GENDERED MORAL ECONOMIES OF TRANSNATIONAL MIGRATION:

MOBILIZING SHAME AND FAITH IN MIGRANT-ORIGIN VILLAGES OF

CENTRAL JAVA, INDONESIA

by

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Despite everyday public and private stories of the injuries and deaths of Indonesian labor migrants, hundreds of thousands continue to migrate annually. These transnational movements are shaped by international and national discourses and policies, framing migration in terms of economic development or human trafficking. This dissertation describes how such broad discursive and structural processes shape the subjectivities of those in migrant-origin villages. Departing from scholarly attention to migrants' experiences in destination countries, I argue that precarious labor migration is practically and financially sustained, tolerated, or encouraged in Central Javanese migrant-origin villages through gendered and moral discourses, despite the high risks and costs to villagers in terms of finance, health, and mortality.

Based on participant observation and interviews conducted between 2012 and 2015 in Cilacap and Yogyakarta, I make three main points. First, migrant/non-migrant categories are messier and more complicated than they first appear. Second, whether migrations are considered "good" or "bad" varies according to the positionalities of villagers, NGO staff, and state representatives. Third, migration practices and discourses are highly gendered, which impacts how migrants, their kin, and neighbors experience and perceive migration-related risk, success, and

failure. These support my main argument: that Cilacap and Yogyakarta residents develop, mobilize, and practice gendered shame and faith as strategies to negotiate the risks associated with migration, return, and staying behind. They do so by circulating blame and shame to migrants, migrants' families, recruitment agents, or foreign employers. Evoking fate and destiny, villagers also attribute agency to non-human and divine actors in determining migration outcomes.

I argue that these multi-scalar moral discourses and responses to transnational circulations of bodies, labor, and money constitute gendered moral economies of migration. Many scholars, activists, and state officials consider villagers' narratives of shame and fate an indication of their ignorance and resignation to structural and supernatural forces. Instead, I argue that they enable residents to negotiate arbitrary migration processes, by framing and explaining the past, in order to act strategically on the present, for better futures. Through these narratives, migrant-origin residents justify and critique migration's "collateral damages" and sustain faith in migration's promises of better lives.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Abbreviations:

ABK (*Anak Buah Kapal*): A broad term referring to sea-farers, typically men who work on fishing boats, cargo ships, or passenger cruise ships

BNP2TKI (*Badan Nasional Penempatan dan Perlindungan Tenaga Kerja Indonesia*): National Agency for the Placement and Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers

BP3TKI (*Balai Pelayanan Penempatan dan Perlindungan Tenaga Kerja Indonesia*): Office for the Service, Placement, and Protection of Migrant Worker, a local branch of BNP2TKI

KTKLN (*Kartu Tenaga Kerja Luar Negiri*): Overseas Migrant Worker Card, a compulsory identity card required by the Indonesian government for migrant workers (typically in domestic, construction, and service labor industries) to leave the country for work

IOM (International Organisation of Migration)

MUI (*Majelis Ulama Indonesia*): National Council of Ulama Indonesia. The *ulama* is a body of scholars trained in Islamic law and science, usually seen as authorities of interpreting Islamic doctrine and law (Hooker 2003). In Indonesia, this is usually represented by MUI, a body comprising of the majority of Indonesian's Muslim groups with various approaches to Islam.

NGO (Non-Governmental Organizations)

SBMI (*Serikat Buruh Migran Indonesia*): National Migrant Labor Union of Indonesia

PPTKIS (*Perusahaan Penempatan Tenaga Kerja Indonesia Swasta*): Privatized/Commercial Agency for the Placement of Indonesian Migrant Workers. Besides placing workers in jobs abroad, PPTKIS are also typically involved in recruiting and training migrants prior to their departure

PRT (*Pekerja/Pembantu Rumah Tangga*): Domestic Worker/ Helper

TKI (*Tenaga Kerja Indonesia*): Indonesian Migrant Worker

TKW (*Tenega Kerja Wanita*): Female Migrant Worker

Commonly used Bahasa Indonesian terms:

Kodrat: Islamic concept referring to fixed gender roles, where a woman's *kodrat* is to care for her children, husband, and domestic chores, while a man's *kodrat* is to provide for his family

Malu: Shame

Nasib: From the Arabic term "naseeb", meaning fate or one's share in life as given by God.

Pahlawan devisa: Foreign exchange hero

Takdir: From the Arabic word "taqdir", meaning destiny and predestination

N.B. With reference to the Indonesian rupiah (IDR), I roughly convert the amounts based on the average and standard exchange rate of United States Dollar (USD) 1 to IDR 10,000.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

1.0   TRANSNATIONAL MIGRATION, MORALITY, AND RISK

Boundary crossers can have unusual sacredness and power, not just danger and risk. (Heyman and Symons 2012: 547)

…Idealisation of movement, or transformation of movement into a fetish, depends upon the exclusion of others who are already positioned as not free in the same way. (Ahmed 2013 (2004): 152)

1.1   INTRODUCTION

An estimated six million documented and undocumented Indonesians currently work overseas, typically in the Asia Pacific region, and Arab countries in the Persian Gulf. These transnational labor migrants are powerful moral symbols in the national imaginary.[1] They are simultaneously valorized and despised in national media: portrayed as "foreign exchange heroes" (Antara News 2012, Aug. 9; Jakarta Post 2014, Jan 26), "oppressed" victims of poverty and abuse abroad (Dagur 2013; Ford 2002; Kompas 2015, Oct 1), or selfish criminals (Kompas 2014, Nov 21; Sarigih 2014). These migrants serve as moral symbols in the sense that they are publically represented and identified with practices that are perceived as socially desirable or undesirable,

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[1] Since this dissertation focuses on transnational migrants, my use of the terms "migrant" and "migration" can be understood as transnational. When I refer to migration within Indonesia I use the qualifiers, "domestic" or "internal."

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admirable or dangerous, right or wrong. These moral judgments and attitudes are typically based on either an intuitive emotional response or conscious ethical reflection, or a combination of both (Heywood 2015; Keane 2014; Zigon 2014). Consequently, the Indonesian state, commercial, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have proposed and implemented various programs and policies targeted at Indonesians who are planning to work abroad, currently working abroad, or have returned from working abroad. These programs typically draw on or contest the often assumed economic advantages of migration, justifying their financial, practical or discursive interventions by representing the organization or group's moral obligations to and the moral imperatives of migrants and their families—how they should respond to the phenomenon of migration. For example, state and NGO-initiated financial education programs or entrepreneurship training programs aim to fulfil the state's or NGO's duty to "empower" diligent or struggling migrants and their families (BNP2TKI 2014; EdisiNews 2014). Media and public campaigns and reintegration programs act to "save" victims of trafficking." "Trafficking" is often a highly moralized term indicating a punishable wrong-doer (the human trafficker) and an innocent victim; it has been unevenly used to represent a variety of issues facing many Indonesian labor migrants, such as financial fraud and abuses by recruitment agents or employers (Ford and Lyons 2012; Lindquist 2013; Palmer 2012; see also Anderson and Andrijasevic 2008; Augustin 2005; Brennan 2014; Kempadoo et al. 2012). Additionally, negative sanctions by Islamic organizations and proposed plans by the state include calls to illegalize, "stop", or "ban" the migration and perceived exploitation of women as domestic workers (Wieringa 2006; Zubaidah 2015).

Departing from the extensive scholarly attention to migration processes and migrants' experiences in destination countries, I trace how migration, and its associated promises, risks, and rewards, are framed in gendered and moralizing terms by migrant-origin villagers. Contextualized

by these tendencies of institutions to moralize, categorize, and regulate gendered and precarious labor migration in Indonesia as well as globally, this dissertation shows how migrants, their kin, and neighbors, engage with, reproduce, or complicate these broader discourses and interventions. I argue that these multi-scalar moral discourses and responses to transnational circulations of bodies, labor, and finance constitute *gendered moral economies of migration.*

Despite widespread tragic public and private accounts of sickness and deaths of Indonesian migrant workers, some 400,000 Indonesians continue to migrate for work abroad annually (BNP2TKI 2014). In 2015, Indonesia received USD 10.5 billion worth of migrant remittances (Al-Azhari and Bisara 2016). These transnational circulations of bodies, labor, and finance are powerfully shaped by international political dynamics and socio-economic inequality (Ford and Lyons 2012; Kearney 1995; Massey et al. 2005 [1997]; Rudnyckyj 2004; Schiller et al. 2012; Silvey 2004). These include international and national discourses and polices and policies framing migration in terms of economic development or human trafficking. This dissertation describes how such broader discursive and structural processes mutually shape the everyday material and economic conditions of migrant-origin villages by drawing on participant observation and interviews conducted between 2012 and 2015 in migrant-origin villages of Central Java. I argue and show how precarious labor migration is practically and financially sustained, tolerated, or encouraged, to various degrees, in migrant-origin villages, through gendered and moral discourses of shame and faith, despite the often-publicized high risks and costs to villagers in terms of finance, health, and mortality.

Through ethnographic examples, I demonstrate how migrant-origin villagers develop and practice gendered faith to negotiate the risks associated with migration, return, and staying behind. They do so partially by circulating blame and shame to migrants, migrants' families, recruitment

agents, or foreign employers and "cultures." Through narratives of fate and destiny, they also attribute agency to non-human and divine actors in determining migration outcomes. Many scholars, activists, and state officials see these narratives of shame, fate, and destiny in terms of ignorance. Instead, I argue that these narratives enable migrants and residents to negotiate arbitrary and risky migration processes, by framing and explaining the past, in order to act strategically on the present, for better futures. Disputing common representations of migrant-origin villages as sites of ignorance and immobility, my objective is two-fold. On the one hand, I argue that villagers mobilize and develop shame and faith to variously explain, justify, and critique migration's "collateral damage" to families and villages— unwanted side effects produced by migration or its pursuit, including familial separation, divorce, deep financial debt, and economic inequality. On the other, these narratives of shame, fate, and destiny also serve to sustain faith in migration's promises of redemption, "development," and better lives. Villagers' gendered practices of shame and faith thus critically shape the transnational flows of labor and money.

1.2 THREE MAIN THEMES

This dissertation makes three main points that are related to three main bodies of literature. These three main points are supported throughout the dissertation, in the form of recurring themes. First, I show that migration is a messy process that exceeds and complicates common categories of those who go and those who stay behind. Second, I show that whether or not migrations are viewed as "good" or "bad", desired or undesired, vary widely according to the positionality of villagers, NGOs, and state representatives. Third, by examining how migration and the multi-scalar discourses surrounding it are highly gendered, I demonstrate their significant impact on how

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migrant-origin villagers experience and perceive migration-related risks, success, and failure, in terms of gender and morality.

1.2.1   Mobilities and Motilities

First, based on ethnographic data from migrant-origin villages, I complicate categories of "prospective," "current," "return" migrants and "non-migrants," and show how these terms are used and linked to one another in a multitude of surprising ways.[2] Migration studies have tended to look at the experiences of migrants in destination countries (Brennan 2014; Constable 2007; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994; Manalasan 2003; Yeoh and Huang 2000), or to trace links between migrant destination and origin countries (Levitt 2001; Gamburd 2000; McKay 2012; Parreñas 2005; Pratt 2012; Silvey 2006). They also examine experiences of "return migrants" (Kloppenburg and Peters 2012; Long and Oxfeld 2000; Ozden and Schiff 2007; Xiang et al. 2012) and "non-migrants" or those "left-behind" (Dreby 2009; Hannaford 2015; Hoang and Yeoh 2011; Toyota et al. 2007). In contrast, this dissertation looks at how migrant-origin villagers relate to and use these categories in fluid and changing ways, linked to their own ambivalent desires to migrate or to stay.

Migration studies have historically drawn from economic perspectives that emphasize "push" factors that motivate migrants to leave their countries (e.g. unemployment or political

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[2] For ease of reference, the following terms refer to migrants' current statuses or statuses at the time of research. Return migrants refer to those who have worked and lived in another country before returning to settle (either temporarily or permanently) in the country of origin; migrants refer to those currently working and living in another country; non-migrants are those who have never left their country of origin with intentions live or work abroad. While being sensitive to the instability of the distinctions between "documented" and "undocumented" migrants (also often referred to as "legal"/"illegal"), this dissertation uses the terms to refer to those with the right to live and work in the "host" country; those without the right to live or work in the "host" country; and "semi-documented" for those who may have the right to live in the "host" country but are working in violation to some or all conditions of their migrant status (Paraskevopoulou 2011: 118).

violence), in relation to "pull" factors that attract migrants to particular destination countries (e.g. labor shortages or the demand for cheaper migrant labor) (Massey et al 2005 [1997]). Current studies have largely shifted away from understanding migration in terms of what has been called a "sedentarist" view (Malkki 1992), where migrants "uproot themselves, leave behind home and country", to settle in destination countries (Schiller et al 1995: 48), and non-migrants are left behind. Unlike these images or implications of stasis, stability, and settlement, migration has been more recently been understood in terms of simultaneity (Levitt and Schiller 2004), relationality (Conradson and McKay 2007), or mobility (Hannam et al 2006). In these frameworks, migrants are understood as those "whose daily lives depend on multiple and constant interconnections across international borders and whose public identities are configured in relation to more than one nation-state" (Schiller et al 1995: 48). Scholars thus increasingly emphasize the fluidity of migrant categories and status; while current migrants may decide to return home to settle, return migrants may choose to migrate again, and non-migrants are also potentially future migrants (Cohen and Sirekci 2011; Constable 1999; Ley and Kobayashi 2005; Toyota et al 2007). Furthermore, migrants may go from being documented to undocumented, and vice versa over the course of days or a week, depending on their employment situations, or the contingent, unpredictable results of their appeal for residency, visa extensions or renewals (Constable 2014; Paraskevopoulou 2011).

Despite these more complex understandings of migrants' agency, mobility, and fluid identities, the mobility, and motility (potential for movement) of those considered "non-migrants" have not been given the same attention. Migration studies still tend to privilege the agency and views of migrants over those who do not cross borders, as encapsulated by the commonly used term "left-behind" to refer to non-migrants. The term "left-behind" suggests incorrectly that non-

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migrants— including migrants' peers, kin and residents of migrants' places of origin— are necessarily abandoned or surpassed by migrants in geographical and socio-economic terms. As Sara Ahmed puts it, "[The] idealisation of movement, or transformation of movement into a fetish, depends upon the exclusion of others who are already positioned as not free in the same way." (Ahmed 2013 [2004]: 152). Some scholars have recently criticized this tendency to treat non-migrants as "passive recipients of remittances, information, and care" (Reeves 2011: 557; Toyota et al. 2007). This dissertation thus responds to a call by Toyota et al. (2007) for a more ethnographic-based understanding of the emotional and relational experiences of those "left-behind" in migrant-origin communities.

My research highlights ways that migrant-origin villagers make or negotiate decisions to stay, although they might face pressures to migrate, and have the opportunities and resources to do so. I find useful the term and framework of "motilities" to refer to the individuals' *potential for transnational movements*.[3] The term emphasizes important aspects of transnational migration not fully captured by the dichotomy between "mobile" and "immobile" persons, or those who migrate and those left behind. As Mark Salter (2013) put it, "any understanding of the contemporary circulation must account not only for the facilitation and incarceration of specific groups, but of all the non-cases of mobility, those who are stopped before they start" (Salter 2013: 10; Kellerman 2012). In emphasizing that everyone has varying potential for transnational movement, this dissertation examines the views and experiences of migrant-origin villagers who decide to stay, those ambivalent about migration, and those who attempted to and failed to migrate.

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[3] The term motility is most commonly used in a physiological or biochemical sense, referring to a body or cell's embodied energy and ability for movement. It has been sparsely used in sociology by Zgymunt Bauman in *Liquid Modernity* (2000) to describe the ability to be mobile. The theorization of motility that I draw on is mainly that proposed by Vincent Kaufmann, Manfred Bergman and Dominique Joye (Kaufmann et al 2004).

To complicate migrant categories, this dissertation introduces a category of "migrants who do not migrate." I demonstrate how existing migrant categories dominant in scholarly and policy-oriented research are inadequate in recognizing other kinds of movement that are neither "transnational" nor simply "domestic/internal." Consequently, I argue that "migrants who do not migrate" expose important policy gaps in national, international, or non-governmental development programs, which typically target either "victims of trafficking" or "return migrants." Their experiences also point to the messiness of migration categories and relative motility in migrant-origin villages, where residents' capacity for movement and whether or not they decide and attempt to migrate, are significantly linked to shifting gendered moral expectations and subjectivities.

1.2.2   Morality, Ethics, and Development

Second, this dissertation examines what constitutes "good" or "bad" migration, "successful" or "failed" migrants, from multiple perspectives, including those of state agencies, NGOs, and residents of migrant-origin villagers. While state actors see migrant wealth and remittances to be central measures of "successful" migration and "development", I show that migrant-origin villagers see migrant money and debt in more complicated ways. Instead, Islamic and local notions of morality, piety, and fate, inform and constitute residents' views of migration, and its associated risks and rewards. These views consequently feed into villagers' own desires, questions, and ambivalence about migrating. In other words, I demonstrate how institutionalized and local gendered moral attitudes within Indonesia shape the diverse practical and discursive responses of migrant-origin villagers to migrant wealth and health, or migrant debt and injuries.

This dissertation is thus concerned with what constitutes morality, how it is differentially applied to men and women, and the mutual effects and consequences of moral discourses and practices on migration processes and patterns. My focus on the diverse moral landscape of migration builds on but departs from current studies of morality and migration. These have typically focused on the moral obligations or pressures that motivate migrants (Constable 2014; Faier 2007; Fioratta 2015; Hung 2014; Parreñas 2001; Pingol 2010), the moral surveillance of migrants (Dannecker 2009; Dreby 2009; McKay 2005; Velayutham and Wise 2005), or the surveillance of migrants' spouses or kin at home (Gamburd 2000; Hannaford 2015). Instead, I examine how moralizing local and institutionalized narratives of migration have touched and shaped the lives, relationships, and subjectivities of migrant-origin villagers. Together, migrants and migrant-origin villagers engage with these broader discourses to produce and shape what I call *gendered moral economies of migration*.

