Importantly, structural violence showed certain stability in contrast to personal/direct violence which showed fluctuations overtime (ibid.). Direct violence could be linked to individual pathology or emotion running wild, in which a momentary lapse of rational builds up into a violent act. Structural violence is more insidious, its ability to cause harm through even-handed stability over significant periods of time and space conveys a calculated violence and systematic cruelty void of unstable emotion and passion.

Galtung deploys an important and useful metaphorical device, the human body, to help distinguish between direct violence and structural violence. In a table he develops a typology of personal somatic violence to illustrate the differences between direct and structural violence (Galtung 1969: 154-175). One column focuses on human anatomy (the violence done by hitting, tearing, piercing, burning etc). This column represents forms of direct violence that injures an individual *anatomically*. The second column focuses on *physiology*, (the denial of air (choking) denial of water (dehydration) denial of food (starvation) denial of movement (as in body and space constraint)); this column represents structural violence. In clarifying the distinction between his typology of violence Galtung notes "one thing is to try to destroy the machine (the human body) itself, another to try to prevent the machine from functioning" (Galtung 1969: 175).

Based on this reading, structural violence is the processual, systematic, illegible forms of violence against the human body and more importantly the body politic.

If the first defining element of Galtung's conception of structural violence is the opposition between direct and structural harm; the second defining element of structural violence is related to this image of the body as machine; and the inability of it to reach its absolute full potential. In this regard the *physiology* of the human body provides a useful illusory example of impairment to human life. Structural violence in this context is about the physicality of actual needs on the one hand, and the experience of fulfillment and achievement on the other.

I argue that street harassment is a form of structural violence located in the space that exists between needs and fulfillment, between access to urban space and safe experiences of that urban space. This gap is further widened (and in many instances caused) by disparate access to resources, political power, education, and (lack of) legal standing. These social struggles then become so ordinary in our way of understanding the world, they mask and make invisible the social suffering and violence enacted by commonplace systems of everyday life.

This focus on the collective human body as a site of social suffering is highlighted in the work of Paul Farmer (2005). As a medical anthropologist, he reinvigorated the concept set up by Galtung; by applying it to discourse on medical and international aid regimes. Farmer argues that structural violence is so intrinsic to modern social life precisely because social suffering has become so ubiquitous; that the task of addressing and acknowledging structural violence disrupts a fragile humanistic ethic. Structural violence disrupts the notion of individuality by instead focusing on the larger meta-structures of politics and society. In this formulation, it becomes hard to accept structural violence, precisely because so many institutions are to blame for

allowing the structure of violence to continue, to go unchecked; and for not adequately stopping the social and physical suffering that millions of people world-wide experience.

Farmer argues that structural violence is a process that links social suffering and untimely mortality. Premature deaths due to preventable diseases or the lack of comprehensive medical treatment become critical in evaluating the progression of structural violence. In these instances, the lack of health care facilities, doctors, medications, or other forms of medical aid invisibly and visibly lead to large-scale death. This form of violence is not direct; rather it is the slow withering away of the health of the body politic. The denial of health, of medication and treatment; is a violence perpetuated on the *physiology* of a society, to use Galtung's metaphorical device. In highlighting the relationship between mortality and lack of medical care; other associative factors come into focus; colonial history; poverty, political instability; and global economic regimes; all influence, perpetuate, and at times destabilize the presence of structural violence.

Building on Farmer, Akhil Gupta (2012) links the bureaucratic practices of the State, to the chronic poverty and high rates of mortality experienced in India. This relationship creates conditions of increasing social suffering among the poor, who are unable to reach their full capabilities due to structures that systematically create "arbitrary" results. In Gupta's formulation, chronic poverty and the untimely death of millions is a form of structural violence because this "violence is not so much a violation of the everyday but the reduction to bare life, that is life in its most naked, essential form" (Gupta 2012:21). In the same way as Farmer does, Gupta is highlighting chronic poverty and mortality as a *physiological violence* against the wellbeing of society.

In Gupta's formulation, this physiological violence is perpetuated by a bureaucratic State which essentially ties its own hands in its ability to effectively reduce chronic poverty. The arbitrary results of poverty alleviation schemes thus produce an "uncaring" State that is immune to that vast scale of death. By linking structural violence to the bureaucratic practices of the state, Gupta works to destabilize the image of the state as a single cohesive unitary actor. The disaggregated view of the state, which he proposes, reveals contradictions in the management and control of populations, thus undermining the concept of biopolitics as "internally contradictory" (Gupta 2012:71). These contradictory state practices become "normalized" and in doing so "maintain structures of intensive violence towards poor populations" (ibid.). This violence is characterized by the rigid rule following, yet chaotic nature of State functions at the local level, in which the deliberate actions of multiple social agents enable equally inconsistent and chaotic results.

Similar to Farmer, Gupta concludes that these actions have severe consequences for the poor, premature death and increased social suffering become endemic. State programs which are designed to increase medical care and employment, and decrease malnutrition and mortality rates in the end systematically produce structural violence through bureaucratic practice, which privilege a certain class of poor (women and children, those who can read and write, local power brokers); and even then those who do receive care, receive it in an arbitrary nature. In the end Gupta concludes that "poverty is not a good word to describe such violence because it inures one to the deformed ethics of statecraft that tolerates and condones such cruelty" (Gupta 2012:22). Again, everyone is blame, and yet no one is to blame.

The politics of medicine (Farmer 2005), and the politics of poverty (Gupta 2012) are linked to the violent and fatal suffering of millions of people; in which such states of inequality

and pain are not exceptional but are rather the norm. Going back to Galtung's metaphor of the human body, Farmer and Gupta clearly link the politics of medical and development aid to a physiological violence against the health and wellbeing of society; a violence which is faceless, and silent.

Veena Das's analysis of structural violence comes from another vantage point; that concerned with individual subjectivity and the personal internalizations of externally induced catastrophes. In Das's work (Das 2007; Das and Poole 2004; Das et al 2001) key attention is given to the labor of everyday negotiations, and this provides an important trope of analysis. Hidden in the mundane details of everyday life is the hegemony of the ordinary, where the effects of violence hide and thrive.

Das positions her work before and *after* instances of grave devastation. By asking what is violated by structural violence, her analysis moves to examine the everyday "life worlds" of individuals in which episodic violence violates the right to have an "ordinary life." Violence in the form of armed conflict and state induced terror, render impossible the ability to have a life-world free from cycles of pain and suffering. So while Farmer and Gupta are primarily concerned with the effects of State instituted neglect (i.e. lack of effective medical and development aid to the poor) Das is focused on individuals who experience cyclical violence (i.e. communal riots); and how they rebuild and restore their lives back to the ordinary. For her, the (re)construction of the ordinary is filled with all types of affective labor, symbolic meanings, and claims to agentive power. In such an analysis subject formation becomes a critical site of inquiry (Das 2007).

Unlike Farmer and Gupta, I argue Das's work highlights the *anatomical nature of violence* (to use Galtung's metaphorical device). Her work focuses on how individuals heal

wounds after direct attacks, more specifically she is concerned with the healing process, the way psychic wounds are reconciled in the face of mass physical devastation; and in doing so she reclaims the importance of the subject and his/her voice.

In this context I argue that the *chronic* nature of street harassment constitutes it as form of structural violence. Women need not experience groping on an everyday basis (though many do) in order for the chronic fear of groping to afflict them when they step out into public space. Groping just needs to happen once to leave a lasting impression on a woman's psyche. The chronicity of fear imbeds itself in the first instance of harm, at the point of first transgression. Importantly, the enduring effects of chronic fear can be triggered by a single event.

Chronic and vast suffering is the single feature that binds together iterations of structural violence among female public transit users in Indonesia, those who need medical aid in Haiti (Farmer), poor farmers and riot victims in India (Gupta, Das). The usefulness of the concept of structural violence lies in its ability to implicate the structures that create such an enduring and unnoticed violence. Street harassment as structural violence lays bare the expansive interconnections between masculine spatial designs, paternalistic legal frameworks, and cultural patriarchy which collectively limits women's urban mobility. It allows for a panoramic view of the deeply embedded forms of gender discrimination and violence, at all scales of society and government. Moreover in semiotic terms, street harassment as structural violence highlights the way in which fear structures and contours the perceptions and experiences of urban life; meaning that for female travelers in Bandung, Indonesia, the condition and experiences of urban space and life is filtered through the fear of street harassment. In ways such as these, highlighting street harassment as a form of structural violence becomes a critically important step towards intervention.

Street harassment as gendered violence

Gender violence, gendered violence, gender-based violence are all terms which describe violence perpetuated (mainly by men) against an individual (mainly women) to maintain gender inequalities. These terms encapsulate all types of violence against women, children and adolescents, and lesbian and gay people. Gender violence includes rape, sexual assault, relationship violence in heterosexual *and* same sex partnerships, sexual harassment, stalking, prostitution, and sex trafficking. The term "gender violence," and similar terms, reflects the idea that this type of violence is most often influenced by gender relations, the social and physical power dynamics between men and women. There are not dictated by biology or a human nature but vary across specific cultural contexts.

In this regard, gender is the most powerful predictor of being a victim or perpetrator of rape, sexual assault and relationship violence. While some men are rape victims, men are almost always the perpetrators of such violence. Gender violence highlights a male-patterned violence: a prevalent violence committed most often but not always by men, often motivated by aggression, revenge, competition, and entitlement. Many scholars who study gender violence argue that to adequately address this type of violence, one has to address cultural themes that encourage violence as a part of masculinity and the masculine symbolic field (Levinson 1989; Adelman 2004; Mathur 2004; Merry 2009; Weis and Haldane 2011).

Street harassment in this regard becomes a performative act of male masculinity. What men may see as a harmless or a fun remark may be felt as humiliating or insulting by women. Where men feel they are simply performing a requirement of masculinity among male peers, women can internalize such acts as threatening and fear inducing. Deeply embedded cultural mores and practices collectively determine the *appropriateness* of various "acts" of masculinity (and

femininity). In some European countries whistling and shouting sexual innuendos is practically an art form such as the Spanish and Latin American “piropos”.

Serious problems occur when there is a mismatch between gendered social interactions, such that male harassment is seen as culturally appropriate *carte blanche*. “Piropos” may be accepted among male cohorts as a performance of their masculinity and yet be simultaneously reviled among female recipients. In the case of Indonesia, gendered interaction in public space between men and women is socio-religiously complex and nuanced, layered with intricate social protocols based on class, age, and gender. While other researchers such as Quinn highlight the importance of masculine “dramatic performance” in the production of maleness and camaraderie (Quinn 2002), something similar may be at play in the patriarchal and religious climate of Indonesia, where masculinity (and femininity) are self evident socio-cultural indicators, with commonly understood cultural conventions on appropriate interactions.

It is important to emphasize here, that there is a line (however fine or opaque) between culturally appropriate gendered interactions and sexually charged violent ones. Defining where and when that line is drawn is much more complicated. For example, given locally specific variations regarding gendered interaction in public space, can one define street harassment in universal terms? While there may be clear definitions of what specifically constitutes harassment in many advanced democracies such as the United States or in Western Europe; in Indonesia (as in many developing countries) legal definitions of harassment mismatch common taken for granted practices and understandings. Locally specific definitions of street harassment vary by individuals (and regions)¹⁰, but what remains constant in the case of Bandung and among the women I interacted with was the demarcation between verbal or visual harassment (puckering

¹⁰ For example regions such as Aceh, Indonesia or Terengganu, Malaysia in Southeast Asia have implemented strict Sharia law, thus governing appropriate dress and behavior in public space which is made compliant by all residents.

lips, exposing genitalia) and physical harassment (groping, pinching, touching). Such variations, such as distinguishing between verbal and physical harassment, index the importance of understanding gender-based violence as a spectrum of actions in local socio-cultural contexts.

While there are many different types of gendered violence, and its associative causes, the literature by far and large categorizes rape (and threat of rape) as the most physically and psychologically violent form of assault; in which rape is used as a tool of war in its most extreme and systematic cases or as a terror inducing threat for complete submission in relationships (Rittner and Roth 2012; Cahill 2001). In this context, pornography and sex trafficking, simply package the buy and selling of sex as rape (Dworkin 1981). If rape and the threat of rape are on one end of a spectrum of gender-based violence, street harassment by strangers is on the other. Street harassment as a type of gender-based violence is characterized as a less serious form of violence, often being distinguished as a public annoyance or incivility (Nielson 2000). But what are the actions, meanings, and symbols that encompass this type of gender violence? Not just in Indonesia, but also in countries such as India, Brazil, and Japan, street harassment has become so ubiquitous with public space that government authorities implement costly transportation policies to curb this form of gender based violence (see chapter 4) reminiscent of large social engineering schemes.

The term 'harassment' was not used by many of the women I spoke to who discussed experiences of groping, pinching, or verbal remarks. Harassment is a legal term, a western term, that has been imported through processes of globalization into developing countries such as Indonesia. It is not used in common everyday language to describe everyday events. It is associated with a formality and a seriousness not fit for everyday types of expressions. Harassment is also a relative term, while there are clear legalist definitions of what actions can

be categorized as harassment. In Indonesia, what may be considered harassment is strongly dependent on the personality, sensitivity, and some would even say tolerance of a woman.

Despite its systematic nature street harassment remains invisible; precisely because it is a culprit-less crime. In the next section, I examine the extent to which legal infrastructures in Indonesia address urban woman's experience of violence by strangers. It is here, that street harassment emerges as a slow violence, born out of broader conditions enabled by structural violence, gender violence, and legal violence.

