

**UCSF**

**UC San Francisco Electronic Theses and Dissertations**

**Title**

Between Sound and Sense: Un/certain knowing, poetic witnessing, and the problem of evidence in Timika, West Papua

**Permalink**

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/99s6g2hn>

**Author**

Cameron, Clare C

**Publication Date**

2019

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

Between Sound and Sense: Un/certain knowing, poetic witnessing, and the problem of evidence in Timika, West Papua

by

Clare Coghill Cameron

DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

Medical Anthropology

in the

GRADUATE DIVISION

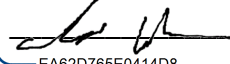
of the

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN FRANCISCO

AND

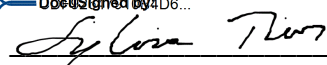
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

Approved:

DocuSigned by:  
  
EA62D765E0414D8... Ian Whitmarsh  
Chair

DocuSigned by:  
  
Vincanne Adams

DocuSigned by:  
  
Lawrence M Cohen

DocuSigned by:  
  
9CABE8AFED38467... Sylvia Tiwon

Committee Members

Copyright 2019  
by  
Clare Coghill Cameron

## Acknowledgements

Happiness is when every / thing inside you goes out and comes back in, newly  
Kimberly Grey, "Somehow, We are a We"

Writing this dissertation has been a long process of watching everything inside me go out, sometimes ending up on the pages that follow. Sometimes elsewhere. Sometimes in the long silences between writing. It is only now that those things have started to come back in. For both processes, I have many people to thank, many of whom I cannot legibly name here.

My greatest debts are to a number of people in Timika who spoke with me, befriended me, took care of me, made me laugh, fed me, all the while bringing my awareness to the possibility of finding stillness amidst the uncertainties of chaos. J.D. gave me the courage to write and write about poetry. From T.R., I received a lyrical education. M.Y is the younger brother I never had, who showed me what it looks like to be quietly confident in the pursuit of a different kind of future. A.E opened her home to me and taught me the meaning of *merdeka*. D.A. offered friendship at moments of profound need. H.M. showed me what it is like to live with both grace and fire. The least of what W.E. did was put a roof over my head. W.V showed me how to always stay close to language. And, finally, *Ka W.O.*: None of this was possible without your kindness and generosity, which I feebly and inadequately reciprocated in the only way I knew how; if a box of Borax is not a metaphor for a kind of love, I do not know what is. I will always be in your debt.

With the deepest gratitude, I thank those who funded this project from its earliest preparation through to its writing: UCSF's Department of Anthropology, History & Social Medicine, UC Berkeley's Center for South & Southeast Asian Studies/Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship, the Wenner-Gren Foundation Dissertation Fieldwork Grant, the National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant, and the UCSF Graduate Dean's Dissertation Completion Fellowship.

The community I have found amongst scholars of Indonesia and West Papua has been nothing short of incredible. Tony Rudyansjah believed in the possibility of returning to West Papua, a decade after I had first lived there, when most said not to try. I met Annemarie Samuels during a difficult year in Boston and have been grateful for her kind words and incisive feedback at key moments while writing the dissertation. Danilyn Rutherford's work has greatly influenced my own writing and thinking, and I am grateful for her encouragement through the years. I met Jack Morin during fieldwork in Timika and have felt his support ever since. Sophia Warshall has been many things, but knowing she was always only one or two time zones away during fieldwork was often everything. Finally, it is with sadness that I reflect on my experience in Jeff Hadler's seminar, knowing future scholars of Indonesia will not have the opportunity to experience his wit and wisdom.

I have been blessed with an embarrassing abundance of generous friends and colleagues at UCSF, UC Berkeley, Stanford and beyond, particularly: Sheyda Aboli, Anjana Bala, Katie Bruhn, Sam Dubal, Sigrid Eyres, Leif Fenno, Nadia Gaber, Molly Hales, Saraswati Kache, Veronika Kusymarti, Rosa Norton, Maryani Rasidjan, Shannon Sauterwhite, Giulia Scaroni, Benjamin Siegel, Baris Ungun, Sophia Warshall, Ryan Whitacre, and Kankan Xie. My thanks to fellow members of Nancy-Scheper Hughes's dissertation writing group – Lis Furlani Blanco, Nadia Gaber, Nicole Rosner, David Thompson, and Anthony Wright – for providing difficult and important feedback, greatly clarifying my writing in the third chapter. I am amazed by the UC Berkeley undergraduates in my "Evidence through Ethnography" class, who likely do not know how much this dissertation was born of our seminar. Melina Salvador apparated into my life with an uncanny ability to see what I was trying to write or say long before, it sometimes felt, I had even thought it. Her presence during the final months of writing was profound; mostly what I remember is the laughter.

As a disgruntled first-year medical student, I enrolled in a seminar with Liisa Malkki. This seminar changed my life. Liisa believed in me in a way that I still don't understand, though had she not, none of this would have been possible. I will always be grateful. Sylvia Tiwon nurtured a love of poetry and a rigorous attention to language that I hope to have done some justice to in the pages that follow. Lawrence Cohen has been there throughout as a sounding board whose generative potential knows no finitude. Vincanne Adams has supported this project with unparalleled enthusiasm and rigor. She has always offered such careful readings of my writing, invariably pushing me to sharpen my writing. Finally, these acknowledgements give me the opportunity to deploy superlatives (and, perhaps, superlative punctuation!): Ian Whitmarsh has been an unfathomably generous mentor and advisor. I am quite certain there are times I would have abandoned this work were it not for his presence. And while I know that, too, would have been okay, I'm glad things went the other direction.

Some people have been there always: Amy Lockwood was steadfast in her support of this project (and, before then, choosing to leave medical school), always kept me grounded, and, at various times over the past decade, has provided shelter. Nicole Rosner's essence is like none other; may everyone experience what it is to have such vibrance and curiosity adjacent to their life. Rachel Niehuus astounds me constantly in her imagining of the capaciousness of possibility, a small fraction of which I hope to have reflected in my own writing. Adeola Oni-Orisan's brilliance is matched only by her compassion, traces of which I, too, hope might be found in the chapters that follow. Stephen McIsaac's erudition is matched only by his intellectual humility, neither of which has anything on a kindness that has, quite simply, kept me going. Cordelia Erickson-Davis's friendship suspends time, and that's really all that needs to be said about that.

Peet's in Menlo Park, especially the air-conditioning during that week of 108° heat; the baby rattlesnake that got lost and found its way in to my backyard; JP Centre Yoga in Boston and

Breathe Together Yoga in Los Gatos; the many dogs of Fort Funston but especially Mika, my wild puppy; the 's' and 'w' keys on my laptop, which stopped working two years before I finished writing the dissertation, becoming allegories for, well, everything; my functioning nervous system; my less-functioning nervous system; all the ways to imagine a nervous system; carbon monoxide detectors; Jamaica Pond; difficult love; the oddity that is Lane Library; Tiger Balm; the succulents I somehow underwatered; the succulents I somehow overwatered; the horticulturist at a Santa Cruz farmer's market who told me it would be difficult to kill a succulent; the kindness of neighbors; sunshine, but also black-out curtains; oatmeal pancakes, really all of Dan's cooking, except that one anomalous disaster we vowed never to speak of again (sorry!); the way a perfect sambal will always tell you that pain is not the opposite of joy: I am thankful for all these reminders that life goes on, even when the writing does not always.

Without Daniel Gessner everything that is good would likely be a little less good. The same is true of Hastings Cameron, without whom everything less good would also be a little more so.

BRUIN: wey..BOB, bagaimana? ko dari?  
QQ FLOW: ah trada bob,  
Sa deng anak2 datang mau tanya nih!  
Ko tau “info” nih k trada?  
BRUIN: Info apa e Bob...?  
QQ FLOW: Ahkk, yang lagi heboh ni BOB!!  
BRUIN: Oww, yoi bob, sudah. Sa su tau.  
QQ FLOW: Knapa dong bgiu e. Macam bagaimana k e.  
BRUIN: Ahkk. Maksudnya?  
QQ FLOW: Ahk...sa maksud “info” itu!  
BRUIN: Ohh...! Itu lagi ale...BOB, ko mau tau yg lebih jelas?  
QQ FLOW: Yoi bob, coba crita dolo!!  
BRUIN: Loo, mari sudah...Tong jalan baru sambil crita saja!

BRUIN: Eh, what’s up? What you been up to?  
QQ FLOW: Ah, nothing.  
Me and the kids came to ask, yeah, you know the “info” or not?  
BRUIN: What info...?  
QQ FLOW: Ahkk, the exciting one, friend?  
BRUIN: Oww, yeah, got it. I already know.  
QQ FLOW: So, why are they like that? That’s kind of weird, you know.  
BRUIN: Ahkk. What do you mean?  
QQ FLOW: I mean, that “info”!  
BRUIN: Ohhh...! Right, you want to really know?  
QQ FLOW: *Yoi*, friend, try, just tell!!  
BRUIN: *Loo*, let’s go already...we’ll walk while telling.

“Adil ka?” Dapoer ATS [my translation]



## **Abstract**

Between Sound and Sense:  
Un/certain knowing, poetic witnessing, and the problem of evidence in Timika, West Papua

Clare Coghill Cameron

This dissertation draws on approximately 18-months of fieldwork (2015-2017) based in Timika, West Papua, the politically contested easternmost region of Indonesia. I take the Indonesian state's radical denial of violations of human rights in the region – the public declaration at the United Nations that such allegations are a “hoax” – as an opportunity to consider alternative evidentiary modes and epistemic frames through which to narrate what can be said to be happening in West Papua. If epistemic uncertainty is a daily reality for most Papuans, I explore how a kind of motivated uncertainty or ambiguity allows for the possibility of other ways of knowing and remembering that produce living (poetic) archives disruptive of the state's desire to produce “truth beyond dispute” (Mbembe 2001). I argue for a poetic epistemology that is both a methodological intervention – an ethnographic mode of both knowing and writing – as well as an ethnographic observation of a kind of knowing that emerges through these daily conditions of uncertainty.

## Table of Contents

<b>CHAPTER 1</b>	Introduction	1
<b>CHAPTER 2</b>	Between sound and sense: audience, epistemic intimacy, and the (plural) Papuan ‘we’	18
<b>CHAPTER 3</b>	Spectacular witnessing: image, exposure, evidence	42
<b>CHAPTER 4</b>	Freedom as stillness: chaos between the ordinary and the event	73
<b>CHAPTER 5</b>	Archiving silence: waiting, hesitation, and the opacity of the poem	98
<b>CHAPTER 6</b>	Conclusion	117
<b>REFERENCES</b>		125

## List of Figures

Figure 3.1	Frame from video of Indonesian Independence Day celebration in Timika	43
Figure 3.2	Frame from music video, “Adil ka?”	44
Figure 3.3	Facebook post after the shooting in Deiyai	50
Figure 3.4	Expended bullets from Deiyai shooting	51
Figure 3.5	Evidence of shooting, Amnesty International	54
Figure 3.6	Scene from Yogyakarta protest I	57
Figure 3.7	Scene from Yogyakarta protest II	57
Figure 3.8	Facebook post on Yogyakarta protest I	59
Figure 3.9	Facebook post on Yogyakarta protest II	61
Figure 6.1	Ganesa’s drawings	120

## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

For poetry makes nothing happen / [...] it survives, / a way of happening, a mouth.

W.H. Auden

One afternoon, during a routine visit from USAID project managers based in Indonesia's capital, Jakarta, I am seated on a bench just out of earshot of "monitoring and evaluation" discussions inside the Tuberculosis Clinic [*Pokeja TB*] at *Puskesmas Timika*, a public community health clinic in Timika, West Papua. Pak Otto and Ibu Rose,<sup>1</sup> two colleagues, sit with me in the patient waiting area. A man wearing a Telkom uniform, Indonesia's major telecommunications provider, enters the clinic, points a cell phone in our direction, and appears to begin taking photos. He is far enough away not to acknowledge our presence but near enough to suspect we are the subjects of his inquiry. I do not quite know what to make of the scene. I am not alone in this confusion, but there is something that leaves us, if not troubled, then altered. A few moments later, the man retreats to the clinic parking lot and Pak Otto follows to confront him directly. He returns and declares, *Kawan saja*. He's just a friend. I ask for no additional details, and he offers nothing further. Ibu Rose, unsatisfied, catches up with the man back in the parking lot. A few moments later, she too returns with a dismissive look – a look that says, it was nothing – but no verbal explanation. We go back to passing time, waiting for the USAID staff to emerge from the clinic, their site visit complete.

In this scene – a moment's interruption punctuating a conversation that passes time – what can be said to have happened? Maybe a man takes a photo of electrical wiring in the clinic. Or maybe he takes our photo. Maybe he takes our photo, piqued by the peculiarity of the scene unfolding in front of him. Or, maybe to document and report our whereabouts to authorities.

---

<sup>1</sup> Throughout the entire dissertation, all names of colleagues, interlocuters, and friends – porous and overlapping categories – are pseudonyms.

Perhaps both. Maybe he is just a friend; maybe what happened was nothing. In many ways, this dissertation is an exploration of these moments that happen adjacent to the things that are said to have happened – this nothingness that isn't. To be compelled to articulate the nothingness of an experience is to have already articulated it into being, and to always also live the possible nothing as a something otherwise is an experience of life surveilled. This happens in Timika but I imagine elsewhere as well.

If the literary mode of fiction describes the could-have-happened (Fassin 2014), this dissertation seeks to sketch the contours of an ethnography that takes seriously the epistemological frame of fiction, one built on moments of the could-have-happened or might-be, not (merely) as a gesture to ethnographic uncertainty but rather to a certain kind of poetic empiricism, where effect and affect always exceed the literal accounting – the “in itself” (Benjamin 2002) – of what can be said to have happened.<sup>2</sup> What I am arguing for is the experience of a kind of subjunctive mode that operates in the realm of the real, not only because subjunctive possibilities are felt or experienced as real, though they are, or because the possible in some way configures the affective, but rather because an accounting of what can be said to have happened is not individually circumscribed. There is an implicit recognition that what may have happened to you, did happen to someone else before you. Individual moments of ambiguity produce a form of collective certainty through which this kind of ambiguity always refracts.

In response to another similarly ambiguous encounter, my neighbor matter of factly advised, “We must assume it was nothing but prepare *as if* it [were] something.” Skidmore (2004), writing on Burma under the military junta argues that, “[d]reams, fantasy, and imagination can all be conceived of as spaces for subjunctivization” (183). What I am arguing, instead, though relatedly, is that there

---

<sup>2</sup> The relationship between violence or terror and the fictional or imaginary has been well explored (see, for example, Taussig 1987; Aretxaga 1999; Spyer 2002; Skidmore 2004).

is nothing particularly fantastical or alternative about my neighbor's *as if* – that is, her exhortation to prepare *as if* it were something. Once more her ‘nothing’ voices a ‘something’ into being.

### **Freeport-McMoRan and the forward-looking statement**

Cautionary Statement Regarding Forward-Looking Statements: This press release contains forward-looking statements, which are all statements other than statements of historical facts. The words “anticipates,” “may,” “can,” “plans,” “believes,” “estimates,” “expects,” “projects,” “targets,” “intends,” “likely,” “will,” “should,” “to be,” “potential” and any similar expressions are intended to identify those assertions as forward-looking statements. [Freeport-McMoran] cautions readers that forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future performance and actual results may differ materially from those anticipated, projected or assumed in the forward-looking statements.

- disclaimer appended to Freeport-McMoRan Investor Relations emails

My dissertation fieldwork took place (2015-2017) in the city of Timika, Papua Province, Indonesia, a city now metonymic of the American multinational mining giant, Freeport-McMoRan (hereafter, Freeport). Timika exists at the base of some of the world’s largest gold and copper deposits (Letih 2002), both of which Freeport mines. The region known today as West Papua (or, sometimes, simply Papua), comprised of Papua and West Papua Provinces, has not always fallen within the geopolitical borders of Indonesia.<sup>3</sup> Whereas the Indonesian nationalist imaginary of Indonesia extends from Sabang in Sumatra to Merauke, at the southeastern tip of West Papua, West Papua did not officially fall under the jurisdiction of the Indonesian government until two decades after the Netherlands recognized Indonesia as an independent nation in 1949. The story of West Papua’s subjugation by Indonesian forces has historically been linked (inextricably so) to the American mining company (Letih 2003; Drooglever 2009).

---

<sup>3</sup> I use “Papua” and “West Papua” interchangeably to refer to the region encompassing Papua Province and West Papua Province, Indonesia.

In his superlatively titled *Grasberg: Mining the Richest and Most Remote Deposit of Copper and Gold in the World*, a former CEO of Freeport recounts the earliest negotiations with then Indonesian Lieutenant General (later, President) Suharto in 1966 to obtain mining rights in West Papua:

[T]here was no Foreign Investment Law, we have competition for the Ertsberg [the mine], the infrastructure was a mess, there was only one hotel in Jakarta, the economy was in tatters, the legal basis for an agreement was vague, and Irian Jaya's [West Papua] national status was still subject to a forthcoming act of self-determination. We were the first to be willing to take a risk with the newly established government" (Mealey 1996: 84).

Mealey's account is nostalgic. He experiences an act that many, if not most, Papuans would consider dispossession as a celebration of risk and the entrepreneurial spirit.<sup>4</sup> His rendering of events depoliticizes contract negotiations, indexing the events as a kind of wild west adventure in a faraway lawless land. Letih (2002) differently recounts these earliest negotiations with then-Lieutenant General Suharto:

The mutually supportive relationship that Jakarta hoped to nurture was evident from the beginning. At an international conference convened in Geneva in November 1967 to sell the new government's business credentials, [Freeport] actively lobbied on its new partner's behalf. With [Freeport] symbolizing the new-frontier image Indonesia wished to promote internationally, and with pressure from Washington, there followed a flood of technical expertise and foreign capital—\$1,226 million by 1969. This inflow was not only crucial in keeping the regime afloat in the early years, but its continuation assisted Suharto in maintaining power for another three decades. In return for its services at such a critical time, Freeport's needs were fulfilled by Jakarta: it got a highly favorable contract, the riches of Ertsberg, and the Indonesian military to protect it. Under the contract, Freeport was given mining rights for thirty years within a 250,000 acre concession with a three-year corporate tax holiday. There were no Indonesian equity requirements, and Freeport was not under any obligation to the traditional Papuan owners of the land, the Amungme and Kamoro peoples. The company was not required to pay compensation to the traditional landowners, nor was it obliged to participate in local or provincial development. Finally, there were no environmental restrictions (72-3).

On their own terms, the contract specifics were exquisite. Consider, then, that Indonesia had no sovereign authority over West Papua at the time of contract negotiations. Though Indonesia declared independence from the Dutch in 1945, the Dutch remained in control of West Papua through 1962, at which point control of West Papua (known then as Irian Jaya) was transferred to

---

<sup>4</sup> Freeport has been repeatedly sued by members of the Amungme ethnic group, original property owners of the site of the Grasberg mine. Most recently, in 2010, the Amungme filed a lawsuit in South Jakarta District Court seeking \$32.5 billion in compensation for appropriation of indigenous land and human rights abuses (Andriyanto 2010). This followed the dismissal of a similar lawsuit filed the previous year seeking \$30 billion in damages, claiming environmental and human rights violations. Lawsuits initiated by indigenous Papuans have been filed dating back to 1996, when arguments made under the Alien Tort Claims Act were also dismissed.

the United Nations (UN) Temporary Executive Authority. The UN Authority was to transfer Papua to Indonesian control the following year, with the provision that Papuans would be afforded the right to self-determination in 1969. In this contested process, flagrantly named the “Act of Free Choice,” Papuan representatives – chosen by the Indonesian government – unanimously voted to integrate into the Indonesian state. Pressure on Papuan representatives was immense. As Saltford (2006) describes, “[A] council member asked what would happen to him [a Papuan delegate] if he opted for Independence; the reply was that he would be shot” (147). It is a reply whose echoes could be heard in the years that followed, just as they can now. Today, for a Papuan to publicly advocate for and support independence is to risk their safety and, in some cases, their life.<sup>5</sup>

This is one way to frame the story of Papua and, more specifically, Timika. It is not wrong, though it also projects a stable, linear narrative, and much of what I want to think about is how narratives fracture and, to paraphrase Stewart (2007), how the lines of resonance spread. Shortly after arriving in Timika, an interlocuter explained Timika to me in this way: “There are three nations here. There is the government. There is Freeport. And there are the people. The strongest is Freeport [*Ada tiga negara disini. Ada pemerintah. Ada Freeport. Ada masyarakat. Yang paling kuat Freeport*].”<sup>6</sup> If Freeport has always been at the center of Timika’s story, this dissertation imagines Freeport’s thereness as dispersed, if always present.

\*\*

---

<sup>5</sup> Independent human rights fact-finding investigations are, to this day, barred from entering the region, and international journalists remain overwhelmingly unsuccessful at securing permits to report from Papua (Human Rights Watch 2015; Blades 2016; Robie 2017). Though there are many notable exceptions, local journalists in Timika are known to often work closely with Indonesian intelligence officials to narrativize police and military violence against Papuans as justifiable and tribal conflict between Papuans as evidence of their innate tendencies toward violence.

<sup>6</sup> All translations in this dissertation, unless otherwise noted, are my own. As such, all errors in translation are mine as well.



My fieldwork in Timika, the administrative center for Freeport's West Papuan mining operations, overlapped with a particular period of heightened political and economic flux. PT Freeport Indonesia, the Indonesian subsidiary of Freeport-McMoRan,<sup>7</sup> entered a protracted period of contract re-negotiation with the Indonesian government. The contract negotiations, which focused on Freeport's long-term mining rights in Papua, hinged on differing interpretations of Indonesian law. Freeport argued that the Indonesian government was legally required to honor their existing Contract of Work (COW), while Indonesian president Joko Widodo's administration claimed that a 2009 Mining Law required the company to convert their COW to a special mining license (IUPK). The mining license would require Freeport to fully divest 51% of its shares to the Indonesian government.

In the final months (February - April 2017) of my dissertation fieldwork in Timika, the Indonesian government and Freeport had reached an impasse, stalled in re-negotiations over Freeport's mining rights. On February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017, mill operations were shuttered and Freeport was no longer able to continue producing copper concentrate. This same day, numerous senior staff positions were eliminated. The next day, Freeport distributed an interoffice memorandum to their employees, stating, "We remain willing to convert the COW to an IUPK [*Izin Usaha Pertambangan Khusus*], provided it is accompanied by an investment stability agreement with the same level of fiscal and legal certainty contained in our current COW." A week later, Freeport internally released an informational handout on the decision to furlough employees: "We are furloughing employees because there is long-term uncertainty about our future operations and investments [...] Due to the uncertainty of our long-term operations, there is no guarantee employees will be called back to work."

---

<sup>7</sup> Unless otherwise specified, I refer to both PT Freeport Indonesia and Freeport-McMoRan as "Freeport."

With no apparent sense of irony, Freeport lamented their own existential uncertainty while redistributing that uncertainty on to their employees. On February 18<sup>th</sup>, President Director of PT Freeport Indonesia, Chappy Hakim, resigned subsequent to Freeport’s declaration of *force majeure*, unable to honor extant contracts. By February 24<sup>th</sup>, the numbers circulating through Timika via WhatsApp indicated that 1,118 people (65 expatriates, 1,053 Indonesians) had been discharged (*dipulangkan*) from work. These numbers included employees both laid-off (*di-PHK*, *pemutusan hubungan kerja*) and furloughed. By May, international media sources reported that Freeport had laid off approximately 10% of its total 32,000 work force (Da Costa and Wanda 2017). Amid contraction negotiations, an internal conflict – a worker strike – further impeded Freeport operations.

The disclaimer which opens this section, some version of which is not uncommon to investor communications, accompanies each of Freeport’s investor relations email updates. The statement is a legal hedge that accounts for the always unknowable future of the corporation’s performance in relation to investor expectation. If anticipation, potential, belief and expectation index uncertainty for the corporation, this dissertation explores a different kind of orientation to uncertainty and the forward-looking statement.

### **the problem of evidence**

Today, West Papua remains heavily militarized, even as the Indonesian government publicly refers to violence against indigenous Papuans as a “hoax,” claiming that evidence of human rights abuses does not exist and, if it did, everyone would know.<sup>8</sup> The Indonesian state’s radical denial of racialized violence in Papua – that is, this narrative of “hoax” – might be countered in a number of different ways. One response is to turn the language of the hoax back on the state, as many exuberant Reddit

---

<sup>8</sup> See Chapter Two (“Between sound and sense”) for a more thorough exploration of the official Indonesian state narrative as one of denial through this language of the “hoax.” Indonesian diplomat Ainan Nuran’s (2017) speech to the United Nations General Assembly is available online.

fora demonstrate. There, contributors refer to the narrative of hoax as, itself, “fake news.” Though, to claim the hoax as itself a hoax – or ‘fake news’ – is to reinscribe the language of the state.

Another mode might be to furnish (and publicize) the so-called ‘missing’ evidence – this is to say, to respond to the claim itself. If the state claims that no such evidence of state-sanctioned violence exists, one response might be to provide that evidence.<sup>9</sup> This is an important but also not unproblematic mode of witnessing. Hernawan’s (2018) recent unparalleled documentation of torture in West Papua does important work in contributing to this kind of witnessing and analysis of violence perpetrated by the Indonesian military and police apparatuses. And yet, it is hard not to read into his framing an epistemological inflexibility that subtly undermines other modes of knowing this same violence and, in doing so, inadvertently reaffirms the Indonesian state’s argument that if government-sponsored violence were happening in West Papua, everyone would already know. In clarifying the limitations of his work, Hernawan writes:

[I]n a number of places in Papua, many informants invited me to visit the graveyards of those who were remembered as victims of torture and killing by the Indonesian security forces. The informants and their communities keep their stories among themselves and very selectively share their memories with outsiders. This oral history signifies the vivid *memoria passionis* which I highly respect. However, it remains problematic to meet the rules of evidence. There is no other material, such as written documents or stories from the other side of this phenomenon, that might corroborate the story. To establish truth out of this evidence, one may have to undertake a forensic investigation which obviously goes beyond the scope and capacity of this book (6-7).

In Hernawan’s framing, the rules of evidence mandate corroborating data from “the other side” – the perpetrators. Beyond the logistical challenges of framing corroboration in this way, the desire to prove (anew) that violence is happening in Papua is to engage with the narrative of the Indonesian state. It is, in some sense, to accept that, to date, there is not *yet* sufficient proof and that some better documentation might yet disrupt the official state narrative. I do not want to suggest that the work

---

<sup>9</sup> The history of past and present violence to West Papua’s indigenous population, including dispossession of indigenous land, *has* already been extensively documented in this way. See, for example, Asian Human Rights Commission (2019); Ballard (2002); Brundige et al (2004); Catholic Justice & Peace Commission of the Archdiocese of Brisbane (2016); Global Witness (2005); and Human Rights Watch (2001, 2007, 2009). On the relationship between the (ever-increasing) militarization of West Papua and violence, see, particularly, King (2004), Kirksey and Harsono (2008), Supriatma (2013), and Widjojo (2013).

of Hernawan and others is not immensely valuable, but it is also worth considering alternative modes to simultaneously witness and disrupt the Indonesian government's claim that state-sponsored violence is a hoax, ones that do not simultaneously take for granted the claim that everyone *does* already know.<sup>10</sup>

If Taussig (1987) warns of the “problem of writing effectively against terror” (3), I am concerned with the more specific (though related) problem of writing effectively against the hoax. Following Thomas (2013), I consider the kind of evidence I am contributing to a Papuan “archive of violence” and, not only what this evidence might be capable of doing, but, just as important, what might be done with it. In rethinking what counts as ethnographic evidence and how that evidence might be differently understood or heard, I am also interested in new ways on which the empirical might be grounded.

### **toward a poetic epistemology: ethnographic uncertainty, silence and suspicion**

Ethnographer and historian of Oceania, Greg Dening (1991) opens his essay, “A Poetic for Histories: Transformations that Present the Past,” with this reflection: “Poetics are not poetry, but the suggestion that they might be is left with the breath of the word” (347). He argues for a Pacific ‘poetic for histories,’ but as Ballard (2014) reflects, Dening never really shows his reader how to do history, as it were, in this mode. How to address the “lack of a coherent theoretical and methodological platform that might allow us to hold both oral and documentary sources within the

---

<sup>10</sup> Drexler's (2006) work on state violence in Aceh, Indonesia, draws attention to the production and effect of anthropological evidence in thinking about the state's accountability. She writes, “Moving from a discussion of truth or the content of state violence to a discussion of the form of effects of knowledge about violence is not to cast doubt on witnesses' credibility or to add to state deniability; rather, it is part of an effort to consider how narratives promote or obstruct accountability” (316; see also Drexler 2007; 2009). Part of what I am interested, here, is how attempts to respond to state narrative with a certain kind of evidence serve to reproduce the epistemology of the state. While I am less concerned with the ways in which evidence might affect the possibility for accountability, I am interested in the ways that different evidentiary modes might disrupt the state's knowing. Munro and Butt (2012), in the context of West Papua, provide another helpful exploration of the politics of evidence, in their case, in the evidencing of HIV/AIDS epidemiology.

same frame” (Ballard 2014: 100, see also Hau’ofa 1996; Hanlon 2003)? Part of the answer, made increasingly clear through the course of my own fieldwork, is dispensing with this notion that oral sources are not also documentary sources and creating a more expansive view of that which can be said to document.<sup>11</sup> And to do that kind of documenting, I too am left with the breath of poetry.

In one sense, ethnography is always about daily confrontations, at varying scales, with uncertainty. And yet, in writing about Timika, I cannot ignore the particularity of a kind of layering uncertainty that comes of living through a state of surveillance.<sup>12</sup> An attunement to the way uncertainty refracts can be an existential imperative, but, for the ethnographer, it is also a kind of methodology that becomes interested in (sometimes, obsessed with) “scraps and debris” (Mbembe 2002: 25) that do not always need reassembling.<sup>13</sup> Living, and observing others living, this kind of uncertainty encouraged me to consider what an epistemology in a poetic register might look like; with greater urgency, my friends, colleagues and interlocutors in Timika brought me to poetry. I do not think these are unrelated phenomena.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Arguing for a collapse in this distinction is made notably less radical as the internet further collapses any void between the oral and the documentary, serving as an infinitely expanding archive of Papuan orality.

<sup>12</sup> Skidmore (2003) offers brilliant and honest writing on the ethnographer’s own fear under related conditions as contributing to her ethnographic method.

<sup>13</sup> Throughout the dissertation, I draw heavily on the work of anthropologists and others who consider kinds of uncertainties as epistemological interventions. See especially Spyer (2002) on the possible or conditional, Hartman (2008) on the “recombinant narrative,” Jackson (2013) on “non-knowledge,” Stevenson (2014) on the “truth of the possible,” and Sharpe (2016) on “ways of knowing that past, in excess of the fictions of the archive” (13). In particular, Hartman’s (2008) approach to the subjunctive as a way of “tell[ing] an impossible story and to amplify the impossibility of its telling” (11), for example, provides a useful way into thinking about documenting in the mode of the subjunctive.

<sup>14</sup> Like Dening (1991), I am (self-)conscious of anthropology’s deep engagement with poetics, most famously in Clifford and Marcus (1986), even as I seek to do something slightly different with the poetic. Heading off critique, Dening writes, “Poetics are a serious business, a critic has told me. ‘Use the word with respect for those who refined it.’ I do. But I do not mean to puzzle over Aristotle’s famous distinction between poetry and history. [...] Structuralists and literary critics expecting additional precision to their discourse on poetics can stop here. By *poetic* in ‘poetic for histories’ I simply try to discover the most generous way to describe a reflective discourse on all the hermeneutic dimensions of histories as cultural artifacts. Poetics, like prose, are something we are always practicing. Poetics are the relationships we have with the texts that suffuse our lives. Poetics are the facility with which we relate the systems of meaning in these texts to the occasions of their reading” (348). In considering a poetic epistemology I strive for a similarly generous *ethnographic* way of knowing that is, not unrelated, but distinct from Dening’s poetic.

By poetic epistemology, I mean a way of knowing grounded in listening for tensions (and resolutions) between sound and sense (Agamben 1999), in the way one might read a poem.<sup>15</sup> In the chapters that follow, a poetic epistemology is both a kind of methodological intervention, an ethnographic *mode* of both knowing and writing, as well as an ethnographic *observation* of a kind of knowing that emerges through conditions of uncertainty. I observe poetically but also through poetry, in some cases offering readings of poems or verse that intentionally blur any distinction between the literary and the ethnographic.<sup>16</sup> In other cases, I create verse through the unexpected juxtaposition of dissonant texts. But, I also offer ethnographic evidence from interlocuters who are creating something similar through the ways in which they witness Timika.

Throughout the dissertation, I think about uncertainty in several registers, particularly in spaces where the question of uncertainty is orthogonal to the anthropologist's own (sometimes misguided) desire to make a certain kind of sense of a scene. One of these is the register of everyday not knowing and the exigency of refracting this daily not knowing through the condensation of collective experience. To put that in another way: There are individual stakes to *not* acting on assumptions of nothingness. The second register might be thought of as "motivated" uncertainty. (And, here, I'm borrowing from and reworking Redfield's (2006) concept of "motivated truths"). I consider uncertainty as a mode of witnessing, in which the conscious production of opacity – sometimes in large public ways (Chapter Three), sometimes in the privacy of a journal (Chapter Five) – seeks to disrupt claims to knowing. I consider both the ways in which cultivating epistemic opacity intervenes on the state's simultaneous claim to a "truth beyond dispute" (Mbembe 2001) but also the related assumption that the production of uncertainty and cultivation of the unknown are, if

---

<sup>15</sup> The kind of epistemology I am imagining, though diverging in precise ways, owes debts to work on cultural poetics, especially Stewart (1996, 2007) and Lepselter (2016), in which the "truth' of things is lodged in the concrete yet shifting life of signs" (Stewart 1996: 4).

<sup>16</sup> In this way, I contribute to recent experimental approaches to ethnographic writing (see, especially, Pandian and McClean 2017).

not exclusively, than overwhelmingly techniques of the state (see, for example, Siegel 1998, 2005; Barker 1998). Sometimes the response to the fantastical is fantasy of a different kind.

\*\*

When I first moved to Timika to work with an internationally-funded tuberculosis community health program, a close friend warned me that, by his estimate, one in ten people in the city works for a state intelligence agency (Intel).<sup>17</sup> This same friend explained, “Talking about Intel in Papua,” – that is state intelligence – “is like talking about ghosts in Java” – another island in Indonesia. “Chilling but pleasing,” he continues. “The difference is, [in Java] we can know that the one narrating is a person, not a ghost. [...] Here [in Timika], people are like ghosts and ghosts are like people [*Bicara soal Intel di Papua seperti bicara soal hantu di Jawa. Mengerikan tapi menyenangkan. Bedanya, kita bisa tahu bahwa yang cerita adalah manusia, bukan hantu [...] Di sini manusia seperti hantu dan hantu seperti manusia*].” Whereas in Java, people may talk *about* ghosts, that the person they are talking to is not, themselves a ghost, is never in question.<sup>18</sup> In Papua, a ghost – or rather spook – works in both literal and figurative registers. In talking *about* Intel, the possibility that one is talking *to* Intel often, if not always, exists. While talking about ghosts in Java and Intel (or BIN)<sup>19</sup> in Timika may share a feeling of pleasure that comes of conversing about the unknown or illicit, he points to the spectral quality of audience in Timika. How do you expose a ghost? And, what do you do once you have? Or have, yourself, been exposed?

---

<sup>17</sup> While this dissertation grew directly out of my relationships and experiences working with Timika’s constellation of tuberculosis care and treatment services, this fact will be all but unrecognizable in the chapters that follow (with the notable exception of Chapter Four). Although I owe significant debts and have much gratitude to those who made possible such institutional arrangements, this dissertation seemed to pull in all kinds of directions that were always adjacent, but never centered, on tuberculosis.

<sup>18</sup> But, see Good (2015) on the experience of how individuals in Aceh “live with the ghosts of the violence” in the region (76).

<sup>19</sup> BIN, or Badan Intelijen Negara, refers to Indonesia’s principal intelligence gathering agency.

The risk of exposure (in its most extreme form, by conversing with a ghost) reflects an “epistemology of suspicion” (Crapanzano 2014) that pervades fieldwork and everyday relationships in West Papua. Spyer’s (2002) work on Ambon, part of the neighboring Maluku islands, uncannily captures a resonant experience of distrust:

I have stressed the role of the possible and the conditional – of which social expressions in solution form a part – or what might be called anticipatory practice in the context of extraordinary, violent circumstances. [...] These are the conditions for what I call a hyper-hermeneutics, which could be defined as a compulsive need to interpret and mine just about everything for hidden meaning, to see any trivial occurrence as a sign or omen of what might come. [...] The crucial dimension filling out this constellation of anticipatory practice is extreme, pervasive distrust: things are so thoroughly scrutinized because their nature and appearance are suspected of concealing something else” (35).

These conditions – this hyper-hermeneutics – also draws attention to the work and communication that happens through silence and the un- or under-articulated. That there are things you cannot say, or may be dangerous to say, brings other ways of communicating and knowing into greater relief. As I explore in Chapters Two and Five, there are words, phrases, and imagery that are only discernible to certain audiences, things that can be felt – poetically – if not said. This kind of attention to the unarticulated is a part of social life everywhere but whose relevance is heightened through an always possible spectral presence.

During the course of fieldwork, I became acquainted with a young Papuan woman I will call Marsela who, I began to suspect, worked as an informant for Intel. For some friends, the proof of this identity was in a confession: she had been recruited by Intel, she had told me, but had worried what her mother would think and decided not to join. That is, her denial was the proof of her affiliation. “Only Intel talks about Intel,” another friend would say. (As I now write, one might ask what this says about my relationship to Intel? It is difficult to escape the epistemology of suspicion.) That she had warned me that I was under constant surveillance, that “there [were] cameras everywhere,” that I needed to be careful, they argued, was evidence of her betrayal. The always-present possibility of betrayal – of interlocuter or ethnographer – heightens the stakes of relationships, though also, ultimately, can become a powerful source of intimacy.



On another occasion, after a particularly challenging day working with the tuberculosis community health program, Marsela messaged to tell me that she understood my stressful experience because it was her experience as well. “We [Papuan] also deeply suffer [*sangat menderit*] from the treatment of Indonesians,” she wrote. The appearance of care or empathy can arouse suspicion of manipulation or disingenuity. Yet, to discount the possibility of the caring informant (or the trustworthy ethnographer) is to make relationships wholly defined by this epistemology of suspicion, rather than allow for the affective possibilities that the opacity of the situation affords. This is not to make light of the unequivocal danger that exposure can entail but to suggest that certain kinds of not-knowing do not preclude other modes of knowing. I do not (and will not) know if she worked for Intel, but I do know that, at least in that moment, it was as if she were my friend.

If exposure and uncovering – the modes of transparency – are also tropes of ethnographic inquiry, what kind of ethnographic knowing is possible when (sometimes deliberate) deception is simultaneously a technique of both surveillance, survival, but also, maybe, friendship? And, what might be learned from an ethnography of opacity, one that dwells in moments of incommensurability and impasse? Building on Agamben’s conceptualization of “nonknowledge,” Jackson (2013) argues that “the art of living (and writing) *ethnographically* in a ‘zone of nonknowledge’ is about cultivating an appreciation, as reader and writer, of the productivities that not-knowing affords” (94; emphasis in original). He later continues, “The point is not to overcome ignorance in some absolute and totalizing way. It is about encouraging a form of knowing that doesn’t simply treat mystery as its mortal enemy, as nothing more than a land to be conquered” (94). In the chapters that follow, in most cases, a kind of epistemological uncertainty is merely what the situation affords. As a mode of witnessing, though, a more active cultivation of that uncertainty is “in the long term, much more useful” (Jackson 2013: 94). To that end, I, too, have tried at points to actively cultivate a kind of poetic waiting through the text and, sometimes, to let opacity remain.