The concept of a "moral economy" is most often attributed to historian Edward P. Thompson's (1971) influential studies on the moral economy of English peasants in the eighteenth century. The anthropologist James Scott later popularized this concept through his ethnography of Southeast Asian rice farmers (Scott 1976). Both scholars sought to situate economic activities within the realm of politics, religion, and social relations, to understand how the collective actions of those then considered "pre-modern" or "pre-capitalist" were "grounded upon a consistent traditional view of social norms and obligations" (Thompson 1971: 76-79), and patterned "fears, habits, and values" (Scott 1976: 2-4). Current uses of the concept have diversified, and moved away from these associations of moral economy with the "pre-modern." By using the plural term "economies", I build on feminist substantivists who highlight the dynamic and contested nature of human relations and action, and that what constitutes the "economic" cannot be strictly defined.

Instead, it is always constituted by complex socio-political relations (see Bear et al 2015; Daston 1995; Ong 2010; Rosaldo 1980; Strathern 1988; Weiner 1992; Wolf 1992). A handful of scholars have looked at migration in terms of a "moral economy," mostly in terms of moral imperatives for migrants to send money to their families in order to care for them (Stevanovic 2012), sometimes alongside moral judgments against migrant mothers' separation from their children (Contreras and Griffith 2012; Katigbak 2015). In contrast, I take a broader approach, and emphasize the importance of gender to how migrants, their kin, and neighbors negotiate values and expectations associated with the circulations of money, labor, and bodies, including those that are injured or healthy. This study also departs from current research focusing on the moral rationality of human behavior, by taking a multi-scalar approach to understanding migration and moral discourses surrounding it (except see Keough 2008).

Looking at how migration is valued— such as in terms of "success" and "failure"—, particularly from the perspective of migrant-origin villages, this study engages with ongoing discussions over the impact of migration on migrant-origin countries and communities. A sub-field of migration scholarship, known as the "migration and development nexus," is concerned with whether migration leads to the social and economic development of migrant-origin countries and communities, or perpetuates under-development and exploitation of the often poorer migrant sending countries (Faist 2008). I argue that this debate is implicitly concerned with the moral consequences and impact of migration on origin countries and communities, by assuming that there is a universal shared common idea of the good life—referred to as "development" (Dannecker 2009; Cooper and Packard 2005; Nederveen-Pieterse 2001). Generally, this scholarship largely distinguishes between "good" migration that should be encouraged— that which leads to "development" or "better" lives for more people (Ozden and Schieff 2007), and

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"bad" migration that should be discouraged or improved upon—in recent years presented as "trafficking" or "modern day slavery" by some activists and journalists (End Slavery Now, The CNN Freedom Project, Slavery Footprint). This dissertation contributes to these timely debates and issues by examining instead how such gendered and moral representations of migration, and its potential rewards ("development"), or costs ("slavery"), are experienced, reproduced, complicated, or challenged by residents of migrant-origin locales.

Departing from scholars for whom the "moral" in "moral economy" is used positively to refer to altruistic, caring, and sharing behavior (Tufuor et al 2015), I approach "morality," "moral judgment," and the moral realm in contextual terms of how others perceive, debate, or evaluate what actions or behavior are "good," "right," or "better" than other practices and ideas (Heywood 2015; Keane 2014; Zigon 2014; Robbins 2004). In other words, the moral sphere consists of reflections and judgments of others (and oneself) that simultaneously define actions and attitudes as appropriate, desirable, or good, in terms of an opposite. Some scholars have criticized this view of morality as based on contractual-like relations, rules, and obligations (Das 2012; Han 2012), but I found that many interviewees and friends in Central Java perceived morality and justified particular decisions, actions, or consequences by appealing to what they considered an objective source, such as the Qur'an, government regulations, or "customary law" (*adat*). Nevertheless, villagers' moral judgments of others are not always internally or collectively consistent. Instead, their talk of moral judgments reveal the necessary remaking of explicit norms and implicit practices within everyday life and interactions (Brandom 2008: 20; Zigon 2014), partially through taking into account, assuming, and/or discussing the intentions of others (Duranti 2015; Keane 2007; 2014). I thus take seriously the observation that "freedom does not lie merely in the absence of rules" (Heywood 2015: 200), but that individuals continue to negotiate freedom and agency in

relation to other people and formal or informal codes of conduct. In other words, a prerequisite of moral codes is their reliance on ethical reflexivity, where "the activities of gossip do not simply reproduce values but exert new pressures on them" (Keane 2014: 12).

This study thus goes beyond the current scholarly focus on what constitutes the production, rejection, or maintenance of particular moral attitudes. I pay attention to how such attitudes are mediated at various levels, such as when and to whom moral judgments are pronounced (Lambek 2010: 2; Das 2007; 2013). In Central Java, the moral sphere is highly gendered, where women and men are subject to different standards of appropriate and desirable behavior and actions, typically regarding work, sexuality, reproduction, and financial and care obligations to the family (Chapter 4). Thus the "moral" is always emergent from and woven into people's everyday interactive responses to the lives and needs of others (Das 2015: 115; Keane 2014: 5; Han 2012a). As such, this dissertation argues that migrant-origin villagers' moral judgments of migrants and migration can also be read as their *ethical and practical responses* to the inherent risks and arbitrary nature of the migration process. In this sense, I contribute to the anthropology of morality by examining how ideas about morality are mediated and structured through situated forms of communication and exchange. Gendered moral economies of migration are thus constituted and sustained through seemingly mundane everyday village talk about migrant success and failure: their money, houses, beauty, and sickness.

1.2.3   Gender and Migration

Third, I support scholarship showing that migration and discourses about it are highly gendered, by examining how gender also clearly structures the experiences of non-migrants and failed migrants in migrant-origin locales. I demonstrate the subtle impact of migration on everyday

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life, relationships, and consciousness in migrant-origin villages, particularly with regards how gender and religious faith structures these views and everyday interactions. Going beyond migrant "success" and "failure," I point to how migration to other Islamic and non-Islamic destination countries can present more subtle but significant challenges to local gendered expectations, moralities, and kinship. Everyday conversations about migration and discussions about foreign migrant-destination countries and cultures reveal how migration can create new differences and exacerbate existing ones. These differences include diverging moral behavior and views, religious views, and material wealth. Migration thus may present wider alternative venues and possibilities—liberating, dangerous, and ambivalent—to how villagers experience and understand village relations, the world, and their place in it.

Feminist scholars of gendered migration in the 1990s and 2000s were influential in prompting migration scholars' to examine the social and emotional impact of migration on migrants, their kin, and their communities of origin (Donato et al 2006; Mahler and Pessar 2006; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2000). By looking at how gender structures household dynamics (such as patriarchal relations) and macrostructural dynamics of labor industries, these scholars encouraged a shift away from particularistic (culturally-essentialist), household, or economic analysis. Instead, they called for gendered analyses of the "politics and governance of migration," such as neoliberal or welfare state policies on migration and diasporas (Donato et al 2006: 6; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2000; Silvey 2004). Such analyses focused on various "spatial, social and cultural" scales of analysis of power, such as the body, state, hegemonic and counter-hegemonic discourses (Donato et al 2006: 6). A key question was whether transnational migration "create[s] even greater possibilities for the reinforcement of prevailing gender ideologies and norms, or, conversely, [if] transnational spaces provide openings for women and men, girls and boys, to entertain competing

understandings of gendered lives" (ibid.; Piper and Roces 2003). To date, research has only yielded mixed, ambiguous conclusions, suggesting that transnationalism has uneven and contradictory gains for women and men (ibid.; Paul 2015).

This study engages with these ongoing and nuanced discussions about gender, politics, and mobility in Indonesia and elsewhere (Blackburn 2004; Lindquist 2004; Doorn-Harder 2008; Wieringa 2006; Silvey 2006; Ford 2002; Weintraub 2008). I look at how migrants' experiences abroad, as well as migrant-origin villagers' experiences with recruitment agents, NGOs, and pre-departure migratory processes, present ideological, practical, and physical opportunities and threats. These opportunities and threats are often evaluated and experienced in gendered ways, with reference to Islam, God, or "Javanese culture." I show how women's migrations in particular can threaten Javanese ideals of masculinity and femininity, while the failures of migrant men to live up to these ideals tend to be tolerated. This study also points to the conditions that underlie and illuminate migrant-origin villagers' awareness of wider structural problems related to the roles of the state and recruitment agencies, as well as gender, ethnic, religious, and class inequalities within Indonesia. Migration can provide opportunities for accumulating previously unimaginable amounts of wealth and property, or it can result in severe debt. Migrant remittances may ensure nutrition and food for children, adults, and elderly, but also pose threats to the bodies of migrants and their kin, in terms of mental and physical illness, and in worst cases, death.

Attention to the impact of migration on everyday life and on gender relations in Central Java cautions against assumptions that the labor migration necessarily enables the "emancipation" of Muslim women from "patriarchal" rural villages (Brettell and Simon 1986; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994), or that such labor migration in general will over time lead to economic prosperity for migrants and their kin. Instead, I show that migration confronts villagers with difficult questions

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about the risks of migration, and "collateral damage" inflicted on migrants, kin, and friends, as a result of the pursuit of wealth, knowledge, love, adventure, respect, and/or independence. Migration has introduced or exacerbated villagers' encounters with differences in terms of intersecting values framed in religious, moral, and gendered terms, even while these differences are negotiated, respected, or contained by migrant-origin villagers.

1.3   CONTEXT

This dissertation asks how gendered and moral discourses are invoked to regulate, justify, or criticize migration patterns and migrant behavior. As the fourth most populous country in the world after China, India, and the U.S.A., and as the world's largest Muslim population, Indonesia provides a unique and relevant context on which to examine the intersection of morality, labor, and transnational mobility (Rudnyckyj 2004; see Liebelt 2008; Pingol 2010; Fioratta 2015). The centrality of morality in Indonesian politics and public discourse has a long history, and is closely linked to Islamic expressions and identity. First President Sukarno's advocacy for a unitary, secular state was not compatible with Muslim intellectuals and the *ulama*'s focus on religion's role in nation-making. Eventually, the Jakarta Charter was drawn as a compromise on the part of Muslim intellectuals for national independence, where the state was based on the belief in one God, while Muslims were required to follow the *sharia*-Islamic law.[4] Sukarno also proposed and articulated

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[4] The *ulama* is a body of scholars trained in Islamic law and science, usually seen as authorities of interpreting Islamic doctrine and law (Hooker 2003). In Indonesia, this is usually represented by MUI or Indonesian Council of Ulama, a body comprising of the majority of Indonesian's Muslim groups with various approaches to Islam. Sharia, or syariah in Indonesian, is usually defined as Islamic law based on the Qur'an to guide the moral and civil conduct of Muslims. Interpretations and implemenations of the sharia in religious and secular contexts vary, with some

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the national ideology of Pancasila, five guiding principles of the nation based on the five pillars of Islam: the belief in God, humanitarianism, national unity, democracy and social justice (Seekins 1993). Despite its unique secular-but-theist state foundations, the vast majority of Muslim voters and politicians has ensured the strong influence of Islamic discourse on national politics. Contestations over the authority to define the political and moral terms of Indonesian nationalism and development has continued and exacerbated through multiple presidencies into the 21st century (Bull 1996; Seekins 1993). It is important to note that Indonesian Muslims are far from homogenous, with disagreements among groups on the state's role in legislating social life and public morality (Arnez 2010; Blackburn 2004; van Wichelen 2010; Weintraub 2008).

There are over six million Indonesian migrant workers as of 2015 (Anjalah 2015). However, when the militaristic New Order state led by then President Suharto first encouraged temporary female labor migration as part of its development agenda in 1980s, it appeared to contradict earlier Islamic and nationalistic discourses of *kodrat*, which refers broadly to the idea of fixed destinies and duties specific to men and women (Blackburn 2004: 229). Generally, men are presumed to be breadwinners while women's place is in the home as nurturing mothers and wives. Even in the 1970s, under the banner of "women and development," when the state encouraged women to labor in the wage-earning sphere, this was on condition that women did not neglect their domestic duties (Silvey 2004: 252–253). In other words, women were articulated as citizens primarily through their roles as mothers and wives (Martyn 2005: 206).

The Suharto government's promotion of transnational labor migration as a pathway to national economic development has an historical precursor in the state's *transmigrasi* program. As

arguing it only applies to Muslims. Some argue there can be no fundamental separation of religion and state (Hooker 2003).

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part of Suharto's broader project to engineer Indonesia's demographics in the pursuit of economic growth and national integration, the Ministry of Transmigration was set up to facilitate coerced mass-migration of Javanese peasants in populated areas to the outer islands, such as Irian Jaya (West Papua), Sumatra and Borneo (Tirtosudarmo 2003). This was justified by the Suharto government view (informed by the Dutch before them) that over-population was one of the root causes of Indonesia's economic stagnation and poverty (ibid). Social science research on *transmigrasi* have focused on two key issues: indigenous rights and agrarian movements on the outer islands, and ethno-political conflict (Li 2007; Collins 2005; Potter 2009). These include criticisms of the World Bank, international development agencies, and repressive state policies which are perceived as part of a broader mission to facilitate Indonesia's industrialization and incorporation into the global capitalist economy (Dove 1988).[5] These programs had an explicitly moral, heteronormative aspect: sponsored migrants "were required to be married, of good character… and to have farming experience. Migrant families received a small house with one hectare of rain-fed cropland." (Frederick and Worden 1993: 172).

By the 1980s, the state began to promote transnational female labor migration, mainly targeted at rural, uneducated women. Separation of low-income, rural women from their families contrasted starkly with its nationalist "family" metaphors based on the ideal middle-class nuclear family. This promotion of rural women's labor migration as the antidote to rural poverty highlights the state's complicity in reproducing gender and class hierarchies in Indonesia (Silvey 2004). By the 1990s, in the state's promotion of labor migration to the Middle East, their "dominant vision of idealized femininity was translated into a migratory income-earning woman for the sake of the

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[5] The transmigration programme also meant the seizing of land from traditionally land-owning peasants of the outer islands, and "resettling" them to so that such land and rainforests can be clearer for (foreign-owned) corporate agriculture and modern irrigation.

'national family's' larger goal of economic development" (ibid.: 253). Furthermore, recruitment agencies and state representatives initially encouraged women's migration to Saudi Arabia rather than non-Muslim countries like Hong Kong or Singapore, with reference to ideas of religious-cultural proximity between the Muslim populations. Particularly appealing for many women was the possibility of making the pilgrimage to Mecca (Silvey 2006; 2007; Rudnyckyj 2004). It is within this later context of the rapid increase in transnational female labor migration and accompanying financial remittances, that state authorities began representing migrant women as "heroes" of national development, or more precisely, "foreign exchange heroes" (*pahlawan devisa*) (Antara News 2012, Aug 9). A banner welcoming these "heroes" home can be seen in the Jakarta airport (ibid.).

Despite the evident popularity and state validation of female labor migration, Muslim women also face religious-based social sanctions against their transnational mobility (Wieringa 2006). For example, in response to media publicity of abuses against women migrants, an influential national community of religious leaders, the National Council of Ulama (MUI) declared female labor migration to be un-Islamic (Wieringa 2006: 6). Although the National Regulation of Placement and Protection for Migrant Workers (UU 39/2004, Article 51) stipulates that all migrants require the written permission of a spouse or parent to migrate, in practice, this is only applied to women migrants. A woman requires permission from her father or, if married, her husband. Indonesian state representatives also frequently pledge to stop sending Indonesian women abroad as domestic workers, in terms of defending the "pride and dignity" of the nation (Jakarta Post 2015, Feb 14; Kompas 2014, Nov 21). Nevertheless, these religious-based social sanctions and legal stipulations are only loosely and unevenly enforced in Central Java. Thousands

of Central Javanese Muslim women do not only continue to migrate annually, but are also, in many cases, publicly and privately encouraged and praised for doing so.

Transnational gendered labor migration from Indonesia was shaped and encouraged through changing ideas about gendered and moral duties to the family and nation, in terms of economic as well as spiritual development of the individual and nation. State endorsement and placement of migrants, alongside the relative lack of effective mechanisms of protection and redress for migrants abroad, must also be contextualized within Indonesia's weaker economic and political bargaining position vis-a-via migrant destination countries (Silvey 2004). Although transnational labor migration is regulated by the state, it is largely carried out by a diverse range of commercial recruitment, training, and travel agencies (see Annex A). A complex and dense network of commercial state-licensed recruitment agencies, informal recruitment agents and field-workers, NGOs, and migrant labor activists (Rudnyckyj 2004; Lindquist 2010; Lindquist et al. 2012), also draw on state's discourses about migration, development, and nationhood to criticize the industry or to justify their respective roles within the migration industry.

This complex landscape of decentralized governance, dispersed responsibility and accountability, contrasted significantly with previous *transmigrasi* "resettlement" programs. Previously, scholars framed *transmigrasi* in terms of how their effective implementation drew on broader changes in bureaucratic reforms and communications innovations following the oil boom of the 1970s. *Transmigrasi* thus was facilitated in a context where the government could establish tighter lines of control, and people were more responsive to central authority (Hull 2007: 243). Paradoxically, this idea of a centralized government responsible for *transmigrasi* also meant that *transmigrasi* resettlement areas were often the sites of peasant protests, involving violent conflicts

pitting peasants against the army (which led the forced seizure of land from peasants), or else inter-ethnic conflict between Javanese immigrants and local tribes (Rutherford 2008).

In contrast, however, the post-Suharto decentralization of the state and deregulation of labor regimes saw an overwhelming increase in recruitment agencies where most workers now apply for jobs through middle-men rather than directly to a company or employer (Tjandraningsih 2013; Silvey 2004; Lindquist 2010; Lindquist, Xiang and Yeoh 2012). This is a trend applicable to both the domestic and international labor market for those engaged in manufacturing, construction or domestic labor and services, arguably giving workers less control over their employment and labor conditions, where "protests" against an employer, recruitment agent, or the state would not be as effective since no-one and everyone could be held responsible. Where recruitment agencies were previously regulated and linked to state patronage, the relaxed rules saw not only the rise of registered private agencies, but also informal and unregistered ones due to the ineffective enforcement of existing laws (Tjandraningsih 2013; Lindquist 2010; Silvey 2004).