Street harassment as legal violence

Legal violence refers to instances in which laws and their implementation gives rise to practices that harm individuals physically, economically, psychologically or emotionally (Menjivar and Abrego [n.d.] you can get this online. I'll send it too). Abrego and Menjivar points out that the violence that arises out of legal structures are often constructed as the "unintended consequences" of laws that are designed to protect certain individuals while simultaneously marginalizing large groups of people, thus leaving them vulnerable to abuse (Abrego and Menjivar 2011: 11). Focusing on the experiences of Latina immigrants in the United States, their work highlights how the state is not always itself the direct agent of violence, but rather laws enable violence against such targeted groups (ibid.). Legal regimes are experienced as violent precisely because they induce social, economic, emotional and psychological suffering. In the case of Latina immigrants, negative experiences associated with their ambiguous legal status lead to the internalization of low self worth, thus inhibiting full incorporation into their host society (ibid.).

Similarly, I argue that given the patriarchal and socio-religious context of Indonesia, street harassment against women emerges as a form of legal violence. Patriarchal legal regimes and their skewed implementation make women in public space vulnerable to violent crimes; precisely because it is legally impossible to prosecute against harassment in public space. A culture of impunity, in favor of men, allows street harassment to remain unproblematic and uncontested; thus inducing social, economic, emotional and psychological suffering among urban women.

Additionally, just as law produces violence through implementation, a lack of law and lack of implementation produces equally dynamic types of violence. So while Menjivar and Abrego examine how the production of law generated violence; its systematic absence does similar work. The absence of law is also productive. A lack of legislative protection for women creates violence in the same way.

In Indonesia, legal regimes are strongly influenced by the parallel practice of Islamic law (i.e. Sharia law). A clear example of this influence is present in the historic Anti Domestic Violence Law of 2004 (*Undang-Undang Anti Kekerasan Dalam Rumah Tangga.UU KDRT*). Turning the bill into law involved a tremendous amount of coalition building. Long before passage of the law, the Ministry of Women's Empowerment (MOWE) facilitated a National Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Women from 2001-2005. It involved 150 NGOs and other mass organizations, UN agencies, and donor agencies (Munir, 2005). A major contention during the negotiation of the proposed law was its stance on polygamy and marital rape. If the law made polygamy a criminal act, many believed that it would clearly violate and offend the practice of Islamic law (in which polygamy is allowed and marital rape discredited).

Other believed that if the law did not condemn polygamy, the law would in essence be ineffective.

In the final language of the law any provision on polygamy and marital rape was removed, out of respect of Islamic law; and as some organizations predicted; the Anti-Domestic Violence Law makes it very difficult for women to claim domestic violence, or even file for divorce. In Islamic law only the husband can grant divorce it cannot be initiated by the wife (Robinson 2006; Munir, 2005). By dovetailing Islamic law and its interpretations, the Anti-Domestic Violence Law 2004 was unable to bridge many core disputes over women's rights. Domestic issues are often dealt with by Islamic courts, which take precedence over criminal courts in family matters; and in practice informal agreements brokered by local clerics or community leaders settle (often unsatisfactorily) most disputes.

Unlike other Islamic nations that have adopted strong Sharia law, Indonesia has navigates a very delicate balance between secular legal jurisprudence and Islamic law.¹¹ How Islamic law is practiced at a local and national level varies significantly; and the presence or absence of legal protections codified through law reflects little on the everyday experiences of urban women. However an emphasis on law and its legal mechanisms does point to the larger social and cultural contexts in which urban women live.

For example, according to the "Women, Business and the Law 2016" report by the World Bank, there are eight Indonesian legal statutes that openly discriminate against women (World Bank 2015). These laws pertain mainly to that fact that in Indonesia, women cannot serve as the head of a household for legal or tax purposes and are subjected to deeply patriarchal inheritance laws based on the traditional privileging of men over women. According to the report, there is also a major lack of legislation, civil remedies, or criminal penalties against sexual harassment

¹¹ Countries with strict Sharia law include, but not limited too, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Pakistan.

and no protection under domestic-violence legislation for unmarried partners (ibid). In ways such as this, legal mechanisms that undermine female socio-political and economic participation gesture towards the restricted position of women in society at large.

Sexual harassment in public spaces is further complicated by various interpretations of legal codes. According to Uli Pangaribuan, a lawyer with the Legal Aid Foundation of the Indonesian Women's Association for Justice (LBH APIK); there is no specific definition of street harassment in Indonesia. Authorities rely on a common criminal code; so for example they prefer to use Article 355 (offensive behavior in public space) rather than Articles 281 or 289; which stipulate longer sentences for severe indecent acts such as the use of force to commit an obscenity. She notes that it is very common for authorities to weaken the position of the victim before the law. For example, she notes that “the police say groping is just offensive behavior because there is no struggling and the victim is still dressed. While for us [LBH APIK], the struggling and opening [of] clothes constitutes attempted rape,” (Setiawati and Dewi 2014).

It has become common knowledge that police authorities will try to discredit women who complain of sexual or street harassment. The capital city of Jakarta for example did not even list sexual harassment, as a category of violence, in their 2013 annual report (ibid). Nationally the number of reports of violence against women remains higher; for example in 2012 the National Commission on Violence against Women (Komnas Perempuan) recorded 4,336 cases of sexual abuse across the archipelago. For a country of nearly 250 million individuals, this number is woefully low, and points to the dramatically low under reporting of violence against women (ibid).

Adding to this situation, violence against women (such as street harassment, domestic violence or rape) is legally focused on isolating violent crimes by clearly identifying distinct

perpetrators. In such a view, violence against women can only be prosecutable based on clear evidence against a clear perpetrator. But given the nature of street harassment, how does one produce such evidence?

In practice women cannot and therefore they very rarely report street harassment. They do not report their experiences of harassment for two main reasons. First, many women are clearly cognizant of the fact that legal frameworks will be skewed against them precisely because they are women. Therefore pursuing legal action against street harassment appears to be a futile and unrealistic option; and second, women do not report street harassment because they do not want to jeopardize their *access* to the urban outdoors by reporting negative experiences to male family members, such as fathers, brothers or husbands. Access to public space via public transit is critically important for women to reach school, work, or for leisure, and many women I spoke to felt that if their fathers, brothers, or husbands knew about the acts of street harassment they experienced; their access to public space would be severely restricted. Therefore, reporting street harassment is never seen as a viable option.

This irony characterizes the main duality of women's urban experiences, in which modern urban living demands woman to have mobility, and yet social, cultural and legal expectations bind her to home and hearth. Silvy, a university student living at home, whose narrative is similar to those of other female college youth I interviewed, described her frustration with experiences of street harassment and her fear of disclosing it to her father and brother.

“ [it] happens to me everyday, when I am going to university or coming home, I can see the way the guys look at me, or when they pucker their lips at me. I feel very shy. I try to dress more humble so they stop, but it does not work.

Sometimes I want to come home and tell my brother or my father because I get mad, but I am afraid. I am afraid I won't be allowed to travel in the angkot to university. I will have to wait for them to take me to class [with motorbike]. But sometime I just want to hang out with my friends, you know in the library, and if I can't take the public minivan then I can't hang out with them when *I want too.*"

Like many other young female urban women, Silvy's commute between university and home is littered with experiences of street harassment. These experiences are negatively internalized but she is afraid to disclose her experiences to the male members of her household. Fear from harassment is coupled by a fear of immobility, thus she remains silent so as not to disrupt her access to urban travel.

Conclusion: Restricted Mobility and the Chronicity of Everyday Violence

In a special issue of *Ethnos* dedicated to examining situations of chronic crisis and uncertainty, Henrik Vigh argues that we need to see crisis not a temporary episode of decline, but rather see crisis *as* context, "a terrain of action and meaning rather than an aberration" (Vigh 2008:1). Further adding that "we need to depart from our regular understanding of crisis and trauma as momentary and particularized phenomena and move toward an understanding of critical states as pervasive contexts rather than singular events," (Vigh 2008:8).

Thinking of crisis as context is helpful in understanding the deeper "critical states" of urban female travelers in Bandung, Indonesia because it highlights how street harassment is not an episodic or punctured event in a woman's daily routine. Fear of harassment and street

violence compose the entire framework of a woman's daily urban experiences. Street harassment emerges not a singular event for female urban travelers, rather this form of violence imbeds itself *as the very context* of urban travel. Thinking of street harassment as context, instead of crisis, gestures towards the way women experience urban space differently, more violently, more intimately, compared with their male counterparts, and in doing so it highlights how public space and access to it becomes gendered. Understanding, street harassment (and fear from it) as the very context of urban travel, indexes the way street harassment emerges as a slow violence, "an attritional violence that is typically not viewed as violence at all" (Nixon 2011: 2). In times of rapid urban development, the precarious nature of urban space transforms the landscape (in new ways) but also reconfigures people and places bringing them into contact with one another a new. When women experience street harassment, they immediately and viscerally feel violated, yet beyond personalized coping techniques, and "tips" to avoid harm, this kind of violence never emerges as a spectacular form, that might be publicized widely, or call into question the moral compass of a nation. Spectacular gender violence, such as a gang rape, child molestation, dowry death or honor killing, are "highly visible" and thus become "newsworthy" precisely because they are "event focused, time bound, and body bound" (Nixon 2011:3). An uncomfortable stare, a touch here and then there, these are not visible forms of violence in the traditional sense of the word. There is no bruise, blood, or bodily mark, instead the violence is unseen, a faster heart beat, a sense of anxiousness, and shortness of breath. This slow violence, simmers on the fringe, and encompasses the very meaning of urban travel for women. This reveals the ways in which gender becomes a critical lens from which to understand experiences of urbanity.

If street harassment is the very context of urban travel, how do women engage in urban mobility safely? What are the experiences and practices that enable travel amid fear of violence?

In the third chapter I analyze the socio-legal concept of street harassment from the perspective of the victim. The next chapter investigates how these women negotiate urban space. Specifically it follows the daily travel routines and urban spatial practices of a group of women to understand their spatial knowledge of the city, and reveal the private strategies women enable to avoid risk and harm. In the next chapter I connect theories of urbanization with place making to explore how women construct, assemble and resituate knowledge of urban space based on sensorial experiences of insecurity and risk. In doing so, urban women litter the urban landscape with complex meanings of inclusion and exclusion.

Chapter 4

Spatial Practices and The Burden of Being Careful

Placing her right hand on the door, Santi suddenly closed her eyes in a long blink and quickly recited a small phrase in a hushed quite voice. Within a second, she turned the doorknob and opened the door. This was done so swift and effortlessly I did not notice it the first few times I was following her to work. As we made our way to the main road on a humid August morning, a public minivan was already waiting out front and as Santi stepped up into the minivan, within a flash of a second, I again noticed a long blink and a quite hushed phrase. Throughout my time with Santi, these long blinks and whispered tones began to form a patterned behavior. I noticed it when she left her home, before she entered an angkot, and when she left her office. When asked about the quick phrase, she quickly pointed out it was an Arabic prayer, and exclaimed, “staying safe can be exhausting ya! I must always take a quick moment to gather my energy and pray for a good day.”

What Santi meant by “good day” was more specifically a good commute, and more importantly, a safe experience in public space, free from assault or crime. Like countless women in rapidly urbanizing cities, Santi’s ability to cope with the erratic and fearful nature of urban space was hinged on the belief that violence could be averted by sheer diligence, and yet even still, there was the crucial element of chance. Strategic prayers, such as those recited before entering public transit, before leaving the safety of home or work, was believed to tip the balance in her favor, give her some extra protection and ease the anxiety that came part and parcel of urban travel.

Women carry the heavy burden of being careful in public space, precisely because the prevailing notion is that women are responsible for their own safety. This heavy burden is

reiterated when people ask victims of sexual assault questions such as, “what were *you* wearing?” and “why were *you* out so late?” These types of questions reify the notion that women are responsible for their own safety, and consequently responsible for their own victimhood as well.

In Bandung traveling in urban space can be laborious for obvious reasons. Incessant traffic jams compound the crowded, chaotic, noisy nature of public streets, filled with all sorts of vehicles, people, hawkers, and goods. The cacophony of revving motorbikes along with the choking pollution of exhaust fumes reinforces the frenzied atmosphere, of people and things desperately trying to inch ahead. In Bandung, car horns begin honking even though traffic lights are red, motorbikes snake in between standing vehicles whether or not there is room to do so. People, some more cautious than others, randomly weave in between this lattice of moving objects. Like most urban cities in the global south, in order to get from point A to point B, one has to venture out into such public streets, and labor both physically and mentally to do so.

Traveling in urban space is more laborious for women, for less obvious reasons. As Santi so poignantly exclaimed, “staying safe can be exhausting ya!” For her and countless women like her, the hidden labor of traveling in public space is a matter of fact, an unspoken truth that is recognized by fellow women, but one that is rarely acknowledged. This feminized labor involves the constant vigilance of ones surroundings, and the physical and mental stamina to do so. For urban women, being “cautious” and staying “safe” is not just a state of mind; it entails specific types of knowledge and requires specific types of labor. Ensuring ones safety and security in public space involves the exertion of extra energy and effort in less obvious but equally demanding ways. Staying focused and paying attention to ones surroundings involves endurance and fortitude, for if a women fails to maintain a watchful eye, if she gives into her exhaustion

and fatigue, the results could be costly and more significantly irreversible. And even still, for some women like Santi, this labor is not enough; strategic intervention in the form of strategic prayers must be secured, if only to gather one's energy in the face of uncertainty.

Feminist scholars have long addressed the particular forms of knowledge and labor produced uniquely by women. Nancy Hartsock's 1983 theorization of standpoint feminism built on a Marxist ideology, and argued that the universal unequal experience of women everywhere was elicited by a near universal experience of patriarchy. Such systemic oppression could only be countered by a "feminist standpoint" which brought to the fore unique forms of knowledge inhabited by women everywhere, a knowledge that was systemically devalued.