\*\*

I opened this introduction with a line from W.H. Auden's poem, "In Memory of W.B. Yeats," which bears repeating here. Auden famously wrote: "For poetry makes nothing happen / [...] it survives, / a way of happening, a mouth." Commenting on this poem, Leighton notes, "That 'poetry makes nothing happen' is an axiom which has irked poets ever since" (145). But, she also recovers a different meaning from the verse, one that helps frame the way this dissertation seeks to consider nothingness. Leighton writes:

However, the phrase also turns, by a tiny inflection, a redistribution of its stresses, into its opposite: 'poetry makes nothing happen.' By this accentual difference, 'nothing' shades into a subject, and happens. [...] Intransitive and tautological, nothing is neither a thing, nor no thing, but a continuous event: 'a way of happening, a mouth.' The present participle and the unstopped 'mouth' ensure that 'nothing' remains a kind of unfinished speech. [...] Indeed, being a 'way' turns the focus of poetry from what to how. 'A way of happening, a mouth' had the curious effect of making us watch the mouth and listen to its 'happening', even if no objective event occurs (2007: 145-6; emphasis in original).

Following Leighton, I am interested in this kind of listening to the *happening* of these nothings and the how's of these happenings even when, perhaps, no objective event can be said to have occurred. This is not to say that no objective event can be said to *ever* happen, only that sometimes, certain kinds of uncertainty may be irresolvable. These moments – or continuous events – call for an epistemological orientation to the poetic. I am also interested in how subtle exegetical moves, like a relocation of inflection or reimagining of the break in a (not always literal) verse, can reframe meaning altogether. While at different points throughout the dissertation I turn directly to verse to witness amidst uncertainty, a poetic epistemology suggests a more expansive attunement to the relationship between sound and sense. It suggests an ethnographic mode that is always listening for these nothings otherwise.<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> An attention to the happening of nothing implicitly does a different kind of work as well. On the phenomenology of colonizing violence, Mbembe (2001) asks: "What does it mean to do violence to what is nothing?" – that is, to do violence to what has been conceived of as nothing (173). He writes of the "arbitrariness" of "seizing from the world and putting to death what has previously been decreed to be nothing, an empty figure." The figure of the Papuan has long-occupied a space in the Indonesian imaginary as a kind of expendable nothing or less-than-human (see Hernawan (2015) on the Papuan "abject" or Banivanua-Mar (2008) on the Papuan "cannibal"), as well as more global notions of the

## chapter overview

Chapter Two (“Between sound and sense: audience, epistemic intimacy, and the Papuan ‘we’”) begins in the mode of ‘as if,’ exploring the paradox of narratives of knowing. While the Indonesian government posits state-sponsored violence in West Papua as a “hoax,” one, they argue, that could be easily disapproved if any counter-evidence were to exist, young hip-hop artists in Timika make a claim that assumes a similarly universalized audience. They counter the state’s assertion, instead arguing that everyone *already* knows what is happening in West Papua. Both claims to all-knowing, though, suggest something about the uncertainty of narrative in Timika. This chapter experiments with alternative epistemological modes by juxtaposing unexpected and, sometimes, seemingly contradictory texts to offer a different reading of this narrative uncertainty. I explore what kinds of intimate, if less stable, knowing might emerge in relationship to the idea of a Papuan ‘we’ (*kami*). Different audiences differently hear and understand narratives of (not-)knowing, and, I argue, this can be understood as the basis for a Papuan belonging.

Chapter Three (“Spectacular witnessing: image, exposure, evidence) follows closely from the first chapter. While creating and reproducing spectacles of violence are often techniques of state terrorizing, in this chapter, I think about the spectacle as that which has the capacity to evoke doubt. And, if violence creates conditions of epistemic murk (Taussig 1984), against the ideals of transparency and documentation (*dokumentasi*), I argue that a mode of witnessing that further cultivates epistemic murk has the potential to undermine the state’s desire to create a “truth beyond dispute” (Mbembe 2001: 109). By examining two examples of spectacles that witness, I examine the

---

Papuan “primitive other” (Stasch 2014, 2015). The chapters that follow implicitly challenge this “colonial present” (Kusumaryati 2018) and its logic of nothingness, a reply to what it means to be conceived of as simultaneously expendable *and* an integral part of the Indonesian state.

possibility of a temporal frame of evidence that allows for the possibility of exposing violence as both past, present, and predictable.

Following the popular refrain *Timika kacau lagi!* [Timika is chaotic again!], Chapter Four (“Freedom as stillness: chaos between the ordinary and the event”) considers chaos in a temporal register distinct from the extraordinary event or the ordinary everyday. If, as the dissertation’s opening vignette suggest, Timika’s possible nothing is always experienced as a something otherwise, the constitutive possibility of punctuated periods of chaos is, in fact, what it is to always live in chaos. I consider the ways in which the grammar of chaos is a grammar of movement but, ultimately, that finding stillness in chaos suggests the possibility of a kind of freedom not wholly contingent on the will of the Indonesian government. If the logic of the state posits violence as an extraordinary event that demands a return to ‘order,’ then I consider stillness as a kind of affective extraordinary that can be experienced within rather than outside the experience of Timika’s chaos.

In the final chapter, (“Archiving silence: waiting, hesitation, and the opacity of the poem”), I explicitly return to epistemology, building on arguments explored in Chapter Three, to explore the way in which silence might be conceived of as something other than an absence. Though responding to silences in the remembering of violence remains an important intervention, this chapter considers a kind of disordered counterarchive that differently imagines silence’s potential. In this chapter, I think about what silence itself might archive and to do this I weave ethnography with poetic exegesis to understand how poems, themselves, archive particular kinds of silence and, in turn, poets and audiences produce and archive their own (unknowable) silences through the poem.

## CHAPTER 2

### Between sound and sense: audience, epistemic intimacy, and the (plural) Papuan ‘we’

In September of 2017, during the 72<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly of the United Nations, the Solomon Islands and the Republic of Vanuatu rose to condemn human rights violations in West Papua and to support the Papuan peoples’ right to self-determination and, ultimately, independence. This was not the first year that a contingent of Pacific island nations publicly supported West Papuan self-determination at the United Nations, nor was it the first year that Indonesia used its Right of First Reply to condemn these condemnations. On this occasion, Indonesia’s U.N. Representative, Ainan Nuran, asserted:

Mr. President, it is one time too many that hoax and false allegations are circulated by individuals that are economically motivated by separatist agenda of Papua and their supporters. Time and time again, the same fabricated and false accusations are thrown at us. These countries are sadly blindfolded. They fail to understand, or, more precisely, refuse to understand.

She later continues, “These countries were foolishly deceived by individuals, I repeat, by individuals, with separatist agenda to exploit the issue of human rights” (Nuran 2017). The representative lingered on “separatist,” articulating each syllable, before continuing, “In this day and age of open technology by now *everybody* will know if such accusations even exist.”<sup>21</sup> Despite the Indonesian government’s active, if unofficial, policies suppressing access and travel to West Papua, implicit in Nuran’s argument was the contemporary omnipresence of technology and digital connectivity and its literal and figurative ability to make seen. If these claims were true, everybody would know.<sup>22</sup>

On a very different stage with very different audiences, Dapoer ATS, a hip-hop collective based out of Timika uploaded a ten-minute long protest anthem titled, “Is it fair? [*Adil ka?*]” to

---

<sup>21</sup> A reading of Nuran’s speech to the U.N. cannot avoid comment on the symbolic importance of the forum in which she declares violence in Papua to be a “hoax.” The United Nations is implicated in the heavily disputed – some might say, hoax – Act of Free Choice, which led to Indonesia’s annexation of West Papua in 1969 (Drooglever 2009; Kirksey 2012).

<sup>22</sup> Though I am, ultimately, arguing for a different epistemological mode of witnessing violence, it is worth being very clear about this claim: there is, in fact, ample video documentation of the Indonesian military’s torture of indigenous West Papuans readily available on YouTube. Much of the video appears to have been shot on a perpetrator’s cell phone. In this age of open technology, everyone *can* know in this particular mode of knowing.

YouTube condemning the injustices – political and economic – facing Papua. Leo, one of the featured MCs, couldn't have known about Nuran's language when, three months earlier, he raps:

Semua orang tahu Timika dapur Indonesia  
Jadi berita di Asia dan di Dunia / Fakta  
P—[emerintah] punya data / N—[egara] dapat uang dari tong Tembagapura  
Tanah kita kaya tapi rakyat menderita  
Dimana kah pemimpin / Jangan hanya diam saja

Everybody knows Timika is Indonesia's kitchen  
It's become news in Asia and the World / Fact  
The g—[overnment]<sup>23</sup> has data  
The n—[ation] gets its money from us, the people of Tembagapura<sup>24</sup>  
Our land is rich but the people suffer  
Where are the leaders? / Don't just be silent

(Dapoer ATS 2017)

He could not have known about Nuran's later assertion – that everybody does not know – but he knows denial is national policy. In a narrative contested on multiple, overlapping planes, both Nuran and Leo use 'everybody' to perform the self-evident, the semiotic slipperiness (Rutherford 2012) of the indefinite pronoun forcing respective audiences to ask: Who is everyone, and am I a part of it? And yet, for both, claims to the self-evident are only really necessary when the narrative is anything but. The very need to assert, "Everybody knows" (or "Everybody would know") already suggests *not* everybody knows.

The Indonesian narrative of a Papuan hoax, an example of what White (2000) might call a "good lie" – that is, one consciously conceived to deceive – is a blunt, if circumstantially effective, instrument of deception. But, if claims to a hoax are so demonstrably a lie (e.g. Budiardjo and Liong 1988; Ondawame 2000; Hernawan 2018), what, instead, might these performances of, not just knowing, but all-knowing – these 'everybody's' – suggest about the instability of narrative and the

---

<sup>23</sup> On Indonesian national television, the name of a corporation, like Freeport, is often censored out of a broadcast. In their video, Dapoer ATS plays on this censoring instead to bleep out references to the government and nation.

<sup>24</sup> Tembagapura is a *kecamatan* (sub-district) in the Papuan district of Mimika and the site of Freeport mining operations, while Timika is the site of Freeport's administrative headquarters within Papua Province.

implicit need to produce and project a subject who already knows? In the case of Leo's lyric, it is as if to say, everyone *else* – that is, 'Asia and the world' – knows, enacting a kind of "conjuring of transcendentally extranational points of view" that Rutherford has characterized as part of the "performative creation of a nation" (2012: 199). Yet, when I tell Bruin, another featured MC on the record "Adil ka?", that his lyrics surprised me as not particularly separatist, he says, "Actually, in this song we're not, we're not talking about freedom [*merdeka*]. We are not speaking to that. Just the first thing we want to tell is what's happening [*kejadian*] in Papua." In other words, though they *should*, everybody does not already know.

Nuran and Leo's 'everybody's stake a claim to the same reality – 'what's happening in Papua' – and resonate even through the dissonance of their respective claims. If, as Lepselter (2016) argues, narratives "can remember themes that echo and multiply inside" them (see also Stewart 1996), this chapter explores the way uncanny echoes – these dissonant resonances – point to concurrent processes of iterative remembering *and* forgetting across, rather than within, narratives. Reading across claims to knowing suggests a "prolonged hesitation between sound and sense" (Valéry *in* Agamben 1999: 109), a kind of fracturing of the real that reflects the epistemic uncertainty running through them both. This chapter, then, considers what it might look like for a fact to disperse, splintering sound and sense, as well as the relationship between witness, audience, and a kind of knowing Nuran might also call a refusal to understand.<sup>25</sup>

Both Leo and Nuran posit ostensibly mutually exclusive narratives for what is happening in West Papua. They project their respective positions as self-evident, even as these claims need to be repeatedly affirmed through association with 'news' or 'fact.' In this same speech to the United

---

<sup>25</sup> I am contributing, here, to an ongoing literature on questions of audience, epistemology and historicity in a West Papuan context, see, especially Rutherford (2012) and Timmer (2015).

Nations, Nuran presents the following data to refute accusations of human rights violations in the region:

During the past three years, 4,325 kilometers of roads were built. 30 new seaports. 7 new airports. 2.8 million Papuans have free basic healthcare. 360,000 Papuan students have free education. With the economy growing at 9.21%, all make Papua and West Papua the fastest growing regions in Indonesia.

Her speech evokes another dissonant resonance – a different series of data – from a WhatsApp message I had received not eleven days prior to her speech to the United Nations. The message includes this warning:

Today 3 people from Nabire died only from eating food, Timika one family, Paniai 9 people in Madi, Deiyai 2 people, Dogiyai 4 people + 1 person fatally beaten by a member of BIN [*Badan Inteligen Negara*, State Intelligence Agency], Jayapura 3 people in Arsi, Kerom 3, Abe 2, Sentani 5, Jayapura City 4 people, Kaimana 1 family, Serui, Biak, Nanokwari [*si*] and several other cities in the Land of Papua. Today plus or minus 30 Papuans [*orang asli*] have died. Try multiplying, for example 30 x 300 days, imagine how many Papuans [*OAP, orang asli Papua*] will die. [my translation]

Each punctuated series of data reads like a mirror image of the other – one suggesting incredible growth, the other multiplying death, one disseminated on a global stage, the other through end-to-end encryption. Assessed as statements of fact, one does not necessarily preclude the truth of the other, even while, assembled side by side, each bears the distinct sound of insistent refutation. Prosodic proximity, the feeling that these two statements are somehow related, stems from their shared intention to convey an appearance of information as “understandable in itself” (Benjamin 2002: 147).<sup>26</sup> But understanding and, to borrow from (and rework) Benjamin, the sound of plausibility, are only ever understandable in themselves to specific audiences.

Martin, yet another Timika-based hip-hop artist, explained, “You know the news here is so screened like that. Screened, screened, manipulated [*dimanipulasi*], filtered [*difilter*]. So only the good (news) makes it there [*di sana*]. The bad, it’s only us who know [*Yang buruk-buruknya cuma kita saja*]

---

<sup>26</sup> Nuran’s narrative is particularly consistent with Mbembe’s (2001) contention that postcolonial authorities are “constantly engaged in projecting an image of itself and of the world – a fantasy it presents its subjects as *a truth beyond dispute*” (109; my emphasis).



*yang tau*].<sup>27</sup> Unlike Leo’s performance of an ‘everybody’ who already knows, Martin suggests epistemic intimacy – it is *only* they who know. Both, however, allude to the ways in which audience and witness alike are continuously imagined, made and re-made in the telling of what is happening in Papua. This re-making points not only to the instability of narrative but, also, to the possibility of imagining new ways *to* narrate. Much in the way I sought to read Nuran’s speech and Leo’s lyric through a shared epistemic frame, what could happen – what kind of audience could be imagined – if, instead of reading Nuran’s speech *against* the WhatsApp message, the two are imagined as a poetic archive once dispersed, sound splintered from sense? That archive might read:

West Papua is the fastest growing [region] in Indonesia / Imagine how many Papuans will die.<sup>28</sup>

If listening for something like slant rhymes across narratives suggests a certain poetic epistemology of life surveilled, it also suggests a poetic mode of witnessing. Leighton (2018) argues that poetic knowing, “rather than being one of logical connections, may be one of sound and syntax, rhythm and accent, of sense sparked by the collocations and connotations of words. For these, too, may be a form of ‘knowing’” (269). In this way, even “a good lie” contains the possibility of a recoverable truth.<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> In using *kita*, a first-person plural pronoun that explicitly intepellates the interlocuter, I am personally drawn in to this ‘us.’ This feature of the Indonesian language, which distinguishes a first-person plural subject that includes the addressee (*kita*) from a subject excluding the addressee (*kami*) is called clusivity.

<sup>28</sup> This imagined archive and the break between the two lines represent the uneven response to the kinds of development Nuran describes. Cook Islander poet, Vaine Rasmussen (2000), writes in the poem “Our Pacific” that, “There is not *one* Pacific / There are many [...] // There is not *one* troubled region / There are many [...] // There is not *one* Pacific / Only one common theme / That development is certain.” The certainty of that development is matched only by the certainty that it is and will be uneven. Another archive of “scraps and debris” (Mbembe 2002: 25) in Timika, the guestbook of a local community development organization, poetically bears out this asymmetry. Inscribed anonymously are the words: “The Javanese come to Papua and sell *bakso* [meatballs] to buy land. Papuans sell land to buy *bakso*. [*Orang Jawa ke Papua jual bakso untuk beli tanah. Orang Papua jual tanah untuk beli bakso*].” Nuran may not be wrong that West Papua is the fastest growing region in West Papua, but imagining that growth requires imagining the death that ‘develops’ in parallel.

<sup>29</sup> I am also drawing, here, on Hartman’s (2008) reimagination of the archive, a subject I will more closely explore in Chapter Four, and the “recombinant narrative” as method. Hartman suggests that, “[b]y playing with and rearranging the basic elements of the story, by re-presenting the sequence of events in divergent stories and from contested points of view, I have attempted to jeopardize the status of the event, to displace the received or authorized account, and to

### **‘it’s only us who know’**

When Martin claims, “You know the news here is so screened like that [...] So only the good (news) makes it there. The bad, it’s only us who know,” who precisely is this ‘us’? The obvious, but too simple, answer is Papuans. And yet, Martin is speaking as part of a hip-hop collective that includes members from across the Indonesian archipelago who would not obviously nor universally be recognized *as* Papuan – each of whom he includes in this ‘us.’ If the ‘everybody’s in the section above mark a discursive opening to claims of legitimacy, what can be said of Martin’s assertion of epistemic intimacy and the making of this ‘us’?

A 2001 Indonesian “Special Autonomy [*Otonomi Khusus*]” law defines Papuans as “people descended from the family of the Melanesian race consisting of indigenous tribes of Papua Province *and/or people who are accepted and recognized as Papuan by indigenous Papuans [Orang Asli Papua adalah orang yang berasal dari rumpun ras Melanesia yang terdiri dari suku-suku asli di Provinsi Papua dan/atau orang yang diterima dan diakui sebagai orang asli Papua oleh masyarakat adat Papua]*” (Republik Indonesia 2001; my emphasis). In a 2004 speech, Filep Karma, famed Papuan independence leader, once imagined a sovereign Papuan nation as one in which, “Someone might be a Makassarese. But he or she will be Papuan. Someone might be a person from Manado. But he or she will be Papuan. Someone might be a person from Java. A Papuan” (Karma *in* Rutherford 2012: 222). Freedom would be the choice to naturalize Papuan citizens. This vision is not dissimilar from that expressed in the above Special Autonomy law, with one important distinction: in Karma’s vision Papua is a sovereign nation no longer subject to Indonesian law. The potential mutability of Papuanness is, thus, enshrined in both current Indonesian law and one imaginary of a future sovereign Papua.

---

imagine what might have happened or might have been said or might have been done” (11). Rather than imagine what *might* have happened – here, I do not have to imagine – by rearranging and poetically splicing contested points of view, I aim to displace the authorized account in a different way, by showing the instability and vulnerability of that very account.

In the aftermath of official transmigration policy and the continuing proliferation of migrant influx, demographic changes, sometimes glossed as a “slow-motion” (Elmslie 2010; Elmslie and Webb-Gannon 2013) or “cultural” (Beanal *in* Letih 2002) genocide, have made indigenous Papuans a minority in Timika (Elmslie and Webb-Gannon 2017). Subsequent to analysis of 2010 census data, Ananta et al. (2016) rather oddly consider “the demographic role of the Javanese ethnic group, the largest ethnic group in Indonesia, in creating ethnic *diversity* in the Land of Papua” (460; my emphasis). Setting aside the way in which this argument reframes decades-long processes of marginalization as a process of diversification, the argument more subtly suggests that West Papua was somehow never previously diverse. This homogenizing narrative must be understood as related to two concurrent and entangled processes: the invention of a singular Papuan identity by the indigenous people of West Papua for the purposes of political advocacy (Chauvel 2005; Kirksey 2012) and a racialized codification of Papuanness by the Indonesian government for the purposes of governance, control and surveillance.<sup>30</sup>

\*\*

Bruin, the unofficial organizer of Dapoer ATS is ethnically Kei, from the Maluku islands – with their own history of violence (see, for example, Spyer 2002; 2013) – located to the west of West Papua. He had gathered all but two of the contributing MCs to talk about their music video, “Adil ka?”:

BRUIN: We...we...OK, first I'm a settler [or, migrant, *pendatang*]. There are a few of my friends, here, who are settlers. We are not people from Papua. But we were born and grew up in Timika. *We know the situation here*. We love...our hearts [*hati*] are like the city of our own lands. [...] I go to other cities bringing Timika's name because I am proud. If I go to Java, I am going to say that I am from Papua. Why am I proud? [Papua has been] branded [*dicap*] no good but feeds all of Indonesia. *That's the first fact*. And, if we talk about justice [*keadilan*], how are we different from Java? It's only because the capital [city] is there and only because we [*kita*] are a different race? The main reason must be

---

<sup>30</sup> See Browne (2015) for a thorough and compelling discussion of surveilling blackness through the metaphor of dark matter, which “names the surveillance of blackness as often unperceivable within the study of surveillance, all the while blackness being that nonnameable matter that matters the racialized disciplinary society” (9).

because of a difference in race. Abroad it's also like that, no? *Straight Outta Compton* was also because of racial difference. The black race and the white race. It's the same, like that, in Indonesia, racial differences [*perbedaan-perbedaan ras*]. Though Indonesia has this, what does it have, it's called what, it's not a law, what is it...?"

NOVAL: "Different [*berbeda-beda*] but still one?"

BRUIN: What is it...?"

DAPOER A.T.S.: The motto?

BRUIN: That, like a motto, Unity in Diversity [*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*]. Different but still one. Like that right?

LEO: Different but...

BRUIN: Made just [*Buat keadilan*]. It seems like those who live in western Indonesia are not like us in Papua. Yeah, that's in the fifth Pancasila,<sup>31</sup> if I'm not mistaken. So, we join together [*rapat*], not for Papuan independence. Ok, *lah*...in my opinion, I would agree if Papua becomes independent. But not in terms of [*dalam hal*]...free Papua, remove the flag...no, first we have to be economically free.

There is an ironic, even absurd, feel to this scene as the members of Dapoer ATS, sitting in One Republic Cafe, the hub of Timika's hip-hop scene, collectively recall the Indonesian national motto ("Unity in Diversity") and the fifth pillar of Pancasila, the Indonesian state ideology, in the same conversation that they evoke N.W.A's *Straight Outta Compton* as a (globally-recognized) referent for "racial differences." And, yet, the argument that many of the MCs make through the song, "Adil ka?," a ten and a half minute posse cut, is an argument to be recognized fully as and treated as Indonesian citizens and for Papuans to benefit from the economic wealth produced in Papua.

The language and imagery of the Indonesian state is perhaps most explicit on Steven's verse.

Like Bruin, he offers a critique of the relationship between money and politics:

---

<sup>31</sup> Pancasila is a philosophical theory of the Indonesian state originally put forth by nationalist leader and the first president of Indonesia, Sukarno. It consists of five principles, the fifth – "Keadilan Sosial bagi seluruh Rakyat Indonesia [*Social justice for all Indonesians*]" – of which members of Dapoer ATS reference here. These pillars are distinct from the Indonesian state motto, "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika," variably translated as "Unity in Diversity" or "Out of Many, One."

Dunia tutup mata anak mama pun terluka  
 Hilang akal sehat aktor aktor Pancasila  
 Higa mani politik dijadikan raja  
 Mana rasa iba untuk kaum yang berjasa?  
 Terombang-ambing piring mereka sudah pical  
 Semua hanya ego manusia tak beresa  
 Mereka jadi korban hidup pun tertekan  
 Dimana ka hak yang harus di rasakan?  
 Repotasi negara seperti disodomi  
 Ilhami / pahami / bukan basa basi  
 Kerja hanya untuk sesuap nasi  
 Harga diri dan mati tidak dihargai  
 Bumi / pertiwi / sampai cendrawasi  
 Kini / menangis entah apa yang terjadi  
 Di mana kasih di mana hati nurani  
 Entah apa ka itu semua sudah mati

The world closes its eyes, children's mothers are wounded  
 The actors of Pancasila have lost their common sense  
 Such that money politics has become king  
 Where is compassion for the worthy?  
 Spinning plates have already shattered  
 It's all only ego, humanity isn't one  
 They become victims, lives oppressed  
 Where are the rights that must be felt?  
 It's like the nation's reputation has been sodomized  
 Inspire / understand / this is not idle chit chat  
 Working just for a mouthful of rice  
 Self-respect and death aren't valued  
 The Indonesian Motherland [*Bumi / Pertiwi*]  
 through the Land of Cendrawasih  
 Now crying because of what's transpired  
 Where is the love, where the conscience?  
 I wonder if they are all already dead

(Dapoer ATS 2017)

The critique suggests Indonesia has lost its way, straying from the state ideology, Pancasila. *Bumi pertiwi* references Ibu Pertiwi, an iconic figure of the Indonesian motherland who appears in some of Indonesia's most patriotic verses, alluded to in the national anthem as "my mother [*ibuku*]". In Steven's verse, the land of Papua (Cendrawasih) *is* the land of Ibu Pertiwi. The song laments the country's reputation, mired in money politics, here, anglicized as *mani politik* rather than the more common *uang politik*, the practice of influencing elections through financial incentivizing. Later verses in "Adil ka?" echo this critique: "The era of change has fallen into poverty / Where is Pancasila / That has become the standard? / What remains is forgotten propaganda [*Era berubah*

*jatuh dalam kemiskinan / Dimana Pancasila? / Yang jadi patokan / Yang ada hanya propaganda yang di lupakan]*” (Putra Flash) or “The symbol of Garuda has become dirty [*Lambang garuda jadi kotor*].”

The video is consciously steeped in paradigmatically Indonesian symbolism. When OF28 raps, “There is still time for us to be one [*Masih ada waktu dimana torang bisa bersatu*]” or Martin, later, “The goal to be together is not just a charade [*Tujuan tuk bersama bukan hanya sandimara*]” their audience – the collective ‘we’ – are Indonesians. Putra Flash, a Javanese rapper on the record, echoes this ‘we’ with: “Black or white we are no different [*Hitam atau putih kita tidak berbeda*].<sup>32</sup> The desire that the MCs on “Adil Ka?” express is a form of justice intimately connected to recognition and economic right. Putra Flash’s line, “That sparkling gold is ours [*Emas yang berkilau itu torang punya*]” follows the assertion that black or white, Indonesians are no different. The ‘ours’ of the sparkling gold is Papua’s, made all the more complicated, here, by the rapper’s Javanese ethnicity.<sup>33</sup>

Economic rights, however, are not exclusively about money, as Rudi’s verse makes clear: “It’s not about the money, boss, but self-respect [*Bukan tentang money bos ini harga diri*].” The lyrics of the song speak to the Indonesian government, even as YouTube comments suggest an overwhelmingly Papuan audience: “Through these ricochets, government, try to be aware / Don’t you feel our [*kami*] race cast out? [*Lwat lantunan ini pemerintah coba sadar / Kalian tdk rasakan ras kami terpencah?*].<sup>34</sup> Here, the audience of “Adil ka?” might almost hear an anticipatory response to Nuran’s argument (and Indonesian policy): economic development is not the answer to a politics of

---

<sup>32</sup> Contrast this line with the hook to a different Timika-based rapper, Ape’s, most-viewed music video: “We want to freedom / ‘cause we are Melanesian / Papua is my home / And not for Indonesia,” which samples footage from a July 2012 protest, led by members of the Aliansi Mahasiswa Papua (AMP/Alliance of Papuan Students). The imagery shows students, surrounded by Morning Star (*Bintang Kejora*) flags, holding up a sign that reads, *PBB dan Indonesia Segera Mengakui Keadilan Negara West Papua* [The U.N. and Indonesia, Recognize the Justice of the West Papuan State Immediately]. Justice [*keadilan*], here, is synonymous with Papuan sovereignty.

<sup>33</sup> For a distinct but related analysis of the relationship between “the changing face of Papuanness” and the West Papuan hip-hop movement, see Richards (2015).

<sup>34</sup> See Smythe (2013) for a fascinating discussion of the way in which “song is a participative symbol that renegotiates boundaries of Papuan identity previously defined by Dutch and Indonesian states, and creates and maintains the daily liberational practice of sustaining the ideological ‘Notion-State’ of Papua” (74). In “Adil ka?” it is the combination of the song with the diverse collective of MCs contributing to the same track that does work to re-imagine these boundaries.

oppression. It is not that it's not about the money but that it's *also* about self-respect. And, part of that self-respect can be recovered “in this day and age of open technology” through viral technologies that allow, if not everyone, then a more expansive audience to know “what’s happening in Papua.”

\*\*

In the seventh season of Stand Up Comedy Indonesia, the popular contestant Mohammed Yusran Alkatiri, known throughout the season as Mamat, presents himself as the first representative of Papua to appear on the show. Prior to participating in the reality television show, Mamat had previously performed with other eastern Indonesian comics in a Yogyakarta-based comedy show titled, *Eastimewa*, a play on the Indonesian word for privileged or special, *istimewa*, which also describes the region of Yogyakarta (*Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta*), a city in central Java. Ultimately finishing as the runner up to the season, his opening set titled, “Child of Papua” [*Si Anak Papua*] addressed the first episode’s theme: “Who am I?”

**Mamat Alkatiri:** Thank you very much KompasTV, who has already made me the first child of Papua to appear on Stand Up Comedy Indonesia. Thank you very much. And the theme today is, “Who am I?” Actually to understand me is easy enough. It’s enough to know the name of my [home] region. All of my traits spring from there. The name of my [home] region is the city of Fakfak. [...] Ah, this is it. [Looks behind to map of West Papua]. The name is already foreboding. And, it’s located in a corner. The people are dark [*gelap-gelap*]. [...] I’m from Papua where the majority of people, on average, are poor. So, I’m surprised. Why are we [*kita*] poor while our [*kita*] environment is rich? [Audience silence]. It’s confusing, no? I myself am confused. What I mean is in Papua there is the largest gold mine in the world. In. the. world. I once read, this gold mine produces 70 trillion [IDR] per year...the average profit. Can you imagine 70 trillion a year? [Silence]. I’ll explain 70 trillion per year. If it were used to make *papeda* [Papuan sago-based dish], all of Indonesia would be sticky. [Laughter and applause] I usually imagine it like this friends. What if I...if we [*kami*] got a piece of this, the largest gold mine...wow...Papua with lots of money, undoubtedly arrogant. Arr-o-gant. If I have a piece from [“Freeport” bleeped out of broadcast] every Saturday night you know where I’d be? Do you know? *Lokalisasi* [brothel]. Negotiating. “Miss, how much?” “500,000” [approx. \$50] “Wow very cheap. 50 million, okay?” I give her 50 million. I kiss her brow. Then I go. “50 million [\$5,000] and you only do that?” “So you know your self-respect [*barga diri*] is worth far more than anything else.”

**Indro Warkop (Judge):** You’re from Papua? Your name doesn’t make that clear [*menjelaskan*].

**Mamat Alkatiri:** I’ll explain it later in the next show.

**Indro Warkop:** You’re saying that, yeah? Alkatiri...from Papua, eh?

Stand Up Comedy Indonesia (2017)

Mamat's set ostensibly follows a common trope of self-deprecating comedy premised, here, on long-repeated phenotypic stereotypes of Papuans ("dark" people, "foreboding" name) (see Banivanua-Mar 2008; Kirsch 2010; Karma 2014). Later in the set, he refers to his own "face of a pig." Having affirmed these preconceptions of Papuans, he does not so much dispel them, but rather goes on to suggest that his countenance, ugly and dark though it may be, should not be the basis for judging the "quality" of a person. The latter half of his set delicately strays in to more explicitly political material, marked by the censoring of Freeport's name on national television. He critiques Papua's paradoxical poverty, a critique that elicits notable silence from the audience. The final punchline of his routine reprises self-deprecatory humor, this time hinging on stereotypes of the Papuan male as sexually promiscuous (Butt 2002) and profligate in his arrogance. Yet, the punchline, again, undermines that stereotype, while subtly reconfiguring Papua's current economics of distribution. The Papuan man Mamat describes frequenting a brothel leaves \$5,000 and only a kiss to the woman's brow, this imagined Papuan's ostensible generosity linked to the value of self-respect.

\*\*

For the contributing artists on "Adil ka?", it has not mattered that their lyrics are not explicitly – or even implicitly – separatist. For Indonesian military and police, the intent of "Adil ka?" is, if not irrelevant, then secondary to the assumption that Papuans are always already separatists. In the month following the release of the video, members of Dapoer ATS heard that Intel, state intelligence, was looking for them. When I asked a friend who was not involved in producing the music video why the police would be interested in them, he replied (via Facebook Messenger), "So, the military is still looking for my friends who made the song because the song's lyrics talk of politics and racial difference [*Jadi teman-teman sy yg bwt lagu ini lgi Di cari Tentara, karna lirik lagu nya bercerita tentang politik dan perbedaan ras*]." The song is about politics and racial differences, but it is not a song in celebration of Papuan nationalism but rather of a more (economically) just Indonesia motivated



by the observation that “we [*kita*] are no different,” or that Indonesians are, in an echo of state rhetoric, “different but still one.”<sup>35</sup>

If, despite their dissonant meanings, the WhatsApp message and Nuran’s narrative that opened this chapter *sound* resonant, then hearing Mamat’s set against the lyrics of “Adil ka?” suggests the opposite – for some, the sound of dissonance despite deeply resonate themes. When Mamat refers to his face as “the face of a pig,” he continues, “OK, I understand. I understand that. Except there’s this. How much longer will it be until a country as big as Indonesia with people as wonderful as yourselves doesn’t judge the quality of a person based only on their face?” And later when he asks, “Why are we [*kita*] poor while our [*kita*] environment is rich? It’s confusing, no?,” he too points to the unevenly distributed economic benefits derived from the mine. Rudi’s line – “It’s not about the money, boss, but self-respect [*Bukan tentang money bos ini barga diri*] – reads like an exegesis of Mamat’s closing punchline. How is it, then, that Mamat is able to make a critique (on national television to an exponentially larger audience) of Freeport and, ultimately, win runner-up in this reality television competition, while the members of Dapoer ATS, some of whom, like Mamat, are not ethnically Papuan, face existential repercussions under heightened state surveillance?

Mamat is able, indeed allowed, to make this critique in part because of the slipperiness around his own representation and the relationship that representation allows him to have with the audience. The judge’s skeptical, “...from Papua, eh?” reifies a tension felt throughout the set: Are the jokes actually *self*-deprecatory? Despite opening barbs that poke fun at the stereotypical Papuan countenance, Mamat does not, in fact, possess the *kulit hitam, rambut keriting* [black skin, curly hair] indigenous Papuans often use as self-identifying physical characteristics. His physical presence challenges the very stereotype he oratorically claims to embody on stage, his presence indexing as

---

<sup>35</sup> Compare Dapoer ATS’s relationship to Indonesia described, here, with Rutherford’s (2003) analysis of Biak (Papuan) relationships to and resistance of New Order Indonesia.

other than Papuan. As the judge, Indro Warkop, later implies, Mamat's name – strongly suggestive of both ethnicity (Hadhrami Arab) and religious identity (Muslim) – further complicates how the audience might interpret his claims to Papuanness and the extent to which he actually speaks for indigenous Papuans. His set suggests another rupture of the semantic and the semiotic, these “two intensities of the same linguistic substance,” that, I argue, allows the audience to hear his critique.

Mamat alternates between using the first person plural inclusive ‘we’ (*kita*) and the first person plural exclusive pronoun (*kami*). That is, at times he interpellates the audience (e.g. “Why are we [*kita*] – all of us, Indonesians – poor while our environment is rich?”) even when talking specifically about Papua. At other times he aligns himself with and therefore interpellates Papuans, but *not* the audience, e.g. “What if we [*kami*] – Papuans – got a piece of this, the largest gold mine?”. Contouring the ‘we’ is intimately connected to any claim to knowing. This act of folding himself into the Papuan ‘we’ and the concurrent possibility of a different ‘we’ legible to and shared with his audience is, I argue, how the works of art that Mamat and the members of Dapoer ATS create are differently recognized by an Indonesian audience. Though “Adil ka?” repeatedly, far more conspicuously than Mamat, evokes the *possibility* of an Indonesian ‘we’ that would include Papuans, it is a ‘we’ that is never fully realized.

### **‘you must know’**

“*Kakak* Clare, you know [*kenal sama*] Timika’s regent [*bupati*], no? The wealthiest regent in Indonesia, you must know [*tabu pasti*]?”<sup>36</sup> Bruin, one of Timika’s more ambitious MCs, is telling me how he lost his job writing a song about parents losing their jobs. Earlier in the year, Omaleng, the *bupati* of Mimika District, published a book, *Papua Minta Saham* [Papua Asks for Shares]. At the book launch

---

<sup>36</sup> The *bupati* (regent or district head) is the governmental head of a district. Though districts represent subdivisions of provinces, the district head has disproportional power in Papua and West Papua Provinces, as Special Autonomy funding is primarily distributed at the district, rather than provincial, level.

he clarified the title, “It’s not about asking, really it’s our right. [...] I already wrote it on page 79 of this book. ‘Papua Has the Right to Own Freeport Shares.’ [The title] is just to draw attention [*Bukan meminta, tapi memang itu hak kita* [...] *Sudah saya tulis di halaman 79 buku ini. Papua Berhak Miliki Saham Freeport. (Judul) itu hanya untuk menarik perhatian saja*] (Vebriyanto 2017). Omaleng’s argument is for the economic rights of Papuans, and the title ‘draws attention’ because it subtly reworks a national scandal that came to be known as the case of ‘Papa Asks for Shares’ [*kasus ‘Papa Minta Saham’*].

In the lead-up to contract re-negotiations between Freeport and the Indonesian government, Setya Novanto, former Speaker of the House of Representatives, arranged a meeting with, at the time, PT Freeport Indonesia’s president, Maroef Sjamsoeddin. In their nearly hour and a half long conversation, Novanto, claiming to be acting on behalf of Indonesian President Joko Widodo and Vice President Yusuf Kalla, suggests that Freeport could obtain a legally mandated special mining license (IUPK) by divesting 20% of company shares to the personal coffers of his superiors. Unbeknownst to Novanto, the meeting was recorded and publicly released. After initially confirming his role in this meeting but denying wrongdoing, he later claimed the whole meeting was a joke, before, still later, denying that the voice on the recording was his.

Shortly after the recording of this conversation was made public, ‘Papa Minta Saham’ memes viralized across social media, poking fun at Novanto’s brazen corruption. President Widodo, discussing the contemporary role social media plays in the spread of information remarked, “Before there was ‘mama wants (cellphone) credit,’ now the topic trending is ‘papa wants shares’ [*Dulu ada ‘mama minta pulsa,’ sekarang yang trending topic itu ‘papa minta saham’*].”<sup>37</sup> Thereafter, ‘Papa Minta Saham’ quickly became shorthand – at least in Jakarta – for the Novanto Freeport extortion scandal.<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> ‘Mama minta pulsa’ refers to a ubiquitous scam enacted through text messaging in which recipients were asked to buy cell phone credit for the sender, who posed as the recipient’s mother.

<sup>38</sup> Despite attempts to extort a 20% share of Freeport, worth an estimated USD \$4 billion, the Constitutional Court of Indonesia declared the recording of Novanto inadmissible in his prosecution. In April 2018, Novanto was sentenced to 15 years in prison on charges of corruption unrelated to his dealings with Freeport.

It is the ‘Papa Minta Saham’ scandal that Omaleng evokes in naming his book *Papua Minta Saham* [Papua Asks for Shares] and at the book’s launch when he declares: “So, individuals ask for shares there, ask for shares here, ask for beans there, ask for cookies here. They want to divide shares. The central government, these crazy people, ludicrous. The Ministry is the same, Parliament is also the same [Jadi pribadi-pribadi minta saham sana, minta saham sini, minta kacang sana, minta biskuit di sini. Mereka mau bagi-bagi saham. Pemerintah pusat, gila dorang (mereka) ini, lucu. Menteri juga sama, DPR juga sama semua]” (JPNN 2015). Omaleng contrasts the greed of “these crazy people,” represented by Novanto, with the economic rights of the Papuan people.