The contemporary transnational migration industry thus includes various actors and institutions—those involved in processing, facilitating, or addressing any issue or practice involved in migrants' preparation for departure, training, arrival, employment, or return and deportation, and post-return reintegration. In this dissertation, I view these parts as constitutive of one another, where these actors and institutions share and disperse social, economic, and political risks in uneven ways. For example, both NGO workers and recruitment brokers depend "on the inherently unpredictable circulation of capital that in different ways set migrants in motion" (Lindquist 2015: 171). NGOs, recruitment agencies, and state agencies, are also diverse in their practices and intentions, including the persons who work for them (Lindquist 2015; Palmer 2012). This dissertation thus builds on but shifts away from existing scholarship on these broader political

and economic structures facilitating transnational movement. I do not assume that recruitment agents or NGO staff occupy particular or mutually exclusive positions in a moral spectrum, where the former are typically associated with immorality or deception, and the latter with altruism and justice (Lindquist 2015). Instead, this ethnography examines how such broader political and economic dynamics of the migration industry are negotiated and shaped in relation to gender, morality, and faith in Central Javanese migrant-origin villages.

The majority of Indonesia's migrant workers come from relatively rural backgrounds and graduated from junior high or high school (BNP2TKI 2015). Indonesian transnational migration increased rapidly after 1998, during the time of the Asian Financial Crisis and the fall of Suharto's military-based, centralized government. By this time, agricultural work such as rice farming in Central Java was gradually perceived as a less desirable and viable livelihood among rural youths. The 1980s and 1990s saw an increase in rural-urban migration for women in particular, where there was a large demand for their labor in textile factories (Wolf 1992; Silvey 2003). The decline in manufacturing and industrial jobs in the turbulent social and political climate of the late 90s, as well as comparatively higher wages abroad contributed to the popularity of migration. However, the rise in demand for Indonesian women's labor abroad was also linked to the entrance of professional women into the labor force of modernizing economies of destination countries such as Singapore, Hong Kong, and Malaysia (Constable 2007; Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2004; Lan 2006). Recruitment agents from these countries partnered with Indonesian-based agents who persuaded women to work abroad—sometimes by paying them a small fee (Palmer 2010)—and convinced their families to permit them to go abroad (Rudnyckyj 2004; Silvey 2007).

The majority of Indonesia's women migrants are domestic workers or factory workers in countries such as Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Singapore. Men typically

work in industrial, manufacturing, construction, and agricultural industries in Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Korea, and to a lesser degree Japan (BNP2TKI 2015). An increasing number of undocumented male migrants also work as sea-farers for Taiwanese or Korean-registered companies and ships.[6] In 2014, the vast majority of migrants are from East, West, and Central Java (BNP2TKI 2015). Promised wages abroad can be at least double or up to ten times of local wages. For example, the minimum monthly wage for factory workers in Central was around 1.2 million Indonesian rupiah in 2015. In contrast, domestic and plantation workers in Malaysia could earn minimally two to three million per month; domestic workers in Singapore, Hong Kong, and Taiwan could earn around four to six million; while factory workers in Taiwan and Korea could expect ten million. Similarly, the costs of migration vary, depending on the job, destination country, and whether or how many falsified documents are required. Migrants typically embark on journeys indebted to their brokers, kin, informal moneylenders, and/or banks. Generally, female domestic workers and an increasing number of migrant men to Korea participate in forms of "indentured mobility" (Parrenas 2010), where they work abroad to pay off their debts to agents who withhold their passports. In contrast, migrant women and men who work in factories and plantations often borrow from kin or moneylenders to pay for their migration journeys upfront.

Nearly all of them are on what is commonly termed "guest worker" programs (Piper 2006: 142), where migrants are allowed to work and live in destination countries for up to two or five years, upon which they can renew their contracts or return home. Indonesian migrants follow a pattern that may be categorized as "circular," "back-and-forth," "on and on," or "serial migration," through a hierarchy of migration destinations (Constable 2009; Liebelt 2008; Paul 2011). This

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[6] These ships travel as far as South Africa (Buruh Migran 2014), Trinidad and Tobago (Mukti 2015), and New Zealand (Nur'aini 2015).

means that whether migrants embark on one journey, or multiple, and in one or more destination countries, vary widely according to individual experiences, desires, and circumstances.

This ethnography of migrant-origin villages in Central Java provides a different side of transnational Indonesian migration. More broadly, it sheds light on migration in relation to "villages" that are, I argue, dynamic sites of encounters and moral diversity. This perspective disputes dominant representations of villages as sites of immobility or underdevelopment[7] and of migration in terms of singular, exclusive, boundaries and categories (Heywood and Symons 2012). As I show, migrant-origin villagers draw on diverse gendered and moral discourses to negotiate the uncertainties, risks, and injustices associated with migration.

1.4   METHODOLOGY

Most of the data for this research was based on participant observation and 130 semi-structured interviews conducted in Java, Indonesia, between September 2014 and August 2015.[8] This included living with families of former migrants, current migrants, and prospective migrants, and participating in daily activities for women such as meal preparation and child-care; attending weekly prayer meetings and *arisan* (a local form of rotating credit and savings association);

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[7] For example, in the case of China, Biao Xiang argues that rather than a simple analysis of families left-behind by migrants, and non-migrant families, "rural communities as a whole have been left behind economically and socially" (2007: 187). This assessment is less relevant for rural villages of Central Java, some of which are targeted for development programs by NGOs and state institutions. In light of this difference, my aim is to examine instead the diverse strategies of mobility and alternative discourses of social and economic development in these villages.
[8] Ninety participants identified as women, while forty identified as men. This includes sixty-nine former migrants, thirteen prospective migrants (including six migrants who did not migrate), and thirty-three non-migrants. I also interviewed six recruitment agents (all except one were former migrants, I interviewed four mainly in terms of their recruiting practices, while two were interviewed as former migrants as well, and are included in the previous category). Nine NGO-associated staff and activists were interviewed, one representative of BP3TKI, and one director of JasIndo insurance company (it works with Cilacap-based recruitment agencies and migrant workers).

weddings, births, and funerals; and annual Javanese and Islamic festivities such as *Satu Suroh* (Javanese New Year), *Idul Adha* (Islamic Day of Sacrifice), *Idul Fitri* (Islamic New Year). This facilitated the participation and observation of informal talk amongst women and men about personal and broader political concerns about their families and the village. It also allowed me to observe and compare how migration was framed temporally and situationally in terms of gender, finances, and other material and moralizing terms. This main research period was supplemented by shorter preliminary research trips in the summers of 2012 and 2013, and a follow-up trip in 2016. On-site fieldwork was also typically complemented by online communication with current migrants, Central Javanese residents, and migrant activists based in Indonesia and Singapore. The bulk of ethnographic data is based on fieldwork conducted in three migrant-origin-villages: two in the district of Cilacap, and one in Yogyakarta City. All are geographically based in Central Java.[9] In 2014, twenty-one percent of Indonesian documented migrant workers originated from the Province of Central Java, the second largest migrant-origin province nation-wide (BNP2TKI 2015).

In addition, I conducted interviews with many representatives and staff of NGOs focused on migrant, labor, or women's issues. While it was difficult to contact and interview at length government representatives of BNP2TKI (National Agency for the Placement and Protection of Migrant Workers), I spoke to one who worked for a district branch (BP3TKI). Nevertheless, I closely followed, archived, and analyzed, the multiple public speeches state representatives of BNP2TKI, the Ministry of Labor, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, gave to the Indonesian-

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[9] As such, I refer to these villages as Central Javanese villages. This contrasts with the official government demarcation of Cilacap as falling under the province of Central Java, while Yogyakarta is a "Special Region" of its own. While the official statistics of "Central Java" excludes Yogyakarta, including it would only increase the significance of this data set.

based press. These activities helped me to understand the institutionalized approaches to and personal experiences with migrant-associated issues. It also illuminated diverse or common opinions on why migration was so popular, or to what extent individuals and groups condoned, vilified, or tolerated it. I also observed several programs, workshops, and conventions targeted at or concerning return migrants, prospective migrants and their kin, in multiple other migrant-origin villages in Wonosobo, Yogyakarta, and Cilacap.[10] These were variously organized and funded by the state, foreign states, or development and aid institutions, and facilitated by NGOs, grassroots organizations, state agencies, and commercial companies.

Dissertation fieldwork was multi-sited, and required travel between villages, the national capital, Jakarta, and the city of Yogyakarta. I agree with the observation that "fieldwork itself is a work that selects and follows particular connections between people, places and other agents" (Hastrup 2012: 157). The various people, sites, and events constituting my fieldwork experience and data are connected by the ways in which they participate in and shape transnational migration processes from Indonesia, from migrants' pre-departure to migrants' return, and possible re-migrations. My mobility between sites was not uncommon for anyone I interacted with. Migrant-origin villages consist of many individuals who often come and go unpredictably. This includes

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[10] I documented speeches and interactions among state representatives, commercial actors, journalists, activists, return migrants, and prospective migrants. I was a participant-observer in several national conventions and less formal meetings organized by the National Migrant Labor Union (Serikat Buruh Migran Indonesia- SBMI). I attended a national conference organized by Koalisi Perempuan Indonesia, a coalition of women's organizations involved with migrant labor issues. Additionally, I attended many conventions and events of various scales organized by BNP2TKI. These included at least two migrant entrepreneurship "fairs," where banks and insurance agencies were present (in Yogyakarta city, and in a smaller town center of Yogyakarta). I also attended one public talk on "trafficking" by state representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to another migrant-origin village in rural Yogyakarta. I was a participant observer in two development programs. One was a cooking and entrepreneurship course funded by BP3TKI for return migrant women in Yogyakarta. The other, funded by a foreign government and facilitated by a Yogyakarta-based NGO, was a course focused on educating and socializing primarily return migrant women on effective communication and cooperation. Both programs included opening and closing ceremonies, where local and district government figures attended and commented on the effects of local migration and development.

those who cross national borders, those who move to nearby urban cities and return on weekends, or those who work on other Indonesian islands on project-based contracts and return annually or every two years. Conferences and events were often fleeting and short-lived "sites." Due to the nature of their work in advocating for labor migrants' and women's welfare, and the day-to-day facilitating of migrants' or women's immediate practical or legal problems, NGO staff and activists often had hectic schedules and multiple travel itineraries. Their weekly or monthly routes were often between various offices wherever they were based, or between Jakarta, migrant-origin villages, and even migrant destination countries. Thus, at any point of time, even when I was in the villages, I communicated with friends, acquaintances, and colleagues in other sites and locales (see Hannerz 2003).

I was first introduced to Cilacap in 2012 when, while learning Bahasa Indonesian language in Yogyakarta, I met Sita, a labor activist.[11] Strikingly, as I told her of how I grew up with migrant domestic workers in my home, she said that she grew up in a rural village in Cilacap, where female migration was the norm. She always knew that becoming a migrant domestic worker was an option for her, but none of her immediate kin had ever migrated. Sita had lived in the city of Yogyakarta for about five years by the time we met, and she shared my curiosity about why so many of her neighbors and fellow villagers migrated abroad, despite the many known risks. She invited me to visit and stay with her family in Cilacap for a few days. With her help translating, due to my intermediate Indonesian at the time, we conducted preliminary interviews with her kin, neighbors, and two informal recruitment agents. Each night we discussed what we had observed, heard, and talked about. Like me, Sita was struck by the pervasive and seemingly incompatible stories of

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[11] All names are pseudonyms, unless they are associated with named organizations that wished for their identities to be known.

violence against migrants, and the general image of success associated with migration. We also noticed how frequently the idiom of "*nasib*" (fate) was invoked to justify risky migration journeys, or migratory failures and sicknesses. These initial observations and questions would come to be central to my dissertation. I continued visiting Sita's village each year since, staying for longer periods in 2014 and 2015.

My attachments to Sita's village, her family, and neighbors, spanned a longer temporal period as compared to the other two villages I lived in. This allowed me to track the changing life circumstances and migrant statuses of various residents. I arrived in the second Cilacap site in November 2014 to visit an acquaintance, Nurul. She had been a migrant domestic worker in both Malaysia and Singapore for over twenty years, and we met twice in Singapore at events organized for domestic workers, activists, and university students. Largely due to the circumstances of her return and her marital history, Nurul was subject to gossip and social marginalization in her community, and deeply sympathetic to others in her position. Nurul was an engaging and opinionated storyteller, and expressed great interest and awareness of broader political and labor issues concerning migrants like herself. I met her small network of kin, acquaintances and neighbors, and a few close friends. Living with Nurul gave me a deeper insight into the daily experiences, interactions, and views of a return migrant who was considered "unsuccessful" or a "failure," and how she and others like her negotiated gossip and harassment.

I was introduced to the third site, a migrant-origin village in rural Yogyakarta, in September 2014. BNP2TKI had organized an event in the city of Yogyakarta to showcase successful Indonesian migrant-based associations and entrepreneurship. Selected return migrants and their fellow villagers from various parts of the archipelago were invited to attend. My interest in this site was sparked by a conversation with a resident, Minah. She had remarked casually, "Some

migrants return with lots of money. Others become crazy. But many… are so arrogant, and they believe they are better than the rest of us. There is a problem of integration. Return migrants should undergo some kind of socialization program when they come back to their *kampong* (village)." Because Minah and I had a mutual friend, she invited me to visit her village. In contrast to the other two sites, Minah's village participated in various development and educational programs funded by the state, international development organizations, and facilitated by NGOs. Thus I was able to observe and participate in two such programs, and compare how such programs might impact participants and other villagers' attitudes to migration, and migration-related institutions (e.g. BNP2TKI and relevant NGOs).[12]

All three sites share important similarities. I refer to them as migrant-origin villages, because statistically and anecdotally, transnational labor migration is prevalent. Nearly everyone has kin, neighbors, or friends who have migrated or tried to migrate, or they themselves have migrated. All three sites share geographic and infrastructural similarities. All are near the South Java Sea, and depend on rice agriculture as well as fishing industries. They also send many residents to work in factories or construction projects in urban areas of Indonesia. They are all relatively rural—inaccessible directly by bus. This is significant when considering the amount of time and money required for residents to travel to the nearest BNP2TKI or BP3TKI office or district government office to obtain information about migration processes and regulations. Their

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[12] See note 7. This region of Yogyakarta is governed by the Sultan, who strongly discouraged recruitment agencies from facilitating the migration of women as domestic workers. Consequently, recruitment agencies located in Yogyakarta tend to be stricter in their migrant selection processes, and follow certain standards for migrants' pre-departure training programs. Recruitment agencies located in Cilacap, however, are notorious for ignoring government regulations and guidelines such as the minimum age or training requirement for migrants. Many Cilacap-based agencies are also known for falsifying identity and medical documents, or sending migrants abroad on tourist visas, as opposed to employment visas. Contrary to my expectations, however, many Yogyakarta-based residents simply traveled to Cilacap or Wonosobo to acquire migration documents, if they did not fulfil the requirements to migrate through Yogyakarta-based recruiters.

relative inaccessibility also increases their reliance on fellow villagers and available recruitment agents and agencies in their village or neighboring villages, as compared to urban dwellers who might be able to "shop around" for a trustworthy agent or a better agreement.

For a week in January 2015, I stayed at a migrant shelter run by SBMI (Serikat Buruh Migran Indonesia, for National Migrant Labor Union) in Jakarta. They are the largest migrant welfare organization in the nation with dispersed sub-groups across the archipelago, run by return migrants. On this trip I was accompanied by a research assistant, Yuna, whom I had met during interviews with a migrant NGO she worked with in Yogyakarta. Yuna previously worked with SBMI, and introduced me to the organization, its then-president Bu Erna, and other staff members. Migrants who were deported or who failed to leave the country stayed temporarily at this shelter, while SBMI staff helped to mediate and resolve their problems with recruitment agencies or BNP2TKI. My experience here enabled me to meet some migrants who returned to Indonesia, but who did not want to, or had not yet returned to their home villages. This helped to balance the views and experiences of these return migrants with the others "at home." In observing the interactions between SBMI staff (all return migrants themselves) and the more recently returned migrants, I was reminded that migrants often criticize and judge one another. Like residents in migrant-origin villages, they do not always share common experiences, interests, or views.

After this visit to SBMI in Jakarta, Yuna accompanied me on two other trips: to a national SBMI conference in Wonosobo for three days, and on a week-long trip to Sita's village in Cilacap. Yuna and I grew close during my main fieldwork year, and as an aspiring researcher of migration herself, our conversations about migration from Indonesia, particularly NGO networks, enriched my understanding of the various concerns, disagreements, and NGO- and state-proposed

"solutions" to issues such as undocumented migration and inflated recruitment fees from Indonesia.

I navigated various positions and misrecognitions while doing fieldwork in migrant-origin villages. As an ethnic-Chinese Singaporean who spoke fluent Indonesian, I was sometimes mistaken as an Indonesian or foreign recruitment agent looking for candidates in the villages. At other times, I was taken as a foreign employer visiting a former migrant employee. On multiple occasions, men and women asked half-jokingly if I could "sponsor" their working visas in Singapore, or take them with me when I returned. Twice, I was approached to fund the businesses of return migrants. Most of the time, however, as an obvious "outsider," many residents approached me to share their experiences, stories, and views about migration. Some were eager to corroborate or explain rumors and gossip: "Is it true that a domestic worker can earn up to USD 6,000 a year?" "Why do Indonesian women become lesbians when they go overseas?" At times, people assumed I shared their gendered and moral values as a fellow "Asian" and "non-Westerner." Other times, people were wary that I might be "too open" in my views as a non-Muslim, that I might approve of homosexuality, premarital sex, divorce, or unmarried couples who cohabit. Some residents sought information about migratory regulations and processes to Singapore and Korea in particular. Many others taught me a lot about migratory and labor regulations (or the lack of them) in Gulf Cooperation states, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Indonesia. The stories, attitudes, as well as the questions, of everyone I met, shaped my understanding of the various perceptions and stereotypes of recruitment agents, employers, migrants, and their lives abroad.

My interest in issues of gender, morality, and labor migration was initially sparked from being raised by and among Filipina and Indonesian domestic workers in Singapore, where an

estimated one in five households hire a domestic worker (MOM 2013, in Platt et al. 2013: 13).

