

Introduction—Engendering Violence in Papua New Guinea: Persons, Power and Perilous Transformations

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First thoughts, which words?

Gender violence is not a new problem. It takes place in virtually all societies around the world, but only in the last thirty years has it become visible as a social issue.

Understanding gender violence requires looking both at the intimate details of family life and at geopolitical considerations of power and warfare. In order to understand gender violence it is necessary to understand the world (Merry 2009: 1, 19).

Violence: Acts and states, facts and values

Gender violence poses a classic anthropological dilemma apropos human universals versus culturally relative concepts and values. But, both in research and in policy and associated programs of prevention and intervention, we need to try to move beyond this impasse, looking at the interaction and translation of local and global meanings in the transnational relations of our world and at the dynamic and complex historical processes which ground how gender violence has been named as a problem by national and international agencies and social movements (see Merry 2006, 2009). Naming is not just a matter of dry scholarly definition and debate but of vigorous and sometimes heated political contest.

In many recent conceptions (e.g. in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals), violence refers not only to violent physical acts against persons—beating, wounding, torturing, killing—but also to emotional violence, psychological harassment, sexual abuse, financial violence, neglect and coercion. It embraces acts between intimate partners, known kin or acquaintances and strangers; it can occur in contexts which stretch from households, through public locations to the physical, and even the virtual, battlefields of war. Increasingly, it also

refers to 'structures' or 'states' of violence, routine forms of coercion or threats of violence inherent in systems of deprivation, exploitation, slavery or oppression (see Chs 1, 2, 4 and 8 this volume; Merry 2009: 4–5).¹

This is a very expansive definition, but it must be stretched yet further to accommodate some cultural practices and beliefs whose reality is contested or which entail hidden or invisible agencies, such as those of witchcraft and sorcery, pervasive in Papua New Guinea (PNG) (see Chs 1, 2 and 3). As Philip Gibbs shows (Ch. 3), the violence recognised by Papua New Guineans (and in his case, Simbu)² is not just the violence involved in the torture and killing of witches and sorcerers (which foreigners likely privilege) but the violence of the original act imputed to the witch or the sorcerer: the ruining of bodies through sickness and death, the destruction of crops and pigs, misfortunes which are imputed to be caused by the witch. In Gibbs' view there are, thus, 'divergent opinions as to just who are the "victims" ... those who suffered the direct effect of acts of witchcraft ... [or] those who have been accused of being witches.'

As his case studies show, the first are predominantly male, the second, those accused, are predominantly female, or men who are connected to the women accused and/or elderly or marginalised. Women accused are more likely to be tortured and killed than men who are usually only ostracised. But women also provoke harm to other women by accusing them of being witches. Gibbs suggests that accusations of witchcraft or sorcery are often deployed in situations of conflict to legitimate violent assaults, torture and even murder of the accused. Killing witches is thus seen as meritorious and protective of the community: '[t]he apparent moral propriety of the act would lead many to consider it acceptable and legitimate' (Ch. 3; cf. Haley 2010; see Zorn 2006).³ Zimmer-Tamakoshi (Ch. 2) also highlights the way in which witchcraft and sorcery accusations figure in violence *between* men, as younger men accuse their fathers and uncles for instance. The violence of witchcraft thus poses both an epistemological and an ethical challenge for us.⁴

1 Sally Engle Merry powerfully plots the difficulties of definition:

Violence, like gender, is a deceptively simple concept. Although it seems to be a straightforward category of injury, pain and death, it is very much shaped by cultural meanings. Some forms of pain are erotic, some heroic, and some abusive, depending on the social and cultural context of the event. Cultural meanings and context differentiate consensual or playful eroticized forms of pain from those of a manhood ritual and those from a cigarette burn on a disobedient wife (2009: 4).

2 These people were previously called Chimbu. However, Philip Gibbs notes that 'the Provincial Government now uses the term Simbu, which is becoming the accepted form' (Ch. 3).

3 Nicole Haley suggests the horrific recent torture and killing of witches among the Duna is not seen as continuous with past practices and is far more contested. These acts, typically by young men fuelled both by marijuana and guns, are expressly deplored by many older male community leaders who say neither they nor state forces can control them (2010: 230).

4 These epistemological and ethical challenges were vigorously debated by the contributors to this volume at discussions at ASAO panel sessions and subsequently on email. Gibbs notes the view of a PNG Justice George Manuhu that the time has come to regard 'murder as murder' and the establishment in April 2009 of a

Clearly then naming an act as ‘violence’ entails adjudications of both facts and values and these are intimately entangled. This is nowhere clearer than in those instances where acts adjudged as illegitimate violence by the terms of international conventions and protocols (such as the United Nations Convention for the Elimination all Forms of Discrimination Against Women or the Millennium Development Goals) are accorded national or local legitimacy.⁵ The third Millennium Development Goal which aims to promote gender equality and empower women includes as its seventh strategic priority ‘Combat violence against girls or women’ (Grown, Gupta and Kes 2005: 3; see Ch. 8). This expressly includes the violence of ‘genital cutting’ and the stoning of women for adultery in parts of Africa and the Middle East where gender violence is normal and indeed legal according to Sharia law.

We have a similar problem with the widespread *legitimacy* of violence in general and gender violence in particular in the Pacific. The pervasive legitimacy of gender violence in PNG has been acknowledged from the foundational studies of the Law Reform Commission in the 1980s to the present (Toft 1985; Toft and Bonnell 1985; Counts 1990, 1992; Zimmer 1990; Zimmer-Tamakoshi 1993a, 1997; Dinnen and Ley 2000; Borrey 2000; Bradley 1994a and b, 2001; Eves 2006). As Fiona Hukula (Ch. 6) suggests, gender violence is often seen as a customary, collective practice in PNG – *em pasin blo ol* – (TP: that’s their way) and as normal – *em nomol ya* – (TP: that’s normal).

For the Bariai of West New Britain, Naomi McPherson (Ch. 1) consummately shows how girls and boys are, from an early age, socialised not only to *expect* but to *accept* violence, and especially that violence which accompanies hierarchies of power, of adults over children and of men over women. Origin myths relate how men violently stole sacra and spiritual power from women; women have persisting fears of rape and murder if they transgress men’s sacred spaces. The patriarchal authority of ancestral religion and charismatic Catholicism here combine to legitimate gender violence, ‘to make violence look, even feel right’

working committee by the Constitutional and Law Reform Commission to review the law on sorcery and related killings in PNG. We have to acknowledge apropos witchcraft that what is perceived as violence, legitimate and illegitimate, is not just culturally specific but historically changing. So, from the medieval period through the so called ‘Enlightenment’, the reality of witchcraft and sorcery was assumed in most of Europe. Accusations swirled around Europe’s villages and towns in the *longue durée* of the so-called ‘witchcraze’, supported both by the authority of Christian churches and of emergent secular states. As Mary Douglas (1970) showed long ago, this violent history shaped attitudes by many European colonisers to such occult violence in Africa and Melanesia and moulded the approaches of several Western colonial agents: missionaries, police, judges, doctors and anthropologists. Even as indigenous people converted to Christianity and tried to eschew such practices as satanic they reinforced the reality of such nefarious powers exercised by the living as the work of the Devil. Even as laws were introduced in attempts to outlaw and eliminate witchcraft and sorcery practices, accusations and punishments, they paradoxically reinforced beliefs in their reality and efficacy (see Aleck 1996; Forsyth 2006; Stewart 2010; Zorn 2006).

5 Merry (2009) observes how CEDAW did not originally include references to gender violence but that these were added as part of later protocols.

(Galtung 1990, cited in Ch. 1). Yet, as McPherson insists, Bariai men are not 'monsters' and Bariai are not an especially violent people. Despite such local or national caveats, the overwhelming impression from the papers in this volume is that PNG is a country where violence in general and gender violence in particular is both expected and accepted by women and men alike. Susan Toft writing for the Law Reform Commission (1985: 14) estimated that around 67 per cent of rural women and 56 per cent of urban women had experienced a beating at the hands of their husbands. Sixteen years later Christine Bradley reported that most adult women in PNG had been either assaulted or raped by their husbands or other men (2001: 2). Collective representations of gender violence as typical of PNG pervade media representations, in national newspapers (see Chs 3 and 7) and overseas media, especially in Australia (see Ginau and Papoutsaki 2007; Duffield, Papoutsaki and Watson 2008),⁶ and in the global print and web-based campaigns conducted by influential NGOs such as Amnesty International (2006), the International Women's Development Agency and Médecins Sans Frontières.

