Finding Papua in Java

Papuans encounter stories about the past and themselves

Belinda Lopez
Bachelor of Arts in Communication
University of Technology Sydney, Australia

Master of Arts (with Distinction)
Aarhus University, Denmark; University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands; City University London, United Kingdom

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Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies
Department of Anthropology

Macquarie University, Sydney

This thesis has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution. I also certify that this is an original piece of research and that it has been written by me. All information sources and literature that have been used are indicated within the thesis.

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Belinda Lopez
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Supervisors
Dr Kate Rossmanith (Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies, Macquarie University)

Dr Jaap Timmer (Anthropology, Macquarie University)

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Abstract

Creative component
Tete

Exegesis

Finding Papua in Java: Papuans encounter stories about the past and themselves

This PhD thesis comprises a nonfiction novel, *Tete,* and an exegesis.

The project asks how Papuans encounter stories from the past and present in Java, Indonesia, how these stories spread, and to what effect.

The exegesis 1) draws on Martin Nakata's (2007) concept of the Cultural Interface to illustrate the "contested nature" of perspectives in the Papuan Interface; 2) Analyses the purpose and impact of Papuan stories and storytelling, particularly about history, by fusing several narrative methodologies defined by non-Indigenous and First Nations' scholars, including Arthur Frank's (2010) dialogical narrative analysis and Benny Giay's (2006) interpretation of *memoria passionis*; 3) Applies the concept of 'trickster stories' to a number of case studies in Java, to demonstrate how independent Papuan scholars fluidly remix canons of knowledge, creating an ecosystem committed to decolonised scholarship; 4) Scrutinises previous scholarship of Trickster and cargo cults, and develops these tropes as a method to critique anthropological and creative writing research, amongst emerging debates about decolonised methodologies; 5) Demonstrates how ethnographic data can be shared through academic and literary writing genres, and how narrative methodologies might be applied to both a nonfiction novel and scholarly essays as a strategy of “insisting on attention to Indigenous history-making" and "insisting on attention to colonial power” (Kaplan 1995, 458).

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Part One:
The Papuan Interface

Introduction

This thesis is about young Papuans living away from home, encountering stories that create havoc and hope. Based in villages and cities, archival texts, books and social media, protests, student dorms and discussion groups in Indonesia; mostly in Java, as well as the Balim Valley in the central highlands and other areas of Papua; these sites, stories and encounters all form part of the “Papuan Interface”.

Education philosopher Martin Nakata's concept of the Cultural Interface has provided a useful foundation for this work. Nakata describes the Cultural Interface as the space where Australian Torres Strait Islanders live and act— not only a physical space, but also “the overlay of myriad intersections of sets of relations and in this sense it is also a theoretical space” (2007, 210).

From fieldwork, the nonfiction novel *Tete* emerged— drawing on the overlay of these myriad intersections. How ethnographic literary writing can exist as its own theoretical space is explored further in Part Three of this exegesis, *There’s No I in Papua.* Much of this exegesis expands on further anthropological data that did not fit within the boundaries of *Tete*. The exploration of academic and non-academic writing genres using ethnographic data is tested in the stitching of this work. The two halves of this PhD are an attempt at a proof-of-concept: how narrative methodologies might be applied through both nonfiction stories and scholarly essays as a strategy of “insisting on attention to Indigenous history-making" and "insisting on attention to colonial power” (Kaplan 1995, 458).

In Part One, Nakata’s Interface will help us delve into the conversation about what it is to be Papuan, or rather the friction of the Papuan Interface, to borrow from Anna Tsing, who defines friction as "the awkward, unequal, unstable, and creative qualities of interconnection across difference” that continually co-produce culture. It would be a mistake to define the Papuan

Interface as a homogenous space. The "cross-cultural and long-distance" encounters which form culture are also found in these stories of Papuans (2005, 4; Nakata 2007). Most have moved to Java to acquire further education — and while many will return home after tertiary study, some will find their place here. They are young people from many different communities and places, connecting together in Java, sometimes for the first time, testing allegiances and animosities with each other, their elders, Indonesians, foreigners and the state.

Disorderly stories

There are many ways to conceive of the exchanges that occur in the Papuan Interface, but my focus is on stories— and how "disorderly" stories from history, about history, "intersect and interfere" with each other, and with stories about what it is to be Papuan in the present (John Law cited in Frank 2010, 980). For this approach, I am indebted to socio-narratologist Arthur Frank, and the ideas articulated in his book *Letting Stories Breathe* (2010). His wide-ranging scholarship serves as an anchor throughout this exegesis. When I say stories about history, I am mostly referring to modern Papuan history — including the period of Dutch colonialism, and the long process of integrating Papua into Indonesia through political, policy and military interventions — and how they live on in the present.

Tete, the nonfiction novel, and this exegesis address the experiences of young adult Papuans generally— but my research was often conducted in conversation with young people who came from and told stories about the Balim[1] Valley in the central highlands of Papua. Leslie Butt argues "when

[1] Throughout this exegesis I have written 'Balim Valley' in line with the spelling used by local scholars such as Agus Alua. I have not altered the spelling of 'Baliem' as it appears in Western archival and anthropological texts. Yulia Sugandi (2014) embraces the spelling of 'Palim Valley' as more accurate reflection of local Hubula pronunciation. I have minimised my use of 'Dani' as a descriptive label for people, languages and traditions from the central highlands, other than in quoting or paraphrasing texts and interviews. I rarely heard young Papuans use this term. Dani is another descriptive label promulgated by outsiders (Sugandi 2014; Bromley 1972, 29).

rumours fly with the intensity that they do in the Baliem Valley, it signals the extent to which forms of hidden violence are constituted in the construction of memories, and in the experiences of uncertainty, ambiguity, and doubt" (2001, 77).

But there are much older stories that must also be considered as theoretical anchors within this thesis, including *adat* (traditional knowledge and practice; the social order (Kamma 1972)). Papuan scholars and elders have helped me think about how traditional knowledge from the Balim Valley appears grounded in concepts also found in Arthur Frank's (2010) socio-narratology, with a focus on stories as actors.

The Christian missionary and linguist Myron Bromley (1972), who arrived in the Balim Valley in 1954, and Indonesian anthropologist Yulia Sugandi (2014), conducting research over half a century later, both learned that stories served as guidelines for how to behave. Hubula, the people from the area of the Balim Valley with whom I also spent time, describe their traditional customs as "*wene yisukama, bisukama*" (news speaker, the places). This "enjoins them to take the ancestors' stories, including prescriptions and prohibitions, as their main frame of reference… To understand the structure of Hubula society, we must realise that the basic path for action is laid out by the ancestors' stories" (Sugandi 2014, 46-47).

In using the word 'path,' Sugandi is referring to R. J. Parmentier's research on the island of Palau, where he employs the word 'path' "to refer to ways of doing things…strategies used in warfare, techniques in fishing". Yet he also refers to paths as "established linkages, relationships, and associations among persons, groups and political units, which were created by some precedent-setting action in the past". This concept can be applied to "the ancestors' path" in Hubula culture, which as Sugandi (2014, 46) states, is laid out by stories. I find it helpful to think of these story paths being laid out through the Papuan Interface, as routes or guides for where young Papuans

might choose to travel. Inversely, the stories themselves move through and act upon the Papuan Interface, impacting individuals and groups.

Socio-narratology's methodology is called dialogical narrative analysis — the studying “the mirroring between what is told in the story— the story’s content— and what happens as a result of telling that story— its effects” (Frank 2010, 1598). This methodology appears hardwired into Hubula culture. It is known that telling of the ancestors’ stories has outcomes for the community:

> “Local wisdom proclaims that ‘broken branches will not fall far from their tree, but will fall beneath the tree’ (*oeki siaga etma piagarek*), which refers to a father’s (*opase*) duty to pass on the ancestral stories and the historical background of the sacred objects in their *kanekela* to their initiated sons *(waya)*. Doing so helps them become well-loved and respected individuals or *netaiken* (lit. you are in my heart)” (Sugandi 2014, 58).

Cypri Jehan Paju Dale also points out that Papua has its own narrative methodologies. He describes the “noble tradition” of *Nyawene*, from the central highlands, as at once "a practice / a process / a social mechanism where communities (villages, clans, tribes and members of the *honai adat* (customary men’s hut)) gather and sit together" to find solutions to problems. It is an opportunity to share traditions and values between generations. It is the seeking of a collective story, from "I have a story" to "we have a story" (*Nit Nyawene)* (Dale 2015).

Papua Nyawene is the 2014 book that resulted from a community oral history project of the same name, based in the central highlands where many of the Papuans featured in this thesis were born and raised. The project, comprising young people and elders as well as researchers connected to the community, is grounded in the seeking out of stories and memories. Within this data, "today's stories always contain experiences and memories from the past (*present in the past)* but are also related to the hopes, concerns and

aspirations of the future (*future in the present)*" (Dale 2015, 4). This is similar to the 'mirroring' that Frank describes — today's stories are 'acting' out stories from the past. At the same time, the stories told today describe possible future actions and aspirations, and voicing them could help them manifest in some form— "stories emplot what may yet happen" (Frank 2010, 4916).

This exegesis explores some young peoples' concerns that traditional knowledge and experience is not being passed down. As Balim Valley scholars Agus A. Alua and Thadeus N. Mulait note, "in the sharing of stories about life experiences, there are also elements of teaching for young people". It is a fear also shared by older generations — that when the path is not shown, there are fears young people will lose their way (Alua and Mulait 2006, 51; my translation; see also Farhadian 2001, 182-183 and Dale, Wetipo, and Elisabeth 2015). However, Part Two: *Honai Study Club* demonstrates how the *honai*, the men's hut from the central highlands of Papua, has been symbolically transplanted to Java. In the student dorms, backyards and meeting places of young Papuans studying in Yogyakarta and Jakarta, *honai* and other cultural symbols serve as vessels for new stories to be created and shared. Scholars have previously been accused of using the "overt symbols" of independence, religious scripture and "traditional expressions, especially song" to study the idea of Papuanness (Richards 2015, 146). My intention is not to disregard this traditional focus, but to show how such concepts are remixed and remade. Fieldwork revealed a much more complex fusing of these 'expressions'. Of course, cultural meanings are not stagnant concepts, but are ever-evolving, as "meanings result from traditions of knowledge which guide actors, while actors in turn reproduce old meanings and add new meanings to the tradition" (Timmer 2000, 5). In this thesis, I posit that some of these actors are the stories themselves.

Eben Kirksey imagines aspirations for Papuan independence —*merdeka*— as rhizomes, employing Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's conception of

these roots as figures of political resistance: “They ceaselessly establish connections among organizations of power, social struggles, and other heterogeneous forms… when chopped up and left for dead, they resprout” (2012, 51). The stories that young Papuans discover for themselves are also rhizomes— when the Indonesian state, Papuan parents and others attempt to chop up these stories and leave them for dead, they sprout up again, in unpredictable ways.

Part One makes its way to a certain corner of the Papuan Interface: Java, in 2015 and 2016. In the bustling city of Jakarta and the cultural capital of Yogyakarta, Papuans in their twenties and thirties are navigating the university, the state, their families and themselves in an era of social media, new approaches to self-determination and state surveillance. On the way there, I will traverse other layers of the Interface— through ethnographies that have come before and through Papuan stories, hinted at, told, written and performed, to better understand the thickness, the richness, the terror and contradictions of being young and Papuan today. Dialogical narrative analysis is something of a hall of mirrors: of telling stories about stories that beget new stories, and the stories about how stories are told (Frank 2010). What follows in this exegesis are a set of— if not case studies, then case stories about stories. These include what I describe as whisper stories.

Starting with a whisper

During my field research, I began encountering what I thought were omissions in communication amongst the Papuans I met. As shorthand to myself in my field notes, I called this the dot dot dot (DDD). I thought of it as an ellipsis in speech, a weighted gap loaded with meanings, or the space between what is acceptable or safe to express, and not, even in private.

It was only after fieldwork that I went back to anthropology, to cultural studies and sociology, to piece together how the DDD could be placed amongst theories that had come before, and in previous Papuan

ethnographies. danah boyd and Alice Marwick, in their research of teenagers using social media, describe “social steganography” as “hiding messages in plain sight by leveraging shared knowledge or cues embedded in particular social contexts” (2014, 65). More specifically to the DDD, social steganography "uses countless linguistic and cultural tools, including lyrics, in-jokes and culturally specific references to encode messages that are functionally accessible but simultaneously meaningless” (boyd 2014, 66). They find social steganography in the coded Facebook messages and “subtweets” teenagers write to one another— intended for their peers and not the parents, teachers and other authority figures also patrolling their online social sites. Papuans similarly code messages online, both about their personal relationships, safety and broader political goals— but offline as well, face to face. The DDD can take place in private exchanges, not just in public social forums. boyd argues that encoding content through social steganography “offers one strategy for reclaiming agency” — for the teenage subjects of her study this served to achieve privacy in networked publics, but for Papuans it sometimes appears to be a conditioned response to risk or discrimination, as much as it is a subtle expression of agency. Both boyd’s participants and Papuans appear to recognise that “limiting access to meaning can be a much more powerful tool for achieving privacy than trying to limit access to the content itself” (2014, 69).

Yet even in limiting access to meaning, some meaning is still communicated. While the DDD comprises the ellipsis, the omission itself, I have come to think about the encoded content that is shared as a ‘whisper story’. Whisper stories are told when elements of Papuanness are expressed. It is a half-telling, and leaves an ellipsis for the rest of the story. I use the word 'story' here in the broadest possible sense, defined by Frank: "Stories are always semiotic as words, images, and gestures that signify". I define whisper stories as encoded content also communicated in symbols or subtle actions — even as Frank (2010, 1016) clarifies "storytelling materialises the

semiotic. Here is no abstract code". If a narrative is “one thing happens in consequence of another” (Frank 2010, 593), then whisper stories can also be the whispers of the tale that *could* be told, of what could next be materialised from the semiotic. They are the shadows of stories that are hinted at, or only half-told. Agency is subtly reclaimed in turns of phrase, physical gestures and creative and intellectual acts. They are whispered constructions of Papuanness because and in spite of hostility to such expressions. Papuans who were still getting to know me as a researcher told whisper stories before they trusted me enough to elaborate further. Whisper stories walk the DDD tightrope, set up by those in power, of inconsistent rules about what can be said, and what can be done. Papuans themselves seek recognition, but use whisper stories to reduce risk. But in Java, when you’re Papuan, you can never be invisible.

A short note on methodology

I expand on my methodology throughout this exegesis, and particularly in Part Three, *There’s No I in Papua.* It teases out my experience of attempting to produce academic and creative writing from fieldwork and interviews with Papuans, while viewed as an *orang barat* or *orang putih (*Western or white) researcher.

At this point, I would like to briefly discuss how I have engaged with Western theory and the ‘ethnographic data’ I collected during fieldwork and interviews with Papuans. In short, I have attempted to collapse some of the conventional boundaries set between the former and the latter, though I still question whether I have succeeded in doing so. I aimed to regard Papuans’ stories and ideas with at least the same importance as the Western anthropologists and theorists whose peer-reviewed work I am expected to refer to as part of standard academic conventions. By thinking of my central Papuan consultants as ‘independent scholars’, I came to regard some of what would traditionally be considered ethnographic data— interviews,

participant observation and non-academic Papuan texts— as theory. I started doing this instinctively, because of the obvious value of their contributions, but have since been assisted by Nakata's (2007) articulation of using data as theory as a methodology.

As I have mentioned earlier, Papuan theoretical frameworks for stories and the places where they are told, such as the *honai*, are inextricably weaved throughout this thesis, often through the interpretations of published and unpublished Papuan scholars. I have also attempted to employ Western theory through the lens of Papuan and other First Nations theorists, where appropriate. As Kate Rossmanith explains, "this, of course, is what you hope good ethnography is about: that, as a writer/ researcher… You're not so concerned to 'make meaning' of the event as to find out how the event was meaningful to those who participated in it" (2014, 105). I was eager to be guided by what was 'meaningful' to the Papuans I met, in both researching *Tete* and the stories contained within this exegesis. While the language in this quote from sociologist Alvin Gouldner is somewhat dated, I appreciate the spirit of the methodology it advocates for:

> "We would increasingly recognise the depth of our kinship with those whom we study. They would no longer be viewable as alien others or as mere objects for our superior technique and insight; they could, instead be seen as brother sociologists, each attempting with his varying degree of skill, energy, and talent to understand social reality" (cited in Heyl 2001, 377).

It is worth repeating once again Frank's description of dialogical narrative analysis — studying "the mirroring between what is told in the story— the story's content— and what happens as a result of telling that story— its effects" (Frank 2010). This is precisely my objective, in examining both whisper stories and the longer narratives that appear in the creative work, *Tete*, and this exegesis. But nothing is fixed in the Papuan Interface, much less how to conduct research within it.

Traversing the Interface

Jenny Munro published *Dreams Made Small: Humiliation and Education in a Dani Modernity* (2009) as her PhD thesis, a detailed ethnography of the Papuan student experience in 'mainstream' Indonesia. It is a useful reference point for the research in *Finding Papua in Java*, conducted a decade later. Munro's fieldwork involved participant observation and interviews with Dani university students in North Sulawesi's capital city of Manado and surrounds, as well as in the students' hometown of Wamena. In both her thesis and updated 2018 book, subtitled *The Education of Papuan Highlanders in Indonesia*, Munro considers "the ways that modern ambitions are shaped and re-shaped by conditions of stigma and discrimination" and "diminishment" (2009, 3; Munro 2018).

An inconsistent "colonial racial logic" developed in Indonesia by the nineteenth century, including a view of Papuans as *masyarakat terasing*, or estranged people from remote places. Munro describes this as an Indonesian gaze, or gazes, "and certain assumptions about Papuans" are part of this point of view" (2009, 56). This perspective shared in government, media and general Indonesian discourse —what I would describe as Indonesian storytelling about/against Papuans— continues today. My fieldwork also unearthed various examples of casual and institutionalised racism by Indonesians, illustrating, as it did in Manado, how "the idea that *orang Papua* possess innate inferiorities continues to define relations between Papuans and Indonesians" (Munro 2009, 52).

Diminishment can extend beyond stigma. It can also include more material threats, such as how police and intelligence services are interested in Papuan students throughout the archipelago. Munro describes accounts of localised racism, noting that students in Manado at the time of her research had not yet experienced physical violence and punishment from police, a situation

that had changed by 2017, where students reported arrests, aggression and "feeling terrorised" by police, according to Papuans Behind Bars (2017). Furthermore, "the fate of fellow student activists tortured and murdered in detention in Papua is never far from their minds" (Munro 2018, 93).

This corresponds with the material day-to-day experiences of my Java-based Papuan consultants. They too spoke of similar struggles in Indonesia. Yet Munro does assert that in learning how to successfully negotiate Indonesian bureaucracy, in making "use of skills in proceduralism and ceremonialism" they are able to "use their experiences abroad to create prestige, confidence, and meaningful results" within their own communities (2009, 245). These skills are often developed in student organisations based on geography, according to regencies, or religion, with an emphasis on "highlanders showing, teaching and practising discipline, order and participation" with each other (Munro 2018, 129).

Beyond this, I found the Papuan attempts at "reversing the gaze" to be much more creative and wide-reaching than developing such skills and social networks (Munro 2018, 139). What I also witnessed was various forms of personal resistance against such stigma. The promotion of alternative ways of being, of storytelling, was evident everywhere, even in subtlest of ways.

Such subtle resistances also fall into the social exchange I have been describing as the dot dot dot and whisper stories. Diminishment triggers the DDD, but it is also answered with a whisper story. Literary critic Frank Kermode conceived of stories as the '*tick tock*' of a clock— a *tick* in the narrative anticipates that something — a *tock* — will follow (2000; Frank 2010). The whisper story represents the *tock* answer to the *tick* of Indonesian stigma. As with many stories, we observe one story “embedded within another" (Frank 2010). As I will expand on in Part Two, Papuan independent scholars do not only share whisper stories. They are actively writing, sharing and creating, as methods of ‘reversing the gaze’.

In exploring these methods, I do not mean to cast the telling of stories as an all-in-one solution to the very material barriers presented to young Papuans. Munro's *Dreams Made Small* (2018) details the day-to-day challenges faced by Dani students, not only during their educational experience elsewhere in Indonesia, but also when they return home to Wamena and surrounds. Having "been accused of being low-quality human resources," young Papuans who acquire knowledge and skills through the Indonesian education system find "no flood of opportunities" to meaningfully participate in the economy and other power structures (Munro 2018, 170).

Digital flâneurs in Java

Munro's fieldwork was conducted mostly in 2005 and 2006, and she makes no mention of social media use amongst students. At the time, students with basic computer skills, let alone those who could use the internet, were in high demand by others with little understanding of technology (Munro 2009, 156).

By 2015, when my fieldwork began, the Papuan Interface— now also comprising online networked knowledge of Indonesian military and police atrocities, political statements on Facebook, Instagram filters and a shared love of Persipura, Papua's best-known football team, heaved and buzzed on smartphones and *warnet* (internet cafes) all over Java. In this online, offline Papuanness we find the whisper stories explored in the following chapters.

I would not cast the Papuan experience in Java as only one of diminishment. The Papuan Interface is full of reimagining and remaking. It is a re-storytelling: a reinvention that remixes traditional culture with connected life in capital cities, seizing several versions of the world that other groups would assume to be incompatible and blending them, creating new possibilities. Young people from different parts of Papua, meeting for the first time in Java, speak Indonesian to their new neighbours, and *logat Papua* (Papuan dialect) amongst each other. In the boarding rooms and houses divided by ethnic groups, regional Papuan languages can often be heard.

Online and offline, conversations are peppered with slang from Java, Papua and beyond. Of course, there is no one experience of the Interface, and each experience includes both "externally imposed and subjectively produced mediations" (Nakata 2007, 211). danah boyd similarly describes publics as being "tangled up in one another, challenging any effort to understand the boundaries and shape of any particular public" (2014, 9).

boyd describes the experience of young people using the internet as digital flâneurs, in honour of Baudelaire's original flâneur strolling the city streets (boyd 2014, 203). For Papuans in Jakarta and Jogja, there are (in spite of state agency monitoring) certain flâneur-type freedoms online and offline that may not be possible back home, including the freedom of a decent internet connection. Facebook Live would be difficult in Wamena, where in certain villages on the periphery of the network, sending a message via WhatsApp becomes an exercise in acrobatics — being able to stretch to a corner in the room or a walk to a street where network bars appear. With many parents in the Balim Valley unlikely to have their own Facebook account, there is also more freedom to define yourself online and offline, far from community pressures at home.

This exegesis aims to suggest an alternative to Lawrence Yang and colleagues' assertion about stigma: that it "threatens the loss or diminution of what is most at stake, or actually diminishes or destroys that lived value" (cited in Munro 2018, 88). This humiliation can intensify Dani students' commitment "to home and other highlanders" (Munro 2018, 179). For some Papuans living in Jakarta and Yogyakarta, stigma also represents a threat to what is most at stake. However, in clarifying exactly what is at risk, and through the threat of destruction, stigma can serve to embolden young Papuans to tell different stories about themselves, if only in whispers.

Fragments of whisper stories

At a small workshop on video editing held for Papuans by a non-government organisation in Java, budding filmmaker Leon explained why he was taking part: "I'm beyond bored by the Indonesian media" he said, referring to the way national outlets report on Papua. He was ready to tell his own stories, and he had begun with whisper stories. In one music video he directed for a friend— a song about pursuing a beautiful Papuan woman— a giant *Bintang Kejora* (The Morning Star, the Papuan independence flag) is featured, painted behind a bed. “That’s my actual bed!” he told me. The frame is just a few seconds long, but there is the flag covering the wall, subtle but undeniable.

A 2007 national government regulation officially bans the use of separatist symbols, specifically listing the Morning Star flag (DFAT 2019). The extent to which the Papuan flag has been tolerated as a whisper story has varied over time and place and remains unpredictable. Charles Farhadian writes that in the initial heady days of *Reformasi,* following the fall of the flag-intolerant President Suharto, he was surprised to see young Papuans (in Papua) wearing T-shirts featuring the Morning Star. To him it suggested "a slight lacuna” had started to open up in the political system (2001, 27). That lacuna again opened with President Abdurrahman Wahid, who conditionally allowed the Morning Star flag to be flown as a cultural symbol in 1999, before eventually caving to pressure from politicians and security forces and retracting his assurances (Chauvel 2004, 30; Sanders 2001, 22; Van den Broek and Szalay 2001). Freedom of expression advocates often point out that under the Special Autonomy Law of 2001, Papuan regional symbols are protected as a display of cultural identity, but "the Morning Star flag was not specifically listed,” according to human rights lawyer Jennifer Robinson (2008). In recent years, publicly displaying the Morning Star symbol has led to some arrests and warnings, mostly inside Papua, but in other Indonesian regions as well. Incidences involving the raising of the flag have led to lengthy prison sentences for some activists, documented by Papuans Behind Bars

(2017). Between 2010-2018, security forces were responsible for approximately 95 deaths of Papuans in 69 incidents— 39 related to non-violent political activities such as raising the flag (Human Rights Watch 2019).

Binaries

Danilyn Rutherford makes a distinction between Papuans in Biak who "participated enthusiastically in the programs and projects of the [Indonesian] regime" — the focus of her own ethnographic research — and other "practices or persons that the New Order pushed to the margins" (2003, 4).

My fieldwork unearthed a reality that sat between this binary, simply because in Java, there is no neat division between young Papuans pushed to the margins and those who participate enthusiastically in the regime— they know each other (and Rutherford also goes on to tease out the grey areas of Biak self-identification). In Papuan student dorms in Java and Yogyakarta, these two groups often cook together, pray together and party together. They are family. Sometimes— often— this binary exists within the one person. To be Papuan is to always to be pushed to the margins, as much as one is encouraged to participate in the regime.

One night I was hanging out and interviewing Fery in his *kost*. He lived in standard student digs in Yogyakarta: a small room, a single mattress pushed up against the wall when not in use, so there was room to sit on the floor. Three shirts hung from a small rack close to the ground. I was getting tired, so he drove me to a nearby intersection, so my *ojek* (motorcycle taxi) could pick me up and take me home. When my driver saw Fery, the standard dialogue rolled out. There's a certain script that is often followed when an Indonesian local speaks to a Papuan they do not know. They can be the waiter at a cafe, an *ojek* driver, or someone sitting on the sidewalk. *"Kamu…?"* (You are...?). It's a tired old jingle, so Papuans can fill in the blanks: "*Ya, saya dari Papua"* (Yes, I'm from Papua). They are always seen here. And so the driver began: "*Kamu…?*" Fery answered him: Yes, I'm from

the east [of Indonesia]". It wasn't enough for my driver though. *"Dari Papua ya?"* (From Papua, right?). His hand formed into the shape of a rifle and he pointed it, intentionally or not, at Fery. My driver leaned over and said to me, in Indonesian, "Lots of people over there…" and imitated the sound of gunfire. Neither Fery or I said anything.

After a few moments of us staying silent while the driver laughed, Fery said: "Sir, you mean the problem between the military and Papuans?" The driver turned to me and told me there were many problems with tribes in Papua. He turned back to Fery, and asked him if here in Jogja, "*Kita saudara ya, satu negara dan kita saudara, kan?"* (We're family, one country, and we are family, right?). Fery started speaking Javanese, smiling, and I did not understand what he was saying. Javanese is a complex language, broken into both formal and informal, or high and low forms, but Fery had taken the time to acquire it while living in Jogja. It is a useful language for survival, and to find a place to live. Papuans repeatedly told me that landlords in Yogyakarta are likely to consider them loud, drunk and dirty, and will be reluctant to rent them a room. Javanese-speaking Papuans recounted how they helped younger Papuans find accommodation by speaking Javanese to the landlord, as a way of gaining their trust.

Later that night, I texted Fery to ask him what he had said to the driver in Javanese. He said he told him he should take the time to read about what is happening in Papua because the media wasn't always right. Fery had been smiling, but it was a firm *tock*, responding to the *tick* of the narrative started by the driver. A whisper story, delivered politely in a foreign tongue and only half-told: Read. Get educated. There's more to this story.

Bodily whispers

Munro (2018) hints at another whisper story when she describes students wearing the traditional penis gourd (*koteka* in Indonesian, or *holim* in Dani).

In another paper based on her fieldwork, Munro articulates *malu* (embarrassed), as “both the feeling of awareness, including a dimension of struggle, of being persistently viewed as primitive and uncouth, as well as the feeling that erupts when conflicts over the right to respectful recognition are aired in public” (2015, 170).

The intersection of *malu* and the airing of these feelings of struggle, by wearing the *koteka,* appears as a bodily manifestation of, or parallel to, the DDD/ whisper story exchange. If the omission of the DDD is expressed in Dani students being “encouraged to be shy, embarrassed and even ashamed (captured in the term *malu*)” (Munro 2018, 177); then wearing the *koteka* whispers new meaning. Male students wear the *koteka* to express "courage, tenacity, and commitment. It is the opposite of shameful. Students know, and assert, that everyone in the highlands is aware of the dominant perspective about the *koteka*: it indicates extreme primitiveness” (Munro 2009, 225). It is the *tock* to a long history of *tick* — of Indonesian storytelling about what the *koteka* represents. It is no coincidence that the first ‘modernising’ campaign first launched by the Indonesian government in the Balim Valley in the 1970s was named *Operasi Koteka* (Operation Penis Gourd*)*. Indonesian anthropologist Oscar M. T. Siregar, writing not long after the start of the campaign, explains that the government wanted to show it was able to quickly achieve progress “in recognition of the fact that it would take 100 years or more to bring the interior to the level of cultural progress such as is found in Java and other parts of Indonesia” [the Indonesian version following the English abstract states “maybe two hundred years”] (1972, 54-55).

If we think of stories as actors, we can also think of the body as one site where these stories act upon (Frank 2010). The stories behind the wearing of, or not wearing the *koteka,* are one example of why, as John Law argues, the “body is so important”:

> “For it is a detector, a finely tuned detector, a detector of narrative diffraction patterns. It is an exquisite and finely honed instrument that

> both detects and performs patterns of interference between modes of ordering" (2000, 27).

As more stories in this exegesis will show, the Papuan body is a site of narrative contention, one that is patrolled not only by Indonesian state actors, but also by Papuans themselves. Their embodied experiences detect and perform these patterns of interference, between modes of ordering how Papuanness is and should be expressed, as I explore in the following chapter, *Patrolling Papuanness.*

Patrolling Papuanness

Papuanness is patrolled in the Interface by Papuan, Indonesian and state actors, through the stories that they tell each other. The patrolling of Papuanness by Papuans themselves shows the lack of a fixed or singular Papuan experience in the Interface. Nakata's own approach aims “not to produce the ‘truth’ of the Indigenous position but to better reveal the workings of knowledge and how understanding of Indigenous people is caught up and implicated in its work” (2007, 215).

Such 'workings of knowledge' are explored by Bronwyn Carlson in her book *The Politics of Identity: Who Counts as Aboriginal Today?* where I was first introduced to Nakata's concept of the Interface. Carlson writes that in Australia, a mix of colonialism, history and policy means that today, being Aboriginal can be a complex and emotionally fraught process, often subject to community surveillance over ways of acting 'Aboriginal' —"reminiscent of the conditions of a police state" (2016, 266). While First Nations communities in Australia and Indonesia have been ensnared and implicated in colonialism in different ways, there are intersections here with the Papuan Interface.

Epenka

A particularly Papuan-flavoured word is *Epenka*. It is in fact, not one word but a concept— stretched out it’s *E… Penting Ka*? Literally, it means ‘is that important?’ *Epenka* rolls along the lips in a languid way, as though even the utterance is an unnecessary effort. Papuan writer and journalist Aprila Wayar identifies its many uses, including in *mop* (humorous Papuan stories) and interprets it as “is what you’re saying really important? Maybe it matters to you, but not to me— because I really don’t care about what you’re talking about” (Wayar 2011). To my mind, it is a really subtle way of saying ‘I don’t give a [insert preferred swear word or phrase here]’. Wayar also links the

term to a certain kind of apathy that has befallen young Papuans, describing them as *generasi epen* (the *epen* generation).

Wayar argues that globalisation has caused Papuans to have something of an identity crisis in their culture and in their belief in themselves. She warns of a generation of Papuans who "no longer care about problems that occur around them… who are less aware of the social conditions of the community" — an attitude that has spread even to public servants in Papua (2011, 127-128). "There aren't many young Papuans who are proud of their own culture," she adds. Global media products are partly to blame, including 'sinetron', the Indonesian, often Java-based soap operas that are aired throughout the day on televisions around the nation. Young Papuans are also drawn to music from outside of their country, like reggae made popular by Bob Marley. In embracing the liberation music of another Black community, they forget their own traditional musical traditions (Wayar 2011, 128).

While *Epenka* is a slang term universally known by young Papuans, there seems to be no universal standard on what it is to be a 'good Papuan' — to be a person who is not part of *generasi epen*. Young Papuans face pressure to be all things— a global citizen on the internet but still connected to one's traditional culture, someone who fights for their community, but is not a separatist. It is these contradictory ideas that young Papuans must contend with, and is perhaps one of the reasons why the DDD emerges so strongly— sometimes it is safer to leave an ellipsis rather than speak, or to whisper rather than tell your whole story.

As well as being a journalist and essayist, Wayar is a novelist. In her first published work of fiction, *Rootless Black Rose* (2015), the main character Anna is a modern, career-orientated Papuan woman living in Jayapura. Yet Anna's exceptional markers of success in the city compete with her history as a student involved in organisations fighting for *merdeka* (independence).