It is, then, Omaleng’s book that Bruin has in mind when, slipping between Indonesian and English, he raps:

Kusedot tanpa rem man! Petaka baginya Man!  
 [I inhale without braking man! Disaster for him, Man!]  
 Topic ‘Papa Minta Saham’ GODDammn  
 What we gotta do? What we gotta do?  
 People’s losing mood, everybody knows how  
 Kami sebagai Penonton, saksikan drama monoton ow...  
 [We are observers, witnessing a monotonous drama ow...]

Bruin is aware of what he refers to as *kasus lain* – the other case of ‘Papa Minta Saham’ (the Novanto scandal) – but tells me that “Here (in my lyric) I only describe Omaleng as the heart of the problem [titik permasalahannya],” as if each inflection might be siloed. Instead, his lyric echoes an echo, unavoidably, if not intentionally, drawing comparison between Omaleng and Novanto, despite the fact that his lyric directly references the Novanto scandal rather than Omaleng. And yet, when much later, after the music video has long been publicly released on YouTube, I ask him about the line, he recalls his own lyric to me as “Papua Minta Saham.” My attempts to ascertain meaning and intention belie an unexpected disjunction between the semantic and the semiotic. Both artist and audience understand the lyric to criticize Omaleng, even while the verse semantically references the Novanto

scandal. So clear is the intended meaning to Omaleng – a critique of his corruption – that Omaleng fires Bruin, a low-level civil servant in the *bupati*'s office.

The initial resonance between Novanto and Omaleng, the titular slant rhyme intended to 'draw attention,' draws attention through contrast. Omaleng claims to want Freeport shares for the benefit of the Papuan people; Novanto wants shares for himself (and his superiors). That resonance, though, ricochets in a direction Omaleng must not have anticipated. Rather than contrasting Novanto's individual greed with the economic rights of Papuans, Bruin's inflection of 'Papa Minta Saham' redoubles meaning, comparing the two politicians and implicating the Papuan *bupati*, Omaleng, in Novanto's greed.

In defining and interpreting the end of a poem, Agamben builds off Valéry's definition of a poem as a "prolonged hesitation between sound and sense" (Valéry in Agamben 1999: 109), "between the semiotic sphere and the semantic sphere." Agamben is interested in the poem's final line because it marks a "state of poetic emergency," where the poem's defining rupture between the semantic and semiotic is no longer possible and in "an endless falling [...] language finally communicate[s] itself, without remaining unsaid in what is said" (115). The end of the poem marks a resolution of the poem's intrinsic play between sound and sense. Bruin's firing might be seen as a version of this poetic resolution, in which the unexpected articulation and accumulation of that which has remained unsaid produces a kind of certainty in knowing.

Bruin knows he is fired because he intended to publicly criticize Omaleng and Omaleng understands Bruin to have been criticizing him – even when, to an outside observer, Bruin's critique might appear aimed at Novanto. This understanding between Omaleng and Bruin is possible, in part, because of a shared production of a Papuan 'we,' and both Omaleng and Bruin's recognition

that, in Timika, there are things Papuans must know.<sup>39</sup> To paraphrase Stewart (2007), the spreading lines of resonance sharply “snap into sense” (4). The mutability of Bruin’s verse (later recalling the line as ‘Papua’ rather than ‘Papa Minta Saham’) initially confused me in a way that, in turn, seemed to confuse Bruin. To him it was clear: either way, his audience would hear the line as a critique of Omaleng, the *bupati* of Timika.

### ‘without us knowing’

In concluding this chapter, I return to an extended excerpt from a message that circulated across social media, a small portion of which opened this chapter. The extended message seeks to warn the Papuan “family” of an ongoing state operation to poison Papuans through food:

Please share with our family in Papua. Important.

[...]

Without us knowing it [*tanpa kita sadari*], only because of our [*kita*] negligence. Only because we [*kita*] don’t convey the information to our family, in the end our family in Papua will become victims.

There is no need to go far, Elpas’s older brother [*abang*]<sup>40</sup> witnessed, directly saw and heard two members of TNI asking the canteen guard to put poison into the food. If we didn’t know, just imagine how many Papuan students in Medan would already have become victims. The head of the Papuan Student organization in Sulawesi called me about 1 student who, in the beginning, had a typical stomachache and the next morning was lifeless. The same report also came from the Papuan student organization in Mangkurat, Kalimantan. Fortunately, the member of BIN [Indonesian State Intelligence] who oversees Papuan student movement in Kalimantan is Catholic and he immediately told the head [of the student organization] that there was a BIN program named “Black Task for Papuans” [*orig. in English*].

The message later continues:

IMPORTANT INFO !

-----"-----"-----!-----!

RESULT OF THE PEOPLE OF THE PAPUAN NATION’S PETITION

---

<sup>39</sup> Veena Das’s (2007) analysis of voice, drawing on Derrida’s notion of signature, may be helpful here. If what Das takes from Derrida’s analysis is “the possibility that words might become untethered from their origin” and the implication that “we may fail to recognize the signature of the utterance we are hearing [...] when words are animated by some other voice,” then what I am pointing to, here, is not the threat or “possibility of signature as forgery” but rather the possibility of signature *to* re-tether (8-9).

<sup>40</sup> The use of *abang*, rather than *kakak*, is somewhat surprising, here, given the more prevalent use of the former terminology in geographic areas outside of Papua.

Dear Honorable [*Yth.*] People of the Papuan Nation, that they pay careful attention when buying vegetables, Fish, chicken and Beef or Goat or Pork. We [*kita*] must be careful of those sold By Migrants [*Orang Pendatang*].

One should particularly NOT buy from vegetable men [*Jav. mas-mas*] or women who sell using motorbikes to enter Papuan alleyways.

Anything that they bring to sell has already been targeted and surely been poisoned. So, please, please don't buy the things that they bring to sell. There is one Mama from Menado whose husband is Papuan. This woman from Menado wanted to buy vegetables and Fish. Then, She was stopped by the Man selling those vegetables.

Mama Menado asked the Fish Man [*mas*] how much...?

The Man Replied, Ma'am don't buy any of my things because is it Specially for Papuans [*Khusus untuk orang Papua*].

*Wah*, it turns out that Mama Menado who wanted to buy these vegetables is the wife of the pastor. And this Mama became afraid and didn't buy [the vegetables]. Then She went home to her house. This woman told her husband and finally the Secret was leaked.

Before, that vegetable Man [*Mas sayur*] said, Sorry ma'am, don't buy our [*kami*] things because we [*kita*] have been tasked by BIN to KILL Papuans [*Orang Papua*] through food, so ma'am don't buy.

This Man thought that this Mama was a migrant [*Orang Pendatang*] and so unknowingly He told BIN's secret to this Mama Menado. They will make all sorts of ways and efforts but the power of darkness is powerless; it is only the power of GOD that inspires awe [*dasyat*].

Thus this Info can be shared [di Shere] with all Papuans [*orang Papua*]!

Thinking of her safety, the name of the informer Mama Menado will not be identified except by the woman's initials, DB.

[...]

Stay safe. Don't forget to pray.

Keep spirits up.

### **SHARE THE INFO.**

Both the duality and ambiguity of audience weave throughout the text. The man selling vegetables 'mistakes' the woman from Menado as a migrant (*pendatang*) because she *is* a migrant or, rather, he refuses to understand the possibility that Mama Menado could be both a migrant and a member of the Papuan family. He mistakenly includes her in the 'we' that has been tasked by BIN to kill Papuans. The opacity of the other – a porously defined Papuan family – mediates a knowing that, in this case, allows the other to be mistaken as self. Similarly, the member of BIN in Kalimantan, a different region in Indonesia, is both an agent of the state and a Catholic.

In another part of the message detailing the ways in which BIN “exterminated” students in East Timor, the message warns recipients to “be careful reloading cell phone credit [*pulsa*] at counters that you don’t know; BIN normally questions the counter [seller] while asking about the presence of Papuan students, if your number is exposed, it’s not safe.” Ambiguous identities – the possibility that anyone may be working with BIN – unsurprisingly heighten conditions of terror and the risk of exposure, but that ambiguity is also what allows for the possibility of information to “leak” out, as it were. The information continues to leak as users receive and forward the message from one device to the next, each time contouring the Papuan “family” anew. In urging the message to be shared with “all Papuans,” there is an assumption that the current reader knows who is Papuan. However, the ambiguity of the ‘we’ – that is, all Papuans – allows for information to leak in both directions. Why else would Mama Menado’s identity need to be protected?

I consciously refer to the contents of the message, as well as the message itself, as information or “info” (as in the message) rather than what might elsewhere register as rumor. Kirsch (2002) suggests that rumors in Papua index the “local experience of terror” (Kirsch 2002: 58); they are “symptoms” of political violence. This analysis is consistent with much of the anthropological literature on rumor that takes rumor symbolically, as a reflection of something else – something that is too political or too dangerous or too politically dangerous to circulate in a more certain epistemological register (but see Bubandt 2017). Rumors reflect rather than describe experience; they suggest a “truth of the possible” (Stevenson 2014: 14).<sup>41</sup> Ambiguity and ephemerality are, in part, what anthropologists have argued make rumor a “classic ‘weapon of the weak’” (Scheper-Hughes 2000), and yet, here, the message emphasizes “direct” witnessing, specific individuals and locations,

---

<sup>41</sup> See, for example, Strassler’s (2004) discussion of the juxtaposition of the Indonesian state’s imperative for proof (*bukti*) of the now notorious rape of Chinese-Indonesian women during the 1998 riots that lead to the downfall of President Suharto against concurrent state claims that these rapes, in the absence of a certain kind of ‘juridical proof,’ were only rumor (*isn*): “While acknowledging the ‘possibility that rapes occurred,’ [Minister of Women’s Affairs, Tutty Alawijah] noted, ‘to be certain of it there must be proof [*bukti*] that there truly are victims’” (693; my emphasis).



and, as I suggested earlier in the chapter, data with the sound of plausibility to a specific audience. The message indelibly echoes, saved on the SIM card of each recipient's phone, expanding the Papuan 'we' – as well the risk of exposure – with each forwarded message.<sup>42</sup>

As Kirsch argues, rumor often stands in contrast or in resistance to state narrative. The state may lie or propagate “fables” (Mbembe 2001: 117), but rarely, if ever, does official state narrative index as rumor. I would argue that this is in large part because the epistemic opacity of rumor derives less from the unprovability or, even, untenability of narrative claims but rather the uncertain origins of a rumor. This, however, would seem to privilege the possibility of knowing (and, thus, also lying) with the state. Yet, the state is not the only actor capable of positing reality. Perhaps, then, what is called for is a rumoring of Indonesian state claims to knowing and a concurrent imperative to rethink anthropological rumoring of violence. To call a narrative ‘rumor,’ one that effectively claims Nuran’s hoax as, itself, a hoax, is an act complicit in nationalizing epistemology. It is, in some sense, to reproduce Nuran’s ‘everyone’ – to argue that if not everyone knows *in the same way*, how can it be true? Are there not other epistemologies to consider?

Crapanzano’s (2014) exploratory essay on the opaque other stems from a desire to know what it means and how it might be possible to know the other. In one scene, he describes the way in which telling a dream to a team of Moroccan exorcists becomes a way for them to know him; it is, as he describes it, a knowledge or epistemology of the heart (257-60). Indeed how one interprets the

---

<sup>42</sup> There is at least one alternative interpretation of this message that takes the message as a rumor or chain letter (*surat kaleng*) explicitly circulated for the purposes of spreading fear and instigating violence. Such an explanation would fit into an extensive history in Indonesia of anonymously authored or initiated “dark leaflets” (*selebaran gelap*), “technologically enhanced rumor” (Bubandt 2008), and telephone calls or messages with politically provocative messaging (see, for example, Bubandt 2008; Lindsey 2000; Anderson 1990; Aditjondro 2001), consistent with what Bubandt calls an Indonesian “politics of paranoia.” While entirely plausible that the above viral WhatsApp message began in this way or with this intent, the contexts in which I saw this message discussed among recipients of the message suggested that the information in the message was neither new nor surprising – thus, not particularly provocative – and, instead, the message merely reaffirmed preexisting understandings of daily existential threats. This appearance of truth and the believability of these kinds of circulating narratives, Bubandt argues, produces “social impact [...] in many instances contributing directly to the escalation of violence.” Other times, “these narratives have no social impact, and they are quickly forgotten” (792). What I am exploring, above, is what it means for an individual to read the message and *know* it as fact and the sociality of that epistemological frame.

above WhatsApp message – as fake, as real, as propaganda, or merely representative of some other real (rumor!) – suggests a similar epistemology. That is, the epistemological register I locate in this message mediates a form of knowing the other; to call the message rumor is to exclude myself from some imaginaries of a Papuan ‘we.’ Crapanzano later argues, “[I]t is the *you* engaged with the *I* that produces the possibility, *but only the possibility*, of the *we*” (274; emphasis in original). The message’s original sender writes, “Without us knowing it, only because of our [*kita*] negligence. Only because we [*kita*] don’t convey the information to our family, in the end our [*kita*] family in Papua will become victims.” The message uses the inclusive ‘we’ [*kita*] throughout, even as WhatsApp can only ever convey its possibility. But, over and over again as the message is forwarded from one phone to the next, that possibility is realized when the recipient recognizes the message, not as rumor, but as existential threat.

### **conclusion: imagining a different Papuan ‘we’**

A different possible ‘we,’ reflecting a different economics of the mine, haunts each vignette in this chapter – the past (and future) possibility of a *kita* (we) that excludes Indonesia. *We would have given them the gold*, a Papuan friend of an older generation once told me, arguing that Freeport should have originally supported West Papua in their desire for independence. She imagines the possibility of a ‘we’ that tethers Freeport’s political interests to those of Papua(ns). It is also a ‘we’ that becomes increasingly less likely as a controlling stake (51.2%) in PT Freeport Indonesia will imminently transfer to the government of Indonesia.<sup>43</sup>

---

<sup>43</sup> On 21 December 2018, Freeport-McMoRan issued a press release announcing the end of a years-long negotiation of the terms of their contract extension and special mining license: “PT Indonesia Asahan Aluminium (Persero) (PT Inalum), a state-owned enterprise that is wholly owned by the Indonesian government, completed the previously announced \$3.5 billion cash acquisition of all of Rio Tinto’s interests associated with its joint venture with PT-FI (Joint Venture), and the \$350 million cash acquisition of 100 percent of FCX’s interests in PT Indonesia Papua Metal dan Mineral (formerly known as PT Indocopper Investama), which owns 9.36 percent of PT-FI. In connection with the transaction, the Joint Venture interests are being merged into PT-FI in exchange for a 40 percent share ownership in PT-FI. As a result, PT Inalum and the provincial/regional government’s share ownership of PT-FI approximates 51.2 percent of PT-FI and FCX’s share ownership approximates 48.8 percent. The arrangements provide for FCX and the

The narrative Ainan Nuran, Indonesia’s representative to the United Nations, puts forth at the beginning of this chapter resonates strongly with both those of Dapoer ATS, Mamat and, to a lesser extent, the message circulated on WhatsApp. As a representative of the state narrative, Nuran frames accusations of human rights abuses as a ‘hoax’ put forward by “individuals that are economically motivated by [a] separatist agenda of Papua.” It seems entirely accurate to suggest that those she would accuse of ‘hoax’ *are* economically motivated. In fact, money and the economic landscape of West Papua conspicuously weave through each vignette presented in this chapter. Though consciously omitted from her narrative of “what is happening in Papua,” the Indonesian government, who at the time of this writing have just negotiated a controlling share of PT Freeport Indonesia, was, perhaps, the most economically motivated of all the actors.<sup>44</sup>

In response to Nuran’s speech, Victor Mambor, noted Papuan journalist and editor-in-chief of *Tabloid Jubi*, penned an irreverent “love letter [*surat cinta*]” to Nuran, publicly posted on Facebook. He begins, as if writing a letter to a pen pal, before systematically turning the language of the hoax back on Nuran. “HOAX,” he writes:

It’s a good choice of words for the response that you read [at the United Nations General Assembly]. By the way Ainan, I’ve lived a long time in Papua. Did you know that? So why is it that I’ve never heard of what you called ‘a massive development process in these last three years?’ [*Itu pilihan kata yang bagus untuk tanggapan yang kamu bacakan itu. By the way Ainan [original in English], sudah lama saya tinggal di Papua. Kamu tahu itu kan? Tapi kok saya seperti tak pernah mendengar apa yang kamu sebut ‘proses pembangunan masif dalam tiga tahun belakangan ini?’*]

Mambor flips Nuran’s “everyone will know” back on itself: If this development that you claim is happening, why don’t I know about it? “In this day in age of open technology,” wouldn’t *everyone* know? Mambor contests Nuran’s ability to know “what is happening” in Papua; he is there, and she is not. His claim to knowing is a claim to a kind of knowing that is “understandable in itself” – but

---

pre-transaction PT-FI shareholders to retain the economics of the revenue and cost sharing arrangements under the Joint Venture. As a result, FCX’s economic interest in PT-FI is expected to approximate 81.28 percent through 2022. FCX will continue to manage the operations of PT-FI” (Freeport-McMoran 2018).

<sup>44</sup> See Bradley R. Simpson’s *Economists with Guns: Authoritarian Development and U.S.-Indonesian Relations, 1960-1968* for a related point on the inextricability of economics from violence during a different time period in Indonesian history.

not to everyone. This chapter explores the relationship between epistemology and belonging and the way in which narrative uncertainty belies this more intimate, if labile, mode of knowing. At stake is nothing less than what it means to be included in (or excluded from) certain imaginaries of the Papuan 'we.'

### CHAPTER 3

#### Spectacular witnessing: image, exposure, evidence

Are we witnesses who confirm the truth of what happened in the face of the world-destroying capacities of pain, the distortions of torture, the sheer unrepresentability of terror, and the repression of the dominant accounts? Or are we voyeurs fascinated with and repelled by exhibitions of terror and suffering? What does the exposure of the violated body yield? Proof of black sentience or the inhumanity of the ‘peculiar institution’? Or does the pain of the other merely provide us with the opportunity for self-reflection? At issue here is the precariousness of empathy and the uncertain line between witness and spectator.

Saidiya Hartman

What does it mean to bear witness in the act of watching a retelling?

Elizabeth Alexander

On July 1, 2017, Dapoer ATS (see Chapter Two) uploads their music video “Adil ka?” to YouTube. Shortly thereafter, Omaleng, the *bupati* (regent) of Mimika, fires Bruin, a featured MC on the track. A month and a half after the release of “Adil ka?”, a friend, unfamiliar with the song, sends me a video of Omaleng, on stage, throwing wads of Indonesian rupiah into a crowd of young Indonesian soldiers in celebration of Indonesian Independence Day, August 17<sup>th</sup> (see Figure 3.1). He is joined on stage by senior members of the military, encouraging him to release fistfuls of cash into a crowd of young, eager soldiers.

Bruin had begun our conversation asking, “You know of Timika’s regent, no? The wealthiest regent (*bupati*) in Indonesia, you must know?” He had then continued, “In hip-hop we wear bling, right? He’s also someone who wears bling.” The assumption that I must know Omaleng stems from Bruin’s interpretation of bling and its ability to make seen, as well as an assumption about my own interpretation about what it is that Omaleng’s bling makes visible. It is not simply that I must know *of* Omaleng, it is that I must know *of* Omaleng, the Regent of Mimika, because he is someone who strives to make himself known – to “draw attention,” as it were – through spectacle.

Bling is both the literal manifestation of an aesthetic of the visible and an apt metaphor for what, in this chapter, I want to call spectacular witnessing. If, as Thompson (2009) argues, bling “conveys a state between hypervisibility and blinding invisibility, between visual surplus and disappearance” (483), the spectacle that witnesses and, in turn, creates witnesses suggests a similar paradox. I take the spectacular in two senses, in the sense of the spectacle but also as in an image or scene whose excesses provoke incredulity – that is, spectacular as a synonym for the incredible. The excesses of the spectacular draw an audience in, only to make some audiences question the very scene before them.



Figure 3.1. **Frame from video of Indonesian Independence Day celebration in Timika.** *Eltinus Omaleng, bupati of Mimika District, in a white suit at a celebration of Indonesian Independence Day among members of the Indonesian armed forces (Tentara Nasional Indonesia) on August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017 in Timika, West Papua.*



Figure 3.2. **Frame from music video, “Adil ka?”**. left to right: *OF28, Putra Flash, Dolar H3C, and QQFlow*, published on YouTube July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

Watching the 48-second-long video of Omaleng evokes a dissonant resonance similar to that between Nuran’s speech to the United Nations and the circulated message on WhatsApp that I describe in the previous chapter. The video, taken during a celebration of Indonesian Independence Day, shows Omaleng on stage thrusting handfuls of 100,000 IDR (\$10 USD) bills into an eager crowd of young soldiers, while more senior members appear on stage filming the scene as it unfolds. Here, the video of Omaleng uncannily echoes imagery from “Adil ka?” (see Figure 3.2) – a shower of dollars bills superimposed over the artists as the MC, QQFlow, finishes rapping:<sup>45</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> The music video is, further, a visual nod to what Thompson (2009) refers to as the “sound of light,” the relationship between hip-hop and bling. Reading “Adil ka?” as, in part, a critique of Omaleng, is not to find an uncomplicated critique of bling at the base of the largest gold mine in the world. As Bruin says, “we [too] wear bling.” Instead it is a critique of what Omaleng’s stunting – here, the act of throwing handfuls of Indonesian rupiah into the air – represents. Poet and essayist Hanif Abdurraaqib writes that what “people get wrong about the act of the stunt is that it isn’t entirely narcissistic [...] when it gets you free, [it] is also charity” (2017: 158). The critique of Omaleng is to say, “This isn’t getting you (or us) free.’ In fact, there may no longer be an ‘us.’ And, unlike charity, which always also places its recipient in a position of debt (Mauss 1925 [1970]), it is Omaleng’s indebtedness – or, subservience – to his audience that is most visible, rather than an archetypal display of a Melanesian Big Man’s cultivation of social debt (Sahlins 1963; Gregory 1980). Put differently, if as Clune (2009) argues, bling and its capacity to blind is about ending the rapper’s “formal dependence” on ‘you,’ the audience, Omaleng’s stunt suggests the opposite. (On a related phenomenon, see Martin’s (2010) discussion of “the death of big men” and the rise of the “big shot” in Papua New Guinea).

Ini hip hop man music berorasi / Banting tulang / Cari uang / Dong berjuang /  
Sampai dulang / Ulang2 / Demi uang / Skarang curang / Dong terbang /  
Bribu sarang / Kam kas kurang / Kam kas pulang

This is hip hop, man, music of oration / Working hard / To make money / They struggled /  
Until it's gone / Again and again / For money / Now cheating / They cast aside /  
Thousands of homes / You give less / You send home

Listening anachronistically to QQFlow's lyric could give the impression that he is critiquing the loss of Bruin's job, "sending home," a euphemism for firing (see Chapter Two), the cheating and wasting ascribed to Omaleng. A similar mode of reading the imagery over which QQFlow lays down his verse against the video of Omaleng might, too, suggest he offers a critique of the regent's excess. Yet Bruin loses his job after the release of "Adil ka?," as a result *of* its release. The original intended target of this verse, suggested by the use of American dollar bills rather than Indonesian rupiah, was Freeport. Written midst mass lay-offs and furloughs, "Adil ka?" protests the Papuan (mostly) men who lost their jobs while the government of Indonesia negotiated for a controlling stake in the monolithic mining company. But I would argue that reading QQFlow's verse as *also* a critique of Omaleng would not be wrong and not simply because Omaleng's interests cannot be so easily separated from those of Freeport.<sup>46</sup> The enduring possibility for new objects of critique already contained within the imagery and verse of "Adil ka?" suggests a temporal mode of witnessing that accounts for the condensation of experience through repetition. The spectacular critique is also a form of anticipatory witnessing.

\*\*

Writing on Suharto-era Indonesia, Siegel (1998) argues that the Indonesian government kills in its own image. He suggests that the state does not other its enemies, rather it nationalizes death, explicitly perceiving and treating domestic threats to the nation *as* the Indonesian citizens that they are, rather than as foreign to or outside the nation. Consistent with Siegel's argument around the

---

<sup>46</sup> Here my own reading of the "Adil ka?" music video against the video of Omaleng evokes Rudi's line elsewhere in the song: "It's not about the money, boss, but self-respect [*Bukan tentang money bos ini harga diri*]" (see Chapter Two).



spectacle of these deaths, Hernawan (2015, 2018) suggests that the Indonesian military and police apparatus purposefully make a localized spectacle of torturing and killing suspected Papuan dissidents.<sup>47</sup> If the spectacular is to be understood as a mode of governance, then it might also suggest a rationale for a kind of spectacular witnessing – or witnessing through spectacle – that seeks to trouble the relationship between what can be known from what is seen. And, if the post-New Order “dream of transparency” has demanded a certain kind of juridical evidence that fetishizes the photograph (Strassler 2004), spectacular witnessing makes different epistemological demands. While the images of Omaleng evoke “cheap imitations of power” that “reproduce its epistemology” (Mbembe 2001: 133), the spectacle as witness suggests an epistemological perversion of transparency’s logic that intervenes on what indexes as evidence.<sup>48</sup>

In the *Reformasi* (post-Suharto) “regime of visibility,” Steedly (2013) argues that “the compulsion to see and be seen is continually brought to crisis by the terror of seeing and being seen” (262). In this chapter, I explore how a mode of witnessing, often mediated by photographic images, exposes the uncanny relationship between surveillance and witnessing.<sup>49</sup> If the threat of the camera – of having one’s image captured – is a key tool of the Indonesian surveillance apparatus, it has also represented the promise of transparency. How, then, might exposure be a useful heuristic for thinking about new forms of imagistic witnessing that emerge alongside, if in contrast to, those of the surveillance apparatus? If the language of transparency and *dokumentasi* are the languages of

---

<sup>47</sup> See also Foucault (1977) and Mbembe (2001) on the spectacle of state-sanctioned killing, and Heryanto (2006) on the Indonesian government’s history of spectacular displays of murdered “criminal gangs.” In contrast, see Philpott (2018) on the increasing imperative for Indonesian security forces to make violence visible to a specific audience but remain invisible to a wider national and international audience.

<sup>48</sup> See Hetherington (2008) for another fascinating example of how transparency can be multiply understood and evidenced.

<sup>49</sup> See Strassler (2010) on competing “circuits of witnessing” between those of photojournalists and the Indonesian military who “controlled and strategically used the production and circulation” of images (239).

the Indonesian state (and bureaucracy, more broadly),<sup>50</sup> the curated spectacle repurposes the photograph's forensic expectation, offering an invitation to look and, in so doing, to be exposed. The image as witness becomes as much about the audience's participation in the spectacle, as the image itself. To disbelieve, then, is to also be exposed.

### **fake rubber bullets, real blood**

Heran saja. Kok ada yang bilang kunjungan Kapolda Papua ke keluarga korban penembakan Deiyai bbrp waktu lalu adalah hal yang luar biasa karena hanya terjadi di mas pemerintahan Jokowi. Yg betul saja. Terjadi juga di zaman Soeharto, Gus Dur, Megawati, Habibie sampai dua periode pemerintahan SBY. Bukan sesuatu yang luar biasa. Seperti pada umumnya orang bersalah mencoba bersikap baik. Di Papua, itu hanyalah modus. Karena kesalahan yang sama diulangi terus menerus.

I'm just surprised. Those who were saying the meeting a little while ago between Papua's Chief of Police and the family of the Deiyai shooting's victim was extraordinary because this only has happened during Jokowi's administration. The truth. It also happened in the era of Soeharto, Gus Dur, Megawati, Habibie through SBY's [Yudhoyono's] two administrations. It's not something extraordinary. In general people at fault try to act nicely. In Papua, it's just a mode. *Because the same mistakes are repeated continuously* [my emphasis].

Victor Mambor, editor-in-chief, *Tabloid Jubi*  
(via public Facebook post) [my translation]

On August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017, between six and ten members of Indonesia's security apparatus opened fire on a group of Papuans at the construction camp of PT Putra Dewi Paniai in Oneibo, Bomou village.<sup>51</sup>

Paniai Bomou is located in Tigi District, within the Regency of Deiyai, Papua Province. The

---

<sup>50</sup> For example, in the wake of military shootings of unarmed Papuans, Indonesian Coordinating Political, Legal and Security Affairs Minister at the time, Luhut Pandjaitan, promised "openness" and "transparency" in resolving the cases (Sapiie 2016). See also the *Jakarta Globe* (2014) editorial, "What Papua Needs is More Transparency."

<sup>51</sup> Construction projects are increasingly sites of armed violence, pointing to tensions between the Indonesian government's large-scale infrastructure projects, most controversially the Trans-Papua Highway, and the local population's skepticism over the motivation behind these projects, i.e. as a means of increasing the military's mobility through and occupation of greater and greater areas of previously inaccessible or difficult to access land (see, for example, Syailendra 2016). More recently, in December 2018, members of the armed Papuan resistance group, Tentara Pembebasan Nasional Papua Barat, Organisasi Papua Merdeka (TBNPB-OPM) ambushed and killed upwards of two dozen men, mostly construction workers. They targeted employees of the state-owned company, PT Istaka Karya, responsible for construction of the Trans-Papua Highway in that region (Widhana 2018). The choice to target construction workers suggests their symbolic representation of the Indonesian government's infrastructural violence in West Papua.

morning of the shooting, a young Papuan resident of Oneibo, Kasianus Douw, drowned while fishing. His friends had asked to borrow a truck from the construction company in order to transport him to the nearest hospital. At the time he was alive but unconscious. The on-site project manager refused, and Kasianus later died, either en route to or after arriving at the hospital.<sup>52</sup> Friends of Kasianus returned to the construction site, “turmoil ensued” (*terjadi keributan*), and, ultimately, members of the security apparatus arrived and opened fire, killing one, Yulianus Pigai, and injuring eight to eleven others (Purnomo 2017).

This is one composite version of what happened. At least three different chronology (*kronologi*) of events – from the perspectives of the construction company, police and local church – were reported in regional newspapers (You 2017a; “Inilah Kronologis Penyerangan Camp” 2017; Purnomo 2017). The director of the construction company issued a further clarification of what *Tabloid Jubi* had originally published as the company version (*versi pihak perusahaan*), in which he rejected the very possibility of a company version; the company could not be considered associated with the events because only subcontractors were on site at the time of the shooting.<sup>53</sup> In the local church accounting, victims of the shooting reported that the only damage they caused was a ripped company tent and that members of Brimob, an elite police unit, fired from about four meters away without so much as a warning shot, while members of PT Putra Dewi Paniai and specialized crowd control police (*Pengendalian Massa/Dalmas*) remained at a distance in their vehicles (Purnomo 2017).

---

<sup>52</sup> The on-site construction manager, ostensibly of PT Putra Dewa Paniai, later said he had refused to transport Kasianus for fear he would be blamed if Kasianus died in transport. Interviewed after the shooting, he said that he “was worried, don’t let him die in the middle of the trip, later I’ll be blamed, that was my first thought [*Saya khawatir jangan sampai meninggal di tengah jalan, nanti saya yang disalahkan, itu pikiran utama saya*]” (You 2018). This refusal led to a delay in bringing Kasianus to the hospital, which ultimately may have been what did cause him to die in transport.

<sup>53</sup> The director of PT Putra Dewi Paniai, I Dewa Rai Jagatnata, told *Media Nasional* news: “The incident in question had no relationship to our company because they were contractors, not employees of PT Putra Dewa Paniai, rather limited to subcontractors or contract workers. At the time of that incident, our employees were not performing any work activities because at that time the employees were ‘off’ [*Insiden tersebut tidak ada kaitan dengan perusahaan kami, karena pemborong bukan karyawan dari PT Putra Dewa Paniai, melainkan sebatas Subkon atau pemborong kerja. Pada saat kejadian itu, tidak ada aktifitas pekerjaan yang dilakukan oleh karyawan kami, karena saat itu juga karyawan sedang off*]” (“Dirut PT Putra Dewa Paniai” 2017). This comment reflects a much larger trend, in West Papua and globally, in distributing corporate (legal, social, political) responsibility by enlisting subcontractors to manage compartmentalized areas of company operations.

In the police version of events, *masyarakat* (literally ‘the people,’ here, meaning Papuans) attacked the company camp and beat up the workers (*melakukan pemukulan terhadap karyawan*) (“Inilah Kronologis Penyerangan Camp” 2017). Rubber bullets were fired.

This last claim emerged resolutely contested: Did members of the Brimob police force use rubber bullets as the police originally claimed or live ammunition (*peluru panas*)? In response to the initial police narrative of rubber bullets, images of shell casings collected in the aftermath of the shooting began to circulate on social media and, eventually, into local newspapers. The casings are pictured on top of a page from a loose-leaf notebook enumerating the ages, names and injuries sustained by each of the victims of the shooting, at the bottom, a printed aphorism: “Never put off til tomorrow what you can do today.”

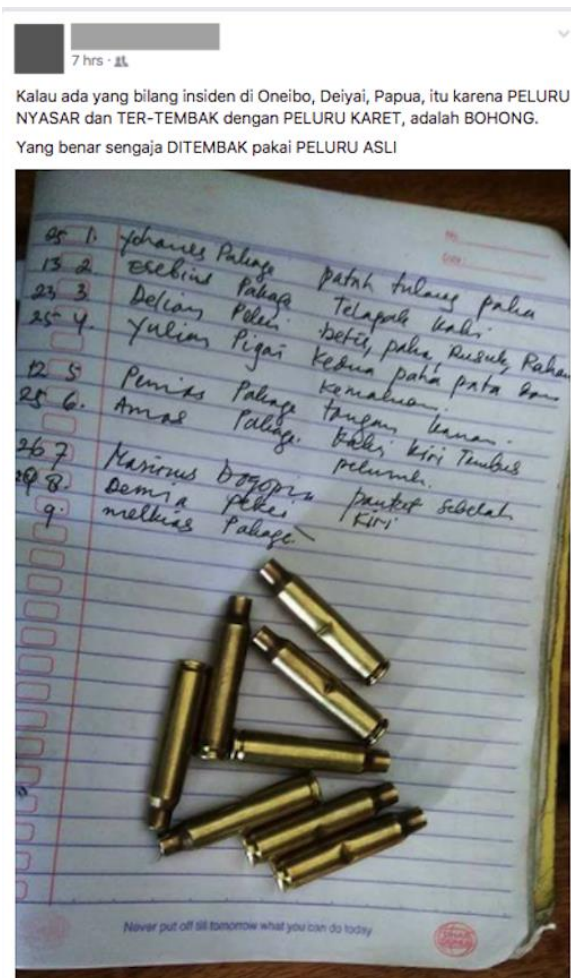


Figure 3.3. Facebook post after the shooting in Deiyai. Lists the names of victims, under a collection of shell casings from the scene of the shooting: “If there is anyone who says the incident in Oneibo, Deiyai, Papua was because of STRAY BULLETS and WERE SHOT with rubber bullets, it is a LIE. The truth, they were purposefully SHOT with REAL BULLETS.” The bottom of the loose-leaf notebook page includes a printed aphorism, appearing in English, “Never put off til tomorrow what you can do today.”

One of the local Papuan newspapers, *Tabloid Jubi*, printed a similar version of this image, the bullets arranged slightly differently on what looks to be the same piece of paper. This version appears accompanied by an inset in the upper right-hand corner, another photograph, lifted from Wikipedia, of 5.56 NATO cartridges – the caliber of ammunition used by the Indonesian-made Pindad SS1

assault rifle. The shell casings collected at the scene of the shooting appear to match, the inset acting like a cipher for the larger image.

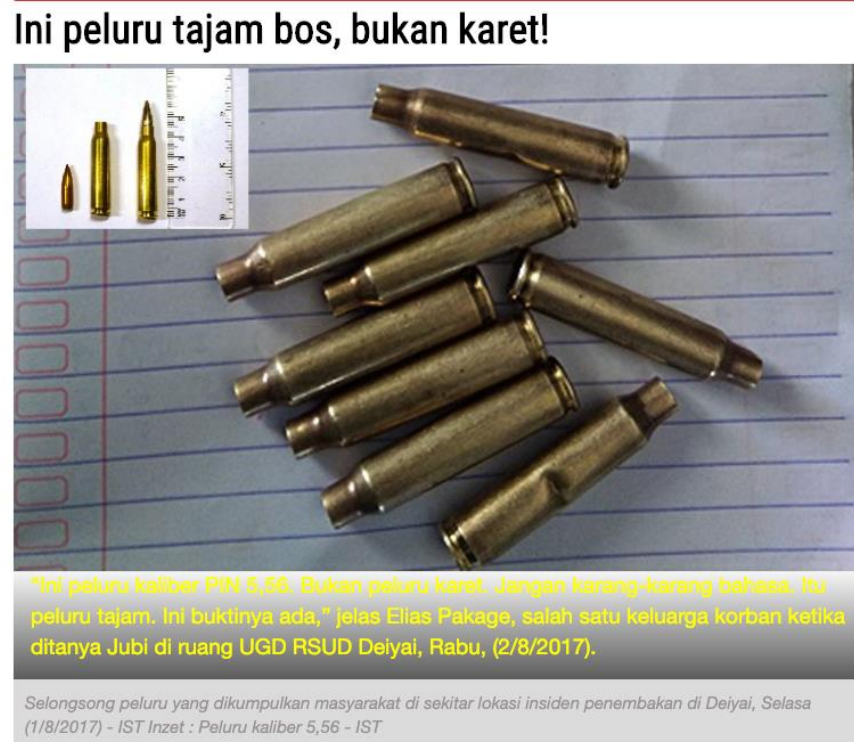


Figure 3.4. **Expended bullets from Deiyai shooting.** *The lead image from a Tabloid Jubi article titled, "This is live ammunition boss, nage is captioned, "These are PIN 5,56 caliber bullets. Not rubber bullets. Don't make up stories. That's live ammunition. This is the proof," clarified Elias Pakage, one of the victim's family members, when asked by Jubi in the ER at Deiyai Hospital, Thursday (You 2017b)."*

Much like the WhatsApp message I describe in Chapter Two, captions of both the Facebook post and the newspaper article emphasize facticity. One caption reads, "If there is anyone who says the incident in Oneibo, Deiyai, Papua was because of STRAY BULLETS and WERE SHOT with rubber bullets, it is a LIE. The truth, they were purposefully SHOT with REAL BULLETS," the other, "These are PIN 5,56 caliber bullets. Not rubber bullets. Don't make up stories. That's live ammunition. This is the proof."

What kind of evidence is a staged photograph taken in the aftermath of an event, and what is it that these photographs witness? In one sense, these images appear to reproduce the epistemology of *dokumentasi*, a belief in the photograph's "forensic capability" to rescue the truth from a false narrative (Wright 2013). Compare the accompanying captions, for example, to entries from comment books at a Yogyakarta exhibition of *reformasi*-era photographs titled, "My Witnessing and the Three Orders." Strassler (2010) finds entries like: "This is the truth," "Awesome! Really...and this is actual proof of what is and has happened in our country," "Let the facts speak for themselves," and "Photographs don't lie" (232). Yet, the photographic evidence of the Deiyai shooting recognizes that photographs can and do lie – the facts do not always speak for themselves. In the images above, it is the combination of staging and captions that direct the audience to the truth.

In the photographs from Deiyai, the first image is curated to frame a handwritten list of the victims' names, the juxtaposition of victims against bullet residuals performing causality.<sup>54</sup> In the second photo, a reference image overlaps the photo of the casings, the resonance across the two images rather than either individual image as what indexes as "proof." Here, again, it is not (or not exclusively) the indexical frame of the photograph that charges the image with facticity but the subject itself – shell casings. The image of spent casings is an overdetermined index of a shooting, and yet the full evidentiary force of the image is still a potential, ultimately realized in its conscious placement against other images that turn the generic index into a particular kind of performed evidence. The curated images use the spectacle of violence to create witnesses.

---

<sup>54</sup> I distinguish this kind of manipulation from the curation of images Strassler (2010) discusses in the *dokumentasi keluarga*, in which photos are staged to accommodate a genre of photography that is expected for documenting family events, like weddings. "Dokumentasi photographs produce the generic, ideal Javanese wedding," she writes, "by transmuting the indexical specificity of a particular event into iconic perfection, conforming to 'a vision of cultural order as people felt it should be'" (175).