Most of these studies conclude that the victims are predominantly women. But they also reveal that such violence is gendered in another sense, in terms of its legitimacy. Thus, an assault by a man on his wife is typically accorded greater reason and justice than that by a woman on her husband. As Martha Macintyre and Jean Zorn (Chs 5 and 8) both demonstrate, men are more often seen to be entitled, to have the *rait* (TP: right, authority) to violence, to express 'righteous indignation' and to be acting reasonably while violent women are viewed as lacking such entitlement, as subversive of legitimate male authority and to be acting irrationally or emotionally. McPherson (Ch. 1) further suggests that Bariai women are seen as emotional, uncontrolled and weak in will and body, so that when they resort to violence, they must use those weapons at hand, from metal spoons to machetes. Their violence is often ridiculed and rarely condoned. Men by contrast are thought strong in will and body and should use only their bodies to bash or kick (although several of McPherson's case studies suggest they frequently resort to machetes and axes). Their anger is serious, feared and legitimised (see Ch. 3 for similar ideas of male and female difference in Simbu). In West New Britain, as in much of PNG, violence by a husband is thought justified if a wife refuses sex, if he suspects her of infidelity, if she secretly uses contraception, if she fails to adequately nurture their children or look after him

6 Ginau and Papoutsaki (2007) discern both ignorance and undue negativity in Australian journalists' representations of PNG, focusing on violent crime, corruption, HIV and problems with Australian aid. Duffield, Papoutsaki and Watson (2008) in an analysis primarily of ABC and SBS broadcast and online media found a more balanced and mixed reportage in March 2008, at the time of Rudd's visit to PNG as Prime Minister. This no doubt caused a spike in interest, but significantly much of the optimism in these stories focused on the figure of Rudd, an older statesman view of Somare and privileged sites for Australian war memory like Kokoda and the promise of a more collaborative rather than a 'Big Brother' approach in foreign policy.

by gardening, cooking and cleaning, if she fails to graciously accept co-wives, if she scolds him for his laziness or drunkenness, or if she disobeys his edicts (Ch. 1). Violence by husbands is the most common form of gender violence but women are also legitimately beaten by their fathers and brothers if they become pregnant outside marriage and sometimes even if they are victims of rape. And many chapters evidence the gender violence of younger, unmarried men, either singly or collectively (Chs 2, 3, 5 and 6).

Engendering violence? Children, men and same-sex violence

Contested concepts of violence and its widespread frequency and legitimacy in PNG thus pose big problems for all the contributors to this volume. But what then of that other term in our title: *Engendering*? In contemporary English this word has a productive double meaning, signifying both the idea of giving rise to, precipitating, even begetting but also endowing with gender. I here conceive gender not just as the relations between actual women and men, but gender as a cultural code signifying masculine and feminine. This engages a profound debate about how we can best conceive of gender in Melanesia, a debate haunted by Marilyn Strathern's brilliant and provocative study *The Gender of the Gift* (1988). Simply put, this propounds the idea that in PNG as in the rest of Melanesia we cannot readily distinguish between the 'nature' of sexed bodies as a deep biological substratum and 'culture' as a more superficial layer.⁷ Nor can we simply conceive of female and male persons on the model of Western individuals (see also Butler 1990, 1995; Thèry 2008). Strathern rather posits the person in PNG not as a bounded autonomous individual but as a locus of relations, as permeable and partible. She sees gender not in terms of sexed bodies nor merely as relations between the sexes, albeit opposed or the same, but as a dominant cultural code, even perhaps *the* dominant code for talking about human beings in general, and especially about the relations between persons and things. Her approach has proved influential in the ethnography of gender in PNG but has long been critiqued for its failure to acknowledge male domination and gender violence and to address social transformations in both colonial and independent epochs and radical changes in gender relations, even perhaps in models of the person (see Jolly 1992a; Macintyre 1995; Wardlow 2006).

7 McPherson (Ch. 1) deploys this binary in her cogent argument against a universal account of male violence as a 'biologically determined and evolutionarily honed human (genetic) trait' suggesting rather that violence is a cultural trait, 'engendered and embodied' in the course of socialisation. See also Merry (2006: 8–15) for a succinct exposition of fundamental shifts in the study of gender in the last two decades: the shift from sex to gender, from rigid roles to fluid performances for diverse audiences and from essentialist to intersectional analysis of gender identities.

So how does this relate to the approach we espouse in this volume? Why do we use the phrase *engendering* violence rather than *violence against women* or *domestic violence*? Although crucially important in early transnational feminist alliances, and as a credo for ongoing global campaigns, *violence against women* excludes those victims of violence who are children and men. Although in the many situations depicted in these chapters women are the predominant, or the primary victims (see AusAID 2007), we cannot occlude the fact that children are also often victims of violence perpetrated by adults (see Human Rights Watch 2005) and that men *may* be victims of violence, from women or other men, as well as its perpetrators.

Domestic violence is also a problematic term insofar as it presumes a domain distinction between domestic and public life, another Eurocentric binary akin to nature/culture which is hard to sustain in PNG (Strathern 1988). In much early research and writing on violence in PNG and Melanesia more generally there was often a distinction made between so called 'domestic violence', the violence enacted between close kin in households versus 'tribal fighting', the public violence of *raskol* (TP: rascal, criminal) gangs and increasingly the violence unleashed in electoral combats (see Garap 2000, 2004; cf. Jolly 2000a). But how do we draw this line? Many intimate disputes, between married couples for example, resonate with violent clashes between clans and lineages in 'tribal fighting'. Throughout the Highlands of PNG, wives usually come to their husband's place from neighbouring groups, who are often enemies, and a dispute between them can implicate a broader battle (although in the past women could also act as mediators between groups, see Strathern 1972).⁸ Moreover, as Zimmer-Tamakoshi shows for the Gende of the PNG Highlands (Ch. 2), violent relations between men, of different generations and different locales, often swirl around economic disparities in access to land and labour and around contested exchange relations, frequently engaging disputes about women and bride price. The wives and children of enemies are crucial sources of economic and cultural value to men and are as much potential victims as male combatants.

The concept of 'sexual antagonism' in early Highlands ethnography was seen to implicate both avoidances and conflicts pertaining between men and women as intimate partners and the solidarity of 'men in groups' engaged in deadly battles over land, resources, exchanges and often women (Langness 1967, 1999;

8 This capacity for women to mediate is perhaps reduced in the present, as Wardlow suggests for the Huli that women are no longer 'in between' their natal and affinal kin, as men invest less time in extended kinship relations and working men in particular show a 'withdrawal from relationality' (2006: 23). Macintyre suggests that Marilyn Strathern's 1972 ethnography dates from a period when pacification was strictly enforced and there was a lull in fighting which necessitated novel modes of dispute settlement (pers. comm. 18 January 2011). Macintyre also reminds me the Kup Women for Peace Initiative required not only women who were from fighting clans but neutral women (see Garap 2000, 2004). Rumsey's (2000) depiction of women's extraordinary mediation in the Nebilyer Valley shows how they deployed modern identifications of their power as Christians and citizens of the PNG state to stop tribal fighting.

Read 1982; Herdt and Poole 1982; see Strathern 1988 for a consummate critique; and Ch. 3). Women who moved at marriage to enemy groups were thus more vulnerable to the collective violence not just of their husbands and agnates, including accusations of treacherous witchcraft and gang rape, which was used to silence or intimidate recalcitrant wives (Ch. 3). In violent political struggles between ethnic groups in Highlands PNG the rape and sexual torture of women accompanied the murder and mutilation of combatants and civilians, men and women, in patterns very similar to those reported in European wars, such as those in Eastern Europe in the 1990s, Hindu-Muslim conflicts in India and the genocide in Rwanda in 2004 (Merry 2009: 156–71).

Insofar as it does not presume women are always the victims, nor distinguish unduly between domestic and public violence, *gender violence* has become the preferred concept in both global research and programs of intervention in recent time. Sally Engle Merry defines gender violence as ‘violence whose meaning depends on the gendered identities of the parties. It is an interpretation of violence through gender’ (Merry 2009: 3).⁹ For the most part this is the concept we deploy in this volume. And we use the title *engendering violence* to signal the process whereby contemporary gender violence in PNG is situated in the context of massive social transformations which are provoking new forms of conflict and novel understandings of such violence. But what does this change of name actually mean in practice? As in many areas of aid and development, gender has too often become synonymous with women. And this is at odds with the need to see gender as a relation, between women and men, but also between women and between men. We need to bring into the frame not just the female victims of violence but its male perpetrators, to engage men as, for example, Fiona Hukula and her colleagues at the National Research Institute have done in ‘conversations with convicted rapists’ (Ch. 6). Many chapters in this volume relate gender violence to changing masculinities in contemporary PNG (see also Eves 2006; Jolly 2008; Taylor 2008a and b), and most perceive the profound social transformations of the last decades as provoking dangerous uncertainties and contests in models of masculinity. We can witness how changing gender relations have, in many parts of PNG, generated a sense (if not the reality), of a diminution of male power and laments for the younger generations of

9 Merry elaborates, showing how gender violence can occur in opposite sex and same-sex relationships and in heterosexual and homosexual partnerships. The meaning of the violence might also be filtered through racial or national difference.

For example when a blow is understood as a man's right to discipline his wife, it is gender violence. When a mob lynches an African American man for allegedly raping a white woman, the violence is defined through gender and race.... These relationships are used to explain and even justify the violence. For example, a man may justify hitting his wife because she was disobedient. A prisoner may explain his anal rape of a fellow prisoner by saying that the victim is less than a man because he was a sexual predator against children. A soldier can explain raping an enemy woman as a way to dishonor his enemy (2009: 3).

'shrinking men' with the seemingly inexorable progress of modernity (see the early essays by Clark 1989; Meggitt 1989; Clark 1997). In a controversial book Donald Tuzin (1997) expressly joined such lamentations, proclaiming 'the death of masculinity,' suggesting that the destruction of the male cult of the Ilahita Arapesh with their secondary conversion to a more evangelical Christianity entailed not just cultural evisceration but emasculation (cf. Knauff 1997, 1999). Yet masculinity has not so much died as been reborn with Christian conversion.