Between 2005 and 2007, I worked in cafes and restaurants alongside migrant workers from China,

Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, and India, who were often paid half my wages, with longer hours,

and fewer rest days (if any). Between 2010 and 2011, I also volunteered for and worked with the

migrant labor NGO Humanitarian Organization of Migrant Economics (HOME) and Indonesian

Family Network (IFN). During that time, I helped to facilitate and document cases of labor abuse,

fraud, and forced repatriation that faced both male and female migrant workers in Singapore,

particularly those who worked in manufacturing, service, or construction sectors. These

experiences in various positions and affiliations such as employer, colleague, and NGO volunteer

have given me a long-term view of the dynamics and issues concerning gender, labor and

migration, not only in Singapore, but also Southeast Asia broadly.

1.5   THEMES AND CHAPTERS

The dissertation's main argument is that Cilacap and Yogyakarta residents develop,

mobilize, and practice gendered faith and shame as a strategy to negotiate the risks and potential

shame associated with migration, return, and staying behind. The dissertation is organized by the

different ways in which migration is valued, and how moral responsibility and blame for migrant

"successes" and "failures" are explained and understood.

Chapter 2, Mobilizing and Moralizing Indonesian Labor, contextualizes and frames the

dissertation's broader argument regarding gendered morality and migration in Indonesia. This

chapter draws from newspaper articles, public speeches by, and press interviews with state

representatives and migrant activists. Based on these sources, I argue that moral responsibility for

migratory processes and injustices is ascribed to many different actors. The state blames foreign states or recruitment agencies for not conforming to regulatory guidelines; activists and recruitment agents may blame the state, Indonesian laws, and foreign labor laws for the exploitation of Indonesian labor. I argue that in mainstream public discourse, however, regardless of their diverse intentions, these institutions and actors tend to unintentionally collude and locate ultimate responsibility for migration and its ill effects in migrant individuals—particularly women— and sometimes, their families.

Chapter 3, "Evaluating Migrant Success and Failure," explores the perspectives of residents of migrant-origin villages on migration and morality. This chapter describes and analyzes how villagers and migrants themselves blame migrants for their failures or success, while ignoring or sidestepping the complicity of other actors, including recruitment agents and employers. Villagers perceive migrant success to be ubiquitous yet unachievable. I show how villagers distinguish between self-evident material markers of success (i.e. wealth, houses, and enterprises) and more elusive gendered moral requirements of success (i.e. fulfilling or performing gendered duties). Narratives of migrant success and failure thus emphasize the enormous effort and discipline it takes for a migrant to be perceived as a financially successful migrant and a good and responsible family member. The value of migrants' money and wealth is mutually shaped by their moral reputations and gendered performances as good persons—parents, children, siblings, and neighbors. These narratives also affirm the moral validity of others' decisions to stay, despite the material and social appeal of migration. In this chapter, I introduce "migrants who do not migrate," often seen as "failed migrants." Their experiences point to relative motility (potential for movement) in migrant-origin villages, and to the messiness of the categories of mobility/immobility and migrant/non-migrant. The ubiquitous blaming and shaming of "failed"

migrants reinforce the chapter's argument that self-responsibility emerges as a fundamental and limiting theme in discourses on migrant success or failure.

Chapter 4, "Shame," looks at how migrants' families are also blamed for migrants' failures through "kinships of shame" (Davies 2014). Building on scholarship on transnational moral economies and surveillance of migrants, I trace how moral regulation is sustained through the circulation of shame. Shame, or the threat of shame, strongly shapes the motility and mobility of villagers; it conditions their decisions to stay, migrate, or return. However, shifting from migrants' own moral subjectivities, I ask how such moral evaluations of migrants also shape the desires, behavior, and shame of those who do not move (or have not yet moved). Explicitly contrasting the gendered responses and experiences of villagers and migrants, I move beyond dominant scholarly and media focus on women and morality, and ask how migrant men or migrants' husbands experience and cope with their partner's migration, including experiences of humiliation and emasculation. My focus on the shame and morality of mobility presents an alternative to scholarly, media, and NGO perspectives that discuss risky migration behavior in terms of a lack of access to information and knowledge (Aradou 2013; e.g. Stoll 2013). This chapter thus asks what is morally at stake for villagers, such as when they express ambivalence in their decisions to migrate or not. Prospective migrants approach and share "knowledge" and "risk" in existential, situational, and intersubjective ways.

Chapter 5, "Faith," examines how and why migrants and their families are sometimes absolved of blame and responsibility for their "shameful" actions. Human responsibility, I argue, can be displaced and reconfigured through beliefs in the role of divine agency, or in terms of "fate" and faith (Liebelt 2008; Pingol 2008). My approach builds on ideas about the role of divine and supernatural agency in villagers' narratives of moving, staying, or return (Daswani 2010; Lambek

2010; van Dijk 2010). This offers a counterbalance to migrant research that emphasizes human agency and autonomy. I argue that villagers' emphasis on divine agency serves to acknowledge the inherent risks, loose regulations, and arbitrary nature of the migration process with its variable fees, rules, and legal loopholes. However, Central Javanese narratives of fate depend on "human effort." Faith requires human labor (see Rudnyckyj 2010: 255). In other words, I argue that such *labors of faith* are not strategies to escape or ignore reality. Instead, they constitute villagers' recognitions of and responses to the possibilities for and limits to human agency in relation to the dispersed moral-legal responsibility for migrants.

Chapter 6, "Re-thinking Gendered Mobilities and Transnational Kinship," explores migrant-origin villagers' views of foreign places and the threats they pose. It examines how some villagers also blame foreign employers and foreign states for things that go wrong for Indonesian migrants abroad. Migrant-origin villagers represent "foreign" gender and sexual practices in diverse ways. These representations often encode knowledge about different immigration and labor regulations abroad, which villagers often attribute to foreign "cultural" norms. Stories about foreign (destination) countries are fundamentally comparative in nature, thus they both reinforce and challenge local gendered norms and identities of villagers as rural, Javanese, Indonesian, and Muslim. On the one hand, stories of immoral or evil foreign employers and agents produce an image of Javanese, Indonesians, and Muslims, as more honorable, spiritual, or humane, than their other-Asian or other-Muslim employers in destination countries. On the other hand, the restlessness, ambivalence, or explicitly transgressive actions of prospective migrants and return migrants suggest ways in which residents and migrants negotiate or contest gendered moral expectations. Migrants' positive and affinitive narratives and experiences can also be seen as a critique of local gendered and moral norms. Discussions of "Indonesian" and "foreign culture"

(positive and negative ones) arguably shift villagers' discussions of migration experiences away from a focus on migrant self-responsibility or blame. Instead, they suggest that alternative moralities and gendered subjectivities are possible.

Chapter 7, "Gendered Moral Economies of Migration," concludes by contending that the specific yet diffused nature of moral responsibility and blame for the wealth and injuries of Indonesia's migrants contributes to shaping migrant-origin villagers' faith in migration. Villagers' gendered practices of shame and faith thus critically shape these transnational flows and economies of labor and money. Despite their lack of explicitly political criticism (i.e. they do not participate in labor protests, demand autopsies of returned migrant corpses, report to officials the recruitment agents known for malpractice), villagers' discussions of fate and destiny are grounded in awareness and acknowledgment of the complicity and partial responsibility of employers, recruitment agents, and state institutions when things go wrong for migrants. I argue that villagers' seeming political inaction is grounded in their awareness of the state's inability to guarantee transnational security of migrants or adequate village livelihoods. Villagers' lack of overt political action demonstrates that state and migration institutions are not perceived as directly relevant to their lives, as compared to mediators such as recruitment agents, kin, spirits, and God.

Due to a complex set of historical and contemporary factors, villagers perceive and experience increasing pressures to identify with Islam, or find Islamic practices more relevant to their life worlds than before. I argue that these emerging Islamic subjectivities limit *and* enable critique of exploitative or unfair labor and migration laws, and local norms of gendered morality, through its focus on individual fate, divine punishment and divine justice, as opposed to (worldly) social justice. However, I also conclude by pointing to hopeful exceptions, where activists employ ethical-moral rhetoric of Islam and nationhood to advocate for and participate in programs

involving migrant welfare and rights—in terms of infrastructural and legal provisions— while suspending moral judgement on individual actors.

2.0   MOBILIZING AND MORALIZING INDONESIAN LABOR

2.1   INTRODUCTION

On 9 January 2014, an emaciated, badly burned, and scarred 23-year-old Indonesian woman, Erwiana Sulistyaningsih, was found limping at the Hong Kong International Airport, barely able to walk (Mam 2014). The extreme abuse and violence she suffered during her employment as a domestic worker in Hong Kong came to light only after various graphic images of her scarred face, bruised body, peeling skin on her fingers, and blackened feet and hands, were circulated and went "viral" among Indonesian migrant and activist groups on Facebook. Pressure from these online communities led to an organized 5000-strong protest march in Hong Kong under the slogan of "Justice for Erwiana". Migrant domestic workers, sympathetic employers, and Hong Kong residents participated. These events arguably led to a widely publicized legal case against Erwiana's previous employer, Lo Wan-Tung—a case of alleged torture, which was initially classified as "miscellaneous" until the protest march (AFP 2014). Yet, when Lo was arrested and questioned, investigators reported that "documents were also shown to our officers indicating the maid quit of her own accord" (Lo and Ngo 2014). When asked why Erwiana, in her visibly injured condition, had gone unnoticed by Hong Kong immigration officers, the Director of the Immigration Department said, "It is difficult to judge whether there were injuries because of her complexion. We cannot blame the officer" (Siu 2014).

This example highlights the processes through which forms of abuse and violence experienced by migrant workers can be simultaneously made publicly visible and invisible, where issues of responsibility and blame can be elusive. Erwiana's physical wounds are literally

documented, via graphic images made public, and undocumented, undetectable via her official

migration papers or by customs officials. As one of the six million Indonesian migrant workers

abroad today, the vast majority of whom participate in precarious work (Kalleberg 2013; Constable

2014)—work that is usually informal, flexible, characterized by low and uncertain wages, a lack

of unionization or protective regulations, and job security—Erwiana's plight is familiar; the

protests and abuse unexceptional. They have instead become part of a transnational landscape of

long-term, ongoing precarious migration of domestic workers, alongside the large presence of

relevant labor and migrant activist groups. Why and how do some cases of migrant labor abuse—

such as Erwiana's—garner extensive public support and state attention, while many others remain

undocumented, tolerated, and apparently less relevant to public concern?

This chapter takes the widely publicized case of Erwiana as a point of departure to show

how moral responsibility for migratory processes and injustices is often actively dispersed among

multiple institutions and individuals. In the event of fraud, unpaid wages, or work injuries,

migrants and migrant activists often blame deceptive recruitment agents, exploitative employers,

or governments for weak labor laws. Recruitment agents may absolve themselves of responsibility

by claiming they are only facilitating the demands of employers, governments, foreign labor laws,

or "market mechanisms" (Lindquist 2012; 2015; Wise 2013). The Indonesian or migrant-origin

state may shift the responsibility for protecting their citizens abroad to foreign/ destination states,

or blame recruitment agencies for not conforming to state-imposed regulatory guidelines. I argue

that the Indonesian state, some mainstream journalists and migrant labor activists, however, tend

to unintentionally collude and locate ultimate responsibility for migration and its ill effects in migrant individuals—particularly women— and their families.[13]

Specifically, I discuss two dominant and contradictory public representations of Indonesian female labor migrants: as national "heroes" who contribute to Indonesia's sustainable economic development, or as exploited "victims" of an unequal global labor economy. Drawing on public discourses about migrant women, migration, and development in formal statements by Indonesian state actors, news reports, and migrant activists' websites, I analyze the gendered moral assumptions underlying representations of migrants as heroes or victims. I argue that representations of migrant workers as exploited victims do not necessarily undermine representations of migrants as heroes of development, or the state-sanctioned notion that labor migration is a pathway to personal, rural, and national development. Instead, these representations of migrants as heroes and victims similarly emphasize migrants' individual responsibility in terms of gendered morality. Building on existing scholarship on this hero–victim dichotomy largely based on labor migrants from Indonesia (Ford 2002; Ford and Lyons 2012; Lindquist 2010; 2012; 2015) and the Philippines (Aguilar 1996; Oishi 2005; Rafael 1997; Parreñas 2001; Parreñas 2005; Pratt 2012; Rodríguez 2010; Suzuki 2003), I focus on the less-studied category of the "immoral victim," or female migrants who may be depicted as criminals or perpetrators alongside their victimhood. As I will elaborate, this focus on migrants' individual morality and responsibility allow discourses of migration as a pathway to development and migration as labor exploitation to appear mutually compatible.

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[13] I acknowledge that Indonesian state is largely made up by agencies and institutions that may adopt contradictory policies and visions in relation to migration or gender-related issues (Ford and Lyons 2012; Palmer 2012). However, there is remarkable rhetorical consistency (and consequentially, effects on related policies and programs) regarding the placement and protection of migrant workers, from its presidents, BNP2TKI, and the Ministry of Labor, in the 21st century.

The Indonesian state is one among many states that actively promotes labor migration as a temporary solution to national unemployment and poverty. Using Indonesia as a case study, I frame this chapter's discussion within the "migration-development nexus" (Faist 2008) and current debates over the role of labor migration in post-Millennium Development Goals (Thieme and Ghimire 2014). Scholars involved in these debates on the relationship between migration and development have largely focused on the social and economic causes and consequences of labor migration on migrants' countries of origin (Faist 2008; Castles 2009). These studies often emphasize greater protection and welfare provisions for migrant workers, and/or proposed solutions and pathways to developing these countries concerned, such as increasing the range of employment options for migrants and their communities (e.g. Thieme and Ghimire 2014).

Instead of asking how migration can better contribute to development, or how development programs can be reformed to include "well-being" (IOM 2013; Scott 2012), I build on the work of ethnographers of gendered transnational migration (Constable 2007 [1997]; Gamburd 2000; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994; Mahler and Pessar 2006; Piper and Roces 2003; Silvey 2009; Schiller 2012; Wise and Covarrubias 2009) to examine how migration as a development strategy, even if a "temporary" one, is taken for granted, promoted, and maintained by international migration institutions, states, and NGOs, despite compelling evidence that the lives and labor of many migrant workers are literally unsustainable and unbearable (Ladegaard 2013; Brennan 2014). What kinds of lives, luxuries, forms of abuse and sacrifice, are being sustained in the name of development? What is it about the promise of development in the Indonesian context that makes migration appear necessary? I focus this discussion mainly on female migrants, since women are often the explicit subject of these moralizing migrant representations.

This chapter argues that various Indonesian institutions and actors, in their selective representations of migrant heroes or victims, often evoke similar moral assumptions of what makes a "good" or "bad" Indonesian woman and worker. These gendered moral assumptions serve narratives which imply what I call a *gendered moral hierarchy* of migrant workers, where some workers are morally superior to others: those who are heroes who deserve media attention; those who are unfairly abused and deserve state protection; and those who partly deserve their tragic fates. I argue that in attempting to distinguish between the guilty and innocent victim, and between "illegitimate" or "tolerable" violence, these gendered moral hierarchies emphasize migrants' individual moral responsibility and blame. The responsibility of states and institutions for migrant safety, labor protection, and aspects of social welfare is thus downplayed in public discussions of labor migration, exploitation, and development.

2.2   MIGRANTS AS HEROES OF DEVELOPMENT

The Indonesian state officially began regulating transnational labor migration in 2004, largely in response to the rapid increase in female labor migration after the Asian Financial Crisis and fall of Suharto's New Order State between the years 1998 and 1999. In Chapter 1, I outlined briefly how the Indonesian state, in the 1980s and 1990s, initially promoted and legitimated the labor migration of rural women by reinterpreting women's Islamic gendered roles (*kodrat*) as mothers, wives, and citizens. Currently, the Indonesian state continues to promote labor migration as positively contributing to the social and economic development of the nation, where migrants

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are commonly referred to as "foreign exchange heroes" (*pahlawan devisa*) (Antara News 2012, Aug 9; Jakarta Post 2014, Jan 26).[14]

For example, in 2012, then-chief of BNP2TKI Jumhur Hidayat drew on a 2012 World Bank report to not only highlight the potential for migrants' remittances to contribute to the national economy, but also emphasize that migrants' financial remittances are in fact more resilient to economic crises than foreign aid and foreign direct investment (Antara News 2012, Aug 9). This makes migrant remittances a more "sustainable" resource for development than its alternatives [IOM 2013, UNFPA 2014]. To quote the report, he "expressed his gratefulness to the migrant workers for helping Indonesia bear the impact of the economic crisis… 'If there are lay-offs during a global economic crisis, poorly paid migrant workers are usually the last ones to lose their jobs.'" (Antara News 2012, Aug 9). Migrants who are "legal" or "formal"—who migrate through state-sanctioned regulatory channels— have also been deemed "national assets" (Edisi News 2014, Jul 11), who are noble (*perkerjaan mulia*), and represent the good image (*citra*) of the nation abroad (BNP2TKI 2014).

Migrants have also been represented by the state not only in terms of contributing to the national economy, but also "the people's economy" (*ekonomi rakyat*) (CilacapKAB 2011). This term evokes the sense that migration, particularly in terms of their remittances, can directly improve everyday lives of people at the village or district level (BNP2TKI 2014). This view often justifies the implementation of various financial education and entrepreneurship programs targeted at return migrants, their kin, and neighbors. For example, in January 2014, BNP2TKI made several

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[14] The official state rhetoric has been remarkably consistent, although my research has seen three different persons heading BNP2TKI over three years and two presidencies. They are: Jumhur Hidayat (2007-2014) and Gatot Abdullah (April-October 2014) under the SBY presidency, and Nusron Wahid (2015-present) under the Joko Widodo presidency. This term is likely inspired by or borrowed from the Philippine state, which referred to its migrants as heroes about a decade before the Indonesian state (Rodriguez 2010; Rafael 1997).

press statements focusing on aims to empower "foreign exchange earners" through these programs (Jakarta Post 2014, Jan 15; Antara News 2014, Jan 13). Implicit in the idea of such "empowerment" is the expectation that such businesses will help to reduce unemployment by providing jobs to migrants' kin and neighbors. As evident in the following speech by the chief of BNP2TKI's Bandung branch: "These skill training programmes will hopefully improve the welfare of migrant workers and their families, that they will be capable of creating jobs and employment by themselves, through entrepreneurship" (Nugroho 2014).