These images evoke facticity so much so that human rights fact-finding missions, like those of Amnesty International, present very similar photographic evidence in their reporting on violence in West Papua. The photograph below, taken in the aftermath of a different shooting – this time in the Papuan highlands town of Wamena – deeply resonate with the two above images that circulated on social media after the Deiyai shooting. These images, however, circulate in very different epistemological registers. The photograph appearing in the Amnesty International Indonesia report, “Don’t Bother, Just Let Him Die: Killing with Impunity in Papua” (2018) is captioned: “Bullet shells found after soldiers attack in Honelama, Wamena.” The tone is procedural. It does not explicitly stake a claim to how these casings fit in to the narrative of what can be said to have happened – *this* image reproduces the epistemology of transparency, relying on the photograph as “indexical object saturated with the charge of having been there” (Strassler 2010: 237).



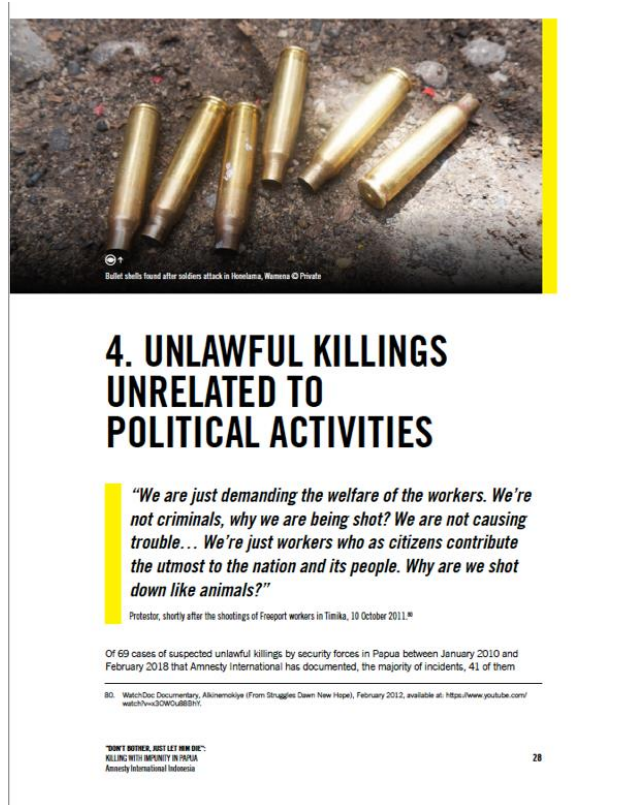


Figure 3.5. **Evidence of shooting, Amnesty International.** *An image from the Amnesty International Indonesia report, “Don’t Bother, Just Let Him Die’: Killing with Impunity in Papua” (2018: 28).*

\*\*

What I have not reproduced above is another set of images that more often than not circulated together with those of the bullet casings – images of the wounded, in one case dead, victims.<sup>55</sup> In

<sup>55</sup> I take Hartman’s question that opens this chapter, “What does the exposure of the violated body yield?”, as an impetus to think critically about how these kinds of images circulate, what effects they may have on audiences and, in turn, what audience reactions expose. Hartman’s question must be asked anew of my own reproduction of certain images. As she reminds us, “At issue here is the precariousness of empathy and the uncertain line between witness and spectator.” I consciously choose not to show these images – of dead and wounded bodies taken in the immediate aftermath of violence – because it is not clear to me what my own reproduction of them accomplishes within this context. I do not wish to unwittingly make a spectator of my reader. In the other images I show in this chapter, I assume (perhaps incorrectly) that some version of the intended effect that they have on their original audiences – that of witnessing – can be reproduced for my own audience. In the case of these images, it is also clear to me that they were explicitly intended *to* circulate widely. While also depicting violence, the performance captured in the images below, I will argue, does more work to undermine rather than reproduce the problematic relationship between photography, spectatorship, and violence. See Siegel (1998) and Ballard (2002) for further discussion of the historical role the display of dead bodies has played in Indonesian military and police regimes of terror.

response to these type of images, which frequently circulate on social and print media, Philpott asks: “What are the consequences of framing the conflict as one of broken Papuan bodies?” (2018: 268).

He argues at some length that “Papuan social media activists” may be misguided in the reproduction of these kinds of images:

“[I]t may be that Papuan social media activists are producing a spectacle of violence rather than creating the conditions of making visible the plight of Indigenous Papuans [...] perhaps having not yet mastered the enabling elements of social media, activists are at risk of audiences not seeing what it is that they are attempting to make visible [...] [S]ocial media activists that depict the Indonesian government as beyond reason and interested only in completing a genocide allegedly underway for over half a century may have the unintended consequence of discouraging the bearing of witness because the task of engaging the Indonesian state seems pointless (Philpott 2018: 273-4).

Philpott seems to be suggesting that the role of social media is, ultimately, to engage the state but are there not other (less “pointless”) audiences to engage? What in this context does it mean to have “mastered the enabling elements of social media?” and what kind of witnessing might these images otherwise enable? Philpott’s claim that activists are “producing a spectacle of violence” seems to oddly conflate the way in which the *perpetrators* of violence “produce” such a spectacle and the ways in which activists can turn such a spectacle against them.<sup>56</sup>

These images may terrorize anew as they circulate on social media, the very ability for the afterimages (Lorde 1997) of violence *to* terrorize – some more than others – as part of the calculus of violence. But, as Philpott also argues, the Indonesian military’s spectacularizing violence relies on a spatially and temporally limited audience. That is, the military’s strategy is to cultivate a contained spectacle that terrorizes Papuans but remains invisible to wider audiences, allowing Ainan Nuran, for example (see Chapter Two), to assert an unequivocating narrative of denial. If the state response to violence is to unilaterally deny its existence (if it were happening, everybody would know), ambiguity and, even doubt or disbelief, may be what enable the possibility of turning spectators into

---

<sup>56</sup> Edwin (2014), for example, writes of Mamie Till-Mobley’s decision to have an open casket funeral for her son, Emmett Till. “In making public and visible a lynching which had not been openly avowed or photographically recorded,” he writes, “Till-Mobley not only broke through the historical silence of survivors but turned the genre of the lynching photograph against the perpetrators” (Edwin 2014: 714).

witnesses. That is to say, confronting uncertainty in the state's narrative might be how these images "engage" audiences.

\*\*

Eight days after the shooting in Deiyai, university students in Yogyakarta, on the Indonesian island of Java, graphically re-enacted the Indonesian military's torture of Papuans, motivated by the recent events in Deiyai. Papuan men appeared, arms bound behind their backs, with fake blood streaming down their chests. Behind them, performers who do not appear to be Papuan, are dressed in camouflage and wear sunglasses, one hiding his face with a surgical mask. The mask simultaneously gestures to a performance of military secrecy and the protestor's own terror of being seen (Stedly 2013), reified in the figure of an adjacent man who holds a cell phone camera up to the scene. The men posing as members of the Indonesian military apparatus point replica rifles at the Papuan performers. One, the man whose face remains hidden, wields a whip-like prop. Behind them, protestors hold banners and signs contesting the police and military presence in Papua, explicating the performance in ways not dissimilar from the earlier captions of bullet casings.



Figure 3.6. **Scene from Yogyakarta protest I.** Indonesian police look on as performers, some posing as police and military personnel themselves, re-enact violence against Papuan men (Yogyakarta, 9/8/2017).



Figure 3.7. **Scene from Yogyakarta protest II.** Protestors follow the performers, carrying signs protesting the police and military presence in Papua. One sign fully visible in the image reads,

*“Tarik Militer (TNI/POLRI) Dari Deiyai dan Seluruh Tanah Papua [Pull the military (armed forces/police) from Deiyai and all the Land of Papua].”*

The protest provoked different responses – some misunderstood the re-enactment for a scene unfolding in real-time; others questioned the verisimilitude, suggesting the re-enacted scene was much too exaggerated or made-up. In other words, the re-enactment was either *too* believable or *un*believable. The ambiguity of the scene produces images of not-knowing that, further, disrupt the notion of the photograph as the evidentiary paradigm of transparency and *dokumentasi*. The protest further plays on knowledge that the act itself of creating a spectacle critical of the state would provoke the very police presence the re-enactment sought to criticize. The performance knowingly anticipates its response. In the upper right-hand corner of the image above, a police officer dispatched to the protest surveils the event, visibly amused by, perhaps in disbelief of, the scene as it unfolds. The original spectacle of violence produces these spectacular echoes, asking audiences: Who or what does this scene spectacularize?

Of course, what I identify as the ‘original’ spectacle of violence, here, is a performed reverberation of past violences. Wright (2013), writing on photography in the Solomon Islands, refers to the photograph’s “echo of things,” by which he means “its ability to be absorbed into other histories and trace a range of connections between past and present” (7). The image, both as an echo from the past and an artefact that itself produces echoes, evokes the possibility of seeing forwards and backwards – through space and time – in ways not even the performers might have imagined or seen.<sup>57</sup> Here, the upper left-hand corner image of a man holding up a recording cell phone to witness the protest counterposes the spectating gaze of the police, the dissonant modes of seeing made

---

<sup>57</sup> Using visual practices of the Mount Hagen as a heuristic for a critique of transparency and audit culture, Strathern (2000) points to a different but related relationship between the visual and the temporal: “[W]hile those on display present themselves at a single moment, they are, so to speak, suspended in a timeless frame,” as spectators of these practices do not assess performances in real-time (310). Here, I would argue, the image rather than the performance itself suspends the frame.

legible through the singular frame of the photograph. The recording cell phone in this image gestures further backwards (in my narrative) but forwards (a week in time) to the previous image of Omaleng, flanked by soldiers holding up cell phones, recording the scene. Each echo suggests the inescapability of being seen but the concurrent indeterminacy of *how* audiences might see.

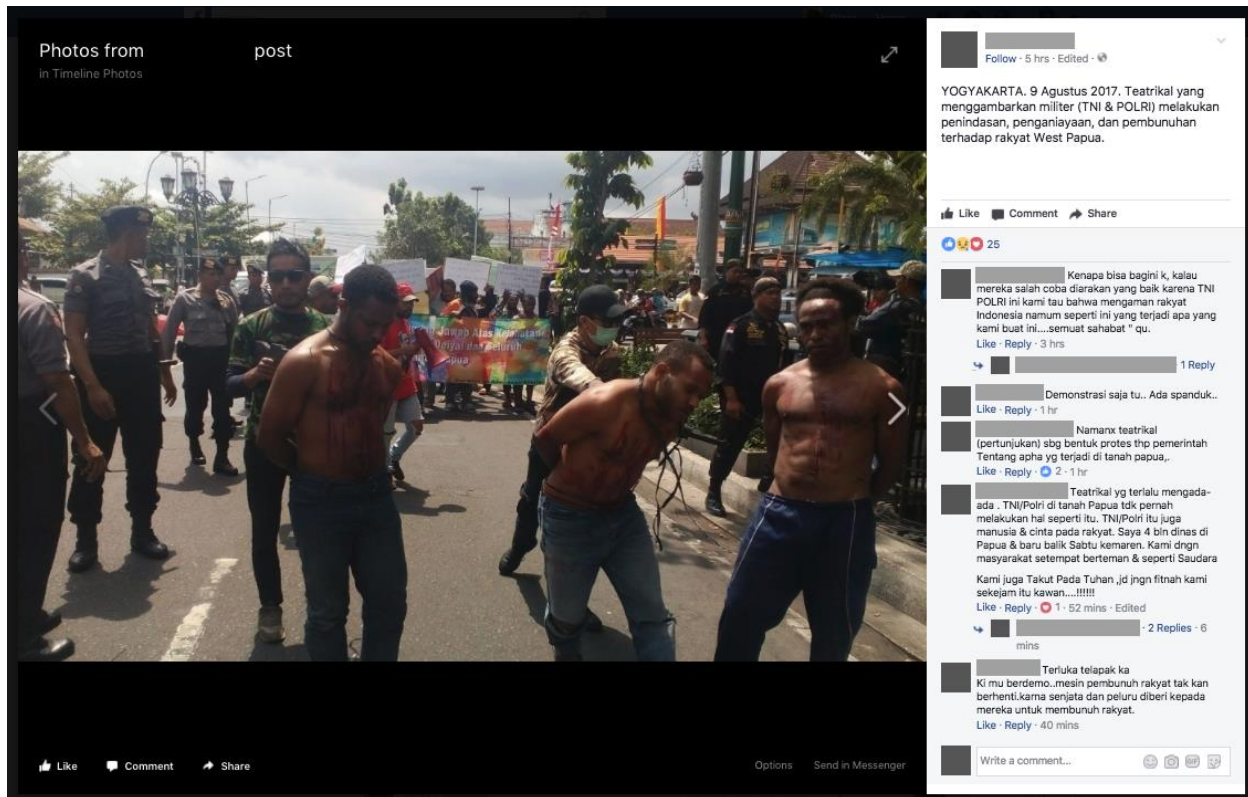


Figure 3.8. **Facebook post on Yogyakarta protest I.** *Caption on the original post (upper righthand corner):* YOGYAKARTA. August 9<sup>th</sup> 2017. Theatrical performance that demonstrates the military (army and police) oppressing, persecuting, and killing West Papuans [YOGYAKARTA. 9 Agustus 2017. Teatrikal yang menggambarkan militer (TNI & POLRI) melakukan penindasan, penganiayaan, dan pembunuhan terhadap rakyat West Papua].

*Comment #1:* How can it be like this, if they are wrong, try to show them what is right because we know that TNI/POLRI safeguards the Indonesian people even though when like this happens, ...everyone is friends [Kenapa bisa bagini k, kalau mereka salah coba diarahkan yang baik karena TNI POLRI ini kai tau bahwa mengaman rakyat Indonesia namun seperti ini yang terjadi apa yang kami buat ini...semuat sahabat].

*Comment #2:* That's just a demonstration.. There's a banner.. [Demontrasi saja itu.. Ada spanduk.].

*Comment #3:* It's called theatrics [performance] as a form of protest against the government about what is happening in Papua. [Namanx teatrikal [pertunjukan] sbg bentuk protes thp pemerintah Tentang apba yg terjadi di tanah papua.]

*Comment #4:* This production is made up. The Army/Police in Papua have never done things like that. The Army/Police are also human & love the people. I spent 3 months in Papua & just returned this past Saturday. We and the locals were friends & like siblings. We also fear God, so don't slander us with such cruelty friend...!!!! [Teatrikal yg terlalu mengada-ada. TNI/Polri di tanah Papua tdk pernah melakukan hal sperti itu. TNI/Polri itu juga manusia & cinta pada rakyat. Saya 3 bln dinas di Papua & baru balik sabtu kemaren. Kami dngn masyarakat setempat berteman & seperti Saudara Kami juga Takut Pada Tuhan, jd jngn fitnah kami sekejam itu kawan.....!!!!].

*Comment #5:* The soles of your feet wounded marching..The machine killing the people will not stop because they are given arms and bullets to kill the people [Terluka telapak ka Ki mu berdemo..mesin pembunuh rakyat tak kan berhenti.kama senjata dan peluru diberi kepada mereka untuk membunuh rakyat].

The above post and accompanying images were ultimately shared over 31,000 times, with comments in Indonesian and English reflecting disbelief – both disbelief that people were actually treating others in this way, and, ironically, disbelief that law enforcement could allow this “terrible scene” to unfold:

“It's just teatrical [sic]..But it's full of propaganda..The true is.. Not like that... Democracy in Indonesia too much give bad people to speak free and untouchable [sic].”

“I know I felt disgusted as well how they treat west papua people's like this..where's police n law enforcement to control this terrible scene..Is Indonesia control the whole country or what? This is insane, United Nations Plse help this people's of this country they don't deserve this treatment from this mf..”

In the latter comment, it is not clear if the commentator thinks that the “terrible scene” is, in fact, an act of violence unfolding in real-time and, if so, who in this scene they identify as the police.<sup>58</sup> These ambiguities point to the performance's play with ‘real-time’ – the point of the protest is that these scenes *are* unfolding in real-time, if not in the space of the protest.

---

<sup>58</sup> That this commentator identifies the United Nations, complicit in establishing the political conditions for decades-long Indonesian police and military violence in Papua, as the potential body to “help” Papuans is ironic and worth noting.

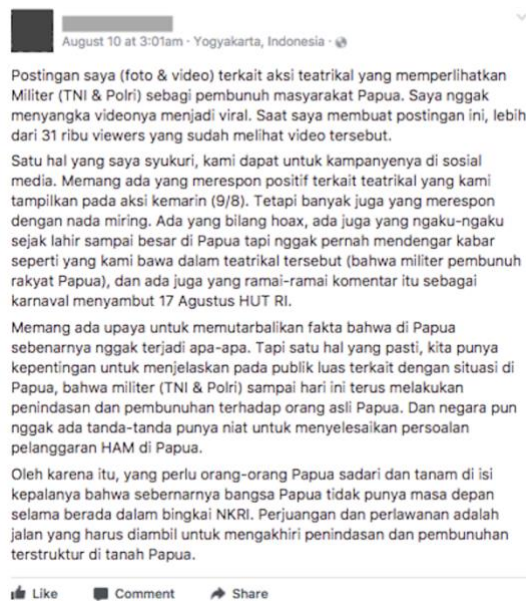


Figure 3.9. **Facebook post on Yogyakarta protest II.** *Message posted to Facebook two days after the above protest by one of the event’s organizers: “My posts (photo & video) are related to the theatrical demo that exposes the Military (TNI & Polri) as murderers of Papuans. I did not expect the video to go viral. At the time of this post, more than 31 thousand viewers have already seen this video. One thing I am grateful for, we are able to campaign through social media. Indeed there are those who responded positively to the theatrics that we performed at the demo yesterday (9/8). But many also responded with a biased tone. There were those who said it was a hoax, there were also those who admitted to being born and growing up in Papua but having never heard news like we presented through the above theatrics (that the military is killing Papuans), and there were also many busy commenting as if it was a carnival on the occasion of August 17<sup>th</sup>, the anniversary of the Republic of Indonesia [HUT RI]. There was even support for distorting facts, that in Papua nothing actually has happened. But one thing is certain, we have an interest in explaining to the broader public about the situation in Papua, that the military (TNI & Polri) to this day continues to oppress and kill indigenous Papuans. And the country shows no signs of intending to resolve the problem of human rights [HAM] violations in Papua. As a result, what Papuans need to understand and to plant within their heads is that the Papuan people actually do not have a future while they remain within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia [NKRI]. Struggle and resistance are the paths that must be taken to end structural oppression and murder in Papua.”*

Three days after the protest, the individual who publicly posted these images to Facebook, published the above post, indicating an intention to “expose” the military as murderers. The post is notable for striking semantic similarities to “Adil ka?” – a clear interest in explaining what is happening in Papua<sup>59</sup> – but a resolutely distinct conclusion: Papua has no future as part of the Republic of

<sup>59</sup> Compare the specific staging and explicit guiding narrative of these images through protest signs and explanatory Facebook posts to Spyer’s (2002) description of similarly graphic images that circulated during the 1999-2002 violence in



Indonesia. Superficially, this conclusion might seem to support Philpott's critique, that images of, in his words, "broken Papuan bodies" yield a sense of witnessing's futility. Yet, the performance of violence was not intended to engage the Indonesian state, as Philpott assumes, but rather the "broader public." Here, the spectacle of violence serves a dual purpose. It confounds the evidentiary relationship between *dokumentasi* and the photograph, while simultaneously repurposing the epistemic murk (Taussig 1984) of violence to undermine state narrative. If, as Mbembe argues, postcolonial authorities project "a fantasy it presents its subjects as *a truth beyond dispute*," cultivating spaces of public dispute, speculation and, even, denial radically intervenes on the state's claim to truth (2001: 109; my emphasis).

### 'everything has already been exposed'

Lebih baik bertemu setan daripada orang mabuk tetapi lebih baik  
bertemu orang mabuk daripada tentara.

It's better to meet satan than to meet a drunk, but it's better  
to meet a drunk than to meet a soldier.<sup>60</sup>

-fieldnotes, 11/6/2015

These lyrics to "Papua" and "We Want to Freedom" below, are not the lyrics that Ape (pronounced *ah-pay*),<sup>61</sup> a Timika-based Kamoro (Papuan) rapper, writes after he is tortured by members of the specialized police force, *Korps Brigade Mobile*, more commonly referred to as Brimob. They could have been, but he had already written them a month, if not years, earlier.

Dari zaman reformasi kami sudah merdeka  
Mengapa kini bangsa kami masih di jajah

From the era of *reformasi* we were already free  
Why then is our nation today still colonized?

---

Ambon. She describes the circulation of video CDs (VCDs) with images of "victims and their bodies: close-ups of oozing wounds, bullets protruding from body parts, maimed and charred corpses, and the bodily contortions, moans, and screams of people's suffering too painful to watch" (33). The "VCDs provide *little* perspective on events and often make no pretension to having a narrative, besides, that is, the insistent repetitive narrative of victimization resurrected on and out of body parts" (33; my emphasis).

<sup>60</sup> A young community health worker colleague, originally from the city of Medan in northern Sumatra, offered me this aphoristic reflection during my first full month working in Timika. The reflection might well have continued, "It's better to meet a soldier than a drunk soldier," as this section bears out.

<sup>61</sup> Ape is a pseudonym chosen by the artist.

Teror dimana-mana bangsa kami tersiksa  
 Cobalah buka mata  
 Jangan banyak bicara  
 Proklamasi undang-undang dasar coba di baca  
 Kemerdekaan iyalah hak segala bangsa  
 Jangan bersaksi dusta jangan menutup mata  
 Semua sudah terbongkar papua akan merdeka

Terror everywhere, our nation tortured  
 Try opening your eyes  
 Don't talk much  
 Try reading the proclamation of the Constitution  
 Freedom, it's the right of every nation  
 Don't testify to lies, don't close your eyes  
 Everything has already been exposed, Papua will be free

Ini Indonesia bangsa, yang perkasa  
 Bukan rekayasa, tapi di juluk macan Asia,  
 Bineka tunggal ika / jakarta yang utama,  
 Kami di Papua hanya menjadi dapur dunia,  
 entahlah mengapa, kami di anggap apa,  
 mungkin harta kami yang  
 menjadi sorotan mereka,  
 tak mampu tuk di sangka kami di anggap sodara  
 namun yang terjadi malah saudara pun di jajah.

This is the Indonesian nation, the mighty one  
 Not by design, but named the tiger of Asia  
 Unity in diversity / Jakarta first  
 We in Papua have only become the world's kitchen  
 who knows why, what we are considered  
 maybe it's our property that  
 has become their shining light  
 Incapable of presuming us as brothers  
 What happened instead, your brothers were colonized

Intonasi dalam puisi saat berorasi  
 Bukan basa basi tapi mencoba tuk bersaksi  
 Saat negara pun berstatus demokrasi  
 Itu menjadi bukti ketika akan bersaksi  
 Mencoba kritik dengan rap za hujati  
 Mungkin kan di tembak tapi tetap za hormati  
 Buka jalan dan bebaskan rakyat kami  
 Berikan referendum karena itu tong kagumi.

Poetic intonation at the moment of orating  
 It's not polite but trying to witness  
 When the country's status is democratic  
 It becomes evidence when going to testify  
 Trying to criticize through rap I blasphemize  
 Maybe I'll be shot but still will be respected  
 Open the streets and free our people  
 Give us a referendum because that's what we desire.

Kini timbul konflik amerika dan indonesia  
 Menjadi pantauan dunia  
 Papua angkat bicara  
 Su cukup kami di siksa  
 cobalah buka mata  
 Janglah di sangka kami terdiam bisu saja  
 [...]
 Keadialan menjadi karat  
 Manusia menjadi mayat  
 Meminta harta sendiri tak adil kalo di sadari  
 Lihat rakyat menanti kemakmuran itu berarti<sup>62</sup>

Now conflict arising between America and Indonesia  
 Becomes the world's observation  
 Papua rises up to speak  
 We have been tortured enough  
 Try opening your eyes  
 Don't expect us just to be silent  
 [...]
 Fairness turns to rust  
 People turn to corpses  
 Asking for your own wealth isn't fair if you think about it  
 What this means, see the people awaiting prosperity

Ape's lyrics are temporally fluid, both anticipatory *and* reflective, suspended in a liminal grammar of the 'has happened,' 'is happening,' and 'will happen (again).' From the first verse, he plays with contradictions of time: "From the era of *reformasi* we were already free / Why then is our nation today still colonized?" Unlike certain documentary forms of witnessing, in which narrative

<sup>62</sup> Written Indonesian lyrics provided by artist, Ape, reproduced unedited above (Ape 2016).

timelessness dehistoricizes (Edwin 2014), Ape's lyrics play with time to historicize. And, when he raps, "Trying to criticize through rap I blasphelize / Maybe I'll be shot but still will be respected," he does not so much uncannily predict his own future but, rather, performs a mode of witnessing (much like the MCs on "Adil ka?") that blurs the distinction between a collective past and individual futures.<sup>63</sup> Considering the lyric now, in the frame of this present, it is hard to not to hear the lyric as testimonial of imminent violence.

When we talk the evening after he is released from jail, Ape describes the desire to write a certain kind of "indirect [*tidak langsung*]" song to expose what he experienced:

Menurut saya, ungkapkan semua itu melalui lagu dan mungkin bisa mempengaruhi banyak orang. [...] Saya akan buat secara tidak langsung...saya menceritakan itu ke semua orang [...] Saya tidak pengen saya ceritakan itu ke orang nanti ada, nanti ada orang itu komplain tentang hal ini. Dan menjelek-jelekan pihak brimob, berusaha untuk menyatukan Brimob, kan tidak mungkin. Saya buat dalam sebuah, dalam sebuah lagu, terus apa? Orang...orang merasa bahwa kejadian itu sudah terjadi. Dan biar mereka menyadari itu dan merasakan dan tidak...Istilahnya menjadi teguran, mungkin ya, mudah-mudahan nanti di pihak brimob mungkin terdengar...Tapi saya tidak sebut brimob. Mungkin semua orang yang pernah membuat konflik...yang pernah berkelahi, yang pernah disiksa segala macam, mereka bisa merasakan itu.

To me, by revealing all of it through a song maybe I can influence a lot of people. [...] I'll do it indirectly...I'll tell it to everyone [...] I don't want to tell it to people and later there are, later there are those people who will complain about it. And vilifying Brimob works to unite Brimob. No, never. I'll make it in a, in a song, then what? People...*people will sense that this incident already happened*. And so they can be aware of it and experience it and not...As a type of rebuke, maybe, yeah, hopefully later Brimob will hear it. But I won't call out Brimob. Maybe everyone who has ever brought conflict...who has fought, who been tortured in all kinds of ways, maybe they can experience it.<sup>64</sup>

"Save Papua" already suggests the kind of indirect witnessing that he describes above because this thing that subsequently happens to Ape *sudah* (already) and *masih* (still) has happened and is happening in Papua. The indirectness he describes is indirect only in its rhetoric; he wants to write a

---

<sup>63</sup> Here, and throughout the chapter, I draw inspiration from Christopher Wright's work, *The Echo of Things* (2013) on photography in the Solomon Islands. Referring to the echo of a photograph, he suggests "[t]he notion of an echo contains the idea of a call and response, an aural reflection, similar to the visual one associated with photography" (2). These echos "trace a wide range of connections between past and present."

<sup>64</sup> Here, I translate *merasakan* as experiencing something, though *mengalami* would have been a more literal word to express the experiential. *Merasakan* comes from the root word, *rasa*, to sense or feel. I use 'experience,' to convey the idea of experiencing by feeling, in a sense, to live or experience vicariously.

song that interpellates its audience as witnesses by *directly* “feel[ing] that this incident already happened.” When he suggests that those who have fought or been tortured might experience *his* fight, he is again pointing to the realization of the ‘we’ that I describe in Chapter Two. Witnessing is something that can be felt by identifying an/other in the self.

\*\*

When I sent Ape messages the day I returned to Timika after a brief return to the States, I had expected to hear back quickly. The recent availability of free wifi hotspots in Timika replaced some of the uncertainty around telecommunications. When I did not hear back, I thought he may have lost his phone or his SIM card or run out of cell phone credit. These were the most plausible explanations. But the most plausible explanations often cede to the not implausible: Is he dead? In the past he had received anonymous text messages, “Hati-hati di jalan [*Be careful on the road*]” or “Jangan sampai salah di jalan [*Don’t make a mistake on the road*],” vague, by a certain evidentiary standard, unprovable, threats that combined the everyday danger of roads in Timika with the understanding that roads are also sites of assassination. Eventually I receive a Facebook message back, apologizing for the delayed reply: “I was detained at the sector police station for 20 days because of fighting with a member of Brimob but I’m now free...what’s your cell phone number [*za di tahan di polsek selama 20 hari karena berkelahi dengan anggota brimob tp sdh bebas...za minta ko pu nmr kbaa...]*?” He no longer had my cell phone number because the police had seized his SIM card in an attempt, according to him, to map out his social network – to find out which of his friends fled the scene (*mau cari tahu lebih dalam tentang teman-teman saya yang melarikan diri*).

Here is the story that I know how to tell: An off-duty Brimob officer was drunk. He got into a fight and someone hit him. The officer then came upon Ape and his two friends, who may also have been drunk, and, pointing a gun at them, repeatedly demanded to know, “Where’s the person who hit me earlier [*Di mana orang yang tadi saya pukul*]?” They did not know. One of Ape’s friends

then hit the Brimob officer. Ape also hit him. The blows caused the officer to drop his gun. Ape picked up the gun, briefly disarming him, before returning the weapon. The Brimob officer was Papuan.

APE: Iya! Itu, itu yang membuat kami pukul dia! Iya. Kalau dia merasa dia orang Papua, kenapa dia ... Saya berusaha jelaskan kalau saya punya pendidikan, dia...tidak mendengarkan saya. Dan berusaha sebagaimana mungkin supaya saya tidak ke pengadilan. [pause] Mereka tau saya ngapain, mereka tau saya apa. Serius, Brimob. Bahkan sebelum mereka pukul saya mereka suruh saya [nyanyi]. Serius.

Yeah! That's, that's what made us hit him! Yeah. If he felt like he was Papuan, why did he... I tried to explain that I had an education, he...didn't listen to me. And tried as much as possible to not have to go to court [pause]. They knew what I do, they know what I am. Seriously, Brimob. Even before they hit me they ordered me [to sing]. Seriously.

He says he could not later go to the police and tell them what happened “because they are the same, members of the same [*karena merka sama, sama anggota*].” That is, why report your torture to your torturers? Later in our conversation Ape elaborates, “Within a Brimob force, they call it ‘Esprit de Corps,’<sup>65</sup> becoming together. One feels it, everyone feels it. They’re like that. So, if one of them is hit, they have to seek revenge [*Dalam satu angkatan Brimob itu mereka istilahnya jiwa korsa, jadi kebersamaan. Satu rasa semua rasa. Mereka begitu. Jadi satu orang dari mereka dipukul, mereka harus balas dendam*].” If the Brimob officer had felt, instead, his Papuanness, this never would have happened.

At another point in the conversation, I ask him again, but why did you hit him? He becomes visibly frustrated with me, “Because I felt threatened! [*Karena saya merasa terancam*] [...] I was so panicked, [it] made me emotional, more panicked, the brusque tone of his question. It wasn't polite.

---

<sup>65</sup> The term *jiwa korsa* or the word *korsa* do not appear as entries in the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*, the official dictionary of the Indonesian language. One etymology suggests that *korsa* was originally used by the Indonesian military, a portmanteau of *Komando Satu Rasa*, roughly translating as One Sense Command (Sido 2013). The term *jiwa korsa* is frequently associated with the Cebongan prison raid, in which members of Indonesia's elite military force *Kopassus* executed four detainees of Cebongan prison, suspects in the murder of a Kopassus sergeant. Bewok describes *jiwa korsa* in this way: “Mereka ibarat satu tubuh, jika ada bagian tubuh yang terluka, maka bagian tubuh lainnya juga akan merasakan sakit [*They are like one body, if a part of the body is injured, then the other parts of the body will also feel sick*]” (Bewok 2013). I translate the term with the anglicized French expression, *esprit de corps*, which closely resembles the sense conveyed by *jiwa korsa*.

While [he was] acting angrily [*Jadi saking paniknya saya, buat saya jadi emosi, panik terus, nada pertanyaannya tuh kasar. Tidak sopan. Sambil marah-marah*].” Perhaps because I had asked what I thought to be questions clarifying ‘what happened,’ Ape interjected “seriously” throughout our entire conversation, as if to convince me he was telling the truth – almost certainly because my way of being in the conversation betrayed doubt.

While alcohol consumption was often a totalizing throw away answer for otherwise inexplicable acts of violence, Ape’s explanation – “It wasn’t polite” – resonates more strongly here. The offending lack of politeness that Ape identifies further echoes the value the young, male members of Dapoer ATS placed on self-respect (*barga diri*), described in the previous chapter. At the time I had not understood this, and the truth that I seem to have had the most trouble with in our conversation was the way in which expository happenstance – this random encounter – could turn deeply intimate. Alcohol was never as dispositive of all the subsequent ‘why’s one might want to ask in Timika’s violent aftermaths.

APE:           Jadi mereka [Brimob] suruh saya rapper dulu. Tapi saya bilang saya tidak mau. [...] Saya tidak mau melecehkan...Saya tidak mau melecehkan rapper, yang nyatanya dipukul.

So, they [Brimob] first ordered me to rap. But I said that I didn’t want to. I didn’t want to disparage...I didn’t want to disparage rappers, which is what got me beaten.

CC:           Mereka minta kamu—  
They wanted you to—

APE:           —rapper, penyani.  
—rap, sing.

CC:           Kapan? Waktu ditangk—  
When? When you were arres—

APE:           Iya, sebelum dipukul.  
Yeah, before they beat me.

- CC: Waktu dipukul mereka minta kamu rap?  
When they were beating you, they asked you to rap?
- APE: Iya.  
Yeah.

I ask him why, as if he should supply the rationale for the circumstances of his own torture.

- APE: Mereka tahu saya memang rap. [...] Jadi tidak tahu, saya tidak tahu pasti kenapa mereka suruh saya rap. Jadi waktu di...di, ini, mereka tanya, "Orang rap?!" [pause] Saya...saya bilang, "Iya, saya suka rapper." Mereka tunjukkan foto saya, "Ini kan kamu?" Waktu saya menyanyi di café. Saya bilang, "Iya." Tersus saya... "Coba kamu nyanyi rap sekarang!" Terus saya tidak mau. "Kamu nyanyi cepat!" Sambil gebuk. Saya tidak mau. "Kamu nyanyi atau saya tembak!" [...] Saya tidak mau. Tapi...ya sudah. Terus mereka suruh saya menyanyi lagu. Katanya mereka mau gali kubur, buat kubur saya, gitu [...] Cuma ada satu yang bilang gini, "Jangan. Jangan sampai kita tertiuap." Mereka—

They knew I was a rapper. [...] So, I don't know, I'm not certain why they ordered me to rap. So, at the time...at the time of this, they asked, "Rapper?" [pause] I...I said, "Yeah, I like to rap." They pointed to a picture of me. "This is you?" When I was singing at the café. I said, "Yeah." Then I... "Try to sing rap now!" Then, I didn't want to. "Quickly, sing!" While beating me. I didn't want to. "You sing or I'll shoot!" [...] I didn't want to. But...yeah, it's enough. Then they ordered me to sing a song.<sup>66</sup> They said they wanted to dig a grave, make my grave. [...] But there was one of them who said, "Don't. Let's not blow this up." They—

- CC: Berarti?  
Meaning?

- APE: Berarti mereka mau membunuh saya! Tapi saya bilang, saya bilang, kalau kamu mau membunuh saya, kamu tidak mungkin bicara. [...] Kalau kalian mau bunuh saya, tidak mungkin kalian bilang ke saya.

Meaning they wanted to kill me! But I said, I said, if you want to kill me, you wouldn't say it. [...] If you wanted to kill me, you wouldn't say it to me.

- CC: Mereka ancam saja.

---

<sup>66</sup> I remember complaining to a close friend in Timika that the family I was living with during the earliest months of fieldwork had always wanted to know exactly where I had been when I returned home. The friend replied, "They are starting to see you as family." His comment points to a condition of intimacy, even care, that surveillance presupposes. The violence unfolding in the scene above points to the ambivalence in this intimacy. While facilitating the capacity to personalize terror, it is difficult to discount the possibility that Ape's torturers may also be fans of his music, even as their demands to rap under threat of death might simultaneously be read as an act of undermining the power Ape wields through verse.

They were just threatening.

APE: Itu hanya sebuah ancaman. Saya tau, makanya saya tidak terlalu...Mereka suruh rap saya tidak mau. Itu sama saja sa melecehkan hal yang saya cintai. [*pause*] Iya, rap itu mahal loh menurut saya. Menurut saya tidak gampang untuk saya disuruh rap, terus saya dipukul [*long pause*].

It was just a kind of threat. I knew, so, I wasn't too... They wanted me to rap but I didn't want to. It's as if I was insulting the thing that I love. [*pause*] Yeah, to me rap isn't easy to come by, right? To me, it's not easy to order me to rap, so I was beaten.

CC: [...] Kamu pikir mereka akan kembali? Coba—  
[...] Do you think they'll return? To try—

APE: —Iya, saya berpikir semacam itu.  
—Yeah, I think of that.

CC: —menemukan kamu.  
—to find you.

APE: Saya berpikir semacam itu [...] Saya, gimana ya, saya berusaha biar tidak terlalu... Karena saya punya hidup, bukan mereka yang berguna. Kehidupan mati saya bukan mereka... yang tentukan. Kapan saya mati ya bukan mereka.  
I think of that [...] I, how do I say it, yeah?, I try so it's not too... Because it's my life, it's not them who get to benefit from it. The end of my life is not theirs... to determine. When I die, yeah, it's not for them [to decide].

As in earlier in the conversation, I ask him to piece together a timeline.

APE: Iya. Terus disergap, dilakban tangan. Di, apa, lakban mulut, kakinya diikat disuruh berlutut [...] Terus mereka, mereka pukul, mereka siram dengan air, bersihkan darah, biar mereka bersihkan semua darah-darah yang keluar baru mereka serahkan ke Polri... Mereka bawa ke polisi. [...] Jadi mereka pukulnya di luar. Di SP3. Dia seret saya sampai ke tengah hutan... ke tengah hutan... baru mereka siram arak.

Yeah. Then I was ambushed, my arms taped. My, uh, mouth taped, my legs tied, and ordered to my knees [...] Then they, they hit, flushed with water, cleaned the blood, so that they cleaned all the bleeding and then they brought me to *Polri* [Indonesian National Police]... they brought me to the police. [...] So their punches were outside. In SP3 [neighborhood in Timika]. He dragged me to the middle of the forest... to the middle of the forest... then they flushed with arak.

At another point in our conversation, he tells this same part of his story, emphasizing different details:



APE: Jadi, dia punya teman-teman yang tangkap saya. [...] Ditangkap, dipukul, baru diserahkan ke -- Saya disiksa...serius. Darah keluar dari hidung, telinga [...] Kalau di Indonesia kan mereka biasanya diistilahnya 'jiwa korsa.' Sekalipun anggotanya selalu tetap...kamu yang, kamu yang dipukul. Jadi mereka siksa. Sambil mengarahkan pistol juga di kepala, lima pistol taro di sini, sini, sini.

So, he had friends that caught me. Caught me, beat me, then delivered me to – I was tortured...seriously. Blood bled from my nose, ear. [...] In Indonesia, they use the term *jiwa korsa* [esprit de corps]. Though soldiers are always still...it's you, you who are beaten. So, they tortured me. While also pointing their pistols at my head, five pistols put here, here and here [he points to positions around his head].

Near the end of our conversation, I ask, *Apakah ko punya bukti* [Do you have evidence]? Ape knows that what I am really asking about, even if I am not conscious of it at the time, is a certain kind of evidence. He replies, *Mereka foto. Mereka foto saya. They* – the police – had photographed him.