Moreover, as Naomi McPherson argues (Ch. 1), such male cults previously prevalent in the Sepik, the Highlands and the Gulf regions of PNG entailed violence on young boys—thrashings, abrasion with nettles, swallowing canes, cicatrisation, genital cutting, food deprivation and terrorisation—in order to transform the boys from gentle children to violent martial men. In some cults the stress was on removing polluting female blood, in others the emphasis was on the ingestion of semen through fellatio or anal sex with older men; both were enjoined to make boys into men (Allen 1967, 2000; Herdt 1981, 1982; Godelier 1986; Godelier and Strathern 1991; Bonnemère 1996). Everywhere the power of older over younger men was powerfully articulated with the power of men over women (see Ch. 2). Thus, we might also conceive the activities of these erstwhile cults as manifesting gender violence as well as evincing forms of desire, initially called 'ritual homosexuality' (Herdt 1981, 1982).

Some Christian women, like those in the Sepik depicted by Tuzin, may celebrate the end of male cults and enjoy an enhanced status in the new spiritual domain of Christian and evangelical churches. But, as McPherson (Ch. 1) and Anna-Karina Hermkens (Ch. 4) argue, conversion to Christianity can also *remasculate* men and reinscribe patriarchal authority, as introduced forms of 'spiritual violence' (McPherson's telling phrase) eclipse indigenous forms (see also Hammar 2010). Many women conform to the combined customary and Christian pressures to be good women and wives, subject to the authority and the violent rage of their husbands (see Chs 1 and 4). But other women are 'wayward' (Wardlow 2006), trying to evade such violent subjection either by not marrying (Spark 2011), by desertion or divorce, by transactional sex rather than conjugal sex or by their own violent resistance, which can occasion yet more violent male retribution (see Chs 7 and 8).

Gibbs (Ch. 3) also depicts threats to male dominance among the Simbu since younger women can do much that their mothers could not: deliver public speeches, drive cars and run businesses. Many men now allow their wives to handle family finances since they are better at budgeting. But young men, and especially those who are uneducated, unemployed and unmarried, express feelings of frustration, envy and humiliation, particularly if women desire only men with cash. Such young men resort to alcohol and drugs and vent their anger in violence towards others, especially women and girls. This parallels Holly

Wardlow's chilling portrait of Huli men and the pervasiveness of *madane* (Huli) an emotional state she translates as bitter resentment and disappointed rage and which proves crucial to her understanding of the fraught, often violent, relations of Huli men and women (2005, 2006). This suggests that although the concept of 'sexual antagonism' is no longer valid as a way of linking intimate relations between men and women, male cults and tribal fighting, relations between men and women in the Highlands are still agonistic, even if that antagonism is fuelled by novel, modern tensions (see Josephides 1985; Hammar 2010).¹⁰

And in many places the agonistic relations between men and women are linked to generational differences and conflicts between older men and younger men. Younger men figure prominently in many of the cases of gender violence discussed in this volume (Chs. 2, 3 and 6). Hukula (Ch. 6) notes the prevalence of young men amongst convicted rapists, especially those involved in *lainup* (TP: pack rape); Gibbs (Ch. 3) notes the prevalence of young men implicated in gender violence in Simbu, while Zimmer-Tamakoshi (Ch. 2) sees the gender violence in Gende, both between men and women and between men, as intimately linked to patterns of marriage and bride price. Generational conflicts between older men and younger men have ensued because older men earlier dominated access to women as wives and tried, but ultimately failed, to monopolise wealth from mining. Physical violence and related sorcery attacks and accusations have developed from such generational conflicts between frustrated younger men and older men.

Rising rates of gender violence? Continuities and ruptures

We often hear claims that gender violence is increasing in PNG with the pressures of modernity and urbanisation. And yet this is nearly impossible to gauge. Even in rich countries like Australia or America, statistics of gender violence are notoriously difficult to collect and the records of both police and hospitals and even 'victimisation' surveys are commonly adjudged to be inaccurate indices of the actual rates, and to be skewed by race, nationality and class (Merry 2009: 20–22, 104–16). In PNG many such acts of violence go unreported and, even if victims go to the police, charges may be dropped for various reasons. Macintyre (Ch. 8) reports that even those policemen who have attended awareness workshops and can speak eloquently about why gender violence is illegal, criminal behaviour, often try to dissuade wives from pursuing charges against their husbands in the interests of domestic and wider social harmony. It seems

¹⁰ I thank Martha Macintyre for discussion on continuity and rupture apropos 'sexual antagonism' in Highlands PNG.

many police are reluctant to implement the law, partly because of their own perceptions of the legitimacy of gender violence and partly since many women later drop charges (often due to pressure from husbands and other male kin). In PNG the customary justice system of compensation and reconciliation is often preferred by men while the very process of the state-based system of laying criminal charges and pursuing a court case has in PNG, like many countries, often proved a site of secondary violence for the victim (see Zorn 2010 and Ch. 5 on rape cases).

It is impossible then to credibly speculate in a country like PNG whether rates of gender violence have been increasing or decreasing since, for example, the period of the work of the Law Reform Commission in the 1980s (Macintyre 2006). It would take a huge and expensive national research program to begin to answer this question. For the more specific act of rape, Jean Zorn notes very high per capita rates and an extremely high incidence of pack rape (in comparison to Britain at least). But, as to whether the more general rates of gender violence are increasing or decreasing, I endorse Martha Macintyre's stance (Ch. 8). She suggests that the need for 'thorough research' to underpin programs of intervention by agencies such as AusAID has 'finally been recognised' but that the time and costs of procuring such data for 'robust and consistent analysis have not' (Ch. 8). She concludes: 'The research required to establish a baseline for prevalence would be costly, time-consuming and invasive of privacy' (Ch 8). From the viewpoint of those struggling to reduce gender violence there is already far too much, so there is little point in such an expensive research exercise (see AusAUD 2007 for a cogent smaller study).

But the important fact remains, that there is public rhetoric, in the national media of newspapers, radio and television, and often in more local fora, about an *alleged* rise in gender violence, and this typically gets linked to broader concerns about modernity, laments about lost 'traditions' and the way in which both alcohol and marijuana are implicated in a loss of discipline and contemporary masculine cultures of intoxication. In such discussions, the frequency and legitimacy of gender violence in the past is often occluded. In some of the more romantic assessments of restorative justice there is a tendency to downplay the violence inherent in pre-colonial dispute resolution and punishment, not just the violence of tribal warfare and frequent village relocations due to violent fissions or sorcery accusations but those more intimate acts of gender violence: the gang rape of recalcitrant women, the violent punishment of women who had been unfaithful wives (but not their male lovers, even if they themselves are husbands) and the rape and murder of those women who intruded into men's secret, sacred spaces.

Thus, it is important not to underestimate the gender violence of the past and indeed the violence of much 'restorative' justice (Ch. 8). It was often more

important to restore relations between powerful men rather than to redress the wrong done to a woman who had been raped or beaten. As Sinclair Dinnen suggests: “‘restoring’ relations may simply serve to reinforce those underlying inequities’ (2002: 11). This is why so many indigenous women at a Port Vila conference in 2000—including Ruth Saovana-Spriggs from Bougainville, Rita Naiviti from Vanuatu and Alimita Duratalo from Fiji—called for ‘transformative’ rather than ‘restorative’ justice (see Dinnen 2002; Jolly 2003a, 2011; and Forsyth 2009 on the relation of customary and state justice in Vanuatu).

In the broader literature on PNG some privilege continuity while others privilege rupture in the history of gender violence. In a number of important early papers Zimmer-Tamakoshi (1993a and b, 1997, and, writing as Zimmer, 1990) stressed the continuities with past practices of gender violence, such as the gang rape of women in warfare and patterns of torture of both rebellious women and those accused of being witches in the Gende context. But, writing of PNG more broadly, she also highlighted the ways in which such violent patterns of control over women were being modernised, in narratives about nationalism and sexuality for example, given the way in which the sexuality of educated or urban women was being linked to the mobility and alleged ‘looseness’ of western women and contrasted with the controlled and demure sexuality of village woman. Zorn (Ch. 5) also notes how judicial opinions articulated by both Australian and indigenous male judges in those cases of rape brought to courts in PNG have tended to rely on such caricatures of ‘good’, controlled village women versus ‘bad’, uncontrolled urban women (see also Ch. 7). Other authors such as Banks (2000: 95) have stressed how violence against women is more likely when ‘men perceive they have lost control over women’ (see Ch. 4). Several chapters in this volume suggest that even in rural regions men perceive their control over women to be less than that of their fathers or grandfathers (see also Wardlow 2006). Often this is linked with a sense of diminished power in the world at large, as the values of modernity, Christianity and commodity economy eclipse the more certain controls of ancestral gender hierarchies and past male cults. Thus it is not a question of continuity *or* rupture but both. Gender violence persists but often in new contexts, in new forms and with novel meanings.

Engendered social transformations on four dimensions

Although it is difficult, and likely not worthwhile, to try to calculate how far rates of gender violence have increased from past to present, the chapters in this volume powerfully reveal how the engendered violence we witness in

contemporary PNG is linked to those broader but frequently disarticulated and divergent social transformations which have been collectively labelled 'modernisation'.¹¹ This is a conclusion which emerges from all the chapters in this volume, although they focus on four different dimensions of such transformations: (1) the impact of commoditisation and especially of extractive industries like mining and logging; (2) the transformation of forms of 'spiritual violence' entailed in conversions to Christianity; (3) the 'implanting' of Western modes of justice and the law and (4) the impact of the HIV epidemic and the broader introduction of biomedicine. Across these four dimensions I highlight the tension between more relational and more individuated notions of gendered persons, a problem to which I return in the concluding sections of this introduction on the challenges for aid programs dedicated to combating violence in PNG and questions of women's empowerment, agency and human rights.