"I admire what you did back then, but it's a real shame you abandoned the struggle for Papua in order to focus on your career," a mysterious man from

the past, Ferry, tells Anna (Wayar 2015, 36). I will discuss Wayar's work further in Part Two: *Honai Study Club.*

Meanwhile, the Indonesian state and its actors patrol Papuans from another angle. In 1986, Indonesian scholar Soeharini Soepangat published a doctoral thesis on Dani perceptions of schooling, and was critical that the students she observed did not appreciate the value of a modern education. "The value of schooling to the *orang lembah* (Baliem Valley Dani) is a means to acquire a diploma to get a government job" (cited in Munro 2009, 46).

In 2015 and 2016, many Papuan university students in Java were hopeful to do just that upon their graduation. Munro found similar ambitions and expectations amongst her Manado-based Dani informants. They likewise positioned themselves as "future heroes" aiming to develop Papua (2009, 7), aspirations I found consistent particularly with the less-politically active Papuans I spoke to.

In both Manado and Java, Papuans experience pressure to navigate bureaucracy and help their *adik* (literally, younger sibling— often younger Papuan students) do the same. For Papuans throughout Indonesia, regulation and impression management begins even within students' accommodation, often divided according to cultural groupings, based on kinship systems of older and younger siblings, or in boarding houses where a *ibu kos* (house mother) monitors inhabitants to "to ensure their morality and protect her own reputation by extension" (Munro 2018, 28, 126).

There are, however, constantly competing visions of what acting towards improving a shared sense of Papuanness involved. Aside from religion and tradition, Richards writes that Papuanness is also communicated in domains such as pop culture and language, "with or without the political aim of *merdeka*" (2015, 164). She terms "the changing shape of beliefs that Papuans are a good and worthy collective" as the Papuan pride movement (2015, 145). Of course, within the Papua pride movement there are unresolved discussions about what it is that Papuans, as a collective, should draw their

pride from. Rather than think about Papuans in the usual way that scholars define collaborators: "As like-minded colleagues who each contribute to a commonly conceived product," Tsing argues that opportunities for collaboration should not be "consensus-making but rather an opening for productive confusion" (2005, 248). A parallel example Nakata provides for Torres Strait Islanders is this: an elderly person leading a traditional life and a young person with a tertiary education "are both Islanders whose experiences may lead them to interpret the meaning of their lived realities in different ways but these interpretations are equally as legitimate as each other" (2007, 211) .

Yet Papuans face the challenge of trying to resolve which interpretations are legitimate for their own lives, in discussions with elders, their peers and themselves. Young people from Wamena describe themselves as "at a crossroads, an uncomfortable position that confuses us, making us choose a direction to go in ... A part of us is still with our *adat* [while] the other part has been dragged into modern life with many other options" (Sugandi 2014, 43). Globalisation offers the opportunity to expand, to "envision possible lives, to fabricate individual characters or to imagine national communities and world-wide religious affiliations" (Timmer 2000, 5). At the same time, Papuans studying in Java also carry with them the expectation of maintaining traditional lives, characters, communities and affiliations.

These competing visions are outlined by Donatus Bidaipouga Mote, a writer raised in Papua, who later continued tertiary studies in Yogyakarta. His book, titled *Suara Pembaharuan Mahasiswa Papua: Mengungkapkan Masalah-Masalah dalam Pendidikan di Papua* (Papuan University Students, the Voice of Renewal: Revealing Problems in Education in Papua) (2015), is a comprehensive overview of challenges in the education system. Mote implores us to walk through the villages of Papua, in the forests, on the riverbanks, to hear people— parents and elders— asking "when will my child become an agent of change in this country, to deliver us (the people of

Papua) from this occupation? … When will the children of this young generation of Papua be remembered by us in a Day of Heroes of the Nation?" (Mote 2015, 9)

In his research on white working-class young men in the 1970s, British sociologist Paul Willis found that "conformists" — young people adhering to "the official idea of schooling" while seeking success and upward mobility — are sometimes disregarded and discredited by their peers as being passive (1977, 14, 150). Young Papuans, meanwhile, must contend with paradoxical ideas of success. Their families, who wish them to gain an education and economic advancement, sometimes ask them to participate successfully in the state, while working to dismantle it. Nakata, after Michel Foucault, writes it should be recognised "that at the interface we are constantly being asked to be both continuous with one position at the same time as being discontinuous with another" (2007, 216). He frames this as the "push-pull" between Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives, but it can clearly occur amongst Indigenous positions in the Interface as well (see also Carlson 2016).

Young people in their twenties and thirties, studying far from home in an often hostile environment, are implored to be 'agents of change' for their families back home. Yet it is hard to define what specifically 'an agent of change' in Papua must deliver— the enormously broad goals of ending colonialism or bringing about independence, or bringing economic security to family or community? Even harder to define is how exactly young Papuans can be such agents. They are asked to figure this out while also participating enthusiastically in the regime, to paraphrase Rutherford (2003) again, by, for example, becoming public servants for the Indonesian government and securing a wage. There is an ever-sliding benchmark of what it is to be meaningfully engaged with the world as a Papuan, and the multiple standards by which one is judged.

Another young Papuan man studying in Yogyakarta, Tomas, completely rejected the link between fighting for an independent Papua to an authentic sense of Papuanness. He was waiting in the wings, so to speak, to become a pilot. He grew up with no electricity, in a village where little Indonesian was spoken. When a priest took him to Jayapura to complete high school at the age of 15, he cried. When I met him, he was preparing to return home to his village after 10 years away. He planned to ask for money from local leaders, to fulfil a childhood dream. Ever since he had seen the big missionary planes land in the dust and dirt of the local football field, he had wanted to become a pilot, but could not afford to pay for the license and the requisite training hours.

Nino Viartasiwi, Agus Trihartono, and Hary Yuswadi attempt generalising criticism of previous scholarship of Papua, claiming that past studies have described "a traditional and underdeveloped homogeneous society that is sustained by tribal—somewhat mystical—conducts". Instead, they paint a society "mingling and blending without any real distinction" between different ethnic groups, as a result of heavy migration and intermarriage[2] (2018, 80).

Tomas navigated a nuanced path between this simplified binary. He wore the *koteka* (penis gourd) during traditional ceremonies. He still spoke *Bahasa Mee* (Mee language) with his family. He longed to become a pilot and return home, to fly food and supplies to his remote community and others like it in Papua. In Yogyakarta, his Instagram feed was a daily display of dining in cafes with friends, many of them non-Indigenous students he met in Jayapura. He was part of a students' association there that counted amongst its members several young people whose parents arrived in waves of migration to Papua from Java and other islands. Tomas scrolled through his Instagram feed, pausing on a photo where he was sitting next to a light-skinned girl in a hijab: she too was Papuan, he said.

[2] This is not the case in Wamena, where intermarriage between highlanders and Indonesians rarely occurs (Munro 2018, 35).

Viartasiwi and colleagues (2018) state that previous studies have left people like Tomas' friend out of the discussion. Long-standing *transmigrasi* (transmigration/ resettlement) policies have seen generations of young people like her grow up in Papua. When they leave to study at university in Java, these non-Indigenous students often join (mixed-ethnicity) Papuan clubs. It is clear that they have come to identify as Papuan, or from Papua. In Java, Tomas had also mixed into a new culture. He had learned Javanese, made friends and tasted great food (It's hard to feel satisfied on food from home once you know how much rice can fill you up, he said). His life and his future were weaved into a larger idea of Indonesia— he is Indonesian, but he is still proudly Papuan.

Patrolling Papuan women

A Papuan man who regularly aired his opinions about political matters on Facebook shared a post aimed at the young women in his online social circle:

> "When women (…especially women of the land /Papuan women…) are only busy making themselves pretty, straightening their hair, getting hair extensions, plucking their eyebrows… putting on too much make-up, getting busy looking for guys (Papuan guys, duh)— who is going to be the female figure of the land who fights for the rights of other women from their land, who are always oppressed by violence and more? Should we wait for a female figure to appear from heaven to put an end to all this?"

The implication is that, if you seek to express yourself aesthetically (especially as an Indigenous Papuan woman), you are, as the activist in the social media post suggested, too distracted to be an agent for change. (In turn, the type of activities that some students engage in, such as protests, is seen by non-political Papuans such as Tomas as contributing to negative stereotypes of Papuans in Java.)

Julia was only 19 when I met her, but she was already a business owner, a student organisation leader, and her fashion aesthetic had brought her a large following on social media. Raised in Papua, one of her parents is Papuan, the other is from elsewhere in Indonesia[3], and her friendship group also reflected this mix of migrant and non-Indigenous Papuans. Her Instagram page is a gallery of creative outfits and experimentally beautiful hairstyles and makeup. Photo filters abounded, highlighting her perfectly symmetrical and classically beautiful face: clear skin, large, almond-shaped bright eyes, full lips. A selfie of hers, originally posted on her own Instagram, was featured on another account acting as a curated portfolio of attractive Papuan women, and other modelling opportunities continued to open up to her. She used Instagram to sell items from the small clothing business she ran from her *kost* (boarding room) to make money on the side while she studied. It featured Papua-positive logos, particularly promoting the city in Papua she was from, as her identity. Julia's approach to the Papuan pride movement was decidedly apolitical, even capitalist. It involved selling both a physical product and an idea.

There are clearly conflicting versions about what it means to contribute and to be an 'agent of change'. boyd writes that impression management is difficult in "a networked setting" (or an interface) because contexts themselves are networked. "Contexts don't just collapse accidentally; they collapse because individuals have a different sense of where the boundaries exist and how their decisions affect others" (2014, 49). The student activist associated the pursuit of beauty with the equivalent of *Epenka*— a failure to 'act' in the way a Papuan woman should.

Despite such criticism, Julia's efforts were a whisper story against the "moral hegemonies of beauty" found particularly in Java (Richards 2015,

[3] During my research, I did not encounter a large number of Papuans of mixed-race background. Those I spoke to with a Papuan mother and a father of different racial heritage in particular had sometimes found themselves excluded from community definitions of Papuanness, a view echoed in emerging political and social debates (Slama 2015, 264; Munro 2018, 14).

160). To watch Indonesian television is to be subjected to advertisements for skin whitening cream and straight, glossy hair. The advertisements pop up in between scenes of soap operas, where the leading stars also have white skin and straight hair. Most Papuans with access to a TV grew up with these advertisements too, of course, but they were teenagers then, they say: impressionable.

Now sometimes in Java, they see this stark contrast— between the screen and the mirror, themselves and the people that declare them 'other'. Between the pride they feel and the judgement they are subjected to. And when Papuans speak about this, often they'll touch their skin, and grab their hair to illustrate— it's tangible here. "*Iya, Kulit hitam, rambut kriting. Saya orang Papua!*" (Yeah I've got black skin, curly hair. I'm Papuan!). A popular recent song performed by musician Edo Kondologit, *Aku Papua*, contains lyrics that almost echo this phrase word for word. Kondologit told the crowd at a 2011 festival that the curly hair and black skin mentioned in the song "doesn't mean we want to split from Indonesia. It's our identity as Papuans, who are also Indonesians," *Kompas.com* (2011) reported. Julia's clothing business had embraced similar sentiments. One T-shirt for sale on Instagram featured a drawing of a Papuan woman, her curly hair filling the front of the T-shirt. Beneath it, a few hashtags: #Curly #Hair #Proud #Papuangirl #Myidentity.

Kaca said she wanted straight hair when she was younger. When she arrived in Yogyakarta from Papua to start university, other students asked her if her hair was natural, and if they could touch it. She was softly spoken but made an impression when she walked in the room: Big hair. Huge smile. Her glasses flicked with orange, like exclamation marks. Pink nails, blue jacket. In her first week of university, Kaca walked into the campus and realised instantly someone must be calling out to her, and only her: "*Eh, kriting!"* (hey, curly hair!). It was Aprila Wayar: now Papua's first female novelist, then a student at the same university. They have been friends ever since. Wayar herself is a proud, political Papuan woman — who occasionally straightens

her hair and puts light-coloured contacts in her eyes. The Papuan Interface and the people within it contain multitudes.

Many Papuans told me that their parents had warned them not to get involved in activism in Java, and Julia and Kaca are no exception. Julia's parents, particularly her father, who worked as a public servant, had requested that she focus on her studies and not go to protests. She had obeyed him, recalling something he had said with an intonation that suggested she agreed: “My father says Papua isn’t yet ready for freedom. We’re not ready to organise ourselves”.

Kaca said she did not like demonstrations. She wanted to return to Papua, become a financial advisor and set up her own business. In Jogja, she had also quietly become the main distributor of Aprila Wayar’s novels — which describe in detail military violence and rape against Papuans, and where some of the characters openly call for independence. I asked her why. She said, in her soft, low voice, that she was angry when she had first read the book. She learned Papuan stories from history, here, in Jogja. Later, she told me— perhaps when a bit more trust has been gained— that her father had considered moving the family to Australia for safety. Kaca is more comfortable with whisper stories for now, but she plays her part in distributing the trickster stories I'll explore in Part Two: *Honai Study Club.*

Indonesia, Papua, Nationalism, History

There is an anecdote about the former Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri's visit to Jayapura in 2002. The story seems to be trying to show the abyss between Indonesian and Papuan conversations around nationalism. It goes like this: a year after the elected Papuan leader Theys Eluay and his driver were assassinated by Indonesian Army special forces command personnel, Megawati made a one-day visit to Papua on Christmas Day (Smythe 2013; Giay 2006). Three thousand people attended a ceremony in Jayapura. Megawati declared that she had a Christmas present for the Papuans: a rendition of her favourite song. Julian Smythe continues telling the story:

> "Standing on stage suspended above a field of green grass, within sight of the sea, the wind, and the birds that so many Papuans sing of, into the silence of Theys Eluay and Aristoteles Masoka's deaths, Megawati gently crooned the song popularized by Frank Sinatra, 'I Did It My Way'" (2013, 89).

Smythe observed Megawati's crooning in Jakarta, where it was aired on state television. It suggests this performance was intended for a wider audience than just the 3000 people who were gifted this 'Christmas present' in Papua. He argues that the song, crooned just over a year after the murder of Eluay, saw Megawati reiterate "the discourse of the colonial state, which minimizes the Papuans' own agency and right to speak" (Smythe 2013, 89). Perhaps this is reading too much into the song. Either way, it shows different stories sitting uncomfortably alongside each other. To invoke Frank Kermode's concept of stories as a clock: the *tick* of the Indonesian president's performance, the *tock* of deep Papuan mourning, grappling with the loss of a man considered a great leader.

Indonesian media and scholarship is not a monolith, and nor is the Indonesian Interface, particularly in the stories about Papua that run through

it. The perspectives of Indonesians who have also been led by diverse Papuan hermeneutics (and vice versa) are weaved throughout this PhD. In other parts of the Indonesian Interface are scholars and writers reflecting differently on the stories told about history and Papua.

In a review of the historiography of conflicting Papuan and Indonesian perspectives, researcher Nino Viartasiwi claims that Papuan accounts of history lack empirical evidence. "Although personal history cannot be discounted, a shared experience by the people presents a more powerful argument," she writes, although somewhat contradictorily goes on to state in the same paragraph that Papuan narratives become repetitive (due to "the lack of Papuan intellectuals and writers who support the Papuans' perspective of history"). Viartasiwi concludes "the Papuan alternative history becomes no less monolithic than [the] Indonesian version of history" (2018, 152). This thesis stands as a counter-narrative to that claim.

The former head of the New York bureau of Antara, Indonesia's national news agency, writes that he has a sense of 'deja vu' as he follows how the "Papua problem" is developing. Akhmad Kusaeni was bureau chief between 1998 and 2001, a witness to the East Timor independence negotiations at the United Nations' headquarters during that time. To him, this is a familiar story, where international actors use familiar strategies, focused on accusations about human rights abuses, to gain independence. This upsets him, "as a red and white Indonesian who feels *NKRI sebagai harga mati*" (NKRI, Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia is immutable (Widjojo et al. 2008)). He adds: "This is a history lesson that cannot be repeated if a segment of Indonesia wants the Red and White [flag] to fly from Sabang to Merauke" (Kusaeni 2014).

Indonesian nationalism flourished most aggressively and fervently during the Sukarno and Suharto eras, but Clifford Geertz observes that this "'master idea, with its slogans, stories and radiant moments' had begun to be questioned by 'more reflective Indonesians'" (Rutherford 2003, 2). *Papua*

Road Map, published by the Indonesian Institute of Sciences, acknowledges "the face of Indonesian nationalism in Papua is dominated by militaristic interpretations and practices. Nationalism is reified and trivialised in the form of showing respect for symbols such as the red-and-white flag, the national anthem and other symbols" (Widjojo et al. 2008, 32).

The residue of Indonesian nationalism remains occasionally 'radiant' in politics and pop culture. In *5 cm*, a youth-orientated comedy-drama film released in 2012, the young adult protagonists climb to Java's highest peak, Mahameru. They place the Indonesian flag at the top of the mountain (a popular pursuit for local hikers). There is an earnest, extended scene in the otherwise light-hearted movie where the main characters all give speeches declaring their undying love for Indonesia, some of them weeping as they speak.

Symbols are powerful conduits for emotion. Benedict Anderson writes that the logo-map— first introduced by colonialists marking their territories with a particular colour of ink (the Dutch, a yellow-brown) later formed “a powerful emblem for the anticolonial nationalisms being born” (2006, 179). Papua formed a part of this heady dreaming— for while most Indonesian republican leaders did not know the area, its history as an internment camp for Indonesian political prisoners created a “symbolic significance of New Guinea as the furthest tip of the Indonesian fatherland” (Drooglever 2009, 131). To them, Papua had become an inextricable part of an emerging Indonesian identity.

Interface frictions

And now, Papuan students travel to Java, to Jakarta and Yogyakarta, to distinct points on a map they have spent their school lives memorising and reciting. These are sites of possibility and danger — the Papuans make these locations their own, although they will never be entirely Papuan. In that way, the Papuan Interface weaves in and out of the Indonesian Interface, and vice

versa. Eben Kirksey draws on Indonesia's many cultural and political associations with the banyan tree in a way that may be useful to understand both the Interface and Indonesian hegemony itself. The tree is a symbol of the traditionally dominant political party Golkar, led by Suharto during a three-decade reign. Anderson also recalls an old Indonesian saying — "Under the banyan tree no healthy plants can grow" — assessing the limits of reform occurring in the country in 2001 (cited in Kirksey 2012, 56).

To continue the analogy: is the banyan tree a substitute for the Indonesian Interface, crowding out and obscuring other interfaces below? Or can we better describe the Papuan Interface as the banyan tree? As Kirksey notes: "Banyans are strangler figs. They grow up and around host trees, encircling them with a fused lattice of aerial roots" (Kirksey 2012). His own work explores how Papuan activists "began to undermine, climb, appropriate, and replicate the architecture of domination" to achieve their own ends (Kirksey 2012, 57).

It is not accurate to say that the section of the Papuan Interface I witnessed was a simply replication or appropriation of Indonesian power— Papuan thinking, storytelling and scholarship runs deeper than that. But the force of Indonesian nationalism— its success story— means some elements of Papuan nationalism are framed as a response to Indonesian nationalism. In this framing, Papuan nationalism, like the banyan tree, "climbs" up this existing structure. Indonesian leaders imagined their nationalism with Papua as its border. The Papuans featured in this research reckon with their own borders: they describe growing in their identity as Papuans not only while they live in the cultural and political centres of the Indonesian state, but because of it.

Like the image of the banyan tree, Anna Tsing's concept of friction "reminds us that heterogeneous and unequal encounters can lead to new arrangements of culture and power" (2005, 5). Yet this friction, Tsing notes, "is not a synonym for resistance": hegemony can be made in these

encounters as well (Tsing 2005, 6). Many of the Papuans I spoke to are from Wamena, where "no English term properly captures the situation of *pendatang*", or Indonesian migrants, living there, according to Munro: "'Migrant' does not reflect the way that *pendatang* are, in state ideologies, intended to provide modern exemplars of Indonesian practices and values for Indigenous people" (2009, 4).

Young Papuans leave their city in the middle of the central highlands, where *pendatang* are the cultural keepers of what is right and good, and move to the heartland of that ideology. Now, they can judge these exemplars at its ideological and geographical centre. Papuans too are also 'offered' the chance to become exemplars themselves. In *Tete,* young men are expected to attend the Indonesian Independence Day celebrations on August 17, as a means of proving their allegiance.

I met Frankie, a recently graduated law student in Yogyakarta, who planned to head home to the Balim Valley, once he had saved enough money for his ticket. He did not openly take part in demonstrations, but we first spoke after a political discussion on Papua, held discreetly at the back of a shop. The location had been hidden on social media. Frankie did not speak at all during the meeting.

On one of his visits back home during his studies, he filmed a ceremonial performance that was held in his village on August 17. He told me he came from a village where many people, his father included, still wear the *koteka* (penis gourd), and he grew up mostly without electricity and television. This knowledge he had acquired— how to use a phone camera and film a traditional ceremony— came from his time in Jogja. Sitting on the floor of his small *kost* (boarding room), he played a few clips from the performance on his laptop. "Here's the dancing. There are a few more videos like these [that I've made]." Frankie said. "This is on the 17th of August. So [this ceremony] is saying: 'I'm a Papuan, we were like this. We used to wear *koteka*…. We didn't wear Indonesian clothes…. Then the government entered and gave us a new

identity— Indonesian. We know this. We still maintain our culture'". The *adat* (traditional culture) ceremony had taken place on the very day that Indonesians celebrates their independence. It was a deliberate contrast to celebrations elsewhere, he told me: "This is Indonesia's anniversary, but we say: we have this identity, which cannot be equated with Indonesia".

Frankie told me he did not want to upload the videos online. He was concerned about the consequences of the clips being seen. He would not publish these videos, and yet he kept them regardless. The clips are evidence that the event took place. If the ceremony is a whisper story for an alternative version of Indonesia's Independence Day, then Frankie's recording of it (but not publishing it) is another dot dot dot on top of it: an ellipsis, a weighty omission, loaded with meaning.

Melindo

A term adopted by the Indonesian government— *Melindo* — was created with the intent of "undermining the Papuan claim to be culturally different from the rest of Indonesia" (Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict 2017, 5). A portmanteau of Melanesia and Indonesia, it is both an organisation (set up to represent Indonesian provinces with Melanesian ethnic populations) and an idea: it posits Indonesia as having both geographical and cultural legitimacy when it comes to Papua— that it is both Asia and Melanesia. *Melindo* flings a lasso around Papuan identity and reins it into Indonesia.

In 2015, during international discussions about whether West Papua should hold a role in the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG), it was clear "the *Melindo* argument had worked" when Indonesia was elevated from 'observer' to a newly created 'associate member' title. In the meantime, Indonesia thwarted the ambitions of the United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) to become a full member, and was instead granted observer status (Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict 2017, 5). The ULMWP continues to advocate for full membership (Wenda and Rumbiak 2018).

The Indonesian filmmaker Asrida Elisabeth, from Flores, pulled her film *Tanah Mama (*Mama's Soil), set in Wamena, Papua, from the government-funded *Festival Budaya Melanesia* (Melanesian Cultural Festival) in October 2015. In a press release sent to journalists in October 2015, Elisabeth described it as a "political and diplomatic project" linked directly to Indonesia's aspirations in the MSG, creating "more controversy than respect for Melanesians" (my translation). She told the *Jakarta Globe* (2015) that "for the people of East Nusa Tenggara, Maluku and North Maluku, the Melanesian 'identity' has simply been thrust upon them by the state".

In Jakarta, I witnessed *Melindo* in a form different to how it is conceived by the government. At the *kost* of one young Papuan student from Wamena, there was an alliance of migrants from the East: from Flores and other parts of eastern Indonesia and Papua, living in close proximity. They spoke of a kind of camaraderie; a unity established if not in opposition, then at least parallel to, Javanese neighbours living nearby. The easterners needed to stick together, they explained.

Torture

The practice of torture is "widespread and systematic" in Papua, and many activists and non-government organisations continue to publish evidence and oral histories of these transgressions (Fernida et al. 2015, 4). "The Indonesian state apparatus has no hesitation to use killing, surveillance, arbitrary arrest and detention, and disappearances to control civilians," writes Budi Hernawan (2015, 197). He argues that torture has come to constitute "a form of state coercion" and "a state-sponsored crime and has become a mode of governance". Hernawan's research shows the very public use of torture by the Indonesian military invokes a Foucauldian "ritual of public execution". The performative element of this procedure, an indication of the might of the state, "has been done in public space, in front of a public audience, so anyone, including women and children, can witness an actual event of

torture” (Hernawan 2015, 197, 207-208). In *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man*, Michael Taussig writes:

> “The space of death is important in the creation of meaning and consciousness, nowhere more so than in societies where torture is endemic and where the culture of terror flourishes. We may think of the space of death as a threshold that allows for illumination as well as extinction” (1987, 4).

Such 'space' matters, both as an abstract and physical concept in Papua: "Location matters here" Hernawan tells us. "The power of spectacle does not lie in the act of inflicting actual pain and suffering but more in the act of communicating such an experience through the display of mutilated bodies” (Hernawan 2015, 197).

The threshold of this space of death can allow for moments of illumination in unexpected ways, for example, through the use of technology. When videos of abuse go viral on YouTube, torture is turned on its head and used as evidence by the international community to call for the prosecution of the soldiers involved. This mode of governance fails when an international audience "has been inadvertently exposed to the brutality of the torturers, but did not succumb to the shock and awe produced by the sovereign power of Indonesia" (Hernawan 2015, 206).

There is a Chilean folktale recounted by writer Ariel Dorfman. Witches steal children and break up their bodies, sewing their body parts together abnormally to break their will— the head is turned around, ears, mouth and eyes are sewn shut. The resulting creature is the *Imbunche*. Dorfman wrote in 1985 that during the military junta under Pinochet, Chileans were "in a way, already like *Imbunches*. They are isolated from each other, their means of communicating suppressed, their connections cut off, their senses blocked by fear" (cited in Taussig 1987, 4).

Balim Valley scholar Thadeus N. Mulait (2006, 20) describes "mokatma" as the world of the dead". Similarly, Yulia Sugandi was told by her Hubula

informants "mokat" meant "the spirit of the dead", while "mokatma" meant "the world of the spirits" (2014, 68, 170. In *Tete*, Fransiskus uses "mokat" to warn friends of Indonesian intelligence agents who were likely trailing them in their homes, meeting sites, Facebook profiles and protests. Such surveillance is a feature of life for young people from the Balim Valley living in Indonesia (Farhadian 2001, 178; Munro 2018). Like so many Papuans engaging in the DDD, Frank whispers safety, community and culture— in his case relegating these intelligence agents to *roh-roh jahat* (evil spirits) in his mother tongue. The whisper stories that Papuans engage in are in themselves illuminating acts: to refuse to cede control of one's humanity in the face of surveillance or even the threat of torture from the state. Papuans will not be viewed as *Imbunches*, mutilated by witches or spies. Despite the threat of violence and death for Papuan activists, documented extensively in human rights reports, it is the agents who are framed as lifeless beings, haunting the epicentres of state power.

In a similar way, the *Koreri* beliefs practised on the Papuan island of Biak— its "utopian narratives and practices" — are described by Rutherford as existing "against the backdrop of supposedly modem forms of hegemony" and these stories become a mode of relating to the policies of the Indonesian state (2003, 143). I explore *Koreri* further in Part Two. "What we find in Biak is not a negation of the modern, in the sense of its defining opposite, the traditional," she writes. "Biaks fully participated in the modern practices of New Order citizenship, yet in a fashion that dislodged the identifications that would have situated “Indonesianness” in their souls” (2003, 144). This is also a description of how many young Papuans in Java engage in the dot dot dot and storytelling. They make use of modern elements in Java's education system and economy while hearing and telling stories that can subtly dislodge an implemented "Indonesianness". They whisper their Papuanness anew.

Part Two:
Honai Study Club

Papuan Trickster Stories

“Every generation occupies itself with interpreting Trickster anew” Paul Radin (1969, 3).

Papuan history is rich with stories imbued with a certain trickster spirit. Trickster is a complex archetype, muddied by anthropological, psychological and literary attempts to define and co-opt it (Radin 1969; Shipley 2015; Kerényi 1969; Layard 1958), as *There's No I in Papua* explores. Jo-ann Archibald from the Stó:lō Nation in Canada points out "the diverse range of ideas that First Nations associate with the Trickster, who sometimes is like a magician, an enchanter, an absurd prankster, or a Shaman, who sometimes is a shape shifter, and who often takes on human characteristics” (2008, 5). Lewis Hyde defines trickster thematically as “the mythic embodiment of ambiguity and ambivalence, doubleness and duplicity, contradiction and paradox” (2010, 7).

Gabriella Coleman tells of taking up the trickster spirit during her research of Anonymous, a mischievous online hacker group whose elusive trickster qualities she describes in her book *Hacker, Hoaxer, Whistleblower, Spy: The Many Faces of Anonymous* (2014). Coleman describes her process of brokering between the hackers and the media as “a bit trickster-like myself”. When she was invited to speak about Anonymous to the Canadian Security Intelligence Service she went, despite her reservations about divulging information she had found in her research to a spy agency, because “I believe some element of the trickster spirit nudged me to accept CSIS’s invitation” (2014, 16, 50).

I want to suggest that the trickster spirit is catching, as it was for Coleman. To catch the trickster spirit does not make a person a trickster, or imply that they possess certain characteristics associated with Trickster — that of ‘the fool’ or a shameless wanderer with “great attraction to dirt” (Hyde

2010, 8; Radin 1969). In his analysis of artists and trickster myths, Hyde articulates the idea of trickster as a coalescence: “My own position, in any event, is not that the artists I write about are tricksters but that there are moments when the practice of art and this myth coincide” (2010, 14). Gerald Vizenor of the Minnesota Chippewa Nation conceives of trickster as a "doing, not an essence, not a museum being, not an aesthetic presence" (cited in Archibald 2008, 6). I too wish to illuminate the moments when trickster is ‘done’ — when it coincides with the practice of storytelling — and watch what unfolds.

Where does the Papuan trickster spirit come from? I argue that it comes from stories, both modern and mythical (and quite often the two are not mutually exclusive). To be more precise, the Papuan trickster spirit comprises *the stories themselves.* In the words of Hyde: “The trickster in the narrative is the narrative itself” (Frank 2010, 1028). I cite Hyde as quoted in Arthur Frank’s *Letting Stories Breathe*, as it is Frank’s work I am indebted to in developing my understanding of narrative as trickster, along with Archibald and Hyde. My aim is not to locate examples of the archetype itself in specific contexts, but rather explore the contagious force of the trickster stories that travel through the Papuan Interface.

Eben Kirksey’s *Freedom in Entangled Worlds* (2012) opens with a ‘List of Key Characters’— and each brief biography of these mostly well-known Papuans is imbued with trickster elements, though to my knowledge Kirksey never invokes the myth himself. He found “West Papuan revolutionaries demonstrated an uncanny knack for… building coalitions with unlikely allies,” but this, in turn, could limit their broader objectives (2012, 1). Octovianus Mote set up a meeting with then Indonesian President B.J. Habibie, only to escape an assassination attempt. General Melkianus Awom, one of the first guerrillas in *Organisasi Papua Merdeka* (the Free Papua Movement), evaded the authorities for decades while building the movement from within. As I detail in *There’s No I in Papua,* Kirksey also found himself imbued with a

certain trickster spirit that caused him to detour from conventional anthropological work.

Exploring the etymology of the word 'art' Hyde finds the ancient root word *-*ar* —meaning to join, and to fit— in several older and modern languages, appearing in words such as 'artisan' in English. Following this train of thought, Hyde describes 'trickster artists' as *artus-workers*, or joint-workers:

> "Not that they are much involved with making the firm and well-set joints that lead to classical harmony, of course. What tricksters like is the *flexible* or *movable* joint. If a joint comes apart, or if it moves from one place to another, or if it simply loosens up where it had begun to stick and stiffen, some trickster has probably been involved. In several different ways, tricksters are joint-disturbers" (2010, 256).

Part Two is an exploration of how stories are joint-disturbers, and how they cause people in the Papuan Interface to act. To again quote Arthur Frank, the aim here is to examine the 'trouble' these trickster stories cause: "Socio-narratology's interest in Trouble is twofold: first, how do stories present models of dealing with different kinds of trouble, and second, how do stories themselves make Trouble?" (2010, 655). I seek to understand what happens when Papuan trickster stories spread across the Interface.

Ukumearik as artus-worker

My creative work *Tete* centres on Ukumearik[4], the grandfather of Fransiskus. On a tribal chief's equivalent of a curriculum vitae, Ukumearik is no trickster, in the sense of the archetype's morally-ambiguous characteristics. He appears in oral histories as a leader who deeply honours his traditions. Ukumearik is chief of chiefs, a man who, in local oral histories and outsiders' accounts, ruled over a significant part of the Balim Valley, in a grouping known as Assolokobal. He did so during its tumultuous modern history, while

[4] I have used the spelling Ukumearik, as preferred by Fransiskus. In other sources his name is spelt in various ways, including Ukumhearik.

Dutch, Indonesian and religious forces attempted to exert influence over the region.

Yet like other Papuans before and after him engaging with different kinds of power, the stories that are told about Ukumearik invoke a kind of trickster spirit. As *Tete* demonstrates, Ukumearik continually eludes categorisation amongst his community and the political and religious entities that later come to interact with him. He is often cast as a shifting figure, benefiting from and struggling with forces of power, echoing Paul Radin's definition of Trickster as "at one and the same time creator and destroyer, giver and negator, he who dupes others and who is always duped himself" (1969, ix).