The core foundation of standpoint feminism was built on the idea that women were consistently positioned as a subordinated group, and from this vantage point women offered a critical lens from which to understand the world, its policies and their implications. Donna Haraway in 1988 fine-tuned this argument, by highlighting what she called "situated knowledge;" in this view universal claims of subordination were critiqued by the reality of complex lives and their multiple locations of social existence. Rather than privileging a subordinated view from below, Haraway argued for a "privileging of partiality" rather than emphasizing its universality. In such a view, scientific fixations on objectivity obscure the existence of such complex sites of knowledge production, and her intervention was to instead highlight the value of this rich partial view. Locating such sites of partial perspectives was taken up by intersectional theory in the 1990's, which revealed the intricate and layered matrices of social life and identity. Where standpoint feminism gave voice to women and their unique forms of knowledge, intersectional theory highlighted the varying locations of women, located between a latticework of complex social identities. Intersectional theory sought to highlight how women

were located at these very unique intersections of race, sexuality, culture, religion, ethnicity, language, and political identity among others.

This long tradition of scholarly work in feminist studies parallels the formation of anthropological concerns with subjectivity; that is theories of the self and its relation to broader socio-cultural changes. A critical point of departure for many feminist scholars was investigating how women understood themselves, their varying social identities, and wider changes taking place in society. Such concerns with the subjectivity of women often lead to the doorsteps of psychoanalytic theories and its variants; questions regarding deeply subjective self-processes, such as affective expression, memory, trauma, and healing, relied on individualized narratives and personal life stories as the spring board for analysis on wider political phenomena. Examples of this include the much cited, *Spirits of Resistance and Capitalist Discipline* by Aiwa Ong (1987), which analyzed female subjectivity in Malaysia during the transition away from subsistence agricultural and towards industrialized capitalism. This work, along with others, powerfully teased out the intimate connections between feminized labor and the social suffering of women on the margins of society. Collectively, these works have inspired a range of ethnographies showing how social, political and economic changes at the global level, are indexed by deeply personal self-reflections and meanings making practices among individuals affected by such changes, as the local level.

Of concern to me here, is how women, often the subjects of such analytic narratives, learn to cope and adapt to changing geo-political conditions. How do their subjective internalizations, of trauma and violence, evolve into concrete daily practices and situated knowledge? Is such knowledge circulated? If so, to whom?

In order to understand the relationship between individual practices and state policies I turn to the work of anthropologist and political scientist James C. Scott, who widens the scope of analysis to understand social changes through the lens of the state. In *Seeing Like a State*, he argues that grand schemes to improve the human condition inevitably fail because they are based on high modernist planning which privileges top-down order and systematic transparency, as opposed to local knowledge, *metis*, which is based on individual experience and skill. As states impose modern planning techniques for the purposes of governance, order, and economic prosperity; local knowledge, practice, and traditions are destabilized and undermined. Scott's argument parallels the work of Aiwā Ong, Shepard-Hughes and Bielh, in that state practices, such as Soviet collectivization, or the adoption of neoliberal economic policies, wipeout longstanding local economies and traditional practices of care. In this narrative, external geopolitical stimuli in the form of top down Statist socio-economic policies; erode longstanding, enduring, often traditional, forms of knowledge and practice.

The simple argument this chapter advances, is that the opposite condition also exists. New forms of knowledge and practice are produced in direct response to the exigencies of high modernist state planning. In Bandung, *metis* is not eroded by rapid urban development, rather I show that instead a *modern metis* is produced by woman as a response to quick modernization and rapid urbanization taking effect around them. Understanding modern urban development through the lens of traveling women, we see that new forms of knowledge and skills are developed as a counter to the insecurity of urbanization. In this view, Santi's strategic prayers, before leaving the safety of home and work described at the beginning of this chapter, emerge as an amalgamation of her hidden labor, as a coping technique, and as a form of feminized knowledge. It is a direct response and byproduct of a precarious urban environment. I show that

rapid urbanization does not lead to the erasure of local knowledge—*metis*; it simply produces new types of *metis*.

In the first section of this chapter, I trace the concept of *metis* to Michel DeCerteau, and highlight his definition of *metis* as a form of cunning behavior. In this view, women's travel practices to avoid danger emerge as tactics, rooted in perceptions of sly inventiveness and skill. Next, I describe the types of patterned behaviors that emerge among urban women as a response to fear of harassment in public space. These spatial practices I argue emerge as form of modern urban knowledge among traveling women. Finally, I show the evolution of the concept in James C. Scott's work, where *metis* and high modernist planning are dichotomous terms, such that local knowledge inevitably suffers at the hands of state planning, here I reverse this logic and show how in Bandung, urbanization and chaotic urban planning leads to new forms of strategic and tactical knowledge among urban woman. Women adapt, develop, and retool their urban strategies of travel in order to deal with the insecurities produced by rapid urbanization amid infrastructural decay. In this view, these spatialized feminist practices are direct outcomes of state policies and the de-politicization of violence against women in public space, and reflect deeply subjective meaning processes of inclusion and exclusion. Thus, the concept of a *modern metis* emerges as a more fungible way to understand the dynamic relationship between local knowledge, individual practice and state planning, and better informs how individuals learn to cope and adapt to rapidly changing socio-political conditions.

Tactics and Strategies

In the opening paragraphs of Michel's De Certeau's widely cited chapter, "Walking the City," the reader is taken to the top of the World Trade Center in New York. From this vista, the

chaotic nature of urban life momentarily becomes tranquil. Here, the dense, noisy, and hectic city appears serene, passive, and calm. In this view, stretching as far as the eye can see, the urban landscape is demystified by the clear, evident, and logical structures of congruent intersections, roads, highways, and bridges. It is argued that only from this view, can one begin to appreciate monolithic skyscrapers as citadels of modernity, progress, and development, while simultaneously being spectacle to their “gigantic rhetoric of excess”.

Urbanity becomes nearly idyllic in the images described by De Certeau, that is until one takes the elevator down from the viewing platform to the streets of New York below. Here, the top-of-the-world sentiment is immediately humbled by the reality of urban life. Density (of people and objects) and a frenzied atmosphere of everything in a rush, are starkly contrasted with the view from above described only moments earlier. It is here, on the ground and in the streets that the rugged urban city takes on a life of its own, governed by its own logic of inhabitability.

These two scenes of the urban city, one from above and one from below, elicit the inherent contradictions of urban life. In one view, the city is imagined as an orderly grid of efficiency, clearly demarcated to ensure transparency and ease of use. In the other, the city is imagined as an overcrowded, concrete jungle, both in its wildness and chaotic nature. As an inevitable process of modernization, urban life (meaning city life) is entangled in contradictions of opportunity and constraint, of order amid complexity.

Everyday practices, such as reading, cooking, and walking operate with a guise of habitability, and under that guise, De Certeau reveals everyday practices to emerge as practical forms of individual expression. In his writings of everyday practice in urban life, individuals learn to evade limitations by working around and in between structures of authority and dominance. Such evasion, in order to be successful, is reliant on individual skill and knowledge.

And this process is at its core De Certeau's understanding of *metis*, which he defines as "a form of intelligence that is always immersed in practice" (De Certeau 1984: 81).

Importantly for De Certeau such evasion should not be conflated with resistance.¹² De Certeau is concerned with the creative manner in which thoughts translate into practice. The way people respond back to larger structures of governance, and reclaim for themselves moments of self-expression. These acts of "making do" are developed into "tactics" versus larger "strategies." This distinction is fundamental to De Certeau's understanding of agency and social life.

Strategy for De Certeau is the 'structure' of social theory, that pervasive all-encompassing 'force' which sets out to govern as in Foucault's *governmentality*, to structure as in Giddens' *structuration theory*, and to create the rules of play as in Bourdieu's *theory of practice*. Strategies deploy space. They are the places of "the powerful;" a collective energy which generates proper social relations by distancing itself from Others. Strategies refer to the locations of correct environments, institutions and resources; places where strength originates from distinction (De Certeau 1984: xix; Bourdieu). Strategy is marked by formality. In Bandung, strategy emerges in the official planning of angkot routes by the Department of Transportation of West Java (DISHUB), their determination of how many minivans will operate which routes, where their official pick up and drop of points will be, and how much the fare for each journey will cost. Strategy also emerges in determinations made by angkot owners, who see themselves as entrepreneurs, not government employees or public service providers. Their decision on how well to maintain an angkot, whether it really needs an engine oil change, or new brake pads, or whether to invest in new upholstery, for example, all emerge as strategic formal decisions from a

¹² as in the works of Michel Foucault.

business and cost-benefit analysis perspective. These strategies, formal planning and profiteering, emerge from a position of power.

Tactics are set against such strategies. They do not count as “proper,” for they belong to the Other, the less powerful. Tactics are not about space they are about time. They are actions which take place “on the wing,” not premeditated or preplanned engagements; rather they are actions that rely on *created opportunities*. They are actions that make use of the powerful “for their own ends” (De Certeau, 1984:xiv). De Certeau notes that many everyday practices are tactical in character; walking, reading, cooking. Tactics are characterized as improvised acts by their spontaneous impulsive nature. In Bandung, tactics are the creative actions angkot drivers use to maximize daily profits. For example, waiting on the curbside to fill up (or overfill) the minivan before departing, charging for the full fare even though a passenger only traveled a partial fare, taking alternate routes to maximize ridership, erratically pulling over to pick up passengers, or randomly making a u-turn to back track on a route. On the streets of Bandung, these tactics govern the rules of the road, and “official” strategies by bureaucratic state agencies such as Department of Transportation of West Java (DISHUB) or by entrepreneurial angkot owners become irrelevant.

On the road, angkot drivers, (essentially day laborers) determine which actions are appropriate and which ones are not. These are tactics used not just for financial purposes, but tactics that become forms of self-expression. For example, pak Rudy, an angkot driver, noted that different drivers had different styles. Some were more patient than others, and some more risky. Each driver had a different style of engaging the road and passengers. Some were more aggressive in maneuvering the street and dealing with riders. The use of tactics, such as erratic u-turns, over-filling minivans, or violently honking the car horn, deeply interpolated the

personalities and driving styles of the drivers. Most everyday angkot users in Bandung would attest to this observation. In my own experiences for example, I began to notice that the older drivers on the Ciumbuleit – St. Hall route were more patient than the younger drivers. Traveling with my toddler son, taking money out from my purse or pocket would sometimes be tricky. On one occasion, my son was particularly squirmy, and as we departed from a busy intersection, I was clearly having difficulty holding on to him and the two bags of vegetables from the market. As cars were swerving around us, my son kept eagerly leaning towards the road, and I just could not get my hand into my purse to take out money to hand to the driver. Seeing the distress on my face, and both my hands occupied, one with bags of vegetables and the other with a determined three-year old, the older driver politely waved his hands and sped off without taking the fare. On other similar occasions, younger drivers would yell at me to hurry up (*cepat ibu!*) and with a disgruntled face speed off while my hand was still in the window.

I attributed this variance in experience not just to the personalities of each driver, but also to the fact, that for older drivers (who may be married with children of their own), my subject identity was read as a “mother;” meaning I was afforded greater respect, but also pity, if I was having difficulty controlling my child and belongings. For the younger drivers, (who may not be married or have children) my subject identity was not read as “mother,” but simply just “customer,” meaning I better hurry up and pay the fare, because the driver had more important things to do than wait for me to get ahold of my kid to pay him.

This was a common sentiment noted by many female angkot riders. As Ani, a young student at ITB noted, she could tell how well her angkot ride would be by just looking at the driver. “If the driver is young, and has a lot of tattoo’s, it going to be a bumpy ride; if the driver is older it might take longer, but he probably won’t brake so hard.”

In Bandung, as in most urban areas in Indonesia, women (like angkot drivers) also utilize tactics as they travel in the city. Similar to the ways that angkot drivers deploy tactics to maximize daily profits, tactics deployed by traveling women have a simpler goal—avoid harassment and petty crime. Just as driving styles indicate the varying personalities of the angkot driver, tactics to travel safely in public space deeply interpolate the personalities, past experiences, and intersectional identities of the urban women that deploy them. Such tactics can include, strategic prayers, such as those recited by Santi before leaving home and work, but can also include holding ones cellphone and purse tighter and in strategic positions, avoiding eye contact, modifying clothing and attire (as Gina did in the first chapter) or memorizing alternative routes to home or to work, and sitting in specific seats in a minivan.

Women utilize these tactics in varying repertoires. All of the women I spoke to in Bandung emphasized that such tactics during urban travel were necessary and set against the equally powerful (and sometimes sly) tactics of men, who engaged in petty crime, groping, catcalling, and other forms of sexual harassment. In urban public space, tactics by women and men, are set against each other as forms of power plays. All of the women I spoke to, relished in telling stories where they outwitted and outmaneuvered men in varying ways. Using their own skill, attention to detail, and inventiveness, these stories of ordinary triumphs over harassment in public space index not only the un-spectacularness of this violence, but also its perversely mundane ordinariness. As I show later in this chapter, collectively these tactics and patterned behaviors form the core of women's spatial practices in the city, and become a form of self-expression amid rising insecurity in the urban landscape.

It is within this context of tactic versus strategy that I would like to tease out De Certeu's use of the concept of "metis," which he defines as "a form of intelligence that is always

immersed in practice” (De Certeu 1984: 81). The concept was initially taken from Jean-Pierre Vernant and Marcel Detienne’s writings in *Les Ruses de l’intelligence. La metis des Grecs* in 1974. De Certeu writes that his understanding of metis, is “close to everyday tactics through its ‘sleight of hand,’ its cleverness and its stratagems” (De Certeu 1984:81-82). Instead of a strategy utilized by the powerful, *metis* is associated with the less powerful, those who deploy tactics to make do with their circumstances; as he emphasizes, “a tactic is an art of the weak” (1984:37)

For Santi, whom we met at the beginning of this chapter, quickly reciting prayers before leaving the safety of home or work, is a tactic to ensure safe travel. It has also become a type of everyday practice that has developed in direct response to the precarious nature of urban space externally, but also as a coping mechanism internally.