1. Commodity economics, extractive industries and masculine 'landowners'

First, the economic transformations which are a part of a process of uneven capitalist development grounded in extractive industries like mining and logging have enriched certain people (usually men) and certain regions while leaving others (and especially women) marooned in increasing poverty and isolation (see Filer and Macintyre 2006). These processes are not only fuelling emergent class and regional divisions but conflicts between generations and genders.

This is most graphically revealed in Laura Zimmer-Tamakoshi's chapter on Gende, which focuses on the radical changes she has witnessed over the last decade with the development of mining in this region. Two major mining operations have rapidly moved into this part of southern Madang Province: Ramu Nickel (previously Highlands Gold but run by the Chinese Metallurgical Construction Company since 2005) and Marengo Mining Limited, a small Australian company which in 2005 took over control of a project at Yandera also initiated by Highlands Gold.

She stresses that it is important not to talk about all men versus all women, but to see gender as imbricated with relations of generations. She reveals how older and younger men were and are in relations of both conflict and complicity

¹¹ It is beyond the scope of this Introduction to consider this much-debated concept (see Jolly 1998; and Knauff 1997, 1999). Suffice it to say that I eschew any notion of a homogenous and teleological process, stressing not just the pluralities and diversities of global experience but the way in which the oppositions of tradition and modernity have become reified, rhetorical concepts both in scholarly theory and some indigenous philosophies (see Jolly 1992b).

in local systems of alliance, exchange and bride wealth, competing for wives but also allied in their violent control of women. Whereas in the 1980–1990s she witnessed the ‘bachelorisation’ of Gende society whereby old men were commandeering women as wives and young men were unable to attract wives, that situation has been dramatically reversed with the flow of new wealth from the mine and its anticipated increase to a torrent in the future. Polygyny has ceased to be the privilege of old men and is now eagerly sought by young men. The Gende had been relatively impoverished in relation to Simbu, but now people are trying to pursue claims of attachment to those parts of Gende territory where the mines are concentrated. Gende are returning from town and from Simbu territory to be registered as ‘landowners’, and this is fuelling violent conflicts (including many accusations of sorcery culminating in violent murder of those accused).

As elsewhere in mining and logging developments there is a stark gendering of the benefits both of land compensation and of employment associated with the mine. The novel notion of the ‘landowner’ entails not only more capitalist concepts of land as property rather than a personified place over which people are collective custodians, but increasingly masculinist ideas of control over the use and transmission of land (see Macintyre 2002, 2003; Filer 1997). Although women may be ‘landowners’ by law they are typically marginalised by male-dominated landowner associations. Macintyre has demonstrated this more broadly in the context of mining in the region (see Lahiri-Dutt and Macintyre 2006). In her chapter in this volume Macintyre shows that even in a matrilineal society, such as Lihir, the previous influence which women exerted over land and its transmission has been diminished by men’s greater access to registering land titles and their increasing domination of the negotiations of local landowner associations, such that women, even articulate, well-educated women, are denied a public voice. We can hear from Macintyre (Ch. 8) how Lihirian women were rudely silenced and humiliated by furious men who, while acknowledging matriliney, simultaneously insisted that women speaking in public was against *kastam* (TP: culture, tradition).

Zimmer-Tamakoshi relates how Gende women have pursued more violent direct action to gain employment in mining sites and camps as laundry assistants, cooks and secretaries. Although women are in general losing power in these developments and will likely continue to do so as men dominate the emergent landowner associations, certain women are assuming positions of leadership. A spectacular example is a young woman, the daughter of a local Gende Big Man, who became so successful as a business entrepreneur that her father called himself her *boi* (TP: employee, mimicking the infantilising language used by colonial bosses for indigenous male workers). Women who are successful in the modernist enterprises of business and education regularly attract the

accusation of being *bikhet* (TP: big-headed, impertinent, obstinate). In this case the woman's father was killed by a group of young men, although it is unclear how far their resentment of this woman's success was a factor in his murder as well as disputes over land and compensation payments. Those women who are successful in more local ways seem to attract less opprobrium. Gende women can achieve power locally by hard work and fulfilling their exchange obligations, but women's capacity to do so and repay their bride price has been diminished by development, especially for the younger generation. But those older Gende women who repaid their bride price long ago are still proudly planting gardens and nurturing pigs so they can complete funerary payments for their dead husbands and contribute to their sons' marriage payments. Zimmer-Tamakoshi dubs them 'merry' widows (Ch. 2); they seem to have secured some happiness and well-being despite the challenges of the profound social transformations wrought by mining development.

As well as precipitating competition and conflict between men and women in accessing the new wealth emanating from mining, such developments in the commodity economies of extraction are entangled with the gendering of broader hopes and fears about modernity. Zimmer-Tamakoshi suggests that 'researchers focus on both men's uneasy confrontation with modernity and *kastam* and women's efforts at achieving a semblance of agency and personal security in the midst of deeply challenging economic, cultural and social changes' (Ch 2).

The effects of commodity economics are most dramatically charted for the Gende, but several other chapters allude to how transformations in material life have increased gendered tensions and violence. For Simbu, Gibbs links the pervasive emotional state of *jelas* (TP: dangerous feeling of desire, envy, see also Wardlow 2006: 30ff) to transformations in the material basis of existence. Such feelings are fuelled by the increasing scarcity of good land and gardens given the burgeoning population and the differential opportunities to pursue education and *bisnis* (TP: business). Moreover, he suggests there are important economic dimensions to witchcraft accusations: not only is divination well-paid work (mainly for men) but the land and the possessions of the accused are often plundered by the accusers and the alleged victims of witches. As Gibbs observes (Ch. 3), most of those accused are women, and in particular elderly women who married in from elsewhere, who are perceived as physically weaker and socially inferior, especially if they lack influential husbands or brothers and strong sons. Plundering their flourishing gardens or thriving pigs proves relatively easy.

2. Gendered conversions: Christianities and ‘spiritual violence’

Second, there have been dramatic transformations in gender relations and engendered violence which have accompanied conversion to Christianity. As Hermkens (Ch. 4) argues, the influence of Christianity in contemporary PNG is profound, not only as proclaimed in the rhetoric of the state’s independent constitution, or in political and popular discourse but as practised by the overwhelming majority of its citizens, 96 per cent of whom adhere to one of the many Christian denominations or independent churches (Gibbs 2004).¹² Many have recently reconverted from the more mainstream denominations introduced during the colonial era—Catholicism, Anglicanism, Lutheranism, Methodism—to more evangelical or charismatic forms and independent local churches (see Barker 2001; Eves 2003, 2008; Gibbs 2004; and Robbins 2004). Christian conversion has been canonically associated with the coming of the light and of peace, although colonial state violence was indubitably as important as Christian ideals in the incomplete process of what has been paradoxically called ‘pacification’ in PNG. This was articulated with the parallel demise or wilful termination of male cults, which in many regions of the country were linked to warrior modes of masculinity (cf. Jolly 1994). The message of Christian peace has surely not resounded loudly enough in several valleys of Highlands PNG where tribal fighting persists and/or has been recently revived with more deadly weapons like guns and automatic rifles, including M16s, AR15s and SLRs (also used by *raskol* gangs who intimidate travellers on the highways of the region and in urban centres: see Dinnen and Thomson 2004; Macintyre 2008). But, even in those parts of coastal and insular PNG where warfare has been banished to *taim bilong daknes* (TP: time of darkness, heathen past) parallel calls for peace in Christian households and families have not been similarly heeded.

McPherson (Ch. 1) offers a compelling example of how the ‘spiritual violence’ of past and present has creolised among the Bariai. Although the Bariai lacked the male cults typical of Highlands, Sepik and Gulf regions of PNG, key myths of primordial origins explained how men violently dispossessed women of the sacred Bullroarer and access to spiritual powers through the murder of all adult women, sparing only suckling infants who would have no knowledge of what was lost. Women were forbidden access to men’s houses and witnessed their sacra on penalty of gang rape and murder. Other myths explain the distribution of Bariai people as the result of the primal violence of an old man whose virility and hence masculinity was threatened. Contemporary women are still fearful of the vengeful power of ancestral spiritual beings and of living men. McPherson

12 Gibbs’ estimate (2004) is based on official census figures from July 2000 and some non-official figures from the National Statistics Office. This paper offers a consummate survey of the 200 Christian churches, the diversity of beliefs and practices and changing patterns of religious affiliation a decade ago.

recounts two incidents in the 1980s, one involving a female visitor and another, an elderly woman, who were proximate to a men's house and might have witnessed male sacra. These both occasioned tense discussions as to whether these women should be killed; they were eventually spared. But, even in those contexts where men have relaxed the spiritual segregations of the ancestral religion, women still articulate discomfort, even terror.

McPherson describes how conversion to Catholicism has entailed the end of men's houses and associated patterns of male homosociality, but also how the movement of men to live with their wives and children in women's houses, in patterns more approximating a nuclear family, has also engendered more intimate, quotidian violence. Men now exert a daily and punitive control over the household, asserting their rights as 'head' of the family as enshrined in Catholic doctrine. This extends to their close surveillance of their wives' fertility, which is seen as a sign of their virility. Post-partum taboos which entailed birth intervals of about four years have lapsed since the 1980s and have not been replaced by indigenous abortifacients or introduced contraceptives, largely because of the Catholic ban on such birth control: women who use contraception are thought destined for Hell. Women are thus denied condoms either to control their reproduction or as protection against HIV, and are consequently bearing as many as ten children, exponentially increasing their load in garden work, carrying wood and water, child care, cooking, cleaning and laundry (see Jolly 2001b).