Ukumearik appears as an artus-worker twice over: Firstly, he is painted in many of the stories as someone who can make the joints of his own society and others a little more flexible. Secondly, the stories that are told about Ukumearik continue to act out in different corners of the Papuan Interface, impacting on the lives of people in the present day. Like Trickster, the trickster stories about Ukumearik are able to act out "something right/wrong that will get life going again" (Hyde 2010, 7).

And there are many stories about him, told by elders, researchers, colonial and missionary figures. We are introduced to him as a young man stealing other people's pigs. Instead of being punished for his thievery with death (a standard punishment), he is eventually rewarded with leadership. There's a story where he kidnaps a young widow (Fransiskus' grandmother— after apparently conspiring to have her husband die in war) with the intention of marrying her, but in the end, she herself makes the decision to become his wife. Another early anthropological and missionary story tells of how he peacefully assists the American Archbold expedition, who unknowingly give him the power that helps him consolidate his rule through outright war. The Dutch tell stories of how he makes offers to help them end the wars amongst various tribes in the Balim Valley, despite his own history as a remarkably successful warlord — though he later fails to show up for the meeting (out of

respect for his elders). His children tell stories of how Ukumearik utterly refused to abandon his own *adat* (traditional customs) despite their willingness to *bakar adat* (literally, to burn their traditional symbols and objects) following the arrival of the Christian missionaries that Ukumearik himself invited to his land.

Hyde writes that Trickster "belongs to polytheism or, lacking that, he needs at least a relationship to other powers, to people and institutions and traditions that can manage the odd double attitude of both insisting that their boundaries be respected and recognising that in the long run their liveliness depends on having those boundaries regularly disturbed" (Hyde 2010, 13). The arriving religious and political entities find themselves with challenging subjects to order into their specific social systems, and Ukumearik opens and restricts boundaries for those who arrive as his guests, as he both benefits from and pays the consequences for these changes.

Though Ukumearik appears in many stories as a figure who sometimes causes chagrin to other parties — stealing pigs, for example — in the stories told about him he is never presented as "a run-of-the-mill liar and thief" — something Trickster can be misunderstood as being (Hyde 2010, 13). When Trickster lies and steals "it isn't so much to get away with something or get rich as to disturb the established categories of truth and property and, by so doing, open the road to possible new worlds" (Hyde 2010, 13). In these stories, Ukumearik is an artus-worker who tests the limits of rules and conventions, of his own world and of others.

Tete elevates the perspectives of oral histories drawn from Fransiskus and his extended family above other sources. However, several other anthropological, colonial and religious archives not cited in the creative work attest to his significance and ability to negotiate various axes of power. The Balim Valley anthropologist Thadeus Mulait acknowledges Ukumearik as *kain* (an influential big man) (2006, 3; Alua 2006, 141). In an overview of Dutch colonial archives, Anton Ploeg points out several examples where Ukumearik

is identified as a "Huge Man" or exceptional leader, a figure he locates amongst tribal chiefs in the central highlands (Ploeg 1996). Russell Hitt, who interviewed several missionaries in the Balim to assemble a popular history of their proselytising in *Cannibal Valley* (1969), also describes Ukumearik: “In American terms he would have been the poor boy from across the tracks who was now president of seventeen corporations and board member of forty-three… a self-made man” (1969, 95). [There is evidence contesting this neat American metaphor —the missionary and linguist Myron Bromley acknowledges Ukumearik’s father was “an important confederacy leader and feast chief,” amongst several other powerful men (1962, 4)]

The archives of the Christian and Missionary Alliance’s magazines, *The Alliance Witness* and *Alliance Life*, record ongoing hope and occasionally contradicting accounts about Ukumearik’s possible conversation and/or staunch opposition to Christianity from 1954 until 1981, when his death is noted in *The Alliance Witness* (1981, 13) with the words: "God knows if he died a believer”. A statue of Ukumearik unveiled in 1991 has his likeness holding the gospel aloft to the heavens, with a plaque below describing him as “the first one to accept the gospel in the Baliem Valley”. Yet Catholic priest and historian Frans Lieshout, who first lived in the valley in 1964, argues that the statue “does not represent what truly happened” given that Ukumearik never choose between the two Christian denominations, firmly held to his own traditions and was eager to maintain good relations with both groups (2009, 225).

A rare recorded incident of threatened physical conflict between Ukumearik and religious figures in 1962 is described in forceful terms by the Protestant Reverend T. C. Bozeman, who warns that Ukumearik had “given himself over to Satan" after he reacted angrily to the burning of “fetishes" by threatening death to missionaries. Bozeman adds “the party of government men was able to break up the attack and discourage any violence” (1962, 11). However a later edition of *The Alliance Witness* appears to contradict the

circumstances of that same incident, describing Ukumearik as later showing "no outward hostility and seemed even to be friendly" (1963, 13).

Bromley recalls the incident over three decades later in an unpublished oral history recorded by his daughter, Elisabeth Bromley, in November 1998. He reflects in nuanced terms about the incident, illustrating Ukumearik's ability to flexibly react to complex axes of power:

> "When that happened, Ukum did, without ever threatening our lives or anything like that, he did put a ban on any local people coming to the station, to Hitigima… The head honcho of the Dutch government in Wamena came down and arrested him. He figured that there were threats involved to people's lives, there was trouble going to brew… And of course it was a very humiliating experience. But he didn't come out of that with a sort of resentful 'I'm going to get these buzzards', but rather came out realising there's somebody else in the valley that's got a lot of power — I better try to figure out how to work along with this. And I think that was more or less his reaction."

When the Indonesians arrive, the stories say that Ukumearik again approaches the newcomers with a spirit of collaboration, telling his people that while the foreigners would provide an opportunity for local children to receive an education, they would eventually return to their own land, as others had before them. Again, he leaves "old divisions intact" but keeps them "porous and flexible" (Hyde 2010, 260-261).

Ukumearik appears in Indonesian-sponsored stories as a symbol of unification, including in those not mentioned in *Tete.* Lieshout (2016) gives the example of the *Gedung Serbaguna Ukumhearik Asso* (the Ukumhearik Asso Multipurpose Building) inaugurated in Wamena in 2013. The then *bupati* (regent) of the area, John Wempi Wetipo, asserted that the building was titled as such because Ukumearik, along with three other traditional leaders, met Sukarno and "initiated West Papua joining with Indonesia". Wetipo is quoted in a book published by the Indonesian Ministry of Transportation, adding that the building was constructed on the site where voting for the Act of Free

Choice took place in the city in 1969 (Panjaitan, Islahuddin, and Suherlan 2015, 31).

Indonesian diplomat and civil servant Sudjarwo Tjondronegoro played a key role in negotiations in the lead up to the contentious vote by a small selection of Papuans, which formalised the annexation of Papua into Indonesia (Drooglever 2009). He is cited in an Indonesian government published account of the proceedings in Wamena, giving a speech recalling that he "six years earlier, was gifted a pig from HUKUM HIARIK from Hitigima," but Ukumearik is otherwise not listed amongst those who 'voted' in *Kabupaten Djajawidjaja* (Jayawijaya Regency)[5] in July 1969 (Soemowardojo 1997, 149-162). Lieshout asserts that tribal chiefs were forced to choose Indonesia, and that the event took place at Wamena's military barracks, not at the site where the Ukumhearik Asso Building stands (Whatsapp message to author, March 18, 2019).

Lieshout (2016) asks, if other tribal leaders are also acknowledged as *tokoh Pepera*[6] (notable figures in The Act of Free Choice), why Ukumearik's name alone was used to name the building. In his opinion, some of Ukumearik's many descendants and relatives now involved in local

[5] Lieshout (2016) writes that "I think we all know well enough that the 'Act of Free Choice' was engineered to be an 'act free of choice'". The official Indonesian transcript quotes government representatives asking participants in Wamena if they would like to remain with Indonesia, with tribal chiefs and other Papuans making fairly short statements that they would "choose" or "stay" with Indonesia or "the red and white" [flag] (Soemowardojo 1997, 154-157). The United Nations General Assembly records also include the Indonesian version of the Wamena event, which states "many members spoke very eloquently and with a candid spirit (many West Irianese turned out to be eloquent orators in their own right and fashion of expression!)" (cited in Saltford 2003, 161).

Other accounts of the vote in the city recall disturbances for two days before the event, with two Indonesian soldiers killed, but on the day a scene of calm, as participants were "forced to memorize the pleasant responses provided by Indonesia and read those aloud under the threat of death" and the appointed speakers confining themselves "to stating the words 'red and white'" before sitting down again (Drooglever 2009, 724-725). A different account alleges that some participants were critical of the vote, but "with four different dialects being used, the official interpreters made sure that none of these criticisms were expressed in their translations into the Indonesian language" (Saltford 2003, 161).

[6] Lieshout (2016) adds that the tribal chief Kurelu Mabel was earlier noted as a key figure in the vote.

Indonesian politics have overinflated his contribution to the Act of Free Choice in order to advance their own current political aspirations (Interview with author, May 21, 2017) — allowing this trickster story to expand well into the present.

Meanwhile, the oral histories shared in *Tete* instead tragically indicate that tricksters too can be "duped" (Hyde 2010; Radin 1969). Karl Kerényi argues that Trickster must also be granted "the greater consistency, an unchanging, indestructible core that not only antedates all the stories told about him, but has survived in spite of them…A trickster he is, and remains, even when the story-tellers would like to show him as… a *victim* of the world's trickery" (1969, 174).

Decades later, Ukumearik is dead but very much alive in his grandson's dreams and visions as he navigates Jakarta as a Papuan millennial. A*dat* (traditional customs) reveal that ancestors remain present in the *honai* (a traditional men's house), and "these ancestors are not merely manifested as historical sacred objects, but are also actively involved in the lives of their descendants" (Sugandi 2014, 59). Fransiskus honours that knowledge and uses it to his benefit in the Indonesian capital.

To be clear, I do not substitute 'ancestor' with Trickster here — that is inaccurate and contradicts the sacred way in which these deceased elders are regarded. Rather is the *trickster stories* about Ukumearik that negotiate the boundary between the living and the dead, as a metaphor by which we can understand the work that these stories do in the Interface. Trickster "might foolishly bring death into the world, but then, rather than abrogating the distinction between the living and the dead, he will take his place as one of the few characters who can negotiate that boundary" (Hyde 2010, 26). Ukumearik's spirit lives on in the trickster stories that are told about him, causing those in the present to act in hopeful and harmful ways[7].

[7] A consultant who appears in Leslie Butt's ethnographies of fieldwork in the Balim Valley in the mid 1990s is also named 'Ukumhearik', some 15 years after family oral

Fransiskus is also able to see the contextual limitations of trickster stories about his grandfather. Radin writes of Trickster "through his actions all values come into being" (cited in Frank 2010, 1456) and Fransiskus remixes the stories of his grandfather's actions as an allegory for the work he himself wishes to pursue as a lawyer and Papuan man. As the creative work *Tete* demonstrates, Fransiskus acknowledges Ukumearik's record of polyamory and war, but he himself begins telling new stories promoting gender equality and anti-violence that he has discovered in Jakarta.

The Itchy Old Man

Moving to the Papuan island of Biak, where Manarmakeri has been described by storytellers and anthropologists, local and foreign, as a biblical or messianic figure. Here, I wish to illuminate the trickster elements of this story about an old man who took over the world.

There are various spellings of Manarmakeri, but all are rooted in the Biak words *mansar* (old man) and *armaker* (scabies) — also translated as The Itchy Old Man (Kamma 1972, 17; Rutherford 2003).

There is a long backstory to the Itchy Old Man's journey, but I will take up with an abridged version of the tale, at the point when Manarmakeri is socially isolated, with oozing welts and scaly skin. He discovers that the Morning Star has been stealing his palm wine, a "liquid solace to the lonely vagrant" (Rutherford 2003, 154). Manarmakeri catches the star, who in exchange for

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histories and missionary archives record the tribal chief as having passed away. The names of the Dani in her research are pseudonyms (Butt 1998, 51), but it is interesting to note what the name Ukumearik continues to inspire, and to observe the life of a tribal chief in a newer era. She records attending a wedding in 1995, where "an alliance chief named Ukumhearik, who was rich with pigs, land, and influence" married his daughter to an ally, but the daughter ran away two days later, leaving him to negotiate the return of the brideprice (Butt 2005, 167). She notes that "Ukumhearik, a tribal leader of some political renown" — believed the Indonesian government's family planning program *Keluarga Berencana* was dangerous and resulted in his newborn's death (Butt 2001, 72). He tells Butt he had given up Catholicism and his *adat* (traditional customs) to become a Baptist a decade earlier, in order to stop his children from dying. Other Danis considered his *adat* transgressions to be the reason his wives often ran away (1998, 164). She adds: "Ukumhearik sells himself aggressively as a wealthy and influential leader" (Butt 1998, 161).

release, agrees to show him the secret of eternal life. It involves capturing a woman. Who turns up next but Insoraki, the village's most beautiful woman and the daughter of the headman. He throws enchanted fruit at her breast, which impregnates her while covering her in a rash. The conception and birth remain a mystery to the village for some time (accounts range between a matter of days and five years later), when her son recognises his father Manarmakeri, the Itchy Old Man, in a crowd. He yells out '*Yai iso i wu, yai iso i wu* (there is my father, there is my father)" (Kamma 1972, 32).

Everyone, including Insoraki's father, the chief, is disgusted at the idea that his daughter lay with this old scabby man and the entire village abandons the island. The Itchy Old Man and his now-revealed family are left behind. The young boy is hungry, and asks his mother for food. “Go tell your father to let you eat some of his crusty skin!" Insoraki says bitterly (Rutherford 2003, 156). The boy is lead to a feast of food in another room, and finally, the Itchy Old Man persuades Insoraki to also swallow the food made from his skin. The Itchy Old Man then goes to the forest, builds a fire and leaps into it, spinning around as his old skin melts away from him. Now he is a dazzling young man, naked and glistening, with a new name to boot: *Manseren Manggundi* (the Lord Himself; the mighty one):

> "The old skin had turned into antique plates, shell armlets, beads, and other valuables. He then stood on a stone and looked at himself in the seawater, and behold, he was whiteskinned like a European. This did not please him, so he leapt into the fire once more until he was burnt a brown color. He looked in the mirror again and liked it this way. First he put on European clothes but rejected them. Then he wrapped himself in the Biak loin-cloth of beaten banana-tree bark, put a comb in his hair to which he tied cock’s feathers and adorned himself with armlets and beads" (Kamma 1972, 34).

Having rejected Western clothes and skin for a Biak man's appearance, the Itchy Old Man prepares for world domination. He sets sail, "magically inscribing the features of the human landscape,” gradually dropping off crew

members who become the original inhabitants of Maluku, of Java and other Indonesian islands (Rutherford 2003, 158-159).

In some versions of the story noted by Freerk Ch. Kamma (1972), the Itchy Old Man also throws rice to Java, and a piece of bread to the Netherlands—giving each place its distinct food culture. Danilyn Rutherford notes versions of the story where the Itchy Old Man's son goes to Palestine, his work underpinning the second half of the New Testament. In others, the Itchy Old Man is the catalyst for European identity and Western wealth and technology (2003, 159).

Rutherford expands on how the Itchy Old Man may be seen in biblical terms— "Like the Old Testament narrative, the myth of Manarmakeri tells of a man blessed with a son in the deepening twilight of his years. Like the New Testament refrain, it depicts a virgin birth" (2003, 163).

Of course, there is much Trickster in this tale, where "a theft of palm wine… sets off a new series of events that are explicitly presented as surprises: Manarmakeri startles the Star, the Star startles Manarmakeri, Manarmakeri obtains the power to startle the world" (Rutherford 2003, 164). As in stories about Trickster, the tale opens with theft (of palm wine), and it continues: the 'theft' (startling) of a princess, the theft (startling) of the world. Theft in this story will again "open the road to possible new worlds" (Hyde 2010, 13).

As Itchy Old Man began dropping off crew members on islands that were to eventually become Indonesia, "the progress of a journey provided the principle that organized a cultural order. It is almost as if the "unity" in the national motto, "Unity in Diversity," was born on Manarmakeri's moving ship (Rutherford 2003, 159). What is more trickster-like than for the Itchy Old Man to be directly responsible for the Indonesian nationalism that his descendants continue to rally against? Like Ukumearik's acceptance of Dutch, religious and Indonesian incursions, these men and their stories open new worlds with consequences that are never benign. Jaap Timmer, in his analysis of three

historical narratives focused on the Bird's Head region, similarly writes of Papuan-authored texts "forging national histories to underpin ideas of unity" — despite these texts being created in opposition to the state, "in their struggle against Indonesia" (2015, 109). Again, what could be more Trickster-like? The people of the Onin Peninsula claim a connection to the ancient Javanese kingdom of Majapahit— which Indonesian nationalists also used to peg ancient legitimacy upon the modern Indonesian state (2015, 110).

The most interesting question here, beyond whether Papuan stories carry the trickster spirit, is to ask what 'trouble' such stories have caused (Frank 2010). Timmer similarly quotes Bruce Lincoln, who argues a myth is not only a coding device through "which actors *can then* construct society. It is also a discursive act through which actors evoke the sentiments out of which society is actively constructed" (2015, 96).

In the Itchy Old Man stories, he, like Trickster, negotiates the boundaries between old and new worlds, between the living and the dead, a figure who as Rutherford describes "explicitly embodies the connections between the alien and the ancestral" (2003, 133). We can think of this quite literally in his boat journeys through Indonesia, to Palestine and Europe. But this same spirit is also embodied in the way the Itchy Old Man myth has sailed its way into modern fights for Papuan independence, through the *Koreri* messianic movement.

Curiously, *Koreri* is a Biak word that means 'Ideal State' or 'Utopia' from the root word *rer,* "'to change skins', like a snake for instance". It has been translated as 'metamorphosis' (Kamma 1972, 18). "Tricksters are known for changing their skin," Hyde (2010, 51) tells us, and while the Itchy Old Man undergoes a very literal skin change, *Koreri* ensures that this story continues shedding its skin in various iterations, sailing into new chapters of history.

Dutch and missionary archives document over a century of *Koreri* movements, beginning in the 1850s. Such movements are defined as a group of believers preparing for the return of Manseren Manggundi (the Itchy Old

Man now remade as the Lord Himself), which would “usher in the revelation of *Koreri”* (Kamma 1972, 102).

Rutherford writes that the *Koreri* movement of 1939-43 "featured leaders who turned the messianic expectations associated with the myth in an explicitly political direction". The Dutch administrators and missionaries considered *Koreri* to be part of Indonesian nationalism; the Indonesians, when they gained power, linked the movement to the Free Papua Movement, *Organisasi Papua Merdeka* (Rutherford 2003, 24).

Angganitha Menufaur, a Biak woman who proclaimed herself the 'Golden Queen of Judea', had pacifist followers who dressed in white, avoided pork and spoke in tongues. The Itchy Old Man appeared to Angganitha in a dream, unfurling an upside down Dutch flag with Sampari, the Morning Star, pinned against the blue section— something of a predecessor to the West Papuan flag agreed upon two decades later. Angganitha's political rise was remarkable as a woman in 1940s wartime Papua: amongst New Guinea's tribes, she was recognised as Queen, and handed the title 'Woman of the Peace' for having united them (Drooglever 2009, 68; Rutherford 2003).

Hyde reminds us that in patriarchal societies, there are, correspondingly few female trickster stories— and yet we know that Tricksters are boundary crossers. In Angganitha’s case, this does not refer solely to gender boundaries. As the Dutch historian Pieter Drooglever asserts, “*Koreri* was the first sign of Papuan nationalism in which the borders of the clan or tribe were transcended" (2009, 69).

Some boundaries run deep. Despite Angganitha's title of 'Woman of the Peace' it was deemed necessary to have a man run her army— that role went to her collaborator Stephanus (Kamma 1972, 171). The armies were also plagued with infighting, and "the profound individualism of the Biakkans made effective cooperation impossible” (Drooglever 2009, 69). To quote

Hyde again, "when [Trickster] becomes the messenger of the gods it's as if he has been enlisted to solve a problem he himself created"[8] (2010, 8)

The artus-workers met their end: Angganitha and Stephanus were beheaded by the Japanese, and as Drooglever (2009, 69) asserts, the movement was not too difficult to suppress. That is, if you believe this trickster story ends here. Rutherford (2003, 201) writes that Angganitha lit "the embers of Papuan nationalism that still smoulder in many Biak hearts".

Forward on to July 1998, just over a month after President Suharto resigned. Filep Karma, a former civil servant and member of an elite Biak family, led a demonstration where the Morning Star Flag was raised. Of course, the Morning Star, first responsible for stealing the palm wine from the Itchy Old Man, is now the key feature and namesake of this flag. To fly the Morning Star flag in Papua can lead to a lengthy prison sentence— Karma later served 10 years of a 15-year sentence for raising the flag again in 2004 (Papuans Behind Bars n.d.). As I wrote in the chapter *The Papuan Interface*, images of the flag can serve as whisper stories for young Papuans in Java.

Rutherford (2003, 25) notes that in 1998, Karma never mentioned *Koreri* during the flag raising, but the flag is *Koreri*'s own whisper story, however softly it murmured in Karma's mind at the time. As he later told Kirksey, "I had seen the flag before, but I didn't remember what it looked like. We looked all over Biak but couldn't find one" (2012, 43). Finally, one was hastily made with cheap cloth and red and blue paint. As the flag was raised, Kirksey writes that Karma was "a spirit dancing about like liquid mercury, moving in different directions, and coalescing around multiple future events, figures of hope" (2012, xvii)— or in other words, Karma had joined this trickster story for the ride. Then security forces opened fire on the crowd. Karma was shot in both legs and arrested, serving 18 months in detention. At least 40 people were

[8] To extend this idea of Trickster as the messenger of the Gods: *Koreri* in Angganitha's time also carried heavy biblical overtones, according to Kamma (1972, 161). He writes that some followers believed essential facts about the gospel had been repressed– such as that the Itchy Old Man was in fact Jesus. In turn, Angganitha was known by the alternate name 'Mary', and the island where she was outcast, 'Bethlehem'.

killed in the incident, according to Amnesty International Indonesia (2018, 19; see also Kirksey 2012).

Kirksey's description of Karma as 'a spirit' is the definition he gives to "the messianic multiple". Much like Angganitha's story before him, there was "a sense of expectation populated by many saviours and imagined events" (2012, 32)

The turn of the millennium was indeed a messianic time. President Suharto had resigned, an independent East Timor was whispering itself into life— change was in the air (Van den Broek and Szalay 2001). A few days later, Kirksey himself arrived to Biak on a ship that was coincidentally thought by locals to have messianic figures on board. Kirksey writes that the messianic multiple hovered as Biak's citizens excitedly asked themselves who these foreign messiahs would be: "Will CNN journalists arrive? The Itchy Old Man? Jesus? Or perhaps the messianic spirit was already working in Filep Karma, prompting his bold actions" (2012, 45).

I believe the "messianic multiple" and "messianic spirit" is actually part of a true trickster story at work. Hyde (2010, 80) describes tricksters as "travellers who multiply meanings as they move" — and this time, the story carried the messianic multiple on board. Several versions of the *Koreri* myth, some dating back over a hundred years, predicted the Itchy Old Man's return — "and then the golden age for the Papuans will begin," according to one ending (Kamma 1972, 40). Why wouldn't the Itchy Old Man, the Lord Himself, finally return to Biak as political fires raged around Indonesia?

Arthur Frank writes that dialogical narrative analysis learns from storytellers, just as the anthropologist Julie Cruikshank was able to learn from the Yukon master storyteller Angela Sidney: "Her great skill came not just from remembering and knowing the stories, but from knowing how to use them appropriately in different situations to produce the effect she knew

good stories can create"[9] (Frank 2010, 405; Archibald 2008). In the same way, the crowd in Biak, anticipating the boat, were storytellers who knew how to invoke the Itchy Old Man. They had learned "how to work with stories that are not *theirs* but *there*, as realities" (Frank 2010, 410). As I wrote earlier, Rutherford notes that *Koreri* was never mentioned in the speeches given during this time. Yet the crowd had certainly invoked Manarmakeri in response — he was *there*. As Kirksey writes:

> "The figural steamboat driven by the Lord Himself, who travelled the high seas spreading the seeds of world religions and the magic of modernity, helps explain the collective excitement about the arrival of the literal boat that I happened to be on" (2012, 42).

Given *Koreri's* propensity to shed its story skins and propel itself through history, perhaps I should not have been surprised when in 2015, I found the Itchy Old Man alive and well in a Papuan student dorm in Yogyakarta. I sat with a group of young men from many areas and groups: Mee, Lani, Dani— and a boy from Biak, on the cusp of manhood, who had been mostly silent as his older *kakak* (big brothers or older friends) spoke about their experiences of life in Jogja. When I asked if they had been told *cerita rakyat* (folklore, or traditional tales) when they were kids, he spoke for the first time:

"There's Biak history. About our ancestors, *lah.* It's about Manarmakeri. This story is history. It's Mansaren*.* Mansaren is God.[10] It's about the forefather of the West."

The Itchy Old Man story began. Eventually, the Biak man reached the part of the story when Manarmakeri steps into the fire and turns into the Lord Himself.

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[9] Australian researcher Jason MacLeod, who has worked with several Papuan civil resistance groups, heard from Papuans that the Itchy Old Man was actually still travelling, "recruiting support for a Free West Papua". Papuan scholar and political leader Jacob Rumbiak suggested to MacLeod with a smile: "Maybe he is trying to recruit you right now?" (MacLeod 2015, 338).

[10] In a later Facebook exchange with the Biak man, he told me that Mansaren was a Biak word meaning 'the Lord God who was in heaven'. Kamma (1972) translates Mansaren as 'freeman' or 'lord'.

"And he comes out looking like an American, really white. Like a *bule* (white foreigner), *lah*."

Though they were not from Biak, some of the other men clearly knew the story: "He was really handsome," one interjected. "Like Johnny Depp". Everyone laughed.

And so, I saw the forefather of the West, the Itchy Old Man, reborn from the ashes into a newer kind of Western father-figure: an icon of Hollywood. I like to think that the assistant storyteller was thinking of Depp playing the character of Captain Jack Sparrow in Disney's Pirates of the Caribbean franchise. Of all of Depp's films, these movies most certainly would made it to the markets of Yogyakarta, where bootlegged DVD copies of mainstream Hollywood films can be bought for about fifty Australian cents. Coincidentally, Captain Jack Sparrow comes close to the darkest shades of the Trickster archetype: a scheming, amoral character who helps and hinders himself and those he interacts with, as he sails the high seas. He also, literally, sheds his skin, revealing the skeleton form he is cursed with. But I digress.

These young men may have been generously, humorously remixing the myth of Manarmakeri to help a Western researcher understand— "In mythology, we hear the world telling its own story to itself" (Kerényi 1969, 175). And yet, the 'trouble' of the Itchy Old Man story revealed itself later in the conversation, when the young men spoke of the fear many parents felt in speaking their mother tongues and telling certain stories to their children. This itself was a familiar tale, one I would hear many times: their parents were afraid of repercussions for their family from the various sections of the Indonesian state. The word repeated again and again to me was 'trauma'.

The young man who told me the story of Manarmakeri anew was born in Biak, but that is not only who he is. He is yet another modern Papuan containing multiples. Like the Itchy Old Man, he has travelled. He grew up in the cosmopolitan mining city of Timika, and as a result he speaks his mother tongue, *Bahasa Biak* (Biak language) imperfectly, inflected with *logat Papua*

(Papuan dialect). And now, he's in the ancient royal city of Yogyakarta, studying at an Indonesian university, watching American movies in his shared dorm room while he picks up local urban slang and high Javanese. He has come to learn many things in this dorm and in this city, and one of them is this: "Indonesia has history. Papua also has history". *Tick, tock*.

The *tick tock* of histories

Frank Kermode's conception of narratives as the *tick tock* of a clock has particular relevance in trickster stories about history, and it is worth delving a little deeper into his ideas at this point. His work is focused on fictional stories, although he does paraphrase Karl Popper's well-known quote — "There is no history of mankind, there are only many histories of all kinds of aspects of human life" (1945, 257) — and Kermode adds it was "an insight which he was anticipated by novelists" (2000, 43).

When *tock* answers *tick*, it converts this singular into multiples, or in Kermode's words, “converts a blank into a *kairos,* charges it with meaning". *Kairos* is a complex Greek word and idea about time, sitting in contrast to sequential time (*chronos).* He takes *kairos* here to mean “a point in time filled with significance” or a “boundary-situation” (Kermode 2000, 47, 192) — that can relate to a personal crisis, but Trickster is also a boundary-crosser. With *kairos*, what "was conceived of as simply successive becomes charged with past and future" — which overlaps with the purpose of stories in *Nyawene* from the Balim Valley (Kermode 2000, 46; Dale, Wetipo, and Elisabeth 2015). I am reminded again of trickster stories moving through the Interface, through past and future, charging us with further meaning. Popper told us there were many histories: "And one of these is the history of political power. This is elevated into the history of the world" (Popper 1945, 257).

There’s another trickster tale from Biak that further illustrates the *tick tock* of historical storytelling about political power, described by Papuan scholar Benny Giay (2006, 27). It is about Amir Machmud, the Indonesian military

general and later Minister of the Interior, who played a key role in the transfer of power from President Sukarno to Suharto, and in the annexation of Papua to Indonesia (Drooglever 2009). As Giay describes, at one stage (we are not told which year) Minister Machmud was in Biak giving “a fiery speech about the government's duty to fight: imperialism, colonialism and communism”. After he had finished, a Biak local in the crowd called out to him. The person thanked the government for teaching the people about imperialism, colonialism and communism, but said that Papuans were more amazed by the *anggar*-ism that the government had taught them: "We ask you to help us so that we can understand and quickly implement this concept". *Anggar* is a Biak word, and so when the Indonesian minister then asked the local public servants what it meant, they looked down and dared not answer. After returning to the hotel with Machmud, the Biak staff were finally forced to tell him: “*Anggar* in our language means *menyipu* (to trick, to deceive)”. *Anggar*-ism was literally ‘trick-ism’, presented tongue-in-cheek by the Biak audience member with a new suffix to match the other philosophical concepts.

We can assume the minister was sharing stories about imperialism, colonialism and communism in the context of Indonesia’s history, casting off the chains of the former Dutch colony, and its fight against the red scare. But the person in the audience, and the speech itself, turned out to be artus-workers, disturbing the joints of those stories in the context of the Papuan Interface as lived by the Biak crowd. As Giay writes:

> “The point of the question was that state officials were deceitful or high-class *penipu-penipu* (tricksters/deceivers)[11]. Because his speech was good, but what was carried out in the field was different to this beautiful, authoritative speech and the programs that were formulated neatly on paper” (2006, 27).

[11] The common translation of trickster in Indonesian as *penipu* needs rethinking in the context of ‘trickster stories’, as I discuss further in *A long aside on labels and theories.*

Encountering trickster stories in Java

The remainder of Part Two: *Honai Study Club* looks at the stories Papuans tell each other in Java. It is away from home that whisper stories begin to take shape as trickster stories, where at last, fully formed— they can cause all sorts of 'trouble' (Frank 2010).

What I have come to believe is that examples of the dot dot dot are the first whispers of this trickster story spirit. It opens a space of possibility, for where trickster could, or does, enact itself. As Papuans begin remixing stories, the trickster spirit becomes fully formed. As Frank writes: "From all the stories that people hear while they are growing up, they remain caught up in some…and adapt a few to fit adult perceptions and aspirations" (2010, 186).

As artus-workers, Papuan trickster stories aim to achieve a 'flexible and movable joints': "Indonesia has history, Papua also has history". This is the world of Honai Study Club— where its members stretch out stories as they analyse them. Discussion, exchange, performance and writing warm up the joints of old stories, told by the state, told through *adat* (traditional customs), told by religious leaders, told by their parents and professors. These clubs fuse stories together and see how the parts will run. Again invoking Hyde's vision of tricksters as "travellers who multiply meanings as they move" (2010, 80) — I can close my eyes and imagine these stories as travelling tricksters, creating friction as they massage their way through the Papuan Interface (perhaps we can imagine them as trickster osteopaths!). Watch the Itchy Old Man hobble, observe imperialism float, see other suppressed stories spread through study groups and student dorms, through discussions and demonstrations, with reverberations for these young people, their families and the Indonesian state and society.

Perhaps I should write that these trickster-stories carry out their work in the Interface/s— the Papuan Interface, but the Indonesian one too. The Indonesian media and state often lack the vocabulary to define these Papuan

artus-workers (both the stories and the storytellers)— because they transcend the binary narrative generally offered in the mainstream of the Indonesian Interface: either you are a violent separatist, or you are loyal to the nation-state.

Coleman, in her analysis of Anonymous, writes “it is rare for something actually resembling the trickster myth to come into being in the midst of our contemporary reality” (2014, 275). I would add that what is truly remarkable is for Papuan trickster stories to come into being in the Indonesian Interface. As described in *Tete* and throughout this exegesis, life for Papuans in Java and the way history is taught in the Indonesian education system make these tales even more subversive— or perhaps it is precisely these conditions that make trickster stories come alive.