For Santi these prayers were triggered by an immensely fearful experience when she was young, one she was reluctant to discuss. When I asked her, how long she had been reciting these prayers before leaving home, her initial response was “since I was a child.” When I asked if anyone had taught her how to hold the door and close her eyes while reciting the prayer, she replied “no, I think I made it up.” If an elder did not teach it, how did you get into the habit of doing it, I asked. How and why did this practice emerge, I thought? After a moment of reflection, Santi took a sip of her tea, and told me a story that she had not thought about for a while.

Santi had learned to take any angkot when she began elementary school. Her mother initially rode with her in the mornings, but she would return home from school alone with a few girl friends who also lived in her neighborhood. When she was about 10 years old, one day while returning from school a man got aboard and sat directly across from the girls. The girls’ stop was the last one on the route, and once the moving minivan entered a long stretch of forested area, the man unzipped himself and began to masturbate in front of them. The school girls began to

scream, Santi did not understand what was happening at first, as she said “I thought the man was having a heart attack, his eyes rolled back, I started screaming out for a doctor,” she quietly giggled. The driver of the minivan immediately pulled over and threw the man out. When the girls arrived at their stop, he did not take their fare money, instead he suggested they go buy some candy, and never ever tell their parents about the “sick man” in the minivan.

As Santi told this story her voice dropped to a whisper. She was looking down at her cup of tea and her feet were fidgeting. We were in her living room, sitting on the floor in front of a bookshelf with family photos. She explained to me how over the next few days her school friends explained what the man was doing. She was deeply embarrassed by the whole incident and never told her parents. She was afraid that her mother would start accompanying her on the way home from school, and she knew that it would be an extra burden for her. After that experience she was scared to take the angkot alone, and she never felt safe in an angkot, but as she said, she had no choice. Santi concluded, “so to answer your question, I think I started the little prayer since then, because what do you do when you are afraid? I pray, because when I pray it gives me strength.”

For Santi, these habitual strategic prayers were rooted in a moment of trauma, and served as a reminder to be vigilant about others. The prayers were a way to gather strength and carry on, despite feelings of weakness or fear. In ways such as this, the prayers index a form of agentive practice, in which acts rooted in specific experiences, serve as expressions of individual agency amid anxiety or distress. Such tactical practices to cope with the external and internal stress of urban travel emerge as a feminized form of *metis*.

It is here, through the concept of *metis*, that individual agency emerges as processual, a movement and interchange between outside external factors and internal states of being. Agency

is expressed as an exchange between the invisible (the thought) and the visible (the act) (De Certeau 1984:84-85). This dynamic of internal versus external states of being is similar to James Scott's work on hidden and public transcripts (Scott 1990). Scott argues that "every subordinate group creates, out of its ordeal, a 'hidden transcript' that represents a critique of power spoken behind the back of the dominant" (Scott 1990: xii). Emotions felt by the subordinate group simmer on the inside, and critique and question experiences of injustice. According to him, these internal states of being rarely overlap with external public actions, in which subordinates must bend to existing power structures. When internal emotions are exposed to the public record, out of sheer frustration for example, they provide a rare glimpse at the contradictory, and unstable power relations at hand. Similarly in Bandung, women who engage in tactics to avoid harm, assert and transform their internal hidden transcripts, into culturally appropriate meaningful action, and thus express a type of agency in the face of masculine objectification. Here, women cautiously thread a needle between their internal fears of harassment, and external actions that can avoid such harm. For women who travel in urban space; thoughts and emotions such as fear or anxiety organically translate into specific actions, such as a tighter grip her or hushed prayer there.

Memory plays a vital role in the operation of agency through *metis* (De Certeau 1984:82-89). Remembering when and where first instances of harassment occur trigger various responses. Santi immediately turned to her faith, but others may seek out different tactics.

Alfa, a close friend of Santi, for example turned to technology as a source of strength. If she felt uncomfortable in an angkot (because of the way a man looked at her, or because he sat too close to her) she would quickly turn to her cellphone to snap a picture. "You have to make sure the volume is on, so the shutter makes a loud noise," she said with a smile. We were having

lunch together at the mall where she worked. Last year she was hired as a shop girl in an optometry office at a major retail mall in the center of Bandung. She was excited about the job but did not like the commute to the city. She needed to transfer between 3 different angkots from her home in Dago Atas to get to work. Alfa was an energetic and fashionable woman in her twenties, today her neon pink top exactly matched her shoes and small purse, and unlike Santi, she does not wear the hijab. Alfa came to Bandung to study from central Java, and lived with her 2 older brothers who were working in the city as architects. “I come from a very protective household,” she noted. “My brothers are very strict with me, but I think it is because they know how men think” she added.

“The idea to take pictures of men who bother me came from them. When I first came to Bandung to study I told them about a time when a man was reading a magazine in the angkot and used it as a cover to grab my thigh. I was scared and immediately froze. He kept his hand on my thigh for a while, I was screaming inside my head but couldn’t say anything, I just looked out the window in front of me as the angkot drove around. Eventually his phone started to ring so he lifted his hand to pick it up. When I got home, I bust into tears and told my eldest brother Rizal. He was furious. The next day, he told me to take a picture of anybody who bothers me again. So now I just snap away.”

Alfa said this last part ‘so now I just snap away,’ by mockingly clicking an imaginary camera with her hands. Unlike Santi’s quite demeanor when retelling her previous experience with harassment, Alfa had a more energetic attitude, and retold her story in a matter of fact way,

without embarrassment. Over lunch it became clear that for Alfa, the problem was with men. It was their lack of self-restraint, discipline and a sense of entitlement that caused them to behave badly. “You know, Bandung is changing, more and more people are coming here for school and work, these men have no control, they do not understand how to act.” Here, Alfa was referring to the rapid urbanization of Bandung, with an influx of rural migrants and upwardly mobile students to the city. To counter such lack of moral character, Alfa turned to technology such as her cell phone. “You have to shame them” she said coyly.

Technology empowers Alfa in urban space, she uses the camera of her cell phone to document those who make her uncomfortable. In her view, the shutter noise of the camera throws off guard would-be-assailants. “They think I am just going to sit and take it, they don’t know what to do when I put the camera in their face.” The images never last more than a few days on her phone because she eventually deletes them. But as she emphasizes “they don’t know that, maybe I will post their picture on facebook, or instagram, the threat is enough... ya?” I was particularly intrigued by this last statement Alfa made, the threat of social shame was constructed as a malleable force, one that could be used both to express her own agency, while simultaneously being structured by it. Social shame associated with harassment in public space was meted out equally and just as powerfully against offensive men.

For both Santi and Alfa, it took just one fearful incident in the past to engender certain tactics for future travel. These tactics were developed as an active form of agency, a dynamic expression of individual determination to avoid future harassment. This understanding of agency, as a movement of time from past memory to current practice, accounts for the swift decision making required in daily life. For women who travel in the city, memory plays a vital role in determining *where* and *when* to pick up or get off a minivan, which drivers are safe to ride with

and which ones are not, and where and when public streets are safe to walk. In each case, complex external stimuli interact with past and future knowledge (a type of intelligence) to be expressed creativity through everyday actions. Women in particular are “operators” and “users” of this creative knowledge regarding safe travel (De Certeau 1984:xii-xv). To deal with such fear amid a culture of impunity for sexual harassment, such women must develop tactics, practices, and habits in their own ways and based on their own unique experiences.

If we think of agency as a temporal intelligence immersed in practice, it begs the question, how do people learn ‘tactics’ and operationalize *metis* against larger ‘strategies’? For countless women like Santi and Alfa, such practices emerge more organically, based on individual personality, unique experiences, and specific circumstances. However, while the practices and tactics to travel in urban space may differ, common knowledge suggests that countless women, in large urban cities everywhere, require the use of tactics to ensure safe travel. In turn, this common knowledge indexes the way urban space is experienced differently by women. It highlights how urban space is dynamic, ever changing, and in response, requires an equal dynamism from female urban residents. And it is at this juncture where De Certeau’s conception of *metis* holds back from a larger theory of social practice. As Jon Mitchell has argued, De Certeau offers instead a “theology” in which agency, resistance, and subjectivity “are the manifestations of an enduring counter-modern human spirit” (Mitchell 2007: 89). Everyday practice is where De Certeaus find redemption from the flattening forces of modernity. I argue everyday practice is also where such modernity is tested.

Women's Spatial Practices

There is a familiarity one experiences with routine travel in the city. Fruit-sellers, street vendors and hawkers, uneven pavements, abandoned buildings all become a common part of the urban landscape; those familiar faces of people or places all signal a range of emotions and represent either signs of security or portents of fear, in ways such as these fear makes the city.

Fear is a form of knowledge, fear generates information. The emotions of fear, even fleeting moments of fear, cognitively imprint a memory, a mental red flag so to speak, which communicates and produces specific urban spatial practices. Women are constantly searching for such red flags as they make their way through the city. These mental markers trigger the way women engage with urban space.

For example, Siti, a woman whom I followed to and from work, quietly noted to me one day that she experienced cat-calls from a fruit-seller at one known minivan pick up site, so she instead preferred to walk to a different pick up site, even if that meant exerting a little more effort and time. If she saw a group of young men standing around a food-kiosk, she crossed the road erratically to the other side, to avoid having to walk through the small crowd of men. When she sat alone in a minivan and male passengers came on board, she instantly held her purse tighter, or moved it to a more secure position on her lap. In all of these instances Siti was painstakingly aware of her surroundings and was promptly reacting to the external stimuli in the urban environment. In those brief moments, the urban landscape was read and instantly interpreted, constructing and enabling particular spatial practices—crossing the road here, walking a little further there. In my many travels with Siti, and women like her, what became apparent was that women were constantly assessing their urban environments, making snap judgments, and acting on that information based on their own unique perceptions of risk.

Assessment, judgment, and action form the core patterns of feminized spatial practices. All the women I interacted with in Bandung, told and retold stories of the importance of being aware and assessing the urban environment; they all carried the heaving burden of being careful. Assessment of the urban environment, the people and things that inhabit it, became a critical first step while traveling in the city. All women explained in varying ways; how being aware of the environment required one to next make a judgment about that environment. It was not enough to just be cautious of what was happening, but one also had to determine whether those events or people posed any risk or provided a sign of safety. After a snap judgment is made, each woman quickly but carefully determines what action (if any) is needed and the potentiality of any risk that action may cause. For experienced travelers in the city like Santi, Alfa, and Siti, assessment, judgment, and action became a patterned behavior such that common urban environments (small crowds of men, cat-calling street vendors) instantaneously engendered particular actions.

This patterned behavior is best illustrated by one of the first women to give me advice about traveling in Bandung. Ika, a young, thin and fair complexioned mother, sternly noted to me, “You must always look at the driver first, then look at the other passengers in the minivan before you decide to get in; If the driver looks too young or too old wait for another one to pass. Or if the minivan is too crowded, just tell the driver to go. You can’t just get into *any* minivan, you have to *see* first and then *decide*.” Assessment of the urban environment was not limited to just public transit. She later added, “traveling in the city you can never relax. You always have to see, know what is going on, so you can do something. Don’t be lazy, o.k.!” For women who travel in the city, there is never an opportunity to rest or relax. Since the urban landscape is ever changing, women must constantly be aware of what it happening, for being “lazy” can be costly.

It was commonly believed, sexual violence and crime in public space, could best be avoided by unending attentiveness.

I find that the core patterns of feminized spatial practices, assessment, judgment and action, become habitual as women routinely engage the urban environment. The women I followed closely developed their own rhythms as they walked or waited for minivans, these individualized patterns (what I call “modern metis” in the concluding section) provide a mask for the emotions that are running inside them. Ranges of emotional responses are felt by traveling urban women; frustration, anxiety, fear and relief all oscillate from within. Importantly, these emotional triggers produce unique spatial practices that litter the urban terrain with multiple meanings.

Many of the women I interacted with in Bandung rely on public transit as their *only* means of getting to work, university, or the market. Without public transportation, these women would be severely limited in opportunities of employment and education, or in the ability to independently leave the confines of their home. In this narrative, public transit is empowering. No longer tied to home and hearth, these women (of various backgrounds) access urban mobility as a way to improve their lives.

However in a counter-narrative, public transit (and urban space more broadly) emerges as a constraint on the ability to fully engage in public in a free manner. The patterned behavior of countless women in urban space indicates that tactics for urban travel emerge as a hidden labor burdened by gender. For some, these tactics are also a coping technique, to assuage fears and insecurity. In this counter-narrative, public transit emerges as unkind to the weak-hearted, a hardship one must endure in order to attain a higher good (like education or employment). Such travel tactics then emerge as a form of knowledge, expert guidance substantiated by experience.

This labor and knowledge is rarely openly acknowledged among women themselves. Rather these spatialized practices are intuitively determined as urban space is constructed through the lens of fear.

For example, Juli, a young schoolteacher who uses public minivans as her only mode of transportation in the city, has developed an entire mental list of “tips” she uses to get to work safely and on time. She quickly listed her advice as “time, *trayek* (meaning minivan route), and attire. She was hired as a schoolteacher 5 years ago, and noted that the first week of work was the hardest for her because she had difficulty assessing how much time was needed for her commute. She noted that on her first day she got to work in 35 minutes (she had expected the commute to take 45 minutes), but the next day she was 30 minutes late even though she had left her home at the exact time. She was embarrassed by her tardiness and blamed the angkot driver who refused to depart until the minivan had more passengers. After four days of inconsistencies, she determined that she needed to allot at least 90 minutes for her commute, double her initial expectation. “You should never be in a rush, it creates more stress, I always make sure I have extra time. That was five years ago, in Bandung now, I give 2 hours for my commute.” This requires Juli to wake up extra early and subsequently go to bed early, during the week this means she cannot go out with friends for dinner or other celebrations. “I have no choice, no one can predict traffic in Bandung anymore! And you know, its getting worse every year.”