Both the mode of my questions and the photographic police evidence fetishize a certain kind of detail and way of seeing that index as documentary. When Ape raps: “Don’t testify to lies, don’t close your eyes / Everything has already been exposed,” it is difficult not to read the verse as an admonition of this kind of knowing. Open your eyes, he says, because everything has *already* been exposed. And when, above, I ask him why his captors had forced him to rap, he had already anticipated both the event and the question (“Trying to criticize through rap I blasphemy / Maybe I’ll be shot but still will be respected”). The song implicitly critiques the linear logic of documentation in favor of a poetic of witnessing (“Poetic intonation at the moment of orating / It’s not polite but trying to witness”) that befits a collective, always already anticipated, experience of violence.<sup>67</sup>

---

<sup>67</sup> This discussion draws on Edwin’s (2014) critical reading of Audre Lorde’s “Afterimages,” a poem Lorde writes to serve as witness to Emmett Till’s murder. Edwin points out that Lorde alters and removes details from her poetic accounting, changing the name of the river in which Till’s body is found. Responding to the police beating of Rodney King, Alexander (1994) makes a related point, showing how artists “each responded to King’s beating in different ways, but all resisted the documentary form that dehistoricizes both the body and the event. These artistic examples mitigate against a history of narratives of dominion which attempt to talk black people out of what their bodies know” (92-3). Implicit in these interventions that witness is the assumption of an audience that already knows. The documentary mode

Almost two years after his release from jail, Ape and I are talking on the phone. I ask him if he still thinks about what happened. Though it should not have, his response catches me off guard. He still sees some of those *Brimob* officers on occasion. They provide security for an office he sometimes visits. Everything is fine between them. “They respect (*respeke*) me,” he says.

### **conclusion: witnessing ‘ordinary criminal acts’**

In the aftermath of the Deiyai shooting described earlier in the chapter, Indonesian Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs assessed the incident in this way:

Ada yang menganggap pelanggaran HAM berat, padahal itu kriminal, tindak pidana biasa. Ada orang tenggelam minta tolong, enggak ditolong kemudian mati, warga ngamuk, polisi datang meleraikan, kemudian posisi diserang dan menembak. Itu kan enggak direncanakan, enggak ada genosida, enggak ada *crimes against humanity*, bukan kelanjutan dari kebijakan negara, *tapi dikembangkan seperti itu* [...] Untuk itu kita bicara bagaimana ke depan masalah HAM perlu sosialisasi. Kan pelanggaran HAM berat beda dengan pelanggaran HAM biasa, beda dengan kriminal biasa. Supaya ke depan nanti tidak ada kerancuan masalah ini.

There are those who consider this a gross violation of human rights, though [really] it is criminal, an ordinary criminal act. There is a person drowning who asks for help, he isn’t helped and then dies, residents run amok, police arrive to break it up, then police are attacked and shoot. *This wasn’t planned, there is no genocide, there are no crimes against humanity, it’s not a continuation of national policy, it just developed in that way.* [...] For that we [need to] talk about how, in the future, human rights need socialization. A gross human rights violation is different from an ordinary human rights violation, which is different from ordinary crime. So, going forward there is no confusion about this problem (*in* Erdianto 2017 [my emphasis]).

For Wiranto, the problem he identifies is naming the shooting a violation of human rights, not the shooting itself. He argues that this is instead an “ordinary criminal act.” Even so, on the face of it, there is nothing extraordinary about his denial. Four years earlier, under circumstances precipitated by the murder of an Indonesian special forces (*Kopassus*) sergeant in Yogyakarta, Java – geographically and politically far from Papua – Indonesian Minister of Defence Purnomo

---

of the police photograph, above, and a certain kind of narrative detail suggests an audience that does not know and yet, of course, these details can never convey the kind of information that “bodies know.” The error I make through pursuing a certain kind of questioning is to expose myself as someone who does not, but *should*, already know the possibility – and, thus, reality – of Ape’s exposure to this kind of violence. In this scene with Ape, I hear reverberations of Bruin’s emphatic, “*Kakak* Clare, you must know.”

Yusgiantoro issued a strikingly resonant statement in response to the execution of the four suspects detained at Cebongan prison. They were killed by members of *Kopassus*, exacting revenge for the murder of a fellow commando:

Ini adalah bukan pelanggaran HAM. Tidak ada kebijakan dari pimpinan di dalam peristiwa Cebongan, dan itu bukan peristiwa yang genoside. Jadi ini aksi spontanitas dari 11 anggota TNI. Tidak ada sistematis yang dilakukan oleh pimpinan untuk melakukan kegiatan pidana ini.

This is not a violation of human rights. There is no policy coming from leadership in the Cebongan incident, and there is no incidence of genocide. So, this was a spontaneous action from 11 members of the Indonesian National Armed Forces. There is no systematic order made by their leadership to carry out this criminal activity (*in* VOA Indonesia 2013 [my translation]).

What is evidence of policy, if not a series of echoes? I opened an earlier section (“fake rubber bullets, real blood”) with a quotation from the Papuan journalist, Victor Mambor, in which he refers to cycles of state violence against Papuans (and subsequent apologies) as a mode of being “because the same mistakes are repeated continuously.” I have argued throughout this chapter that a kind of spectacular witnessing belies a temporal fluidity, in which moments from the past bear an uncanny resemblance to the future. Wiranto’s response could easily have been Yusgiantoro’s, and it is this very (absurd) possibility – was anyone even claiming the Cebongan executions were a genocide? – that betrays the language of spontaneity. Reading across the two responses makes visible the state’s systematic response to police and military violence; things may have just developed in this way, but they almost always do.

If the Indonesian government’s strategy is to limit the flow of certain kinds of information into and out of Papua and to give official state narrative the patina of fact, this chapter explores a kind of witnessing that rejects the premise of this kind of knowing, cultivating spaces of disbelief, interpretability and performance that push back against the repetitive certainty with which the state claims to know that “there is no genocide.”

## CHAPTER 4

### Freedom as stillness: chaos between the ordinary and the event

BERITA-berita di empat surat kabar yang beredar di Timika, ibu kota Kabupaten Mimika, Provinsi Papua tak pernah sepi dari berita kekerasan. Seringnya berita pembunuhan. Penyebabnya, bisa karena perang suku hingga berebut perempuan. Koordinator Liputan Surat Kabar Harian Salam Papua, Mujiono, mencatat, satu hingga tiga kali kejadian kekerasan selalu muncul setiap minggu. Karena sering munculnya kekerasan di kota kecil ini, maka beberapa orang lokal menyebut Timika sebagai kependekan dari "tiap minggu kacau".

The news is never far from violence in the four newspapers in circulation in Timika, Papua Province. Frequently there is news of murder. The cause can be from tribal warfare to fighting over women. Daily News Coverage Coordinator for *Salam Papua*, Mujiono, notes that one to three occurrences of violence always appear each week. Due to the frequent occurrence of violence in this small city, some locals call Timika a shortened version of ‘each [*tiap*] week [*minggu*] chaos [*kacau*].’

Deni Yudiawan

Kami sebagai Penonton, saksikan drama monoton.

We are like observers, witnessing a monotonous drama.

Beatzo (Dapoer ATS)

#### ‘tiap minggu kacau’

*Timika lagi kacau.* These are the words that popped up in WhatsApp not once, but twice, several months after leaving Timika in April 2017. “Timika is still in chaos,” the message reads. In this instance, ex-Freeport employees – those who the mining company had laid off [*diPHK*]<sup>68</sup> during on-going contract re-negotiations with the Indonesian government – set fire to a bus station, the entry and exit point for those traveling between Timika and Tembagapura, the mining city located some 6,000 feet above sea level. Timika was burning. Video circulating on social media showed the station in flames, parked motorbikes destroyed. Another video showed police firing (I am told) rubber

---

<sup>68</sup> *PHK* is an acronym for *pemutusan hubungan kerja* [lit. severance of work relationship], meaning lay-off.

bullets into a crowd of protestors. *Mantan karyawan bikin kacau* [Ex-employees are making trouble], one message explained. Another, *Mantan karyawan yang mogok kerja dan sudah di keluarkan ini yang buat kacau* [Ex-employees, the ones striking and who have already been laid-off, they are the ones making trouble]. And then, *Herannya pihak kepolisian takut mengamankan* [Surprisingly the police are afraid to pacify (the protests)]. More frequently I received text messages warning, *Timika kacau lagi*. Timika is again in chaos.<sup>69</sup> These messages variably indexed, sometimes as warnings, admonitions not to go outside or to get home, sometimes as idle observations, describing geographically-contained violence. Through the refrains *Timika kacau lagi* [‘Timika is chaotic again’, or ‘Timika is in chaos again’], *Timika lagi kacau* [Timika is still in chaos], or the popular portmanteau for Timika, *tiap minggu kacau* [each week chaotic], the city’s chaos is articulated as always already about to happen. At the same time, that feeling that chaos is always already about to happen is also the very continuous experience of chaos.<sup>70</sup>

This chaos is anything but uniform despite the cyclicity suggested by the assonant ‘again’s of *kacau lagi*. What, then, is the temporality of this recursive ‘again’ – Timika is *again* in chaos – that is not cyclical and only predictable in that it is certain to happen, as it were, again? That certain repetition implies endings; for chaos to begin again, it must have, at one time, ended. But, how to imagine a chaos that both never ends and is constantly beginning anew? Chaos does not mark a rupture to the ordinary. It is, instead, both the defining and propagating feature of punctuated

---

<sup>69</sup> *Kacau* has been variably translated as “confused,” “disordered,” and “chaotic,” particularly with reference to a scene or situation. Here, I follow the translation of Munro (2019), also working in West Papua, who uses “chaotic,” and I translate *bikin kacau* as “to make trouble.” Writing in the immediate aftermath of the Sarinah terrorist attacks in Jakarta, political scientist Thomas Pepinsky glosses *kacau* as “something like disorder,” arguing that it “is a constant theme in Indonesian thinking, a kind of existential anxiety about what *could* happen if ‘things got out of hand’” (2016; my emphasis). The anxious, anticipatory valence of Pepinsky’s *kacau* resonates for me in many everyday uses in Timika, particularly in cases where *kacau* might be interchanged with *babaya*, or danger(ous) (e.g. to characterize everything from failure to use a turn signal to interreligious marriage). In this chapter, I am exploring and arguing for a different temporality of *kacau* that is less about the “could” and more about the “already.”

<sup>70</sup> See Spyer (2006) on violence in Post-New Order Indonesia as “nowhere locatable and thus potentially everywhere” and the role of the media in contributing to this “spectralization of violence” (158).

periods of violence, as well as its precondition. The anaphoric repetition in this telling of chaos reflects a more ubiquitous, explicitly articulated attention to movement. “Timika meledak” (*Timika is exploding*) or “Timika memanaskan” (*Timika is heating up*) often accompany “Timika kacau lagi.” A common explanation for everyday distress – “terlalu banyak pikiran” – in its most literal, the idea of having too many thoughts, but better understood figuratively as the mind racing, again reflects the extent to which the language of motion saturates the everyday. The grammar of the everyday is also a grammar of kinetic energy.

In the earlier stages of fieldwork, when I still attached a certain importance to trying to figure out who precisely was involved with what outbreak of violence and why, I would ask nearly anyone I came across: What was going on?<sup>71</sup> What was the cause of the current *ributan* [lit. noise]? On one such occasion in late May 2016, the people I came across were two elementary school-aged children passing time under the shelter of the rarely occupied security post in my neighborhood. After a brief but illuminating conversation in which they honed in on the theft of a duck as the precipitating insult, one child, by way of further explanation, said to me, “In Timika, little things [*hal-hal kecil*] become big things quickly.”<sup>72</sup> In this conversation, “little things” – the essence of the

---

<sup>71</sup> Malkki’s (2015) description of her own “continual ethical and affective uncertainty about the ‘need to know’ and the ethical uses of evidence” (70) resonates both here and in my more specific discussion of evidence in the previous chapter. See also Malkki (1997) for thoughtful reflections on journalistic practice and anthropological methodology, particularly in thinking about how to witness “phenomena that are transitory and fleeting, anomalous and ‘unrepresentative’” (99).

<sup>72</sup> I am struck by the differences between my conversation above with the ‘fantasy’ conversation Spyer (2002) writes about in the context of violence in Ambon. She describes a public service announcement (PSA) that aired during that conflict, in which two young children – one Christian (Obet), one Muslim (Acang) – discuss the reasons for the ongoing conflict. Obet says, “I don’t know, it’s a problem of adults,” to which Acang replies, “It’s an adult problem and us kids are the victims” (29). Spyer rightly points to the ways in which the infantilization of the conflict trivialized the violence (see also Malkki (2010) for further discussion on the use of children in framing conflict). The actual effect of the PSA was to provide “[a] name and face for the enemy,” as Acang and Obet became glosses for Muslim and Christian sides, respectively. It is, however, inconceivable that such a PSA could be created in Timika’s context. There is no one narrative of ethno-religious conflict around which to craft an explanation, even when, as in the case of the PSA, that explanation takes the shape of *denying* difference between the two sides. Further, children’s understandings of conflicts are not so dissimilar from those of adults: A colleague of mine would later respond to the children’s explanation, “Maybe because of a pig. But a duck...? Duck’s aren’t even worth 100,000 IDR (\$10 USD),” as if it was the implausibility of the theft of a *specific* animal – the duck – in igniting the conflict, rather than the implausibility of theft itself as sufficiently incendiary.

everyday – carry a potential that elides scalar distinctions. What is the nature of a “little” thing if it can also become “big” (or, later, “little” again)? What kind of movement is in this becoming? Das describes the event (a “big thing”) as “attach[ing] itself with its tentacles into everyday life and fold[ing] itself into the recesses of the ordinary” (Das 2007: 1).<sup>73</sup> There is a particular temporal orientation to the event implicit in that image; the ordinary is substrate for the residuals of violence, even as the ordinary itself also always reflects an eventedness. Das goes on to ask, “What is the relation between possibility and actuality or between actuality and eventuality, as one tries to find a medium to portray the relation between the critical events that shaped large historical questions and everyday life?” (2007: 2). The *again* of Timika suggests a different question: What is the relationship between the possible and the eventual? That is, to what extent does the possible become merely a different way of describing the eventual? In this chapter, I am ultimately interested in how this question might be answered in the wake of the possibility (or eventual-ity) of Papua’s freedom. To say that Timika is chaotic again is to also say it was not and will not always be chaotic, though it always *might* be.

\*\*

Despite a land rich in natural resources, by most social and economic indicators Papua Province remains the poorest province in Indonesia. Writing subsequent to Special Autonomy laws and decentralization of governance in West Papua demonstrates increasing contestation over the causes. Arguments hinge on whether too much or too little of the Indonesian state’s presence is to blame (see, for example Anderson 2013; 2014; 2015 writing against Munro 2013). Too much of the state’s

---

<sup>73</sup> In more recent writing on the eventedness of the everyday, Das (2015) critiques Povinelli’s (2011a) notion of ‘quasi-events,’ which “never take the status of having occurred or taken place,” in contrast to events, which are “things that we can say happened such that they have a certain objective-being” (Povinelli 2011a: 13). The quasi-event, Das argues, “casts the state as the privileged organ of ‘seeing,’ standing above the flux of everyday life” (2015: 13). In theorizing the experience of illness as simultaneously “absorbed in the everyday” and “beyond the grasp of categories that are available” (17) Das instead turns to da Col and Humphrey’s (2012) notion of the ‘quasi-event,’ which “make[s] aspects of the everyday that were otherwise hidden come to light or reorient[s] relationships” (Das 2015: 19).

presence points to the far-reaching deleterious effects of militarization, too little to the failures of local government to support functioning public services, especially healthcare and education. Recent work on the spectrum of violence in Mimika District, of which Timika is the capital, suggests that the homicide rate is thirty times the national average and principally attributable to or linked to domestic, territorial, or everyday criminality rather than separatism (Anderson and Morel 2018). If, as the previous chapter showed, police shootings can be classified as “ordinary criminal act[s],” these kind of distinctions – criminal/political violence or the absence/presence of the state – are of limited use in conceptualizing violence in Timika. The police shooting as “ordinary criminal act” does, however, point to the ordinary as discursive object and the way in which the chaotic and the everyday are constitutive of one another.

In the aftermath of the January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)-claimed bombing in Jakarta, the father of the Kei family I was living with at the time in Timika had tried to reassure me, “They [ISIL] wouldn’t dare come to Papua. [*Mereka tidak berani datang di Papua*],” he asserted with pride. “Maybe they just don’t know Papua exists?” I countered. “They know [*Mereka tahu*],” he said, “but they don’t come. It’s safe here [*tapi tidak datang. Disini aman*].” What kind of ordinary is ‘safe’ (for some but not all) because others dare not visit? Can the opposite of the ordinary be something other than the extraordinary, than a rupture, or an event? What, for example, if the opposite of the ordinary is stillness? And, perhaps then freedom may be what is possible in stillness.

### **becoming chaotic**

“Who wants to kill me? Behind the Post Office!” [*Siapa mau bunuh saya? Di belakang kantor pos!*], he propositions. *Kakak*<sup>74</sup> Petrus is joking, I think. It is May, and there is an ongoing clash (*bentrokan*)

---

<sup>74</sup> *Kakak* literally means older sibling, sister or brother, but is also used as a familiar term of respect.



between Kei and Bugis migrant<sup>75</sup> residents of Timika. A Bugis motorcycle taxi (*ojek*) driver was reportedly killed by a Kei perpetrator. Local newspapers reported the incident and the cascade of happenings (*kejadian*) that, in their narration, occurred in the aftermath of the murder:

Salah seorang tersangka yang diduga terlibat pembunuhan seorang tukang ojek berinisial (*sic*) AJ (38) di Jalan Hasanuddin Irigasi Timika pada Senin (2/5) malam sekitar pukul 22.00 WIT berhasil diamankan aparat Kepolisian Resor Mimika, Papua, pada Selasa (3/5) malam. Tersangka dengan inisial BE tersebut ditangkap aparat kepolisian di Kelurahan Kwamki, tepatnya di belakang kompleks Tiga Raja. Kapolres Mimika AKBP Yustanto Mudjiharso di Timika meminta kepada pihak keluarga korban untuk tetap tenang dan tidak terhasut dan membiarkan pihak kepolisian sendiri yang akan mengambil alih kasus pembunuhan tersebut. “Yang jelas ini adalah masalah kriminal murni, tidak ada kaitannya dengan masalah-masalah yang terjadi sebelumnya. Saya harap masyarakat tetap menjaga suasana yang aman dan tertib dan ikut menciptakan iklim yang kondusif di Kabupaten Mimika,” kata Yustanto. Motif pembunuhan tersebut sendiri dilatarbelakangi keinginan sang tersangka untuk memiliki kendaraan bermotor dengan nomor polisi DS 4569 MS milik sang korban yang turut dibawa lari ketika berhasil membunuh sang korban. Jenazah korban pada Selasa siang telah diterbangkan ke Makassar, Sulawesi Selatan untuk dimakamkan di kampung halamannya.

One of the suspects allegedly involved in the Monday (2 May) murder of an ojek driver, initials AJ (age 38), on Hasanuddin St. in Timika’s Irigasi neighborhood at 10:00 p.m. Eastern Indonesia Time (*WIT*) has been successfully secured by the Department (Resort) Police of Mimika, Papua on Tuesday (3 May) evening. The above suspect, with initials BE, was arrested by the police in the Kwamki sub-district, precisely behind the Tiga Raja complex. The Chief of Mimika Police (*Kapolres*), AKBP Yustanto Mudjiharso, in Timika asks the side of the victim’s family to remain calm, resist provocation, and allow the police themselves to handle the case of the murder. “What is clear is that this is purely a criminal matter that has no relation to problems that have occurred in the past. I hope that the community will maintain a safe and orderly environment and remain involved [in creating] a conducive climate in Mimika Regency,” said Yustanto. The murder itself was motivated by the suspect’s desire to have the motorized vehicle, license plate number DS 4569 MS, owned by the victim, which was taken after killing the victim. Tuesday afternoon, the body of the victim was flown to Makassar, South Sulawesi to be buried in his hometown (*Harian Papua* 2016a; posted online: 5/4/2016, 6:46 a.m. WIT).

This is purely a criminal matter, *bearing no relation to problems that have occurred in the past*. The perceived need to claim the murder of an *ojek* driver and theft of his motorcycle as criminal matters when they, to an outside observer, are so obviously criminal matters prompts the question: What else could they be, if not criminal? And, the claim that the murder-theft has no relation to problems in the past (*tidak ada kaitannya dengan masalah-masalah yang terjadi sebelumnya*) might, further, seem an odd

---

<sup>75</sup> The Kei are originally from the Kei islands (Kei Kecil and Kei Besar), part of the Maluku islands in eastern Indonesia. Though administratively part of the Malukus, the Kei islands are geographically closer to the Papuan coast than they are to many other parts of the Malukus. The Bugis are migrants from southern Sulawesi, an island west of both Papua and the Maluku islands.

preempting statement. What would have led someone to think otherwise? To what vague “problems” is Yustanto referring? The statement that they are not related to the past invariably draws attention to the possibility that they could have been. This invitation to see possibility through an articulated negation resembles the ‘everybody’s I describe in Chapter Two. As I argued, claims that “everybody knows” are only called forth in the face of its opposite. Here, the claim that this murder-theft has no relation to the past cannot help but evoke the possibility that it might.

Yustanto’s admonition “to maintain a safe and orderly environment” asks another question of time: When does he or, rather, his statement imagine the environment to have been “safe and orderly” such that it can now be maintained?<sup>76</sup> Was the murder-theft a rupture in Timika’s otherwise safe, orderly and “conducive” environment (though, again, this crime has nothing to do with crimes past), or does maintenance refer to a more proximal process that emerged in the wake of AJ’s murder, which is to say, it was not safe nor orderly before the murder-theft but has been since?<sup>77</sup>

Two hours after *Harian Papua* posted the above clip, another local online media source, *Salam Papua*, provided additional details, from which the following is excerpted:

---

<sup>76</sup> It is important to note, that ‘order’ has a very particular meaning in this context. ‘Order’ is a state dictated and brought into being by the military. Contrast the language of order, above, with Widjojo’s reflections on the political environment in West Papua: “Concerning the freedom of expression, the government is of the opinion that, *even if carried out in a peaceful and orderly manner*, rallies voicing aspirations for Papuan independence should be categorized as acts of treason under articles 106, no, and 116 of the Criminal Code (kuhp). In Papua, Regional Chief of Police Tito Karnavian also applied Law 9/1998 and Law 12/1951. The police chief confirmed that demonstrations raising the issue of Papuan independence are prohibited because they do not support national unity. This policy is believed to be in line with the government’s vision for combating separatism and preserving the integrity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia in Papua (NKRI). The government does not consider such demonstrations part of civil rights and political freedoms of expression as guaranteed by article 28 of the 1945 Constitution and article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights” (508; my emphasis). Orderly protests by Papuans are treasonous.

<sup>77</sup> Note, here, also a striking mix of obfuscation and peculiar detail. The news clip anonymizes the victim, providing only his initials, presumably to obscure ethnic identity. Though, the final detail, that the corpse will be flown to Makassar allows even the uninformed reader enough information to make assumptions. The article provides the license plate number of the stolen motorcycle, presumably to put readers on alert, while simultaneously admonishing them that this purely a police matter. The online comments section on these articles often became a source of more specific information than the articles themselves. Everyone in the comments sections, for example, seem to know that the perpetrator was Kei, originally from the Maluku islands to the west of Papua. It is unlikely that public commentators know more than the reporters, highlighting the extent to which the newspaper articles themselves seek to craft a “motivated” version of events (Redfield 2006).

Setelah jasad korban di visum, jenazah kemudian di bawa (*sic*) ke rumah duka di Jalan Bhayangkara dengan diantar ratusan pelayat. Kemacetan panjang terjadi saat iring-iringan kendaraan pelayat memadati ruas jalan dari RSUD Mimika hingga ke rumah duka. Kericuhan sempat terjadi disaat jenazah korban tiba di rumah duka. Kericuhan ini dipicu akibat seorang oknum anggota polisi yang sedang mengatur lalu lintas sempat memukul pengendara roda dua. Saat kericuhan terjadi, seorang warga kemudian melempar batu kearah (*sic*) kaki seorang anggota polisi sehingga terjadi adu mulut antara pelayat dan polisi. Agar kericuhan tidak semakin membesar seorang polisi terpaksa melepaskan tembakan peringatan ke udara untuk menenangkan situasi. Setelah situasi dapat ditenangkan, ratusan pelayat yang mayoritas warga KKSS ini kemudian diarahkan ke Warkop Galang di Jalan Hasanuddin. Di Warkop Galang, ketua KKSS H. Basri, Kapolres AKBP Yustanto Mujiharso, Kapolsek Miru Kompol I Gede Putra duduk bersama massa untuk membahas kasus yang menimpa Agus Jaya.

After the victim's body was visualized, the corpse was then brought, along with hundreds of mourners, to the funeral home on Bhayangkara St. A long back-up occurred when the motorcade of mourners jammed the road from Mimika Regional Public Hospital (RSUD) to the funeral home. A riot broke out when the victim's corpse arrived at the funeral home. The riot was triggered when a police officer, who was directing traffic, struck the driver of a two-wheeler (motorcycle). When the riot broke out, a resident threw stones in the direction of the police officer's legs, resulting in a shouting match between mourners and the police. So that the dispute would not escalate, a police officer was compelled to release warning shots into the air in order to calm the situation. After the situation was deescalated, hundreds of mourners, the majority of whom were South Sulawesi Family Association (KKSS) residents were then directed to Galang Coffee Shop on Hasanuddin St. At Galang Coffee Shop, the KKSS elder, H. Basri, the Chief of Mimika Police AKBP Tustanto Mujiharso, and Chief of Mimika Baru Sector Police Kompol I Gede Putra sat together with the crowd to discuss the case that befell Agus Jaya (*Salam Papua* 2016, posted online: 5/4/2016; 8:46 a.m. WIT).

Identified in *Salam Papua* by his full name rather than his initials, Agus Jaya's funeral processional causes a traffic jam, pooling hundreds of people in the street. A police officer, for unknown or unstated reasons, strikes someone passing by on a motorcycle, presumably as part of the processional (but maybe not). Rocks are thrown. Shots are fired to *calm* the situation. Everyone ends up at a coffee shop to discuss, not the riot, but a problem that has occurred in the (near) past – the murder of Agus Jaya. In this accounting, mourners become rioters become mourners again, though it was perhaps their mourning that made them into rioters. Though order and chaos might conventionally be conceived in opposition (as they are in these newspaper articles),<sup>78</sup> order and chaos both index as states of kinetic being. A riot reflects the chaos of *Timika kacau lagi*, but the police officer's warning shots purport to offer order. The next morning, *Harian Papua* published the following:

---

<sup>78</sup> Though, see Massumi (1998) on chaos as a “super-ordered state.”

Bentrokan kembali terjadi di Timika yang melibatkan dua kelompok massa pada Rabu (4/5) malam sekitar pukul 22.30 WIT dan berlangsung hingga tengah malam pukul 00.30 WIT dini hari tadi. Pemicu bentrokan antar warga dari jalan Kartini dengan warga dari Jalan Pattimura diduga karena motif balas dendam setelah sebelumnya salah seorang warga terkena panah wayer dan dilarikan ke rumah sakit. Selain itu bentrokan juga disebut-sebut masih ada kaitannya dengan kasus pembunuhan seorang tukang ojek beberapa hari lalu. Akibat insiden bentrokan ini, tiga orang terpaksa ikut dilarikan ke rumah sakit karena terkena panah wayer untuk mendapatkan pertolongan medis. Sementara itu personil gabungan dari TNI/Polri sudah dikerahkan menuju titik temu bentrokan di bawah komando Kapolres Mimika AKBP Yustanto Mujiharso dan Dandim 1710 Mimika Letkol Inf Andi Kusworo guna menghindari bentrokan susulan. Kapolres sudah mendatangi perwakilan dari dua kubu warga yang bertikai agar segera meredam dan mengakhiri konflik yang meresahkan masyarakat sekitar itu. Adapun kendaraan Baracuda milik satuan Brimob Detasemen B ikut disiagakan di tempat kejadian (TKP) agar menciptakan suasana kembali kondusif.

Clashes involving two mobs resumed in Timika on Wednesday (4 May) evening around 10:30 p.m. Eastern Indonesia Time (*WIT*) and continued until the middle of the night at 12:30 a.m. early this morning. The suspected trigger for the clash between residents of Kartini St. and residents of Pattimura St. is suspected to be the motive of revenge after one resident was hit by an arrow and rushed to the hospital. Aside from that, the clash is still also considered to be related to the murder case of the *ojek* driver a few days ago. As a result of the clash incident, three people were forced to be rushed to the hospital for medical assistance after having been hit with arrows. Meanwhile, joint Military/Police personnel under the command of Chief of Mimika Police (*Kapolres*) AKBP Yustanto Mujiharso and 1710 Mimika Military District Commander, Lt. Colonel (Infantry) Andi Kusworo have been deployed towards the clash meeting point in order to avoid subsequent clashes (*lit.* aftershocks). The Chief of Department (Resort) Police has already visited with representatives of the two resident strongholds in order to immediately attenuate and end the conflict that is disturbing the surrounding community. One of *Brimob* Detachment B's Baracuda vehicles joined the crime scene to create a return to a conducive atmosphere (*Harian Papua* 2016b, posted online: 5/5/2016, 5:26 a.m. WIT).<sup>79</sup>

Two days after Agus Jaya's murder, a clash breaks out in a different part of town, its trigger identified here as revenge, though "also considered to be related to the murder case of the *ojek* driver."<sup>80</sup> In the newspaper's narration, which closely follows the police accounting, Agus Jaya's murder marked a rupture such that a later clash, temporally separated from his murder by a different riot and an injurious arrow, *is* causally associated, but 'problems that have occurred in the past' are

---

<sup>79</sup> Compare this reported series to Spyer's (2002) description of a "run-of-the-mill fight."

<sup>80</sup> The narrative of events that circulated orally through Timika was of a conflict between *orang Kei* (Kei) and *orang Bugis* (Buginese). It is, thus, notable that this detail does not explicitly appear anywhere in the newspaper reporting of events, even if references to South Sulawesi strongly suggest the victim's ethnic identity. There are exceptions, but more often than not, in violent, viralizing disputes between migrants, other migrants were simultaneously quick to ascribe the cause to a bad actor rather than an identity: *oknum saja* – it's just an individual – is a different way of silencing the violence, attributing blame to a person rather than an entire ethnicity. It is a way of trying to prevent a "little thing" from becoming a "big thing," even as that becoming is already in progress. In contrast, the phrase *perang suku* – tribal war – is more commonly used to characterize conflict between different factions of Papuans. That characterization confounds scalarity – a domestic dispute between two Papuan members of the same family might be described unironically by migrants as a *perang suku*. Here a "little thing" between Papuans is, rhetorically, already a "big thing."

not.<sup>81</sup> The past imagined here is a discrete entity, which cannot bear on the present. But the capaciousness of the present extends at least as far back as Agus Jaya's murder because his murder provides an explanation for this current violence in a way that previous violence could not offer an explanation for the inciting murder itself. This conceptualization of time is inextricable from the state's need for the aftermaths of violence – or, what the police and military determine to be the aftermaths of violence – to appear as something other than chaotic. The newspaper articles do not so much undermine the narrative of Timika as a place of chaos (and that chaos as violent) but, rather, they contour a narrative of Timika as a place whose chaos can *become* ordered.<sup>82</sup> Chaos has a before and after.

This imagined discreteness of chaos posits violence as both extraordinary (in demanding a return to order) but, also, extra-ordinary (in the always possible 'again' of chaos). If Timika is *kacau lagi* – chaotic again – each experience of chaos is, however, always already discursively linked to the past through these 'again's and the aftershocks that come before them. For something to happen again is to recall that it has happened before. And, if "little things" can become "big things," the return to order emphasizes a different becoming – that is, how "big things" can become "little" again. But how is it that the "little" is perceived to become "big" in the first place? An emphasis on becoming ordered *again* distracts from the constitutiveness of chaos – rather than being always possible, it just always is – and the possibility for a different kind of chaotic becoming.

---

<sup>81</sup> Discussion of the newspaper in Indonesia cannot avoid acknowledgement of Anderson's (1983) classic theorization of nationalism. Anderson argues that the newspaper, an example of print capitalism, unites members of an imagined national community through its capacity to narrate, borrowing from Benjamin, in homogenous, empty time (but, see Kelly 2002 and Chatterjee 2001 for arguments that challenge Anderson's use and characterization of homogenous, empty time). The newspaper allows people in disparate places, who will never meet, to understand themselves as connected. In the discussion above, I am less interested in the newspaper as social medium and more interested in the way in which journalists – through voices of Timika's police and military – narrativize violence to imagine time (differently from homogenous, empty time) so as to create temporal continuities and ruptures consistent with the appearance of order.

<sup>82</sup> See Rutherford (1999) on the relationship between order and Indonesian state violence, as well as alternative ways of understanding that relationship in the context of the Papuan island, Biak.

**‘seperti dulu, biasa-biasa saja’ / like before, routine, average and mundane**

Tak ada yang berubah sejak dulu kala  
Saat ada dan tiada  
Semua sama seperti biasa  
Tak berbeda hingga kini adanya [...]  
Nothing has changed since long ago  
When there is and isn't  
Everything is the same as usual  
Until now, no different [...]

*excerpt*, “Semua biasa,” Diana Mariska

On a brief visit to Sorong, a city on the western coast of Papua, a migrant (*pendatang*) resident remarked – seemingly to put me at ease – that Sorong was the safest city in Papua because it had the highest proportion of *pendatang*. If the demographic shift rapidly and alarmingly occurring across Papua is, for many, imagined as contributing to the safety and order of the region, then the demand for returns to order are difficult to disentangle from racist stereotypes of indigenous Papuans – or Papua, itself – as somehow innately violent, even, as in the case above (“becoming chaotic”), outbreaks of violence are also linked to migrant populations. For many, order is not safe. The refrain, *Timika kacau lagi*, suggests something about place as circumscribing a shared or collective experience of violence and chaos, but the singularity of that chaos does not exist. It may be that Timika’s chaos is something more akin to, in Beatzo’s lyric, a “monotonous drama,” but the affective terrain of that monotony (and that drama) is unevenly experienced (Dapoer ATS 2017).

Amidst the unfolding violence described in the previous section, one female Kei colleague posted to social media:

Suara tembakan lagi malam ini...sio dapat ingat waktu masi di ambon dulu..Tuhan Yesus..kasi damai tanah MIMIKA ..su cape dengan keadaan ini...

The sounds of gunfire continue this evening...I can remember a time before when I was still in Ambon<sup>83</sup> ..God Jesus...make the land of MIMIKA<sup>84</sup> peaceful...I'm already tired with this state...

While “this state” (*keadaan ini*) most literally refers to sounds of gunfire in the present, it also refers to an affective state of enduring fatigue, which is both an experience of the present but also one that, for her, can be traced back to sounds of gunfire ricocheting forward from a different time and place. The past, here, distinctly bears on the present. Her comment points to the possibility that the extraordinary might be found not in the temporal ruptures of violence described earlier but in a kind of affective rupture to “this state” of being tired.

The kind of chaos that galvanizes police or military intervention (or, the kind of chaos galvanized *by* police or military intervention) is one very particular manifestation of the *kekacauan*. But, living with and through chaos can also be read as a refusal of something that might elsewhere be glossed as the precarity of the everyday.<sup>85</sup> If Timika’s newspapers simultaneously sanitize and sensationalize, what are other ways to write chaos that allow for chaos to be understood in all its multiplicity, as something other than only violence? What might it look like – and feel like – to consider chaos as a “monotonous drama” rather than a recurring event? In the vignettes that follow, based primarily on fieldwork in Timika with a United States government-funded tuberculosis control program, I offer a reading of chaos that will ultimately allow for the possibility of finding stillness within chaos and, perhaps, a different politics of the extraordinary.

---

<sup>83</sup> Migrants from the Maluku islands, including Ambon, are disproportionately represented in Timika, many having settled in Papua over a generation ago, others having more recently moved to escape regional conflict.

<sup>84</sup> Mimika is the district of which Timika is the capital city.

<sup>85</sup> See Han (2018) for an exhaustive review and synthesis of the ways in which the concept of “precarity” has been differently used and theorized by anthropologists. I follow her concluding remarks, both in the inclination to “move beyond suffering,” but also “not simply to swap one master concept for another, but rather to pay attention or attune to the textures of vulnerability not so that we can say “*yes!* to justice” (Lear 2015, emphasis in original) but so that we can see the diverse forms of politics that are already before us” (341).

## I.

*Kalau banjir. Libur! Kalau kacau. Libur! Kalau perang. Libur! Kalau mambuk. Libur!*

This is how Petrus, the Kei father I am living with at the time, explains why school is, again, closed today and the kids are home. “If flooding. Day off! If chaos. Day off! If war. Day off! If drunk. Day off!” The possible ‘if’s are expansive. Today there is flooding after a heavy evening rain. School is canceled. If chaos is a discrete thing, something that can be separated from rather than descriptive of war, flooding, or intoxication, what is it? Maybe it is just that chaos is the word that he uses to describe violence between migrants (*pendatang*) and war (*perang*) is the word that describes violence between Papuans. Or maybe it is that chaos, whatever it is, ebbs and flows and can percolate up past some threshold that closes school.

## II.

Kemarin bicara dengan teman yang kerja di Tembagapura. Dia bilang, 3 minggu lalu ada pencurian konsentrat banyak sekali. Senilai 16 M rupiah. Pelakunya adalah dibantu orang2 amungme. Dan di Tembagapura sedang gencar sekali kampanye presidir FI orang Papua. Sa jadi menduga, keributan di Timika ini mungkin untuk membusukkan wacana Presdir FI orang Papua.

Yesterday I spoke with my friend who works in Tembagapura. He said, three weeks ago there was a theft of a lot of [copper] concentrate. 16 billion (roughly \$16 million USD) rupiah’s worth. The perpetrator was helped by some Amungme [Papuan highlanders]. And in Tembagapura, the campaign for president of Freeport Indonesia is now intensifying. So I suspect, this tumult in Timika is maybe to taint discussion of [the possibility of a] Papuan president of Freeport Indonesia.

This is Minyu’s explanation for a conflict between Kei and Toraja (both migrant) residents of Timika. But I have trouble seeing his explanation as an explanation for a conflict among migrants.

He continues:

Mungkin karena lebih mudah membuat konflik dengan agen-agen orang Kei atau Toraja dibanding Papua. Sepanjang pengamatan saya, tidak pernah ada yang bisa menjelaskan nama, tempat tinggal dan keterangan pribadi lain. Cuma ‘orang Kei.’

Maybe because it’s easier to incite conflict between Kei and Toraja agents as compared to Papuans. As far as I’ve observed, no one can clarify the name, address, or other description [of the perpetrators]. Only *orang Kei* [a person of Kei ethnicity].



This explanation suggests that, if the goal is to derail a campaign for a Papuan president of Freeport Indonesia, any conflict will do. There is a kind of commensurability of all violence that reveals the epistemic uncertainty of Timika's violence, rather than the violence itself, to be the desired outcome. But, this logic seems to misunderstand the extent to which epistemic uncertainty is also always and familiar. What the police and military would call a return to order is not also a return to epistemic certainty.

### III.

About half-way through my fieldwork in Timika, my cell phone charger stopped working or went missing. Somehow I came to be without a cell phone charger. I went to a strip of electronics stores on Jl. Budi Utomo in central Timika and had the following exchange with the salesperson:

CC: Saya mau beli charger yang asli.	I want to buy a charger that's an original (i.e. not counterfeit).
Seller: Iya, ada.	Yeah, we have those [ <i>pointing to the chargers</i> ].
CC: Oh, mahal. Ada yang lebih murah?	Oh, that's expensive. Are there any cheaper ones?
S: Iya, ini yang biasa.	Yeah, this one that's regular. <sup>86</sup>
CC: Biasa? Maksudnya bukan yang asli?	Regular? Meaning not an original?
S: Iya, yang biasa saja.	Yeah, one that's just normal.
CC: Apakah itu akan cepat rusak?	Is that going to break quickly?
S: Biasa saja.	Just normally.