A Long Aside on Labels and Theories

I am interested in how stories act. I have looked at trickster stories as defined by Jo-ann Archibald, Arthur Frank and Lewis Hyde, as a means of tracing their travels — a trail of theoretical breadcrumbs left for my own benefit, and hopefully others. It does not change the fact that Trickster itself is a trope that I have indirectly brought to bear upon culture/s that do not name it as such, and there are a few related points worth exploring before proceeding to the trickster case stories.

It's all in the name

Jo-ann Archibald points out "the English word 'trickster' is a poor one because it cannot portray the diverse range of ideas that First Nations associate with the Trickster" (2008, 5). This becomes even more hazardous as translation is layered upon translation: the English word 'trickster' is often translated into Indonesian as *penipu* (deceiver, imposter)[12], even to describe the archetype itself. The wholly negative connotations of *penipu* to my mind fail to convey the light and shade of the Trickster myth— and that is before it has been appraised in the hundreds of different languages spoken in Papua (For example, how Trickster could relate to the word *anggar* in *Bahasa Biak* (Biak language) mentioned in the previous chapter).

Furthermore, within this project I am not focused on locating exact equivalents of literal Tricksters in the *cerita rakyat* (folktales) or languages of particular Papuan tribes. Instead, I have searched for a more suitable Indonesian translation for 'trickster stories', as a concept unto itself, rather than looking for a word that can wholly encapsulate the original Trickster myth. Still, attempting to evoke the trickster elements of 'trickster stories' in

[12] Unless stated within the text, all Indonesian-English translations within this section are drawn from Kamus Indonesia-Ingriss (Echols and Shadily 1994; Echols and Shadily 1975). English definitions are from the Oxford Dictionary of English (2016).

translation is an ongoing project. To begin, I have drawn on the Indonesian root word *akal*, upon which a number of word formations can be built related to intellect, ingenuity, deception, inventiveness and machinations. *Akal ubi* in particular is defined as “clever trick, stratagem”. Trickster stories could then be translated as *cerita yang penuh akal ubi* (a story filled with tricks and stratagems), particularly if we focus on the definition of stratagem as “a plan or scheme, especially one used to…achieve an end”. This hints towards the concept of trickster stories as ‘doing’ and ‘acting’ out in the Interface— as tales that will result in something else happening. However, *akal ubi* is cited elsewhere[13] as a synonym for *akal bulus* (cunning mind, sly trick), which can also carry overly negative connotations. There are similar limitations in English translations from the original Winnebago word for Trickster, *Wakdjunkaga,* defined as 'cunning one' (Kerényi 1969, 174).

Another translation for trickster stories could be *cerita berakal panjang* (a crafty story, from *akalnya panjang*). This translation overlaps with Hyde’s own etymological sleuthing. He refers to the ancient root word **-ar,* which he uses to define artus-workers ('artus' being the Latin verb for ‘joint in the body’) explored in *Papuan Trickster Stories*. Yet he also draws on another Latin verb to help “sketch the unifying image…for the work that tricksters do in regard to traps of culture”. Sharing the same ancient root is the Latin *ars*, meaning “skill, artifice, craft, and crafty action” (2010, 254). The definition for crafty is “clever at achieving one's aims by indirect or deceitful methods”— which similarly hints at the dual nature of Trickster, and also suggests action.

We can also think about trickster stories’ tendency to act as travellers who "multiply meaning as they move” (Hyde 2010). In conversations with my Papuan scholarly peers, I have sometimes described these stories as *cerita-cerita yang bergerak* (stories that move). Having reflected further, I think a better description of a moving trickster story could be *cerita yang mengembara* (a story that roams/roves/wanders). References to wandering

[13] At http://kbbi.web.id/akal, amongst other sources.

originate in North American First Nations Trickster myths, which overwhelmingly feature “a hero who is always wandering” (Radin 1969, 155). Nlha7kapmx (Interior Salish) Nation storyteller Shirley Sterling also describes how, as stories are interpreted slightly differently from person to person, “the story takes on a life of its own and it travels from person to person” (Archibald 2008, 97; Frank 2010). In doing a little etymological remixing of my own, I hope I have made a start toward sketching a unifying image of trickster stories in the Indonesian and Papuan Interfaces.

Cultish theories

I will begin to make some comparisons between Trickster and the dogma of the cargo cult, which so commonly appears in colonial archives and academic scholarship about Papua and the Pacific more widely. A cargo cult is traditionally thought of as a phenomenon “of Pacific people with millenarian (and sometimes anti-colonial) expectations who used magical means to get western things (hence the term “cargo” cult)” (Kaplan 1995, 76).

Koreri and the Itchy Old Man story, for example, has been defined as a cargo cult[14]. Kamma writes that the many versions of the story recorded over time "show a gradual shift towards a notion of commodities being one of the most striking features of the West… What was a canoe in the older versions became a steam boat, then a motor boat, and finally an airplane" (1972, 48). He argues however, it is a mistake to term such a movement as a 'cargo cult': "There is no cult of western goods. The cargo the ships are to bring is no more than a part of the expectations, it is not the cargo but the ancestors that are worshipped" (1972, 238). Martha Kaplan’s argument is not that cargo cults do not exist, but rather, “they exist not necessarily as Pacific or

[14] Writing in 1951, J.V. de Bruyn describes the “Mansren cult” as “a communal expression of the renunciation of the struggle for life. It symbolises the efforts of a people to re-order and re organise its way of life as a result of the changed conditions brought about by culture contact and pressure from outside” (1951, 3).

nonwestern phenomena but instead as a category in western culture and colonial practice" (1995, 101).

My focus is also not to verify the authenticity of particular cargo cult stories. Like Trickster, I wish to use this trope as a tracing agent to consider how stories act, and to interrogate the methodologies we use to measure their movements, as I examine at length in the chapter *Trickster Joins the Cargo Cult*. Here, I want to examine Kaplan's own narrative methodology and how it mirrors the practice of the independent Papuan scholars we will hear from later in Part Two.

Kaplan's book *Neither Cargo Nor Cult* devotes itself to the undoing of the myth of the original cargo cult, that of the Fijian oracle priest Navosavakadua and the Tuka 'cult'. As Kaplan states early in the book, "In Fiji, however, Tuka was never primarily about goods; Navosavakadua's project focused on issues of leadership, authority, and autonomy" (1995, 110). She elaborates:

> "Navosavakadua looked at multiple systems of power and created a new articulation…I think that Navosavakadua's project was the product of structures (the Fijian and colonial systems in a real historical conjuncture). But it is not reducible to, or completely dependent on, any of these structures. I am convinced that creativity is possible in "Indigenous" contexts, but I also think that colonial conjunctures create spaces where new possibilities are thrown open. These are rarely happy possibilities, as colonised people face colonial power. But… new kinds of history were and are made by the colonized. And creative making of history did not end with Navosavakadua for the Vatukaloko, any more than Navosavakadua's own significance was fixed by his own acts or intentions" (Kaplan 1995, 2534-2542).

I am drawn to Kaplan's repeated use of the word 'creativity' here. In particular I see strong parallels in her description to the stories told about Ukumearik, in his creation of new 'articulations' in the face of multiple systems of power. Navosavakadua's story is also an artus-worker, working the joints or 'conjunctures' of the Indigenous and colonial, one that does not

end with him. The colonialists recognised his myth not as creative but cult-like, which “had its roots in colonial perceptions of the unexpected or unwelcome response to a trajectory of Christianization, ‘civilization,’ or ‘westernization’ that the colonizers conceived as natural and inevitable” (Kaplan 1995, 89).

Kaplan also asks how we as anthropologists might establish strategies for writing about “the complex societies of a connected colonial and post colonial world?” (1995, 190). I, like Kaplan, have not ceased wondering how I have brought my own framing to bear upon my writing about Papuans. The Trickster trope I have mentioned, but there are others: I have sought to be informed by Balim Valley notions of story and storytelling, as I spent time with independent scholars who had also drawn on these theoretical foundations. Yet I am reminded of a conversation I had with my co-supervisor Jaap Timmer and other doctoral students working on Papua at my university. We discussed the Papuan exhibition at Taman Mini Indonesia Indah in Jakarta. Something of a state-run ‘theme park’ for Indonesian culture, Taman Mini features an exhibition of mainly Asmat culture, from that particular region— as though the structures and clothing reproduced there was representative of all Papua (see also Bolton 2011). I wondered later if I was doing a similar thing to this state-run theme park— dressing up my work in what I perceive as Balim Valley scholarship as representative of a larger Papuan culture. By drawing on Papuans’ wide-ranging interpretations of *adat* and theory, I hope I have avoided this. Similarly, it is worth questioning whether Nakata’s Cultural Interface, conceived out of Torres Strait Islander experience, should be transplanted to Papua. I think these questions should be asked, again and again.

Kaplan's own strategy for writing about these complex, connected colonial and postcolonial societies is worth quoting at length:

> What I want to do, then, in my narrative, is to find a story of the making of narratives and a story of their fates as cultural systems are

> articulated, and some systems are routinized…I believe that real history is found both by the analytic strategy insisting on attention to Indigenous history-making and that insisting on attention to colonial power (1995, 459).

I find this approach, what Kaplan calls 'narratography,' an excellent intersection to Arthur Frank's articulation of dialogical narrative analysis— studying "the mirroring between what is told in the story— the story's content— and what happens as a result of telling that story— its effects" (Frank 2010, 1598). Jaap Timmer, in his analysis of historical Papuan accounts from Bird's Head, follows Bruce Lincoln's case for classifying "narratives not by their content but by the claims that are made by their narrators and the way in which those claims are received by their audience(s)" (2015, 95). Charles Farhadian, in his history of urban Dani Christians, similarly explores the narratives of "Western mission, Indonesian-state and Dani individual and society whose designers and speakers quest continually for moral legitimacy" through a variety of means (2001, 8).

It is amongst these ideas— of considering how stories come to be made and exist alongside each other, and then how they 'act' or 'are received'— that my own methodology sits.

Kaplan asks a question I began asking myself privately, and then in writing throughout this doctorate: "Is it a history that cannot be told, the very project itself misguided?" (1995, 395). As the section *There's No I in Papua* explains, the exegesis and *Tete* examine strategies for the writing of colonial and postcolonial histories: a nonfiction novel and, in Part Two, a short historiography of Papuan independent scholars. I aim to zoom out to be slightly more meta— while I engage in my own process of narratography fused with dialogical narrative analysis, my main interest is to illuminate the scholarship of Papuans who are engaging in the same process.

Papua scholars such as Theo Van den Broek and Budi Hernawan have popularised a method for looking back at history: *memoria passionis,* which

draws mainly on the work of theologian Johann Baptist Metz (Glazebrook 2008). My intent in *Honai Study Club* is not to approach Metz's writings directly, but rather through the interpretation of Papuan scholar Benny Giay, particularly in his nonfiction work *Pembunuhan Theys* (The Murder of Theys) (2006) — itself an example of *memoria passionis*. Both Giay and Kirksey point out that Theys Eluay, once a Golkar parliamentarian who helped the Indonesian state track down West Papuan independence activists, later emerged as a leading figure for independence himself and was later killed for it. Kirksey quotes Eluay, who saw in himself a conversion of biblical proportions: "Before I was Saul, and now I am Paul"— alluding to the Pharisee Saul who chased down Christians before becoming a Christian leader himself (2012, 59). Here again, I cannot help but find trickster elements in stories about Eluay.

Giay declares the spirit and aim of *Pembunuhan Theys* to be guided by the same principles as the Bible: it exists so that a new generation will not forget the experiences of a past age. He argues it is also in line with the views of Jewish-German philosopher Walter Benjamin: that the purpose of culture is to remember the suffering and trauma of those who have been victims of history (Giay 2006). Giay cites Benjamin's view that civilisation wrestles with the *memoria passionis* of those who are oppressed and enslaved for the sake of peace and justice. He likewise interprets Metz's view that this theology contends with "the silent history" of the colonised and enslaved" (2006, 24).

Writing on the memory of dictatorship in Argentina, Elizabeth Jelin observes that a country can work through its political trauma by means of distance— and a younger generation is best placed to engage with historical stories of violence, having not internalised the terror of that violence (cited in Labanyi 2007). The problem that some young Papuans face is that this terror continues to be internalised in their present, everyday lives. Ironically, the first edition of Giay's work was banned by local Papuan authorities and removed

from circulation just a month after its release, stating that the book was “disturbing to the public” (Giay 2006, 9).

Before introducing some ‘trickster case stories’, I should point out that Giay suggests a number of ‘concrete activities’ by which the past can be 'rescued' and "solidarity for the *memoria passionis* of Papuans can be implemented". These include the performance of songs and oration; seminars, book reviewing and discussions; worship and drama (2006, 31). I mention them because the following case stories also contain these elements. Giay’s suggestions serve as a framing device for these examples, and a means by which we can continue to explore the intersection of trickster stories, *memoria passionis* and other narrative methodologies.

Trickster Case Stories

Say you have just arrived in Java from a village or a suburb in a city of Papua. You go to a bookstore in Jakarta or Yogyakarta. The largest chain store is called Gramedia. There are few alternatives. And you scan for a history of the place you are from. Or perhaps you don't scan anymore, because you know what to expect: A history of Borobudur. The great kingdoms of Java. Perhaps a biography of Sukarno, the country's first president. There are no books on Papuan history, just a few development tomes that would cost one-tenth of the monthly amount you're sent from your parents.

The state education system creates an absence of Papuan history felt by many young people who arrive in Java from Papua. The acts of speaking and writing about Papuan history are subversive, and not only to the Indonesian government. My Papuan peers also describe traumatised Papuan parents who hesitate to speak of other histories, for fear of their children being radicalised. They describe a childhood of whispered stories amongst elders, and of not discussing family eyewitness accounts of killing, rape and political injustice.

Arthur Frank expands on the French psychoanalyst Pierre Bayard's idea of an inner library, comprising all the stories we could come into contact with. As Frank describes, it includes "the odd-sounding possibility of being influenced by stories that have not been heard" (2010, 1241). The term Benny Giay (2006) uses is *budaya bisu* — a mute or silent culture. It is the outline of these unspoken histories, like the white chalk of a victim in a traffic accident, which Papuans recognise when they do come into contact with these trickster stories in Java. A Papuan man described the reaction of many young people hearing these history stories articulated for the first time: "*Ah, begitu ya*". Ah, so it's like that. There is a sense of the familiar even in the absence of the stories themselves. Bayard describes 'phantom books' as those that surface "where the unrealised possibilities of each book meet our

unconscious”, and in turn “fuel our daydreams and conversations” beyond the material books themselves (2007, 160).

The following case stories are drawn from fieldwork and interviews that I conducted with individuals and groups who have rediscovered Papuan history for themselves. It describes how these stories fuel "daydreams and conversations" and how Papuans are sharing their discoveries with their millennial peers in Jakarta, Yogyakarta and beyond. These case stories will demonstrate how young Papuans are transplanting traditional modes of discussion and storytelling to their sites of study in Java, while remixing them into something new, and yet still Papuan.

Case Story One: The Clubs

In a two-storey house in Jakarta, a small group of young men met weekly to talk about history. They called themselves *Klub Bakar Batu* (Cooking Stones Club). In the central highlands of Papua where many of the men were from, *bakar batu* is the equivalent of the Sunday roast. Back home, it takes place when celebration or mourning is called for. Pork, sweet potatoes and gathered greens steam over heated stones. The men lift the rocks into a large pile, the women take care of the cooking. Leaves are laid down as serving mats for the food, and everyone gathers in small circles to savour the earthy smells, to devour the food, and talk about the way things are.

Occasionally, say for Christmas, young Papuan men living in the house transplanted this cooking feast to Jakarta. They pooled their money and attempted to *bakar batu* on the length of concrete that served as a backyard. The men also sat and talked — sharing sweetened coffee and chocolate bread from the nearby corner shop. After many discussions in the big house where so many of them slept, a book was born. Klub Bakar Batu members contributed essays for a slim anthology[15], and they pooled funds to print it.

To understand their intent, we can go straight to the book's poetic introduction, which is signed off by the collective. I have translated and quoted from it liberally because it is a wonderful piece of writing, describing with lyrical elegance the whisper stories and trickster tales, the friction and the paradoxes that define the Interface for many of those who grew up in Papua and arrive to study in Java. It begins by recounting a childhood in Papua, when they would walk home from school, watching out for the pigs wandering around, and the cool teenagers who passed them, and the longing

[15] I have omitted the title of this self-published collection to maintain the anonymity of the independent scholar featured in this case story — see *Trickster Joins the Cargo Cult* for a discussion around anonymity in research with Papuans.

to be like them. And the way those teenagers spoke to their illiterate elders, hearing the whispers of special days for Papua, and of *merdeka,* or freedom.

> "When our elders arrived on certain dates, the ones that were sacred days for the Papuan nation, we cheered them. They decorated their heads with chicken feathers and their faces full of battery paint, and we shouted *merdeka* when they passed us. All of this felt strange, but filled us with happiness. It felt like we were being freed from days full of boredom. It saved us from lessons at school that talked about trains, for example, something alien to us and difficult to understand, given there were none in Papua yet. Freeing from the complicated instructions of the headmaster during the [Indonesian] flag ceremony, telling us to take a moment's silence, imagining the faces of [national heroes] Diponegoro, Imam Bonjol or Hasanudin, filled with reverence".

They were also saved from an older generation of Papuans: "Free from the ideas of old people wearing *koteka* (penis gourd) and *sali* (traditional skirt), wandering aimlessly, confused by civilisation". And hearing about their *kakak,* their older brothers in the forest, the ones who were spoken of in rumours, who came from dark forests and were ready to fight. And a longing to become like those who said: "God, the Papuan nation will save us, my brothers".

> "And then, we became university students. And the age of wearing shithouse uniforms, a sign of our slavery to this education system, was left behind. A feeling of having blossomed because we have become radicals… although we still are helped by our parents to live and to study, we now can stand against their generation, a generation not willing to relinquish its position".

The introduction continues in a tongue-in-cheek, self-deprecating style that humorously captures the "externally imposed and subjectively produced mediations" of the Interface (Nakata 2007, 211):

> "Setting up a few dozen social media accounts and looking at the latest news about Papua. Sitting in front of the computer for hours befriended by coffee, cigarettes and *pinang* [betel nut]. If our heads are

> tired or our hearts are cheerful, we buy beer from a nearby kiosk, whether it's one can or one crate. When we go to the street we're no longer decorated with chicken feathers — we have banners, a megaphone, a press release and— don't forget— our nation's flag. Somehow we become experts at dressing in a style part Che Guevara, part African-American hip hop, talking about oppression in middle-class cafes, cursing America on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, nagging our parents about freedom while asking them for phone credit. Hating this country while supporting local officials in election campaigns, being active underground while giving information to intelligence, etc."

The anthology eventually launches into individual essays and stories that operate as artus-workers on Papuan history, creating more flexible joints that their parents may have resisted. First, we again are reminded of the ironies and difficulties of working out the best strategy to be an "agent of change" (Mote 2015) for Papua:

> "We're always swearing at our Papuan friends who aren't as radical as us. We call them 'public service position chasers,' 'betrayers.' 'Judas,' 'barbaric' or 'pig food'. And it's not rare that we ourselves are cursed by our comrades from other groups: 'misguided plans,' 'shallow'…'stunted methods', etc.

Honai Study Club

Meanwhile, in the centre of Jakarta, a high tower hovers above a large park. It attracts plenty of Indonesian families, visiting foreign tourists, and in 2010, it first drew a small group of Papuan students who wanted to debate part of the very history the tower was built to immortalise. Monas is long, tall, and thin— some might say phallic. It is Indonesia's national monument, the *Monumen Nasional*. Construction of the tower began in 1961, to commemorate Indonesia's struggle for independence from the Dutch.

The small group of Papuans were at that time studying and working in Jakarta, but some have gone on to find jobs as journalists, lawyers and

activists monitoring human rights issues in Papua. The group started off as a history book club— focusing at first on a text that had recently been made available in Indonesian: Pieter Drooglever's *An Act of Free Choice*[16] (2009). The book was the result of a study commissioned by the Dutch Government to investigate the events that had taken place before, during and after the Act of Free Choice in 1969. To hold the book requires two hands. The wrist bends at the weight of the volume, and each week the group met to wrestle with the weight of its contents. It represented a complete fissure with the history they had learned about in the Indonesian education system: that Papua had always belonged to Indonesia. Each week, a chapter was considered, discussed, and often members of the group would be tasked with writing about what had been exchanged, to ensure the material had been properly understood. The group called themselves Honai Study Club.

On the *honai*

A *honai* is a circular hut, with a large umbrella-like roof made from coarse grass topping the wooden structure. Of the word *honai* itself, Sugandi was told that some Hubula "interpret *honai* literally as the place of the first human being or respected old man" (2014, 55). *Honai* is widely known as a cultural symbol from the Balim Valley, and the term has entered the lexicons of Indonesian and other Papuan languages. In the central highlands of Papua, the *honai* is at once a place of shelter and a deeply significant physical structure promulgating philosophical and spiritual ideas. These are explored at length by Agus Alua and Thadeus Mulait, who write of the *silimo* (the name of the compound where the *honai* is located): "Life together in the *silimo* is weaved in the fascinating stories of life experiences, both sweet and bitter". In the spaces allocated for the different sexes, such as the *honai* for males, young people learn from their elders about war, romance, traditional customs

[16] Published in Indonesian as *Tindakan Pilihan Bebas!: Orang Papua dan Penentuan Nasib Sendiri* in 2010.

and other social matters (Alua and Mulait 2006, 50-51; my translation; see also Sugandi 2014).

My intention is not to extensively reproduce elders' teachings exploring the spiritual concepts contained within the *honai*, or other traditional Papuan concepts or practices. A treatise on the *honai* would merit its own thesis. More importantly, it would be impossible for me to access all knowledge contained within and concerning the *honai*, and even then, inappropriate to share (Sugandi 2014).

In the words of Arthur Frank: "I make no attempt to define stories. The emphasis is on watching them act, not seeking their essence" (2010, 476). The same could be said for these specific cultural concepts and symbols such as the *honai*: I aim to watch how Papuan independent scholars apply them to their own thinking and lives. I will supplement their theory with the work of anthropologists to provide context to this remixing of traditional concepts.

It is no coincidence that not all of Honai Study Club's members were from the central highlands— they came from other regions of Papua as well (and occasionally an Indonesian friend also participated). It raises a point that I hope all these case stories illuminate: despite fears and anxieties expressed about the loss of traditional knowledge and language in Papua, Papuans in multiple sites are using symbols and communication exchanges as vehicles for stories that help carry Papuanness through the Interface, and in doing so, subtly challenge the hegemony of history.

Before the club

Andi has worked as a journalist in both Java and Papua, but she is originally from a district near Wamena. She did not spend most of her adolescence and young adulthood in the central highlands. During senior high school, a well-connected Indonesian family supported her to study in Java's cultural heartland of Yogyakarta.

“When you go to Papua” her Javanese friends would ask her every year, even while at university, “how long is the journey in the train?”

“I was startled,” Andi said. She told them: “Papua is a different island. You can’t catch the train, you have to catch a plane or a ship.” She asked herself how the students could know so little about Indonesia, outside of the island they were on. In primary school in a small classroom in the central highlands, the map of the archipelago had loomed large, the teacher pointing to and drilling students on each island. “We knew all the different islands. Sulawesi is shaped like the letter K’… Sumatra is long… Ambon is a small island, close to us. We truly memorised the geography [of Indonesia]” Andi said.

Every year, she was reminded of the Indonesian freedom fighters’ struggle against the Dutch. The photos of these heroes lined up the classroom walls, their face to be studied and memorised. She learned of the predestined dimensions of Indonesia, from Sabang in the West to Papua’s furthest tip of Merauke and of the Javanese kingdoms of Majapahit and Mataram.

To practise English with native speakers, an older Indonesian friend in the neighbourhood escorted Andi and her friends to Prambanan and Borobudur, the ancient temples near Yogyakarta. Outside, hawkers flooded the space, selling knickknacks. Inside the site, Andi guided foreign tourists through the history of the temples, rote-learned for years in the Indonesian education system.

Andi also noticed that what she was learning in her new school was different from what she had learned in Papua. The teacher would often speak in Javanese, and Andi would have to ask her to use Indonesian, as she did not understand. “In Papua, it’s never been compulsory to learn the local language of the place we’re from. There are people, myself included, who don’t know how to speak their own language at all,” she said. From childhood, her mother spoke to her in Indonesian. “With other elders maybe Mama would use the local language, but it would be mixed with Indonesian.

But with us, [with the children], she used Indonesian. So maybe Mama regrets this."

Once she was at university, Andi asked her mother to speak to her in their own language when they caught up on the phone. But her family found Andi's way of speaking amusing. "I tried to speak with her, but they laugh, because it's not right". Andi said she now speaks Javanese to the same level as her mother tongue.

Reflecting back on her culture, heritage and her education in Java has forced Andi to reckon with the way the state functions to promote some types of knowledge and not others. Language is a powerful declaration and enforcer of power, old and new. Rutherford writes that at the forging of the independence movement against the Dutch, it was Indonesian, the language, that saw "the imaginary object of the colonial gaze… transformed into the imagined citizen of a nation" (2003, 179).

Andi now has a nephew studying in Jogja. "They have to learn Javanese," she says. "Even if their other scores are good, if their Javanese is red [a fail], you have to repeat the class.

Such differences in official policy have been noted for decades— R.S. Roosman observed in the 1970s that while regional languages were taught in Java and Bali for the first three years of primary school, children in Papua were taught *Bahasa Indonesia* (the Indonesian language) from the first grade (cited in Gietzelt 1989, 203). An official Indonesian government handbook from 1980 also explains that such an emphasis is necessary for Papuan children to be "made national-conscious in order to evoke self-confidence amongst the population thereby stimulating their self-propelling growth toward civilisation" (cited in Gietzelt 1989, 203). Some of the government programs that drove these policies in the central highlands are further explored in Case Story Three.

"It's really sad," Andi said. "We're killed off — through our languages, tribes and clans that are being lost… We're blind to our own history, and

when we grow up, we have to find these books, and to find this out for ourselves".

The making of Honai Study Club

Yan has worked as a lawyer, also giving his time to Papuan projects across a number of organisations. He was another founding member of Honai Study Club. He is originally from Paniai, of the Mee tribe. He could not remember precisely who came up with the name Honai Study Club, but he did remember why the group bestowed the name upon itself: "We specifically choose the *honai*, because that has become an identity, I mean— of a place of learning," he said. "We used [the name] *honai*— because *honai* is a symbol of a house: a house to learn, a house for us to discuss, a house to solve problems. When something happened, people would go to the house. Why, back then, did we not use the name of the house from my region [of Papua]? Because others don't understand… The *honai* is better known, and so we used *honai* [laughs]".

As Alua and Mulait explain, the philosophy of the *honai* is that deliberation should take place not outside of the *honai* but inside that particular space, "where what a person says and their way of thinking can be valued and respected, and on the other hand, the involvement of the ancestors and spirits who inhabit the *honai* also needs to be respected"(2006, 51).

Of course, this is not to be taken literally: Honai Study Club did not reconstruct a wooden hut in the middle of Merdeka Square in central Jakarta in order to converse with ancestors. The main focus of its members was on modern history, not the intricacies of *adat* (traditional customs). And while Andi is from the central highlands and is familiar with the *honai*, she is a woman— and therefore would not traditionally engage in discussions in this space. She pointed out that the discussion group had taken on the "philosophy" of the honai, not its traditional gender boundaries. As Yan said, the use of *honai* "is only a symbol". Yet he emphasised the intimate space of Honai Study Club, both in group numbers and discussion. A core group of

about five to ten people kept the hearth of Honai Study Club warm as they met weekly in parks, at food stalls or in the rooms of the *asrama (*boarding houses) where they lived. The focus on exploring historical concepts, and later writing about them, shared on paper and in blogs, meant that topics reverberated deeply around the group and beyond it. The intention was for concepts and stories to be understood at a deeper level. There was not a majority of Central Highlands intellectuals in Honai Study Club, but as a known cultural export from Papua, the *honai* was a means through which trickster stories about history were transported.

The group chose the *honai* as a specific regional cultural export that still resonated with all of them. (An earlier iteration of Honai Study Club focused more on culture rather than history, and was named *Diskusi Noken* (Noken Discussions). The name refers to the traditional bag used by various Papuan tribes. As well as its practical uses within farming, child-rearing, marriage customs and other rituals, it also has symbolic value within politics, economics and the law (Ell et al. 2013, 18). For example, *Komunitas sistem noken* (the noken system of community) represents a 'collective comunalism' that manifests in *demokrasi noken* (noken democracy), symbolising the importance of agreement and deliberation amongst people. As a literal expression of this, noken have also been used as a physical collection point to store the votes cast in elections) (Ell et al. 2013, 22, 28).

Munro writes that highlanders' student organisations' focus on procedure extends to political discussions. Citing an example of a meeting about Papuan political history during fieldwork, she argues "beyond content, much more attention was paid to the formal procedures and the ceremony of holding a discussion… the meeting was an exercise in group discipline" (Munro 2018, 132). In Java, I found that the extent of bureaucracy depended on the size and style of the group involved, a trend consistent with Western and Indonesian contexts. Larger, official meetings of formal student organisations tended to focus much more on agendas and procedure than

smaller, more informal discussions arranged independently of or from sub-networks of such organisations. Munro argues that this emphasis on procedure is an indication of a worrying trend:

> "It is evidence of the potency of technocratic racism that Dani feel they lack skills in leadership (governance, in a sense), organizing and group communications, considering that these are some of the hallmark cultural skills of highlands societies…it is troubling to find that young Dani today think they lack this expertise and need to learn it from Indonesians" (2018, 133).

However, as Munro also acknowledges, these examples also point to young Papuans attempting to 'translate' different kinds of leadership styles. One Balim Valley student in Manado explained that the *ap kain*, the traditional tribal leader known for his fighting prowess, for defeating enemies and stealing women, was not as common anymore, given the recent, radical changes to highlander society over the last half century or so. And yet, the student still locates the *ap kain* as central to modern Balim Valley life, as a person well-versed in both *adat* (traditional customs) and history, now negotiating new power structures within Indonesian Papua: "Maybe he becomes a ‘bos’ instead, works in the government. He is also an expert at organizing events, solving disputes, and he tells people what to do, how to help themselves with their issues. When he talks, people listen, because they believe in him" (Munro 2018, 134).

Indeed, as Part Two will continue to explore, Papuans have long employed cultural symbols to speak to evolving concepts of community and political systems, even in the face of "diminishment" and the loss of "collective dignity" amongst elders and young people alike due to outsiders' impositions of power (Sugandi 2014; Munro 2018). Take the Papuan nationalists who claimed *Koreri* from the island of Biak "as part of a broadly shared Papuan heritage of resistance" (Rutherford 2003, 25), or the work of anthropologist Arnold Ap, explored in Case Story Two.

Finding freedom in study cells

Honai Study Club is not the only education space Yan has facilitated— amongst other commitments, he was formerly a committee member of the *Aliansi Mahasiswa Papua (*AMP*)*, the Alliance of Papuan University Students. Several Papuans I spoke in Java to who had participated in the AMP described that organisation's political education programs as being formative to their understanding of history. I was also repeatedly told that their materials and events were closed to outsiders. I did, however, attend an open event held by the AMP for the members of the public and press in Jakarta. The speakers presented an alternative checklist or crash course of significant historical events for Papua, not found in the Indonesian education curriculum. It recalled linguist Charlotte Linde's description of narrative induction: "The social work that an institution performs to make one person's story everyone's story: relevant to everyone and available to everyone as a role model" (Frank 2010, 1378). The event seemed something of a counter-induction to the monological stories typically presented by the Indonesian education system and state.

Allen Feldman has documented Irish paramilitary stories in political indoctrination— of what the Irish call "The Troubles" — which "will then cause all manner of Troubles for both those whom it calls to act and those against whom this story justifies violence" (cited in Frank 2010, 672). The anticipation of such troubles is one explanation my Papuan peers give for their parents' avoidance of historical Papuan stories. Frank writes that the monological approach of the stories documented by Feldman ultimately fails to do "what stories are best at doing, which is to open up moral complexity" (Frank 2010, 848). The work done in Club Bakar Batu, Honai Study Club and other discussion groups, online and offline, is distinct to this. Far from a monological narrative induction, the essence and ethos of these groups seem

to involve its members savouring stories, including the rewriting, discussion and correction of existing materials.

Students holding a large event in Java would be conspicuous to a government paranoid about young Papuans assembling, and facilities are difficult to come by. For that reason and more, Yan said he preferred to apply the same intimate, pointed form of education found in Honai Study Club to all his discussion groups. He described seeking out individuals or small groups "because two people meeting eye to eye will focus on the material— what they receive from me and what I receive from them becomes a model of shared responsibility [to learn]," he said.

He named this set up a "study cell". The word "cell" carries a set of state anxieties about the Jihadist radicalisation of young people— not only in Indonesia but in Western contexts as well (Matusitz 2013). Instead, a way to think about this in Yan's case is how 'cults' were historically framed by colonial powers:

> "In each case, a 'cult'— a marginal, dubious deviant activity— is brought into being in the imagination not of its practitioners (who have other understandings of what they do) but of its inquisitors, the central authorities…This narrative of the creation of cults sees 'cults' as intrinsically tied to states" (Kaplan 1995, 4134-4137).

The irony is that these discussion-based forums held by Papuans come in a new era of diplomatic-style approaches to Papuan activism. This is distinct to state-sponsored 'stories' characterising the Papuan struggle as a monolithic, direct confrontation between the Indonesian army and *Organisasi Papua Merdeka* (Free Papua Movement) (MacLeod 2015). To again use Kaplan's description of Navosavakadua and Tuka, these groups represent a kind of creativity being invoked, in looking at many systems of power and creating "a new articulation" (1995, 2536).