Second, she says that she has memorized the various alternate routes (*trayeks*) to her destination, which includes a significant amount of walking, hoping on and hoping off different minivans. The alternate routes requires a different set of determinations, based on the weather (if it rainy or too hot), what she was wearing, how much she was carrying, and how much energy she has. Her backup plan, embodied in her knowledge of alternative routes and side streets,

served as a form of reassurance, if she encountered difficulty in her initial commute, she could rely on an alternate route to get to work. Juli only used her back up routes a few times a month; on the off-day that the presence of a fellow passenger made her feel uncomfortable or traffic is particularly bad. In those situations Juli would prefer to disembark the minivan, and walk alone and pick up a different angkot to get to work. She noted that unwanted attention and glances were absolutely unbearable, if she became cognizant of a man's stares, her body became riddled with anxiety, so much so that she would start to perspire. In that moment, she would immediately muster up the courage to loudly announce "*kiri*" to indicate to the driver that she needed to get out.

Juli emphasized that her experiences with stranger-anxiety were not common, that she was somehow unique in her inability to tolerate a man's gaze. She frequently reiterated that she had a shy personality, and was not as strong as most Indonesian women. However, all the women I interviewed in Bandung noted experiences of anxiety and fear during their daily commutes to work or school.

Third, Juli was meticulously cognizant of her attire during travel. "You cannot just wear whatever you want when you are traveling by angkot. You must wear loose modest clothing. But that does not mean you cannot be fashionable, ya!" Juli did not have a uniform at the school where she worked, and she did not wear a hijab. However, her desire for modest clothing did not negate a sense of fashion or style. Rather it required, a more nuanced attempt to bridge together concerns of harassment, with a personal desire for creative expression. Public space was constructed through the fear of what-ifs, and thus required diligently carried out "tips" and "back-up plans."

Similar to Alfa, Juli also relied on her cellphone as a form of reassurance during travel, but unlike Alfa she never took pictures of men who were staring at her. Instead, Juli preferred to hold the cellphone tightly in her hand during angkot travel, and to listen to music to browse the Internet when she felt comfortable. Adding that “the space in an angkot is small, and my commute is long. I need something to distract me, but its hard sometimes, because you have to make sure that you are paying attention to your things. One time someone stole my wallet from my purse when I was watching a movie on my phone. It was my fault, I was not careful.”

For women like Juli, traveling in public space is a constant balancing act. On one hand public space requires women to be constantly vigilant about their environment, frequently making assessments and snap judgments that require specific actions; simultaneously, these women seek out creative forms of self expression in public space, such as watching movies during transit or wearing clothing in their own unique style. Women like Juli can never really enjoy public space in a leisurely fashion, because leisure presumes privilege and safety, conditions that are out of reach precisely because they are women. In ways such as this, the urban terrain is littered with multiple meanings of inclusion and exclusion.

Modern Metis

In the previous sections we have seen how women develop individual tactics to deal with precious urban space. As women construct urban space through the lens of fear, these tactics emerge as an expression of individual agency amid insecurity. These patterned behaviors and individualized practices are a direct response to experiences of harassment or crime, and often become the lens through which women interpret and make sense of their urban environment, an environment that is rapidly changing. There is a sense of urgency in the way women speak of

Bandung. Constant changes in urban space (such as rapid demolition and construction) create an electric sense of transformation, of new possibilities that hinge on uncertainty.

For example there is nostalgia in the way long-term residents describe Bandung; that it once was a serene idyllic hill town with cool weather and clean air, qualities which no longer exist. Rapid urbanization has engulfed this once picturesque town. Narrow lanes designed for modest vehicles are now packed to the brim with revving motorbikes, cars, and busses. In a vain attempt to ease congestion, major streets that use to hold two-way traffic, are now converted into one-way corridors; stretching and overlapping in confusing ways. Older neighborhoods in the center of town, with classic Dutch tropical architecture, are now converted into commercial areas, housing themed restaurants, outlet stores, and outdoor cafes. Newer neighborhoods are emerging for the upwardly mobile middle class, cramped into areas once untouched by development, leading to the dislocation of entire hillside villages into slum-like informal housing. The once cool clean air of Bandung is now thickened with pollution and smog, and the rivers that run through the city are polluted beyond repair. Following global trends, the weather is warmer every year, leading to large-scale mosquito born illnesses that cool weather once prevented.

These urban transformations parallel the large-scale developmental changes documented by James Scott in *Seeing like a State*. His description of grand scheme failure, produced and brought down by high-modernist planning, corresponds to the underbelly of urbanization and development taking place in many cities of the global south. Both, grand schemes and rapid urbanization, bring certain people and certain places into new relationships with one another. Both are carried out with broader notions of modernity in mind, and both rely on generalized simplifications in the face of complexity and nuance.

However, unlike Scott's assertion that high-modernist state planning erases metis and practical knowledge; we see that in Bandung, women develop, adapt, and create new types of knowledge in order to deal with the exigencies of state planning and urbanization. These women respond back to uncertainties in urban space through the development of unique practices, tactics, and habits. Importantly this feminized knowledge is not rooted in tradition, but is instead born out of urbanization itself. Increasing female work participation rates, easier access to education, growing cosmopolitanism and consumer culture, all demand women to leave the confines of home and hearth. And yet when they do so, urban space is instantly read, interpreted, and understood as unwelcoming. In order to navigate such terrain, women adapt, they learn alternate routes to get to work, they chose different attire, or say a little prayer.

Recognizing the connection between urban experiences and sensory stimulations provides nuanced ways to explore the action and interactions between women and their relations to and with urban space. This highlights the gendered nature of urbanization in the global south, and the ways in which people and places are brought into new relationships with one another, such that traditional roles are challenged. However, as we see in the next chapter, these new relationships between people and objects, reify traditional gender dynamics.

Feminist theory has cautioned that the *separation* of men and women in public space will only further *entrench* gender differences (Rosaldo 1974, Ortner 1974, Mohanty 1991, Butler 1997, Das and Poole 2004; Das 2007; Ghanam 2002, 2011; Koning 2009). Yet, to combat increasing violence against women in public space, Indonesia, along with India, Brazil and Japan have followed a growing trend to gender segregate public transportation systems with “women only” compartments. In Indonesia, public transportation is tied to the discursive and material processes of modernization and redevelopment, as described in chapter 1. This modernity is

expressed through both political and economic incorporation of women on one hand, and spatial exclusion and gendered violence on the other.

In Chapter 4 I examine global attempts at redesigning public transportation to reduce violence crimes against women. Scholars and city planners alike have drawn on new science and emergent technology to trace out the ways in which women can travel safely in public, however these emergent designs yield to traditional (yet popular) forms of gender segregation, with “pink” gender segregated “women only” compartments and platforms for buses and light rail systems. As modern transportation systems rely on traditional forms of gender segregation, I argue that despite the popularity of these systems, they remain red herring solutions to the more effusive problem of violence against women (Marcus and Clifford 1986; Low and Smith 2006).

Chapter 5:

Pink Transit and the Limits of Urban Citizenship

“I never thought I could use my lipstick as a weapon” said Sifa, a young IT professional who had come to the mega-mall Plaza Senaya in Jakarta, Indonesia to learn about self-defense. Like many other urban women in Jakarta, she experiences sexual harassment daily during transit from work and home. “There are some carriages for women, but they are limited so I sometimes have to use the mixed carriage,” she added. She had eagerly come to the free self-defense demonstration on an early Saturday morning to learn tips and get advice from a professional martial artist. Anna, a mother in her forties had come with her teenage daughter. They were not only interested in learning about self defense against sexual assault, but also how to protect themselves from other forms of violence such as “pickpockets, because they have many tricks.” The floor of the mall was dotted with attentive women of various ages, who had come to watch and learn the multiple ways to defend against physical attacks. Eko Hendrawan, the community trainer leading the demonstrations shouted to the participants “don’t think that women are weak, throw away that mind set” (Jakarta Post 2013).

In 2006, Eko along with Sofyan Hambali helped establish and organize the Bandung based community group Female Self Defense at Kushin Ryu (WSDK)¹³. “A couple of years ago, three students of Aa Gym (an Islamic preacher) were robbed and two died. That was the catalyst to form this community,” said Eko. Frequent harassment against women was commonplace, but it was not until such a traumatic event, the death of two religious students, that the community mobilized to help women learn simple techniques to avert assault.

¹³ Eko estimates that there were around 2000 participants from Bandung, Jakarta and East Java that are involved with the traditional Japanese martial art community, see (Jakarta Post 2013).

Scenes like this in Jakarta are not new to urban woman. Across the globe, women in urban cities such as Cairo, Mexico City, New Delhi, and Rio de Janeiro, are acutely aware of the threats and possible threats of violence that they may experience in public space. Most women, like Sifa, experience violence daily during transit, that gray area of time and space, between home and work.

The threat of violence against women in public space is particularly salient in urban areas. Women in urban areas are twice as likely as men to experience violence, especially in developing countries.¹⁴ Some national studies indicate that up to 70 percent of women in developing countries have experienced physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime.¹⁵ According to a 2013 World Health Organization report, for the South-East Asia region 40.2 percent of women aged 15 and over self reported that they have experienced physical and/or sexual violence. This percentage includes abuse by both intimate partners and non-intimate partners (WHO 2013). While there is a significant body of research that investigates violence against women in the context of domestic violence and battery; what has remained difficult to document are the systematic experiences of sexual violence and harassment by complete strangers. Violence that is experienced daily but undocumented.

In Indonesia, systematic data on street harassment and assault is difficult to record precisely because it rests on women self-reporting crimes, the ability to identify distinct perpetrators, and a sympathetic legal system that enforces, prosecutes, and punishes violent crimes against women without shame, stigma or victim-blaming. Short of such equitable socio-

¹⁴ UN-HABITAT, 2006, *State of the World's Cities 2006/2007*, p. 144.

¹⁵ World Health Organization, *Global and Regional Estimates of Violence against Women*, http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/85239/1/9789241564625_eng.pdf, p2. For individual country information, see full compilation of data in UN Women, 2012, *Violence against Women Prevalence Data: Surveys by Country*.

legal structures, street harassment emerges as an open secret, a practice that is widely known to be true, despite an official blindness to its reality.

That blindness is slowly eroding. In October 2014, the Thomas Reuters Foundation released a global report entitled “Most Dangerous Transport Systems for Women” that globally ranked public transit systems in 20 of the most populous capitals (Thomas Reuters Foundation 2014). Bandung’s sister city, Jakarta was ranked number five, below New Delhi, Lima, Mexico City, and Bogota (no.1). The report laid bare in the simplest of terms, the common experiences and long held belief of women throughout the world, that taking public transportation is risky *because* you are a woman. It underscored how harassment in public transit is entangled with broader issues such as trust in local authorities, trust in fellow passengers, and the risks of women traveling at night, especially without male relatives or chaperones. These entanglements highlight the importance of investigating street harassment beyond individual occurrences and individual pathology. Global reports such as this highlight the dual nature of street harassment against women. On the one hand, such harassment is a widespread violence that is experienced by women globally, while on the other hand those experiences of violence are localized within particular contexts of culture, legal systems, and personalized perceptions of risk.

The irony of the results from the Thomas Reuters Foundation report is that three of the top five most dangerous transit systems for women have special “women only” carriages or buses, specifically created to reduce violent crimes against women. These transit systems, in Mexico City, New Delhi, and Jakarta have separate gender segregated compartments or areas designed to keep women separate and away from men, yet despite these “pink” colored female friendly designs, women remain unsafe and are fearful of harassment and crime. What went wrong?

In this chapter I highlight the global emergence of gender segregated transit systems as a “new” mode of urban segregation and governance. This new segregation, between men and women in places of transit, is a modern, contemporary, attempt to address safety concerns amid rapid urbanization by privileging industrial design and civic planning interventions. These infrastructural ‘improvements’ are appealing (to some policy makers, politicians, and their female constituents) for delivering relatively quick results. Segregation is seen as a legitimate and viable solution to the problem of sexual harassment in public space because the common belief is that systematically addressing patriarchal attitudes prevalent in society, has proven to be more controversial, messy, and drawn out.

The emergence and popularity of gender-segregated transit highlights the complicated relationship between women’s access to public spaces, and the infrastructural pressures that emerge in rapidly urbanizing city centers. We see that the dual phenomenon of rapid urbanization and increasing incidences of violence against women in public space complicates popular discourse on the appropriate governmental interventions needed to enhance women’s safety. At the core of the matter is the simple question: what is the best way to ensure women’s safe access to public space? Increasingly, we see that city governments, planners, engineers, and even some feminist activists prefer to rely gender segregation, not as a way to inhibit women’s participation in the public sphere, but as a strategy of urban governance to enhance it. In these narratives, segregation emerges as a necessary technique in order to increase women’s safe access to public space. Segregation of the sexes, by means of private enclosures, discursively marks women’s bodies as exceptional, and thus in need of special protections from the wider public. This same narrative assumes all male passengers have the potential to do and cause harm,

and thus reifies gendered stereotypes and roles. Despite this these systems are widely popular among certain sections of society.

In the first part of this chapter I review the literature on urban segregation through the seminal work of Teresa Caldeira, and her concept of the “fortified city” (Caldeira 2000). Her work builds on the long-standing trend of viewing urban segregation through the classic axis of race and class. I argue for the need to expand this theoretical lens to also include gender. Such an analysis would examine the ways in which city spaces are segregated (formally and informally) along the lines of gender as well. It would highlight the multiple and often conflictual ways privilege and status are determined. Fear of violence in this context mediates where and when women’s bodies can be, thus demarcating safe zones from unsafe ones, and separating privileged bodies from underprivileged ones. The physical condition of the built environment, such as bad lighting or abandoned areas, significantly impacts such determinations. Many of the assumptions that undergird theories of urban segregation overlook the critical examination of gender, with some notable exceptions (England 1991, Spain 1992, Duncan 1996). As I have discussed in chapter 1, public space is not gender neutral, and women and men inhabit and socially construct these spaces in unique ways. The global emergence of gender-segregated transit highlights this flawed assumption.