Paradoxically, while the Catholic ban on such birth control is closely policed by catechists and husbands alike, edicts against polygyny are flouted with impunity, as young men increasingly marry second and even third wives (see also Ch. 2). Sexual jealousies, regularly a source of violent conflicts in marriages in the first few years, are compounded by this revival of polygyny. As in those Biblical stories which implicate Eve as the origin of carnal knowledge, women are cast as lustful and uncontrolled, who through their eternal sexual allure (and novel provocations such as wearing wide-legged pocket trousers!) arouse men and are thus the 'true cause' of men's insatiable desires (see Cummings 2008; McDougall 2003). The Bible is frequently used to justify the patriarchal power of the husband and father as head of the family (as Christ is head of the church) and to legitimate men's violent disciplining of women, canonically wives, but also daughters and sisters.

So, alongside the legitimation of violence through resort to ideas of ancestral practice or contemporary *kastam*, Christian doctrines can justify not just gender inequality but the gendered violence which accompanies it. Apropos Catholic women in Madang, Hermkens concludes: 'This union of Christian and cultural

values results in a powerful doctrine of submission' (Hermkens Ch. 4). And, she suggests, in some Christian traditions this is developed into a theology which celebrates female suffering and endurance as the path to personal transformation.

Hermkens recounts the gruelling detail of Alice's story, to show how The Legion of Mary in Madang and in particular the late Father Golly, the Legion's local and national director, promoted the Virgin Mary as a 'role model' (see Hermkens 2007, 2008, Ch. 4). Alice and many other women who have been the victims of violence and sexual abuse from their husbands are being enjoined not to resist, but to be patient, to endure, to survive and to hope, through their female submission, to transform their husbands' hearts and vitiate their violence. As the story of Alice graphically reveals, this ethic of submission is extended to their daughters even when *raskol* gangs, rape and HIV coalesce to form the fearful spectre of a modern dystopia.

As Hermkens reveals, women's power to survive and even hopefully transform men is drawn from mimetic, embodied identification with the figure of Mary, a model of humility, simplicity and obedience. They aspire not just to copy her outer form, through dressing in blue and engaging in perpetual prayer, but her inner virtues and particularly those of patience and submission—*daunpasin* (TP: humility). There is also a martial aspect to Marian devotion since her followers are cast as warriors in her service as she crushes the several heads of the serpent of Satan. But they are ultimately enjoined to be obedient slaves to her and to their husbands. According to the edicts of the late Father Golly, a wife should not leave her husband, even if his violence persists unabated and, even if he is having extra-marital affairs and she fears contracting HIV, she should never use condoms as protection (see below).¹³

Hermkens stresses how Marian devotion is thought to occasion a highly personalised self-transformation. This process is both painful and paradoxical. It entails hard daily discipline and great strength to wrench peace from the emotional turmoil of abuse by a husband. And ultimately this self-fashioning is also a triumph over the many heads of the serpent of the self: self-exaltation, self-seeking, self-sufficiency, self-love, and self-satisfaction etc. As Hermkens (Ch. 4) sagely observes: '[t]his Christian rhetoric which calls for the denial of the self also emphasises the self.'

Her chapter raises some fascinating questions about contesting models of relational and individuated persons and ideas of empowerment and agency (see

13 Gibbs offers an alternative suggestion that such women's prayer groups can also be a way for women to distance themselves from their husband's control (including violence and sex), in local idiom 'getting out from under the legs of men' (pers. comm. by email 20/01/11; see Gibbs and Mondu 2010). It will be interesting to see what the effect of the 2010 announcement of Pope Benedict XVI relaxing the Catholic policy on condoms in relation to HIV will be in PNG. (On the limitations of the Pope's pronouncement on the use (or non-use) of condoms see Ch. 4, note 12.)

below). Apropos the recent debates in the anthropology of Christianity in PNG, and especially that between Joel Robbins (2010) and Mark Mosko (2010a and b) she suggests that conversion to Christianity has entailed neither the radical rupture to a more individuated self which Robbins claims for the Urapmin (2005) nor the persistence of Strathern's 'dividual' persons, engaged in spiritual as well as material transactions, as Mosko claims for the Mekeo (2010a). She considers both representations of personhood, individual and relational are co-existing 'albeit sometimes conflicting' (Hermkens Ch. 4: 116; see Wardlow 2006: 19–20).

3. Implanting western justice and law

Third, I ponder the transformations of engendered violence which have accompanied what Jean Zorn (Ch. 5) calls the 'implanting' of western modes of justice and the law.¹⁴ I here briefly distil the connected insights of Zorn's chapter and those of Fiona Hukula and Christine Stewart.

Zorn's (2010, Ch. 5) extraordinary review of cases of rape heard in the PNG courts by both expatriate Australian and Papua New Guinean judges certainly makes for disturbing and depressing reading (see Ch. 8). Her chapter subverts the hopes of those who see western-style policing and courts as likely to deliver more justice to women who are victims of such violence. She shows how rather than evincing the legal ideals of cool reason, the decisions made by male judges in these cases are, for the most part, an extraordinary concoction of emotion and masculinist presumption about victims of rape in particular and women in general. Many of the notorious myths of rape which circulate in contexts in Australia and America are revived in fresh milieu: that it is primarily an act of strangers, that women consented if they did not shout out, physically resist or immediately report the rape; that women's uncorroborated testimony is untrustworthy in general and especially about rape; and that women who drink and have sex are 'bad' women who don't deserve to be seen as victims of rape. In a recent paper (Zorn 2010), she shows how judicial suspicions about women's uncorroborated testimony have persisted in PNG long after they have been cogently critiqued and dispatched in many other common law countries through processes of legal reform.

Zorn (Ch. 5) traces the sexism of many judges in PNG to three sources: the indigenous pre-colonial cultures of PNG, the cultures of the colonisers, Britain, Germany and Australia and the rapid and uneven development which characterises PNG's post-colonial history. Moreover she discerns sexism in the prevailing sub-culture in which judges are educated, which privileges reason and logic (deemed masculine) over emotion and unreason (deemed feminine; see

¹⁴ Apropos similar processes in the dispersal of law and international protocols, Sally Engle Merry (2006) speaks of 'transplants'.

Lloyd 1984). The masculinist predisposition of the law results in adjudications whereby the physical injury of the victim is seen as more real or tangible than her emotional injury. She suggests that male judges find it hard to empathise with the female victims' emotional pain. Even when rape cases are reported in such graphic detail as to constitute pornography, the protected anonymity of the victim together with the use of first person affidavits generates a curiously hybrid genre: eliciting sexual excitation while simultaneously detaching the reader from embodied identification with the person who suffered (see also Zorn 2010 for a detailed analysis of narrative identification in judgements of rape cases in PNG).

Some judges, both Australian and indigenous, are starting to break free from such judicial sexism in sentencing, partly because of changing attitudes but also in response to the gravity of rape in PNG. According to Zorn rapes per capita in PNG are high and increasing and there is an alarming prevalence of violent pack rapes, typically occurring in the wake of household or automobile robberies. In response to this, PNG's judges first devised sentencing guidelines, which increased the 'starting point' for sentences to around eight years (many were under five years prior to 1987) and added more years for 'aggravating factors' including undue or extreme violence, acts of 'sexual perversion' (such as anal rape or rape with objects), if the victim was very old or very young, or if the rapist was in a position of trust or authority. The *Criminal Code (Sexual Offences and Crimes Against Children) Act*, passed in 2002, was designed to raise the 'starting point' to fifteen years for non-aggravated rape, but some judges have disregarded this Act in their judgements, ignoring its existence, disingenuously misinterpreting or manipulating the wording of the Act to award sentences even lighter than those suggested by the earlier guidelines, and in some cases even claiming its unconstitutionality (without warrant). The same judges (particularly Justices Cannings, Sevua, Lenalia) are using conservative legal arguments to challenge a 'quantum leap' in sentences. These judges, claims Zorn, are the very judges whose judgements evince an incapacity to empathise with the female victims of rape.

By contrast those who have manifested such empathy in their judgements are more likely to use the 2002 Act to impose far tougher sentences on rapists and to cite the PNG Constitution to declare women's equal humanity with men and their rights to travel freely without the threat of rape and gender violence (Justices Injia and Kandakasi are named as exemplary). Still, in some of the recent judgements even of these more empathetic jurists, there is a tendency to show differential empathy to women on the basis of ethnicity, locale and education. Whereas in the past white women who were victims were often treated more generously than indigenous women (see Zorn 2010), now it seems that the most

deserving victims are those good village women, who are portrayed as innocent and naïve, in contrast to more educated urban women (Zorn, Ch. 5; see also Zimmer-Tamakoshi 1993a, 1993b).

Fiona Hukula's 'Conversations with Convicted Rapists' (Ch. 6) offers a fascinating counterpoint to Zorn's, from the perspective of the men who perpetrated such acts of rape, incest and indecent assault. Fifty men, all incarcerated as prisoners in Bomana Prison outside Port Moresby, were interviewed by Thomas Semo and Hukula, on a project initiated at the National Research Institute (NRI). Hukula suggests that as a woman her interviews were less successful, because she was bound by cultural protocols of not discussing sex with men and because she was mistakenly thought to be a lawyer intent on lengthening their sentences. By contrast, in interviews with Semo, inmates comfortably offered frank perceptions and retrospections on their acts of rape. Semo also conducted interviews with male Correctional Service officers employed to guard these men and with whom they had close daily contact.