The study cells are targeted in their intimacy. "We see where they like to *nongkrong* (hang out)— and if that person has the potential to mobilise

people, if they have a lot of friends and family that follow them, yeah, we'll grab them. For example, if he likes to *nongkrong* or play billiards— then we'll invite them to play billiards, but while we're playing we'll invite them to have a discussion," Yan said. "They've come from Papua with the aim of learning. Their parents in Papua have experienced trauma in the past, and it makes the parents say [to their child]: 'When you're over there just study, don't go talking about politics'. And we start talking slowly, and in a way that's not going to annoy them."

The seeking and re-evaluating of history is a pursuit worthy of itself, but these case stories show it is tied to larger ideas, occasionally including *merdeka.* The word literally means independence or freedom, but in the Papuan lexicon has come to represent many aspirations and desires, beyond that of an independent state (MacLeod 2015, 1856). The Honai Study Club model frames the studying of Papuan history, culture and politics as self-possessed freedom— something of a *merdeka* of the mind. Through discussion, members of Honai Study Club freed themselves of having to adhere or avoid narratives promulgated and repressed by Papuans and Indonesians alike. This may, or may not, lead to a literal desire for *merdeka*. As Yan explained:

> "We're interested in history because of this: when we talk about our right to pursue independence, we must know ourselves first in our own history. That we Papuans ask to separate from Indonesia in a sovereign manner, peacefully and according to international law. Because we ask to stand alone, as our own country— not because we've been killed, not because we're different, or have black skin or curly hair, not because of that. But because it's our right…That's why history is important".

Particularly in regional areas of Papua, the restoration of *adat* (traditional customs) and local forms of identity shows "signs of developing into a political ideology entangled with merdeka" (MacLeod 2015, 1648). The

discussion groups in Java and beyond sometimes reference specific regional or traditional symbols— although the Papuans within the groups may not come from those particular cultural backgrounds. What is important is that the symbol itself is widely known, in order for it to take on a layered form of Papuanness. Papuan leaders have criticised the internalised oppression of their own people, who continue to view themselves and their history through the prism of outsiders' conceptions (MacLeod 2015, 1268). But the culture of Honai Study Club and similar discussion groups: to examine existing historical texts, to challenge and rewrite them, also represents a conceptualising of themselves, "to know ourselves first in our own history". This process allows young Papuans to 'do' *merdeka*. *Merdeka* here is not a noun but a verb, a doing, in the same way that Trickster is a "doing, not an essence, not a museum being, not an aesthetic presence" (Archibald 2008, 6). *Merdeka* is not incontrovertible Papuan dogma— again, like Trickster, it is interpreted anew each generation (Hyde 2010).

A Papuan gaze of history

Charles had never written an essay before he joined Klub Bakar Batu in Jakarta. He was born in Wamena. His father was a teacher who died when Charles was in primary school. His mother continued working in the local market, selling the vegetables she had grown herself.

When he first moved to Jakarta, he would always cry (a breath of laughter as he said this). His plan was to return to Wamena after his university studies, to become an engineer and work on large infrastructure projects to develop the city. That would likely involve working for the government as a public servant.

He lived where *Klub Bakar Batu* came about. More than just a place to sleep and eat— the house served as a community hall, music studio and lecture theatre. He had sort of fallen into *Klub Bakar Batu*, invited by his *kakak* (older Papuan friends). The group had gathered first to discuss politics,

culture and economics related to Papua, and then to write about history. The essay he had chosen to write consumed him. “It was so difficult. I couldn’t sleep, I couldn’t eat,” he said.

He was struck by a question none of the older Papuan university students living in Jakarta could answer: who was the first governor of Papua? Today, only ethnic Papuans can serve as Governor in both Papua and West Papua Provinces[17] (DFAT 2019). But the very first governor, Charles discovered, was a white man: Stephan van Waardenburg. And so he took himself to a local *warnet* (internet cafe). With Indonesian students surrounding him— gaming and working on university essays —he began to learn about a Dutchman who found himself struggling in a time of great change. Through photocopied books and downloaded files posted on servers online, on Google, and Wikipedia, he researched van Waardenburg. He was "an official of high integrity and courtesy,” Charles writes in his essay, published in Klub Bakar Batu’s anthology, who at the same time stuck strictly to his superiors' instructions and prioritised the needs of "orang Indo-Belanda" (Dutch-Indonesians) over those of the Papuans.

There was some appeal for a man like van Waardenburg to go to Papua, he writes: "To pursue a career in Papua was interesting for a government official willing to take a chance in a tropical place. Political cronyism was common, and people were suspicious of van Waardenburg's appointment ". Yet Charles describes a bureaucrat well-versed in the world of public service in Batavia, as Jakarta was then known, with a complete lack of experience in the field but no shortage of plans: "The governor's great aspiration was for Papua to become economically and financially independent".

[17] Papua Province was divided into two provinces in 2003, with the new province eventually named West Papua Province (Bertrand 2014). West Papua is also the name by which the two provinces are collectively known on an international level in English, often alluding to its self-determination aspirations. In this PhD I have used Papua as the collective term for the two provinces, following its usage by political and non-political Papuans I interviewed in Indonesian.

The piece itself does not cite any references from sources using standard academic conventions — though it appears to draw from the Indonesian version of Drooglever's *An Act of Free Choice,* the book is not quoted specifically. Charles said he began studying Papuan history using the text. Timmer observes that Drooglever's very thorough work "has limited consideration about what it means to be a Papuan" (Timmer 2015, 100). Charles's essay explains, through a Papuan lens, the struggles and perspectives of a Dutch historical subject, while appropriating and remixing Drooglever's original text. He subverts the usual positions of subject and expert in Papuan historiography. It is also unlike scathingly-critical activist material in that it is a Papuan perspective that humanises the Dutch coloniser— in this case, van Waardenburg. He is neither saviour nor devil in Charles's writing. Instead, he employs Kaplan's (1995) narratography in his analysis— "insisting on attention to Indigenous history-making", "insisting on attention to colonial power".

Benny Giay has called for Papuans to "throw out this myth" that "Westerners will come to save the people of Papua" (cited in Kirksey 2012, 190). What Charles does here is analyse this myth in concrete form in order to destroy it: "Papuans hoped to be 'freed' or 'saved' by a colonial actor. The colonial leader was viewed as a messiah figure. The problem is that this 'messianistic view' was misleading for Papuans, to understand their true condition," he writes. He then turns his attention to Papua's present-day reality, where ethnic Papuan bureaucrats have become the new messiahs. Public servants misuse funds while "they claim themselves to have integrity" and as Charles notes, "messiah figures are difficult to criticise". He writes that the Papuan community is failed on two fronts: they are "given false hopes about their security through *Otsus*[18] by public officials, and about [gaining] freedom by activists through independence demonstrations".

[18] *Otonomi Khusus* (Special Autonomy) granted to Papuans in 2001, aimed to, amongst other goals, ensure that Indigenous Papuans also benefited from development

The book that Bakar Batu Club produced is an effort to question and investigate Papuan history, not "as something romantic or nostalgic efforts to return history to find a lost Eden," as the introduction declares. The morality lessons told in traditional cargo stories is that Papuan ancestors floundered opportunities and knowledge was lost or rejected (Timmer 2000, 302) — something Klub Bakar Batu are not interested in. They insist they are not dealing in fables of Papuan history. They think back to their ancestors living in Papua, in natural clothing, raising pigs, fishing, fighting. "There are no messiahs there. There are people, living a life of hardship and happiness".

In Indonesia, texts that mention *merdeka* are often rendered subversive (this, of course, excludes texts about Indonesia throwing off the shackles of the coloniser— the Dutch— to become its own nation). From its preface, the book mentions *merdeka*, and while Indonesian officials might consider this book subversive, it is not activist or propaganda material. It is a critical investigation into Papuan histories different to those presented by governing powers— Dutch, Indonesian and Papuan elites. What is more, from its very title it also rejects a messianic or cargo-cult like worldview that posits even Papuan saviours as another alternative to Indonesian schoolbook mythology. Charles has negotiated these different worlds— the abyss between what he was taught in textbooks, about a world owned by others, what he has heard and seen, in his everyday life. Instead, he has asserted himself as the creator of a new written text, born from discussion and reflection, owned by him— without giving explicit reference to sources he has drawn on.

Cultivating Papuan lands anew

Using dialogical narrative analysis, the aim here is to study "how stories give people the resources to figure out who they are," but also, as we have mentioned earlier "the mirroring between what is told in the story—the story's

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in Papua, and reduce the economic disparity between Papua and other parts of Indonesia (Sugandi 2014, 10).

content—and what happens as a result of telling that story—its effects" (Frank 2010, 1596).

These grand narratives and checklists— the micro-stories of dates, injustices and alternate versions of history— remixed, analysed and criticised, serve to give young Papuans the space to consider how they, in turn, will act in their own lives. Hyde describes this process as when "the audience listening to any trickster tale undergoes a kind of inner artus-work, then, a loosening and breathing of the psychic boundaries" (2010, 267). The stories loosen psychic boundaries by allowing Papuan scholars to bring this questioning quality into their experiences in Java.

Charles has rejected messianic stories to instead re-examine powerful actors from a critical Papuan point of view. And in doing so, these alternative stories have caused him to act— to re-evaluate other heady, messianic approaches to current day politics adopted by his peers. He rarely goes to the rallies some of his other Papuan friends hold near the presidential palace in Jakarta. There are some demonstrations he thinks are worth going to — the other day, he stood in the rain with dozens of his friends to protest yet another recently-announced military expedition planned in Papua.

What activists and independent historians such as Charles generally agree on is that the vote held in 1969, when a small group of Papuans 'consented' to join Indonesia, was a farce— a forced imposition. But Charles believed that holding another referendum again would be very difficult— or to achieve a re-vote by means of demonstration. He offered a different strategy: "The fight we have to have is to educate ourselves".

"In my opinion, if there's another way to go about this, we should do that. To keep going to the rallies… in my opinion, it's not that effective for us. I'm the one who'll suffer the consequences. So I choose to stay here and study". His vision extends beyond that of personal study: he describes his writing as a vehicle for slowly inviting or engaging Papuans to become more critical and to pursue study themselves. "With this piece of writing here, I invite the

reader to consider that that we have to determine things for ourselves," he says. The book's preface describes hearing stories from elders whispered through an oral tradition that stretches back through the ages. Having produced only one piece of writing on the topic, the only messianic conversion Charles has experienced is to the written word: "And so slowly, through writing, we convey ideas, and raise awareness".

Meanwhile, Yan's sharing of trickster stories was deliberate and strategic, as well as publishing blogs online, he also targeted those who might be open to this kind of artus-work, and able to share it with others. Papuans speak of the formative experiences of learning about history as a motivator to participate (or not) in protests or other actions that the state could consider transgressive— be it making a Facebook post, attending an activist event, demonstration or participating in organising structures such as the *Aliansi Mahasiswa Papua* (AMP). Yan recalls how his education through Honai Study Club and other collectives made him question what his university professors were saying: "Surely this professor is just reading or looking to other people's writings. It not certain that this is the truth, right?"

Papuan 'truths' here involve a process of discussion and debate. Even when texts such as Drooglever's *An Act of Free Choice* become key to an understanding of Papuan history within the discussion, they are challenged, remixed and made anew. I would argue this is representative of wider trends in the Papuan Interface focused on searching from within—such as looking to Melanesia for political outcomes (complimenting and substituting an appeal to Western and Indonesian allies), and to Papuan culture for symbolic frameworks (MacLeod 2015).

Honai Study Club and Klub Bakar Batu appear to represent the opposite of a cargo cult— if we are to understand it as "an organized effort to obtain, through ritualized methods, the commodities and authority possessed by outsiders" (Rutherford 2003, 25). This is less 'raiding the land of foreigners'— as Rutherford would put it— and more like cultivating Papuan lands anew.

What impact does this have on the Papuan Interface, and even the Indonesian Interface? Kaplan asks: “If we can argue that ‘cults do not exist’ should we not also ask ‘does the state exist’? (Kaplan 1995, 505). Case Story Two explores how the Indonesian state positions itself in regards to another creative expression of Papuan memory making.

Case Story Two: The Museumising of Arnold Ap

The savouring of trickster stories in semi-private forums leads to these histories being projected in ever-more public forums. The Balinese anthropologist I Ngurah Suryawan has pushed publishing efforts to elevate young Papuan voices to the forefront. Among his past projects is the anthology *Narasi Sejarah Sosial Papua* or Stories of Papuan Social History (2011). Suryawan has curated the perspectives of young Papuans to rewrite the "Indonesianisation" of their history. He recognises the Papuan-driven movement criticising *historiografi sang kuasa* (historiography of the powerful), flourishing with intellectuals such as Socratez Sofyan Yoman, Sem Karoba, Dr Neles Tebay and Benny Giay, who have led the writing of history for themselves. Suryawan argues the movement has parallels to Subaltern Studies and its reconceptualising of the history of India and South Asia from the perspective of non-elites (2011, xi-xii). The title of Suryawan's preface is *Sejarah Sosial dan Perlawanan Bangsa Papua* (Social History and Papuan National Heroes)— and indeed, while setting up Papua as its own nation is subversive, so is exploring its history: "Papuans who write about history will be called separatists, dangerous and needing to be watched" (Suryawan 2011) . What about young, unknown Papuans who perform history for themselves?

In a Papuan boarding house in Yogyakarta, students are preparing a commemoration event for Arnold Ap, the Papuan anthropologist and musician who compiled localised stories, through music and folktales, which people from all over West Papua came to recognise as a more unified expression of Papuanness. Ap is one of the best-known Papuan artus-workers, spreading trickster stories that created a vision of Papua beyond that conceived of by the state.

Given Arnold Ap came from the island of Biak, it can be asked whether the shared cultural Papuan identity that Ap's band Mambesak created resulted in a dominance of coastal Papuan culture, "at the cost of mountain cultures" (Suryawan 2015, 200). The same question has been asked of previous aspirations of pan-Papuanism, such as the *Koreri* messianic movements of the 1940s (Drooglever 2009). Yet like Honai Study Club (which draws directly from 'mountain cultures'), the name of Mambesak was chosen on the basis that it was already known beyond the region it originated from. *Mambesak* is a Biak translation of 'bird of paradise' (another unifying Papuan symbol), that had become recognised by a wider Papuan public after a televised performance of a '*mambesak* dance' in Jakarta in 1975 (Glazebrook 2008, 39). The then young, motivated members of Mambesak engaged with music from various regions of Papua and reproduced them to be widely consumed by a wider Papuan audience. The project was tolerated in an Indonesian context because the dogma of the country's 'unity in diversity' allowed regional cultural differences to exist under the umbrella of an unshakeable nation-state (Glazebrook 2008, 36).

Arnold Ap was certainly an artist and artus-worker, in the vein of Trickster 'joint workers' (Hyde 2010). The charisma of the fresh-faced, handsome Ap and the other members of Mambesak loosened up the joints of both traditional songs— reproducing them and making them accessible (both literally, in cassette tapes, and figuratively, to urban Papuans who knew little about cultures in the interior of Papua). And the same time, he played by the rules of the 'Unity of Diversity' dogma— prising open Papuan nationalism through the very framework that aimed to avoid it— a true joint loosener. His death at the hands of the state ensured his story lived on as a trickster story. By killing him, they mythologised him permanently (as the state did with Theys Eluay (Kirksey 2012; Giay 2006)). The mythologising of Arnold Ap is not limited to Papuan university students in Java. Refugees and West Papuans globally locate Arnold Ap as a symbol of their Papuanness, and Diana

Glazebrook asserts that the “memory of the suffering of Arnold Ap—who died at the hands of Indonesian soldiers—remains central to a *memoria passionis* of West Papuans” (2008, 8). Arnold Ap’s biography is well documented. The purpose of this section is not to investigate Ap as a historical figure, or the content of Mambesak’s songs. Rather it is to begin to examine specific examples of Arnold Ap— the trickster story— spreading through the Papuan interface.

Markus recalled going to primary school in Nabire in the 1990s (although his family is Mee, from Paniai). He would spend time with his teacher, even after school had finished. “Usually in the afternoon we would help her at home, and then she’d always sing with her guitar. She’d say ‘this is Arnold’s song. This is Mambesak’". What Markus recalled is that his teacher would play a few favourite songs of Arnold Ap, but never told the story of how Ap had lived or died. “I think— and also just seeing the expression on my teacher’s face— for her to tell the story of his biography… maybe there was too much trauma there. That’s what I feel now, when I think of back then,” he said. “That’s what I suspect. There was trauma. And maybe she was also scared.”

This is *budaya bisu,* a silent or mute culture (Giay 2006). Markus’ teacher could sing Arnold Ap's songs but could not voice the story of what had happened to him. In that way, Ap’s songs became a dot dot dot for other histories that could not be spoken of. And yet, the whisper stories had already begun their work. Markus’ own ‘inner library’ — to again refer to Bayard’s concept — now included the stories about Ap he had not yet heard (Frank 2010).

Throughout Papua in the 1970s and 80s, Mambesak’s songs operated as a form of the dot dot dot— the distribution of the band’s music serving as whisper stories of a proof-of-concept of a what MacLeod calls a “pan-Papuan” cultural identity (2015, 2151). After Ap died, Markus' teacher was able to whisper his trickster story, but only to the point of playing the music.

By 2016, Markus was sharing trickster stories of his own as an activist and emerging journalist for online independent media, writing about Papuan concerns from an anthropological, historical and Marxist lens. In one article, he asks why Papuan students are not educated about Papuan heroes like Ap, or taught cultural knowledge from specific tribes, such as *koteka* and *noken.* He notes that many university-aged Papuans become ambitious about acquiring such knowledge of their own initiative, despite the pressures of a 'colonial education system' and the state apparatus monitoring Papuan students in Java.

On the side, Markus sold clothing with political messages, including the Morning Star flag, to raise money for projects and protests in Yogyakarta, where he is based. One afternoon, around 3 pm, he received an SMS from an unknown number: “I’d like to order some clothes, I'm at the front of the *asrama* (student boarding house)". There, Markus said he met with two Indonesian intelligence officers who warned him to stop selling the clothes.

And yet, he felt freer in Jogja than he did when he returned back home. "In Nabire, members of my own family are *Intel* (paid by Indonesian intelligence)", Markus said. "There isn't a single person an activist in Nabire should trust. Right up to their own *pacar* (girlfriend or boyfriend)". The last time Markus returned home, his father was aware of the activities he had been involved in in Yogyakarta, despite not having discussed it with him earlier. "My father told me: In Papua, Papuans aren't going to believe you when you talk about these problems. Because our situation has already developed. There's money, there's employment. If we kiss the red and white flag [the Indonesian flag], citizens can live peacefully".

It is April 26th, 2016. Thirty-two years ago, Arnold Ap was shot and killed by officers of the Indonesian state. Tonight, the boarding house in Yogyakarta is filled with people, mostly Indigenous Papuans, but there are Indonesians and a couple of foreigners here too. Markus helped organise this event, held in Ap’s name. Papuan students like him convert the whisper stories of

Mambesak to perform Papuanness in the twenty-first century. Arnold Ap and Mambesak are vessels for trickster stories, travellers that "multiply meaning as they move" and here, in this Papuan *asrama,* they are once again at work, loosening joints across the Interface (Hyde 2010).

I am surprised to see a young woman I had interviewed earlier, acting as host for the night. She had been quiet during our meeting, and deferential to Markus, who was also speaking to me at the same time. She repeatedly stated that her friend had much more to offer than she did. She politely avoided speaking about her own experience, and understandably, regarded me from a distance. The dot dot dot of interviewee and foreign interviewer formed an ellipsis between us. Here, she commands the stage, cracking jokes and pushing the night forward, her back painted with the Morning Star flag.

As an anthropologist, Ap ran the Loka Budaya museum in Papua. In *Imagined Communities,* Benedict Anderson writes that "Ap's occupation and assassination is not at all accidental. For museums, and the museumizing imagination, are both profoundly political" (Anderson 2006, 182). Anderson never explicitly defines what he considers the museumising imagination, but we can return to the Greek for clues. Museum arrives from the Greek *mouseion,* meaning 'seat of the Muses'. A muse— a source of inspiration for a creative artist — is the role Arnold Ap plays here in Jogja. He is both a vessel of remembering, and a site upon which art is spread. On this night, Papuan students imagine and deliver a living museum to Ap— one of poetry and performance, speeches, and theatre. Yet these student artus-workers stretch out and explore beyond Ap the muse, their museumising imagination pushing further than Ap as a figure of history, as they share not only his mythologised songs but also their original works about current day concerns. They perform the drama and fragments that Benny Giay lists as memoria passionis (Giay 2006). It is worth noting again that the book in which he does so, *Pembunuhan Theys* was at one time banned, further proof that "history

writing in Papua can be a dangerous business" (Timmer 2015, 97). Tonight, we will see more proof of this.

In a self-published work by Frank Hubatka, Arnold Ap's widow Connie recounts that "the Loka Budaya Museum would have been closed down, because it could not function any more, because in the perspective of the government it was not legitimate, and also the basic way of thinking was forbidden" (n.d., 27). This 'basic way of thinking' is the museumising imagination. The irony is of course, Ap's museum, devoted to 'Irianese' culture, was actually created by the Indonesian state, and he was killed in part for being its curator (Anderson 2006, 182). Anderson argues that the purpose of such museums was to serve as a kind of 'monumental archeology' which, when "increasingly linked to tourism, allowed the state to appear as the guardian of a generalized, but also local, Tradition… museumized this way, they were repositioned as regalia for a secular colonial state" (Anderson 2006, 186). The museumising that Papuan students conduct here in Jogja celebrating a national hero, has parallels to what the state curriculum asks of its students when celebrating the Indonesian independence heroes who fought against the Dutch. That colonial power also similarly vilified those advocating for independence (Drooglever 2009).

The night is finishing off. "I don't know what will happen next" one of the MCs declares. "Maybe there'll be more dancing?" "*Goyang!* (Dancing!)" the audience responds enthusiastically, demanding it. But the MC implores his peers to be careful. He does not say specifically about what— the dot dot dot dances around his tongue: "When you go home, maybe just leave in pairs of one, or two people. What I mean is, we have to guard against problems that shouldn't happen, *toh.* Night has come, and Satan can appear from human beings."

Two large trucks filled with Indonesian police are stationed outside the door, with officers standing at the back of the building and in the side streets. "There's been *Brimob* (paramilitary police) here since morning," a Papuan

man leaving the event at the same time tells me. “They’re here fully-fitted out with weapons. They arrived at this place with a clear aim— in front of the *asrama* (the student boarding house),” he says. “They make themselves actors to create a situation that could heat up. They create a situation that could trigger Papuans. Making out as though we live rough lives, that we like to create chaos,” he says. “This is a genuine event. This is a cultural event. It’s not a political event. And we’re really confused.” This young man may be speaking rhetorically— many young Papuan students are not confused or surprised to find the Indonesian apparatus at a cultural event— for this story is all too familiar. For though it is a cultural event, the museumising imagination makes it, in Anderson’s words, inherently political to the state.

Yet I do not wish to posit Anderson as a model theorist on Papua, for he too idealises the goodwill of the state in *Imagined Communities.* Of the modern period following 1963, when the Dutch ceded sovereignty, he writes:

> “The subsequent painful relations between the populations of West New Guinea and the emissaries of the independent Indonesian state can be attributed to the fact that Indonesians more or less sincerely regard these populations as ‘brothers and sisters,’ while the populations themselves, for the most part, see things very differently” (2006, 181).

If we conceive of this story using Frank Kermode's *tick tock* — in Anderson's telling the *tick* of the Indonesian offer of brotherhood and sisterhood has been answered with the *tock* of Papuan separatism. But like the framing of Navosakadua in Fiji instigating a ‘cargo cult’ in response to colonial attempts to create order, Anderson’s version of the story frames Papuans as obstructionist forces to Indonesian attempts of unity. Anderson too is complicit in ‘cultifying’ Papuan narratives. Instead, on this night of celebration in the name of Arnold Ap, the *tick* of a Papuan cultural event of telling trickster stories is inevitably followed with the heaving *tock* of the state's response. The key word the young man used here is 'trigger': men,

weapons, trucks — the ingredients to trigger a potentially new, chaotic story. And so, stories continue to be made, embedded within one another (Frank 2010).

An Arnold Ap counter-story

That is not to say that these stories of Arnold Ap, or Ap as a vessel for stories, are incompatible with an identity aligned to the nation-state of Indonesia. The museumising of Arnold Ap can take place without threatening the strength of the state. After all, Mambesak's music existed, officially, within the prism of Unity in Diversity. In that context, the group simply played some regional songs from the east of the country.

Tomas, the trainee pilot we met in *The Papuan Interface,* told me the story of Arnold Ap at our first meeting. Or rather, it was his own story, played to the soundtrack of Arnold Ap. He recalled the cassette tapes of Mambesak distributed around the community, and how those songs featured in his memories of childhood. But in our conversation following that, he made clear that he identified, undoubtedly, as Indonesian— looking at me firmly in the eye and stating that fact clearly. There is a small possibility that this young man was not being frank with me. There is risk involved for a Papuan man to speak of alternative identities with a foreign researcher in Indonesia. But in my meetings with him, as well as on his social media, I never received any indication that he believed something other than what he had told me: he was an Indonesian man, of Papuan descent, glad for new opportunities in Yogyakarta, an ambitious, enthusiastic participant in the nation-state. Arnold Ap was a nostalgic reminder of childhood, and his future lay in Indonesia. This was not a paradox. At our first meeting, I also assured him that I would not reveal his name in my research. If his friends also wished to speak to me, as he had suggested they might, I would also keep their identities safe. "Why wouldn't it be safe?" he asked me. "We're just talking about culture".

Case Story Three: Rootless Black Rose

It's October 2015, and trickster stories travel down the streets at the Ubud Writers and Readers Festival, held annually on the island of Bali. The event attracts big-name foreign writers, and its international cosmopolitan brand has collided head-on with the ghosts of Indonesia's history. Festival organisers had planned panels to discuss the 1965-66 mass 'Communist' killings, still a taboo topic in Indonesia, but wrenched open worldwide after the 2012 documentary film *The Act of Killing* had its protagonists enthusiastically performing how they went about eliminating their victims decades earlier. Just over a week before the event, the organisers emailed ticket holders. The cancellation of the controversial panels had followed "increased scrutiny" by and "extensive negotiations" with the local authorities, who warned that the theme could "jeopardise the overall viability of the Festival". In other words: get rid of 1965, or we'll shut it down. It is another iteration of *budaya bisu* — of those who wish to maintain a mute culture.

But 1965 has its own trickster stories that will not be restrained. On every panel I attend that is held as part of the official festival, foreign and local writers make statements of resistance against censorship. The outlawed writers have taken to holding pop-up discussions on the periphery of the festival, in nearby cafes and bookshops. A smiling middle-aged woman running one of these events calls out to two men wearing dark glasses and leather jackets, hovering by the road outside. *"Mari, Pak!"* (Come on, sir!). She asks them if they'd like to join in.

There is an undercurrent of tension at this festival, sharpened by the presence of Indonesian police and intelligence agents observing events from afar. Featured at one of the panels that were allowed to continue is Aprila Wayar, a petite, fierce-eyed then 35-year old writer who says: "I never

imagined I would be the first female Papuan novelist". And then, Wayar makes a brazen declaration: "I believe that Papua will one day be free".

Wayar is operating here as an artus-worker— loosening the joints of taboos and the unspoken, promoting nuance within the Papuan and Indonesian Interfaces. In her other profession as a journalist, she operates in similar ways. In 2014 she was obstructed by police for attempting to report on a student protest in Jayapura, according to the International Coalition for Papua (2015).

Wayar later told me in an interview that it was not the first time she had spoken at an international event, and made similar provocative statements. "When people say: 'Yeah, this is what you said and it was true, or 'yeah, what you said wasn't true'. It's normal. There are differences amongst people. My opinion is: if what you think I'm saying is wrong, then fight it through books." She believed her detractors should respond using the same tool of writing that she has used, rather than attempting to censor her.

A novel approach to history

Her first novel, *Rootless Black Rose* (2015) was first printed in Indonesian as *Mawar Hitam Tanpa Akar* in 2009 by local publishers. It was later translated to English by a friend of hers, Rebecca Blair Young, in a rather literal version of the original text. Aprila self-published the English edition to be made available for the writers' festival in Ubud. The novel is a history lesson wrapped in narrative. It includes visceral accounts of *memoria passionis* with descriptions of rape and violence. The reader is introduced to known figures in Papuan activism, such as Arnold Ap, Filep Karma and John Rumbiak, weaved throughout the novel.

The story is told from multiple first-person points of view, beginning with that of the main character, Anna, a white-collar worker and mother living in Jayapura. From the outset, she is presented as a modern feminist— and her lifestyle is unlike the reality of many women living in Papua. At her office, she

has her own assistant. She is in a relationship with a man, Tom, who shares responsibility for domestic tasks— they alternate nights where they wash their baby with warm water to keep her comfortable. The novel offers alternative realities, not only of history but also of gender relations in Papua.

Tom had introduced Anna to the Papuan student movement. From the outset, we realise that the novel will break with conventional formats of the genre to ensure that the reader is steeped into a modern history of Papua. There are even footnotes. As Tom calls a friend to ask what is happening when Jayapura becomes overwhelmed with traffic, the friend answers: “Our friends are raising the Morning Star flag” (Wayar 2015, 106). A footnote for this dialogue at the back of the book includes a long paragraph outlining the flag’s design, American paranoia about the communist threat in the 1960s and the massacre of Papuans since Indonesian acquisition of the territory from the Dutch. The conversations and disagreements between characters prevent the novel from taking an entirely monological Papuan view of history.

It was only in university in Yogyakarta that Wayar herself became aware of the extent to which human rights transgressions floated across the surface of Papuan history. "It was all the references I found in books while studying— 'Oh, so, yeah, there were lots of human rights abuses in Papua. Oh, this happened— this happened in many parts of Papua,” she said. “But I didn't think I should do something. Not like that. That didn't awaken my critical awareness at that time."

What woke her was the potential of the transformative impact of fiction— and another trickster story that had travelled to her reading list. "When I was reading novels, I had a thought: ‘Why not write about Papua, like the writings of Pramoedya [Ananta Toer]? Then more people will read it’”.

Toer's famous series, the Buru Quartet, was composed while the writer was imprisoned on Buru Island by the Suharto regime for 14 years, accused of being a communist in 1965. Denied writing materials for the first ten years of his imprisonment, he orated his stories to fellow prisoners (Lane 1996).

Wayar noted that many Papuans are traditionally unaccustomed to learning stories through text. "In terms of Papuan history, [it's passed] mouth to mouth [by] ethnic Papuans," Wayar said.

Toer's works were regularly banned by the Suharto regime, and Gerry van Klinken writes that the author demonstrated that history writing "can buttress the desire for freedom in sturdy ways without selling itself into the servitude of today's or tomorrow's state elites" (2001, 343). Toer's writing served as a model for Wayar's own, because through fiction, it allowed ordinary Indonesians to see their history anew. She believes the same transformation needs to happen in relation to Papuan history. "There are several people in the Indonesian parliament who know about the history of Papua," Wayar said. "How can you teach this incorrect history to this nation? History forms the identity of a nation".

Rootless Black Rose, in its original Indonesian version, uses conventional informal Indonesian forms of address such as *kamu* (you) and *aku (l),* rather than those found in *logat Papua* (Papuan dialect), such as *ko* (you) and *sa* (l), increasingly found in Papuan literary texts published online. Wayar said she did this deliberately: "There is the young generation of Papuans who are reading my novels as a reference and as an initial foothold to understand what Papua truly is. But my aim in using standard Indonesian is to inform the Indonesian public of the real problems in Papua," she said. "We need doctors, we need teachers. We don't need the military".

Papuans will usually avoid speaking to outsiders about such matters, particularly stories about *merdeka* (independence), according to Wayar. "If I see there's a non-Papuan there, I'm not going to talk. Ethnic Papuans won't talk to Indonesians about *Papua Merdeka* … Indonesians are often associated with the military".

Although Wayar's family is from Nabire, she has spent very little time there. Her thinking about history, and the way Papuans talk about history, was also shaped by a childhood spent in Wamena, where her father worked

as a teacher in the state education system. Born in 1980, in the shadow of military operations in 1977-78 in the highlands, Wayar says she later became aware of events "that we can describe as mass murder in Papua". A historical investigation by the Asian Human Rights Commission (2013) determined these operations amounted to "genocide".

"That was Wamena," Wayar says. "And so today, when I struggle with my own *memoria passionis*, in the way I see Papua and Papuans, that's what I think about: How do I reflect on my past, to look to the future in order to make Papua better?"

Indonesian policies policing Papuan culture in the central highlands in the 1970s also had an impact on Wayar's sense of self. She says her father witnessed people being arrested by police if they spoke a language other than Indonesian. *Operasi Koteka* (Operation Penis Gourd) and Operation Task Force*,* Indonesian campaigns rolled out in the early 1970s, were focused on 'civilising' Papuans, an example of "cultural imperialism through Indonesianization in all government, cultural and educational institutions" (Gietzelt 1989, 216). As a civil servant for the state education system, Wayar's father was particularly careful to speak Indonesian at home. "You could not use [your own] language. Not in the house, not in your own bedroom," Wayar says. "In *Rootless Black Rose* I use the phrase 'all the walls had ears'".