In the second section I examine the link between urban mobility and female agency. I argue that women embrace “women only” transit as a way to enhance their mobility and assert individual agency. In the third section, I explore the belief that gender segregated transit is discrimination by design, and problematize the equity claims at the heard of such infrastructural interventions. These counter-narratives, one in support of increased gender segregated spaces, and one against it, index the complexity of addressing women’s safety amid rapidly urbanizing

cities, and the risks and rewards involved in attempting to forge equitable gender relations through increased segregation and spatial design. In both narratives safe mobility plays a critical role in shaping women's experiences of urban life.

The Emergence of a 'New Segregation'

A recent special issue of the journal *Mobilities* was dedicated to investigating the relationship between roads and Anthropology (Dalakoglou and Harvey 2012). The editors paid specific attention to how roads carried a powerful sense of mobility, between “sweeping narratives of globalization” and “tangible materialities of particular times and places.” (Dalakoglou and Harvey 2012: 459). The research suggests that roads are equally capable of disconnecting people, populations and sentiments, as well as “forging connections” between previously divided areas (ibid). The “other side of the tracks” is an apt metaphor for such separation and disconnection, despite geographical proximity. Building on this research, I argue that “women-only” mass transit systems in general, which include roads but are not limited to it, similarly capture the spirit of forging connections amid separation, of mobility through segregation. Gender segregated transit is premised on the belief that women can achieve safe mobility precisely because they are protected by a ‘separation’ that keeps out the potential of harm. Rarely do passengers acknowledge, that it may be the separation itself that leads to the increased potentiality of harm. In other words, women see segregation as an antidote to harm, for it is much harder to see segregation as furthering harm. A point I will elaborate on later in the conclusion.

It is in this context of the promise of safety despite uncertainty, that large modernizing infrastructural projects such as roads and transit systems, become critical for understanding the

relationship between mobility and female safety in urban areas. Like roads, I believe transportation systems such as angkots, are replete with all types of social interactions and materialities of social significance. Moreover these interactions unfold on a daily basis, in sync with the rhythms of social life. But what happens when these interactions are also replete with forms of violence, disrespect and shame? How do women, like Sifa who we met at the beginning of this chapter, internalize and make sense of their daily mobility coupled with experiences of daily violence; and what enables such entanglements to occur? What strategies emerge to empower acts of agency and de-center positions of victimization?

The emerging body of literature on (auto)mobility and its attendant infrastructure highlights the overlap between material objects (such as roads, vehicles, and transportation systems) and the social and cultural experiences of development, economic progress, and middle class sensibilities; or the lack there of. This literature focuses on how physical infrastructures carry meaning through non-social materials, such as cars, concrete roads and steel pipes (Urry 2000, Anand 2011, 2012, Larkin 2013, Chalfin 2014). The United States has perhaps led the world in its expression of a particular imaginary of the open-road, associated with ideas about ‘freedom’ and the ‘frontier’ explored by philosophers, writers and film-makers.¹⁶ In other parts of the world, the open road has deeper national and cultural meanings, associated with modernization, development, and connectivity to urban centers. These sentiments take on gendered meanings, given that women and men internalized such representation in potentially divergent ways. For some, the development of roads and transit infrastructure translates into jobs, growth, and economic activity, for others it can signify crime, prostitution or trafficking.

¹⁶ Baudrillard’s ‘America’ (1970) or a more ethnographic exploration would be Kathleen Stewart’s work (1996).

Vehicles that utilize this infrastructure also take on a significance of its own. Urry argues that the car has become “a way of life;” not just a transport system “for getting from one place to another” (Urry 2000:115). Auto-mobility in this view is tied to a form of everyday habitability, a mundane space of traffic and congestion, or of possibility and necessity. Simultaneously the materiality of the car implicates broader systems of interconnections that produce it. The car is interlinked with licensing authorities, traffic police, petrol refining, road building and maintenance; just as much as it is itself a manufactured object produced by capitalist industrial sectors and iconic firms (Ford, GM, Mercedes, Toyota) through definitive social science concepts such as Fordism, Taylorism, and Post-Fordism (Urry 2000:115-118).

Classical investigations cars and roads emphasized the possession of seemingly ‘modern’ objects. For example, in the classic ethnography of the Azande in Africa by Evans-Pritchard’s, he concluded that colonial built roads did not seem to impact the Azande people since *they did not have cars*, rather the road infrastructure was used just as a footpath, noting that “when a group of Azande walked down them they did so in single file as they were accustomed to along their bush paths (Evans-Pritchard 1960: 311).

This view of static bounded-cultures, lacking modern technologies such as cars, was brought into direct question when mobility became a central trope of anthropological cultural critique in the 1980’s (Marcus and Clifford 1986; Marcus and Fischer 1986). In *Anthropology as Cultural Critique*, Marcus and Fischer pushed the discipline to investigate the influence of the ‘modern’ western world on communities that were regarded as invert and isolated. In doing so, the field of research expanded, to include not only marginalized or isolated communities, but also those with immense social power and mobility.

This paradigmatic shift built on conceptualizations of culture and mobility by scholars such as Bourdieu, Foucault, Lefebvre and thus paved the way for more postmodern, processual and dynamic understandings of space, status, and prestige (Jameson 1984, Harvey 1989, Soja 1989, Thrift 1996, Massey 2005). It is within this context of mobility and material objects that the work of Teresa Caldera on urban segregation in Brazil becomes relevant.

In *City of Walls*, Caldera (2000) documents the changing landscape of two Brazilian neighborhoods in Sao Paulo over nearly a decade. She reveals the complicated ways in which crime and violence directly impact broader cultural understandings of social mobility and safety, such that formal and informal modes of segregation and distinction emerge as strategies against the diffusive power of crime, violence, and fear. She shows that as various social groups in the city attempt to protect their homes from crime; fear of violence emerges a broader cultural trope that governs particular behaviors and elicits particular responses. Amid a backdrop of rapid urbanization and limited infrastructural resources, individuals turn to more basic efforts to fortify their homes and neighborhoods from crime and violence. This space emerges as a “fortified enclave”, what Caldera defines as “privatized, enclosed and monitored spaces for residence, consumption, leisure, and work” (Caldera 303:1996b) She makes note that this process of fortification, of building up walls, barricades, fences, and iron grills, is replete with broader social understandings of race and class. In this view the act of fortification and its material manifest—the wall, becomes a cultural device to create both physical (and social) segregation and separation.

In Brazil, social and economic inequality is particularly visible, and Caldera notes that, “as a consequence, processes of spatial segregation are also particularly visible, expressed without disguise or subtlety” (Caldera 303-304: 1996). Spatial segregation in her analysis

operates on the axis of race and class such that fortified enclaves function on the complicated premise of keeping out those who are poor and/or racially distinct (in the case of Brazil whites from ‘non-whites’). As a result, Caldiera unravels the complicated relationship between poverty and criminality, in which one implicates the other. Fear of violence and crime strongly co-relate with race, and subsequently the emergence of spatial segregation indexes this divide.

The fortified enclave (as advertised to the rich) publicizes segregation as a status symbol. Caldiera teases out the concept of this “new logic of residence” that is widely promoted for the upper classes. She emphasizes that in these advertisements, isolation by design, is entangled with prestige and social class. However, residential patterns of segregation are not new, they can be traced to pre-modern periods in which land and housing, specifically correlated to social class and hierarchy. Geographical divisions between aristocrats and servants, between the rural village and the elite center are reoccurring spatial practices throughout much of the world. For Caldiera, what makes this type of segregation “new” is the manner in which it manifests itself, within discourses of modernization and its effect on democratic participation (Caldiera 1992).

There are four distinct features of Caldiera’s fortified enclave. First, explicit separation is achieved with physical dividers, such as walls or barricades that limit pedestrian mobility. Second, this separation is enforced by private security systems that employ guards and security men. Third, the enclaves utilize design and organizational techniques to create a “private universe turned inward” away from the street (Caldiera 2000). For example, positioning windows facing a lawn, garden or swimming pool instead of city sprawl. Finally, fourth, these enclaves market independence and self-sufficiency away from the public street and those who inhabit it. The objective of a fortified enclave is to create an entire functioning parallel universe

outside of the public street, with its own mini market, library, laundry services, or sport/gym facilities (Caldiera 1992, 2000).

According to Caldiera, the emergence and expansion of fortified enclaves in major urban cities of the global south index the way social and economic divisions in society map out geographically. These geographical distinctions embed themselves within broader socio-cultural logics of race, violence, and class, in ways that both subtly (but also overtly) reify unequal subject positions. The reification of inequality through material objects, such as walls, iron grills, and gates, naturalize fear of violence as a logical and culturally appropriate way to signify social distance, status and privilege. As she emphasizes, “experiences of violence tend to be class-specific” (Caldiera 53:2000). So much so that “talk of crime never abandons its prejudicial categories: in fact, they constitute it” (Caldiera 78:2000).

Fortified enclaves emerge not just as a physical and geographical space of exception (to the reality of violence and fear) but also emerge as a metaphorical device, one that is constructed and designed with prejudicial and discriminatory logics against the poor and racialized minorities. In the neighborhoods that Caldiera studied, race and class physically (but also figuratively) segregated and divided urban space. In Brazil, this physical and social segregation informs the core of urban experiences, for the rich, the poor, and all those in between.

A similar type of segregation and division is occurring in urban cities, but not through the design of residential communities, this type of segregation is occurring formally and informally along the lines of gender, and through the mode of urban transit. This is not a “new logic of residence,” this is rather a *new logic of transit*. If the objective of the fortified enclave was to create and reify social hierarchies by withdrawing from the chaos and violence of the public street; gender-segregated transit materializes this relationship in its extreme form, such that

public violence demands the sequestration of an entire gender of people. The public street becomes so interlinked with sexual harassment and crime that it emerges as a naturalized site of violence. Thus in order to control this “natural masculine aggression,” women must be kept separate for their own protection, by the patriarchal powers of the State.¹⁷

The emergence of social terms and categories regarding street harassment index the multiple ways women are deeply embedded within pre-existing gender logics that question their presence in public spaces. State interventions, through gender-segregated transit, intend to rectify these cultural vices by providing safe spaces of transit for women. Just as the fortified enclave seeks refuge from the violence and chaos of the public street, gender segregated transit imposes that same logic onto mobile spaces, and the purposes of urban mobility.

Segregation in both instances re-inscribes the public street as a place of violence and fear. In doing so, the logics governing the emergence of the fortified enclave are replicated and re-assembled by the materialization of gender-segregated transit in four ways. First, gender segregated transit is not private property for collective use; rather it is public property that is made private to specific classes of people, namely women and children. Segregation that is born out of a fear of violence, thus re-assembles public space into private space.

Second, gender segregated transit is not made to be isolating, in most instances, this mobile space is announced widely as exclusively for ‘women only’, with bright signage and bold pink colors directly attentive to the public masses. Unlike the fortified enclave, this space is marketed as a safe social space for women to comfortably travel without the worry of harassment. Advertisement campaigns targeted specifically towards women dot the inside of

¹⁷ This belief regarding the naturally aggressive inclinations of men, was common in Bandung among women I interviewed. It is also a common sentiment throughout Latin America, widely referred to as “machismo” culture. In South Asia, the sexual harassment of women is commonly called “Eve-teasing,” a reference to the first Biblical woman, Eve.

‘women-only’ busses and compartments, indexing a different type of sociality in communal spaces designed for them.

Third, similar to fortified enclaves, this segregation is enforced by forms of surveillance (by guards and security cameras) as a way to impose rules of inclusion and exclusion. The segregated design of this transit would be useless without enforcement, backed by the power of the state. Lastly, both types of segregation implicitly demarcate economic status and wealth. For public transit in general, is associated with those who cannot afford the privilege of auto-mobility. In major cities of the global south, reliance on public transit becomes indicative of social and economic class, those who can afford motorbikes or automobiles join an ever expanding middle-class that asserts its distinction through forms of consumerist desires. This distinction functions similar to fortified enclaves, as slum-like neighborhoods are associated with those who cannot afford the privilege of private closed condominiums. Segregation in these instances separates the few from the many.

Women-only transit and fortified enclaves rely on spatial designs to physically create distinctions between people. The fortified enclave enables this urban segregation along an axis of race and class, just as ‘women-only’ transit enables this segregation along an axis of gender. In both accounts, the public street emerges as a site of naturalized violence.

Mobility as Agency

Segregation between sexes is not a unique concept. Spatial divisions between men and women have been long documented and continue to provoke examinations of broader equity concerns with regards to power, representation, and knowledge. As women increasingly participate in the public sphere, their access to public space is critically tied to other

empowerment indicators, such as education, employment, political representation, and leisure. To fully participate in civic and political life, women must first be able to safely inhabit the public street, and yet as countless official and unofficial crime reports highlight, women who venture out into public space feel insecure and anxious. Many experience violence in the form of sexual assault or rape further limiting access to the urban public space.

This section argues that the inability to safely travel in public space limits a woman's sense of mobility, and thus her expression of individual agency. Daily threats of violence that impinge on urban mobility directly restrict a woman's sense of self-expression, independence, and self-worth. Two major feminist interventions inform this link between mobility and agency, the first emerges from feminist legal scholarship, and the second from feminist geography.