Indonesian labor migration and higher wages overseas have indeed enabled some migrants to pay for school and medical fees, build concrete houses, start small businesses, and increase consumption (Ozden and Schiff 2007; Silvey 2006; Sukamdi and Abdul 2004). However, in these statements and many others regarding remittances, state institutions dealing with transnational migration and labor represent such cases of "success" as normal and guaranteed, as long as migrants work hard. While financial education and entrepreneurship skill training programmes do provide individual participants with some financial, human, and physical capital, these alone do not ensure that participants eventually start their own businesses after the training sessions end, or that these enterprises are sustainable over time. In other words, these programmes operate under the optimistic but unfounded assumption that such entrepreneurship programmes will lead either to the success of individual enterprises or create external benefits for migrants' communities (Anwar and Chan 2016).

Rarely, if ever, do these reports on "development" focus on the issue of better wages, legal rights overseas for migrant workers, or causes of unemployment in Indonesia. Instead, low wages for migrant workers are framed and accepted as inevitable due to market forces; the sustainability of migrant remittances largely depend on the ability for migrants to accept unfairly low wages and

endure harsh working conditions. Additionally, migrants are positioned as responsible for creating jobs in order to reduce or prevent future migrations from their own communities. While state representatives applaud migrants' "hard work" and self-discipline, the state is presented as primarily responsible in helping migrants channel their remittances productively.

In addition to the state's emphasis on individual self-responsibility and discipline as a factor for successful migration and development, I highlight the following examples to support scholars who note that the Indonesian state and recruitment agents promote migration not only in its economic promises and advantages, but also in terms of gendered, moral, and religious or spiritual development—such as representing migration in terms of carrying out a patriotic or (feminine) familial duty (Robinson 2000; Rudnyckyj 2004; Silvey 2006; 2007). In a visit to a regional office in East Java in July 2013, Jumhur addressed specifically women who desire to become migrant domestic workers overseas (but who have not yet left):

> The lure of high wages overseas and the association with consumption indeed can encourage [the migrant] to become wasteful or extravagant… Do not change your mobile phones frequently, buy mobile [phone] credit, smoke, or sit happily in cafes [clubs]. The wasteful migrant reduces the possibility that one can send money to families in the homeland [*tanah air*]. Remember, if you consume too much, you will accumulate debt, and this isn't good for your future, and your family. I'm asking you later not to be wasteful, be frugal, and save money (Waspada 2013; see also BNP2TKI 2014).

That same month, Jumhur's message to female migrant candidates in Central Java similarly called for women to save money and be wary of "flirtatious employers" (*majikan genit*). He emphasized twice, "If you are seduced by your employer, refuse, but also don't be tempted (*jangan mau*). Just say that you are only there to work. If everything is fine over there, then bring money home and start a business" (Purbaya 2013). After Jumhur was replaced by Gatot Abdullah as head of BNP2TKI in 2014, Gatot dispensed remarkably similar moral advice to prospective migrant workers, including "stay away from drugs" (BNP2TKI 2014).

The gender-specific exploitation and abuses confronting Indonesia's migrant domestic worker population have been widely documented (Constable 2007 [1997]; Ford 2002; Ford and Lyons 2012; Huang and Yeoh 2007; Killias 2010; Kloppenburg and Peters 2012; Ladegaard 2013; Palmer 2012; Silvey 2006; Silvey 2007, Soeprobo and Wiyono 2004; Wee and Sim 2004). While experiences of migration are variously dependent on chance, luck and a migrant's confidence, personality and skills, many of these women usually risk or are trapped in forms of debt bondage to informal recruiters, recruitment agencies or employers; face physical, verbal or psychological violence by employers; have unregulated work hours and conditions and share their employers' residences. High-profile cases of abused Indonesian female migrants overseas have contributed to challenging the sovereignty of the state, questioning its responsibilities to its citizens abroad, and shed light on its role in effectively "sponsoring" precarious labor and trafficking-like labor migration (Palmer 2012; Silvey 2007; Tjandraningsih 2013).

However, these state representatives' emphases on migrants' financial education, responsible consumption behavior, and proper female moral discipline, shift the focus away from these broader structural inequalities and state complicity in exploitative recruitment and training processes. They instead explicitly (mis)represent the failure of some female migrants to remit money and accumulation of debt in terms of their tendency towards extravagant consumption patterns. The dangers of physical or sexual abuse of female migrant domestic workers, most of whom are required by laws in destination countries to live with their employers, are represented mostly in terms of female promiscuity and moral weakness, in allowing themselves to be tempted and seduced. Jumhur's "pep talks" quoted above effectively represent good workers as "exploitable" women, while reinforcing a national feminine ideal of the sacrificial family-oriented

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citizen. Simultaneously, his speeches pathologize those who may reject such conditions of "success," and do not conform to these gendered moral ideals.

Furthermore, these gender and moral attitudes are usually religiously and culturally inflected; their salience and power depend on the contexts of their communication and practice. For example, female labor migration and remittances are often discussed by state representatives and recruitment agents in terms of religious piety or identity (Silvey 2007). State bank and migrant ministries representatives also highlight the increase of remittances around the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan (Antara News 2012, Jul 23; LensaIndonesia 2012, Jul 30), thus linking migration with the fulfillment of religious and familial duties. In these ways, such ideas linking financial flows with expected moral behavior are conveyed and sanctioned by authoritative figures in Indonesia, and as I will elaborate, subsequently enforced through village talk.

Many scholars have made the link between institutionalized gendered Islamic morality in Indonesia and the state's paternalistic attitude towards female labor migration, which is most evident from the ways in which state officials have reacted to publicized cases of abuse and violence against migrant domestic workers (Ford and Lyons 2012; Silvey 2004; Palmer 2012). The state has implemented laws which arguably further restrict women's mobilities, such as temporarily banning female migration to Malaysia and Saudi Arabia. Stricter bureaucratic requirements for female migration were also imposed (Silvey 2004; Quiano 2011). In 2012, the Indonesian state, under Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, announced plans to "stop sending domestic workers abroad by 2017" (Jakarta Globe 2012). This has remained a recurring state promise even in 2015, during Joko Widodo's presidency (Jakarta Post 2015, Feb 14). As discussed above, there has also been a significant and apparently contradictory turn in state discourses to articulate the responsibility for safety onto women themselves.

These responses were generally met with skepticism by migrant and labor activists in Indonesia, and seen as the result of pressure from the influential national community of religious leaders, the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI).[15] MUI officially issued a religious decree (*fatwa*) that transnational female labor migration was un-Islamic (Wieringa 2006: 4). Migrant workers and activists have also argued that these negotiations and plans have not done much to reduce the rate of violations against migrants (Jakarta Post 2011, Dec 20). Instead, news on ending moratoriums or inter-state negotiations have notably focused on how to *increase* employment quotas for "cheap Indonesian labor" in Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, and Hong Kong, for Indonesian migrants in "non-domestic work" industries (Jakarta Post 2011, Dec 20; Jakarta Globe 2012; BNP2TKI 2011; Zubaidah 2015). While the Indonesian state has appeared to successfully resolve issues with Malaysia and Saudi Arabia on things such as migrants' rest days, salary, and right to keep their passports, I agree with scholars and activists who argue that these negotiations sit uncomfortably alongside the state's active promotion of migration as a pathway to national economic development.

It is important to note that migrant and labor activists, workers, and their families contribute to and critique these moral evaluations and expectations in diverse ways (Silvey 2004; Choo 2013), and that these gendered moral evaluations operate similarly in other migrant-origin countries in Southeast Asia. Nevertheless, these public responses from institutions of authority reinforce Indonesian perceptions of migrants who do not conform to this ideal as vulnerable women: uneducated, untrained, naïve, in need of protection and control, or even as psychologically ill,

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[15] The Council comprises of larger, influential Islamic grassroots development organizations such as Nahdatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, as well as smaller groups. State responses to the MUI's *fatwa* must be understood in context of the close but complex links MUI has with the state historically, as well as the role of such decrees in dictating the general direction of Islamic life in Indonesia. Although government-funded, MUI acts independently and has often directly opposed state policies, while at other times, been explicitly invited to sanction programs such as the controversial birth control policies. See Gillespie, P. Current Issues in Indonesian Islam: Analysing the 2005 Council of Indonesian Ulama Fatwa No. 7. *J. Islam. Stud.* 2007, *18*, 202–240.

morally ambiguous or suspect (Jakarta Post 2012, Aug 9; DetikNews 2015, Apr 30; Faizal 2012a; Indosuara 2014, May 29). These measures or "solutions" to the exploitative and unstable migrant work conditions have been opposed by more critical migrant labor activists and scholars, who argued that forbidding women from migrating would not actually stop their migration but only contribute to increasing the vulnerability of women to exploitation in increasing numbers of risky and undocumented forms of migration (Killias 2010; Silvey 2004: 259). These are as opposed to changes proposed by activists that would favor and enhance migrants' bargaining power. This includes improving migrants' access to social support networks and legal provisions abroad, and addressing structural unemployment in Indonesia (Constable 2009a; Hsia 2009; Tjandraningsih 2013; Jakarta Globe 2012; Jakarta Post 2011, Dec 20). Migrants' dependency on and vulnerability to their brokers can also be reduced if pre-departure training and recruitment centers are run like public educational institutions, instead of commercial organizations (Buruh Migran 2015, Oct 25).

Apart from increasing regulations on migrant women's mobility, the Indonesian state has framed cases of migrant labor exploitation, fraud, and abuse, in terms of "illegal migration" or "trafficking." These terms distinguish such "bad" migration as processes not legitimated by the state, and hence *different* from state-sanctioned labor migration. In recent years, state agencies have regularly deported large groups of "illegal migrants" from Malaysia (Ardyan 2014), and represented these returns as laudable "rescue" efforts (ibid.). The consequences of such forced repatriation for migrants and their families are seldom questioned. In 2014 and 2015, the national police, and representatives from BNP2TKI and Ministry of Labor conducted "raids" in recruitment agency offices and migrant training centers, where those found violating state regulations had their licenses revoked (Fadly 2014). The "problems" Indonesian migrants face abroad are thus attributed by the state at least in part to commercial recruitment agencies that have been compared to human

traffickers (Tempo 2014) and "mafia rings" (Fadly 2015). State representatives such as BNP2TKI chiefs regularly shift discussions of "protection" mechanisms to highlight "formal" and "regulated" labor markets available for prospective migrants abroad (BNP2TKI 2014; Zubaidah 2015).

For example, in 2004, the state introduced a licensing regime for recruitment agencies (PPTKI), although this was not strictly enforced. The responsibility and role of the state in relation to migrant candidates, migrant workers, recruitment agencies, and insurance companies, are outlined in the Presidential Regulation of 39/2004 for the Placement and Protection of Migrant Workers (UU 39/2004). Recruitment agencies are positioned as responsible for almost every aspect of the migration process from recruitment, to placement, and post-employment. This includes ensuring that migrants travel with the proper documentations, adequate and relevant training and skills for their jobs abroad, the placement and employment of migrants abroad (Articles 35 to 51), as well as the overall protection of migrant workers (Article 82). The Regulation effectively legitimated and encouraged existing practices at the time, where migrant candidates and their brokers were highly mutually dependent for their economic welfare (Rudnyckyj 2004). Nevertheless, this dependency is marked by unequal risks born by migrants and brokers, where brokers can stand to recuperate potential losses of "failed" migrants, and migrants deceived by con brokers or face wage issues abroad have limited avenues for redress (ibid.). In contrast, the Regulation stipulates the state's main responsibility as "monitoring" and governing recruitment agencies (Article 81). The state also has the authority to stop or cancel the migration journeys of any candidate not deemed suitable for work abroad (Article 81 and 100). This official document has been criticized by many activists for its uneven emphasis on the

technicalities and regulations of placement processes of migrants, over ensuring protective legal mechanisms for migrants.

Interestingly, in contrast to Ministers' effective bargaining with foreign states to increase or enable labor opportunities for Indonesian migrants, I observed that Ministers, Foreign Ambassadors, and Indonesian Consulate staff publicly turned to prayer when faced with questions regarding improving labor laws for migrants.[16] During a speech in Singapore on Indonesia's roadmap called "Development 2025," an Indonesian member of audience criticized the Minister for focusing on issues facing the middle class, as opposed to underlying issues of poverty and unemployment leading to precarious labor migration. In response, the Minister said that "God willing" (*Insyallah*), these issues will be resolved. A similar tactic was employed by then chief of BNP2TKI, Gatot Abdullah, at a speech addressing prospective migrants and return migrant entrepreneurs in Yogyakarta. In response to a question about what BNP2TKI will do about the problems facing migrants, Pak Gatot said, "*Insyallah, masalah-masalah akan berkurang.*" (God willing, these problems will reduce.) These prayers are seldom followed by indications or assurances that BNP2TKI or the Indonesian state are actively taking steps to ensure better labor conditions for citizens at home and abroad.

The above points demonstrate that states such as Indonesia do not accidentally neglect the protection of domestic spaces and migrant workers' rights, since the lack of regulation of such spaces produces and maintains particular middle-class and elite privileges required for the further generation of social, economic and political capital (Silvey 2004: 259–260). While the state frequently frames migrants as "heroes of development" in bringing in billions of US dollars' worth

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[16] In recent years, the Indonesian state has formalized labor migration agreements with Korea and Japan. These contracts are colloquially referred to as "G-to-G" or Government-to-Government programs.

of remittances annually, they also systematically devalue domestic work, forms of practical skills and labor associated with rural populations' lack of formal education, and migrants' safety (Citra 2013; Sen 1998). In another representative speech, an un-named state official explains that migrants' lack of "skills" and "under-education" render them "more prone to exploitation and torture by unscrupulous employers and agencies" (Sarigih 2014). While this may be true to some extent, the National Agency's discursive and programmatic focus on migrants' self-responsibility also explains labor abuse in terms of migrants' own uniquely class-based failings.

In other words, the majority of state discourses and responses to the exploitation and abuse of Indonesian migrant workers contributes to sustaining the precarity of migrants' lives and labor. This is done through discursively naturalizing the unfair working conditions of workers in informal sectors domestically and abroad with reference to global market inequality, in addition to partially shifting the blame for abuse and violence onto errant recruiters, "God's will," and migrants themselves. A consequence of this dominant discursive framework is that the possibility for successful and safe migration journeys is largely left to migrants' sheer perseverance, courage, chance, and personality. Discussions of development or migration's "positive" impact on migrants and their families, must thus take into account the gendered and moral assumptions underlying notions of "the good life" and a "better" future, as well as how these assumptions operate across national boundaries with transnational consequences.

In the following section, I present evidence that gendered moral assumptions underlying state discourses of migration and development are similarly evoked in media and activist accounts of violence against Indonesian migrant women.

2.3   MIGRANTS AS VICTIMS OF EXPLOITATION: GENDERED MORAL

HIERARCHIES

Dominant media and activist accounts of violence against migrant workers often strategically focus on cases that are extreme or scandalous—whether to sell newspapers, garner Internet traffic, or draw more people to activist causes. In the following analysis of some of these accounts in Indonesia, I contend that the representation and sensationalization of extreme cases in the public sphere serve to highlight these cases of abuse as exceptional, unintentionally supporting the Indonesian state's official stance that "success" is the guaranteed achievable norm of the good, pious, and self-responsible migrant. The media focus on extreme cases of violence may also contribute to rendering mundane forms of labor exploitation—such as long working hours, inadequate rest or food, poor living conditions, and delays in wage payments—as comparatively "tolerable" and "normal."

When migrant workers, activists, and scholars have called for greater state accountability in the face of labor exploitation and abuse, these are usually framed in terms of human, migrants' and labor rights. I support scholars who have pointed out that "rights" discourses are not abstract, universal, and value-free (Lai 2011; Choo 2013). Instead, the politics of migrants' and women's activisms are complex, and may contribute to reinforcing moral and gendered hierarchies embedded in understandings of victimhood, exploitation, violence, and protection.

This section builds and contributes to the existing scholarship on the victim–hero dichotomy that can be found in global human rights discourse broadly (Brennan 2014; Bernstein 2010; Kempadoo 2012), and more specifically in Indonesia in terms of human trafficking and labor migration (Ford 2002; Ford and Lyons 2012; Palmer 2012). Indonesian images and tropes of victimhood and heroism linked to migrants' gendered morality find striking parallels in the case

of the Philippines (Pratt 2012; Parreñas 2005; Rafael 1997; Rodriguez 2010).[17] Elaborating on what makes a hero or victim in the contemporary Indonesian migration context, I present examples to further argue that discourses of victimhood are not only contrasted with those of "heroic" agency. The category "victim" is not a homogenous one of the stereotypically innocent, exploited, and defenseless female migrant. Instead, it is a category that is loaded with value judgments of what makes victims deserving or undeserving of their circumstances, or what makes some victims pitiable and others "blameable." I analyze the gendered and moral assumptions in how activists and mainstream news media in Indonesia have represented cases of labor abuse, violence, and illness of migrant domestic workers. I then conclude by addressing how these representations of blame and responsibility present challenges to discourses of rights, migration, and development by state and non-state actors.

Below, I present a tentative model of gendered moral hierarchies in the representation of migrants' victimhood. I suggest that cases of violence and deaths of Indonesian migrant domestic workers can be distinguished in terms of how victimhood and blame is allocated, and thus I consider three broad categories: (1) immoral victims who are blamed for their plights; (2) innocent victims who deserve social justice; and (3) unlucky victims of fate. I argue the moral privileging of "successful" or "pitiable" female migrant who is innocent, vulnerable, heroic, and/or selfless, produces their negative gendered subordinates: immoral and ill-fated women who fall short of the ideal expectations of a mother, daughter, sister and wife. I discuss and compare these examples, to highlight that cases of "innocent victims," such as Erwiana's (introduced at the opening of the chapter), were able to garner more public outrage, support, and media coverage. In these cases

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[17] The latter may emphasize Christian "sacrifice" (Suzuki 2003; Liebelt 2008), in contrast to Indonesian concept of avoiding shame (malu) (see Chapter 4, this dissertation; Lindquist 2004).

where the migrant is "un-blameable," recruitment agents, employers, and states can then become exposed to critique, and held accountable.