Although I did not come across any similar accounts during my research, van Klinken references an event where the opposite was reported to have occurred, according to a *detik.com* news article: “History teachers in remote highland postings in February 2000 found themselves fleeing to the safety of town after parents threatened them for teaching a version of national history in which Papuans had no role” (2001, 323).

As a result of her father’s fears, Wayar never learned *Bahasa Moor*, the language of her family's Moor tribe from Nabire. As an adult, she has only visited Nabire, and has never lived there. She hesitates to retell *cerita rakyat* (folktales) from the Moor, for fear of telling them wrong.

Like other Papuans who have grown up in places other than where their families are from, Wayar has benefited from and struggled with this multiplicity of culture. After her mother died, her father remarried Wayar's stepmother, who is of Chinese background. The family moved to Tasikmalaya in West Java, and Wayar later went to university in Yogyakarta. She is fluent in Javanese and Sundanese, and can argue her case in English. Wayar's experiences have expanded her ideas about Papuanness and her ability to articulate them, while she notes the absence of some forms of traditional knowledge in her upbringing. When we discussed how social media is currently bringing Papuans from diverse cultures together online— which I had presumed was a new phenomenon— she cited Arnold Ap as having experienced and promulgated this in an offline way a couple of generations earlier:

> "Arnold Ap was also a rich child— yes, he was rich because his parents were officials for the Dutch government, but not in that sense [of wealth]. But he was rich with experience. Because he knew lots of songs, he knew many people. His parents were moved from place to place. After a number of years, he knew nearly all of Papua."

Artus-workers such as Wayar and Ap have used their diverse experiences to create and share remixed notions of Papuanness through the Interface, through various media, online and offline. Ap's ability to do this occurs on two levels, the first in his work as a musician and anthropologist while he was alive. Today, his name and memory are used by other Papuans to transport trickster stories anew as a 'story vessel' — a concept I will explore further in *Memoria Papuanness.*

Memoria Papuanness

I have used various descriptors for the story vessels that appear across the Papuan Interface. I am referring to the *honai* (literally: a men's hut; a place where discussions about customary law take place (Sugandi 2014)) or *bakar batu* (a site and method of cooking on heated stones) or even *noken* (a traditional net bag) — reinvented as discussion groups and creative collectives; or even Arnold Ap as a museumising force. These are only some ways through which stories are spread and savoured and Papuanness is strengthened— there are countless others drawing from various Papuan tribes, contexts and technologies. I like the word ‘vessel’ because it implies that the object or concept can hold both its original shape and new ideas within it.

Papuan independent scholars used the words 'symbol’ and 'philosophy' to describe how Honai Study Club had taken up the *honai* for their discussion group. Benedict Anderson uses the word ‘avatar’ to describe maps as sites of colonial or anti-colonial expressions (Anderson 2006). Meanwhile, Ngurah Suryawan, describes Papuans’ belief that art and culture, such as that produced by Arnold Ap, are ‘instruments’ to reclaim dignity (2015, 200). Charles Farhadian asserts that Christianity has been used as a "channel for self-assertion" by Papuans when prevented from expressing a "putatively Papuan identity, in opposition to an Indonesian one" (2001, 369). Diana Glazebrook identifies triggers that elicit historical monologues of colonisation amongst West Papuan refugees— such as Arnold Ap, 1969, ‘koteka campaign’ or Freeport — otherwise known amongst West Papuan theological scholars as *memoria passionis* (2008, 27). Giay, a leading scholar in this tradition, himself writes that his own Mee tribe's tradition of *dabeuwo* (celebrating the life of a significant person who has passed) can also emerge as one event where Papuans themselves come together to recognise their

potential to "change this world full of fear created by those in power" (2006, 35).

The state has responded to some of these vessels as a Trojan horse for dangerous ideas, and sought to quash expressions of them accordingly (Anderson 2006; Timmer 2015; MacLeod 2015). Meanwhile, as mentioned elsewhere in this thesis, deep anxieties exist for many parents, elders and young adults about the passing down of cultural knowledge and local languages. But while concerns remain about the depth of knowledge being passed down to the next generation, cultural symbols such as the *honai* and *noken* are spread widely and used creatively by young Papuans. These movements stand in parallel to the state-sanctioned Papua exhibition at Taman Mini in Jakarta (showing mainly Asmat and Dani culture), or other Indonesian cultural museums that allow, as Anderson says, the state to appear “as the guardian of a generalised, but also local, Tradition” (2006, 186). These Papuan scholars do not have the state’s proclivity to claim total guardianship of tradition. Instead, they often use and remix these traditional and pan-Papuan symbols. This is not to say that they are divested of their original meaning, but the symbols often become vessels through which considered stories of Papuanness travel.

Furthermore — regardless of whether they are named after or linked to Papuan symbols or not — discussion groups, performances, events and publications, online and offline, visual and text-based, also see stories remixed and rehashed, due to an ethos of combined narrative methodologies. Papuan stories undergo dialogical shaping through critical exchanges between autodidactic scholars and creatives. This stands opposed to the monological stories enforced from above by the Indonesian education system and the state— or even the checklist of historical suffering repeated (or avoided) in familiar Papuan narratives.

It is tempting, given the varied range of lived experiences and cultural exposure that these Papuans in these case stories have had, to label their

approach as being something entirely new: a Papuan cosmopolitanism, influenced by globalisation and so-called modernisation. Yet we know that Papuan culture/s have longstanding approaches to dialogical narrative analysis and narratography, of reconsidering history, but also reconsidering the context in which that history takes place, including *Nyawene* from the Balim Valley, and the pan-Papuan *memoria passionis* (Dale 2015; Giay 2006; Suryawan 2011).

Giay lists a number of activities that mark stories of *memoria passionis* (2006, 33-35). In other words, he, like the process of dialogical narrative analysis, is interested in the relationship between the story, the storyteller and the listener, and "how each allows the other to be" (Frank 2010, 387). Giay names one purpose of holding discussions or other activities which mark the past is to ask: "What the meaning of this event for us, and our children in the future?" In Kermode's conception of narrative as a clock, this is also what the tock of *kairos* does— it is "our way of bundling together perception of the present, memory of the past, and expectation of the future" (2000, 46).

Giay names another purpose of *memoria passionis* as being to "laugh at authoritarian power". He posits the carrying out of *memoria passionis* events as decolonising tools — "to celebrate our combined strengths to fight this 'mute culture' and fear, and to present a new Papua". This process becomes another form of the '*merdeka* of the mind' described in Case Story One: "Events with the theme of *memoria passionis* can also be seen as a commemoration of life, so that people are no longer shackled by *memoria passionis".* This, like the best of trickster tales, speaks to a shedding of skin (Hyde 2010). Giay is arguing that one must experience the story in order not to be shackled the story (2006, 33). This is the paradox at the heart of Papuan remembering.

Friction on all sides

As we have heard, there is much trauma amongst older generations in sharing such stories, and in remembering out loud. And at the same time, there is a long tradition of engaging with such remembering, as identified by Giay and others. My Papuan peers contend with both aspects of Papuan memory making and as a result, negotiate complex paths through the Interface.

Benny Giay's *memoria passionis* is also explained from a Christian perspective: he asks what role the Church and its representatives might play in promoting *memoria passionis*. The Papuans in these case stories approach remembering history from— if not a secular perspective, then from one that does not take its central point of focus from Christianity[19]. In their performance and evaluation of history, the Papuan scholars in these case stories are assertive actors, often looking at assertive actors of the past. This is somewhat distinct to the 'victims of the past' approach, of people who are acted upon, that is often the focus of *memoria passionis* (Giay 2006). Nakata, writing of the history of Torres Strait Islander agency in colonial times, insists that it cannot be framed only as a "period of diminishment, powerlessness and loss" (2007, 205). The history of Islander agency is also one of "re-making" and "reimagining ourselves," just as the history of Papuan agency, strength and power— and Papuanness itself— is articulated through the friction of these scholars' conversations.

Timmer found a focus on divine design in Papuan narratives from Bird's Head that "construct the idea that Papua is coming of age in what they claim to be a genuinely historical account" (2015, 96). The avoidance or lack of focus on 'divine design' in the case stories I have described also differs from such historiographies, and yet there is a continued trajectory towards

[19] It is important to note, however, that many groups of young Papuans observed in this study and other ethnographies do centre elements of Christianity within their discussions and everyday lives to varying degrees, from forming organisations based on their faith, to including a prayer within otherwise secular meetings (Farhadian 2001; Munro 2018).

Papua's coming of age too. Yan, an original member of Honai Study Club, argued that "if young people know history… that will shape the identity of the Papuan nation". This is history as performance— as its own *merdeka*. It relates to Timmer's description of the Bird's Head narratives as "performative historicities"— "much of the meaning that they give to the past is made in the act of their communication to specific audiences" (2015, 96).

I quoted Lewis Hyde earlier, who wrote of Trickster that he wished to show the "moments when the practice of art and this myth coincide" (Hyde 2010, 14). Crucially, artus-workers make an impact not only by challenging outside authority but also established norms in their own society, and the Papuans in these case stories do so implicitly by remixing Papuan culture and norms.

It is this very process that loosens the joints of these stories, allowing them to continue popping up in different parts of the Interface. In that way, they are like the rhizomes Kirksey (2012) writes of: the flexibility of these stories means they weave inextricably throughout the Papuan (and Indonesian) Interface/s in ways that align with a multiplicity of *merdeka*.

Sarah Richards asks what constitutes "an authentic Papuanness" beyond the ready-made identity boxes of "culture (*budaya*), land (*tanah*), customs (*adat*) and history (*sejarah*)"— identifying instead "the changing shape of beliefs that Papuans are a good and worthy collective, what I call the Papuan pride movement" (2015, 145, 155).

But the Papuans in these case stories do more than promote pride in Papua. They demonstrate a kind of confidence that is beyond showing the 'worthiness' of Papua— they challenge and interrogate Papuanness, its history and ideas, its stories. It is through this process that I mean their sense of Papuanness is strengthened. They aim to become, to use a word I often heard used, *orang kritis* (an independent thinker). My Papuan peers subvert the traditional processes of learning— on all fronts. They question knowledge from Indonesian universities (and sometimes church authorities) and teach

themselves stories that their parents avoided telling them for fear of the consequences. At the same time, they challenge existing Western concepts and colonial histories through Indigenous frameworks— that also may employ traditional culture differently to their elders.

We can again think about these stories as trickster artists or artus-workers, creating friction between joints in the Papuan Interface (Hyde 2010; Tsing 2005; Nakata 2007). I quoted Tsing in Part One of this exegesis, who points out that opportunities for collaboration are often not "consensus-making but rather an opening for productive confusion" (2005, 248). Within these discussions and exchanges, the process of dialogical narrative interpretation celebrates such productive confusion and rubs against the edges of existing institutions, power balances and knowledge/s. This too is "collaboration with friction at its heart" (2005, 246).

An ecosystem of Papuan scholars

Stó:lō Nation scholar Jo-Ann Archibald (2008, x) has discovered the powerful pedagogy of stories: “It is as though the story ‘comes alive’ and becomes the teacher,” she writes, and indeed, in the absence of the Indonesian education system providing more complete histories, it is the Papuan trickster stories that serve as the inspiring professors that many Papuans long for. Archibald points out that Trickster finds trouble precisely when he/she becomes disconnected from cultural traditional teachings — highlighting the importance of “interconnections between family, community and nation, culture and land” (2008, iv).

Karl Heider writes in 1977 that the compulsory implementation of the Indonesian curriculum in the central highlands would make Dani children “bilingual and bicultural”, therefore widening their perspective. He does note that “every day that a Dani child spends in school is a day away from Dani life. The years of youth, which once a Dani spent learning to be Dani, are spent in school, learning to be Indonesian” (Heider 1997, 12, 66). After a

return visit to the central highlands in 1988, Heider observes that young Danis in more isolated communities could continue to secondary school only in larger towns or cities, “at the cost of breaking one’s ties to land, sib, compound, and ritual groups” (1997, 156).

Memoria passionis and decades of local and international human rights reporting attest to the impact that state policies have had on Papuan rights, languages, identity and culture. And yet as these case stories have highlighted, when such interconnections are challenged, trickster stories can act to remix them in unexpected ways, strengthening Papuanness anew.

Nakata (2007, 214) describes an Indigenous standpoint theory as one where Indigenous academics or students bring their experience to bear on their own critical analysis, an approach that could similarly apply to the Papuan scholars described in these case stories. They too appreciate that:

> “It is much more about understanding and explicating the complex positioning that is constitutive of Islander experience at the Interface as the playing out of the constant struggle for meaning, the contestation over meaning; it is about the various readings that can be applied to give this experience meaning in a way that makes sense to those involved in understanding Islanders” (Nakata 2007, 212).

This to me again sounds like a fused methodology: the friction generated by various narrative approaches, including narratography, dialogical narrative analysis, *Memoria Passionis* and *Nyawene*. A failure of the academy and in writing is that in attempting to elevate Indigenous knowledge, many “commit them[selves] to a dichotomy between Indigenous and Western knowledge” which cannot be theoretically sustained (Arun Agrawal in Nakata 2007, 187). The Papuan autodidacts also know this. They fluidly and elegantly remix canons of knowledge, originally drawn into stiff categories— *adat*, Papuan, Western, Indonesian, religious or otherwise, to create new knowledges and define themselves. This is an ecosystem that is deeply engaged and

committed to understanding the "contestation of meanings" in the Interface (Nakata 2007, 10).

These case stories have helped me understand that the purpose of this exegesis is not to locate 'authentic' accounts but rather to highlight some examples of where these readings of different narratives are taking place amongst Papuans themselves. Their work is proof of an evolving scholarship committed to decolonised methodologies. As this thesis attempts to wrestle with methodological questions of how narratives can be represented, these scholars have simply done the work, and shared the stories.

Part Three:
There's No 'I' in Papua

Part Three is titled *There's No I in Papua*. I choose the title long before I began writing. It started as a mantra, a desire I had to focus on the stories I was hearing, and not my own experience of research. Here I outline the unpicking of that desire and the reconstruction of it.

Jo-ann Archibald describes the knowledge gained from her years of research as a "storybasket' for others to use. "Following Stó:lō tradition, I give back what I have learned about storywork, which effectively educates the heart, mind, body, and spirit" (2008, x). And what is a methodology section but a storybasket? Let me show you the tools, the pre-set patterns, and the inconvenient, leftover sections of cloth.

Don't Unweave the Rainbow: Creative Writing as Research

I'll begin with a story. Ten years ago, after I returned to Australia following my first stint of living in Indonesia, I attended an academic conference for Indonesian studies at a university. I was not a student at the time and had only participated in the event as a means of soothing the heartbreak of having left the country I was besotted with. I was interested in Indonesia intellectually and thought I might like to pursue postgraduate research on it one day, but I also loved Indonesia in the way that you love your first overseas country. It's a bit like doing teenage romance again, in the way it defines you, in the way you overlook its faults, and the stickiness of the memories you make.

I sat in a room full of Indonesianists sharing their research and was shocked to find myself a little bored. With a few exceptions, the speakers turned the fascinating intricacies of real life into dry analysis that killed its subjects as it categorised them. If this was how academia did Indonesia, I thought to myself, I will never go back to study again.

In the end, I did anyway. I was persuaded by the work of anthropologists and writers who grappled with ideas through their elegant writing and the stories they told, in Indonesia and beyond. This chapter does some of its own grappling with the creative writing and academic ethnography that has come before me, some of it focused on Papua, some not.

The tension

There is a tension between creative writing and anthropology that has occupied scholar/writers— a subplot of a long-running feud between the arts and the sciences. Isaac Newton was famously accused in 1817 of attempting to 'unweave the rainbow' by the poet John Keats— in other words,

attempting to remove wonder from life by understanding it solely through the lens of science (Delistraty 2018).

Michael Jackson airs the internalised anxieties that result from this feud in his memoir *The Accidental Anthropologist.* In the mid-1980s, he was concerned that his creative writing had compromised his academic credibility and job opportunities as an anthropologist amongst his more conservative colleagues. Did his two vocations invalidate each other?

> "Though I had long ceased thinking of them as mutually antagonistic, many academics — purists and pedants to the last — regarded science and art as antithetical, as unalike as chalk and cheese, or east and west, and recoiled from their intermingling with the same horror as a racist recoils from miscegenation" (2006, 245).

Academia has since relaxed its boundaries somewhat. Writing in 2013, after conducting ethnographic research into how remorse is judged in the NSW criminal justice system, the writer-anthropologist Kate Rossmanith found herself considering her options while looking at her field notes: "My mind immediately turned to genres: I can write academic articles, I thought to myself, and I can also write literary nonfiction". Rossmanith later realised that the proceedings of a courtroom formed their own narrative that "seemed to demand this nonfiction form. It sought it out" (2013, 7).

While creative writing courses have become increasingly popular in Australian universities, as a discipline it has continued to endure some growing pains in terms of finding a valid theoretical framework to meet the expectations of university funding mechanisms (Muecke 2010; Narayan 2007). A hybrid anthropological/creative writing PhD project appealed to me from the beginning. I wanted to convey on the page the complexity of the stories I had found in Indonesia using language that did them justice, while benefiting from the support and structure that the university provides. I also wanted my project to be grounded in fieldwork and ethnography. I saw this as distinct to the kind of analysis parlayed in dry academic form, or through

parachute journalism and the often-parochial lens of Australian reportage. I believed in the value of "good writing" to quote Stephen Muecke (2010, section 4), and I hoped that with some help, I could create useful work—whatever that meant.

The university has become a place where creative writers can justify funding their work as research, beyond mere entertainment, and in turn, they have begun to use the language of the academy: of 'fieldwork,' 'methodology' and 'ethnography' (Muecke 2010, section 2). But someone like me— a writer, who saw themselves as a lay ethnographer (who had operated mostly outside the academic church, in audio documentary making), and a student of decolonising anthropology— finds herself on ethically shifting sand: attempting to meet the ideal in all these disciplines, she could fail all of them. Before I tease out the competing visions and obligations I have felt during this PhD, I will first explore other writer/researchers who have wrestled with similar questions in their work. As I reflect on my own experiences of research with Papuans, I will further delve into the ethnographic approaches and output of anthropologists writing about communities other than their own.

The Quest and the Decoder

Gabriella Coleman "spent years collecting too much material, attempting to build my own labyrinth that would allow me to chart a course through theirs" (2014, 401). As she notes in the acknowledgements to *Hacker, Hoaxer, Whistleblower, Spy: The Many Faces of Anonymous*: "Writing a book for a popular audience while remaining faithful to complex, esoteric, technical, and legal details is a formidable challenge" (2014, 406).

Anthropologists and nonfiction writers face the challenge of arranging a single, contained text from large swathes of sometimes-contradictory data. Some attempt to do so under a single, flowing narrative (what I would broadly describe as a 'Quest' structure that posits the writer as seeking to discover

something as part of the story), while others arrange their work thematically (using a 'Decoder' structure to explain certain topics). Inevitably, these two structures often collide. In each of these forms, the writer often acts as either The Adventurer or The Expert respectively – roles I will unpack further in the chapter *Trickster Joins the Cargo Cult*.

In books such as *On the Run: Fugitive Life in an American City* by Alice Goffman (2015) and *Anonymous,* a thematic “decoder” structure is used that also follows a trail of stories throughout. Each chapter addresses a certain aspect of their research— although Coleman's personal chase of hackers has elements of the Quest contained within.

The Quest structure appears in Chloe Hooper’s *The Tall Man* (2009). Although observations may enter the text, an overarching narrative takes place mostly in the observational first person. *The Tall Man* begins with the death of Cameron Doomadgee on Palm Island, a small island off the coast of Townsville in far-north Queensland, Australia. Hooper inserts herself into the events that took place in the community and Australia more widely, after a white police officer was accused of being responsible for an Aboriginal man’s death, and follows Doomadgee’s family as they seek justice. Her work pitches itself into the "loose alliance of publics, Indigenous and nonIndigenous, justiceminded, literaryminded" (Muecke 2010, section 3). As it "zigzags" and ties up these alliances, it constructs a stage on which her literary reportage plays out for the readers of her book. On that stage, Hooper uses a convention often found in ethnographic writing: she narrates her "journey from outsider to insider – using story conventions to persuade readers effectively" (Cortazzi 2001, 9).

On the Run is another example of such writing. It is an ethnographic study on the lives of young Black American men in a heavily-policed neighbourhood of Philadelphia by Goffman, a sociologist who spent six years observing and continuing friendships with these men. Goffman's Quest is mostly contained

in an extended appendix section that details how she came to be connected with the men she is writing about.

Anonymous was published by Verso, an imprint that tends to straddle the realms of scholarly and nonfiction work. The book is the result of Coleman's multi-year study of the loosely/chaotically-arranged hacker/activist collective by the same name. It documents hacking exploits during the group's significant role in the Arab Spring, and its seeking of revenge for Wikileaks (after multinational companies aided the US government in blocking finances and server space to the organisation following the leaking of diplomatic cables).

Like Hooper, Goffman and Coleman follow 'families' of sorts— although in the case of *Anonymous*, the literally anonymous nature of many of its participants makes it difficult to follow their stories from beginning to end. Some people do feature throughout the text — mostly those whose real names ended up in court depositions and media articles after they were caught, allowing her to reveal their identities.

Danilyn Rutherford's *Raiding the Land of the Foreigners* (2003) made a significant contribution to the scholarly literature on West Papua. The work is scaffolded by Western philosophical and anthropological theory, employing something of an academic Decoder structure. This framing in Western discourse "limits the richness of Papuan lifeworlds," Jaap Timmer argues in a review of the work. "At times, I wished that Rutherford had allowed the materials from her extensive fieldwork on Biak to speak more loudly. That would have shifted the balance between theory and ethnography more towards an understanding of how Papuans think and behave" (2013, 334).

If theory can be formed from the distilling of the "exceptional outpouring of the everyday" (Tsing and Ebron 2015, 685)— then such outpourings can also be contained within in the nonfiction writer's (or even novelist's) toolkit, even when working within an academic framework. There is precedence for these 'exceptional outpourings' in other books about Papuans, such as Eben

Kirksey's *Freedom in Entangled Worlds* (2012) and Jason MacLeod's *Merdeka and the Morning Star* (2015). Both books are Quest/Decoder hybrids. Kirksey, in his own words, sees that "insights from botany, in dialogue with philosophy, cultural theory and ethnographic observations — offer a way to grapple with human social movements and institutional forms" (2012, 56-57). MacLeod mixes theory with anecdote, closing the book with collective testimony — "strands, voices and vignettes" — that he compares to the traditional woven mats found across the Pacific (2015, 3936).

In *The Tall Man*, Hooper also shares such outpourings in small stories that form part of a greater narrative. Hooper introduces the characters as though it were a novel, and through it, Palm Island, where her book is set: "Another of Cameron's nieces wanted to be a model; her mother told me she'd have to get her off the island before— and she held her knuckles to her cheek, meaning before her daughter's looks were ruined by beatings" (2009, 53). Scenes like this give context about life on the island more subtly than a set of statistics might. Another character, a lawyer named Andrew Boe, provides background on cultural expectations: "He'd included a list of what would be inappropriate to wear. 'Be mindful of exposing underwear unduly. Don't try to be feral'" (Hooper 2009, 9).

Like Papua, Palm Island is an exercise in contrasts. Hooper sets up these contrasts with a macro-view of the island: literally, as she flies in to see "the pale green sea so luminous" and "mountains of forest met the palm-lined shore… then the dream shifted". She compares these to the headlines she has read: "'Tropic of Despair', 'Bitter Paradise', 'Island of Sorrow' were the headlines I'd been reading". She uses this plane ride to give us the background of Cameron Doomadgee's death: "Arrested for swearing at a white police officer, and so, forty minutes he was dead on a cell floor, with injuries like those of someone who'd been in a car or plane crash" (Hooper 2009, 8).

Hooper inserts the political background regarding the Northern Territory intervention in the context of the fallout of the trial. In that way, a single story becomes a larger one, where Prime Minister John Howard was "ignoring most of the report's detailed recommendations urging community consultation". "'It's our Hurricane Katrina', the Prime Minister said, as though it were all down to nature. An election was looming and he trailed in the polls" (Hooper 2009, 267).

She is not afraid to pass judgement, or let the scene be observed through her eyes. She is no passive observer. Describing the Queensland Police Union's inaugural Pride in Policing Day march, held seven and a half weeks after the verdict that set Chris Hurley free, Hooper describes the scene as "the parade scene from the children storybook about police" (2009, 268). Here narrative nonfiction fuses with op-ed. Though unlike that latter form, which tends to offer a polemic solution to any given problem, Hooper instead offers subtle comments and images that serve to highlight the depth of the problem itself.

I was drawn to Rohini Mohan's *The Seasons of Trouble* (2014) because it achieves what the creative work *Tete* aims to do. It sets up the notion of The Quest not as the writer's or ethnographer's personal adventure but from the perspective of the characters. It is written in a close third-person style that feels like the voices of the people featured in the story, following years of discussions conducted mostly over the phone. As Mohan states in the preface, her goal was "to tell their narrative as honestly and engagingly as they did, to show the changes they experienced among the wreckage of civil war and the mundane omnipresence of conflict" (2014, Preface, para. 4). She buries the reporter's quest, and her role as Adventurer/Expert (in her words: "Scrutinising documents, photographs and maps, listening to silences, repeating questions and revisiting locations") deep below the narrative itself (Mohan 2014, Preface, para. 2).

All the works I have cited explore highly politicised issues about communities the writer/researcher was not originally a part of, following extensive research. In Mohan's case — an Indian journalist writing about Tamil characters — long phone calls and interviews in Tamil without an interpreter over five years eventually " somewhat helped overcome our differences of country, gender and class" (2014, Preface, para. 2). As a Spanish-Australian woman writing about the stories told by Papuans from diverse backgrounds and locations, I have found these authors' editorial strategies a compelling lens through which I examined my own work. Yet in both *Tete* and *Seasons of Trouble,* the reader does not have the opportunity to see the writer's mind and process at work— at the very least, the writer's performative mind at work. We know that Mohan negotiated "the pitfalls of memory, bias, history and trauma" and challenged her "notions of victimhood, patriotism and community" because she tells us she did (2014, Preface, para. 2), but we never see that process at work in the text, unlike other narrative nonfiction books. Throughout Part Three I offer some insight into my own process during research and writing.

Fieldwork frictions

Michael Taussig writes in *I Swear I Saw This* that he originally believed his "task as an anthropologist was to sift through this rampant heterogeneity and find the truth" — later realising that he was "missing the point that it was this very multiplicity of difference along with its associated fragmentation that was reality" (2011, 149).

Narrative nonfiction is often concerned with adopting fiction writers' techniques of propelling along an overarching plot and humanising an event, experience or topic— and in the process can sometimes avoid complexity. In her essay criticising the so-called 'golden age of storytelling', Maria Tumarkin paraphrases philosopher Raimond Gaita, who argued: "Emphasis crafting good stories exists, at least partly, at the expense of good thinking" (2014,

178). In an excellent line in her essay, Tumarkin argues that if stories are expected to act as "conduits for the universal, for the transcendental," certain results can occur that would affect good thinking, and ultimately, truth: "It can make friction-and-silence-laden spaces created by the telling and the listening feel smooth, elementary, back to how-it-once-was, like a woman after a Brazilian" (2014, 177).

Here is where a focus on story could be problematic. The search for narrative and 'characters' can also smooth out such spaces, acting as horse blinkers applied on the eyes of the researcher/writer, as Gabriella Coleman observes in her interactions with journalists seeking to interview Anonymous— a leaderless, shape-shifting collective:

> "This is often entirely lost on the mainstream media, which can't—or won't—write a story that does not normalise the conversion of an individual into a celebrity or leader, complete with individual heroism or tragic moral failings…Most of Western philosophy, and in turn, much of Western culture more generally, has posited the self—the individual—as the site of epistemic inquiry. It is hard to shake millennia of philosophical thinking on a topic—intellectual thinking that is also cultural common sense" (2014, 50).

Coleman's and Tumarkin's concerns about neat narratives and individual heroism apply to researcher/writers attempting to communicate their data through literary nonfiction. Coleman's work is a playbook for creating intimate stories when your characters must stay (mostly) anonymous. Establishing the inner lives of 'Anons' as characters is difficult, given that the characters we do know of are those that Coleman met in person, or through court documents. With the exception of one or two players, there are no major characters that define the nature of the movement. Then again, this would be impossible, as Coleman notes: "Beyond a foundational commitment to the maintenance of anonymity and a broad dedication to the free flow of information, Anonymous has no consistent philosophy or political program" (2014, 3). It was appealing

as a case study for my own research, given the multi-focused nature of the Papuan Interface (Nakata 2007). Anonymous is described as “an infinite machine… wherein mazes generated maze-generating mazes” (Coleman 2014, 9) — a description I found applicable to the many groups and individuals vying separately and together to promote Papua, their communities and themselves.

Fieldwork carries dangers— and by that, I do not only mean particular sites of fieldwork that are dangerous, but also risks and opportunities of scholarship and storytelling. I want to carry Anna Tsing's concept of friction as a means of exploring the tensions that linger between traditional anthropology and writing in fieldwork. Here, "collaboration with friction at its heart" (2005, 246) comprises not only work between scholars and other collaborators, but also the process of ethnography itself.

I am tempted to describe the endeavour of my preferred kind of research as simply as how Brené Brown articulates it: “Maybe stories are just data with a soul” (2010) — and the aim becomes a matter of collecting and sharing that story data, through any number of genres. It is uncomfortable to do so, but one can argue the case that there is a rupture in the aims of the creative writer and the anthropologist. There is friction between the collection of 'data' and the seeking out of charisma, the inextricable something that draws a writer to a person of interest, to a 'character’— to use the literary term— who can tell that story well. In anthropology, those involved in fieldwork are often called 'consultants'. There is no expectation of narrative or persona in such a title.

Initially, my own research project aimed to:

> “…Focus on up to 10 young Papuan individuals and their related relationships, in order to develop an in-depth understanding of their offline and online lives".

When I first met one Papuan man, I spoke to him for only 30 minutes, briefly discussing his experience of studying in Jakarta. He hinted at having attended some student meetings, but was softly spoken and said little else. Sensing that he had said all that he wished to say, we wrapped up the interview. His life formed part of the Papuan Interface, but I questioned whether he was a participant who wanted to continue discussing his experiences, and whether they were, frankly, worth writing about in greater detail. Yet consider his circumstances: You move from a rural village to the capital city of a country you consider hostile to the history and culture that you come from. Some of your friends are monitored by the police. Possibly amongst your friends are those paid by Indonesian intelligence. A white woman, older than you, explains her project in an accent you have not encountered before. She asks if you would like to do an interview with her. You come from a community where politeness is emphasised. You say yes. She begins asking preliminary questions about where you are from, your childhood memories, your university education. You may not wish to say very much at all when you first speak.

Months later, after I had spent time in his community, I discovered he had contributed to an ecosystem of writing and discussing history. He spoke of the knowledge he had acquired, and how living in Jakarta had shaped him as a thinker. Had I not spent more time in his presence, I would never have learned this. It all seems rather obvious, this getting to know people to understand them better, in both research and life. Some sell their story better than others. The introverts or the shy ones with important things to share can be left behind. I worked hard to rectify this, but even while using the tools of longer-term fieldwork, the temptation to hunt for character and narrative can easily operate like horse-blinkers for the ethnographer/writer. In saying that, I have no doubt that conventional anthropology has also been regularly seduced by "the conversion of an individual into a celebrity or leader" as the "site of epistemic inquiry," to quote Coleman (2014, 50) again.

Dangerous field notes

I wondered if I, as a researcher, was influenced by the dot dot dot, what I see as the ellipsis of not speaking/not completely telling stories about certain themes or topics. So often I observed my Papuan participants holding back from drawing the full picture of a perspective or story, and practising a kind of self-censorship about social conditions, politics, history or trauma. The DDD emerged in my field notes, exacerbated by the conditions of my ethics approval: I could not write notes on paper, which could then be lost or confiscated and compromise the safety of my participants and myself. I took care to digitalise loose scraps of paper and encrypt my writing— and even then, I saved details about my participants across multiple encrypted files.

Michael Taussig notes that "the fieldwork diary is built upon a sense of failure— a foreboding sense that the writing is always inadequate to the experience it records". A rereading of those same notes can bring forward a "shadow text that can simulate the experience" of fieldwork once again — not only because of what is written, but "more likely for what is omitted yet exists in *gestures between the words*" (Taussig 2011, 100). This is the DDD. I now see I spent at least a year failing to perform an impossible magic trick of disappearing in person and in my notebooks: a tall, white woman trying to be invisible amongst Papuans, and amongst other observers who noticed our differences in a way that could be threatening to all of us. I also attempted this endeavour online, as I will discuss soon. These attempts were fraught from the beginning, as Taussig describes in *I Swear I Saw This*, and it is worth quoting him at length:

> "Fieldwork, and hence its notebooks produce a knowing that is largely the result of stories and chance embedded in what could be called the 'stranger effect,' whereby the anthropologist-observer is credited with mysterious power no less than with childlike ignorance and vulnerability. This mysterious power is also connected to but not necessarily the same as that of the state or the occupying power or the

> upper classes or a white skin, no matter how much the anthropologist disapproves" (2011, 144).

I indeed disapproved of these privileges, and given the weight of the stories I was hearing, I felt uncomfortable about inserting myself in the narrative. This shaped even how my field notes were written. I would have two separate files, or at least different paragraphs, in accounts of the day. There would be the field notes, where I wrote about what I had observed in my best 'ethnographer's voice'. I have been a habitual diary keeper since childhood, so elsewhere I rambled on about my experiences and feelings, yet felt something akin to guilt for 'indulging' in my personal perspective.