Hukula's chapter underlines how frank these inmates were about their actions (see also Ch. 8, about men's disarming honesty apropos their gender violence). Moreover, their retrospective accounts as to why they raped yield some unexpected, if gruesome, insights into changing masculinities in PNG. Some explanations of their acts are expected and stereotypical: claims of the irresistible 'nature' of male sexual desire (see Ch. 5),¹⁵ claims of the inexorable allure of certain women, claims of sexual frustration due to being denied sex by partners or to being unmarried, claims to be under the influence of alcohol, claims that male friends or kin pressured them into gang rape. Some explanations are rather less expected for those who live beyond PNG. Many such accounts highlight desires for revenge and retribution not just against the individual female victim but her family. There are stories of prior thefts, of unreciprocated debts, of previous killings through witchcraft, of pre-existing tense group relations, of humiliation occasioned by the victim or her family. A common refrain is that the offender was 'set up' or even coerced into the act of rape: by his brothers, by his wife's first husband, by the victim's family and/or the victim herself, even by the 'inevitable' consequences of watching pornography. Significantly for those who have argued that female consent is not so much an issue for rapes in PNG as her male kin's rights in her person (e.g. Borrey 2000), several rapists exculpated their acts by insisting that the women consented (sometimes allegedly under

15 This claim about the irresistible 'nature' of male sexual desire is significantly at odds with prior practices of sexual restraint after the birth of children or prolonged periods of ritual celibacy in many parts of PNG, practices which were thought rather to increase men's strength and status, often because sexual contact with women was thought to pollute or emasculate men (see Herdt 1981; Jolly 2001a). In some parts of PNG men were thought to be less troubled by sexual desire than women. Wardlow (2006) reports that the ideal Huli man was cool, reasonable and not very desirous while women were thought hot and emotional with undisciplined sexual desire. Christianity might be doubly implicated here both in the termination of such practices and in the ideology that husbands have conjugal rights to have regular sex with their wives (see Chs 1, 4).

the influence of alcohol) but then later recanted, and with the assistance of their families, charged them with rape. In many of these retrospective accounts men insist they were not so much the perpetrators of rape as themselves victims: of desperate or unfortunate circumstances or of being 'set up' by the machinations or coercions of others. There is a clear deflection of individual responsibility here, perhaps through a stress on relational personhood, as well as 'disarming honesty'.

These individual, even idiosyncratic, stories might be counterposed with what Hukula alludes to at the beginning of her chapter, those generalised explanations of gendered violence in PNG as due to shared 'culture' or reified social norms. The NRI research project was designed rather to explore the specificities of the individual experience of these rapists, according to their age, region, marital status, education and economic situation. Her chapter suggests that explanations which only address the specificities of the embodied power relation between the individual man who rapes and his female victim fail to address the wider social context in which rape occurs in PNG. Although ultimately adjudged in the courts in terms of individuated models of consent and coercion, rapes clearly implicate broader questions not just of unequal gendered power (see Ch. 5) but the perils of profound social transformations in PNG. This chapter thus offers a distinctive and unusual perspective which reveals much about men who rape and about what has been dubbed 'embattled' or 'troubled' masculinities in the context of encroaching modernities in PNG (see Ch. 2; Jolly 2000).

The final chapter in this trio is that by Christine Stewart (Ch. 7), a confronting analysis of the extreme violence of the police raid on the Three Mile Guesthouse in Port Moresby in 2004. Police raids on sites of alleged *raskols* in settlements and prostitutes in 'brothels' are not unusual in PNG, perpetuating a colonial pattern of violent frontier pacification into the present (Dinnen 1998a: 260–61, 1998b). But this raid proved exceptional in many ways. That extraordinary event involved not only the brutal arrests of many women alleged to be selling sex but, initially, a number of men. Some of these were likely customers in the bar as were the women; some were perhaps clients of those women who were selling sex. But, they too were accused, alongside the women, of selling sex.

In the police violence which ensued, which involved physical beatings, rapes, (one with an air freshener can), forced fellatio and the forcible ingestion of condoms and a humiliating parade at gunpoint down the streets of Port Moresby, the women were subject to a level of sexualised violence which far exceeded that meted out to the men. Women were charged and kept in prison for days without food, washing facilities or medical attention while the forty men caught

up in the raid were swiftly released. Three weeks later all charges of 'living on the earnings of prostitution' were dropped in the absence of proper search warrants.¹⁶ But in the ensuing media frenzy, which inaccurately perpetuated the myth that the men were prostitutes too, the ideal of gender equality was paradoxically and, perhaps cynically, used to argue that the men should have been treated just as badly.

Stewart (Ch. 7) thus reveals the fragility of the discourse of human rights in PNG and how it can be too readily dismissed as a set of foreign values funded by foreign aid donors (see below) or, as in this case, used by some lawyers and commentators to perversely argue that gender equality should have meant equal violence and humiliation for men. In PNG, men who were alleged to have sold sex to other men have typically been charged with the more serious crime of sodomy (Stewart 2008). Stewart demonstrates how the violent and criminalising forces of the law have conjoined with ancestral and Christian ideals of wanton, polluting women in the moral panics around the figure of the *pamuk meri* (TP: prostitute, harlot, a woman who sells sex). And, as is clear from that powerful image of the ingested condom, HIV is also focal in this narrative of fear, pollution and retribution.

4. HIV and introduced biomedical models

So, finally let me highlight the importance of the HIV epidemic in reconfiguring relations between men and women in PNG and in the broader debates about gender, modernity and violence. This is not the specific subject of any particular paper in this volume although it has been the focus of much excellent recent research and practice by Lawrence Hammar (2008, 2010) and Elizabeth Reid nationally (e.g. 2010a, b, c, d and e), by Katherine Lepani both nationally and in the Trobriands (2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2010), by Nicole Haley in Duna country (2010), by Naomi McPherson and Richard Eves in New Britain and New Ireland and by several other ethnographers in collections edited by Alison Dundon and Charles Wilde (2007), Richard Eves and Leslie Butt (2008) and Vicki Luker and Sinclair Dinnen (2010). The reality of HIV and the spectre of AIDS resurfaces in many of these papers: it haunts Philip Gibbs' depiction of Simbu (see Ch. 3 and Gibbs 2009, Gibbs and Mondu 2010); it frames the stories of Alice and Julie as told by Hermkens (Ch. 4) and it is focal to Christine Stewart's story of the Three Mile Guest House raid (Ch. 7).

Gibbs reports a pervasive stigma about HIV in Simbu: if a family member is suspected of dying from AIDS, they are buried quickly so as to preclude

¹⁶ See Stewart (2011) for a persuasive assessment of how police and judges have both thwarted the intent of the new law on 'prostitution' which was to criminalise not those selling sex but those who were living off their earnings, such as pimps or owners of brothels.

the possibility of diagnosis of witchcraft. Alice's story as told by Hermkens graphically reveals the intimate relation between gender violence and HIV. When Alice's daughter is gang raped Alice is afraid that she has contracted AIDS. She is also fearful for herself given her ex-husband's affairs and his violent abuse of her, including his coercive insistence on conjugal sex. Given her strong Catholic commitment as a follower of the Legion of Mary she refuses to use condoms but relies on God for protection. Both Alice and her daughter tested negative, a fact she construes not as their good fortune but as God's divine will. Catholics oppose condoms not only because they are seen to interfere with God's plan but also because they are thought to encourage sexual promiscuity and hence the spread of AIDS. The late Father Golly, at the time national spiritual director of the Legion of Mary, advised his followers to avoid AIDS by advocating not the government mantra of ABC 'abstinence, be faithful, condoms' but ABBA: 'abstinence, be faithful, be faithful and abstinence'. Both Alice and Anna, who works as a nurse at Madang hospital, are caught in a dilemma, between the government program of promoting condoms as part of the ABC policy and their Catholic faith. They usually choose the latter, telling both clients and patients that they should adhere to God's will and refuse condoms (see Wardlow 2008). Only if they are undisciplined 'like animals' should they resort to condoms.

Such images of sinful sex and of moral decay which suffuse the responses of various churches to HIV appear to have far more effect on popular perceptions than government poster campaigns and public health awareness programs (the messages of which have been regularly interpreted in ways different to those intended, see McPherson 2008). Hermkens (Ch. 4) reports on healing ministries and pamphlets which promise that faith in God will cure AIDS (along with 'family violence'). And, as other research has revealed (Eves 2003, 2008), the apocalyptic visions of an evangelical Christianity have often converged with the public health panics about the 'end times'. These 'end times' are distinctly gendered since undue blame is being given to women as source and vector of the disease, as witches (see Haley 2010) or *pamuk meri*, while men are usually exempted from blame.

This is dramatically revealed in the chapter by Stewart. The excessive police violence which occasioned the raid on the Three Mile Guesthouse was patently licensed by the spectre of AIDS. The Metropolitan Police Superintendent said that the 'raid had been conducted to prevent sex workers from contracting and spreading HIV' (Ch. 7). This intimate connection between sex work and HIV is distilled in the material sign of the condom: simultaneously seen as enabling and even promoting sexual promiscuity and 'prostitution' and as the means, though contested, for protection against HIV. In one of the newspaper editorials cited by Stewart the spread of the virus is likened to a 'bushfire', searing young girls. The poverty and desperation of those women who sell sex is acknowledged

but this newspaper editor indulges in predictions that they will perform all fall victim to HIV and be 'among those anonymous carcasses to be bulldozed into the mass burial pit of Bomana cemetery' (Ch. 7). And so the stigma of the disease and the threat of death are congealed in the bodies of its unnamed, depersonalised victims (paralleling Zorn's insights on the anonymity of female rape victims).