Cynthia Grant Bowman's seminal contribution to the Harvard Law Review, classifies street harassment of women as an "informal ghettoization". Bowman grounds the idea of 'informal ghettoization' based on John Locke's definition of liberty as "to be free from restraint and violence from others" (Bowman 1993: 520). As Bowman argues:

"the liberty of women in this most fundamental sense of *freedom from restraint*, is substantially limited by street harassment, which reduces [women's] physical and geographical mobility, and often prevents them from appearing alone in public places. In this sense street harassment accomplishes an informal ghettoization of women – to the private sphere of hearth and home. (ibid.) [my emphasis]

Bowman systematically deconstructs the contemporary context in which women increasingly become targets of sexual harassments. She notes that incidents of sexual harassment are linked to four factors of the modern era, first the entry of women in the workforce, second the rise in age

of first marriage and divorce rates, third the delay in childbirth on the part of working women, and lastly, fourth the public acceptance of un-chaperoned women in public space. All of these factors increase the likelihood that women will be out in public, and often on their own. And yet, their increased presence in public space does not necessarily come with a similar increase in the what Bowman refers to as the “freedom to be at ease” in public, that is, the capacity to pass through public spaces while retaining a certain zone of privacy and autonomy, a zone of interpersonal distance that is crossed only by mutual consent (Bowman 1993:526)

Bowman’s work highlights the importance of feminist legal scholarship with regards to violence against women. She comprehensively investigates the legal potential of four possible legal remedies in the United States to reduce street harassment and improve women’s sense of feeling at ease in public. The potentiality of these legal interventions marks the complexity of addressing violence against women in public through legal channels alone. For example, when she first examines existing statutes and ordinances prohibiting assault, it becomes clear that these statutes offer a very limited ability to seek out prosecution given the context of street harassment during transit. When women are unable to identify their perpetrator, it becomes nearly impossible to legally prosecute against an individual who is unable to be restrained or cited by authorities. Perpetrator-less crimes such as street harassment make it incumbent on victims to identify assailants.

Second, when Bowman examined statutes and ordinances inciting “fighting words,” as a potential legal strategy against street harassment, she quickly pointed out that these statutes are largely put in place to deal with speech acts that lead to large-scale violence or riots. She concludes that these statutes have no legal precedence to be utilized in the context of

individualized forms of harassment based on gender alone, since the intention of use is framed within the context of racially or ethnically charged speech act.

Third, Bowman examines the potential of the use of the intentional infliction of emotional distress as a possible legal remedy to street harassment, however she notes again that these statutes can only be implemented on knowable perpetrators who have systematically harassed an individual woman. Here again the onus to prove legally satisfactory emotional distress falls squarely on the woman, thus limiting these statutes' ability to provide justice. Lastly, she examines the prospective use of the tort of intrusion and the invasion of privacy as a possible legal strategy against street harassment. Here she indicates that again there is not legal precedence in utilizing these statutes against unknown perpetrators.¹⁸ Bowman exhaustively concludes that unfortunately "no legal category quite 'fits' the harassment experience" (Bowman 1993: 572-572). Therefore "this observation simply offers additional evidence that neither statutory nor case law has developed with the experience of women in mind." (Bowman 1993:573). It is important to note that Bowman's legal critique with regards to street harassment is specifically grounded in American case law. If in the American context, case law is unable to equitably address the safety concerns of women, what might happen in countries with much weaker legal systems and customs of enforcement?

Susan Griffin (1975) has argued that highlighting the experiences of women is a critical first step in addressing their subjugation. She notes that street harassment increases women's dependence on men and contributes to distrust and hostility between sexes. Thus street harassment encourages women to seek male escorts in public, solidifying the need of men, to protect women, from harassment by *other unknown men*. This leads to the development of what

¹⁸ A tort is a legal term for a wrongful act or an infringement of a right (other than under contract) leading to civil legal liability.

she has referred to as “the male protection racket” (Griffin 1975: 24-30). Griffin’s observations were again based on the American experience of street harassment, but as I have argued in the previous chapter, street harassment has no geographical or historical borders. In the context of many developing countries, the “male protection racket” has increasingly become a reality in the everyday experiences of women. For example, in Indonesia, women commonly seek out sons, brothers, husbands or fathers to accompany them if they need to travel in public space, especially at night. In its extreme form, the requirement of a male chaperon is codified in law, as is the case in Saudi Arabia. The informal and formal logic of Griffin’s male protection racket produces a limited mobility (and thus limited agency) tied to the presence of a male chaperon.

It is in this context of mobility as agency, that Bowman makes the bold claim that street harassment leads to the informal ghettoization of women. The concept of “the ghetto” refers to a specific locality of a minority group that is stigmatized, has limited mobility, and is under surveillance due to its inferior status. Extrapolated onto the condition of women, Bowman extends this logic and applies it to women who are similarly discriminated against based on their gender, with limited mobility and constant surveillance. Women’s ghettoization is thus informal, they limit their own mobility due to a fear of violence, or seek out male chaperones, and this is compounded by the fact that as there is no formal legal mechanism to prosecute against the violence of street harassment.

Feminist geographers make a similar link between mobility and individual agency. In “Beyond Women and Transport” Robin Law (1999) attempts to redefine the field of “women and transport” by providing a conceptual framework which broadens the scope of traditional feminist geography. She does so by advocating a shift in gear from “women and transport” to “women and daily mobility”. Such a shift, she argues will highlight the ways in which women

engage in spatialized activities associated with the daily rhythms of life. By combining spatial analysis (the location, places, spaces of activities) with the temporality of daily routines (housework, childcare, paid work, socializing), the spatio-temporal matrix of mobility expands to highlight gendered practices, meanings and motivations, and thus expressions of individual agency.

Replacing transport with the more abstract concept of mobility, Law argues, that the field of inquiry can be expanded to incorporate new broadly defined analytic categories, such as access to resources, gender as a symbolic code and gendered built environments (Law 1999: 573-577). This call for a shift in analysis is timely given the explosion of social theoretical research on mobility linked with globalization, modernity, and movement between centers and margins.

An emphasis on daily mobility is particularly useful in understanding the role of safe urban transportation in the lives of women, because it allows not only an expansion of the spatial-temporal matrix of everyday practices, but also highlights the affective quality of daily embodied experiences. Women feel emotions such as fear, insecurity, vigilance or confidence in divergent ways as they travel through public space, thus expanding or limiting their experience of the urban outdoors. If women continue to face harassment on public streets, their uses of such spaces become limited. By further defining public space as masculine space, women's ability to engage in activities in the public sphere significantly reduce, thus rendering them tied to traditional places of home and hearth. As global initiatives increasingly demand women to take on more public roles, through employment and education, addressing the insecurity of the public street emerges as a critical first-step.

Classic literature on female agency has linked the concept to multiple social conditions. For example, Sabah Mahmood conceptualizes agency as a capacity for action, even if that action means engaging willfully in acts of subordination (Mahmood 2005). In this conceptualization, agency is untangled from resistance; such that respecting the agency of women must also include respecting their decision to engage in deliberate subordination (however uncomfortable such a position may be). Countering such narratives of willful subjugation, Lila Abu-Lughod powerfully examines the legal and political landscapes that overshadow women's capability to action, landscapes which project narratives of victimhood and passivity (Abu-Lughod 2013). In her analysis the subordination of women does not resonate so much in cultural or religious practices, as it permeates through economic and legal infrastructures that leave women systematically disadvantaged. Aihwa Ong's analysis of resistance and agency among female microchip factory workers amid rapid economic development in Malaysia, is a clear example of the ways in which political and economic re-structuring disproportionately affects women's lives (Ong 1987). In her view women become targeted as the bearers of nationalist visions of development and economic progress, despite the mounting anxiety and stress such modernity may entail. In such narratives resistance to such structures are expressed in locally meaningful ways, by delicately balancing cultural and social norms.

Thus the existing literature on women's resistance highlights the importance of agency as a relational concept, associated with concerns regarding individual subjectivity, free will and the female self's relationship to society at large. Agency becomes tied to larger debates on political and economic structures, such that everyday forms of resistance become enmeshed within individual practices and within specific tropes of cultural performativity. Resistance in the context of urban mobility becomes tied to the ability to engage in public space.

Beth Notar (2012) builds on this framing by arguing that mobility, both in terms of class and physical movement, cannot be assumed to lead to enhanced status, rather mobility, must be examined in conjunction with individual experiences (both temporal and spatial) in order to investigate the ways in which people understand and make sense of their changing life worlds. By comparing taxi drivers and “day-trippers” (people who only drive on weekends) in Kunming, China, Notar shows the vastly divergent sentiments towards automobility in the urban city. Taxi drivers feel trapped by their vehicles, and associate themselves as “average” people, while “day-trippers” feel a sense of freedom and accomplishment from the auto-mobility their vehicles provide. While both groups of people engage in auto-mobility within the urban context, Notar investigates the causes of their divergent experiences. She links these changes to the materiality of car ownership and varying affective nature of urban space. Her work highlights the ways in which urban mobility studies, has privileged mobility as a positive and inevitable consequence of socio-economic change in urban contexts.

The emergence of pink, ‘women-only’ transportation highlights how the assumption of positive mobility is flawed. Mobility as a positive experience is problematized by the experiences of street harassment in public space. The normative claims of mobility are challenged by embodied and temporal experiences that run counterpunal to these positivist assumptions. This link is particularly cogent for women, since their urban mobility is often (but not always) defined in terms of threats to bodily harm.

Discrimination by Design

Amy Dunckel-Graglia (2013, 2016) has argued that gender segregated transit increases women’s ability to engage in urban mobility. She points out “men’s control over transportation is

deeply entangled with gender ideologies that immobilize women” (Dunckel-Graglia 2016:629). The emergence of gender-segregated transit, in her view, overcomes such ideologies by providing relatively safe spaces to engage in mobility. Based on fieldwork in Mexico City, she argues that the popularity of women-only transit systems stem from an increase in violence against women in general (Dunckel-Graglia 2013, 2016). Yet despite an increasing awareness of this violence, promoted through a state run campaign against street harassment, women who utilize “women only” transit still feel restricted by the possible threats of harm that have come to mark the urban landscape. The problem in the end runs much deeper; gendered stereotypes of women as sexual objects, caregivers or as mothers continue to flourish such that women remain unable to break through categorizations that tie them to home and hearth. In fact, Dunckel-Graglia notes that the emergence of gender segregated transit in Mexico City has in some cases reinforced the notion that women are in need of special protections while in public space, thus reifying the very gendered stereotypes that transit infrastructure design attempt to overcome.

Dunckel-Graglia documented the online backlash against the implementation of Mexico City’s ‘pink transit’ infrastructure, highlighting the prevailing attitudes that disagreed with the need of special carriages and platforms for women. She noted that “men have been aggressively against the implementation of women-only services,” arguing the if women could “not deal with” the realities of public transit then they should continue to stay at home (Dunckel-Graglia 2013:95). She concludes by noting that “when women enter traditionally-masculine spaces, the initial reaction by men is to use hyper-masculine behaviors to push women out, rather than changing the culture of the space in order to include women” (Dunckel-Graglia 2013:95). This view further reinforces the need to intervene in the production of gendered stereotypes through broader and more direct tools such as infrastructure design and planning.

Segregation of the sexes through infrastructural design then emerges a normative governance tool that assumes violence against women will occur by *all* those who have the potential to do so. The objective of gender-segregated transit is to increase women's access to safe urban mobility by physically ensuring that they are separated from a wider population that has the potential to do harm. In this view men, regardless of individual experiences, circumstances, or personal histories are grouped together and collectively labeled as possible future threats, a designation determined solely on the basis on gender alone. Yet many of the women I spoke to in Bandung, Indonesia also noted that it was not *all* men who engaged in acts of harassment, there were many who were helpful and polite.

Let me illustrate this point with a scene from my daily travel journal. It was roughly 8:25 in the morning, and I was waiting on the side of the road to pick up an angkot at Gandok market. I had trouble crossing the major road, so I decided to follow the lead of a woman standing up ahead. She looked to be in her forties, nicely dressed in a bright yellow hijab. We both got in the same angkot and were the only passengers with an older male driver. 100 meters ahead we picked up a smartly dressed female college student, also wearing a hijab, textbooks in hand. We all exchanged polite glances and smiled at one another, but we did not speak. As we turned the corner, the next two passengers were fruit sellers in their thirties, both were holding together a very large and fragrant basket of bananas. As they got in and sat next to us the mood changed, but when some of the bananas fell out, the other ladies helped put them back in.¹⁹

In this scene we have two middle class women and two lower class fruit sellers, all in the same angkot. Each individual is in his or her own personal space but each is also within the *same* physical space of mobility. Moving from one location to another, each person is traveling within the city, for work or leisure, in public transport. Not necessarily interacting with one another, but

¹⁹ Notes from personal diary, November 18 2013.

encompassing the same physical and social space, in which differences (gender difference, class differences, maybe even ethnic differences) are acknowledged but most importantly so too is a common space. The potential of violence is present in this scene, but more powerfully, so too is the potential for equitable social relations.

Gender-segregated transit falls into a normative and conceptual trap by ensuring safe urban mobility of one group, at the expense of making broader claims regarding the criminality of another. Infrastructural design interventions may provide temporary solutions to the wider problems of violence against women in public space, but in doing so it glosses over the more fundamental issues regarding the appropriation of public space as masculine space. Gender-segregated transit becomes a type of discrimination by design, with the explicit goal of seeking urban spatial justice for women, a group that has historically and systematically been void from the public sphere and public space in general. But by seeking justice for one group, differences with other groups are reified.

Shilpa Phadke (2013) explicates this dilemma in the context of violence against women in India. She questions how we can arrive at an idea of justice that at least attempts to address the claims of many different groups at the same time. She argues that,

“when we engage with violence in relation to claims on the city, it is important to see violence against women in public as being located alongside violence against the poor, Muslims, dalits, hawkers, sex workers and bar dancers. Addressing the question of women’s access to public space then means engaging with realities of layered exclusion and multiple marginalizations” (Phadke 2013: 52).