Tsing writes that fieldwork represents the rhythms, or "exceptional outpouring of the everyday. The story presents us with repetition, and then surprise" (Tsing and Ebron 2015, 685). Such a story, she argues, "seeps and bubbles into partially formed consciousness – and analysis and theory are informed" (2015, 683). The concept of 'story' has preconceived biases— here mine were to avoid thinking of myself as a character, even when the basic facts of my identity and appearance changed the outpourings of the everyday that I witnessed, even if only in tiny whisper stories.

Messy online fieldwork

There are potential risks for the digital ethnographer online, as she submerges into social worlds, observing participants' actions on Facebook and other mediums. There are four types of practices typically engaged in by digital sociologists, according to Deborah Lupton: networking, researching the use of digital media, using digital tools for analysis, and finally, engaging in critical analysis of how digital media is used (cited in Pink et al. 2015, 4). I placed heavy restrictions on the networking aspect of my fieldwork.

The sensitivity of research on the topic of Papuans in Indonesia may place serious limitations on participation by the researcher herself. Digital

researchers suggest “ethnographic writing might be replaced by video, photography or blogging” (Pink et al. 2015, 3), meaning that the research output is also changed as a result of the interaction— it becomes 'live'. I felt that doing this in real time during field research might attract unwanted attention. There is a long history of the DDD amongst academics working with Papuans. Journalists and researchers both inside and outside of Papua often practise self-censorship in their questions, in case of communication being intercepted (Crosby 2014, 141; Global Information Society Watch 2014).

I considered social media and the internet as both its own legitimate research site and an extension of other offline sites I spent time in, but its public-facing nature caused me to interact in a particularly cautious way. I created anonymous Facebook, Instagram and Twitter profiles to link with participants. I also used a VPN to mask my web browsing history as I interacted with various social media profiles. I was regularly concerned about the safety of my Papuan peers’ use of unencrypted text messages and Facebook to distribute information. Aside from the possibility of their communications being monitored by state agencies, they would often share public posts that could be viewed as subversive.

My experience felt at odds with a few Indonesian researchers who had worked with or were working with Papuans. Some used social media as a kind of live feed of field notes: sharing pro-Papua political statements as information and uploading photos of participants and selfies at demonstrations they attended. And so, they made themselves an integral part of the ‘everyday outpourings’ they witnessed on social media. The researchers here made good use of the internet as a “messy fieldwork environment that crosses online and offline worlds and is connected and constituted through the ethnographer’s narrative” (2012, 126). However, such excited descriptions about the internet's potential are reigned in by surveillance by occasionally hostile state/s, requiring the ethnographer's need

to stay out of the narrative, at least in real time (Global Information Society Watch 2014; Human Rights Watch 2011).

In the true spirit of the DDD, I found it difficult to measure if this live field-note taking was risky, effective or brave. Perhaps it was all three. I found risk difficult to assess, as did others I consulted. Furthermore, the ethnographer who does not wish to categorise herself specifically according to ethnic categories will find others do it for her. Papuan researchers and journalists told me about harassment and surveillance they encountered from authorities, both offline and online. Foreigners can also be hyper-visible in certain contexts due to their physical and other differences. I am by no means suggesting that Indonesian researchers working on Papua are not also engaged in serious negotiations and risk in fieldwork. Yulia Sugandi, an Indonesian researcher on Papua, highlights the need to incorporate safety as part of an anthropological methodology, particularly when working on issues and themes concerning Papua and Papuans (2014, 40). What results is a constant need for evaluation, balancing the benefits of research against personal security considerations (Crosby and Notley 2014). Aside from safety concerns, the speed and reliability of the internet is a major limitation in Papuan identity and ideas being communicated online, at least in Papua itself. Activists and students regularly reported difficulties in sharing videos and other files online.

There is also the possibility for the ethnographer to experience information overload, which Sarah Pink and John Postill (2012) suggest can be minimised by selectively following users who retweet events and statements from others. I came to this practice myself out of necessity. Attempting to document all articles about Papuans was overwhelming. Instead, my digital experience of the Papuan Interface was often mediated in real time through people I followed on social media. I practised a digital ethnography that prioritised what my Papuan peers were sharing — and sometimes, they had written the articles themselves.

The dialogue of the deaf in a mute culture

If Papua suffers from what Benny Giay describes as *budaya bisu* — a mute or silent culture, as a result of trauma and oppression, then we outside of Papua suffer from its photo-negative affliction: the dialogue of the deaf. That is what French psychoanalyst Pierre Bayard says occurs when our inner library (comprising all the books that have shaped our personality and our relationships with books and other people) are incompatible with another's inner library. Arthur Frank expands the dialogue of the deaf to comprise all the stories that we can know, that do not overlap with another's (Frank 2010; Bayard 2007).

Why is it that we write, if not to challenge this? My interest in examining a range of nonfiction books stemmed from a hope to produce work that was written for an audience beyond scholars, yet firmly grounded in anthropological research. I wanted to find clues on what had worked (or not) through others' books— as a means of being an ally against *budaya bisu* and the dialogue of the deaf.

Even before I started writing this PhD in earnest, I felt a number of tensions pulling at this project: scholarly and literary arguments about how writers should engage with the stories of others, my own desires to fuse empathy and art following in the path of those who had done the same, and the Papuans I had worked most closely with, who dismissed my doubts about being able to write *Tete*. In the next two chapters, I will expand on the role of the writerly 'self,' my choice of literary writing over academic prose, and the friction of these concepts against emerging critiques about representing the stories of communities other than your own.

You and *Tete*— Travelling the Second-Person Path

After I began writing, I became aware that my project could be divided into two distinct parts: what eventually became a nonfiction novel, *Tete*, and an exegesis comprising ideas and stories that had also emerged from discussions and observations during fieldwork. I mostly left writing Part Three: *There's No I in Papua*— to the end. I had attempted to write about writing *Tete* as I was doing it, but it made me feel self-conscious. To be conscious of the self has its benefits— but it constantly re-established myself in my own mind as a (somewhat awkward) writer-self, stumbling around these stories, when I wanted to submerge into them. The French painter Matisse apparently told his students: "To give yourself completely to what you're doing while simultaneously watching yourself do it — that's the hardest of all for those who do work by instinct". Sue Woolfe quotes Matisse as a means of pointing out the value in postponing "the planning part" of her writing (2007, 13, 15).

Woolfe is referring to fiction, but there are interesting parallels to other kinds of writing, including what emerges from anthropological fieldwork. She believes that the best stories have their foundation in thematic and moral

principles— the kind of principles that are analysed in essays in high school classrooms and published academic journals. She goes on to write:

> “Most readers and critics would assume the moral principle was the starting point, indeed the aim, of the whole endeavour. However, I suspected… that these thematic principles are often not intended but discovered by writers during or even just on finishing the creation, not before the creation” (Woolfe 2007, 17).

I eventually came to realise that *Tete* was unfolding to me as a story, as a literary narrative, rather than something to be broken down into slabs of quotes that would allow me to extract thematic and moral principles from the so-called data I had collected. Woolfe writes that having observed this lack of thematic planning by writers, she suspects work would “develop coherence not just *despite* this lack in the early stages—but *because* of it” (Woolfe 2007, 17). I had come to my fieldwork with the intention of "investigating how young Papuans create, negotiate and manage their identity" and used "knowledge to both develop their identity and present themselves in the world". Yet to write about this particular story ‘anthropologically,’ to search for and categorise it according to themes and theory, would have diminished the principles contained in the folds of what I sensed was its true form, a narrative of sorts. I was a person with "a matter of concern" and "searching for a form that answers to its urgency" (Muecke 2010, section 4). This is not only a preoccupation of the creative writer. Michael Taussig argues the art of writing is the "very lifeblood" of the anthropologist's work: "A species of poetry, a matter of finding the words and rhythm of language that resonate with what we are writing about" (2010, xi). To simply break this story entirely into pieces, to analyse these people, circumstances and quotes like they were specimens in a lab, would be to diffuse the truths and feelings ingrained in these places and people. Like Stephen Muecke, I believed, particularly with *Tete*, that "urgent knowledge should be felt as well as known" (2010, section 4). This was not simply “another information set from which data can be

extracted to plug into scientific frameworks" (Douglas Nakashima and Paul de Guchteneire in Nakata 2007, 185).

Writing in the preface to the thirteenth edition of his book on miners and plantation workers, *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America*, Taussig can see in hindsight that its academic prose had been inadequate. The book, he writes, falls short of telling stories about people, instead adopting the position of an omniscient narrator that distances itself from its subjects. In criticising his own work, Taussig writes that while concepts he had developed around commodity fetishism had "helped me feel my way into "consciousness" he "didn't take what was the next step": using language to paint a picture of the world described (2010, xii). A sample of his writing about people who make deals with the devil conveys the academic purism he has since disavowed:

> "According to a belief that is widespread among the peasants of this region, male plantation workers sometimes make secret contracts with the devil in order to increase productivity, and hence their wage. Furthermore, it is believed that the individual who makes the contract is likely to die prematurely and in great pain" (Taussig 2010, 94).

Explaining the process of how these peasants use *muñecos*, or dolls, to make such a pact, Taussig adopts the formality of an educated outsider, rather than exploring the rich sensory perspective of the foremen and workers who truly fear the puppets that are made. He concludes "the next step" he is reaching for can only be achieved through "literature, meaning fiction and forms of documentary overlapping with fiction" — in other words, fictocriticism (2010, xii). Muecke also points out, after Gilles Deleuze, that "criticism uses concepts and fiction percepts" — yet in well-written criticism, or fiction with more ideas, the distinction between the genres begins to dissolve (Muecke 2002, 108-109). While *Tete* is not written as fictocriticism, its aims are much the same, as I will elaborate further.

Coleman, in writing about Anonymous, embraced philosopher Jane Bennett's urge to "enhance enchantment" and to choose it over "the story of the disenchantment of modernity". While trying to correct misconceptions about the group, Coleman indulged in stories of its mythic exploits, because the prospect of "fully stripping away the aura of mystery and magic felt somehow unacceptable (were it even possible)" (2014, 394). Bennett and Coleman argue that choosing enchantment is a meaningful political gesture in itself: a rejection of the blunt and literal cynicism, despair and anxiety that has polluted our cultural and political discourse. Coleman writes of Anonymous: "It is this quality of straddling, on the one hand, mythic space, and on the other, the reality of activists taking risks and taking action, that makes the group so enticing" (2014, 399-400). There is a trace of Trickster in this, as Lewis Hyde writes: "The road that trickster travels is a spirit road as well as a road in fact. He is the adept who can move between heaven and earth, and between the living and the dead" (2010, 6). I find a kindred spirit in Coleman, as I too felt that to attempt to analyse away the mythic spaces and political realities contained within *Tete* was also unacceptable — a failure to acknowledge both the "spirit road" and the "road in fact".

In *Tete,* writing about dreams and interactions with the spirit world, as well as anchoring the narrative in acts of storytelling about the past, set in the present, involved travelling these spirit and factual roads. The historian Jo Labanyi points out that documentaries about Francoist-era repression in Spain often employ a 'historical' aesthetic that represents a 'rupture' from the past, and a "sense of relief on returning to a present free from such barbarism" (2007, 103). Modern Papuan storytelling contains no sense of rupture, nor relief. Labanyi argues instead for "an aesthetics of haunting" in presenting the past, as such texts also "confront issues of transgenerational transmission" (2007, 103, 109). The 'haunting' in *Tete* is not an aesthetic but an actuality, an inextricable, continuing part of a modern-day story.

Texts that achieve an aesthetic of haunting are similarly engaged in what Martin Nakata terms “contestations of meaning” (2007). As Labanyi writes, they “retain a sense of the difficulty of understanding what it was like to live that past, as well as making us reflect on how the past interpellates the present”. Furthermore, the approach “opens up a way to deal” with the experiences of those with different politics and perspectives from the past (Labanyi 2007, 112). Storytelling about the past constantly informs the present in *Tete,* both through "a spirit road" and "a road in fact".

Finding the form

I wrote earlier that I wanted to present *Tete* as a narrative, as “its true form”. Let me now just as quickly disavow that. *Tete* is constructed, although I have flitted between what definition best fits this construction. Throughout the process of writing, I have described the work in various ways to friends, colleagues and Fransiskus himself — as 'creative writing', 'creative nonfiction' or a 'true novel'. The boundaries between ethnography, journalism, creative nonfiction and literature are slippery even when searching for accepted definitions of these genres. For example, Dave Eggers’ *What is the What* (2008) describes itself as both a novel and an autobiography of Sudanese child refugee Valentino Achak Deng, recited to and constructed by the author. It includes some reconstructed scenes (in this case, due to the fallacy of memory), while "all major events in the book are true" (Deng 2008). Yet innumerable works using the same literary techniques are defined as creative nonfiction.

The genre I would finally assign to *Tete* is a 'nonfiction novel' — "a narrative of actual people and actual events written in the style of a novel", according to *Merriam-Webster's Encyclopaedia of Literature* (1995). Truman Capote is regularly cited as the founder of the genre (most loudly by Capote himself) and it is based on the use of the term to define his work *In Cold Blood* ([1966] 2000) that I include *Tete* within its definition (although the term,

sadly, has come to be infrequently used) (Schmid 2011). I believe the nonfiction novel is worth reviving for clarity of definition, given the ambiguous swamp of meaning that 'creative nonfiction' comprises. While Kirin Narayan identifies a border between ethnography and fiction "that is neither impermeable nor fixed" (1999, 134); John Russell locates the nonfiction novel as bridging "a clearly demarcable division between fiction and literary journalism" involving the recreation of memory (1990, 414).

Tete is ethnography, using Narayan's definition of "a practice of writing about people that is explicitly rooted in fieldwork" (1999, 135). The writer Carter Wilson, in the introduction to his novel *Crazy February* argues that:

> "Anthropologists try to make explicit and public both the method they have used to gather their material and the means for analyzing it. Ordinarily, a novelist obscures his analysis—the grounds for the choices he has made—and depends on the interior logic of the story to make his tale seem "true" or "believable" (cited in Narayan 1999, 139).

In this way, *Tete* is constructed novelistically. It depends on the interior logic of the story, avoiding explicit explanations of methodology or fact-finding (aside from this exegesis, of course). *Tete* employs narrative compression, and uses the trope of family storytelling set in the past (constructing scenes closely informed by oral histories). It uses second-person 'free-indirect style' and reconstructs dialogue and events. It occasionally includes anecdotes garnered from fieldwork with Papuans outside of Fransiskus' family as "ethnographic generalisation" to illuminate the imponderabilia of actual Papuan life — to paraphrase Bronisław Malinowski (Narayan 1999, 140). In the act of re-sharing these constructed narratives with key storytellers, they have affirmed these stories as theirs — as true.

It also elevates Papuan oral histories above other sources and perspectives, such as Dutch, Indonesian and religious accounts that usually form the basis of accepted 'factual' histories about the Balim Valley. In doing

so, by using narrative techniques usually found in fiction, it allowed me to "investigate questions of authority and epistemology" — of how these stories had been told and could be told— much in the way that true crime writers and scholars such as Kate Rossmanith are able to do in reporting on the courts (2014, 100). Rossmanith points out that criticism of such novelistic techniques, of what is seen as the blurring of fact and fiction, overlooks "the constructed-ness of so-called 'facts'. For example, police facts in particular are versions of events, often factually inaccurate, constructed to present the narrative most favourable to a finding of guilt" (2014, 109). In *Tete,* I included archival material from outsiders writing about Ukumearik, and set them alongside stories told about him to Fransiskus. The curation and ordering of 'factual documents' throughout the narrative provides the reader with historical context and illuminates the ingrained interests and perspectives of outsiders, and how they influence the past and present. It is another attempt at narratography: "Insisting on attention to Indigenous history-making" and "insisting on attention to colonial power", yet rather than explicitly revealing this analytic strategy of finding the "story of the making of narratives and…their fates as cultural systems" in the text (Kaplan 1995, 459), *Tete* uses the 'interior logic' of its own story to allow this to unfold through the narrative.

As a nonfiction novel, *Tete* is story upon story, constructed by storytellers— Fransiskus, his family, myself and others. Rebecca Solnit, writing of her own relationship with her parents, begins by asking: "Where does a story begin? The fiction is that they do, and end, rather than that the stuff of a story is just a cup of water scooped from the sea and pursed back into it…" (2014, 27).

You, the author

Writing in the second person — to Fransiskus — reflects a practice of the question I ask him at the beginning of *Tete*, and asked throughout this project: "Is this how we should tell this story?" Barbara Sherman Heyl, after

Marianne Paget, describes “the researcher and the interviewee in a ‘search’ process whereby they locate a collaborative basis for developing the question-response sequences and the co-construction of meaning” (2001, 374). While this ‘search’ process is distinct to the Balim Valley tradition of *Nyawene* (“the effort to sit and speak together, to delve into and face problems or burdens in life together”), it does embrace this traditional form’s co-construction of meaning— of *Nit Nyawene* or “we have a story” (Dale 2015, 11-13). While the first-person perspective claims narrative authority, the third-person mode allows the writer to “indulge in philosophical or moral reflections tendered from the privileged position of the raconteur of quasi-divine principles” (Fludernik 1994, 467). Second-person mode matched the process of *Tete* unfolding in fieldwork and in writing— a process of searching together— telling and retelling stories in a collaborative attempt to understand them better.

Solnit writes that the root word for 'empathy' is 'path'— the Greek word for suffering and passion. "It's a coincidence that empathy is built from a homonym for the Old English *path,*" she writes. Earlier I quoted Yulia Sugandi (2014), who also described ‘the ancestors’ path’ in Hubula culture, in the Balim Valley, as one laid out by stories. Solnit (2014, 195) beautifully conjoins empathy and path in a shared purpose: "Empathy is a journey you travel, if you pay attention, if you care, if you desire to do…. Suffering far away reaches you through art, through images, recordings, and narratives; the information travels toward you and you meet it halfway, if you meet it". In this process of practising empathy by engaging creatively, Solnit notes that empathy “means you travel out of yourself a little or expand” (2014, 194). In her book on writing, *The Mystery of the Cleaning Lady*, Woolfe quotes artist and psychoanalyst Joanna Field, who for years kept a diary studying her own thinking process while creating, and discovering she practised:

> “Almost a deliberate negation of self, an active holding back of any form of action, or a putting something of myself out into the object I

> looked at so that for the moment my own will was wiped out" (cited in Woolfe 2007, 34).

Muecke, in his fictocritical exploration of the Indian Ocean, observes "when the *object* has sublime dimensions, getting to know it is a writing problem that is a process of *dissolving the self* through words" (2016, 85). To devote oneself to exploring a theme or a life is also to recognise its sublime dimensions, to fall into its depths.

These creators speak to the feeling I had while writing *Tete*. I was writing to a person, about him, during a long process of shared storytelling. Writing in second person, I felt harnessed into the stories I had heard. Reading or listening is, at its best, an act of visceral empathy, just as the creation of a text is. The reader, consuming the 'you' of second person as though they are in the story, is similarly harnessed in. The second-person mode does the best of what Rebecca Solnit describes as "one of the arts of perspective": "to see yourself small on the stage of another's story, to see the vast expanse of the world that is not about you" (2014, 29).

You, the reader

In the second-person form, this 'harnessing' of the 'you' locates the reader as both the actor being steered in the narrative and its first responder. Second person "may open a space for an experience of reading quite unlike those we are accustomed to…" (Schofield 1997, 99). There is also an overlap between the function and result of the second person 'you' on the page and traditional oral forms of storytelling transferred to the page. Archibald insists that a reader of these texts cannot be a passive observer or armchair reader. According to the Ojibway writer Armand Ruffo, the oral tradition "implicates the 'listener' [reader] into becoming an active participant in the experience of the story" (cited in Archibald 2008, 31-32).

In his essay *Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel* (1994), Mikhail Bahktin adopts the chronotope from its mathematical origins to a metaphor for literary criticism. Chronotope, literally meaning 'time-space,' is poetically described by Bahktin as occurring when Time "thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to movements of time, plot and history" (1994, 84).

After exploring various chronotopes in different kinds of novels, he turns his attention to the chronotope of the author and the listener or reader. It is worth quoting from Bakhtin at length about this:

> "Of course these real people, the authors and the listeners or readers, may be (and often are) located in differing time-spaces… but nevertheless they are allocated in a real, unitary and as yet incomplete historical world set off by a sharp and categorical boundary from the *represented* world in the text. Therefore we may call this world that *creates* the text, for all its aspects— the reality reflected in the text, the authors creating the text…and finally the listeners or readers who recreate and in so doing renew the text—participate equally in the creation of the represented world in the text" (1994, 253).

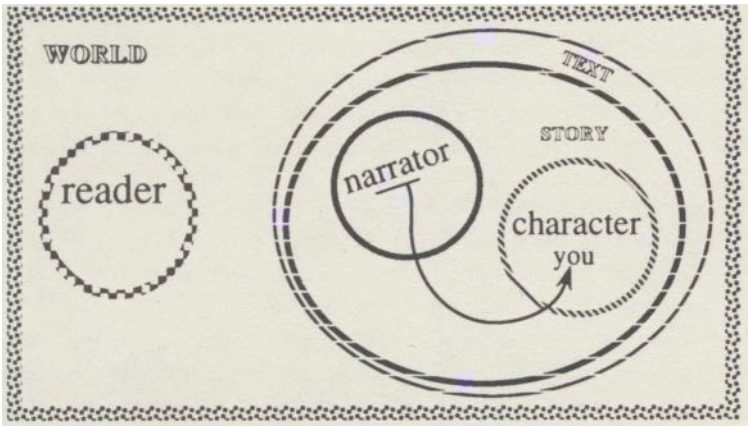
Or, as Solnit writes, a book is not actually a book— simply "its potential, like a musical score or seed. It exists fully only in the act of being read; and its real home is inside the head of a reader, where the symphony resounds, the seed germinates" (2014, 63). It also echoes Bayard's concept of phantom books, mentioned earlier in *Honai Study Club.* Phantom books comprise more than the actual books themselves— they occur when "the unrealised possibilities of each book meet our unconscious" (2007, 160).

While writing about the author/ listener-reader chonotope, Bahktin was not referring to the second-person mode in particular, but his ideas seem particularly relevant to this form of narration. Fludernik argues "second-person fiction… involves the reader in much more radical fashion" and that "*You* always alerts the current listener to pay attention since he or she may be directly called upon to react" (1994, 461, 469).

Bakhtin argues that two events are involved in this process — “the event that is narrated in the work” as well as “the event of narration itself” — adding that readers and listeners participate in the latter. The reader implicitly understands “the diversity of the elements that constitute” the story (1994, 255). In *Tete*, using the second-person pronoun, there is a third, overlapping event that shadows the story — the event as it occurred in the real world. The narrators— particularly myself as the author of *Tete*, and the past anthropologists and Western representatives who wrote about Ukumearik — remain storytellers to be questioned. “The represented world, however realistic and truthful, can never be chronotopically identical with the real world it represents,” Bahktin (1994, 256) writes of fiction, but the same can be said of nonfiction novels, which can never entirely claim ‘truth’.

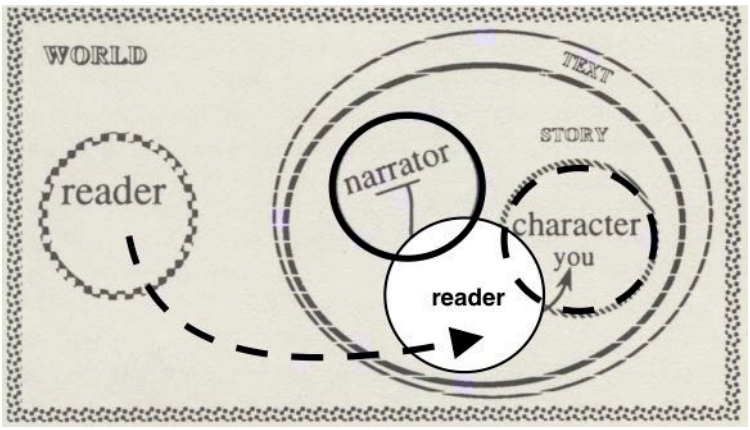
The opening question “Is this how we should tell this story?” lingers throughout the text. In *Tete*, this conversation becomes its own chronotype, the 'you’ initially directed at this main protagonist by the writer. This question, hovering over the text, attempts to collapse “the ‘detached’ and all-knowing subject into the text” similar to what fictocriticism aims to do. The question “Is this how we should tell this story?” runs parallel to a question Muecke says writers today “must face: *How the hell did I get here?”* (2002, 108).

Tete opens using the second-person form as presented in the figure below (Schofield 1997, 101)— the narrator addressing the main protagonist as ‘you’, with the reader an observer of this exchange.



This set-up falls away for the reader as the narrator-character relationship is rarely referred to again. Ideally, what replaces it through the visceral descriptions of the second-person ‘you’ is this figure below, which I have amended from Schofield’s (1997) original diagram.

The reader is drawn into the world of the text, as a shadow-self of the character. The reader, narrator and character are all one, the story told intimately from a ‘lived-in’ perspective, as if the reader is experiencing the first-person perspective from the inside out.



“Tricksters are known for changing their skin,” Hyde (2010, 51) tells us, and the second person compels the reader-listener to viscerally experience this skin-change through narrative. To borrow another analogy from Solnit: all of us are the smallest of a set of Russian dolls, and each time we read another layer encases us "or perhaps my stories are now inside you" (2014, 191).

Trickster pathways

Muecke describes literature as the place where we can both learn and feel things— where we are placed on "knowledge acquisition pathways" and "affect acquisition pathways" (2010, section 4). The second person mode, in this case, acts as a "writerly device" to secure the reader along the pathways we can also trace in these diagrams. In that way, second person is a true

trickster form — a travelling story with multiple allegiances, one that shifts boundaries and multiplies meanings as it moves (Hyde 2010, 80; Coleman 2017, 29).

This is Frank's (2010) theory of socio-narratology in action: a literary work is not only the story but what happens as a result of the story being told. As I have stated earlier, I avoided academic reflections on the writing process of *Tete* while actually writing it. Curiously, examining scholarly texts in the aftermath, I came across Arthur Frank's analysis of Bakhtin, in *Letting Stories Breathe* (2010). Drawing on another of Bakhtin's essays, Frank cites his work as a key principle for his own dialogical narrative analysis:

> "What Bakhtin recommends for novelists applies equally to how dialogical social scientists should write about those who participate in their research: 'By the very construction of the novel, the author speaks not about a character, but with him'. And: 'One cannot talk about him: one can only address oneself to him' (Frank 2010, 2211).

Frank is not literally referring to the second-person 'you' form employed in *Tete*, but rather, to 'address oneself to him' as a compass or value system for research. I have spent much of Part Three: *There's No I in Papua* critiquing how the differences in creative writing and anthropological/academic publishing can influence the researcher's methodology, but perhaps here, after all, is the unifying pathway between genres.

An important caveat about the pathways and trickster travels in *Tete* can be conceptualised using Tsing's concept of friction. She notes that roads are a good metaphor to understand friction, in that they "create pathways that make motion easier and more efficient, but in doing so they limit where we go. The ease of travel they facilitate is also a structure of confinement. Friction inflects historical trajectories, enabling, excluding, and particularizing" (2005, 6). *Tete* was formed from a collaborative search process, and written in second person. Yet, at its core, it is a fixed text, an old technology based on historical trajectories, created in institutions and

disciplines enabling certain types of knowledge and knowledge-makers. In the next chapter, I explore these historical trajectories and present-day disputations through the tropes of Trickster and cargo cult.

Trickster Joins the Cargo Cult

This chapter explores how different tropes used by anthropologists and writers operate, consciously or unconsciously, and holds them up against theorists developing decolonising methodologies. Having written much about Trickster and filtering my fieldwork through a trickster stories lens, I will now use this and the cargo cult trope as a means of investigating challenges in my own fieldwork and writing.

I return to writer Gerald Vizenor of the Minnesota Chippewa Nation, who conceives of Trickster is a "doing, not an essence, not a museum being, not an aesthetic presence" (cited in Archibald 2008, 6). How does the ethnographer ‘do’ Trickster, or cargo cult, and what impact does that have on research and writing? I am reminded of the fiction writer Ann Patchett describing her attempt to commit a story to paper, conceived as a butterfly, and conserve it on the page, an “entomological specimen”: “I reach into the air and pluck the butterfly up. I take it from the region of my head and I press it down against my desk, and there, with my own hand, I kill it. It’s not that I want to kill it, but it’s the only way I can get something that is so three-dimensional onto the flat page” (2011, 108, 141). In parallel, the Ojibway writer Armand Ruffo points out the limits of traditional ethnography and the outsider’s pursuit of understanding through traditional Western systems of knowledge acquirement. Ruffo asks “How much goes unnoticed? How much is left unknown? How much can the 'outsider' really know and feel?” (cited in Archibald 2008, 31).

Nuggets

Think of the British Empire as a global laboratory for research, implores Linda Tuhiwai Smith. The vast colonial machine collected plant species from Indigenous lands without attributing Indigenous knowledge of those species.

Then, it redistributed non-native species— introducing weeds and other kinds of ecological damage. The key point here is “colonialism was not just about collection. It was also about re-arrangement, re-presentation and re-distribution” (2012, 122-123). Pablo B Eyzaguirre, a senior scientist at the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute in Rome, similarly argues that taking “‘validated’ nuggets of Indigenous knowledge out of its cultural context may satisfy an outside researcher’s need, or even solve a technical problem in development, but it may undermine the knowledge system itself” (cited in Nakata 2007, 186). Let us substitute plant collection for ethnography, and nonfiction writing as precisely that—the re-arrangement, re-presentation and re-distribution of knowledge, in this case, Indigenous. To some degree, all research and writing is an assortment of 'nuggets’— massaged and pushed and coerced into a perspective or genre. Claude Lévi-Strauss’ structuralist analysis of myth drew directly on Native American tricksters to argue “some basic logical processes which are at the root of mythical thought” can be revealed if they are disassembled and reduced to parts (cited in Shipley 2015, 652). Can we substitute 'parts' for 'nuggets' here?

How then, to use Indigenous knowledge, not as nuggets but as one of the guiding principles of a thesis? And do I have the right to attempt to do so? Here I am, near the end of this thesis, and I still do not have concrete answers to these questions. Even with the best intentions, the act of research and writing can quickly wade into difficult, neo-colonial territory. Scholars writing from “the view from nowhere”— the orthodox style of scientific realism— can struggle to properly articulate First Nations’ points of view (Kirksey 2012, 136). Jason MacLeod, after Chaiwat Satha-Anand, practised “a deliberate return to the art of storytelling as a method of researching nonviolent struggle” (2015, 853). Yet Australian Waanyi nation writer Alexis Wright questions what “the Aboriginal story becoming, if other people are telling it for us?” — including the “bandwagon of academics” writing and giving advice (2016).

Ethnography finds itself challenged when the driving moral reasoning behind the practice — empathy of another's experience— is seen to be criticised as "an impossible vanity". The ethnographer is instead "an imposter and a voyeur who merely appropriates his or her research subjects for his or her own career benefits" (van Loon 2015, 280). This view is in contrast to how many writers would explain the purpose of 'empathetic' ethnographic writing and art described in the previous chapter. Yet rather than framing any such critique as "a direct assault on the political engagement of ethnography" (van Loon 2015, 280), these perspectives are crucial sections of a roadmap (or storybasket, to quote Jo-ann Archibald) on how to do better, including structural concerns that I will address in my closing chapter.

This is a conversation that continues in Australian research and literary communities. In 2018, the respected Australian essay writing prize, the Horne Prize, received media attention after a new rule was introduced banning certain types of entries: "Essays by non-Indigenous writers about the experiences of First Nations Australians. Essays about the LGBTQI community written by people without direct experience of this community. Any other writing that purports to represent the experiences of those in any minority community of which the writer is not a member," the competition rules now read.

The judges, including anthropologist, author and Elder Marcia Langton and writers David Marr and Anna Funder, criticised the decision to varying degrees, with the latter two withdrawing as judges. Langton told Marr she had sympathy for what the new rule intended to achieve, but that it crossed "the line on censorship and free speech". Funder said the new rule would disqualify much of her own work: "I can't really be judging a prize where my qualifications for doing so are ruled out of bounds" (Marr 2018). The restrictions were later rescinded following public criticism. Goori writer Jack Latimore stated that the reaction had "superbly encapsulated the fragility of privileged authors everywhere whenever they're faintly confronted with the

prospect of actually experiencing the slightest approximation of exclusion". Writing in *The Guardian*, he added: "Like people of colour the entire world over, blackfellas are sick and tired of having our stories ripped off by historically privileged, white writers" (Latimore 2018).

'For their personal welfare'

A PhD is a test: a demonstration that an individual can create an original work. And yet permeating *Tete* and this exegesis are the voices, stories and ideas of Papuans, filtered through the parameters I have set for this project. That is before we even consider how successful published works produced within creative-practice PhDs are not just the work of individuals, but rather "a networked set of social and institutional arrangements" in Australia (Muecke 2010, section 2).