2.3.1 Immoral or Morally Ambiguous Victims

Despite an estimate by Indonesian NGO Migrant Care that approximately 1249 Indonesian migrants died abroad in 2013 (Dagur 2013), the Indonesian government initially prevented, and now actively discourages second autopsies of migrant workers' bodies that are sent back to Indonesia (Knight 2011).[18] While such statistics have been the subject of debate among labor ministries and migrant NGOs, the state's official discouragement of autopsies leaves the "true" causes of death open to gossip and speculation, while heavily skewing public acceptance of official reports of deaths overseas, as due to accidents, natural illnesses, or by death row sentences due to migrant workers' unjustified or immoral motives (Knight 2011; Sarigih 2014).[19] Highly publicized cases of violence against migrant domestic workers often involve the death row sentence in Malaysia or Saudi Arabia (Knight 2011; Sarigih 2014). In 2014, at least 236 Indonesian migrants faced death row sentences worldwide, mostly women who have allegedly murdered their employers or other migrant workers, women who are accused of black magic, or accused of committing adultery with a Saudi Arabian man (Sarigih 2014).

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[18] This figure is based on estimates in Indonesian embassies abroad, BNP2TKI, Migrant Care, media reports, and families of victims; see Tables "Migrant Workers' Deaths Worldwide in Year 2013" and "Violation of Migrant Workers' Rights in Year 2013." Available online: http://migrantcare.net (accessed on 2 July 2014). However, Migrant Care's statistics on violations against Indonesian migrants have been dismissed by BNP2TKI chief. See: Sijabat, R.M. (2013).

[19] On more than one occasion, labor attaches in Indonesian Consulates overseas have also claimed that abuse and violations against migrant workers are very "rare" or "few." See for example, Jakarta Post 2010, Nov 19. For a response by activists in Hong Kong, see Grundy, T. 2014.

Labor activists often emphasize that harsh labor conditions, long-term physical abuse, low pay, or even no pay, are the conditions that provoke migrants' violence in acts of self-defense or temporary insanity (Knight 2011). State officials have also admitted that some cases of "adultery" were actually cases of rape (Sarigih 2014). However, media reports and state officials tend to downplay these arguments, due to the lack of evidence. Regardless of the truth, and keeping in mind the state's policy against second autopsies, blame and responsibility seem to lie mostly with the "adulterous" women, or unskilled and uneducated naïve rural "victims" (Sarigih 2014; Ada Apa 2012). The emphasis on the potential guilt or immorality of the migrant victim is evident in the following news excerpt about Indonesians on death row sentences:

> The [un-named] state official acknowledged that some of the suspects were actually rape victims, but that a significant percentage of them had been charged for having extramarital affairs with Saudi men… According to the official, data from Indonesian representative offices in Saudi Arabia showed that about 7000 children were born from such affairs. "The identities of their fathers are unclear. This should raise a serious concern because this is about our young generation too," the official said.
>
> The official said the government had worked to repatriate the children by providing temporary documents, though admitted that the children could have trouble obtaining official identity documents in Indonesia because they had no birth certificates and unknown fathers.
>
> The government has tried to establish Islamic marriages for [the women] to help them obtain documents in Saudi Arabia before returning to Indonesia, but most of them were reluctant because they had been married to Indonesian men before going abroad to work," the official added. (Sarigih 2014).

In the above example, a significant part of the Jakarta Post article focused on the state's claims to be actively helping illegitimate stateless children "return" to Indonesia, efforts that prove difficult due to the fact that these children's births were born of "adulterous relations" between Indonesian married women and overseas men. The state official's narrative shifts the focus of the article away from Indonesian migrants on death row sentences to the question of their morality and whether they deserve legal aid from the Indonesian government.

In another telling news report by the Jakarta Post, there was a list of "tragic fate of Indonesian workers in Malaysia" (Aritonang 2013). This list included detailed descriptions of extreme physical abuse of female migrants. Any mention of sexual abuse was glaringly absent. Similarly, Ford and Lyons (2012) observed that in discussions of human trafficking and labor exploitation in Indonesia, sex workers are noticeably seldom the focus. In other words, cases that were not seen as "tragic," or cases that attract less public attention and sympathy often involve more morally ambiguous and socially taboo aspects, such as sexual abuse, greed, depression, single parenthood, or divorce. These are sometimes told in the genre of a moral or cautionary tale.

For example, a report written and published on the website of an Indonesian migrant labor NGO begins with a Javanese folk saying: "One goes overseas in search of gold, but it rains stones instead" (Buruh Migran 2008, Jul 28). What follows is a case of extreme physical torture of a domestic worker in Malaysia, who had just returned to Indonesia:

> This proverb is apt to describe the unfortunate events experienced by Radisem Bint Sumarjo [28], a female migrant worker…. Currently lying at the Regional General Hospital… after working in Selangor, Malaysia. There are bruises all over her body, and her legs are paralyzed after being tortured by her employer… She requires an oxygen mask to breathe… According to the victim's brother, Radisem only just managed to rest this morning, after babbling to herself all night long. It seems as if she is still in Malaysia, and in fear. (ibid.).

The narrative goes on to represent Radisem's migration experience in terms of her individual choice and aspirations for wealth:

> Last July, Radisem left home with a sense of pride. She will become a maid in Malaysia and in future, she will be able to bring home large quantities of Ringgit. However, not only did she not get any ringgit, she also encountered misfortune [*nasib buruk*] (ibid.).

The writer then expands on how Radisem got a "good employer" and wrote home twice. However, her family stopped receiving news after this, only to find out much later that during this period of silence:

Radisem was often abused by her employer for stealing her employer's money. Radisem received blows all over her body, from her legs, back, head and she was even strangled by her neck… She did not get to eat much or often. Sometimes only once a day... As a result of not bathing often, Radisem contracted a skin disease that added to her misery (ibid.).

Although the report ends by ultimately referring to Radisem as a "tragic victim" and calling for the Indonesian government to "take action," the narrative is wrought with moral ambiguity, where Radisem's "tragic" situation is variously explained in terms of her pride or greed, bad luck, and the fact that she might have stolen from her initially "good" employer. In a similar narrative vein, a human rights media platform begins a case of abuse in Taiwan by also framing the migrant woman's departure as one where she is "cheerful" in spirits, although she left against her father's wishes (Ayyubi 2009). She returned as "crazy" and severely depressed, claiming her employer hit her until her teeth fell out. The report ends with police investigating "whether or not she was really mistreated" (ibid.). These examples illustrate how a genre of victim narratives that introduce suspicion of the victim, and leave the moral of the story open to the reader's interpretation, either implicitly or explicitly contains a warning along the lines of filial piety and modesty, and against greed.

2.3.2   Innocent Victims of Abuse

These morally ambiguous narratives of women who were promiscuous, greedy, or disobeyed their elders, contrast with stories of the extreme abuse of "innocent" victims. Consider the following report on 17-year-old Wilfrida Soik, who was charged with killing her 60-year-old Malaysian employer in 2010 (Aritonang 2014):

Wilfrida was charged under the Malaysian Penal Code, which carries a death sentence upon conviction; but the court ruled on Monday that she was mentally unstable when the incident took place, therefore, found her not guilty. […]

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Human rights activists and politicians, who have given legal assistance to Wilfrida and monitored the legal proceedings over the past four years, praised the ruling.

The court's verdict is fair because the murder was an act of self-defense, which was to protect herself from torture committed by her employer," Migrant Care, an NGO that promotes the rights of migrant workers, said in a statement.

Migrant Care said Wilfrida should have been acquitted because she was underage when the crime took place.

"We have always believed that Wilfrida must be freed because she was under age when the incident happened. She is a victim of human trafficking," it said. […]

The investigation also showed that Wilfrida was only 17 years old when she entered Malaysia on falsified documents, which, thus, would make her eligible for protection under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which forbids capital punishment for minors, a convention that both Indonesia and Malaysia are signatories of. […]

The campaign to spare Wilfrida from the death sentence also brought together various groups, including members of the Regional Legislative Council [DPRD], the Regional Representatives Council [DPD] and the House of Representatives [DPR]; the Catholic Church in Belu; interfaith communities; singer and activist Melanie Subono. Netizens also showed their support through the #SaveWilfrida petition on Change.org, which had more than 13,000 signatures, making it one of the most popular petitions put up on the popular website (ibid.).

In comparison to cases of "immoral" or guilty victims, Wilfrida's case provoked a sense of public moral outrage, evident in the petitions collected in her name, and a wide range of groups and public figures that supported her court appeal against her death row sentence. Media and activist representations of her focus on her moral innocence in framing her as a "child," a "victim of human trafficking," and "mentally unstable" (hence, only partially responsible for her actions).

Another case involved a "53-year-old grandmother" who was beheaded for murder in Saudi Arabia in 2011. She claimed to have killed her employer because she was forbidden to return home to see her three children (Al-Alawi 2011). Her death sparked public protests in Indonesia, and provoked a state moratorium on labor migration to Saudi Arabia. These examples are representative in showing how, in almost all cases inspiring extensive media coverage and state intervention, women are highlighted as innocent victims—and violence against them, unjustified.

I highlight these cases to argue that they may have provoked more outrage because moral judgments are often based on the perception of one's intentions (Duranti 2015); hence, a migrant is innocent because she was trafficked against her will, or a sacrificial mother, in migrating for the sake of her family. On the other hand, women's agency and intentions are depicted as morally suspect in cases of sexual abuse, or where women had professed some prior desire for adventure, pleasure, or wealth. Even in cases where women do not profess such "deviant" desires, where sexual abuse is concerned, the moral purity and innocence" of women seem suspect by default, as in the case of rape being represented as adultery (Sarigih 2014; Ada Apa 2012). The problem is that this focus on moral agency and immoral agency contribute to shifting the focus of blame for violence onto migrants themselves. This also sanctions only a particular motive for migration— for economic reasons, and supporting one's family—as opposed to addressing cases where women were pressured against their will by family members to migrate, or where women migrated to escape pressures to marry, or stigmatization as single mothers or divorcees.

2.3.3   Unlucky Victims of Fate

Finally, other deaths and sicknesses are represented in the media and informal discussions as "natural," morally neutral, and associated with bad luck. A prominent national news agency, Tribunnews, archives all news regarding Indonesia's migrant workers under the theme (*topik*), "The fate of migrants" (*Nasib TKI*).[20] Former BNP2TKI chief Jumhur Hidayat, has publically referred to "victims of human trafficking" as "those who are less lucky" (*kurang beruntung*)

[20] See: http://www.tribunnews.com/topics/nasib-tki. Accessed 4 April 2016.

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(Republika 2012, Nov 30). These cases of bad luck or illness are often framed "factually", and de-politicized by state authorities.

For example, the following report was posted by migrant activists, on the hospitalization of two migrant workers in Dubai. It hints at the employers' failure to provide adequate heating, but unlike other reports of migrants' deaths and abuse, this one is free of criticism or blame, and does not conclude with calls for state action or suggestions for the implementation of proper labor laws ensuring proper living conditions for workers:

> Two Indonesian migrant workers in Dubai unfortunately experienced charcoal smoke poisoning on Friday. […] They were poisoned after carrying a burning charcoal into the room, due to recent cold weather conditions in Dubai.
> In addition, the room provided by the employer for both workers was cold, and eventually they brought a piece of burning charcoal into the room. Both Indonesian migrant workers inhaled carbon monoxide from the burning of this charcoal. Both were found lying unconscious in the room (Buruh Migran 2014, Jan 22).

Another migrant death was more controversial, where the migrants' relatives demanded for an autopsy of the dead body. Khodijah Dede was a migrant domestic worker, who died three months after she arrived in Jeddah. Her family was told by state officials that she died due to illness, though Dede's recruitment agent separately informed her family that she was poisoned (Solopos 2012, Apr 03). In response to the family's request for an official explanation, BNP2TKI released a report to confirm that Dede had died due to "drinking organic phosphoric chemicals." Despite this detail, the report concluded that upon re-examination, the cause of death was "natural," due to "a decrease in cardiac function in the respiratory tract" (BNP2TKI 2012, Apr 5).

In such cases, I follow medical anthropologists who argue that diseases and illness are often never just "natural," but also the result of improper and irregular diets, and environmental conditions that are usually social and political (Hamdy 2008). Yet, state and media accounts of these sicknesses may sometimes naturalize and uncritically frame these cases as "bad luck" and

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"ill fate," although some minority critical voices are calling for enforcing autopsies on all Indonesian bodies that died overseas (Knight 2011).

2.4   DISPERSING MORAL RESPONSIBILITY AND BLAME

This chapter has presented various ways that moral responsibility and blame for migrants' problems can be dispersed among and shifted onto multiple institutions and actors. A central effect of these dispersals of responsibility is that migrant women in particular bear the bulk of the blame and burden of ensuring "successful" migration outcomes, and enduring the shame associated with failing such expectations. Such discourses about gender, migration, and morality produce a double-edged view of women as, on the one hand, highly individualistic and conscious agents of their own fate; and on the other hand, highly vulnerable to worldly temptations and thus requiring protection and discipline.

In this chapter, I have analyzed some overlapping and intersecting representations and interests of migrant domestic workers by the Indonesian state, activists, and journalists. Whether female labor migration is represented by these actors as exploitative or a positive economic force for families and the Indonesian nation, depends on how they frame the role of and relationship among the Indonesian state, the global market economy, and the gendered moral responsibility of the Indonesian citizen-worker. Activists may strategically employ victim discourses to spare migrants from death row sentences, or negotiate for safer migration processes and working conditions for migrants overseas. The state may employ and contrast such discourses of victimhood to narratives of migrants as heroes, to distinguish cases of illegitimate and tolerable violence. In the latter, state collusion with recruitment agencies in facilitating labor migration is largely downplayed, and the

focus of blame and responsibility for migrants' vulnerabilities and abuse is on individual migrants, employers, and recruiters.

I argue that the precarious labor migration of women in particular is legitimated, tolerated, and sustained by Indonesian policy-makers and the general public due to these often overlooked morally gendered aspects of dominant narratives of female labor migration and development in Indonesia. A gendered moral hierarchy of heroes and victims in these narratives renders invisible, mundane, or irrelevant to policy-makers and public attention, the ones who might not be suffering as visibly or extremely as Erwiana, yet who are not yet "successful" enough to return to Indonesia as "foreign exchange heroes." Furthermore, as migration ethnographers have highlighted, these gendered and moral expectations for migrants to "succeed" in being economic providers, and good women and men, mean that migrants often represent themselves and their host countries to their families and communities of origin in positive terms of security or social mobility (McKay 2003; McKay 2005; Peters 2010). These pressures to represent migration in terms of success sustain the development narratives, desires and fantasies, of their non-migrant peers: that migration may remedy local struggles for livelihood and better futures.

Whether Erwiana's case can lead to substantial change in laws to enhance migrant workers' welfare and political positions in their countries of origin and work depends on whether the outrage and grief over her suffering can not only effectively highlight the global structural inequalities, but also the culturally specific gendered moral inequalities that contributed to her plight. So far, migrant activists have managed to provoke enough public uproar that led to unprecedented attention given to the case by state actors in Hong Kong and Indonesia. The limits of such outrage and attention may lie in the fact that Erwiana fits representations of the extreme "good" and innocent victim, as a very young, fresh-faced woman whose experiences in Hong Kong reduced

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her to an undernourished, barely walking, heavily bruised body. Nevertheless, these are crucial moments of negotiation between states and migrant NGOs on a wide variety of issues. However, the potential for these cases to critique broader structural inequalities is limited by the pervasive dual and narrow visions of migration as a tool for development, or migration as a form of trafficking.

The gendered moral assumptions underlying representations of violence against migrant workers have significant consequences for whether international and states' policies and regulations further restrict mobility and choice for migrants, or address gendered, cultural, and structural conditions of migration and violence. These hierarchical gendered and moral representations of victimhood mean that women may bear greater risks of moral judgment, especially in cases of abuse. As I elaborate in the following chapters, such stigmatization and pathologization crucially affects their access to local social support networks upon return to their hometowns. Nevertheless, over-emphasizing women as victims potentially overlooks male migrants' experiences of gendered risks and violence.

In the following chapters, I examine migrant-origin villagers' gendered and religiously-inflected experiences and views of morality, migration, and development in relation to these broader policies, discourses, and public discussions. This includes male and female return migrants, prospective migrants, non-migrants, and other residents. I describe and discuss the impact of these gendered moral hierarchies on migrants, their kin, and neighbors, to highlight the ways migrants and non-migrants unevenly negotiate the promises and risks of transnational labor migration in relation to development.

3.0   EVALUATING MIGRANT SUCCESS AND FAILURE

Here, almost everyone [migrant] is successful.

–Elderly female resident who has never left Indonesia

If you ask me, in this whole village, nobody is successful yet.

–Former female migrant to Malaysia, mid-twenties, married to a former migrant from Korea

[Success or failure] depends on our own selves and our family. For example, it depends on whether we work hard or not, but also how our children and spouses are… if they are lazy or if they work, and if children spend a lot of money or not. Sometimes we [migrants] are just the same when we are working overseas [*sama saja*] but our families here are spending it on other things…

–Former female migrant to Taiwan, early thirties, who has since returned to Taiwan to work

It was a clear, sunny November morning in a rural village of Cilacap. I had been staying there for about a week with Nurul, a forty-year-old woman who had worked in Malaysia and Singapore for nearly twenty-two years before returning to Cilacap. On this day, Nurul took me to visit her dear friend, Rina, who had also worked in Singapore as a domestic worker in the 1990s. Rina's house had newly painted concrete walls, a bigger than average living room with cushioned Javanese wooden chairs, and a large photo of Mecca in Saudi Arabia. She served us warm sweet tea, along with a generous variety of local snacks such as sour mandarins and fried corn fritters. After some small talk, Rina took out an old photo album of her time in Singapore. She had photos with and of the Chinese family she worked for, as well as some Islamic-religious activities she took part in with fellow Indonesian domestic workers on Sundays or Idul Fitri.[21]

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[21] Sunday is usually the day off for domestic workers in Singapore and Hong Kong. According to the laws of destination countries like Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan, domestic workers are entitled to a weekly or monthly

Rina was a rice farmer who owned and worked her own land, although sometimes she also hired neighbors to help her during harvest season. She was married at fifteen, then divorced, before moving to Singapore to work. Now, her son was working in Korea with a falsified passport.[22] Although he had passed all the required medical and language examinations, he still could not get a job in Korea, so he paid 60 million rupiah (around USD 6,000) to "buy" a job that a neighbor had secured. This meant that at eighteen, he left the country with someone else's name and passport, but his own photograph in it.[23] To pay for her son's migration, Rina "rented" [*disewa*] out all the agricultural land [*sawah*] that she had. "Thank God [*Alhamdulillah*]," she said, her son was able to send back enough money for them to get back their land and repay their debts.