Is 'just normally' calibrated to the regular charger (*yang biasa*) – the counterfeit – or to an original, which is not normal? And, how did the counterfeit become the regular? Perhaps the original never was the regular, but it is hard to know how, or if, that change ever happened. I ultimately bought a regular charger that went missing (again) before I had a chance to find out at what speed it would have normally broken.

---

<sup>86</sup> I translate *biasa*, here as 'regular' and later in the conversation as 'normally.' The word *biasa* can also be used to describe something as 'normal,' 'regular,' or 'ordinary.' Though an initial translation of 'normal' or 'ordinary' would give the exchange a slightly different inflection, I do not think it substantially changes the broader point I am trying to make through this everyday interaction of the way in which a counterfeit seamlessly becomes the normal or ordinary.

#### IV.

Timika is safe now. *Aman saja*. Now there are only *perang-perang biasa* (ordinary wars), Petrus will tell me. By ‘now’ he does not just mean the precise moment in which we are talking, but now as in, this expansive present. At the height of the *perang*, we all left work early, mid-day. A friend picks me up and we go out for grilled fish. The streets are uncharacteristically quiet, though I see the occasional man out walking with a bow or machete. The restaurant is empty, except for us. The owner, a middle-aged woman originally from Sulawesi, apologizes. Variety is lacking on the menu. Because of the *perang* she had not wanted to grill too many fish, in case business was light. Better to limit the menu than to throw away uneaten food at the end of the day.

The night before, Petrus had received a text message from the ethnically Chinese Indonesian director of the community health program where we both worked. *Bagaimana situasi keamanan?* [How is the security situation?] Seeing the message, he looks up at me, laughs, and says, *Saya bukan Intel!* [I am not Intel!] To be in the know is to be suspect. Though, what was it that Petrus’s brother once joked? *Intel* stands for *informasi terlambat* – delayed information. It is suspicious to know – or to know certain things – but those who are supposed to know also do not. Might that be chaos? Petrus tells me that he wants to write the director back, *Hati-hati orang Kei panah orang Cina* [Be careful, the Keis are shooting the Chinese] but thinks better of it.

#### V.

One morning, on the way to a tuberculosis information session with an HIV support group, Elis, a community health worker, mentions that a group of four masked individuals (*kelompok empat orang bertopeng*) sliced (*potong*) a Kei woman. She tells me this as we exit the office complex and almost immediately reach a police barricade and vehicle inspection. The driver tells the young community health worker sitting in the front sit to put her seat belt on, as if we might get in trouble for not

wearing seat belts. We pass through the police checkpoint, we stop, the driver shows his license and vehicle registration. Two separate police officers take photos of parts of the car. Part of the side of our car seems to have been photographed, maybe catching some of our faces through the half-rolled down tinted windows. I ask the driver why the police are taking pictures. *Dokumentasi pemeriksaan mobile*. Documentation of the car inspection. It is a response that recalls the rationale a member of Intel once gave me for taking photos of the participants in our tuberculosis training: *Harus kirim laporan kegiatan ke Jakarta* [We have to send an activity report to Jakarta]. That word, *kegiatan* – activity – sounds odd, pedestrian, in the context of surveillance. Surveillance is not something that passively happens to people as they go about life; surveillance is an activity that other people do. Or, maybe photos interrupt a constitutive state of surveillance, rendering the state of being surveilled a documentable, reportable set of discrete activities.<sup>87</sup>

*Mereka pikir saya teroris!* [They think I'm a terrorist!], a Kei colleague will later exclaim with glee and a chuckle on another occasion after Intel asks to see his identity card (KTP). *Kami sudah terbiasa begitu* [We're already used to it],<sup>88</sup> he reassures me, though the look on my Mee (Papuan) colleague's face says he should not have been included in that 'we.' The joke that Intel stands for *informasi terlambat* – delayed information – is not everyone's joke. Humor can break up the “monotonous drama” of chaos, but it can also bring the “thinness of commonality” into greater relief (Berlant and Stewart 2019: 107).

At the police checkpoint there is a small red car next to us. I watch as the police open the trunk. I jokingly look at Elis and ask, *Mereka coba menemukan apa?* [What are they trying to find?]. She laughs, *Tidak tahu* [I don't know]. Someone else in the car offers, *Mungkin topeng* [Maybe a mask]. Elis laughs. The thought of them stopping a car and uncovering a set of masks in the trunk of this small

---

<sup>87</sup> Tattoos and fingerprinting have, historically, done something similar in Indonesia (Barker 1999).

<sup>88</sup> What I have translated, here, as 'used to' or 'accustomed to' derives from the same 'ordinary' or 'normal' root word, *biasa*.

red car's six-inch deep trunk is ridiculous – even more so because some are saying that it is members of Timika's security apparatus who *are* the masked individuals.<sup>89</sup> Our car is not searched. As we pull out of the police search zone and back into the street, Elis says that *ibu Kei itu bawa parang dan potong kembali dua orang bertopeng* [that Kei woman brought a machete and returned blows to two of the masked individuals]. She says that the police have already locked up (*ditangkap*) two of the suspects and that two remain at large. If the masked individuals are instruments of the state, who are those two people they have locked up?

## VI.

The tuberculosis program driver from Manado, a city in northern Sulawesi, and his trainee sit in the front seat playing Clash of Clans on their tablets, waiting for the team to remerge from a patient's home. They will, at another moment, explain to me that Kwamki Lama, a neighborhood we frequently travel to meet patients (almost exclusively Papuan) is *daerah Texas*, the land of Texas – the wild West. Endah, a community health worker born in Ambon, describes Kwamki Lama as *enak kalau tidak ada masalah* [pleasant when they aren't problems]. By problems she means war.

Clash of Clans is soon replaced by Pokeman Go, the latest fad among migrant youth in Timika. *Orang yg mendadak berhenti pasti mau dapat Pokemon* [A person who stops suddenly definitely wants to get Pokemon], one community health worker tells me. *Kita outreach sambil cari Pokemon* [We perform community outreach while looking for Pokemon]. I learn that Pokemon (a portmanteau for “pocket monster”) live next to the mosque near Bank Papua, near the airport, and in Pomako, a coastal village about an hour's drive from Timika. Pokemon could not yet be legally downloaded in

---

<sup>89</sup> The trope of the masked individual or ninja is a common one, particularly in post-Suharto Indonesia. Myritten (2013) offers another West Papuan example resonant with the above vignette. For further analysis of the phenomenon of the ninja or masked individual in a (non-Papuan) Indonesian context, see especially Siegel (2005), as well as Herriman (2010) and Aditjondro (2000).

Indonesia, but that has not prevented young migrants from playing – stopping suddenly and starting again – as they move through Timika in search of these phantom pocket monsters.

## VII.

The patient died at midnight the previous night. I did not know this happened until I came into the office of the tuberculosis program. There had been a heavy rainstorm until nine in the morning. I, along with half the staff, had arrived late. The day before, at the hospital, the attending physician was unnervingly nonchalant about the inevitability of death. Endah later tells me that he had said to her, *Mau bikin apa? Semua manusia pasti akan mati*<sup>90</sup> [What is it that you want to do? Everybody dies].

Hours later the patient will and does die. The next morning we accompanied the family to the back entrance of the hospital where bodies of the deceased are embalmed. A young Papuan man wearing a Persipura-Freeport (Papua's soccer team) red collared shirt appears in charge of the process. His assistants, a woman and shorter man, both *pendatang* (migrants), work under his supervision. The male assistant handles a syringe with care, occasionally stepping outside for a smoke break. The man in charge advises the family to purchase plastic sheeting from the store *sebelas Bank Papua* [next to Bank Papua] to drape under the body in case of leakage. He sprays a pleasant fragrance along the walls of the casket. Once the embalming process is complete, the deceased's son-in-law helps two hospital staff lay the body, dressed in a three-piece suit, and a bouquet of artificial flowers in the casket. There is some discussion of where the bouquet of flowers should be placed – the unspoken dilemma, whether or not to rest them over his groin.

At his funeral later that day, all the usual trappings of a large gathering are assembled – rows of plastic chairs, small bottles of water, keyboard with accompanying over-sized speaker. A photo,

---

<sup>90</sup> The use of *mati*, here, rather than *meninggal* is noteworthy. *Mati* is more commonly used to refer to animals, *meninggal* to talk about human death.

the photo from his identity card, appears enlarged in front of the casket. The deceased's granddaughter, not more than four years old, walks up to the photo and kisses the likeness of her grandfather on the forehead. Does she know that her grandfather is dead – or what it is to *be* dead? His daughter wears a tee-shirt with the words, in English, “The morning is for hope.”

## VIII.

Kadang-kadang ada kematian-kematian dari orang Papua yang tidak wajar. [...] Orang Papua kalau di rujuk di luar Papua itu pasti kembalinya jenazah lumayan. Pasti pulang dia meninggal. Itu sudah rata-rata. Sudah pernah ada pasien yang di Jakarta yang sakit...misalnya sakit kronis. Ada tumor. Ada ginjal. Atau paru. Atau jantung. Yang stroke. Yang berobat di luar Papua keluar Papua pasti meninggal. [...]itu...selalu terjadi. Selalu terjadi. Kadang-kadang dia bilang ‘ginjal’ tapi nanti sampai di Jakarta dia bilang ‘paru-paru.’ Memang menurut pikiran orang, itu bahaya. [...] Ini seperti ketua di DKI. Itu dari sini katanya cuma gangguan asthma. Terus dirawat di Jakarta. Dirujukan di RS Dharmais. Mereka merawat disitu. Terus katanya disitu ada ginjal ada apa segala macam. Dari situ dirujuk kembali ke RS Pondok Indah. Disitu merawat...disitu sudah harus...sudah tidak bisa. Dari Jayapura masih sehat-sehat. Baik-baik. Cerita-cerita. Dari RS Dharmais sudah terjadi perubahan besar-besar. Dari Dharmais dirujuk ke Pondok Indah. Pondok Indah kembali ke [*tidak jelas*]. Kemudian dalam waktu beberapa jam sebelum dia meninggal ada dokter lain yang tidak pernah dikenal yang datang mengenakan baju dokter yang masuk pemeriksaan dia kasi obat. Waktu itu hanya khusus untuk merawat pasien ini. Setelah itu yang lain hanya kontrol saja. Hanya kontrol. Tidak ada tindakan medis. Hanya kontrol. Cek. Apa...? Karena setelah 1 jam itu pasien ini sudah meninggal. Tapi [sebelumnya] dia masih bicara. Ada dokter lain yang sudah dilihat dari keluarganya. Dokter ini baru lihat. Dokter ini keluar dari rumah sakit itu kan...dokter keluar langsung ke lobby. Langsung jalan. Jadi sebenarnya bukan dokter. Dokter yang sebenarnya dititipkan untuk datang habis dia...untuk membunuh.

Sometimes there are Papuan deaths that are implausible. If a Papuan is referred outside Papua, he will, with certainty, return as a corpse. He undoubtedly comes home, he dies. This is already normal [on average]. There have been patients who, in Jakarta, were sick...chronically ill. They have a tumor. They have a kidney [problem]. Or lungs. Or heart. A stroke. Those treated outside Papua, who left Papua, certainly died. That always happens. Always happens. Sometimes he [the doctor] says ‘kidney’ but later, once in Jakarta, he says ‘lungs.’ Indeed, people think this is dangerous. [...] This is like [what happened to] an elder in Jakarta [DKI, *daerah kebusus ibukota*]. Here [Timika], they said it was just an asthma perturbation. Then he was referred to Jakarta. Referred to Dharmais Hospital [the national cancer center]. They referred him there. Then there, they said kidney problems, all kinds of things. From there referred back to Pondok Indah Hospital. There referred...there already needing...already couldn’t anymore [i.e. too sick]. In Jayapura he was still healthy. Well. Talking. From Dharmais Hospital there were already big changes. From Dharmais referred to Pondok Indah. Pondok Indah returned to [*unclear*]. Then a few hours before he died, there was another unknown doctor wearing doctor’s clothing who entered to examine him and give him medicine. At that time [he came to the hospital] only to treat this patient. After that the others only watched over him. Only watched over him. No medical action. Only watched over him. Checking, what...? Because an hour later that patient had already died. But [before that] he was still talking. There was another doctor that the family had previously seen. [But] it was the first time seeing *this* doctor. This doctor left the hospital...the doctor left straight for the lobby. Went straight away. So, honestly, he wasn’t a doctor. A doctor who, in fact, was left to finish him off...to kill.

“That,” – doctors killing patients – “doesn’t happen anymore,” a Kei colleague tells me, when I ask about stories that patients might not want to take their tuberculosis medication because doctors used to dispense poison rather than medicine. To say it doesn’t happen *anymore*, though, is for many to live presently with the memory that it did and, thus also the possibility that it could again, or might still. In the story above, the doctor was not a doctor, or if he was, he was also an executioner. Chaos might appear to be the uncertainty with which one distinguishes a homicide from inadequate (but here, possibly excessive) access to infrastructures of care. Living chaos may be to know that those things are not so different.

## IX.

Working with the tuberculosis control program involved a surprising amount of time spent asking people to expectorate sputum, that is, hack up mucus from the deep recesses of their respiratory tracts. In Timika, active case finding, a process through which potential tuberculosis patients are actively sought rather than identified when they appear, usually much sicker, in a clinic or hospital, involved screening participants with one clinical question: Have you had a cough that has lasted longer than two weeks?<sup>91</sup> We organized mobile tuberculosis testing events in which nearly every participant would stipulate a chronic cough and, yet, identify no new patients. The anti-tuberculosis campaign visible throughout Timika reflected this ordinariness of the chronic cough: *Bukan batuk biasa!* [This is no ordinary cough!], the signs read, encouraging people to recognize that their cough might be a something rather than a nothing. Coughs that had lasted longer than two weeks were the norm rather than the exception, reframing the temporality of acuity but, also, making the ordinary and the possibly fatal feel very much the same.

---

<sup>91</sup> Sputum microscopy, a crude though, as of this writing, still widely used test, remains the principle tool available throughout West Papua for diagnosis of adult pulmonary tuberculosis patients.

## X.

Seperti...kebiasan-kebiasan yang menjadi biasa karena orang-orang seperti tidak peduli dengan apa yang berubah. Mereka tidak fokus dengan apa yang sudah berubah tapi mereka lebih fokus apa yang biasa terjadi. Mungkin mereka berada di dalam perubahan itu, tetapi mereka merasa bahwa itu biasa [...] Seperti mereka, seperti mereka akan biasa saja bahwa...ketika Papua merdeka mereka biasa, ketika Papua tidak merdeka, mereka biasa, jadi like...*I don't care*. Iya seperti ya, yang lebih kasarnya seperti itu. [...] Karena mereka tidak punya kerinduan untuk mendapat kebebasan. Seperti keluarga saya...Kebanyakan hampir semua keluarga, saudara-saudaranya, Mama, mereka seperti, mereka tidak peduli, mereka hanya memikirkan kebutuhan hidup mereka sehari-hari terpenuhi.

It's like...the familiar becomes normal [*biasa*] because it's like people don't care about what is changing. They don't focus on what has changed but rather they are more focused on what normally [*biasa*] happens. Maybe they are [living] in the midst of that change but they feel that [change] as normal [*biasa*]. [...] Like they, like they would be indifferent [*biasa saja*]...if Papua is free or not, they'll be the same [*biasa*], like...*I don't care* [original in English]. Yeah, it's like yeah, the roughest are like that [...] Because they don't have the longing to get freedom. Like my family...The majority, almost all the family, siblings, Mama, they're like, they don't care, they only think about fulfilling their daily life needs.

In poet Diana Mariska's above reflection on the making of the normal, it is not that change does not happen but rather that the process through which change normalizes is not, for many people, a noticeable one. And, to be so preoccupied with what feels normal is to no longer care about the possibility of the extraordinary – of freedom. Mariska is effectively describing the affective consequences of *terlalu banyak pikiran*, the condition of having too many thoughts.<sup>92</sup> They reconfigure the present in a way distinct from the newspaper accounts of Agus Jaya's murder, which discursively prolong the present to silo from the past in service of "order." What Mariska describes is, in part, an attunement to a prolonged present because of a feeling that there is *only* the present. Living in chaos collapses tense altogether; the past and the present feel undifferentiated, as normal. When Mariska writes in the poem, "Semua biasa," that opens this section, "Nothing has changed since long ago / When there is and isn't / Everything is the same as usual / Until now, no

---

<sup>92</sup> Compare this picture of *terlalu banyak pikiran* to another colleague's response, when asked if he was satisfied with his work: "I am working. Even though I'm working, I'm not mentally exhausted [*lit. dizzy*]. I'm working. I can work. Work to make a living rather than seek chaos, make a fuss [*lit. make noise*]. I don't want a fuss. Problems. I work with the community. They are happy with me. I don't think too much [*Kerja. Walaupun kerja saya nggak pusing. Kerja. Bisa kerja. Kerja cari uang daripada mau kacau bikin ribut-ribut. Saya tidak mau yang ribut-ribut. Masalah-masalah. Saya kerja sama masyarakat. Mereka senang saya. Tidak terlalu pikir banyak*]."



different,” she describes this present (or “now”) that feels unchanged. But what she is saying above is that, despite the feeling that change is normal, there is, in fact, nothing normal about what is happening. It is not that chaos is normal but that it is always.<sup>93</sup>

### **(XI.) a chaotic becoming**

When it rains, Timika is still. People go inside or onto porches. Punctuated experiences of a violent *keacan* often feel suspended, though not the chaos constitutive of the everyday; it is not yet clear what the cessation of rain will bring. During one such rain, I am sitting outside under the eave of the house of the family I lived with during the first six months of fieldwork. The young daughter, preschool-aged, comes out and stands with me, watching the rain come down. *Tante bule, di Amerika ada hujan?* Calling in to question the possibility of rain’s universality, she asks, “In America, does it rain?”<sup>94</sup> But the rain, and the kind of stillness it can produce, is both extra-ordinary (it does, in fact, exist in America, as in most places) and extraordinary. If a focus on, in Mariska’s words, “what normally happens” grounds the ordinariness of the present in indifference, this stillness may prolong the present in a different way. It holds the present in a way that is full of affect, even as the moment is not outside Timika’s chaos. Stillness suggests an affective rupture that makes small changes, like in the weather, feel something bigger than normal.

Malkki writes of the way in which violence can render the extraordinary and the ordinary as “out of all proportion to each other, irreconcilable, yet occup[ying] the same impossible space” (2015: 74). If the movement of chaos can make “little things” into “big things” such that violence itself becomes out of proportion, then stillness may offer a different kind of scalar elision. And, if

---

<sup>93</sup> There are strong resonances here with my analysis of Ape’s lyrics and a mode of witnessing that recognizes this always-ness (see Chapter Three).

<sup>94</sup> She refers to me as *tante bule*, a concatenation of the familial and the foreign. *Tante bule* can be roughly translated as “aunt foreigner.”

state narrative – and the way it is reproduced through the refrain, *Timika kacau lagi* – counterposes the extraordinary (violent chaos) to the ordinary (order), then stillness offers the possibility of seeing a different kind of extraordinary midst the ordinary, the possibility of freedom from within “what normally happens.” That is to say that there can be both movement and stillness in chaos. Stewart suggests that “[o]rdinary affects are the varied, surging capacities to affect and be affected that give everyday life the quality of a continual motion of relations, scenes, contingencies, and emergencies (2007: 1-2).” What then if something like extraordinary affects might be what characterize the stillness, rather than the motion, of a scene in Timika?

A violent chaos, as imagined in the newspaper articles above, is what ruptures time, producing the idea of an extraordinary that must be made ordered again. Even as violence is eminently ordinary, in the sense that it is frequent, it is made to appear as an extraordinary event. But the extraordinary exists in other (less violent) registers. Here, instead, the daughter points to an affective, rather than temporal, rupture that suggests the extraordinary as a kind of chaotic becoming. The extraordinariness of the scene we both witness and inhabit – staring out at the rain from the stoop of our house – is not in the becoming of a “big thing” from a “little thing” but rather in becoming still.

In the context of poetry criticism, Farmer (2019) writes of a poem, “The past tense [...] seems lengthy, as if the memory has persisted out of proportion to the facts of the moment. The poem feels like an attempt to find some way of describing [...] that will both account for its persistence – for its having seemed and seeming still ‘tremendous’ – and stay true to the actual, ordinary, scene” (65). The same could be said of this shared moment in the rain that felt tremendous, even as the facts of the moment are ordinary. Finding this extraordinary *in* chaos (rather than chaos as the extraordinary) offers an alternative politics of chaos. If the narrative of Timika as a place of chaos and violence is politically expedient – it continues to justify the ever

increasing military and police presence throughout Papua and, tacitly, undermines arguments for an independent, self-governing Papua – then locating the extraordinary in something other than violence suggests, perhaps, a way of feeling the possibility of a future in which freedom is something other than ordered.

### **conclusion: forward-looking statements, revisited**

If Freeport’s “cautionary statement” on the forward-looking language of investor communications (see Chapter One) serves as a legal hedge on the mining company’s performance, in which “actual results may differ materially from those anticipated,” then this chapter explores the relationship between the actual and the anticipated, not so much materially, but affectively. In Chapter Three (“Spectacular witnessing: image, exposure, evidence”), I emphasized a particular temporal fluidity of witnessing linked to iterating violence. This chapter considers the way in which the discursive construction of Timika as a place of temporally discrete instantiations of violence serves a particular political end, even when that narrative is further propagated by residents outside the police and military apparatuses (as in the refrain, *Timika kacau lagi*). If Timika is always chaotic again (*kacau lagi*), then it also always needs to be made ordered again. To further argue that violence in West Papua is disproportionately criminal, rather than political, is to misunderstand the politics of that criminal violence but also, maybe, to misunderstand the evidence of that violence as criminal.

In the final weeks of my fieldwork, an opaque murder occurred. This time, explanations for the violence included rage over the volume of music; an elaborate prophylactic homicide secondary to marital infidelity; or a hit intended to derail ongoing negotiations with Freeport over divestment of the mine. Unlike other instantiations of violence, the perpetrator was immediately apprehended. The only question that remained days later was: Why had he committed the crime? In explaining this murder, a Papuan friend remarked, “What is the point, except to make chaos?” In taking up the

concepts of movement and stillness, I have tried to propose a different politics of Timika's chaos, which finds the extraordinary in everyday moments of affective rupture, rather than in this kind of violence. This is not to question the violence in Timika as any less felt but, rather, to shift ethnographic attention to the temporal fluidity of chaos, rather than its need for returns. "Making chaos" suggests some proximate *before* that was not chaotic. A different kind of future may be possible when ruptures in the present do not demand returns to order.

## CHAPTER 5

### Archiving silence: waiting, hesitation, and the opacity of the poem

Poems, being somewhat unreal, have to earn their way into the world in a way that people do not. But poems are real, too, and answerable to reality they exist because people need or want them – want to make them and sometimes want to read them, too. And in their reality, which is part of their achievement – their having *become*, like Pinocchio, real – they also become instructive, a lesson about how things might work.

Jonathan Farmer

[P]oetry's knowing will always, in the end, remain a question rather than an answer, and thus still be asking, so what do we know?

Angela Leighton

In a conversation with Ape, the Timika-based rapper I discuss in Chapter Three, he complained to me about the tuberculosis community health program where we both were working at the time using the proverb (*pribahasa*): *Tong kosong bunyinya nyaring*. An empty drum, he said, makes a lot of noise. He explained the proverb to me as: *Banyak berbicara tapi tidak ada buktinya* [Lots of talking but no proof], which I took to mean something that, in English, might be articulated as, “All talk and no action” – that is, no proof of accomplishing anything. There was in fact lots of a certain kind of proof of the program’s activities; seemingly small accomplishments throughout the day were endlessly photographed. Internal staff meetings were imaged, archived on smartphone memory chips to be later arranged in quarterly reports as *dokumentasi* for donors and “local stakeholders” that we had done things, like hold staff meetings. But, to Ape, this was all noise, and the imagery in the original Indonesian proverb points to the sound (*bunyi*) this nothingness produces. The proverb, and Ape’s interpretation, do not conceive emptiness as silent but rather as cacophonous.

Anthropologists have written extensively on the relationship between silence and violence (e.g. Feldman 1991; Green 1994; Skidmore 2003), but silence, more often than not, refers to a lack of recognition or accountability for violence, or the thing that violence leaves in its wake. Silence

frequently marks complicity, denial, or forgetting (though, see Jackson 2004; Kidron 2009). In Chapter Two, I analyzed Leo's verse from the song, "Adil ka?" in terms of claims to knowing what is happening in Timika. He had rapped:

Everyone knows Timika is Indonesia's kitchen / It's become news in Asia and the World / Fact /  
The government has data / The nation gets its money from us, the people of Tembagapura / Our  
land is rich but the people suffer / Where are the leaders? / Don't just be silent<sup>95</sup>

This kind of call to action – "Don't just be silent" – is important and not unexpected in the context of Indonesia's official silence in the face of politically motivated and poorly recognized violences in West Papua; through verse, he enacts the response that this very silence demands.<sup>96</sup> But, in this chapter I consider other ways of understanding silence, or other kinds of silences – those that may not index as an absence – perhaps existing in a different relationship to knowing and remembering. And, I ask, what can an attunement to these kinds of silences expose, or expose as unknowable?

I want principally to think about silence, and specifically silences of the poem, in relationship to archiving. If archives aim to order, reassemble, store, preserve in "a system that facilitates identification and interpretation" and are kept "in a public place, where they can be consulted according to well-established procedures and regulations" (Mbembe 2002: 20), is it possible to

---

<sup>95</sup> The trope of silence appears nearly universally in the work of Papuan poets I have known and read. Honny Pigai, a Papuan (Mee) Catholic priest in Timika, for example, published the poem, "Don't be quiet [*Jangan Diam*]" (see Pigai 2012, 2014). And yet, Diana Mariska, a young Timika-based Papuan poet, writes in "The Will of Silence [*Kehendak Hening*]" how silence "is painful but gives peace" [*menyakitkan namun memberi damai*]. Silence fills out the affective contours of a scene, at times indexing terror, but at other times stillness, and it is, in part, this possibility for silence to transmute that I am interested in here.

<sup>96</sup> I would distinguish the "good lie" of silence surrounding political violence in Papua from the kind of silence Joshua Oppenheimer's documentary, *The Look of Silence* (2014), explores in the context of the 1965-66 Indonesian mass murder of those suspected and accused of links to the Communist party (PKI) (see, for example, Robinson (2018); Roosa (2006); and Anderson and McVey (2009) for historical accountings and analysis). The film follows Adi, the brother of a victim of this genocide and links silence to Indonesia's failure to reckon with its history of mass murder. The film is replete with prolonged silences of its own, as Adi confronts his brother's murderers and those otherwise complicit in the violence. Silence becomes synonymous with complicity and a desire, as numerous perpetrators repeat in some form throughout the film, to let the past be the past. But, silence, here, is not denial that the events occurred – in fact, the perpetrators often proudly take responsibility and boast of their 'accomplishments' – but rather denial that these acts were unjustified. Silence is a widespread trope in writing on the 1965-66 killings: Sukanta's (2014) edited volume *Breaking the Silence: survivor's speak about 1965-66 violence in Indonesia* or Marching's *The End of Silence: Accounts of the 1965 Genocide in Indonesia*, for example, further point to the way in which this form of denial is understood through silence.

imagine disordered archives that exist privately, opaquely, and ephemerally? Or rather, archives that exist *because* they cannot be ordered?<sup>97</sup> If the archive is the “domain of things that belong exclusively to no one” (26), this kind of archive would exist because it is deeply personal. Garcia (2016) argues that archives, “[i]nscribed with counterdiscourses [...] may open up the possibility of new historical narratives and modes of subjectivity that are not reducible to the power of the state” (575).<sup>98</sup> In this vein, similar to the mode of witnessing I describe in Chapter Three, I want to consider the ways a poem archives silence that is in contrast to the Indonesian ideals of transparency and *dokumentasi*.

Throughout the dissertation I have aimed to develop a poetic epistemology, suggesting an alternative mode of witnessing violence, but also stillness, in Timika, that does not reproduce the logic of the state. In this final chapter I turn to the poetic form itself to consider the way in which Papuan poets are creating counterarchives (and counterdiscourses) through poetry. Here, I suggest an archival epistemology that does not seek order but rather allows text to move forwards and backwards across time and space, forming disordered archives mediated by the poem. Of the poem, Farmer argues that, “[i]t creates, in reality, only itself. Sometimes, I think, we talk about poetry as if that weren’t the case, and our imagination of what a poem can ethically accomplish narrows as a result. The virtue of a poem may be, in some cases, that it gives us a chance to do or feel what elsewhere we shouldn’t” (2019: 32). In ascribing materiality to the poem, and locating the poem’s realness in that materiality, it becomes easy to forget or discount other realities the poem might offer.

---

<sup>97</sup> Another way to think of this kind of disordered archive might be, following Bubandt (2014), in terms of a Derridean auto-immunity (2003). If ordering is a principle logic of the archive, then an archive that exists *because* it cannot easily be catalogued, preserved or remembered suggests this kind of “illogical logic.”

<sup>98</sup> See also Povinelli (2011b) and Thomas (2013) on the production of post-colonial archives which generate evidence that might differently historicize the past. Povinelli, for example, imagines a “postcolonial archive [that] will create new forms of storage and preservation and new archival spaces and time, in which a social otherwise can endure and thus change existing social formations of power” (153). Thomas is specifically concerned with “archives of violence in order to understand the types of evidence that are being generated across disciplines and the uses to which this evidence might be put” (38). She argues that “archives of violence bring into relief the limits of the anti- and immediately postcolonial focus on the nation-state as the primary locus of vindication” (29).

The poem offers an alternative kind of archive, a space that can both hold and remember the experience of the poet *for* the poet – a kind of witness. But, for the poem’s audience, it also a kind of anarchiving, “something that catches us in our own becoming” (Manning 2019 *in* Singh 2018: 113), a “future archive” (Singh 2013: 113). While the material realness of the poem exists only in the frame of the present, the poem infinitely creates, holding a never-ending *possible* archive, dispersed through those who differently experience the poem. In some cases the poem seems to offer a literal ordering of silences – waiting at the end of a line or verse, beats of rest, punctuation that pauses – the possibility of the not-yet resolution of sound and sense. But the work of the unspoken in those moments of poetic hesitation – “the chance[s] to do or feel what elsewhere we shouldn’t” – offers the possibility of an archive dispersed, disordered, locatable only within the experiences of poet and audience. These are silences that remember (and are remembered) not because they have been ordered or documented but because they have been sensed. The kind of silence I am describing is not an absence of sound but an experience, perhaps ephemeral, of stillness (see Chapter Four, “Freedom as stillness”).

Describing what she calls “the ghost archive,” Singh (2018) writes that, “[t]he stories that comprise us have left us both wanting more, wishing we had access to a fuller narrative frame” (96). She refers to “this wishing-wanting desire [as] ‘the ghost archive.’” This archive is “everything we need to know but cannot know as we keep circling and sniffing around the edges. Everything that keeps affecting us and affecting others through us. Everything that remains right there, but just out of reach” (96). Even as, for Singh, the ghost archive is an archive of the self, the poem might be thought of as realizing a different kind of ghost archive, whose knowing is always literally “right there” in verse but always at least a little bit unknowable.

Drawing on Foucault (1972) and Derrida’s (1996) “understand[ing of] of the archive as a kind of power rather than a kind of thing,” Povinelli (2011b) suggests that “archival power depends



not only on an ability to shelter the memory of its own construction so as to appear as a form of rule without a command but also on a certain inexhaustible suspicion that somewhere another, fuller account of this rule exists” (150-1). In thinking about the poetic archive, I am less interested in the poem’s ability to obscure the memory of its creation; for the poet, part of what the poem remembers *is* that very moment. But, for the audience, that suspicion that a “fuller account of its rule” exists is what gives the poetic archive subversive potential. That it cannot be transparently understood or experienced ‘correctly,’ that it is impossible to know the poet’s intentions – in short, the opacities of the poem – contribute to the sense that a rule might not even exist and its audience may never have “access to a fuller narrative frame,” even as new archives of interpretation continuously emerge through its audience. This may be the poem’s most dangerous potential: its reader cannot help but amplify this poetic not-knowing.

### **the opposites of silence: dissonant resonances, revisited**

Apakah harus diam saja?

Must we just be silent?

“Adil ka?”, Dapoer ATS

Nyatanya kalau memang ditemukan korban meninggal, ya itulah eksekusi dari suatu konflik.’ Saat ditanya, jika benar anggotanya salah sasaran dan mengakibatkan warga sipil menjadi korban, apakah akan memprosesnya secara hukum, Aidi mengklaim anggotanya menembak sasaran yang tepat. ‘Posisi kami diserang. Kalau ada terjadi korban akibat kejadian itu, ya anda bisa simpulkan korbannya karena apa?’ lanjutnya. Kalau kami diserang dengan panah, batu, atau tombak, apakah kami harus diam?

‘In fact, if it’s found that a victim died, yeah, that’s an excess of the conflict.’ When asked if soldiers had incorrectly targeted and, as a result, civilians had become victims, would they be brought to justice?, Aidi claimed that the soldiers had shot on target. ‘Our position was attacked. If casualties occurred as a consequence of that [their response], yeah, what makes you able to conclude they were victims?, he continued. ‘If we are attacked with bows, stones, or spears, must we be silent?’

Muhammad Aidi, Infantry Colonel, Kodam XVII/Cendrawasih

In Chapter Two (“Between sound and sense”), I suggest that listening for something like dissonant resonances across disparate, seemingly contradictory, voices offers the possibility for a kind of

knowing amidst an official Indonesian state policy of denial and concurrent cultivation of epistemic uncertainty. Here, I return to that mode of analysis to consider what might be heard by juxtaposing invocations of silence and re-imagining the archives of sound produced through these utterances. I return to two moments introduced earlier in the dissertation: the final, repeated line of Dapoer ATS's "Adil ka?" – "Must we just be silent?" – and the official military response to a police shooting in Deiyai. In the latter, the military's response countered silence with gunfire, claiming their violent response as a response to violence. Through verse, the hip-hop collective offers a provocation; in effect, they challenge their audience to oppose the very thing they have just created and publicly distributed.<sup>99</sup> After a ten-minute long performance of their opposite of silence, they dare a retaliatory response. Much like the military's reply, it is as if to say, "What else did you expect us to do?"

Though Dapoer ATS wrote the song "Adil ka?" before the shooting in Deiyai, the verse can be heard as an anticipatory response to the shooting but also, in this present moment, as a retroactive reimagining of the past un-silenced (Trouillot 1995). Hartman (2008) argues that "[b]y flattening the levels of narrative discourse and confusing narrator and speakers, [she] hoped to illuminate the contested character of history, narrative, event, and fact, to topple the hierarchy of discourse, and to engulf authorized speech in the clash of voices" (12). Infantry Colonel Muhammad Aidi's question is clearer – the hierarchy of discourse, clearer – when his statement to the media is imagined as a verse off "Adil ka?". What if Dapoer ATS had rapped, "Our position was attacked. What makes you able to conclude they were victims? Must we be silent?" Who is expected to stay silent is not unrelated to who, in this hierarchy of discourse, is allowed to become a victim. And yet, in an odd sense, confusing the narrators of these silences draws attention to the fact that, here, no one can be a victim. The military's response discursively disallows the possibility that they might be understood as victims

---

<sup>99</sup> Given the response to their music video, their audience almost certainly included members of the police and military apparatus.

– the sound of gunfire a crude if legible index of power – even as they simultaneously disallow the possibility that their own violence, always justified, could ever produce victims.

Though these interrogative statements – “Must we (just) be silent?” – read nearly identically on the page, who speaks and to whom makes audible the dissonance of these utterances. That the statements are nearly identical and yet elicit markedly different responses amplifies this effect. If the opposite of silence is, for the military, the sound of gunfire, then for Dapoer ATS it is something that does not also seek *to* silence. And yet, in questioning the necessity of their respective silences they are both, already, something other than silent. Their invocations follow a retroactively explanatory logic. Audiences are asked to imagine silence in the subjunctive, as if the possibility of silence was not, in those moments, already foreclosed. In both cases, the opposite of silence is a response that has already been heard. But, can silence, itself, be imagined as something other than an absence or failure to respond? Something that rejects this hierarchy of discourse altogether? What kind of “clash of voices” might be happening in, rather than in response to, silence?

I asked the Timika-based Papuan poet Diana Mariska<sup>100</sup> what she thought about the exhortation not to remain silent. She had written a poem, “The Will of Silence [*Kebendak Hening*],” and there was a line in the poem that seemed at odds with the desire to replace silence with something else, be it noise, narrative or gunfire, the latter of which is maybe both. She wrote of how silence “pains but gives peace” [*menyakitkan namun memberi damai*] and it seemed, in that line, that silence could be understood as a response rather than an absence. She explained:

‘Jangan diam saja’ mungkin dengan, keheningan itu, kamu bisa mulai dengan hal-hal yang simpel seperti ini, seperti kamu menulis, kamu tidak perlu seperti berkoar-koar membuat sebuah seperti lagu, atau apa. Tapi dengan tulisanmu, dengan gagasanmu, dengan pemikiranmu karena ada-ada banyak hal menyampaikan aspirasi, untuk sebuah keadilan, atau jadi seperti. Kamu-kamu mungkin sebuah individual atau pribadi yang suka dengan hal-hal seperti-seperti apa yang kamu-kelebihanmu, itu yang harus diikuti. Itu menurut saya. Harus diikuti. Seperti kelebihanmu. Seperti kamu punya kelebihan dalam hal seperti menulis puisi atau di dalam bernyanyi atau bermusik, jadi seperti mengikuti... passion. Iya, jadi, sebenarnya tidak tinggal diam. Kamu melakukan sesuatu tapi dengan versimu sendiri, seperti ya,

---

<sup>100</sup> Diana Mariska is a pseudonym chosen by the poet.

kamu diam, kamu sebenarnya tidak diam, tapi hanya orang tidak tahu apa yang kamu lakukan. [...] Saya mendoakan sesuatu tapi orang tidak tau. Seperti... Kalau secara pribadi, saya selalu mendoakan tentang Papua merdeka, ya, tapi orang tidak pernah tau. Ya, seperti itu. Jadi, ada keheningan di dalam diri setiap orang. Dan, orang, banyak orang tidak – bukan banyak orang – hampir semua orang tidak tahu.

‘Don’t just be silent,’ maybe with that silence, you can begin with something simple like this, like you write, you don’t have to brag about making like a song, or whatever. But with your writing, with your idea, with your thoughts – because there are lots of ways to convey aspirations, for fairness, or, like. You...you are maybe an individual or someone who likes [certain] things like...like whatever you excel at, that’s what you have to follow. That’s my opinion. It has to be followed. Like, [if] your gifts are in something like writing poetry or in singing or music, so it’s like, following passion. Yeah, so, hmm, actually it’s not staying quiet. You make something but with your own verse, like, you are quiet but actually not quiet; it’s only that people don’t know what you are doing [...] Like, I pray for something but people don’t know. Like, privately I always pray for an independent Papua, yeah, but no one ever knows. Yeah, like that. So, there is a silence in each person. And, people, lots of people don’t – not lots of people – nearly everyone doesn’t know.

There is a sound to making something – to creativity and passion – that is both subversive and unknown.<sup>101</sup> Rather than framing silence as something that requires a response, Diana frames silence, here, as a kind of creative potential. Though, in effect, silence *is* a response, just not one that seeks an audience. If silence for both Dapoer ATS and the Indonesian military is a failure to audibly respond, then Diana offers an alternative: the silences found within that are powerful because they cannot be heard.