I have constantly asked myself how I can at once claim this work as my own, and yet not my own. Other writers have approached this challenge in various ways. Wright's biography *Tracker* (2017) about the Aboriginal leader Tracker Tilmouth, is labelled a "collective memoir," weaving together stories about her subject, told by himself and others. Dave Eggers, in *What is the What*: *The Autobiography of Valentino Achak Deng* (2008), writes from the first-person perspective of a Sudanese refugee in America (labelled a novel) and in *Zeitoun* (2011), writes in third person about a Syrian-American man living in New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina (labelled nonfiction). The books were produced following years of interviews and research, with the labour of storytelling also carried out by people who become 'characters' to the reader. Wright and Eggers are listed as authors of these works, even though the books clearly comprise more than their individual contributions.

At the time that I realised that *Tete* could exist as something of a nonfiction novel of its own, I felt as though I was engaged in two different conversations about these issues. One was the conversation I was having in my head as I read stories, essays and tweets from home, many which

paralleled the varying points of view made about the Horne Prize. The other was the ongoing conversation I was having with my central collaborators about the stories they were telling me, that they had entrusted me to write. After a while, they told me to stop asking them about the issue entirely— it was settled, I would write them. Archibald found that constantly asking for permission to use stories "is regarded as a 'nuisance' by the person who generated the knowledge". Once permission and trust is established, knowledge can be used responsibly with the proper acknowledgement (2008, 44). In my case, I was in regular dialogue with the central storyteller about *Tete* throughout the writing process. I also cross-checked stories with other key storytellers when I was able to safely facilitate access to them.

In this PhD, I have been unable to identify collaborators and the extent of their contributions, following consultation with my university. I have also been limited in citing a couple of independently-published works by some Papuans I have interviewed, in order not to identify participants. This is often the terrible irony of attempting scholarship with Papuans. Many non-Papuan researchers write in their book and PhD introductions about the credit due to their Papuan sources and colleagues, despite feeling ethically unable to name them due to safety and other predicaments. To cite just a few approaches: "The irony lies in the fact that though they are unhesitatingly willing to be made known, I choose to allow their names to remain hidden for their personal welfare" (Farhadian 2001, vii). "I have chosen to use pseudonyms for many of my Biak consultants, a decision that was difficult, given how many friends told me they were looking forward to appearing in my study" (Rutherford 2003, xxi). "The people and places I mention really exist and all the events really happened, but for obvious reasons I have changed the names of some of the inhabitants" with the exception of Papuans who insisted on having their names used, had passed away or previously appeared on public record (MacLeod 2015, 191). In summary: many Papuans want to be acknowledged under their own name, despite the grave risks that

may carry. They often know those risks all too well. Papuans desire and deserve proper acknowledgement and yet it is often Western scholars and institutions that are making the judgement call for them, albeit with honourable intentions.

At the time of writing, I have formally raised my concerns between these competing ethical considerations with my university, and continue to work with my central collaborators and supervisors to address issues of safety, recognition and credit in future publications using this material. Furthermore, transcending the concerns of Western scholars is the need to address institutional access for Papuans and other marginalised groups in academia and writing, which I address in my closing statement, *Fin*. Rather than attempting to determine a single methodology and 'right way' of doing this work — I do not believe there is a one-size-fits-all solution— I wish to first interrogate Trickster in myself and others.

Code shifting

It can be uncomfortable to critique how research and writing actually serves and benefits the communities it purports to represent. First Nations researchers have led the way in grappling with such questions. Archibald faces this discomfort head-on: "Like Old Man Coyote I wanted the (re)search to be easy. I didn't really want to deal with colonial history, and I did not want to question my motives and methods" (2008, 36).

Gabriella Coleman describes her facilitating information and contacts between journalists and Anonymous, her research group, as that of a "translator and gopher, eventually a prolific broker, and on occasion a trickster" (2017, 21). She reminds us that Anonymous was "impelled by the lulz"— meaning that its projects were acted out not only with activist intentions, but for the "hilarious and terrifying mischief" (Coleman 2014, 5). Coleman adopted the craftiness and a conniving spirit of Trickster, not just because it was similar to the traits of Anonymous, but because she argues

that this character is inherent to research itself, which requires anthropologists to hold 'multiple allegiances'. We are "invariably caught between the dimensions of involvement and detachment," Toon van Meijl writes, cited by Coleman (2017, 29), who adds that this inevitably requires us to become expert code-shifters "as we traverse boundaries and craft our writing to speak to multiple audiences".

This can produce memorable work: Benny Giay's *Pembunuhan Theys* (2006) and Eben Kirskey's *Freedom in Entangled Worlds* (2012) move between anthropology, journalism, activism and memoir. And yet it leads to further questions about who in the end we as anthropologists and writers serve. Coleman sees the literally anonymous nature of her research group as key to its tricksterdom: "The power of Anonymous's eponymous anonymity is that we are all free to choose whether or not to don the mask" (2014, 400). Yet during his fieldwork, Kirksey is challenged by Telys Waropen, a Papuan human rights activist, who responds cynically to Kirksey's use of anonymous interviews, rumour and myth to understand the cultural landscape of fear and oppression in West Papua. "What kind of research are you conducting," Waropen asked, "where the identity of your sources doesn't matter? Wouldn't your data be stronger if you quoted credible sources?" (Kirksey 2012, 126).

Kirksey found himself then acting as an activist and journalist in response to human rights abuses in Papua, translating "information gleaned from structurally marginalised sources into a genre of reportage that has currency in the halls of global power". He calls on the feminist theorist Donna Haraway to explain this conjuring: transforming what Papuans know —"situated knowledges" —into a "view from nowhere". Kirksey acts as an artus-worker, using the view from nowhere to both produce investigative journalism, and to blend in "to the architecture of knowledge and the power to emerge later with unexpected insights" (2012, 134; Hyde 2010).

Similarly, in the production of cross-cultural historical knowledge, Muecke argues the need to continually contrast how such situated knowledges come to be (he terms it "accounts of ways in which other peoples come to know things") with how "Europeans' institutions organise knowledge rituals" (2004, 27) — a strategy with parallels to Kaplan's (1995) concept of narratography.

Ask yourself about desire

Nakata warns of Indigenous people being left to "'tell their stories' or to 'advise' so that others can understand them," maintaining the status quo of outsiders analysing and interpreting complex lived realities (2007, 209). I sought to elevate theories and perspectives advanced by Papuans, often not recognised within Western empirical research frameworks, such as the storytellers and scholars in *Tete* and Part Two of the exegesis, *Honai Study Club*. But then, 'trickster stories' is not a Papuan theory— however much it has helped me understand the many different realities within the Interface.

There is the danger here in translation: of using tropes such as Trickster and Hyde's universalised concept of trickster stories, to represent Papuan lifeworlds, even if only metaphorically. Lamont Lindstrom's dressing down of cargo cults on Melanesia provides a blueprint for how tropes may pervade writing and research. This begins with its name: "A cultural reading of 'cult' in part, may have been impelled by the negative connotations of the word" (Lindstrom 1993, 54). In Part Two, *Honai Study Club*, I wrote about my concerns regarding how the English word 'trickster' appeared to carry much more negative connotations in translation to the Indonesian '*penipu'*. However, beyond literal translation of the labels themselves, I want to explore a concept that Lindstrom uses repeatedly— 'anthropological translation'— the act of attempting to convert the "bizarre into the familiar"— and how good intentions turn bad (1993, 54).

My intention in this chapter is not to focus on critically analysing further Trickster myths or cargo cults as 'translated' by academics working on

Southeast Asia and Melanesia (such as McKean 1971 and Giay and Godschalk 1993). Lindstrom's cargo cult thesis draws on Edward Said's concept of Orientalism— "it appears in the dirty mirror of the European self" (Lindstrom 1993, 7) and it is this self that is worth exploring, through my own fieldwork experiences and others. The role that anthropology has played is a cautionary tale about good intentions: and it is my own I wish to stare down.

Benny Giay's work on cargo cults and other themes has been praised by historian Chris Ballard as creating:

> "…A new form of history in which oral and documentary evidence is drawn upon in equal measure in signalling the presence of multiple agendas and interpretative choices. It is possibly a distinctively Melanesian aversion to pronouncing definitively on the intentions of others that lends his arguments their rare subtlety" (Ballard 1999, 154).

Giay's approach to scholarship parallels Kaplan's narratography. Similarly, it is these many 'agendas' that Lindstrom has identified and broken down. Lindstrom traces cargo cults' metamorphosis through colonial administrations, foreign military powers, missionaries, anthropologists, adventurers, journalists, tourists and Melanesians themselves. It's worth noting early on that unlike Giay, Lindstrom in *Cargo Cult* only critiques these viewpoints without illuminating the social world where the cargo cult was identified— in his case, on Tanna, Vanuatu. "For obvious reasons, I avoid producing my own summary account of the John Frum movement," Lindstrom (1993, 77) writes— and so avoids the risks that much scholarship involves. He never helps us try to understand John Frum beyond this lens of critique — and states openly this is not his intention.

Lindstrom squares much of the blame for the normalising of the cargo cult on anthropology's shoulders. He argues anthropologists took cargo cult from a sub-genre of colonial discourse and fused it within Melanesian lifeworlds. This endeavour began with good intentions— including the scholars who "pleaded the need for a new genre of ethnographic cargo text," one that took

time to understand the “native” perspective (Lindstrom 1993, 101). In time, the cargo cult evolved in colonial and anthropological discourse not as criminality or madness, but rather a “rational response… given the available cultural and social resources on the island. One such island resource is myth— myth that serves to found new social unities and inspire collective action.” The French anthropologist Jean Guiart, writing in 1952, saw “the myth of John Frum is only a means, a method of action” (cited in Lindstrom 1993, 106). Substitute myth for ‘story’ and this is paraphrasing my analysis of trickster stories— if not that they inspire collective action, then that they certainly ‘act’ out, and this then results in other actions. However, my own aim is not to literally imprint Trickster onto Papua but to use trickster stories as a deliberate trope, a tracing mechanism to see how stories spread.

In a misguided attempt to highlight autonomy, well-meaning anthropologists cast the cargo cult not as “a sort of diseased reaction to European contact” but instead rendered it “native”:

> “We must interpret them as normal Melanesian cultural ingenuity and creativity …Cargo cult sinks down and disappears into the fundamental structures of Melanesian cognition and sociability; but in so doing it contaminates and consumes these” (Lindstrom 1993, 42).

In the Australian context, Alexis Wright (2016) argues that Indigenous Australians “have lost the plot line in the story about who we are, because we are too distracted by a history of imposed agendas from other people’s stories about and for us, and where policies have left us unstable and just about disabled and ineffective as a people”. Lindstrom similarly fears “it may not be possible anymore to excise cargo cult from the equation” (1993, 63-64).

I was interested in finding where Papuan models of storytelling scholarship could be used to complement or even substitute Western ones. Academic texts apply Western anthropological theory to ethnography collected in the [‘foreign’ or ‘exotic’] field. Inversely, how has Papuan

scholarship impacted on Western anthropology? What can we learn about how to tell stories about the past, and about the impact of telling stories about the past from these Papuan narrative methodologies? Scholarship also does not operate in silos. *Memoria Passionis*, an important model advanced by scholars on Papua, is actually 'appropriated' (or to employ less loaded synonyms: applied/ implemented) from German Catholic scholarship. How many theoretical models can truly be excised from a culture in its original form, and vice versa?

Lindstrom includes Martha Kaplan among those seeking to deconstruct 'cargo cult' in order to prove it was simply an "indigenous political institution" (Lindstrom 1993, 61)— but as I have pointed out elsewhere, she makes much the same argument that he does— cargo cult does exist, in the culture that created it: Western colonial and anthropological culture. Jesse W. Shipley writing on Tricksters in anthropological texts, similarly argues that Trickster is a useful means to "think with and reveal various scholarly trends in how writing about them has changed over the course of the last century" (2015, 656) rather than revealing much about the original myth or social setting itself. In tropes such as cargo cult, the obsession by anthropologists to understand "the creative ways Islanders work out their desires" is actually an expression of scholars' and other foreigners' own desires (Lindstrom 1993, 103, 144). Shipley notes "the category of trickster at times tells us more about a process of reductionist inquiry and the anthropological desire for analytic categories" (2015, 648). There goes that word again: desire. He calls out Lewis Hyde in particular— a key source for me in this exegesis— as not being interested in Trickster's "appropriate social and historical context" but instead arguing for a "universal idea of human creativity" (To be fair, Hyde acknowledges this himself). Hyde "finds tricksters everywhere, as writers, painters, political figures, across time and space" (Shipley 2015, 656)— and I am somewhat guilty of this— only tempering this desire by attempting to understand how trickster stories work, rather than finding Trickster in folktales and individuals

(and perhaps also failing at this endeavour). Lindstrom, in parallel, asks “why is cargo cult so intellectually and emotionally seductive? Why is it everywhere?” He goes on to answer his rhetorical question: perhaps because cargo cult is, after all, the “master trope” — “a metadiscourse of desire itself within Western culture”— that “structures both love stories and cargo stories so that each may be read in terms of the other” (Lindstrom 1993, 197-198). Hyde’s Trickster, too, is another kind of Western love story: “A global figure that points to creativity in the face of uncertainty” (Shipley 2015, 656). In their own way, both Lindstrom and Shipley suggest that we constantly desire the story of desire — a desire of creativity or love against adversity. Tricksters and cargo cults are both evidence of a compulsion to reduce “culture, difference, and complex forms of subjectivity to a seductive, pre-existing analytic category” (Shipley 2015, 656).

This plays out in the university, particularly in the kind of postgraduate research I have undertaken to fulfil the requirements of this PhD. Speaking to a non-Indigenous postgraduate student who wants to study ‘Aboriginal culture,’ Muecke opens with a question: “Your desire for the other, what form does it take?” Like Lindstrom, he points out that Eurocentric anthropological models compare their own culture to the exotic, with a tendency for the two “to be treated as separate systems, with the researcher as a shuttle”. Crucially, he adds: “Desire in relation to the Other is perfectly OK. You just have to ask yourself how that desire might work for or against your thesis work, or for or against the work of the Other” (Muecke 1993, 325).

I do not wish to spend the last part of this exegesis discounting the ideas I have explored in the first half. I write and cite these critical perspectives as a warning: to notice these tropes, and to be aware of my own desire to think in particular ways, determined to see the long march of history in stories, as things living, and ‘acting’ in the present —everywhere and for all of us.

Selling stories

Early into my fieldwork, I was taken to a student boarding house in a smaller city in Java, where I was told that several Papuan students were happy to meet me and speak about their experiences of living and studying away from home. After eating together and talking, we arranged that I sit in another room in the student dorm, where people could come and be interviewed as they wished. A woman walked in and we introduced ourselves. Her name was Selly. As I did with most first interviews, I began by telling Selly what my research was about, my intentions for the project, and my obligations to her as a participant. She listened politely and did not interrupt me. When I was finished, she began to speak, softly but clear-voiced, and told me she did not want to talk to me about her life. "I'm very pessimistic about foreign researchers," Selly said. She went on to say that she and other Papuan students had spoken to several researchers and journalists about their experiences:

> "Several research results have been published in English ... but every story we tell, that we tell the international community, the media, whatever— but it doesn't stop, for example, Australia working with Indonesia with Densus 88 [the Indonesian anti-terrorism squad]. Or America working with Indonesia and sending weapons. It doesn't result in anything. So why should we... so in my opinion, why should we share this much? It means I'm selling information. It hurts me, to sell the Papuan struggle. Because truthfully, it's been long enough, and I'm very pessimistic about this."

I want to examine Selly's articulate response through the lens of researchers' desires as to the purpose of their projects, and in turn, the cargo cult nature of anthropology and writing. Within cargo cults' ignoble history, Lindstrom identifies the genre of tourist cargoism, found in brochures and advertisements. Here, the tourist gaze hones in not on John Frum, but on themselves, as the Westerners seen to bring valuable cargo. This narcissistic gaze is not limited to tourists: "Various cargoists, including anthropologists,

have occasionally bantered that Islanders have mistaken *them* to be the source of cargo" in a kind of "self-deification" (Lindstrom 1993, 134).

Researchers similarly enter a field site and ask participants to engage with their research. To do so is to assume an exchange of some kind— a 'cargo' the researcher believes they must be in possession of. These offers are rarely voiced, unless participation involves a monetary reimbursement, but are implied or assumed by both or either of the parties— exposure, contacts or an opportunity to raise awareness about issues the participant cares about. However much I was personally committed to reducing expectations about the possible outcomes of my research, these assumptions lingered on. Yet Selly rejected the trope of a researcher's cargo, stating clearly "it doesn't result in anything" — meaning the structural and political changes needed to materially improve Papuan lives. She clearly dispelled mine and other ethnographers' desires about the potential value of our research. I wrote in my original research proposal that I hoped to help my own community better understand the Papuan experience, and "a group of people that often appears in the Indonesian or Australian press as nothing more than statistics in crime, fatalities or asylum seekers, or in tourism brochures as curious artefacts of another age". Instead, Selly identified what the real cargo was: information about the Papuan experience— not the potential for its distribution. "Why should we share this much?" she asked rhetorically.

In other words, her question was: what is the point of all these stories? What is the point of the emotional labour that Papuans perform for foreign researchers, if the outcomes do not assist in dismantling the system that allows torture, killings, oppression and rape to flourish? Papuan leaders have pointed out the need to extricate themselves from a reliance on Western allies — an expectation that foreigners will save them (MacLeod 2015). Selly's pessimism articulates a rejection of this view, and what she saw as a lack of material results from foreign research. Afterwards, I, the cargo cultist, could

simply leave after the interview. I could "go home and be safe," she said. "But we have to try to do something for our land, to change things."

Two days after my interview with Selly, I logged onto Facebook and discovered one of the leaders of a local Papuan activist organisation had written a public post that was very clearly about me. I had met him briefly in another city, where I had asked if he'd like to be interviewed. He agreed to find time for us to speak, but had not communicated with me after that. The post was written in Indonesian. [Note: *bule* is an Indonesian slang term for a white foreigner].

> "My ears burn to hear: 'I'm shocked to meet this *bule'*
> Shocked to meet this *Bule*. Who says she's doing research about Papua, related to Papuan students. Nearly all students involved on campus, in boarding houses and rented houses have been reached.
>
> Shocked to meet this *bule*. During the interview, to be asked about a number of issues without consideration. Passionate answers provided everything [information] that in fact should not be answered.
>
> Shocked to meet this *bule*. [Appearing] to act in solidarity, [but] really broken behind. Our similarities pointed out. Dropping, weakening and even destroying all people who [encounter] her spontaneously.
> Woah! Shocked to meet this *bule*. Hahaha, these *bule-bule!*
>
> This flatterer of blood, sweat and tears.
> There's not one critical question asked in this research by this researcher. What's her contribution for the fight for *Papua Merdeka* (Independence)?
> What contribution has this *bule* made for Papuan people with the carrying out of this research?
> Only asking bullshit/worthless questions. Isn't this crazy…! Don't be shocked to meet this *bule*. Don't be shocked when extraction is indeed the target.
> And in the future, that *bule* creates a story about the time Papuans met with a *bule*.
> Not all are the same.

> Those who have not yet met this *bule*, don't get involved. Sell yourself at an expensive price, because you are the most valuable thing on the earth."

In a comment below the post, another Papuan activist from the same organisation identified me by my full name in a comment, and called me a 'pig licker' and a 'mask of imperialism'. Although I had met the two activists briefly elsewhere, I had not interviewed them. The leader gave me far too much credit about the effectiveness of my reach in those early days of fieldwork: I had not reached all Papuans "on campus, in boarding houses and rented houses" nor did I wish to, as I planned to focus on a small number of participants. The activist took exception to my lack of asking of 'critical questions', instead asking 'bullshit' questions that showed my lack of concern for the Papuan struggle. A deliberate part of my methodology was often to avoid diving immediately into political discussions, particularly during the short meetings with the Papuans I met for the first time that day and on other occasions in early fieldwork. My research began by looking at how young Papuans framed their identity— and I did not assume from the outset that all Papuans I met defined *Papua Merdeka* or independence, as part of their identity. What is more, despite the fact that Indonesia is a democracy, Papuan activism is often treated in a suspicious or criminal light by police and intelligence agencies, according to Human Rights Watch (2011). I was obliged to reduce discomfort and risk for Papuans and myself in one-on-one interviews in unfamiliar locations by limiting pointedly political questions before a trust relationship had been established, especially if I had not been 'led there' by the interviewee's previous answers.

It is significant to note that the Facebook post was not reflective of the rest of my fieldwork experience. Instead, I often encountered and was a beneficiary of the opposite view. I have heard many Papuans being exceedingly generous towards foreigners when speaking about both modern

day and historical contexts, despite colonial, religious and exploitative capitalist practices led by Westerners and their institutions and companies. I have heard this praise made in contrast to Indonesians, who are often viewed as oppressors. Jacob Nerenberg argues that this "mode of erasure and downplaying" of Western responsibility is also found in international NGO and media coverage of West Papua. He writes that Indonesian police and military are centred as "visible agents of disempowerment" in human rights reports, and any Indigenous Papuan analysis of global imperialism tends to be minimised by international Papua experts (2018, 8).

In the interests of safety for myself and the Papuans who were happy to speak to me, I immediately avoided further contact with my online critics, given that Papuan activists' social media posts were generally thought to be monitored by Indonesian authorities (Global Information Society Watch 2014; Human Rights Watch 2011). Even if their response was not something I directly encountered elsewhere, it is important to consider. These activists did not know me personally, but they were familiar with the '*bule* researcher' — both as its own trope and a very concrete figure in history. Its appearance, and these Papuans' revulsion towards it, is significant in colonial, anthropological, media and development contexts.

The Papuan leader also indirectly identified another trope found in the history of cargo cults: adventurist cargoism — professional storytellers seeking out the 'cult'. David Attenborough, in a 1960 BBC production about the John Frum 'cult', went to Tanna and "staked out two of the main motifs of adventurist cargoism: discovery and mystery" —placing himself at the centre of a perilous journey to uncover exotic phenomena. In this version of the cargo cult, outsiders like Attenborough "braved the mysterious native but survived" (Lindstrom 1993, 119). Rupert Stasch has identified the core narrative arc of travel writing focused on the Korowai of Papua: including "hostile or edgy encounters with people fearful of whites" and encounters with the people "perceived as traditional". Meanwhile, the cosmos is

presented as “consisting of two incompatible parts”: civilisation (where the travel writer belongs), and “the primitive” (2011, 4, 6).

Stasch invokes the same term that Lindstrom and Shipley use: desire. He employs Bahktin's chronotope (suggesting simpler synonyms such as *timespace* or *event-world*), and argues that desire is central to the genre’s chronotopes. The first, *the narrated chronotope*, involves the narrators’ interactions with the Korowai, its mediators and lands. Meanwhile, *the chronotope of performance* is “the communicative relation between a text’s authors and readers. The third is this mythical exploration of the cosmos: of civilisation and the primitive (Stasch 2011, 3). These chronotopes also appear throughout various subgenres of the cargo cult literature, as we have seen. Stasch argues that this genre “seeks to elicit readers’ desire for the narrator’s chasm-bridging actions” where “*proximity* to the primitive is posed as valuable” (2011, 14) — again echoing Lindstrom’s identification of the adventurer who “braved the mysterious native but survived.” This mirrors the analysis given by the leader in his Facebook post. He implicitly recognises these 'cargoist' tropes when he warns his followers not to be surprised when “in the future, that *bule* creates a story about the time Papuans met with a *bule*”— adding that the “extraction” of information is the aim. His post was shared by two people, including someone who wrote this message above the shared post (my translation):

> “*Bule-bule* (white foreigners) carry out the abuse of human rights in Papua, as a library of lives for their legal and political academic interests. We need organisations of human rights law under the umbrella of international law and charters and conventions to save the freedom of the Papuan nation from genocide, and a total revolution for the Papuan land. Don’t be a fool and meet *bule-bule*!”

While Bayard (2007) says “the dialogue of the deaf” occurs when someone’s ‘inner library’ does not overlap with another person’s ‘inner library,’ academia often posits itself as an antidote to such an affliction: that

the pursuit of scholarship is an endeavour to improve common understanding. But this Papuan Facebook poster rejects this idea: in their view, the *bule-bule* (white foreigners) build their “library of lives”— as one-sided information (or cargo?) collection — “for their academic interests”. Instead, like Selly, the writer insists that systematic reform is needed on an international level.

Coleman describes tricksterism as “a fundamental attribute of anthropological research,” requiring ‘multiple allegiances’ and the ability to shift boundaries (2017, 29), but these traits are not universally celebrated. These tropes of anthropological inquiry have repeated themselves so many times over, they are now expected and anticipated by those who encounter the cult of research. To quote Lindstrom: “We cannot divert ourselves from telling this story over and over again…This particular tragedy is our own” (Lindstrom 1993, 210). What is notable here is these Papuans' forthright rejection of the long-standing myth that Westerners will save them, an idea identified and criticised by key thinkers such as Benny Giay (Kirksey 2012, 190). These Papuans rightfully identified the holders of ‘cargo’ not as the researcher but themselves: "Sell yourself at an expensive price, because you are the most valuable thing on the earth". They also questioned the value of foreign research, and the contribution, or lack thereof, it will make to Papuans’ political reality. I attempt to briefly address these structural and ethical tensions in my closing statement— *Fin*.

Fin

This is not so much a conclusion but an addendum — a signposting of what needs to come. I asked towards the beginning of *There's No I in Papua*, why is it we write stories? Towards the end of Part Three, a Papuan woman, Selly, questioned why Papuans like her should tell (or sell) stories. Who are the 'we' in my original question? And how can 'we' be as open or inclusive as possible?

To answer these questions, we must first acknowledge how academic and political systems have historically shaped who tells stories. Lisa Uperesa argues:

> "Anthropology not only was built on studying the native, and in that study claiming expert status that requires the subject to remain subjected, it is part of the wider world of academia that remains a site of systemic white privilege and advantage (board of regents, donors, administrators, faculty, curriculum, norms, values, etc.)" (2016).

While I believe that the ethos and direction of research in universities has shifted significantly in recent years, this thesis has not weighed up what a decolonised practice benefiting from several knowledge traditions would look like on an institutional scale.

My job title and professional experience has not been that of fundraiser, activist, an agent for other artists or a translator— and yet people have asked me to fulfil these roles. I do not say this grudgingly, because I have seen how these some of these forms of assistance have been immediately useful to the individuals involved, and many who requested help in turn provided me with guidance during research. Jason MacLeod says he "became content with what Nancy Scheper-Hughes calls "good-enough ethnography" — negotiating the boundaries between research obligations and the desire to practise "the always flawed, always partial, practice of solidarity" (MacLeod

2015, 895). When we are discussing not only the practice of ethnography and solidarity, but also non-fiction writing, which carries some assumptions of objectivity, what should the outsider storyteller do— aside from making the work itself?

MacLeod and Kirksey describe writing press releases, organising speaking tours, lobbying politicians and participating in nonviolent solidarity actions (and in the process, gaining access to rich ethnographic data contributing to scholarly knowledge). MacLeod's three-pronged approach is grounded in the practical. Aside from the research itself, he adds a "pedagogy of solidarity" through workshops and the practice of nonviolent civil resistance — all with the aim of "accompanying" West Papuans in their struggle for self-determination and justice (2015, 795). We can dig into the word 'accompanying' a little more— does it invoke ideas of bias, or can the storyteller/researcher maintain their independence here? Particularly within the highly- sensitive landscape of Papua research, it sort of depends on who you ask.

Camellia Webb-Gannon acknowledges the impact of peace and conflict studies (PACS) on her work: a "prescription for conflict transformation through research". She goes on to qualify that a version of peace with justice is envisaged by West Papuans as *merdeka*— or freedom, including freedom from violence. Webb-Gannon writes that the intention of the Sydney-based West Papua Project is to "promote peaceful dialogue between West Papua and Indonesia" (2017, 20, 26), but in the eyes of the Indonesian state, even invoking the label West Papua can be seen as a sign of irreparable bias, and a threat to sovereignty.

My intention here is not to criticise these researchers for their collaborative, solidarity-infused approach to research. It is to ask in this highly charged environment, what kind of solidarity the creative writer-ethnographer should offer, and to whom? As Webb-Gannon points out, the focus of PACS "explicitly values peace over violence in contrast to many

other disciplines that aspire to value neutrality". Rather than advocating the model for all ethnographies, it is useful particularly in "situations of gross injustice" (Webb-Gannon 2017, 20).

Scholars and writers have often been schooled in the conventions of objectivity rather than activism— although objectivity is a dangerous term, a snake's nest of loaded meanings and power structures. Without trawling through the long grass of these issues, I want to ask if the writer-ethnographer wishes to practise solidarity with the community they are engaged with, particularly in situations of gross injustice, are they required to abandon their independence? What does independence actually mean here? Literary forms of writing regularly step outside of conventional notions of objectivity to animate a particular person or community's experience and perspective, as *Tete* attempts to— but that is distinct to mediating directly with political organisations or activist movements. There are also genres of writing that would argue that amplifying the views of such organisations does show a nuanced perspective. Peace journalism, for example, advocates identifying "other options for the readers/viewers by offering a solution-oriented, people-oriented and truth-oriented approach" (in opposition to the "war journalism" and propaganda it argues most media are complicit in) (Nohrstedt and Ottosen 2015, 220).

As discussed within *There's No I in Papua,* questions about research independence and solidarity sometimes focus on how the outsider writer can better represent a community, rather than asking how writers from that community can better access institutions and networks themselves. I admire the collaborative approach of many of the works I have written about in this thesis, authored by non-Indigenous writers. I do not believe that, without exception, only a person within a certain identity category should write about particular experiences or social phenomena. However, as many have pointed out before me, works written by people from a particular community have the potential to be more insightful— they have lived this Interface, not just

observed it (Nakata 2007). Yet no one knows of the tense negotiations between independent research and solidarity more than First Nations researchers themselves, who have to negotiate both the cultural expectations of Western institutions and those within their own community. Theirs is a site of both temporary fieldwork and ongoing real life where, as Uperesa points out, the "'weight' of expectation" around community, care and service work is inextricably linked to their research obligations. Non-Indigenous researchers such as myself may be asked to perform such tasks, but we are not "bound" by them (2016; see also Smith 2012, 328).

And yet at the same time, the conventions of research and media systems can limit First Nations scholars despite their intimate knowledge/s of their subject. Smith points out that academia's hierarchy of referred journals does not generally place value on traditional Indigenous knowledge — "the difficulty in identifying such publishing outlets is indicative of the way the academic environment works to legitimate certain kinds of knowledge" (2012, 353). Furthermore, those who act as allies can see harm done to their academic careers if they come to be perceived as biased and conflating their research with advocacy. In other words, having "the potential to see the trees but not the forest" — seen as lacking in the ability to see the bigger picture (Smith 2012, 328). Meanwhile, non-Indigenous writers and academics benefit from the same system that, to refer back to Uperesa, sees them "claiming expert status that requires the subject to remain subjected".

I knew from the start of my fieldwork that it would be folly to think of myself as the expert of the Papuan stories I was hearing. I felt, and I believe I will always feel, like an apprentice. The Australian Goori writer Jack Latimore (2018) suggests a remedy to these structural problems that sounds a bit like a carbon offset scheme:

> "If white writers and establishment media organisations are to steal our stories, one way they might offset their bootprint is, for example, by incorporating a mentorship or similar initiative into the production of the

> work which will provide new opportunities and pathways into the industry for First Nations individuals and collectives".

Some may take exception to the wording of stories being 'stolen' as a blanket description for all ethnography and journalism. However, I strongly support Latimore's idea of mentorship. It is actually an idea of reciprocity, after all, since non-Indigenous researchers and writers are mentored by the communities that receive them. It sits in line with the values of First Nations storytellers, who use "their personal life experiences as teaching stories in a manner similar to how they use traditional stories. These storytellers help to carry on the oral tradition's obligation of educational reciprocity" (Archibald 2008, 112). In the Balim Valley, the importance of sharing life experiences as a form of education for young people is similarly recognised (Alua and Mulait 2006, 51). These values also have roots in Western cultures. Muecke also points out the Old English word *cythe*, meaning knowledge, survives only in the phrase 'kith and kin'. He asks, "Why doesn't knowledge have anything to do with kinship anymore, or kindness?" (1997, 61).

These are approaches that I hope to continue to incorporate into the systems and structures that I am able to exercise influence within. So should the writer's task be limited to the creation of a thesis or book? No. The work is much more than that, and, like the story itself, is never really over. It can continue in ways such as mentorship and support of individuals, particularly First Nations writers and scholars negotiating Western frameworks of knowledge, as well as collectives representing these creators. Within this frame, MacLeod's 'pedagogy of solidarity' can still sit comfortably. We all benefit from this.

While this project's methodology was grounded in participant observation and interviews, there is also much to gain from engaging in literary criticism and translation of Papuan texts, written in Indonesian. Future scholarship could delve much further into the richness of publications being produced in

the flourishing ecosystem of emerging Papuan anthropologists, journalists and fiction writers. Worthwhile research could also be pursued about the range of friction-filled collaboration, solidarity and hostility between Papuans, Indonesians and foreigners of all political persuasions, pushing the story forward once again.

I will leave you with guidance from Jo-ann Archibald's *Indigenous Storywork,* quoting the Ojibway writer Armand Ruffo. More than just a means to close this thesis, it is a note I hope to keep sending to myself:

> "For the outsider, then, attempting to come to terms with Native people and their literature, the problem is not one to be solved by merely attaining the necessary background, reading all the anthropological data that one can get one's hands on. Rather, for those who are serious, it is more a question of cultural initiation, of involvement and commitment, so that the culture and literature itself becomes more than a mere museum piece, dusty pages, something lifeless" (2008, 31).

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