Stewart situates this stigma in the long history of how women (and especially 'prostitutes') rather than their male partners were perceived as the source of sexually transmitted diseases since nineteenth-century laws in both France and Britain tried to monitor and control 'contagious diseases'. The British laws had long-distance implications with the establishment of lock hospitals and surveillance measures in the colonies of India and Africa and the British territory of Papua (see Lepani 2008b, 2012; Reed 1997). She connects this history to the more recent transplantation of the global HIV discourse to PNG and shows how this has often exacerbated local stigma, focused as it is on isolating 'high risk' groups which are labelled by a plethora of acronyms: MSM (men who have sex with men), FSW (female sex workers), and so on. Hammar (2008, 2010) and others have queried this fixation in public health discourse and suggested that those most at risk are likely to be those wives with unfaithful husbands who, unlike most sex workers, are not using condoms. Lepani (2008a, 2008b, 2008c, 2012) has eloquently demonstrated the negative effects of this global language of risk and death and how it has been localised both in the specific context of the Trobriands and more broadly across the nation. She has also demonstrated the limits of the individualist biomedical model for a country like PNG where relational concepts of the person still prevail over more individuated models. Inappropriate models are surely also apparent in the typification of the women who sell sex as 'prostitutes' or 'sex workers', as if their lives as mothers, sisters, daughters, partners and wives are irrelevant (see Wardlow 2004; Ch. 7; Lepani 2012; Stewart 2011 for compelling examinations of labelling the selling of sex, including the phrase 'transactional sex').

Stewart's argument that global HIV discourse, an introduced criminal legal system, Christian moralism and middle-class exclusionism have congealed to form the scar of stigma of HIV in PNG is compelling. Such stigma not only hampers diagnosis, prevention and care of those with HIV but generates fear, lack of empathy and even releases the blood of torture and death for those suffering, or suspected to be suffering, from AIDS. This is patent in several witch-killings in the Highlands (Haley 2010). But the spectre of AIDS is also used to justify, as in the Three Mile Guesthouse raid, violence against *pamuk meri*, and seemingly, by analogical reasoning, all women who are thought wayward or eluding the control of men.

Combating violence? Translating research into policy and practice

As a totality, this book thus focuses our attention on how patterns of gender violence in PNG are intimately imbricated with major ongoing social transformations in that country. It is not just a matter of understanding the proximate causes to the vast array of individual acts which constitute gender violence but the structures which predispose and enable that violence. Gender inequality is a crucial enabling structure, but though some have seen this as so pervasive and persistent as to be part of PNG 'culture' (see Macintyre 1998 for an overview; Macintyre 1987; and Lepani 2008c on the Massim), the character and dimensions of gender inequality have changed dramatically in alignment with the huge social changes depicted in this volume: the combined influences of commodity economics, Christian conversion and the introduced regimes of law and biomedicine in the context of the HIV epidemic. The gendered culture of PNG's modernity is thus as much implicated as the gendered culture of tradition (see Merry 2006: 12ff, 2009: 2).

Major social transformations in PNG have yielded a surfeit of combustible material which is often concentrated and even fuelled through the prism of gender. Women, and especially powerful, wayward or resistant women, are often blamed for those negative consequences of social change which occasion inequalities and resentments. But, given this, how might we then address the question of how our research connects to policy and practice, to past and future attempts to combat violence? Does the evidence assembled in this volume suggest a new approach?

Macintyre (Ch. 8) stresses that many of the aid and development programs initiated to combat gender violence are relatively innocent of, and even ignorant of, the rich anthropological and legal research in PNG to date, and the huge burgeoning global literature on gender violence from the perspectives of the diverse disciplines of anthropology, psychology, medicine and the law. Research has rarely been well articulated with programs and practice despite the huge efforts of many organisations such as UNIFEM, the World Bank, Amnesty International and especially AusAID (but see AusAID 2009). And, as Richard Eves (2006) suggests in his comprehensive report for Caritas Australia, large-scale public programs to promote awareness of gender violence and to reduce its incidence have to date proved relatively ineffective in PNG (as elsewhere, see Merry 2009: 2). Like the carefully designed and expensive posters to combat AIDS, they have often been subject to creative interpretations wildly at variance from the intentions of their creators. The work of awareness-raising through theatre groups has had rather mixed, even negative, results. As Naomi McPherson (2008) has shown for West New Britain, local theatre performances

can reinforce gendered caricatures about good faithful village wives versus *pamuk meri* and portray the latter, rather than men, as the main source of HIV. Eves (2006) recommends shifting the focus of intervention from women to men, and from mass public campaigns to small awareness-raising groups. He advocates small, all-male groups with male facilitators as the most successful mode of raising awareness of gender violence and changing men's attitudes, in accord with models deployed in overseas countries. This has been initiated by Philip Gibbs and others working for the Catholic Church and Caritas Australia.

The evidence we have from Macintyre's experience over four decades as both an anthropologist and a consultant to AusAID in PNG on programs dedicated to improving the awareness of police and promoting a human rights approach to gender violence is that awareness-raising and dedicated programs may have little effect and indeed can sometimes prove counterproductive (Ch. 8). A woman who participated in one of Macintyre's workshops, and was thus made newly aware of her rights, challenged her violent husband only to be beaten up even more violently. She suggests that direct programs expressly designed to reduce gender violence may be less successful than broader projects of women's economic and social empowerment.

Macintyre (Ch. 8) cites the well-known example of how reduced population growth in countries like India has been achieved less through the direct methods of family planning, contraception, safe abortion and campaigns for women's reproductive rights and more through improving education and economic conditions for women (Sen 1990; Macintyre Ch. 8). She advocates a similar indirection in relation to gender violence.

'Considering what might hasten or alter the gender inequalities that underpin violence, I think that the Millennium Development goals aimed at empowering women more generally necessarily have to precede campaigns that aim to combat violence' (Ch. 8). And yet, as we have seen from several chapters in this book, including Macintyre's own, those few PNG women who have benefited from being well educated and/or have succeeded in business or government employment have also been subject to punitive gender violence, like the majority of their poorer fellow female citizens living in the towns and villages of PNG.

Macintyre also suggests that the very mode of engagement of foreign donors and the neoliberal precepts which have suffused aid and development programs in recent time are part of the problem. Like most global agencies, government and non-government, AusAID the major donor for development in PNG has been heavily influenced by economic rationalism and the technocratic modes of 'audit culture' (see Strathern 2000). AusAID outsources most of its programs to commercial companies through contracts which place high priority on processes of monitoring, auditing and evaluation and 'deliverables': the numerous reviews

and reports mandated at each stage of a project. Macintyre estimates that in her work as a consultant in PNG, about 60 per cent of her time was spent reporting on what she was doing rather than doing it. The arcane, technical requirements of many projects are completed by foreign experts rather than Papua New Guineans, resulting in what has been called ‘boomerang aid’ (where most money is spent on Australian consultants) and novel forms of tied aid, shaped by the moral imperative of ‘accountability’ to taxpayers and donors rather than to the recipients of aid (Kilby 2010). Unequal and dependent relations between donor and recipient countries and their nationals persist despite all the public relations patina of partnership and collaborative research. Like much of the rhetoric about diversity and equality, Macintyre sees this as empty talk.

Empowerment and agency: Changing persons in the era of human rights?

If one accepts that these dual modes of personhood [relational and individual] can coexist, if in highly contested ways, then a variety of questions emerge. For one, might a transformation be occurring with more individualistic expressions of agency coming to the fore?... And if ‘modernity’ had something to do with an increase in individualism, what is it about modernity that has this effect? Further, how might the expression of a more individualized sensibility be gendered? (Wardlow 2006: 20).

Empowering women, as many have suggested, is a curious concept. It seems to simultaneously imply that women’s power is there to be revealed *and* that it needs to be animated or even endowed by others. The cruel reality is that power often has to be wrested from men, who are violently resisting challenges to their control. As Martha Macintyre stresses (Ch. 8), if women are to be ‘empowered’ to resist or reduce violence, men are going to have to be disempowered. The promotion of human *raits* (TP: rights) implies the erosion of the *rait* (TP: right, authority) of men to rape, beat, maim and murder women. As Macintyre insists, it is a romance to presume this is a ‘win-win’ situation, in which both women and men will benefit.

There are several examples in this book of the hazards of women’s empowerment in individuated acts of resistance to gender violence. Wives who resist their husbands’ beatings with their own violence or with righteous words about their ‘rights’ as equal citizens or Christians risk even more violence in retribution (see Chs 4 and 8). In a compelling examination of women’s ‘negative agency’ among the Huli, Wardlow (2006: 72–8) shows how wives can deploy more subtle subversions, by ‘forgetting’ their husband’s edicts, neglecting to garden

or cook, declining sex or even being careless about their menstrual blood. This can sap the husband's will and undermine his collective projects. In Wardlow's view (2006: 75) it inherently entails a more individualised expression of self. Ultimately this risks vilification and further violence. Such extremities cause many women and especially wives to self-harm, to lop off their fingers or even to hang or drown themselves. Rates of suicide among Huli women are extremely high (see also Counts 1993). The woman is typically blamed and the husband interprets this as an attack on himself, depriving him of her work and thus 'throwing away his bridewealth'. Thus, even this most extreme and desperate form of women's individual negative agency is ultimately encompassed by male agency and masculinist values.