### the poem’s opacities

Tuhan / Tolong / Jaga kami / Karna kami / Tak mampu / Berjalan / Sendiri  
God / Please / Protect us / Because we / Aren’t able / To walk / Alone

One evening, a young friend I will call Ganesa, pulled out his diary, laid it on my kitchen table, and directed me to a poem. Above is the first verse from that poem. He had written it years earlier, only

---

<sup>101</sup> Cvetkovich’s (2012) conception of creativity, hinging on movement, offers another helpful way into thinking about the affective (rather than kinetic) stillness within chaos that I consider in Chapter Four. She argues, “This notion of creativity as movement can also benefit from queer phenomenologies, as well as queer ways of thinking about temporalities that move backward and sideways rather than just forward. Creativity encompasses different ways of being able to move: to solve problems, have ideas, be joyful about the present, make things. Conceived of in this way, it is embedded in everyday life, not something that belongs only to artists or to transcendent forms of experience” (21). Cultivating the silence I describe in this section might, then, be thought of as way of being or becoming still in everyday life.

days after his mother's presumed assassination. (Presumed is a not unproblematic word, here. I presume, but he knows.) The story of her death echoes vignettes from the previous chapter, in which hospitals can be understood as unsurprising, if still unsettling, spaces of homicide, but the words on the page do not convey the violence of the moment he memorializes in any literal way. Yet, in some ways, this unassuming page in his journal was the material evidence of her murder. The poem reflects a kind of epistemic intimacy that Martin described when he had said, "It's only us who know," but this time the 'we' who knows is narrower and more intimate – here, it is just Ganesa, God, and his dead mother. The kind of knowing they uniquely share, however, is not the murder itself, which is more widely (if not universally) acknowledged, but rather the pain it is causing Ganesa. To evidence this grief is to evidence a murder.

In the poem's first verse, the 'us' (*kami*) who needs protecting remains opaque to a reader, like myself, who was never the original intended audience for the poem. Is it his surviving family? His probably dead father? A different, more expansive 'we,' like 'Papuan's'?<sup>102</sup> The verse's intended audience, God, was understood to already know whoever it is that the verse interpellates. The poem's limited intended audience, however, is also fluid, shifting from one verse to the next. Though Ganesa begins by addressing God, the verse that follows offers a direct plea with his deceased mother, changing the scale of the poem's grieving from possibly infinite (who really *is* able to walk alone?) to intimately finite.

Mama peluk aku / Sedetik / Saja Aku / Sangat lelah dgn / Semua ini  
Mama, hug me / Just / A second, I / Am very weak from / All this

---

<sup>102</sup> If, as Farmer suggests, "the unlikeliness, that affirmation, that sense, for however long we can keep it alive, that a viable 'we' exists" is "the best description [he has] for what poems sometimes do for [him]" (2019: 13), then in sharing the poem with me, and allowing me to reproduce it here, I have the sense that Ganesa, too, imagines enlarging that viable 'we' from that which he originally intended.

This second verse assumes his audience, his mother, understands the meaning of “all this,” even as the third and last verse could be read as a hedge to the second, in a sense, an acceptance that what he has imagined as possible in the previous verse, he knows to be possible no longer. In this last verse he again speaks directly with God, this time as a conduit, so that he may be able to convey to his mother his longing for her.

Tuhan tolong / Sampaikan / Rindu ku / Kepada Mama / Tercinta  
God please / Tell / My beloved / Mama / That I miss her

The poetic return in the third verse might, though, be read as something other than a hedge but, rather, the possibility of at once holding two seemingly contradictory truths, that he can talk directly to his mother as if she were still alive and that she is also with God. Or, he can both know that his mother is with God but not yet know how that changes his relationship to her. The poem archives these kinds of (not-)knowing that Leighton points to as the contradictory knowing that both the poet’s process of writing and the reader’s experience of listening can elicit:

[K]nowing and not knowing are not absolute opposites for the poet, for the one might be layered over the other and both ‘known’ at once. The poet might come to know what he doesn’t know or not know what he knows. The contradiction catches something of the surprise and familiarities that poetry can bring, often at the same time, and to both writer and reader (Leighton 2018: 259).

The intervening pauses between each verse, exaggerated in the way that I have presented the poem, allow the reader to hear Ganesa’s hesitation as he struggles with how now to know and talk with his dead mother. In those silences, a reader might faintly hear him saying: Who do I turn to now?

Writing of how the “impossible archive” of her body includes sounds she has never heard, Singh (2018) reflects, “That I never actually heard that sound makes it no less real to me, no less part of the compilation of materials, affects, and noises that make my embodied life what it is” (79). Much in the way Singh argues that the absence of sound is something that her body can still remember, I

would argue that the poem can do something similar – in fact, the poetic form is *meant* to do something similar.<sup>103</sup>

Ganesa's poem, scribbled in a personal journal, bearing no signs of struck words, re-arranged lines, or erasures, points to the way in which the verse archives a particular, maybe even spontaneous, moment that is both specific and ongoing, existing, as Leighton suggests of the poem, as a present participle. The poem conveys the sense of a thing that happened but that is not over; the end of the poem introduces a final, indefinite hesitation, implying perhaps that the end of the poem and the final verse may not be one and the same. The end of this poem may, instead, be the impossible resolution – for both poet and audience – to the poem's contradictory knowing.

To understand the unwritten violence Ganesa nonetheless conveys – a silence that isn't – is to contend with what it means for an archive of adolescence to begin in grief. Laden with doodles of marijuana leaves, AK-47s labeled as AK-47s, the words "illegal crew" etched in robust bubble letters, superimposing over and interspersing with poem upon poem devoted to teenage love, the materiality of his journal offers an archive that embraces the chaotic; this is not an ordered document. Yet, the journal mediates another kind of knowing and remembering found in both the ephemeral, but also unending, moments that cannot be pinned down or pointed to on the page. It is a disorder that can also disorient, perhaps without knowing it is disorienting. These are the moments of potentiality, hesitation and waiting that the poem archives – in Diana's words, the way "you," but I would add, the poem, "are quiet but actually not quiet."

---

<sup>103</sup> In Michael W. Clune's (2016) essay, "How Poems Know What It's Like to Die," he explores the ways in which Emily Dickinson's famous poem "I heard a Fly buzz" suggests how a kind of "absorbed listening" can be "an experiential analogue for death" (645). As he argues, "Dickinson simply asks that we take seriously that aspect of the experience of absorbed listening that causes us to speak of 'losing ourselves.' Dying is just like losing oneself in sound, the poem suggests, with the difference that in the case of death, one doesn't return to oneself" (634). Drawing on this analysis, I am thinking about the way both the reader and poet, here Ganesa, might lose themselves (in different ways) listening to the poem's silences. Grief might be thought of as a form of "losing oneself" from which one can, repeatedly, return.

A few days after Ganesa first showed me his journal, he brought me another, older looking journal filled with his father’s poetry. In later communication, after I had left Timika for the foreseeable future, it became clear that his father had also died, but, when he showed me this diary, at the same kitchen table in Timika, the fact of his death was less clear to me. And, I had come to understand this ambiguity as a kind of uncertainty that I should not seek to clarify. At the time I had understood his father to have fled Timika by boat; whatever had happened, he was no longer a physical presence in Ganesa’s life. He told me that, like his diary, I could make a copy of this journal though, unlike his diary, this document was for me alone to witness. At the time, it had made me think that his father was still alive, and he, perhaps, did not have permission to share the contents of the journal. Or that, if his father were alive, the poems might prove politically inflammatory and, thus, pose an existential risk. Most of my explanations for the secrecy of the journal concerned his father’s safety. Now I imagine the journal as mediating a kind of intimate, if unspoken, relationship between Ganesa and his father, another way through which he negotiates his grief through an archive of unheard sounds.

\*\*

Of the end of a poem, Agamben asks: “What is this falling into silence of the poem? What is beauty that falls? And what is left of the poem after its ruin?” (1999: 114). Framed differently, I would ask, what might the poem leave in its wake? And so, here, I want to consider further what kind of knowing is made possible in what the poem never does reveal, and to do that, I want, with her permission, to offer a poem written by Diana Mariska. The poem is called *Merah Putih Aku*, or, Red

Merah Putih Aku [Red and White am I]

Bergetar jiwaku  
Kala Sang Merah Putih berkibar

My soul vibrates  
When the Red and White<sup>104</sup> flies

---

<sup>104</sup> “Merah Putih” is a synonym for the Indonesian flag; its literal translation is the Red and White. There was some discussion with the poet as to whether the English translation for “Merah Putih” should simply be “flag” or “Indonesian



Di udara

Kilau cahaya memancarkan kehangatan  
Ketika Sang Merah Putih  
Menyatu dalamku

Jiwaku tenang dalam balutan merah darah  
yang seakan mebara  
dan  
Putih tulangku yang begitu kokoh  
bak tiang bendera

Aku dan Merah Putihku  
Selamanya

In the air

Light's luster emits a warmth  
When Red and White  
Become one within me

My soul is calm wrapped in red blood  
as if smoldering  
and  
the white of my bones as sturdy  
as a flagpole

Me and my Red and White  
Forever<sup>105</sup>

The first time I read her poem, I was perplexed. If the Dapoer ATS song *Adil ka?* (or, “Is it fair?) *evokes* a politics of separatism, even when the lyrics subtly suggest otherwise, Diana’s poem, *Merah Putih Aku* does something else. In one sense, the imagery she evokes could not be clearer. The red and white of the Indonesian flag fuse both corporeally and spiritually within her; Indonesia is not just metaphorically in her blood and her bones, Indonesia *is* her blood and bones. She, further, provides an exegetical aside at the end of the poem: “an offering for Indonesia.” When I first read the poem, I thought of Papuan friends and colleagues – both mine and hers – who would find this poem heretical. And I asked Diana about that reaction:

Jadi, hmm, mungkin orang... orang Papua yang akan membaca puisi ini dan, sangat [...] ingin tentang Papua merdeka, mungkin mereka akan marah sama saya atau mereka akan tidak senang dengan puisi ini. Karena seolah-olah saya pro terhadap Indonesia. [...] Ketika saya tulis puisi ini, itu betul-betul saya ada dalam posisi yang, yang sangat emosional ketika merindukan masa kecil yang penuh dengan perayaan – perayaan sebelum Indonesia, apa, sebelum seperti pesta kemerdekaan Indonesia waktu masa kecil. Jadi kembali lagi ketika, membaca tentang sejarah kemerdekaan Indonesia... terus akhirnya saya merasa bahwa kemerdekaan Indonesia itu, sesuatu yang patut untuk disyukuri. [...] Saya seperti banyak sekali puisi tentang Papua dan hal-hal yang terkait dengan seperti, kesedihan yang ada di dalam hati saya tentang, hmm, Indonesia terhadap Papua seperti apa... ketidakadilan, pembunuhan, seperti itu. Nah, puisi-puisi itu sebenarnya banyak cuman saya tidak pernah share ke siapa-siapa [...] seperti sekarang saya masih warga negara Indonesia. Ketika saya mem*publish* sesuatu yang... seperti itu, mungkin saya akan jadi *blacklist* untuk Indonesia karena mereka akan berpikir bahwa saya, sangat mendukung Papua merdeka. Seperti itu, jadi kalau dari dalam hati, saya sangat mendukung memang seperti itu.

---

flag.” In the first verse, “Merah Putih” is translated as “*the* Red and White,” to directly invoke the flag. In the second verse, the same Indonesian expression is translated without “the,” representing a kind of transition from the red and white of the first and third verses. The poem culminates by imagining the colors of the Indonesian flag as her blood and bones.

<sup>105</sup> Translation conceived in collaboration with poet.

So, hmm, maybe people ... Papuans will read this poem and will really [...] want it to be about Papuan independence,” she says, “maybe they’ll be angry with me or they’ll be unhappy with the poem. Because it [reads] *as if* I am pro-Indonesia. [...] But] when I wrote this poem, I was in this position of being really emotional when I was missing [my] childhood that was full of celebration of Indonesia’s independence. Reading about the history of Indonesia’s independence, in the end I felt like [it], it was something to be grateful for. [...] [But] I like a lot of poetry about Papua and related issues, like the sadness in my heart for Indonesia’s opposition to Papua, like injustice, like murder, things like that. *Nah*, honestly, I’ve [written] a lot of that poetry, it’s just that I haven’t shared it with anyone. [...] Like, right now, I’m still an Indonesian citizen. If I publish something like that, maybe I’ll be blacklisted by Indonesia because they’ll think that I support Papuan independence. But, in my heart, I actually really do support it.

The poem is simultaneously literal and deceptive in its apparent meaning. It is not that she means to deceive – though later she will tell me that, in a way, all poems deceive. Rather, to speak a certain truth, some things have to remain hidden. “The more literal a poem appears,” she says, “the more dangerous it is.” She is saying that she can both love Indonesia and support Papuan independence. I would argue, the poem is opaque because what appears as the end of the poem is not in fact its end. In Chapter One, I poetically read Nuran’s speech to the U.N. and the foreboding WhatsApp message as an archive once dispersed; here, I do not have to imagine. Diana’s poems that live elsewhere, in her journals, poems I have not seen or read, offer a rejoinder to “Merah Putih Aku.” They are the unheard dissonant resonances that make up a living archive.

If Leo’s verse ends, “Don’t just be silent,” a kind of call to arms to mobilize voices, and Ape raps, “Don’t expect us just to be silent,” Diana understands silence differently, as itself a kind of voice:

Ketika kamu bisa merasakan kedamaian di dalam dirimu sendiri dengan menulis sebuah puisi, itu seperti kamu sedang berbicara dengan dirimu sendiri. [...] Seperti mungkin kamu marah terhadap sesuatu dan kamu menuliskan itu. Itu, kamu sedang mencoba menggambarkan apa yang kamu rasakan. Dan ketika itu tertulis, dan kamu membaca itu, kamu bisa merasakan seperti keheningan, tapi juga ada rasa lega. Tapi ketika disharing, perasaan itu tidak akan berubah karena kamu-kamu, apa, mengalami proses kreatifnya. Kamu tahu perasaan ketika kamu tulis puisi itu. Jadi, itu akan tetap seperti itu. Sampai selamanya. [...] Jadi keheningan itu tetap ada di dalam diri – dan, sampai kapanpun itu, biarpun orang sudah mungkin nanti akan membaca karya ini dan akan menginterpretasikan ke berbagai hal, bisa, relate ke berbagai...apapun yang mereka mau, tapi perasaan si penulis – maksudnya saya sendiri itu, seperti tetap. Tetap sama. Saya tetap bisa bersuara di dalam keheningan.

When you can feel inner peace in writing a poem, it’s like you are talking with yourself. Protecting the silence within you, like making peace with yourself. Like maybe you’re mad about something and you write about that. You are trying to describe what you feel. And when that’s written and you can read that, you can feel like a silence, but also a feeling of relief. But when it’s shared, that feeling won’t change because you, *you* experienced the creative process. You know the feeling when you wrote that poem. It will always be like that. Until forever. [...]

So that silence will always be inside you -- until whenever or even if people will maybe later read that work and interpret it in various ways, relate to it in various ways, however they want, but the writer's feeling – meaning me, persists. Remains the same. [...] It's like I can still have a voice [even] in my own silence.

And so, when Agamben asks, “What is this falling into silence of the poem? What is beauty that falls? And what is left of the poem after its ruin?” Diana offers an answer: that silence is the voice of the poet. Her silence is a different kind of something that could be mistakenly understood as an absence – or a nothing. Though the poem is infinitely interpretable – each reader offers his or her own understanding – no audience can ever know the moment in the poet's life that produced the poem, even as that moment is forever preserved in its verse. If a poem can be the most intimate reflection of the self, writer Maggie Nelson helps frame my question of the poem: “Can a reflection,” she asks “be a witness?” (Nelson 2009: 35).

\*\*

Seakan bungkam pada semua tragedi  
Kenyataan yang terus-menurus  
Menyakitkan hingga bahagia  
Bagaimanakah mulut itu dapat?  
Berbicara atau malah memilih DIAM?  
Biarlah...

As if numb from all the tragedy  
A reality that persists,  
Sickening until happy  
How can the mouth be?  
Speaking or, instead, choosing SILENCE?  
Let it be...

“Bisu [Mute],” Diana Mariska

Diana is telling me about the context in which she wrote another poem, maybe the poem above.

Months later, when I am working through the transcript of our conversation, neither of us can remember which poem we had been talking about. She describes the context in which she wrote the poem we cannot now remember:

DIANA: Pernah ada pembunuhan di pasar atau dimana saya lupa, tapi tentang situasi Timika yang sangat tidak aman tidak kondusif.  
There was a murder in the market or somewhere, I don't remember, but it was about a situation in Timika that was really unsafe, not conducive.

Echoing the police narratives described in Chapter Three, in which the climate needed to be made conducive (*iklim yang kondusif*), Diana describes the situation in Timika as unsafe (*tidak aman*) and not conducive (*tidak kondusif*), reproducing the language of order. She continues:

DIANA: Orang-orang diberitahukan kalau tidak boleh keluar malam, seperti apa seperti itu. Jadi seperti perasaan ketika itu saya menulis puisi itu, saya merasa seperti, hmm, ada pertumpahan darah di atas tanah ini, dan menimbulkan banyak rasa takut. Sebenarnya, hmm, mereka tidak tau apa yang sebenarnya terjadi, tapi hanya karena mendengar isu ini dan itu, akhirnya orang menjadi takut untuk beraktifitas untuk melangkah keluar rumah...seperti itu. Seperti, ketakutan yang sebenarnya itu, hmm, tentang keamanan, rasa-rasa aman. Jadi seperti, kenapa sampai saat ini masih sering terjadi pembunuhan dan yang menjadi korban itu orang Papua? Kenapa harus orang Papua harus mati di atas tanahnya dan dibunuh oleh orang yang bukan orang Papua, seperti itu? [...]

People were informed that they weren't allowed to go out at night, like that. So, that was the feeling when I wrote that poem, I felt like, hmm, blood had spilled on this land, and lots of fear arose. Actually, hmm, they didn't actually know what had happened, they only heard [it was] because of this issue or that. In the end, people became scared to be active, to step outside the house...like that. Like, that fear that's really about security, the sense of security. So, like, why are there still now frequent killings that make victims of Papuans? Why do Papuans have to be killed on their land and killed by people who aren't Papuan, like that?

CC: Masalahnya itu, sering ada pembunuhan seperti itu?  
That problem, are there often killings like that?

I chose to focus on the frequency of the killings rather than the quality of the experiences they produced – the fear, insecurity, and, ultimately the uncertainty.

DIANA: Iya, pembunuhan yang tidak jelas. Dan orang hanya mendengar berita yang simpang-siur, berita yang datang dan terus tidak jelas...apa namanya, sumbernya darimana. Mereka hanya bilang...“ada orang baku bunuh di pasar!”. Hanya seperti itu. Terus korbannya siapa? Yang bunuh siapa? Seperti...makanya itu saya seperti, kadang saya ingin menjadi wartawan juga, [*tawa*] saya ingin mencari informasi yang lebih dalam tentang sesuatu, dan ingin menulisnya, seperti...puisi yang ini.

Yeah, killings that aren't clear. And people who only hear stories that are like mazes, news that arrives and then it's not clear...where its sourced from.

They only say... “Someone was killed in the market!” Just like that. Then, who’s the victim? Who’s the killer? Like...consequently I am like, sometimes I want to become a reporter [*laughter*]; I want to seek more in-depth information about something, and write about it, like...[in] this poem.

This moment in our conversation resonates with the conversation Ape and I had about witnessing (Chapter Three), in which I sensed his rebuke of a particular way I had sought to document the memory of violence. There, the multiplicity and collectivity of that memory made it irreducible to the kind of narrative I had sought to recuperate from his experience. Here, in talking with Diana, the epistemological shift does not so much take the form of rebuke but rather a seamless recognition. She, too, had wanted to know a certain kind of information (Who is the victim? Who is the killer?) from stories that are like mazes but that “in-depth information” is ultimately something to be remembered through the poem.

DIANA: Dan ada, setelah menulis puisi yang ini, selang seperti satu atau dua jam, saya menulis lagi tentang kebebasan [...] Itu seperti, seperti saya ingin, hmm, tanah ini, tanah Papua... Aman dan merdeka dan bebas dari semua penjajah, terus semua masyarakat mulai dari daerah pegunungan sampai pesusur pantai, pokoknya semua yang berambut keriting dan berkulit hitam, bisa hidup suatu saat seperti setara, saling mendukung, saling seperti hidup bahagia di atas tanah mereka. Jadi, itu, puisi tentang Papua merdeka, saya ada menuliskan beberapa kata, tapi bukan ‘merdeka’ tapi ‘kebebasan’.

And after I wrote this poem, there was, after an hour or two, I wrote again about freedom [*kebebasan*] [...] It’s like, like I want, hmm, this land, the land of Papua...[to be] safe and independent [*merdeka*] and free [*bebas*] from the colonizer, and then for all the people [*masyarakat*], from the mountains to the coast, essentially everyone with curly hair and black skin, can live some time as equals, helping each other, on their land. So, that – the poetry about a free [*merdeka*] Papua – I have written some words, but not on ‘independence [*merdeka*]’ but rather ‘freedom [*kebebasan*].’

CC: Jadi kamu membedakan antara ‘kemerdekaan’ dan ‘kebebasan’?  
So, you differentiate between ‘independence’ and ‘freedom’?

DIANA: Seperti... Seperti itu dua kata yang berbeda tapi memiliki arti yang sama, sama-sama ingin bebas melalui kemerdekaan itu. Jadi saya memakai kata, ‘bebas’ untuk mengganti kata ‘merdeka’.

Like, those are two different words, but they hold the same meaning, it’s the same to desire to be free through that independence. So, I use the word ‘free’ in lieu of the word ‘independent.’

The desire to write about a murder – to gather “in-depth information” – does not lead her to write a poem that looks like it is about murder but, instead, to write a poem about freedom. Framed differently, to write a poem about freedom *is* (also) to write a poem about that specific murder because the poem preserves that “feeling when [she] wrote that poem.” If, as Singh (2018) argues, the body holds “an infinite history of traces without leaving an inventory” (18), so too does the poem. Diana describes the decision to write about freedom using language that does not index as political in the same way as would the language of *merdeka*. If the rallying cry of a free Papua is *Papua Merdeka!*, where independence and freedom are synonymous, she uses the word for freedom (*kebebasan*), rather than independence (*kemerdekaan*) as a way to say something without saying it, or, rather, to say something that only a specific audience will hear and understand.

### **conclusion: silences that take hold**

Drawing on the work of Indonesian writer Pramoedya Ananta Toer, Sears (2013) considers Indonesian literary works as “situated testimonies” which have the capacity to alter historical memory and amend silences in the historical record.<sup>106</sup> In many ways, this chapter does point to the ways in which poems might similarly be conceived of as situated testimonies. Of Ganesa’s poem, for example, I *am* interested in what kind of witnessing the poem might allow. Can the poem, for

---

<sup>106</sup> Throughout this chapter, Indonesian writer Pramoedya Ananta Toer’s work intimates a siren call, a kind of temptation that needs resisting, in thinking through both the capacity for the literary to evidence, as well as the way in which silence can be understood as experience. Sears (2013) does just that, opening her analysis with a quotation from Ananta Toer’s essay, “Ma’af, Atas Nama Pengalaman,” in which he writes: “Dan jadilah kenyataan baru, kenyataan sastra, kenyataan hilir, yang asalnya adalah hulu yang itu juga, kenyataan historis [And so there came to be a new reality, a literary reality, a downstream reality, whose origin was an upstream reality, that is, a historical reality]” (Toer 1992 [Bardsley 1996]: 4). Later in the essay, Toer continues, “One can imagine how awesome is the task of dealing with all this unfinished business in a work of literature. Not to mirror or reflect events, because the task of literature is not to take pictures, but to change upstream realities to become a literary reality, that will carry its readers further forward than the established order” (Toer 1992 [Bardsley 1996]: 12). Despite the deep resonances with his work, I have consciously chosen to limit my analysis in this chapter to the work of Papuan poets, though these resonances – as well, the possibility of drawing false equivalencies – deserve further exploration. Herman Wainggai (2018), the nephew of Dr. Thom Wainggai, a Papuan scholar and political activist whose life ended as a political prisoner in an Indonesian jail, implicitly offers a glimpse of the problem with introducing Indonesian literature into my discussion, noting how reading Indonesian poetry was (and is) a colonizing experience for Papuans and how reading Papuan poetry has offered an alternative to “learn[ing] to be faithful Indonesian citizens.”

example, witness a homicide? Diana, too, considers the poetic form as evidentiary. In both cases, the poem witnesses through rather than despite its opacity. But, to hear the poem as amending history is to hear a silence in need of repair and, rather than consider silence as an absence, I have tried to consider the ways in which silences create their own kinds of immaterial archives. To paraphrase Ananta Toer (1995), this chapter is concerned with the kinds of silences that take hold.

In this way, I explore both the silences embedded in verse, as well as the silences mediated through, if not residing in, the poem – those silences that can be felt but not known. Diana shows how the unspoken might manifest in the choice of silently subversive language, or, in the internal voice of the poet. Even as I interpret the silences in Ganesa's poem, I can never actually know what they mean, only what they mean for me and what interpretation I might offer for my reader.

Agamben suggests that the poem's "proud strategy" is, at its end, "to let language finally communicate itself, without remaining unsaid in what is said" (1999: 115). That thing that language communicates, though, is infinite in its potential, residing in both poet and audience alike. There is no grain along or against which this poetic archive can be read (Stoler 2009), the poem amplifying and dispersing its unknowability.

## CHAPTER 6

### Conclusion

[I]n the end, poetry's knowing remains sufficiently insufficient, like a verb without an object, or like a suspended present participle – something to be found only in the finding, discovered in the discovering, heard and listened for only in the hearing and listening.

Angela Leighton

On the morning I left Timika for the foreseeable future, I stopped by a neighbor's house to say a final goodbye. In her parting words, she ardently re-affirmed the inevitability of an independent Papuan nation and offered a gentle rebuke to those who would question that inevitability. Later, on the plane, I scribbled down her words to the best of my memory: "People who don't believe in god" – by which she meant me – "only believe in reality," she said. "They think it [*kemerdekaan*/freedom] is impossible. I believe in God. I know *pasti akan jadi* [it will definitely happen]." By 'reality,' she refers to a singular experience of real-time in a fixed present, but what she describes as *her* reality, without articulating it as such, is a collective reality that already contains the past and the future. It is related, but indexes slightly differently, to the "narrative experience of reality as subjunctive" that Samuels (2018) beautifully describes (see also Samuels 2015; Good and DelVecchio Good 1994).<sup>107</sup> It is not so much a sense of a possible reality but a reality that is possible in so far as it is inevitable.

To distinguish between Timika's possible and actual is, in some cases, akin to the paradox Pouillon (1982) identifies between knowing and believing. "It is not so much the believer," he argues, "who affirms his belief as such, it is rather the unbeliever who reduces to mere believing what, for the believer, is more like knowing" (6). In my neighbor's assertion, the trouble with (my)

---

<sup>107</sup> Samuels (2018) argues, "Broadening this grammatical form to the anthropological analysis of narratives reveals how, rather than structuring reality into coherent stories and meaningful plots, narrative thinking in the subjunctive mode leaves open multiple possibilities both for the beginning and the end of a story, thereby exploring 'the indeterminacy of reality' (Good 1994, 153)" (296, citation in original). Part of what I have been trying to point to, throughout, is how the subjunctive mode in Timika, in the way I have been thinking it, does something other than "open multiple possibilities" in narrative. The initial appearance of this kind of indeterminacy often, ultimately, cedes to a kind of certainty.



belief is akin to the trouble with the possible, neither of which can be easily disentangled from the trouble with *writing* possibility. That is, for me to call freedom possible is to call it something other than inevitable. At the same time, to call experiences of violence merely possible is again to understand the real as singular experience. In some ways, my neighbor's statement brings Good's (1994) "problem of belief" full circle. In this brief moment above (but as I have pointed out, elsewhere as well), it was my belief in the 'real' that had obscured other forms of knowing.

The question, then, this dissertation has posed (and tried to answer) is how to write this reality in a way that possibility and un/certainty are not at odds but, rather, co-exist within a particular register of knowing. And, how does the ethnographer – and those living this reality – evidence it in a way that does not reproduce the exigencies of an epistemological frame grounded in the hoax? In answering these questions, and thus trying to respond to my neighbor's parting words, I have proposed a poetic epistemology that listens for unexpected resonances that can be "heard and listened for only in the hearing and listening" (Leighton 2018: 272), a kind of knowing that does not always demand a resolution to opacity but that sometimes yields one in spite of itself.

\*\*

One day, while I was working in a hot office in the middle of one of Timika's hospitals, an Indonesian physician popped in, and apropos of nothing obvious to me at the time, remarked that Papuan patients were like laundry, "Dirty. Clean. Return them. Then dirty again [*Kotor, cuci, kembalikan. Kemudian kotor lagi.*]." He did not actually use the word 'we' – or any grammatical subjects, for that matter – but (disturbingly) I felt like he had interpellated me in this cyclic assessment as someone who 'cleaned.' Papuan poet and Catholic priest, Honoratus Pigai (2012), describes a similar cyclicity, with a similar inevitability, if in very different terms. In the poem, "The Troublemaker's Claims [*Klaim Pengacau*],"<sup>108</sup> he writes:

---

<sup>108</sup> *Pengacau* is from the root word, *kacau*, meaning chaos or confusion, as in, *Timika kacau lagi* (see Chapter 3).

Ditangkap, diadili, dipenjara dan dihuku / Diteror, ditindas, dibunuh, dihancurkan /  
Tubuh kembali jadi debu / Karena ia tercipta dari debu  
Arrested, tried, jailed and sentenced / Terrorized, oppressed, killed, destroyed /  
The body returns to dust / Because he was created from dust

The subjects of both the physician's declaration and Pigai's verse remain unspoken. Pigai uses a grammatically passive construction; these are things that happen to Papuans but *by* whom remains unarticulated. He assumes his reader will already know, in the same way that the physician assumes I understand who is getting dirty and who is cleaning them up. Audiences are imagined through the epistemic intimacy created by what can sometimes be understood in the unspoken, or, what can be said but not heard by all.

Pigai's verse suggests two related forms of cyclicity – the cycle of all life or all bodies (with its obvious biblical underpinning) and the repetition of a more circumscribed experience. To be arrested is to be sentenced already; to be terrorized is to already know destruction; and, to be Papuan is to already know both these collective realities. These two moments – one in a poem, one in a hospital staff room – produce a resonant sound. It is the sound of repetition and inevitability, a staccato-like perfunctoriness whose minimalist grammar marks claims to the self-evident. In Pigai's case, this sound is the basis for a kind of anticipatory witnessing. It is anticipatory because its cyclicity predicts repeated experience, but it is anticipatory in another sense as well. To read Pigai's verse against the physician's observation – as an anticipated response *to* a future observation – is as if to hear Pigai saying, dust is not dirty, it is of God.

To witness poetically is to hear calls and responses where there might otherwise have been nothing. It is, sometimes, to interpret the subversive potential of silence without demanding it be replaced with something else. And, it is to reconcile this tension I have intimated throughout the dissertation: that violence in West Papua *is* already known (it is not a hoax), even as it might be differently – destabilizingly – evidenced and archived.

\*\*

Near the end of my dissertation fieldwork, Ganesa (see Chapter Five) drew a few sketches, etched out on Post-It® Notes that were always lying around my house in Timika at the time. When, much later and no longer living in Timika, I found these three notes stuck in a notebook more haphazardly than I would have liked (sometimes ordered, material archives can be useful), I had only a vague memory of the conversation that had led to these drawings. At the time, their meaning must have felt self-evident; I had left little to help me later understand the drawings. Here is what he had drawn:

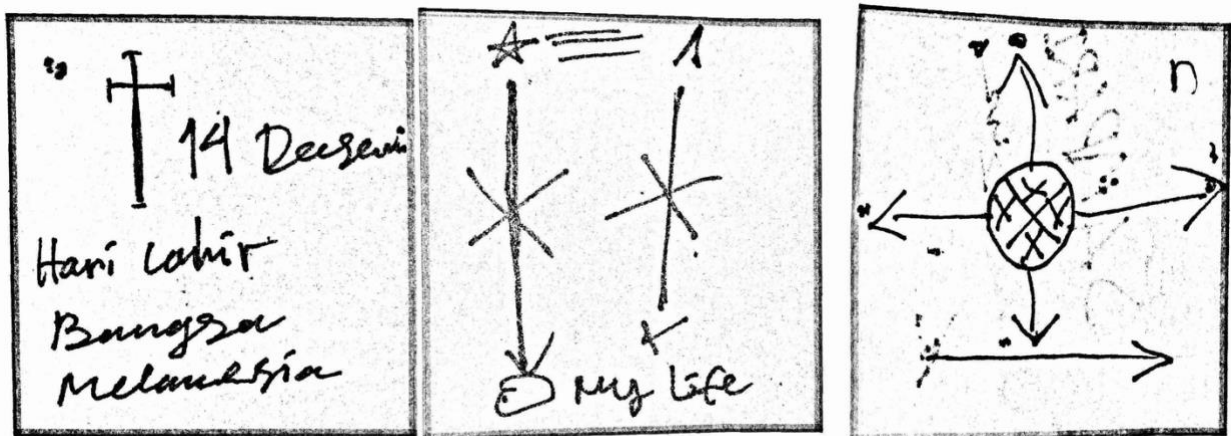


Figure 6.10. Ganesa's drawings.

When I found these sketches, I had already been thinking about the temporality of witnessing and remembering violence and different ways of thinking about evidence that did not need to project a linear, stable narrative to *be* evidence. The multiple overlapping arrows, some pointing in the same direction, some struck out, felt intriguing. And so, taken by the kind of movement the arrows in the drawings suggested, I messaged Ganesa and asked him if he remembered the images (I sent him the above scan) and, if so, could he help me remember how or why he had come to draw them? The first image, he wrote me back almost immediately, represents “14 December 1988 Hari Lahir

Identitas Orang Papua Atau Ras Melanesian [December 14<sup>th</sup>, 1988 the Papuan Identity and Melanesian Race was Born].<sup>109</sup> The second drawing, he continued:

Diri Saya Sendiri, bercerita tentang keluarga Saya dan pekerjaan Mereka yg kadang di teror. Jadi Baris yg di Coret menunjukan orang tua saya yg telah Pergi Ke Surga, Dan tinggal saya sendiri yg harus meneruskan perjuangan yg mereka lakukan, Lingkaran Melambangkan Sebuah Harapan/Hope .....untuk Masa Depan yg indah Untuk Orang Papua dan Tanah Papua.

is about myself, it tells the story of my family and their work that is sometimes terrorized. So the lines that are crossed out show my parents who have already gone to heaven and left me by myself to continue the struggle that they did. The circle represents hope.....for a future that is beautiful for Papuans and the Land of Papua.

The first time I became attuned to something like this hope was in talking to Ape (see Chapter Three), telling him that things often felt hopeless in Timika. He, very bluntly, told me that I had not yet *adaptasi lingkungan Timika* [adapted to the environment of Timika]. I do not think he meant that adaptation would lead to some new ability to cope, whatever that might mean, but rather that in adapting to the environment of Timika, I would see that there was already hope. Reading Pigai's poetry (2012, 2014; Goo et al. 2012) I am, also, continually struck by this hope, even as he also contributes to an archive of Timika's violences. Ganesa's hope "for a future that is beautiful," even as he describes the story of his family's experience of terror, reaffirms my interpretation of Ape's response. It is not just that the future is hopeful, the present is too.<sup>110</sup> In the third image, Ganesa writes:

Garis yg menuju ke Atas menunjukan "TUHAN" Sang Pencipta Orang Papua, Garis yg menunjuk me Arah Bawah adalah menunjukan Kita Orang Papua Yg Ada di Tanah Papua, Garis Kekiri Adalah Hubungan Dengan Alam Liar/Hutan, Garis Yg Kekanan adalah Hubungan Orang Papua Yg Saling Memiliki.

The line pointing up shows "GOD" the creator of the Papuan people, the line pointing downward shows We the Papuan People who are in the Land of Papua, the line to the left is the relationship with wild nature/jungle, the line to the right is the relationship among Papuans who have each other.

---

<sup>109</sup> This is the date scholar and activist Dr. Thom Wainggai famously declared the region known today as West Papua to be the independent Republic of West Melanesia.

<sup>110</sup> Though I do not explore the landscape of Christianity throughout Papua in the dissertation, it is, at a minimum, worth noting here how Ganesa's hope for a radically different future is tied up in a Christian millenarianism (see, for example, Rutherford 2006).

If Ganesa is hopeful for the future of Papua, each of these arrows – and the relationships between them – represent sources of hope. This hope that Ganesa, my neighbor, Pigai and Ape all point to is one that warrants brief reflection. I have, at different moments, shown how both violence and chaos are always possible and, at the same time, how individual experiences of the could-have-happened take on a kind of certainty when refracted through collective memory. But, how can this sense of violence’s inevitability be reconciled with the pervasiveness of hope in Timika? As both Pigai and Ganesa show, there is a cycle to terror, but there is also a cycle to life. And, these are not one and the same. To return to my neighbor’s parting words, to only see (or hear) the repetition of violence may be what it is to believe only in reality. The ethnographic imperative might then be to try and listen for the faint sound of this other happening – these kinds of stillness that may yet yield a different future – that could also be mistaken for a nothing.

\*\*

In Rutherford’s stunning final essay, “The Ethics of Kinky Empiricism,” from the collection *Living in the Stone Age* (2018), she argues for “anthropology to reclaim the empirical” (149). I have returned to this essay many times while writing the above chapters, particularly to think about the way she links the empirical to the ethical. What does “ethically grounded” anthropology look like in this context (Scheper-Hughes 1995)? That ethnography’s truths may be messy (or partial) but we still must act is the ethical imperative of the ethnographer, Rutherford argues. (For many it is also an existential imperative.) This dissertation has been an experiment in listening, messily, to argue that amplifying messiness *is* precisely what an ethics of ethnography might sound like. In an earlier essay, foreshadowing what is to come, she asks, “How should today’s anthropologists of West Papua be mobilizing paper’s power? What should we make of our own deployment of all this machinery and the pleasures and anxieties it provokes? With what habits and passions should we be handling our words?” (123). The question of how to handle our words is one I have tried to take very seriously; as

I have shown, words can powerfully witness and also powerfully reimagine. Sometimes they do both at once.

Jusuf Kalla, the Vice President of Indonesia, recently argued that a military counterattack in Nduga, Papua Province, likely to precipitate civilian casualties, “won’t be a human rights violation, because we have to see who violated human rights first” (Kalla *in* Arbi and Mambor 2019). (*Our position was attacked. What makes you able to conclude they were victims? This is not a violation of human rights. This wasn’t planned, there is no genocide, there are no crimes against humanity, it’s not a continuation of national policy, it just developed in that way*). And, in response to a civil society fact-finding mission in the same area that found the military’s presence as responsible for the deaths of 182 people, the government called the finding a ‘hoax’ (Arbi and Mambor 2019). Asked about the possibility of journalists reporting from that region, Army Major General (Mayjen) Sisriadi replied, “If we invite reporters to become witnesses, they make accusations (about the military’s violations of human rights). There is no evidence of this. Where is the evidence? [*Kalau wartawan kita undang supaya jadi saksi. Mereka menuduh (soal pelanggaran HAM oleh TNI), tidak ada buktinya, buktinya mana?*]” (Sisriadi *in* Damarjati 2019).

Journalists cannot be allowed to gather evidence but that this evidence (that they are disallowed from gathering) does not exist is evidence that no evidence exists. This is the logic as I understand his statement; it is also a logic that compels a different evidentiary mode of witnessing. As I write now, protests are erupting throughout West Papua after forty-three Papuan students were detained in Surabaya, on the island of Java, after police fired at least 23 rounds of tear gas into their dormitory while Indonesian crowds shouted racist epithets at the students, including the exhortation to slaughter Papuans (Arbi et al 2019; Davidson 2019). (*Arrested, tried, jailed and sentenced / Terrorized, oppressed, killed, destroyed*). The justification: an Indonesian flag found in a sewer near the dormitory. (*There is no evidence of this. Where is the evidence?*). I talk to Ape, who sends me videos of these recent protests throughout West Papua. “These will never be seen on the news,” he tells me.

They will never be seen on the news because the scenes depict chaos and a military not fully in control but, also, because the Indonesian government has, of this writing, cut much of the region's access to the internet.