She goes on to add that multiple “unfriendly” bodies do not necessarily compete for the right to the city; rather their claims are “coterminous” (ibid). Meaning each act of claiming public space must acknowledge the rights of Others to that *same* space simultaneously.

Gender segregated transit explicitly subverts the ability to seek out multiple claims of justice for multiple marginalized groups. Women-only transit systems express special claims to urban mobility, such that design interventions openly seek to advance redistributive claims based on gender alone, and in doing so reify differences instead of limiting them. It is for this reason that gender segregated transit is marked with a cloud of controversy and challenged efficacy. In this regard there are two main points of concern.

The first is an issue of capacity. Inconsistent access to gender segregated transit creates a precarious environment for many urban women. Take Sifa for example, the young professional who we met at the beginning of the chapter. As she noted “there are some carriages for women, but they are limited so I sometimes have to use the mixed carriage” (Jakarta Post 2013). When gender segregated transit is implemented without adequate attention given to expected ridership, women who would normally seek out this form of transportation are left out. In this instance, the implementation of transit policy designed to help specific women inadvertently neglect the very population that was the intended target. For women like Sifa, daily threats of harassment continue to impinge on her access to safe mobility. Many women who I spoke to echoed this sentiment, as they felt that the current gender segregated transit system in Jakarta was so limited, that it did not make a significant impact on their transit experiences. In fact many women noted that it was more laborious to take the special women-only busses in Jakarta, since it ran only on limited routes and at limited times.

In many instances public transit policies are designed and implemented on women's behalf without much feedback from female riders themselves. In the capital city Jakarta, the introduction of "women only" cabins in 2010 by the state-owned railway operator, PT Kereta Api Indonesia (KAI), has been largely seen as a failed solution, as overcrowding and sexual harassment continues to remain pervasive (Turner 2012). It is a 'common knowledge,' that women experience groping, pinching, and verbal harassment while on overcrowded public transit systems yet this harassment is largely unaccounted for in official and unofficial crime reports. It is a violence which has no particular face and to which little or no official commentary exists.

The second issue is one of implementation. Taking Mexico City for example, Amy Dunckel-Graglia (2013, 2016) cautiously notes that gender-segregated transit must be implemented along side a broader campaign that challenges traditional gendered stereotypes. Noting that "if women-only buses, subway cars, and taxis are used only to alleviate daily harassment and violence against women, then it may never force commuters to recognize the deeply-embedded gender inequalities within the transit system itself" (Dunckel-Graglia 2013:98). In this view, gender segregated transit cannot be seen as an all-in-one solution to the harassment of women in public space, instead it should be seen as merely a part of a broader strategy, that attempts to create equitable and safe public spaces for all.

Conclusion: The Limits of Urban Citizenship

James Holston (2008, 2009) has argued that given the extraordinary levels of urbanization that have taken place in the 20th century, citizens who face multiple forms of marginalizations (the poor, landless and destitute) are increasingly forming new social

movements, what he terms, *insurgent citizenship*, as a way to stake their claims to the city and as a means to articulate their right to have rights. In his narrative of rapid urbanization amid increasing inequalities, cities emerge as the new battleground for the expansion or contraction of rights. He has argued “that although insurgent urban citizenships may utilize civic spaces and even overrun the center, they are fundamentally manifestations of peripheries” (Holston 2009:246). I believe this entangled relationship, between center and periphery, is critical in evaluating the experiences of urban women as they navigate public space, and the types of infrastructural interventions that have been carried out on their behalf. The emergence of gender segregated transit indexes the way old traditional articulations of gender hierarchies are repackaged and repurposed for seemingly new and modern visions of gender equality. As women increasingly become the center-focus of developmental initiatives, infrastructural designs, and political mobilizations, their positions are often recalibrated, such that despite being the center of focus, their experiences remain deeply rooted in the periphery. The emergence of gender-segregated transit highlights the way urban mobility is complicated by broader assemblages that view women from multiple perspectives. While on the one hand segregated transit is heralded as a bold move to enable and empower women with safe access to public space, its application and implementation highlights how technological and design interventions alone cannot change longstanding social stereotypes.

This chapter has argued that mobility, safe access to movement in public space, is directly related to expressions of individual agency. Feminist legal scholars and feminist geographers have intimately tied the freedom of movement, as an expression of personal will. When women feel insecure in public space, it is a direct assault on their personal agency. In order to enhance women’s access to safe public space, there is a global emergence of gender

segregated transit systems. Yet relying on segregation as a means to overcome broader cultural assumptions regarding the proper role of women in society has proven to be more complicated and controversial. As women continue to increase their stake in the public sphere, through education, employment, and political participation, their presence will inevitably disrupt and challenge long-held social beliefs. In this way, safe urban mobility for women re-articulates and enables a new form of insurgency, one at the core of many cities, in which gender re-emerges a battle cry, and urban transit becomes the a new battleground.

Chapter 6: Conclusion:

Women Walking the City

“Just because my body is in public space does not mean my body *is* public space!” This was written on a crumbling wall days after the brutal gang rape of a young Indian woman on a moving bus in 2012 in New Delhi. I was in India when this quote lay before me like an omen from a sacred feminine. I have frequently experienced sexual harassment in public space, on buses in LA, in India, Malaysia and Indonesia, but it was not until this experience (a brutal gang rape, a small vigil and a prophetic quote) that I felt the need to interrogate this violence seriously; not just as a quotidian, mundane, routinized experience of urban life, but as a real site of deep ethnographic inquiry. Everyday harassment is a violence that is experienced routinely but one that rarely makes international headlines, as I have argued it emerges as a “slow violence” with delayed destruction and powerful reverberating consequences.

Safe travel is critical for the emergence of women’s rights, their autonomy and economic independence, and yet, safe public travel remains tenuous for most women in the Global South. This dissertation has investigated the relationship between urban transportation systems and violence against women in Bandung Indonesia. Public transportation systems are a powerful symbol of mobility and scientific progress, and are tied to nationalist visions of economic development. Yet, the daily travels of urban women elicit a different set of imaginaries, ones defined by sexual violence and fear of assault.

In many countries beyond Indonesia we see that public transportation is tied to the discursive and material processes of modernization and redevelopment. This modernity is expressed through both political and economic incorporation of women on one hand, and spatial exclusion and gendered violence on the other. Through ethnographic research carried out with

traveling women, transportation owners, nongovernmental organizations and city officials, this dissertation has interrogated the multiple and often conflictual ways public space and urban transportation are experienced.

There is a duality to the increased street harassment against women. It is a routinized experience of public transportation infrastructure on the one hand and also a silent and untraceable violence with no legally prosecutable perpetrator on the other. This dynamic complicates our understanding of gendered violence and the women's experience of urban space in the global south. More importantly a focus on violence against urban women in transit highlights the conflictual meaning making process at the heart of urban mobility. Modernization processes demand urban women to seek greater access to public space, yet those spaces also create hostile environments that objectify them. The presence of such social and cultural tensions reveals the ways in which urban transportation systems destabilize but can also create opportunities for greater gender equality.

This dissertation has shown that urban women employ multiple social and cognitive practices to avoid risk and danger from sexual assault in public space. In doing so, public transit infrastructure is littered with multiple meanings of inclusion and exclusion. The experiences of urban women indicate that violence, fear and anxiety in public space is a critical lens through which to understand urban life, international development and changing gender relations in the fourth most populace country in the world.

Rather than understanding public violence against women as an outcome and unintended consequence of "traditional society" rubbing against "modern progress", this dissertation has instead examined the ways public transportation systems come to *naturalize* a range of gender dynamics. Violence against women on public transportation is a critical emerging issue, one

situated at the intersection of larger debates on international development and city planning, changing gender relations amid rapid urbanization, and the emergence of new forms of urbanism in mega-cities of the global south. It is at this intersection where my dissertation has attempted to make a key contribution.

Ride Sharing and the Future of Transit

“The machine (the locomotive) is the *primum mobile*, the solitary god from which all action proceeds. It not only *divides* spectators and beings, but also *connects* them; it is a mobile symbol between them, a tireless shifter, producing changes in the relationships between immobile elements.” (De Certeau 1984: 113) (emphasis mine).

Public transportation systems, elicit powerful material, temporal and affective visions of mobility, progress, and development. Images of the steam engine as described by De Certeau above; or the contemporary New York subway system all provide a sense of connectivity and growth. The daily travels of people taken as raw reality however, elicit a different set of imaginaries, ones defined by traffic, congestion, delays, and for women sexual violence. The otherwise mundane spaces of terminals, cabins and seats, in fact speak to larger social processes and gendered practices in which women across the globe are keenly aware of possible threats of violence. It is in these micro-spaces of gendered interaction where larger narratives of modernity and development rub against the conditions of daily life.

Since fieldwork, there has been an explosion in the emergence of ride-sharing digital applications, not only in Bandung Indonesia but globally. As cities attempt to design sustainable transportation models for its residents, innovative and entrepreneurial companies such as Uber

and Gojek seek to make critical interventions in the market. These app-based transportation companies directly compete with existing public transportation infrastructure in the city. For example, when Gojek, an app based motorcycle taxi company based in Jakarta Indonesia first operationalized, traditional informal motorcycle drivers violently clashed with Gojek employees who were required to wear brightly colored uniforms in order to identify themselves. The expansion of online digital application based commerce in Indonesia parallels wider developmental and modernizations trends in the expansion of broadband and telecommunications technology. The emergence of ride-sharing applications such as Uber and Gojek, are products of global linkages within an emergent and new sharing economy.

For women who can afford to use these new app based transportation services, Uber and Gojek have dramatically changed their experiences of urban space. Uber in Indonesia allows users to rate their drivers, all of whom covet five star ratings. Women of a certain economic class now rely on these app based services as their primary mode of transit in the city. From consumers of public transit, they now engage in the privilege of auto-mobility *vis-a-vis* internet technology.

Simultaneously, many drivers enjoy the professionalization that is required by these major transportation companies, for example Gojek requires uniforms and name tags, while others companies like Uber require more specific types of training. The emergence of these private companies have reimagined the contours of a rapidly changing transportation services market, creating serious concerns for both transportation policy bureaucrats and traditional small-scale para-transit operators.

For urban women concerns regarding safety remain. In 2015, when an Uber driver in India raped a 26 years old female passenger, Uber temporarily shut down its operations in the

country, and the city of New Delhi banned all ride-sharing companies from operating. Women immediately began questioning the risks of traveling alone with a male driver, who controlled the vehicle and could potentially lock-in an unsuspecting victim. In Malaysia, the ride sharing company Riding Pink, exclusive caters to female only passengers, with an all female driving force. The company openly promotes its operations as a way to enhance women's empowerment through urban mobility. Women are able to engage in safe travel while simultaneously supporting women drivers who engage in employment as a means to increase their own standards of living. The success of this new business venture has yet to be determined, but as new transportation companies enter the ride-sharing market, women continue to engage in urban mobility from the perspective of taking calculated risks regarding their safety and wellbeing.

Important questions for future research remain. How do different travel modes in the city elicit different levels of spatial knowledge and personal safety? In what ways can transportation services be enhanced to ensure safe mobility of urban women? And how can these new emerging ventures remain sustainable from both an environmental perspective, but also with regards to gender equity. Importantly, what social and legal mechanisms can be enacted to turn the tide against the street harassment of women in public space? These questions highlight the depth and complexity of addressing violence against women in public space, and dovetail on a more longstanding and timeless question, that of the position of women in society. Just as transportation systems govern cities spaces, gender roles and expectations govern society writ large. As women increasingly stake a larger claim to the public sphere through increased education, employment and political participation, both systems of governance will need to be altered.

Hope for the Future City

While I watched my son play tag with a friend at a local outdoor market in Bandung, Indonesia our host indicated that we should get ready to leave. The weather was cool with a slight breeze in the air and food carts rolled by with the aromas of fried rice (*nasi goreng*). The children were really enjoying themselves, but Siti anxiously insisted that we leave in 10 minutes. My son protested vehemently. I told Siti that I could stay longer, since kids were still playing. Her son Rimba interjected, turned to my son and said “my mom doesn’t want to be out when it is dark, let go home” When I asked Rimba why, he replied, “we have to be home before nightfall, because at night time (*malam*) bad things happen in the angkot.” What a mature observation for a four year old I thought. When I asked Siti if she had experienced any harassment while traveling at night she said didn’t want to push her luck at night or tempt chance. She was always home before dark and planned most of her trips around this rule. As night-time approached a clear uneasiness came over her.

If the street represents a masculine space, the street *at night* represents a violent masculinity. While fear is always present in public space for women, the street at night is where that fear of harm is *actualized*. Schedules are manipulated, routes are changed, and all sorts of other types of cognitive mappings take over to ensure one’s safety.

This dissertation has attempted to interrogate and problematize the fear of the public space and to stake a claim over masculine urban space and planning. By moving street harassment out of the margins of gendered violence, this project works towards envisioning a public space in which women can feel as safe outside their homes, as they do inside.

The gendered experience of urban transportation, is rooted in these micro-geographies of difference, in the non-verbal, unwritten language of human interaction, where women lower

gazes, hearts beat faster and a feeling of anxiousness takes over. Personal space becomes public and gender difference creates and complicates social hierarchy.

It is at the intersection of scholarly work on everyday life and urban space that I believe feminist criticism and activism has a profoundly important role to play. The work of countless ethnographers indicates that inequalities between genders are symbolized in the organization and daily use of space at all scales, from the home, in the city, and to the nation. It is in the more mundane places of everyday life, such as the gray zone of daily transit between home, work, and leisure where gender inequalities and uneven power relationships hide that I believe the greatest potential for transformation exists.

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