More collective acts on the part of women to stop tribal fighting in the Highlands of PNG (see Garap 2000, 2004; Rumsey 2000) or to secure their share of employment in mining ventures (Ch. 2) may have proved more effective, but they are rare. Clearly the exercise of 'agency' is not just restricted to individual women, but male-dominated structures often inhibit their collective action (see Wardlow 2006: 69–72). We cannot optimistically imagine collective solidarity between women in PNG to redress men's power given the way in which they are routinely and powerfully divided by kinship, generation, language, religion, ethnicity and class. In matrilineal parts of PNG there were traditions of female collectivity associated with the reproductive power and regenerativity of matriclans and the influence women exerted over the transmission of land and leadership (see Lepani 2008c on the Trobriands; Macintyre 1987 on Tubetube; Saovana-Spriggs 2007 on Bougainville). But in much of PNG, the main contexts for women's solidarity have been the Christian churches, where the most efficacious expressions of women's collective agency have flourished in various women's groups (see Douglas 2003; Jolly 2003b). So what chance is there that, rather than being places where women are encouraged to submit to male authority, moralise about sinful *pamuk meri*, or suffer violence patiently, Christian churches and women's groups might become sites for combating gender violence and contribute to that broader economic and political empowerment which Macintyre perceives as a necessary predicate?

In an earlier paper on questions of 'domestic violence' and human rights I suggested (2000 [1996]) that some ni-Vanuatu women were resisting masculinist interpretations of the Bible, and transforming earlier missionary models of 'uplifting' indigenous women through their own appropriation of ideas of 'bringing the light' into their lives. I argued that there was a universalism in the rhetoric of such Christian women which emphasised the transnational similarities of women despite their differences (cf. Robbins 2004). I concluded that these indigenous Christian ideas were important in laying the historical foundations for the acceptance and promulgation of more secular notions of

human rights by some ni-Vanuatu women (especially by the late Grace Mera Molisa and particularly in the capital of Port Vila; Jolly 1997, 2005; but see Patterson 2001 on the rural context of North Ambrym). Since the time of my writing, this ‘vernacularisation’ of human rights in Vanuatu has been challenged by men, including a backlash movement on Espiritu Santo, which called itself ‘Violence Against Men’. As John Taylor has shown (2008b), this movement was especially opposed to proposed new legislation apropos marriage and the foreign funding of NGOs working to protect women who were victims of gender violence. They challenged human or women’s *raets* (BIS: rights) with the notion of male *raet* (BIS: right).

The context of gender violence in PNG is different and evinces a divergent scale of complexity and diversity. The effects of commodity economy in terms of extractive industries, the importance of male wage labour and nationalist consumption patterns are far greater (see Filer and Macintyre 2006; Foster 2002). But here too we can discern how such gendered conflicts can reanimate reified divisions between a male-defined *kastam* and introduced ideas espoused by women which are reviled as ‘foreign’. It is often claimed that the universalist values of human rights and the claims of ‘culture’ or the national sovereignty of countries like PNG are essentially opposed. Indeed in two chapters in this volume we hear opinions expressed in these terms: a PNG man adjudges that human rights will never become ‘popular’ in PNG and that it will take fifty to one hundred years to stop men beating their wives (Ch. 8) and that the ‘lofty ideals’ of international human rights discourse sit uneasily with popular discourses in PNG which are accepting of gender violence and gender inequality and which blame victims (Ch. 7).¹⁷

But how far can we accept this dichotomy, seeing the ‘culture’ of PNG as necessarily opposed to the universal aspirations of human rights? And who is speaking for culture? Merry (2006) has persuasively argued that there is a problem with the ‘culture’ concept in debates about human rights. The problem is also a paradox. At the same time as older conceptions of ‘culture’ as shared norms, enduring traditions or national essences, have been extensively challenged, especially by anthropologists, and have given way to views of culture as contested, changing and permeable, ‘culture’ has too often been used in the human rights context, as in many development arenas, in a reified and ultimately a sexist and racist way (Merry 2006: 10–16; see also Lepani 2010). Patriarchal traditions in Pakistan are labelled ‘culture’ but those challenging such traditions are excluded from ‘culture’. Genital cutting in Africa and the Middle East is seen as cultural and labelled ‘mutilation’ but genital reconstructive surgery in the United States is construed as an individual choice (Merry 2006: 7ff).

¹⁷ We should note however the way in which both the PNG Constitution of 1975 and later human rights protocols have been cited by some indigenous judges in cases of rape (see Zorn Ch. 5).

As this volume shows, although gender violence in contemporary PNG is grounded in past practices, its forms and meanings have changed with the profound social transformations engendered over the last few decades. It has assumed new shapes in the diverse and dynamic cultures of Papua New Guinean modernity. Moreover, although human rights may be dismissed by its opponents in PNG as something 'foreign', western, even Australian, the global evidence is rather that human rights discourse has multiple origins and that it is being locally appropriated and vernacularised in many parts of the world (see Hilsdon *et al.* 2000; Grimshaw *et al.* 2001; Merry 2006, 2009). Although the genealogy of human rights discourse is typically plotted back to the individualist and masculinist models of the European Enlightenment, given its transnational articulations over the last thirty years, this is increasingly looking like a dubious origin myth.

It is true as Merry acknowledges that

Human rights promote ideas of individual autonomy, equality, choice, and secularism even when these ideas differ from prevailing cultural norms and practices. Human rights ideas displace alternative visions of social justice that are less individualistic and more focused on communities and responsibilities, possibly contributing to the cultural homogenization of local communities (Merry 2009: 4).

But Merry's books are also replete with examples of how, as human rights discourse is translated and vernacularised, it has assumed not just the local inflections of different languages but absorbed some of the influences of divergent social philosophies and notions of the person. Moreover, as has been often argued, the individualist and liberal emphasis of European models of rights has been complemented with more collectivist ideas of 'rights' as in movements for the rights of indigenous peoples, workers, migrants, refugees, sexual minorities and even 'women' (see Dickson-Waiko 2001; Merry 2006).¹⁸

How then might we bring these insights back to the disturbing and depressing portrayal of gender violence in PNG presented between the covers of this book? In reading and thinking and dreaming about these chapters, I have often been haunted by those twin recurring figures in contemporary PNG culture: the good Christian wife and the bad wayward woman, if not a *pamuk meri* then a

18 The recognition of women's rights as human rights was a protracted and difficult struggle (see Merry 2006, 2009). The international human rights machinery was initially established, in the wake of the Holocaust to deal with violations of human rights by states, and the canonical figure of someone whose human rights had been violated was the victim of genocide, state torture or political imprisonment. And yet Amnesty International, one of the major organisations which dealt with political prisoners, also took up the cause to argue that women's rights are human rights. Moreover, as Merry suggests, 'In the 1990s, gender violence was defined as an important human rights violation for the first time. Now it is considered the centerpiece of women's human rights' (2009: 1).

woman who eludes male control. They seem to embody hypostatized visions of the relational versus the individuated person. But, as Holly Wardlow (2006) perceptively suggests in the quote that heralds this section, in practice these two figures, these rival models of persons, though conflicting can also co-exist. This is clear in those alleged transformations from relational to individual persons along the four dimensions of social change discussed above. Like Wardlow, in any discussion of ‘incipient individualism’, I consider it crucial to connect conversion to Christianity with changes in material life, especially the commoditisation of economy (see also LiPuma 1998; Foster 2002), and the introduction of novel legal and biomedical regimes.¹⁹

It is very hard to be optimistic about significant reductions in patterns of gender violence in PNG in the near future. Dedicated small group work with men as proposed by Eves (2006) and broader programs of economic and social empowerment for women as envisioned by Macintyre (Ch. 8) are both excellent suggestions from long-term observers of PNG. Zimmer-Tamakoshi (Ch 2) makes important suggestions about potential transformation to the bride price system such that it is ‘curtailed and cut off from local and global market forces’ and that there is a more equitable distribution of mining wealth to ‘landowners’ across generations and genders. The innovative methodologies of ‘community conversations’ deployed by Elizabeth Reid and the team of the Papua New Guinean Sustainable Development Program offer a promising path for social transformation in villages in several provinces, which should not only increase HIV awareness, prevention and care but redress gender violence. But I also hazard a final suggestion that the Christian churches might be crucial in many such efforts. Efforts to work with men in small groups associated with churches along the lines of Christian women’s groups might be a better place to start than more secular state-sponsored workshops. Such groups have already been initiated by Philip Gibbs, one of our contributors, over the last five years in the Western Province.²⁰ And although we have heard the dismal litanies of many Christians who legitimise gender inequality and even gender violence and espouse the values of submissive domesticated wives, there is an alternative voice to be heard in Christianity; a voice which promotes gender equality and peace, and even the projects of women’s empowerment through education and public leadership. Let us hope such submerged voices might be articulated more powerfully in the future and let us hope they are heard.

19 This is the basis of a five-year Laureate project for which I have been funded by the Australian Research Council, called *Engendering persons, transforming things: Christianities, commodities and individualism in Oceania* (FL 100100196).

20 Gibbs notes that these ‘men’s matters’ workshops, of about forty men from across the Western Province, have met annually for a week at the invitation of Bishop Cote of Kiunga, and that this has been ‘an interesting and productive experience’. They were in part a follow up to Eves’ report for Caritas Australia, and Gibbs hopes to write about them in the near future (pers. comm. by email 20/01/11).

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