When Martin said, "Only the good (news) makes it there. The bad, it's only us who know," he is describing his role as witness to what Bruin calls 'the monotonous drama' that is life in Timika, but also West Papua more broadly. In this dissertation, I have tried to suggest that listening poetically to this monotonous drama allows for the possibility of other ways of knowing and remembering – ways that will, also, never be seen on the news – that produce living (poetic) archives disruptive of the state's desire to produce a "truth beyond dispute" (Mbembe 2001). Sometimes, that the words we create can engender doubt or uncertainty *is* the very point. That uncertainty points to a mode of poetic witnessing that might allow us to begin to know what is happening in Timika despite, but also maybe because of, the epistemic chaos that surrounds it. It is productive of a present reality that can imagine "a future that is beautiful." If, as Ape says, "Everything has *already* been exposed," perhaps, then, what remains is for that everything to also be heard.

## References

- Abdurraqib, Hanif (2017). *They Can't Kill Us Until They Kill Us*. Columbus, OH: Two Dollar Radio.
- Aditjondro, George J. (2000). "Ninjas, Nanggalas, Monuments, and Mossad Manuals: An Anthropology of Indonesian State Terror in East Timor." In *Death Squad: The Anthropology of State Terror*, Ed. Jeffrey A. Sluka. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Aditjondro, George J. (2001). "Guns, pamphlets and handie-talkies: how the military exploited local ethno-religious tensions in Maluku to preserve their political and economic privileges." In *Violence in Indonesia.*, Eds. Ingrid Wessel and Georgia Wimhöfer. Hamburg, Germany: Abera Verlag Markus Voss.
- Agamben, Giorgio. (1999). *The End of the Poem: Studies in Poetics*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Alexander, Elizabeth. (1994). "Can you be BLACK and Look at This?": Reading the Rodney King Video(s)." *Public Culture*. 7:77-94.
- Amnesty International Indonesia. (2018). "Don't Bother, Just Let Him Die': Killing with Impunity in Papua." Accessed 4 March 2019. Available online <<https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/ASA2181982018ENGLISH.PDF>>.
- Ananta, Aris, Dwi Retno Wilujeng Wahyu Utami, and Nur Budi Handayani. (2016). "Statistics on Ethnic Diversity in the Land of Papua, Indonesia." *Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies*. 3(3): 458-474.
- Anderson, Benedict. (1983). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London, UK: Verso.
- Anderson, Benedict. (1990). *Language and Power: Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Anderson, Benedict and Ruth McVey (2009). *A Preliminary Analysis of the October 1, 1965 Coup in Indonesia*. Singapore: Equinox Publishing.



- Anderson, Bobby and Adrian Morel. (2018). "Violent Death in Indonesian Papua (Draft)" Accessed 5 March 2019. Available online <[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323959995\\_Violent\\_Death\\_in\\_Indonesian\\_Papua](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323959995_Violent_Death_in_Indonesian_Papua)>.
- Anderson, Bobby. (2015). "Papua's Insecurity: State Failure in the Indonesian Periphery." Honolulu, HI: East-West Center.
- Anderson, Bobby. (2014). "Platitudes of Papua." *Inside Indonesia*. Accessed 5 March 2019. Available online <<https://www.insideindonesia.org/platitudes-of-papua>>.
- Anderson, Bobby. (2013). "The failure of education in Papua's highlands." *Inside Indonesia*. Accessed 5 March 2019. Available online <<https://www.insideindonesia.org/the-failure-of-education-in-papua-s-highlands>>.
- Andriyanto, Heru. (2010). Papua Tribe Files \$32b Lawsuit Against Freeport." *Jakarta Globe*. Jakarta, Indonesia. 8 March.
- Ape.\* (2016). "Save Papua." *You Tube*. Accessed 23 January 2019. Available online <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ctFVsuyaKAM>>.
- Aretxaga, Begoña. (1999). "A Fictional Reality: Paramilitary Death Squads and the Construction of State Terror in Spain." In *Death Squad: The Anthropology of State Terror*, Ed. Jeffrey Sluka. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, pgs. 46-69.
- Arbi, Ivany Atina, Wahyoe Boediwardhana and Benny Mawel. (2019). "Papuan students on Java faced increased pressures." *The Jakarta Post*. Accessed 22 August 2019. Available online <<https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2019/08/19/papuan-students-java-face-increased-pressures.html>>.
- Arbi, Ivany Atina and Victor Mambor. (2019). "Jakarta, Papua conflict escalates as report shows

- victims mostly women, children.” *Jakarta Post*. Accessed 22 August 2019. Available online <<https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2019/08/14/jakarta-papua-conflict-escalates-as-report-shows-victims-mostly-women-children.html>>.
- Asian Human Rights Commission. (2019). “End Violence in West Papua.” Accessed 20 July 2019. Available online <[http://www.humanrights.asia/campaign\\_category/end-violence-in-west-papua/](http://www.humanrights.asia/campaign_category/end-violence-in-west-papua/)>.
- Auden, W.H. (1940). *Another Time*. New York, NY: Random House.
- Ballard, Chris. (2002). “The Signature of Terror: Violence, Memory, and Landscape at Freeport.” In *Inscribed landscapes: marking and making place*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai’I Press.
- Ballard, Chris. (2014). “Oceanic Historicities.” *The Contemporary Pacific*. 26(1): 96-124.
- Banivanua-Mar, Tracey. (2008). “A thousand miles of cannibal lands”: imagining away genocide in the re-colonization of West Papua.” *Journal of Genocide Research*. 10(4): 583-602.
- Barker, Joshua. (1998). “State of Fear: Controlling the Criminal Contagion in Suharto’s New Order.” *Indonesia*. 66: 6-43.
- Barker, Joshua. (1999). *The Tattoo and the Fingerprint: Crime and Security in an Indonesian City*. Doctoral Dissertation. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.
- Benjamin, Walter. (2002). “The Storyteller.” *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings, Volume 3, 1935 – 1938*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- “Bentrok Tengah Malam di Papua, Tiga Terkena Panah.” (2016b). *Harian Papua*. Accessed 3 April 2019. Available online <[http://blogharianpapua.blogspot.com/2016/05/blog-post\\_84.html](http://blogharianpapua.blogspot.com/2016/05/blog-post_84.html)>.
- Berlant, Lauren and Kathleen Stewart. (2019). *The Hundreds*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Bewok, Malik. (2013). “Korsa: Komando Satu Rasa di Kalangan Eks-Kopassus.” Accessed 27

- January 2019. Available online <<https://www.kompasiana.com/malikbewok/55286b35f17e6153478b461b/korsa-komando-satu-rasa-di-kalangan-ekskopassus>>.
- Blades, Johnny. (2016). "Watching this space, West Papua." *Pacific Journalism Review*. 22(1): 13-24.
- Browne, Simone. (2015). *Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Blackness*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Brundige, Elizabeth, Winter King, Priyeha Vahali, Stephen Vladeck and Xiang Yuan. (2004). "Indonesian Human Rights Abuses in West Papua: Application of the Law of Genocide to the History of Indonesian Control." Accessed 9 August 2019. Available online <[https://law.yale.edu/system/files/documents/pdf/Intellectual\\_Life/West\\_Papua\\_final\\_report.pdf](https://law.yale.edu/system/files/documents/pdf/Intellectual_Life/West_Papua_final_report.pdf)>.
- Bubant, Nils. (2008). "Rumors, Pamphlets, and the Politics of Paranoia in Indonesia." *The Journal of Asian Studies*. 67(3): 789-817.
- Bubant, Nils. (2014). *Democracy, Corruption, and the Politics of Spirits in Contemporary Indonesia*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Bubant, Nils. (2017). "From Head-hunter to Organ-thief: Verisimilitude, Doubt, and Plausible Worlds in Indonesia and Beyond." *Oceania*. 87(1): 38-57.
- Budiardjo, Carmel and Liem Soei Liong. (1988). *West Papua: The Obliteration of a People*. Thorton Heath: TAPOL.
- Butt, Leslie. (2002). "The Smokescreen of Culture: AIDS and the Indigenous in Papua, Indonesia." *Pacific Health Dialog*. 9(2): 283-289.
- Catholic Justice & Peace Commission of the Archdiocese of Brisbane. (2016). "'We will lose everything': Report on a human rights fact finding mission to West Papua." Accessed 9 August 2019. Available online <<https://cjpbrisbane.files.wordpress.com/2016/05/we-will-lose-everything-may-2016.pdf>>.
- Chatterjee, Partha. (2001). "The nation in heterogeneous time." *The Indian Economic and Social History*

- Review*. 38(4): 399-418.
- Chauvel, Richard. (2005). "Constructing Papuan Nationalism: History, Ethnicity, and Adaption." *Policy Studies* 14. East- West Center Washington.
- Clifford, James. (1986). "Partial Truths." In *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, Eds. James Clifford and George Marcus. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press., pgs. 1-26.
- Clifford, James and George Marcus. (1986). *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Clune, Michael W. (2009). "Chapter 5: 'You can't see me': rap, money, and the first person." In *American Literature and the Free Market, 1945-2000*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Clune, Michael W. (2016). "How Poems Know What It's Like to Die." *ELH*. 83(2): 633-54.
- Crapanzano, Vincent. (2014). "Must We Be Bad Epistemologists?: Illusions of Transparency, the Opaque Other, and Interpretive Foibles." In *The Ground Between: Anthropologists Engage Philosophy*, Eds. Michael Jackson, Arthur Kleinman, and Bhargupati Singh. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Cvetkovich, Ann. (2012). *Depression: a public feeling*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- da Col, Giovanni and Caroline Humphrey. (2012). "Introduction: Subjects of Luck – Contingency, Morality, and the Anticipation of Everyday Life." *Social Analysis*. 56 (2): 1-18.
- Da Costa, Agustinus Beo and Samuel Wanda. (2017). "Thousands of Freeport Indonesia workers to strike for second month: union." *Reuters*. Accessed 9 May 2019. Available online <<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-indonesia-freeport-strike-idUSKCN18G0DD>>.
- Dapoer ATS. (2017). "Adil ka? (Official Video)." *YouTube*, uploaded by Fangohoi Film. Accessed 2 March 2019. Available online <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i1w2JSUFSHc>>.
- Damarjati, Danu. (2019). "TNI soal Nduga: Kami Hormati HAM dan Tak Sandera Anak-Anak."

- Detik News*. Accessed 22 August 2019. Available online <<https://news.detik.com/berita/d-4666001/tni-soal-nduga-kami-hormati-ham-dan-tak-sandera-anak-anak>>.
- Das, Veena. (2007). *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Das, Veena. (2015). *Affliction: Health, Disease, Poverty*. New York, NY: Fordham University Press.
- Davidson, Elizabeth. (2019). "Indonesia arrests dozens of West Papuans over claim flag was thrown in sewer." *The Guardian*. Accessed 22 August 2019. Available online <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/aug/18/indonesia-arrests-dozens-of-west-papuans-over-claim-flag-was-thrown-in-sewer>>.
- Dening, Greg. (1991). "A Poetic for Histories: Transformations that Present the Past." In *Clio in Oceania: Toward a Historical Anthropology*, Ed. Aletta Biersack. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. (1996). *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. (2003). "Auto-Immunity: Real and Symbolic Suicides: A Dialogue with Jacques Derrida." In *Philosophy in a Time of Terror: A Dialogue with Jurgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida*, Ed. G. Borradori, Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- "Dirut PT Putra Dewa Paniai: 'Insiden Terjadi di Deiyai, Bukan Kesalahan Karyawan Kami.'" (2017). *Media Nasional*. Accessed 7 January 2019. Available online <<http://www.medianasional.id/dirut-pt-putra-dewa-paniai-insiden-terjadi-di-deiyai-bukan-kesalahan-karyawan-kami/>>.
- Drexler, Elizabeth. (2006). "History and Liability in Aceh, Indonesia: Single Bad Guys and Convergent Narratives." *American Ethnologist*. 33(3): 313-26.

- Drexler, Elizabeth. (2007). "The Social Life of Conflict Narratives: Violent Antagonists, Imagined Histories, and Foreclosed Futures in Aceh, Indonesia." *Anthropological Quarterly*. 80(4): 961-95.
- Drexler, Elizabeth. (2009). "Impunity and Paranoia: Writing Histories of Indonesian Violence." *Mirrors of Justice: Law, Power and the Making of History*, Eds. Kamari Clarke and Mark Goodale. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Drooglever, Pieter (2009). *An Act of Free Choice: Decolonization and the Right to Self-Determination in West Papua*. Oxford, UK: Oneworld Publications.
- Edwin, Steve. (2014). "Remembering the Ancestor's Image: Emmett Till and Predicaments of Witnessing?"
- Elmslie, Jim. (2010). "West Papuan Demographic Transition and the 2010 Indonesian Census: 'Slow Motion Genocide' or no?" *CPACS Working Paper No. 11/1*. Sydney: The University of Sydney.
- Elmslie, Jim. (2017). "The Great Divide: West Papuan Demographics Revisited; Settlers Dominate Coastal Regions but Highlands Still Overwhelmingly Papuan." *The Asia-Pacific Journal*. 15(2.1): 1-12.
- Elmslie, Jim and Camellia Webb-Gannon. (2013). "A Slow-Motion Genocide: Indonesian Rule in West Papua." *Griffith Journal of Law & Human Dignity*. 1(2): 142-165.
- Elmslie, Jim and Camellia Webb-Gannon. (2017). "Indonesia's West Papua: Settlers dominate coastal regions, highlands still overwhelmingly Papuan—West Papuan demographics revisited." *The Asia Pacific Journal*. 15(2): 1-12.
- Erdianto, Kristian. (2017). "Wiranto Heran Penembakan di Deiyai Diberitakan sebagai Pelanggaran HAM." *Kompas*. Accessed 22 January 2019. Available online

<<https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2017/08/11/21074891/wiranto-heran-penembakan-di-deiyai-diberitakan-sebagai-pelanggaran-ham>>.

Farmer, Jonathan. (2019). *That Peculiar Affirmative: On the Social Life of Poems*. Nacogdoches, TX: Stephen F. Austin State University Press.

Fassin, Didier. (2014). "True life, real lives: Revisiting the boundaries between ethnography and fiction." *American Ethnologist*. 41(1): 40-55.

Feldman, Allen. (1991). *Formations of Violence: The Narrative of the Body and Political Terror in Northern Ireland*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Foucault, Michel. (1972). *Archeology of Knowledge*. London, UK: Routledge.

Foucault, Michel. (1977). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York, NY: Random House, Inc.

Freeport-McMoRan. (2018). "Freeport-McMoRan Announces Successful Completion of Transaction with The Government of Indonesia, Marking the Beginning of a New Partnership." Accessed 3 March 2019. Available online <<https://investors.fcx.com/investors/news-releases/news-release-details/2018/Freeport-McMoRan-Announces-Successful-Completion-of-Transaction-with-the-Government-of-Indonesia-Marking-the-Beginning-of-a-New-Partnership/default.aspx>>.

Garcia, Angela. (2016). "The Blue Years: An Ethnography of a Prison Archive." *Cultural Anthropology*. 31(4): 572-95.

Global Witness. (2005). "Paying for Protection: The Freeport mine and the Indonesian security forces." Accessed 9 August 2015. Available online <<https://www.globalwitness.org/documents/16424/paying%20for%20protection.pdf>>.

Goo, Vitalis, Honaratus Pigai, Markus Dogepai Auwe, and Selpius Goo. (2012). *Sinar Harapan: Kumpulan Puisi Seputar Harapan*. Yogyakarta, Indonesia: Pilar Media.

- Good, Byron. (1994). "Medical anthropology and the problem of belief." In *Medicine, rationality, and experience: An anthropological perspective*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Good, Byron. (2015). "Haunted by Aceh: Specters of Violence in Post-Suharto Indonesia." In *Genocide and Mass Violence: Memory, Symptom and Recovery*, Eds. Devon E. Hinton and Alexander L. Hinton. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Good, Byron J. and Mary-Jo DeVecchio Good. (1994). "In the Subjunctive Mode: Epilepsy Narratives in Turkey." *Social Science & Medicine*. 38(6): 835–42.
- Green, Linda. (1994). "Fear as a Way of Life." *Cultural Anthropology*. 9(2): 227-56.
- Gregory, C.A. (1980). "Gifts to Men and Gifts to God: Gift Exchange and Capital Accumulation in Contemporary Papua." *Man*. 15(4): 626-52.
- Hau'ofa, Epeli. (1996). "Oral Traditions and Writing." *Journal of Pacific Studies*. 20: 198–208.
- Han, Clara. (2018). "Precarity, Precariousness, and Vulnerability." *Annual Review of Anthropology*. 47: 331-43.
- Hanlon, David L. (2003). "Beyond the 'English Method of Tattooing': Decentering the Practice of History in Oceania." *The Contemporary Pacific*. 15(1): 19-40.
- Hartman, Saidiya V. (1997). *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Hartman, Saidiya V. (2008). "Venus in Two Acts." *small axe*. 26(12.2): 1-14.
- Hernawan, Budi. (2015). "Torture as a Mode of Governance: Reflections on the Phenomenon of Torture in Papua, Indonesia." In *From 'Stone-Age' to 'Real-Time': Exploring Papuan Temporalities, Mobilities, and Religiosities.*, Eds. Martin Slama and Jenny Munro. Canberra: Australian National University E-Press.
- Hernawan, Budi. (2018). *Torture and Peacebuilding in Indonesia: The Case of Papua*. London: Routledge.



- Herriman, Nicholas. (2010). "The Great Rumor Mill: Gossip, Mass Media, and the Ninja Fear." *The Journal of Asian Studies*. 69(3): 723-48.
- Heryanto, Ariel. (2006). *State Terrorism and Political Identity in Indonesia: Fatally Belonging*. London: Routledge.
- Hetherington, Kregg. (2008). "Populist Transparency: The Documentation of Reality in Rural Paraguay." *Journal of Legal Anthropology*. 1(1): 45-69.
- Human Rights Watch. (2001). "Violence and Political Impasse in Papua." Accessed 11 April 2015. Available online <<http://www.hrw.org/reports/2001/papua/PAPUA0701.pdf>>.
- Human Rights Watch. (2007). "Out of Sight: Endemic Abuse and Impunity in Papua's Central Highlands." Accessed 9 August 2019. Available online <<https://www.hrw.org/report/2007/07/04/out-sight/endemic-abuse-and-impunity-papuas-central-highlands>>.
- Human Rights Watch. (2009). "What Did I Do Wrong?: Papuans in Merauke Face Abuse by Indonesian Special Forces." Accessed 9 August 2019. Available online <<https://www.hrw.org/report/2009/06/24/what-did-i-do-wrong/papuans-merauke-face-abuses-indonesian-special-forces>>.
- Human Rights Watch. (2015). "Something to Hide: Indonesia's Restrictions of Media Freedom and Rights Monitoring in Papua." Accessed 23 July 2019. Available online <[https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/report\\_pdf/indonesia1115final\\_0.pdf](https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/indonesia1115final_0.pdf)>.
- "Inilah Kronologis Penyerangan Camp Perusahaan di Deiyai Versi Polisi." (2017). *Kabar Papua*. Accessed 8 January 2019. Available online <<https://kabarpapua.co/inilah-kronologis-penyerangan-camp-perusahaan-di-deiyai-versi-polisi/>>.
- Jackson, John J. (2013). *Thin Description: Ethnography and the African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- Jackson, Michael. (2004). "The Prose of Suffering and the Practice of Silence." *Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality*. 4(1): 44-59.
- "Jenazah Agus Jaya, Korban Penikaman Jalan Tembus Irigasi Dipulangkan." (2016). *Salam Papua*. Accessed 1 April 2019. Available online <<http://www.salampapua.com/2016/05/jenazah-agus-jaya-korban-penikaman.html>>.
- Karma, Martin. (2014). *Seakan Kitorang Setengah Binatang: Rasialisme Indonesia di Tanah Papua*. Jayapura: Penerbit Deiyai.
- Kelly, John. (2002). "Time and the Global: Against the Homogeneous, Empty Communities in Contemporary Social Theory." *Development and Change*. 29(4): 839-71.
- Kidron, Carol A. (2009). "Toward an Ethnography Silence: The Lived Presence of the Past in the Everyday life of Holocaust Trauma Survivors and Their Descendants in Israel." *Current Anthropology*. 50(1): 5-27.
- King, Peter (2004). *West Papua & Indonesia since Suharto: independence, autonomy or chaos?*. Sydney: University of New South Wales Press.
- Kirksey, Eben. (2012). *Freedom in Entangled Worlds: West Papua and the Architecture of Global Power*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Kirksey, S. Eben and Andreas Harsono. (2008). "Criminal collaborations? Antonius Wamang and the Indonesian military in Timika." *South East Asia Research*. 16(2): 165-97.
- Kirsch, Stuart. (2010). "Ethnographic Representation and the Politics of Violence in West Papua." *Critique of Anthropology*. 30(1): 3-22.
- Kirsch, Stuart. (2002). "Rumour and Other Narratives of Political Violence in West Papua." *Critique of Anthropology*. 22(1): 53-79.

- Kusumaryati, Veronika. (2018). *Ethnography of a Colonial Present: History, Experience, and Political Consciousness in West Papua*. Doctoral Dissertation. Harvard University, Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, Boston, MA.
- Lear Jonathan. (2015). "Waiting with Coetzee." *Raritan* 34(4): 1–26
- Leighton, Angela. (2007). *On Form: Poetry, Aestheticism, and the Legacy of a Word*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Leighton, Angela. (2018). *Hearing Things: The Work of Sound in Literature*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Lepselter, Susan. (2016). *The Resonance of Unseen Things: Poetics, Power, Captivity, and UFOs in the American Uncanny*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Letih, Denise. (2002). "Freeport and the Suharto Regime, 1965-1998." *The Contemporary Pacific*. 14(1): 69-100
- Letih, Denise. (2003). *The Politics of Power: Freeport in Subarto's Indonesia*. Honolulu, HI: The University of Hawai'i Press.
- Lindsey, Tim. (2000). "Black Letter, Black Market, and Bad Faith: Corruption and the Failure of Law Reform." In *Indonesia in Transition: Social Aspects of Reformasi and Crisis*, Eds. Chris Manning and Peter van Dierman, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.
- Lorde, Audre. (1997). *The Collected Poems of Audre Lorde*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton and Company Inc.
- Malkki, Liisa. (1997). "News and Culture: Transitory Phenomena and the Fieldwork Tradition." In *Anthropological locations: boundaries and grounds of a field science.*, Eds. Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

- Malkki, Liisa. (2010). "Children, humanity, and the infantilization of peace." In *In the Name of Humanity: The Government of Threat and Care*. Eds., Illana Feldman and Miriam Ticktin. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Malkki, Liisa. (2015). *The Need to Help: The Domestic Arts of International Humanitarianism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Marching, Soe Tjen. (2017). *The End of Silence: Accounts of the 1965 Genocide in Indonesia*. Amsterdam, Netherlands: Amsterdam University Press.
- \*Mariska, Diana. (2017). *Antologi Puisi: Imajinasi Liar*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Martin, Keir. (2010). "The Death of the Big Men: Depreciation of Elites in New Guinea." *Ethnos*. 75(1): 1-22.
- Massumi, Brian. (1998). "Event horizon." In *The Art of the Accident*, Ed. Joke Brouwer. Rotterdam, Netherlands: Dutch Architecture Institute.
- Mauss, Marcel. (1970). *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Mbembe, Achille. (2001). "The Aesthetics of Vulgarity." In *On the Postcolony*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Mbembe, Achille. (2002). "The Power of the Archive and its Limits." In *Refiguring the Archive*, Eds. Carolyn Hamilton, Verne Harris, Jane Taylor, Michele Pickover, Graeme Reid, and Razia Saleh. Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Mealey, George A. (1996). *Grasberg: Mining the Richest and Most Remote Deposit of Copper and Gold in the World, in the Mountains of Irian Jaya, Indonesia*. New Orleans: Freeport-McMoRan Copper and Gold.

- “Menhan: Kasus Cebongan Bukan Pelanggaran HAM.” (2013). *Voice of America Indonesia*. Accessed 27 January 2019. Available online <<https://www.voaindonesia.com/a/menhan-kasus-cebongan-bukan-pelanggaran-ham/1639281.html>>.
- Munro, Jenny. (2013). “Blaming Papuans.” *Inside Indonesia*. Accessed 5 March 2019. Available online <<https://www.insideindonesia.org/blaming-papuans>>.
- Munro, Jenny. (2019). “Indigenous Masculinities and the ‘Refined Politics’ of Alcohol and Racialization in West Papua.” *The Contemporary Pacific*. 31(1): 36-63.
- Munro, Jenny and Leslie Butt. (2012). “Compelling Evidence: Research Methods, HIV/AIDS, and Politics in Papua, Indonesia.” *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*. 13(4): 334-51.
- Myrntinen, Henri. (2013). “Phantom Menaces: The Politics of Rumour, Securitisation and Masculine Identities in the Shadows of the Ninjas.” *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*. 14(5): 471-85.
- Nelson, Maggie. (2009). *Bluets*. Seattle, WA: Wave Books.
- Nuran, Ainan. (2017). “Indonesia – 1<sup>st</sup> Right of Reply.” *YouTube*, uploaded by UN WebTV. Accessed 2 March 2019. Available online <<https://chat.library.berkeleycollege.edu/faq/166951>>.
- Ondawme, Otto. (2000). *‘One People, One Soul’: West Papuan Nationalism and the Organisasi Papua Merdeka (OPM)/Free Papua Movement*. Doctoral Dissertation. Canberra: The Australian National University.
- Oppenheimer, Joshua, Signe Byrge Sørensen, Lars Skree, and Niels Pagh Andersen. (2015). *The Look of Silence*. Denmark: Final Cut For Real DK.
- Pandian, Anand and Stuart J. McLean. (2017). *Crumpled Paper Boat: Experiments in Ethnographic Writing*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

- “Papa Minta Saham? Bupati Mimika: Gila Dorang, Menteri dan DPR Sama, Lucu.” (2015). *Jaringan Berita Terluas di Indonesia*. Accessed 3 March 2019. Available online <<https://www.jpnn.com/news/papa-minta-saham-bupati-mimika-gila-dorang-menteri-dan-dpr-sama-lucu>>.
- “Pembunuh Tukang Ojek di Timika Berhasil Diamankan.” (2016a). *Harian Papua*. Accessed 1 April 2019. Available online <[http://blogharianpapua.blogspot.com/2016/05/blog-post\\_47.html](http://blogharianpapua.blogspot.com/2016/05/blog-post_47.html)>.
- Pepinsky, Thomas. (2016). “The Sarinah Attacks: An Early Analysis.” Accessed 30 March 2019. Available online <<https://tompepinsky.com/2016/01/14/sarinah-attacks-an-early-analysis/>>.
- Philpott, Simon. (2018). “This stillness, this lack of incident: making conflict visible in West Papua.” *Critical Asian Studies*. 50(2): 259-77.
- Pigai, Honaratus. (2012). *Memori Luka Batin: Kisah Yang Terputar Kembali*. Yogyakarta, Indonesia: Pilar Media.
- Pigai, Honaratus. (2014). *Para Pembunuh Rata-rata: Kidung-Kidung Anak Papua Dambaan Kebebasan dari Duka Nestapa*. n.p.: Honaratus Pigai.
- Pouillon, Jean. “Remarks on the Verb ‘To Believe’” (J. Leavitt, trans). In *Between Belief and Transgression: Structuralist Essays in Religion, History and Myth*. Eds, Michel Izard and Pierre Smith. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, pgs. 1-9.
- Povinelli, Elizabeth. (2011a). *Economics of Abandonment: Social Belonging and Endurance in Late Liberalism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Povinelli, Elizabeth. (2011b). “The Woman on the Other Side of the Wall: Archiving the Otherwise in Postcolonial Digital Archives.” *differences*. 22(1): 146-71.
- Purnomo, Nurmulia Rekso. (2017). “Kronologi Penembakan di Kabupaten Deiyai Versi Gereja Kemah Injil.” *Tribunenews.com*. Accessed 2 January 2019. Available online

- <<http://www.tribunnews.com/nasional/2017/08/08/kronologi-penembakan-di-kabupaten-deiyai-versi-gereja-kemah-injil>>.
- Rasmussen, Vaine. (2000). "Our Pacific." In *Remembrance of Pacific Pasts: An Invitation to Remake History*, Ed. Robert Borofsky. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Redfield, Peter. (2006). "A less modest witness: Collective advocacy and motivated truth in a medical humanitarian movement." *American Ethnologist*. 33(1): 3-26.
- Republik Indonesia. (2001). "Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 21 Tahun 2001 Tentang Otonomi Khusus Bagi Provinsi Papua." Badan Pembinaan Hukum Nasional, Kementerian Hukum dan HAM Republik Indonesia. Accessed 2 March 2019. Available online <<http://www.bphn.go.id/data/documents/01uu021.pdf>>.
- Richards, Sarah. (2015). "Hip Hop in Manokwari: Pleasures, Contestations, and the Changing Face of Papuanness." In *From 'Stone-Age' to 'Real-Time': Exploring Papuan Temporalities, Mobilities, and Religiosities*, Eds. Martin Slama and Jenny Munro. Canberra: Australian National University E-Press.
- Robie, David. (2017). "Tanah Papua, Asia-Pacific news blind spots and citizen media: From the 'Act of Free Choice' betrayal to a social media revolution." *Pacific Journalism Review*. 23(2): 159-78.
- Robinson, Geoffrey B. (2018). *The Killing Season: A History of the Indonesian Massacres, 1965-66*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Roosa, John. (2006). *Pretext for Mass Murder: The September 30<sup>th</sup> Movement and Subarto's Coup d'État in Indonesia*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Rutherford, Danilyn. (1999). "Waiting for the End in Biak: Violence, Order, and a Flag Raising." *Indonesia*. 67: 39-59.
- Rutherford, Danilyn. (2003). *Raiding the Land of the Foreigners: The Limits of the Nation on an Indonesian Frontier*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- Rutherford, Danilyn. (2006). "Nationalism and Millenarianism in West Papua: Institutional Power, Interpretive Practice, and the Pursuit of Christian Truth." In *The Limits of Meaning: Case Studies in the Anthropology of Christianity*, Eds. Matthew Engelke and Matt Tomlinson. New York, NY: Berghahn Books, pgs. 105-28.
- Rutherford, Danilyn. (2012). *Laughing at Leviathan: Sovereignty and Audience in West Papua*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Rutherford, Danilyn. (2018). *Living in the Stone Age: Reflections on the Origins of a Colonial Fantasy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Sahlins, Marshall D. (1963). "Poor Man, Rich Man, Big-man, Chief: Political Types in Melanesia and Polynesia." *Comparative Studies in Society and History*. 5(3): 285-303.
- Saltford, John. (2003). *The United Nations and the Indonesian Takeover of West Papua, 1962-1969: The Anatomy of Betrayal*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Samuels, Annemarie. (2015). "Narratives of Uncertainty: The Affective Force of Child-Trafficking Rumors in Postdisaster Aceh." *American Anthropologist*. 117 (2): 229-41.
- Samuels, Annemarie. (2018). "'This Path Is Full of Thorns': Narrative, Subjunctivity, and HIV in Indonesia." *Ethos*. 46(1): 95-114.
- Sapiie, Marguerite Afra. (2016). "Govt assures transparency in resolving Papua cases: Luhut." *The Jakarta Post*. Accessed 2 January 2017. Available online <<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2016/06/13/govt-assurestransparency-in-resolving-papua-cases-luhut.html>>.
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. (1995). "The Primacy of the Ethical: Propositions for a Militant Anthropology." *Current Anthropology*. 36(3): 409-440.
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. (2000). "The Global Traffic in Human Organs." *Current Anthropology*. 41(2): 191-224.



- Sears, Laurie. (2013). *Situated Testimonies: Dread and Enchantment in an Indonesian Literary Archive*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Sharpe, Christina. (2016). *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Sido, Fandi. (2013). "Korsa' Dalam Pengertiannya." *Kompasiana*. Accessed 27 January 2019. Available online <<https://www.kompasiana.com/afsee/55292c7df17e6175468b459e/korsa-dalam-pengertiannya>>.
- Siegel, James T. (1998). *A New Criminal Type in Jakarta: Counter-Revolution Today*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Siegel, James T. (2005). *Naming the Witch*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Simpson, Bradley. (2008). *Economists with Guns: Authoritarian Development and the U.S.-Indonesian Relations, 1960-1968*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Singh, Julietta. (2018). *No Archive Will Restore You*. San Bernardino, CA: Punctum Books.
- Skidmore, Monique. (2003). "Darker than midnight: Fear, vulnerability, and terror making in urban Burma (Myanmar)." *American Ethnologist*. 30(1): 5-21.
- Skidmore, Monique. (2004). *Karaoke Fascism: Burma and the politics of fear*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Smythe, Julian. (2013) "The Living Symbol of Song in West Papua: A Soul Force to be Reckoned With." *Indonesia*. 95: 73-91.
- Spyer, Patricia. (2000). "'Zaman Belanda': Song and Shattering of Speech in Aru, Eastern Indonesia." *Indonesia*. 70: 53-70.
- Spyer, Patricia. (2002). "Fire without Smoke and Other Phantoms of Ambon's Violence: Media Effects, Agency, and the Work of the Imagination." *Indonesia*. 74: 21-36.

- Spyer, Patricia. (2006). "Media and Violence in an Age of Transparency: Journalistic Writing on War-Torn Maluku." In *Religion, Media and the Public Sphere*, Eds. Birgit Meyer and Annelies Moors. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Spyer, Patricia. (2013). "Chapter 4: Images without Borders: Violence, Visuality, and Landscape in Postwar Ambon, Indonesia." In Eds, Patricia Spyer and Margaret Steedly. *Images that Move*, 101-26.
- Stand Up Comedy Indonesia. (2017). "Mamat: Si Anak Papua." *YouTube*, uploaded by Stand Up Kompas TV. Accessed 2 March 2019. Available online <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K5TEigHDbjk>>.
- Stasch, Rupert. (2014). "Primitivist tourism and romantic individualism: On the values in exotic stereotypy about cultural others." *Anthropological Theory*. 14(2): 191-214.
- Stasch, Rupert. (2015). "From Primitive Other to Papuan Self: Korowai Engagement with Ideologies of Unequal Human Worth in Encounters with Tourists, State Officials and Education." In *From 'Stone-Age' to 'Real-Time': Exploring Papuan Temporalities, Mobilities, and Religiosities.*, Eds. Martin Slama and Jenny Munro. Canberra: Australian National University E-Press, pgs. 59-94.
- Strathern, Marilyn. (2000). "The Tyranny of Transparency." *British Educational Research Journal*. 26(3): 309-21.
- Steedly, Mary. (2013). "Chapter 10: Transparency and Apparition: Media Ghosts of Post-New Order Indonesia." In Eds, Patricia Spyer and Margaret Steedly. *Images that Move*, 257-94.
- Stewart, Kathleen. (1996). *A Space on the Side of the Road: Cultural Poetics in an "Other" America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Stewart, Kathleen. (2007). *Ordinary Affects*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

- Stevenson, Lisa. (2014). *Life Beside Itself: Imagining Care in the Canadian Arctic*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Stoler, Ann Laura. (2009). *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Strassler, Karen. (2004). "Gendered Visibilities and the Dream of Transparency: The Chinese-Indonesian Rape Debate in Post-Suharto Indonesia." *Gender & History*. 16(3): 689-725.
- Strassler, Karen. (2010). *Refracted Visions: Popular Photography and National Modernity in Java*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Sukanta, Putu Oka. (2014). *Breaking the Silence: Survivor's Speak about 1965-66 Violence in Indonesia*, translated by Jennifer Lindsay. Clayton, Victoria, Australia: Monash University Publishing.
- Supriatma, Antonius Made (Tony). (2013). "TNI/Polri in West Papua: How Security Reforms Work in the Conflict Region." *Indonesia*. 95: 93-124.
- Syailendra, Emirza Adi. (2016). "Inside Papua: The Police Force as Counterinsurgents in Post-Reformasi Indonesia." *Indonesia*. 102: 57-83.
- Taussig, Michael. (1984). "Culture of Terror—Space of Death. Roger Casement's Putumayo Report and the Explanation of Torture." *Comparative Studies in Society and History*. 26(3): 467-97.
- Taussig, Michael. (1987). *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man: A Study in Terror and Healing*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Thomas, Deborah. (2013). "Caribbean Studies, Archive Building, and the Problem of Violence." *small axe*. 17(2): 27-42.
- Thompson, Krista. (2009). "The Sound of Light: Reflections on Art History in the Visual Culture of Hip-Hop." *Art Bulletin*. 91(4): 481-505.
- Timmer, Jaap. (2015). "Papua Coming of Age: The Cycle of Man's Civilisation and Two Other Papuan Histories." In *From 'Stone-Age' to 'Real-Time': Exploring Papuan Temporalities, Mobilities,*

- and Religiosities.*, Eds. Martin Slama and Jenny Munro. Canberra: Australian National University E-Press, pgs. 95-124.
- Toer, Pramodya Ananta. (1992). "Maaf: Atas Nama Pengalaman." *Kabar Seberang*. 23: 1-9.
- Toer, Pramodya Ananta. (1995). *Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu*. Jakarta, Indonesia: Lentera.
- Toer, Pramodya Ananta. (1996). "My Apologies: In the Name of Experience [Maaf: Atas Nama Pengalaman]" (A. Bardsley Trans.). *Indonesia*. 61(4): 1-12.
- Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. (1995). *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press Books.
- Vebriyanto, Widian. (2017). "Dikritik Karena Tiru 'Papa Minta Saham' Setnov, Ini Jawaban Bupati Mimika." *Rakyat Merdeka Online*. Accessed 28 November 2018. Available online <<https://nusantara.rmol.co/read/2017/03/04/282485/Dikritik-Karena-Tiru-Papa-Minta-Saham-Setnov,-Ini-Jawaban-Bupati-Mimika->>.
- Wainggai, Herman. (2018). "December 14, 2018." Accessed 17 August 2019. Available online <<https://www.facebook.com/WainggaiHerman/photos/a.571558573007638/1155703021259854/?type=3>>.
- "What Papua Needs is More Transparency." (2014). *Jakarta Globe*. Accessed 14 January 2019. Available online <<https://jakartaglobe.id/opinion/editorial-papua-needs-transparency/>>.
- White, Luise. (2000). "Telling More: Lies, Secrets, and History." *History and Theory*. 39: 11-22.
- Widhana, Dieqy Hasbi. (2018). "Natal Duka di Nduga: Korban Sipil saat TNI-Polri Memburu TPNPB-OPM." *Tirto*. Accessed 6 January 2019. Available online <<https://tirto.id/natal-duka-di-nduga-korban-sipil-saat-tni-polri-memburu-tpnpb-opm-dcnk>>.
- Widjojo, Muridan S. (2013). "Papua." *The Contemporary Pacific*. 26(2): 506-15.
- Wright, Christopher. (2013). *The Echo of Things: The Lives of Photographs in the Solomon Islands*. Durham: Duke University Press.

You, Abeth. (2017a). “Tragedi Deiyai berdarah, ini kronologi versi pihak perusahaan.” *Tabloid Jubi*.

Accessed 2 January 2019. Available online <<https://tabloidjubi.com/artikel-8430-tragedi-deiyai-berdarah-ini-kronologi-versi-pihak-perusahaan.html>>.

You, Abeth. (2017b). “Ini peluru tajam bos, bukan karet!”. *Tabloid Jubi*. Accessed 2 January 2019.

Available online <<https://tabloidjubi.com/artikel-8422-ini-peluru-tajam-bos-bukan-karet.html>>.

Yudiawan, Deni. (2016). “Timika, Tiap Minggu Kacau.” *Pikiran Rakyat*. Accessed 19 August 2019.

Available online <<https://www.pikiran-rakyat.com/nasional/2016/11/12/timika-tiap-minggu-kacau-384571>>.

**Publishing Agreement**

*It is the policy of the University to encourage the distribution of all theses, dissertations, and manuscripts. Copies of all UCSF theses, dissertations, and manuscripts will be routed to the library via the Graduate Division. The library will make all theses, dissertations, and manuscripts accessible to the public and will preserve these to the best of their abilities, in perpetuity.*

***Please sign the following statement:***

*I hereby grant permission to the Graduate Division of the University of California, San Francisco to release copies of my thesis, dissertation, or manuscript to the Campus Library to provide access and preservation, in whole or in part, in perpetuity.*

*Clare Cameron*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Author Signature

5 September 2019

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date