After his first contract ended in Korea, Rina's son returned to get married, before leaving for Korea again. However, when he was in Korea, his wife spent most of his remittances on a new motorcycle. Rina also suspected that she was having an affair with another man. So when her daughter-in-law suggested she wanted to work in Singapore as well, Rina did not object. In fact, a few months earlier, her daughter-in-law had left Indonesia for Singapore to be a live-in domestic

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day off. However, this is not strictly enforced due to the fact that domestic workers also live with their employers, and the laws allow room for workers to work on their days off for additional pay. Thus the practice of giving domestic workers a weekly or monthly day off varies among employers. Idul Futri marks the end of the Muslim fasting season of Ramadan. It is the most important Muslim festive season in Indonesia, usually lasting between three days to a week. During this time, some migrants might return to Indonesia to celebrate this event with their family. In Indonesia it is also known as Lebaran.

[22] Falsified documents, such as passports, refer to any documents where personal information or data has been altered by recruiters and/or migrant candidates, with the help of bureaucrats, to deliberately mislead persons of authority, such as immigration officers.

[23] Some migrants agree explicitly to such falsified documents. In this case, the neighbour and recruitment agent had told Rita's son that he could "buy" someone else's job. However, Rina's son was not aware that this entailed traveling on someone else's passport; he only found out when he received his passport at the airport before departure.

worker as well. She only spent a week in the training center before her departure, although pre-departure training courses for domestic workers are legally required to last at least three months.[24]

Once Rina began telling stories about migrants and their families who lived in the area, it seemed there was no end to it. The stories kept coming. One neighbor came back pregnant after working in Malaysia, though she already had five children and a husband in Cilacap. Her husband was a farmer and took care of their children by himself. This husband, however, accepted the child from Malaysia. While she was in Malaysia, she didn't send money home, and when she returned, she did not bring much money with her either. People said that she had married her Malaysian employer, who was rumored to be the father of her child.

There was also a girl who returned from Singapore with big ugly scars on her arms. People said that her employer had scalded her with a hot iron. Nurul remarked, "Maybe the girl did something wrong. Sometimes, the girls may not be well-trained… It could be that she did not know how to iron properly or something, which made the employer angry. Sometimes that happens, especially if the boss is Chinese."

Another girl had returned after only five months of working in Singapore. She returned with bald patches on her head, as if her hair had been torn out by someone. I asked Rina if she knew what happened, and she replied that she did not. She added that she did even not dare to ask the girl's family, because it may be hurtful (*sakit hati*), offensive (*tersinggung*), or humiliating (*malu*) for neighbors to ask what happened.

At this point, I said to Rina that there seemed to be so many tragic stories (*peristiwa*). What did she think of such migration, and people going abroad for work today? To simplify my question,

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[24] These courses typically include how to use modern household equipment such as washing machines, as well as language courses according to the dominant language of the destination country (typically Arabic, English, Mandarin, or Cantonese).

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I asked, is it a good thing, or not (*bagus atau tidak bagus*)? To my surprise, Rina replied without hesitation, as if the answer obvious, "*Ya bagus lah.*" (Yes it's good).

"But why?" I asked.

"You can build a house, buy land…"

Perplexed by her certainty, I pushed further, "So migration is generally good… even though some may have such bad experiences?"

She replied, "Yes, it depends on our own selves and our family [*kita sendiri dan keluarga*]. Sometimes employers want to test us just like we want to test them, or we are being tested. It is up to us to accept [*menerima*] or refuse [*melawan*] them in cases of employer's seduction [*digoda*]…"

Rina's views of the various consequences of migration, in terms of wealth or sickness, abuse, and adultery, are typical of the narratives of people I spoke to in Cilacap and Yogyakarta. Despite the fact that many villagers observed and discussed sickness, violence, or debt that migrants and their families face, villagers generally perceived labor migration positively, in terms of the wealth and material welfare it promises. As I argue and elaborate in later chapters, such positive affirmations about migration highlight how residents actively produce and sustain hope that migration will improve their lives, particularly for persons such as Rina, whose son and daughter-in-law are currently working overseas. Sustaining hopeful attitudes towards migration is intimately linked to how migrant money is valued, not only in terms of an immediate economic exchange value, but also in terms of the gendered moral values associated with the production and circulation of money over time.

In this chapter, I focus on how residents of migrant-origin villages variously define and talk about migrant success or failure in moral and temporal terms. I highlight how kinship and neighborly relations shape these contextual evaluations of migration. I show how despite

ubiquitous and seemingly standard local indicators of migrant-related "success," conforming to these indicators does not guarantee that a return migrant is viewed as "successful." Likewise, when migrant projects fail, migrants and their kin can either earn the sympathy of others, or be blamed and condemned for their failures or social transgressions. I argue that narratives of migration-related "success" or "failure" illuminate how migrant success or failure may be superficially linked to material and financial indicators. Instead, migrants and their journeys are primarily evaluated by their families and neighbors based on their ability to perform or fulfil normative gendered moral expectations. In other words, how migrant money is used produces its value and meaning through village talk. The question of whether or not migrants are legally working and living abroad like Rina's son in Korea, or received adequate training prior to their migration journeys, like Rina's daughter-in-law in Singapore, is seldom taken into account. In subsequent chapters, I consider some reasons for this apparent irrelevance of the Indonesian state's regulations of recruitment and pre-departure processes, or labor and migration laws and conditions abroad.

Besides focusing on the views of migrant-origin villagers, this chapter also introduces what I call "migrants who do not migrate." This refers to persons who left the village with the intention of working abroad, but who never left the country for various reasons, such as running away from pre-departure training camps, or financial fraud by recruitment agents. I describe how, upon return to their origin villages, such individuals self-identify, and are typically perceived and labelled as "former" and "failed" migrants. Others may decide not to return to their villages due to the shame of being perceived as migrant failures. I discuss how the phenomena of "migrants who do not migrate" challenges the commonly exclusive methodological and analytical categories of "migrant" and "non-migrant." Instead, these categories are in practice much more fluid. Such "former migrants" who never left the country serve as an example of local gendered normative

expectations for migrants to return home as successful role models. The ubiquitous blaming and shaming of these "failed" migrants reinforce the chapter's argument that gendered self-responsibility emerges as a fundamental and limiting condition for migrant success or failure.

3.1   PROMISES

3.1.1   Migrant Success and Temporality

In the Cilacap and Yogyakarta villages, stories of migrant-related success were ubiquitous, gendered, and at first seemed nearly homogenous. They were also often full of envy, jealousy, and suspicion. These stories of what constituted success point to local desires for modernity: migrant remittances that funded two-storey concrete houses, migrants who opened their own food or motorcycle repair shops or started small businesses, migrants whose children and family can afford fashionable clothes, cars, motorcycles, mobile phones, a college education, and biomedical hospital fees. There is a popular *dangdut* song about female migrants—"TKW"—the title of the song and also the shorthand for female migrants [*Tenaga Kerja Wanita*].[25] The song is based on stereotypes of the beautiful TKW heroine who works hard overseas, despite her limited skills. Many residents told me that this stereotype of the fair and beautiful TKW is due to the fact that TKWs often work indoors, as domestic workers in private houses, as opposed to farming under the hot sun. Additionally, beauty is expensive: TKWs are also viewed as able to afford expensive

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[25] Dangdut is a genre of Indonesian popular music that is hybrid, "blending Indonesian lyrics with instruments, rhythms, melodies, and electronic production techniques from Indian film music, Malay and middle-Eastern popular music, American disco, English pop and rock, and Latin dance music" (Weintraub 2008: 370). Dangdut's lyrics tend to express "themes of everyday life, love, social criticism against class inequality, and Islamic messages" (ibid.).

whitening creams or injections to achieve modern standards of Indonesian beauty. Return or potential migrants often cited others' successes as evidence that they, too, could eventually achieve their material and financial goals if they worked overseas.

Some migrants are more successful than others, and return migrants in particular often cite the tensions between individual will and familial responsibilities as a big factor, though in surprisingly different ways. For example, Nurul was a migrant domestic worker for twenty-two years and returned with very little to show for it. She suggested that migrants who were unmarried are often more successful than those like her, who were married with children. To Nurul, migrants without parents who depend on them financially were also better positioned to save money for themselves. Since they had few family financial burdens and responsibilities, these single persons were able to save money to buy land or open shops. However, her friend Lita disagreed. Despite having two young children, Lita returned after three years in Taiwan with enough savings to open two small businesses. In contrast to Nurul, Lita said that migrants who had young children like her tend to be more successful. For Lita, since single and unmarried migrants had few familial responsibilities, they tended to spend their earnings on clothes, going out, and having fun. Instead, migrants with mouths to feed tended to think about the future, and to save money for their family's needs.

What these narratives share is the ways in the assumption that success is associated with the relative presence or absence of familial duties in relation to an individual's position in the Central Javanese life course (see Birchok n.d.). On the one hand, for Nurul, her siblings' dependence on her to provide financially for their weddings and their children's education curtailed her ability to save or plan for her own and her children's future. On the other hand, Lita

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saw her children's needs as a source of motivation and self-discipline, inspiring her to be frugal and future-oriented.

Migrant success is also typically understood in temporal terms: residents distinguished between what I call migrants' short-term and long-term successes. While migrants may return home with cash and savings, many end up spending all of these savings quickly to build houses, buy consumer goods, or repay debts. Such migrants whose successes are short-lived are sometimes considered "failures" too, and stories of such return migrants often portray them as being lazy, arrogant, unfriendly, greedy, or stupid. These return migrants are often described as being unemployed (*menganggur*), just sitting at home (*duduk di rumah saja*), and confused and lost (*bingung*).

For example, during the annual *Idul Fitri* celebrations in Cilacap in 2012, I was introduced to a former migrant who had worked in Malaysia two years ago. When we made small talk about how she was, she responded that she tried to stay at home these days, since she did not have the extra money to shop or buy many snacks for the festive period. She told us that she was just waiting for her young children to grow up, so that she can apply to work in Singapore. This example is arguably representative of the majority of return migrants, where migrants' earnings abroad mainly finance the daily expenses of families at home, or the building of houses. Migrants often return with little or no alternative means to generate or earn income beyond fulfilling basic necessities (Khoo et al. 2014). The local stereotype of the "lost" migrant who returned with nothing to do but "sit at home" and wait for a future opportunity contrasts with perceptions of migrants who have achieved long-term success. The latter refers to those who either continue to stay abroad and send money home, or those who returned with enough money to start profitable or sustainable businesses.

Return migrants who started businesses were associated with being smart (*pintar*) with managing their finances. Migrants who managed to save a lot—who returned with larger amounts of money— were also viewed as more hardworking and pious while abroad. They were typically contrasted against their selfish, hedonistic, and less wealthy peers, who were assumed to have spent their earnings lavishly on themselves and consumer items. Other migrants perceived as having long-term success were circular migrants, or those who "come and go multiple times" (*pulang pergi berkali-kali*). The majority of circular migrants were women. This term describes their specific pattern of mobility, where these migrants embarked on multiple consecutive trips, each consisting of two or three year contracts with employers and companies. These comings and goings can be sustained for five or ten to twenty years, if not longer. Their success as circular, continuous migrants, are often associated with their good luck or fate, in being able to secure good employers and in their ability to adapt to a foreign land and feel at home (*betah*). Success is also attributed to their ability to endure and persevere despite harsh living and working conditions for the sake of their families at home. Importantly, as I will elaborate further, such long-term migrants are only considered successful if they have consistently sent money home throughout their stay abroad, as well as if they have maintained good reputations in their villages of origin as being dutiful and faithful family members, and Indonesian citizens.

At the time of my fieldwork between 2014 and 2015, the majority of people I spoke to, including NGO activists, a migrant insurance agent,[26] state representatives, return migrants, and residents of migrant-origin villages, consistently highlighted the ideal that migrants should aim to

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[26] Migrants are legally obliged to sign up for private health and life insurance to cover their medical expenses from the time they begin training in Indonesian recruitment centers, till the time they return to the country. Recruitment agents usually are linked to a few licensed insurance companies who monopolise the provision of migrant-specific insurance packages. Recruiters often solely arrange for the relevant documents for migrants, keeping their policy documents and reference numbers as well, rather than giving this information to the migrant.

accumulate capital (*modal*) to start businesses when they return. It was not enough or practical to simply migrate in order to have money to build a nice house, or for children to go to school. While these were certainly good and expected consequences of migration, many people I spoke to focused on the necessity for migrants to have discipline and diligence to save while abroad, and not send all their money home. This nearly ubiquitous focus on accumulating capital contrasted with my visit to Cilacap in the summer of 2012. Then, residents talked about migration mainly as a way for people to build houses and earn a little "extra" (*tambahan/ lebihan*) beyond what was required for daily basic necessities. My findings complemented similar research findings among Indonesian female domestic workers in Singapore. Women who wished to return home, and were asked to return home by their family, cited the lack of savings and capital to start as business as a barrier to their return (Platt et al. 2013: 34).

This increasing emphasis on migrants' need for capital and savings coincides with the time period (2012-2013) when the Indonesian state started to explicitly draw on international migration-for-development discourses to talk about migrant remittances. During this time, institutions such as US government, through USAid (May 2012, Embassy of the US 2011), Ausaid (The University of Sydney Business School 2012), and International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Lagarde 2015) actively implemented and encouraged entrepreneurship programs in Indonesia as a pathway to sustainable development (Koo 2013). I mention these to suggest that villagers' temporally oriented perceptions about the ideal situation of return migrants, or ideal motivations and aims for prospective or current migrants, were likely influenced by national media, and state and international discourses and projects of migration and development.

3.1.2 Gender and (Un)Certain Success

Superficially, these dominant narratives and definitions of migrant success appear predictable and standard: success is typically linked to migrant money, and status-linked indicators of being modern, such as fashion, the latest motor-bicycle, car, or concrete houses. However, I found that even when migrants do fulfil the check-list of what a typically successful migrant should be, they may still perceive themselves, or be evaluated by resident neighbors and peers, to be "failures" or "not yet successful" (*belum berhasil/ tidak sukses*). This is especially true in the case of female migrants and return migrants. My main point is that narratives and standards of migrant success often do not refer only to financial, physical, or educational welfare of migrants and their families. Such standards often illuminate gendered and moral ideas associated with money and success as well (see Keane 2007).

For example, migrants, particularly women, who had been abroad for more than five years were usually either seen as very successful or very immoral. On the one hand, villagers might suggest that some migrants managed to stay abroad for so long because they had successfully adapted to a foreign country, or had the good fortune to work for good employers who are "like family." On the other hand, long-term migrants could also be perceived as having "forgotten" or "left behind" their spouses, children, or parents, their "Javanese culture," and were just selfishly having fun overseas. These opposing interpretations mean that migrants have to prove their filial attachments to their families by sending money often (see Parreñas 2005; Constable 2014), and being attentive to their reputations as good daughters, sons, wives and husbands, overseas. Maintaining their gendered moral reputation entailed performing transnational emotional care-work such as regular phone calls or text messages home (see Lai 2011; Madianou 2012), not being seen in places deemed inappropriate overseas (e.g. bars), spending frugally on material items for

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oneself, sending or bringing gifts home, or remitting more money during religious holidays such as Idul Fitri and Idul Adha.[27] Such acts of sending dollars or bringing gifts are typically interpreted as expressions and acts of care from migrants to their kin (McKay 2007; Parreñas 2005; McKenzie and Menjivar 2011).

Women were often subjected to harsher moral judgments and standards of "success." If men did not regularly send money home, they were sometimes excused for having to pay their own debts, or for needing the money for expenses such as cigarettes, food, or lodging. On the other hand, women were expected to be frugal, non-social, and to save almost all their earnings for their family at home. These high expectations for female migrants to regularly send money home was evident in how residents were quicker to accuse women of being sexually "loose" overseas if they did not send money home. For example, one male community-based leader put it starkly, "My analysis is this. In cases where [women] migrants return without bringing any money, it is *definitely* because they had affairs there, *hoorah-hoorah*, with Pakistani people or whatever." Such a viewpoint was expressed to me more than once, and by residents, return migrants, activists, and state representatives, regardless of gender and age. This view also echoes dominant ideas of migrants' responsibility for their own successes and failures, such as in this chapter's introduction, where Rina said that success ultimately "depends on our own selves and our family."

Even in cases where female migrants sent large sums of money home, returned with enough money to buy a car, build a big house, or start a business, almost all narratives of such financial success included suspicion or doubt about the source of extreme wealth. For example, such gossip included the fact that some women's remittances were "not *halal*" (forbidden), or "hot money"

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[27] This is often referred to as the Muslim "Day of Sacrifice," an important religious holiday for Indonesian Muslims. Those with the means typically sacrifice goats to gain merit, and honor Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son to demonstrate his obedience to God.

(*uang panas*), implying or explicitly saying that these women probably earned extra money from sex work or received it from rich foreign boyfriends. Again, financially successful female migrants were largely the target of such gossip and moral judgment. These stories were often circulated by return migrants who worked in the same countries as the women being gossiped about, or else by resident non-migrants who make such judgments based on the way female migrants dress when they return, or the photos they post on social media platforms such as Facebook. Scandalous stories in national media, or through informal Facebook posts online, which "expose" stories of Indonesians "trafficked" into sex work, or Indonesian sex workers in Hong Kong or Macau, encourage and perpetuate such stories and stereotypes. Non-migrant villagers often asked me incredulously if it was actually possible for "proper" female migrants to earn so much in a month or in a year.

Once, a middle-aged woman wondered aloud if her female migrant neighbor was "really just a domestic worker", since she reportedly returned home with savings of about 60 million rupiah (approximately USD 6,000) over the course of a year. Based on my interviews, as well as other research on female migrant labor in Taiwan (Lan 2002; Wang 2007), foreign domestic workers and factory workers typically earn between six to ten million rupiah a month, or between USD 500 to nearly USD 1000. In this light, it is possible and reasonable to expect that a migrant worker who has already paid off her recruitment fees and debts could save around 60 million rupiah a year. It would be difficult, but not impossible. Nevertheless, the sources of migrant women's financial success were often suspect and associated with immoral means, unless they managed to maintain good reputations as respectful family members in the village.

Migrant women who appeared financially successful were sometimes accused of secretly being in debt in order to appear successful, and to avoid the shame of being seen as a migrant

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failure. An example of such suspicious attitudes towards successful migrant women was gossip circulated about one migrant woman from Taiwan. While some villagers said she only managed to build a big and beautiful house for her elderly parents from her "non-halal" work, others said that she was in fact deeply in debt. Some migrant women were also criticized for their perceived beauty, that they spent too much money on clothes and make-up instead of sending their earnings to home to their family.

Such evaluations of migrant women's successes were highly moralizing— through explicitly framing women's work, money, and beauty in terms of potential desired or undesired social impact on the religiously-inflected organization of gender and family in the villages. This contrasted starkly with villagers' responses to successful migrant men. I have never heard anyone doubt the source of men's wealth overseas; instead, it was considered "common knowledge" that men's wages in Korea, Japan, or Taiwan, were typically higher than that those for women. Some villagers told me that married men, as rightful breadwinners of the household, would naturally save and remit more of their earnings for their wives and children. Women, however, would not have the same sense of responsibility for financially supporting the household. Similarly, while not all villagers approved of men spending their earnings on cigarettes, alcohol, or commercial sex, many villagers tacitly accepted that these were "natural" or "biological necessities," or necessary for men to adapt to perceived foreign cultural norms and pressures associated with living and working overseas. These double standards of gendered morality and infidelity, specifically more tolerance and tacit social acceptance of male infidelity, are also dominant in other parts of Indonesia, such as East Lombok (Bennett 2005: 153). Such tacit acceptance of male infidelity is also linked to the fact that women are often blamed for their husband's infidelity. Women are said to have not remained attractive enough, or to not have fulfilled their spouses' sexual needs (see

Bennett et al. 2011: 154). Such double standards are also arguably linked to locally influential patriarchal ideas, sanctioned by prominent national Islamic organizations and the Indonesian Marriage Law for Muslims. According to the Marriage Law, husbands are obliged to be the main breadwinners of households, while wives' main duties are caring for the household and children (Katz and Katz 1975). In this light, male infidelity may be viewed as more excusable as long as husbands are able to provide financially for their families, while female infidelity directly violates her proper legal and religious duties to her husband.

In general, when acknowledging the potential financial rewards of migration, non-migrant villagers and NGO workers also often talk about the moral "trade-offs" of migration. Two men who never left their villages spoke at length about filial piety and "Javanese culture," where children should live or be physically close to their ageing parents. One man said sharply that he did not see what justified being so far away from family, and negatively judged his siblings-in-law for deciding to migrate for economic reasons. This echoes sentiments I heard repeatedly, where migrants are often judged for being bad parents, children, or unfaithful spouses who "abandon" their families (Gamburd 2000; Parreñas 2001; Constable 2014), even if they may be working overseas precisely to provide for their families. Thus some residents may be doubtful of and even dismiss the "economic" rewards of migrants' journey as evidence of their "success" as devoted family members.

In light of this discussion, it may seem nearly impossible for migrant individuals, especially women, to be considered "successful" by their kin and neighbors. After lengthy discussions of definitions or examples of "successful" migrants, I realized that most conversations followed a template of "s/he is successful… but…" In other words, the rewards of migration were frequently understood in terms of what migrants and their families risk or lose in the process of migration and

return. In some cases, the "trade-offs" are perceived as never justified by the financial rewards of migration, while in most cases, residents were less sure, and more ambivalent (see Chapter 6). Clear and unequivocal statements of "s/he is successful", which were not followed up with a piece of gossip or a "but," were very rare during the course of my time in Central Java, even in one special case where I knew "successful migrant" in question. This migrant appeared to epitomize locals' standards of fulfilling her familial and gendered duties, sending money home often, and returning to start a profitable, sustainable business. To my surprise, a fellow villager told me that this migrant was probably in debt but just hiding it. She was also said to be "exploited" by her family, for whom she worked so hard overseas. Frustrated at what I felt were extremely harsh and elusive local standards of migrant success in Yogyakarta, I asked, "Then who in this village can be said to be successful?" The response was simply, "If you ask me, in this whole village, nobody is successful yet."

3.2   RISKS

3.2.1   Rumors of Migrant Failures

Stories of migrant failure were as common as migrant success. However, such narratives of failure were often associated with rumor and secrecy, partially due to the anticipation and experience of shame (Chapter 4). Although people in Cilacap and Yogyakarta tended to initially focus and talk about success, stories of migrant failure were often more lengthy and detailed. Narratives beginning with what appeared to be examples of "successful" migration might also unexpectedly end as examples of "failed" migration projects. In contrast to the material reality of

migrant wealth (*kaya*) such as hard cash and houses, these narratives of migrant failure— often marked by mysterious injuries, death, or the *absence* of material indicators of success—were often based on hearsay and gossip. Migrants are typically considered to be "not successful" (*tidak sukses/ tidak berhasil*) or "failures" (*gagal*), for the following reasons.

The most common example of migrant failure is the migrant who does not send any or enough money home. In these cases, migrant men were accused of spending too much of their money on gambling, drinking, or commercial sex overseas— activities considered by most Central Javanese Muslims as associated with male vice and sin. These activities were seldom explicitly condoned by migrant-origin villagers in Yogyakarta and Cilacap, though as I have mentioned, they might be tacitly accepted or tolerated to varying degrees. As mentioned previously, migrant women were typically accused of spending their earnings on consumer luxury items, foreign boyfriends, cafes, or nightclubs. In these scenarios, I sometimes offered an alternative explanation for why migrants may not be sending much money home. Migrants might be paying off their debts to recruitment agents, particularly in their first year of migration (Platt et al 2013: 27-29). Some employers, especially in the case of domestic workers, might choose to illegally withhold migrants' wages, or in the worst cases, not pay them at all (Constable 2007; Ford 2002; Ladegaard 2013; JawaPos 2015, May 16). In response, people often either shrugged off my suggestions dismissively, or reluctantly agreed that this may be the case. In general, I found that migrants' kin and neighbors, especially for those who have never migrated or attempted to migrate overseas, tended to downplay or not consider the financial costs of migration. Most people I spoke to were aware that migrant domestic workers and some migrant men embark on migration journeys indebted financially to recruitment agents (Killias 2010; Lindquist 2010; Spaan 1994; Palmer 2012), while others might pay between thirty to forty million rupiah (USD 3,000- 4,000) to work

in factories abroad. However, migrants' kin and neighbors typically expected that these costs would be quickly and rather easily paid off by the comparatively high wages abroad.

Migrants' bodies and houses are expected to embody the consequences of successful migration; thus houses in disrepair and wounded bodies were often the subject of rumor about migrant failures. Villagers often cited the state of migrants' houses as evidence of their failed migratory projects or journeys. One recurring example was a bamboo house in the Yogyakarta village. There, most residents, regardless of whether they had migrated or not, have at least renovated their houses to include some form of concrete or wood. On different occasions, residents gave me similar versions of the same story about this house. An elderly couple lived there, and their daughter had worked in Hong Kong for more than ten years. Despite this, her elderly parents still had to sell fermented soybean (*tempe*)—a common and cheap food—in order to get by. This indicated to many locals that their migrant daughter hardly sent any money home to help her parents. A crucial detail in these stories was that her elderly parents still lived in a bamboo house, sometimes simply and crudely referred to as the "ugly house" (*rumah jelek*). To many villagers, the only reasonable explanation for this phenomena of the migrant's bamboo house was that the migrant had abandoned her parents, was content with her new life overseas, and had no desires to return to the village.[28]

While simple bamboo houses may indicate migrants' intersecting financial and moral failures to fulfil familial obligations, there were also several stories involving large, concrete, modern houses built with migrant money, that were empty or abandoned. Such houses often stood

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[28] This scenario might be possible for some migrants, such as women who might choose to avoid social pressures to marry. However, in the following sections and the next chapter, I describe and suggest other possible scenarios, where due to disappointment with their kin or abusive working conditions abroad, migrants choose to cut off ties with their families, and not send money home.

out as stories of migrant success *and* failure. For example, on the road where I lived with Nurul in Cilacap, there was an abandoned brick-house in mid-construction. Nurul and her neighbors told me that the plot of land and house belonged to a migrant who was in Malaysia. Initially, he had sent money home to build this house for his wife and children. However, during the construction of the house, the couple got a divorce. One interpretation of why the house remained half-built and neglected was that the owner no longer had the heart to complete it, since it would now remind him of the divorce and ex-wife. Another migrant house in Cilacap was said to be empty after a migrant returned from Saudi Arabia to divorce her husband. Her husband subsequently chose to move away from the village and work elsewhere, while their young child was put in the care of a grandparent. Yet a third migrant house in Cilacap was abandoned, then demolished. A female migrant had returned to find that her husband had not only taken a mistress, but he had also run away with all the money she had sent from abroad.

In addition to stories of adultery and divorce, other abandoned houses were attributed to conflict and distrust among siblings, or between migrant parents and their children. When I was in Singapore, two migrant women from Central Java, respectively told me about their "empty" houses in their home villages. Both had funded the building of these houses from their earnings abroad. In one case, the migrant's siblings moved out of her "humble" house because they were too "ashamed" of it. In the second case, a divorced migrant's daughter chose to move out due to the increasing emotional distance from her mother, who was constantly working overseas.

Success and failure were thus often evaluated in relation to the other. As I elaborated in the previous section, migrants may be perceived as successful in financial and material terms, but they failed to keep their families together in the process or as a result of migration. These houses in migrant-origin villages were thus often symbolic and material reminders of what I call "collateral

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damages" of migration. However, migrants were often blamed in gendered and moral ways for their lack of success, or failure. In these cases of adultery, divorce, and other family conflicts, villagers might fault migrants for being negligent spouses, parents, or children. Stories of migrants who committed adultery abroad, or migrants' spouses who committed adultery "at home," were so pervasive to the point that when female migrants returned pregnant from encounters overseas, villagers were quick to attribute migrant pregnancy to adultery with other Indonesian or foreign migrant workers abroad, or migrants' employers. This interpretation of migrants' pregnancy was particularly convenient in the case of female domestic workers, who lived and worked in their employers' households.

Besides stories of financial success or failure, villagers often circulated stories of migrants who returned very tired or sick, or stories of the dead bodies or ashes of migrant workers that were sent back to the village. For example, there were stories of migrants who returned very tired (*capai*), with various health problems such as asthma, diabetes, cancer, high blood pressure, heart problems, and died within a year or two. These cases of sickness were typically taken as "normal" (*biasa*) and/or due to working overseas. For example, a neighbor of a then-recently deceased migrant said to me, "Of course [the sickness] is because working overseas was really hard… His death was not sudden, he was already weak since he returned from abroad." In other cases of migrants who returned temporarily or permanently disabled or dead, people perceived the causes to be "accidents" (*kecelakaan*) such as motorbike or car accidents, or falling out of high apartment windows, or slipping in bathrooms (usually simply referred to as jatuh). While some of these cases of sickness or death were attributed to harsh-but-normal working conditions abroad, they were sometimes also understood as due to migrants' bad luck or fate (*nasib buruk*), especially in cases of accidents.

However, in almost all cases of death, villagers, regardless of their migratory or educational background, often said that death was due to God's will, or destiny (*takdir*) (see Chapter 5). Villagers' narratives of migrant-related sickness also typically included an intersection of physical, social, and moral reasons for deterioration of health. I was surprised to hear many narratives of migrant failure that were linked to the sickness or death of migrants' kin. These narratives often explicitly related how the sicknesses or deaths of migrants' kin were consequences of a migrants' actions or behavior as a result of working or having worked abroad. As noted earlier, there were countless stories of adultery by male and female migrants overseas, or their spouses who stayed in the village. Unexpectedly, many of these stories often ended with the sickness or death of a family member, such as the following story from Nurul. In this example, the death of a man was said to be due to his migrant daughter's sin—committing adultery.

> There was a woman here who went to Saudi Arabia. Her husband was a very decent man, a tailor. He worked for himself and took care of their child ever since his wife left. But once his migrant wife returned, she wasn't like a wife. I mean, she didn't do what wives were supposed to do… You cannot hide it. So the family found out that she had a boyfriend overseas in Saudi. Her father was so ashamed [*malu*], you know, imagine how terrible it was for the parents, so extremely shameful [*malu tinggi sekali*]. His health got weaker and weaker, and finally he passed away.

Due to the typically unverifiable sources and "true" reasons behind migrant failures, migrants' own stories of why they returned unwell, pregnant, divorced, or with little savings, were frequently dismissed and doubted. A consequence of this is that sustained patterns of migrant failures are often evaluated as individual and exceptional cases, where migrants are to blame for their less than ideal circumstances.[29] In contrast, cases of migrant success were—paradoxically— perceived as more common and normative than migrant failures. This tendency to individualize

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[29] Research on Filipino migrants have found similar discourses blaming migrants for their failures (Aguilar 1999: 115-6; Tadiar 2004: 118).

migrant experiences is not unique to Central Java. Peters (2010), in his research among Congolese migrants and their origin communities, found that migrant failure was not only associated with misfortune, but also migrants' intrinsic lack of character or desirable traits.

Similarly, in villages of Central Java where I worked, stories of migrant failures were typically either explained by migrants' own lack of self-discipline, luck, morality, filial or religious piety, or problems and dysfunctions in migrants' families. Even in clear cases where migrants have been physically abused by foreign employers, as I described at the beginning of this chapter, neighbors may take on employers' perspectives by suggesting that such abuse occurred because of the Indonesian worker's incapability or wrongdoing: "Maybe the girl did something wrong…" Such failures, such as migrants' injuries, debts, and deaths, can also be explained in terms of "nature" (for illnesses), or due to wicked or unlawful recruitment agents or employers. With the exception of cases where return migrants had participated in migrant or labor activism with non-governmental organizations abroad or in Indonesia, rarely did prospective migrants, return migrants, or residents, attribute failed migration projects to national, foreign, or international labor and migration policies or laws.

3.2.2   The Temporality of Gendered Shame

These migrant failures are often perceived and experienced by migrants and other villagers as a source of shame for migrants and their families. Such migration-related failure and shame is often gendered, where some forms of shame associated with women, such as rape or adultery, are typically perceived and experienced in temporal terms, such as "long-term" or "life-long" shame. Other forms of shame such as those due to financial debt, are "short-term" shame that can more easily be erased and forgotten over time, by migrants and members of their communities. Shame

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is also often experienced in gendered ways, according to how individuals are perceived or perceive themselves to have failed or violated gendered expectations and norms (see Chapter 4).

The former president of the national migrant labor union (*Serikat Buruh Migran Indonesia*), Bu Erna, once told me about a female migrant who got pregnant while she was working in Jordon. She had been raped. This migrant ultimately gave birth to the child when she returned to her home village in Indonesia. I asked Bu Erna if some migrants who were rape survivors would choose not to return home, and why, and if there were alternative options for them. Bu Erna replied that some forms of shame were short-lived, like debt, or not finishing one's employment contract. Other forms of shame, like rape, especially in cases that resulted in a child, were life-long (*sepanjang umur*). She elaborated that the mother would not only have to suffer shame for surviving rape, and bearing the child of a rapist. When the child grows up, the mother would also have to bear questions from her child and grandchildren. Such children would also likely receive questions about their absent fathers, and be bullied or humiliated among their peers. Bu Erna used these examples to explain and describe such shame as gendered (only women would experience such shame), and long-term, in describing shame that would span across generations.

Long-term shame (*aib*), is often associated with familial dishonor, or personal humiliation, in contrast to short-term shame (*malu*), which typically refers to mild or harsher forms of embarrassment. In the next chapter, I elaborate on these terms, and how migrant money and forms of gendered behavior can mediate the effects and durations of such shame. Based on observations and interviews, I argue that long-term shame is typically experienced by and acted upon individuals who transgress sexual and moral norms. Despite the prevalence of sexualized speeches and jokes in daily rural life in Central Java, sexuality is still a taboo topic (Wieringa 2012). Divorce for men and women is such an example of long-term shame (Parker 2015), although women, as

explained earlier, were frequently more harshly blamed for the dissolution of marriages or for adulterous spouses.

In contrast, short-term shame is shame that can be erased, forgotten, or eventually overcome if individuals take actions regarding sources of shame. For example, those in financial debt may eventually find work, earn an income, and pay it back. Individuals who violate gender norms, but not in terms of sexuality or sexual practices, may eventually overcome such shame if they compensate these violations with financial support, or by performing other gendered duties. For example, women who leave the village or country without a male relative's permission may experience such short-term shame. Divorced men and women may overcome short-term shame by marrying again.

While these are broad categories to distinguish between how shame may be experienced in lasting or transient ways, it is important to note that individuals experience, negotiate, or find ways to cope with shame differently. This will be the focus of next chapter. It is important to note that such transgressions and violations of gender, sexual, and moral norms, are not uncommon in Cilacap and Yogyakarta, even in cases of non-migrant individuals and kin. However, cases involving migrants are often highlighted and circulated, and those transgressions are perceived to be consequences of migration. As I discuss in Chapter 6, such transgressions might provoke harsh negative social sanctions or threats against individuals by local leaders and villagers, to reinforce local norms. They can also provoke reflexive discussions on the nature or inequality of gendered norms themselves among some villagers. This was particularly true in cases where male authority was perceived as being weakened or threatened, such as when women leave the country without male relatives' permission. Increasing rates of female-initiated divorce (Arijaya 2011) might also

contribute to a sense that Javanese-Muslim ideals of gender and marriage are less stable than before.

Not all residents are equally harsh in their judgments of migrants' "failures." In some cases, villagers might blame migrants' kin for migrants' failure to save enough money, build nice houses, or even to return home. Long-term migrants were sometimes pitied for working so hard overseas only to finance their father or husband's gambling or drinking habits at home, or to finance their non-migrant spouses' adulteries and conspicuous consumption. Rina, described, for example, how her daughter-in-law had taken on a lover, and bought luxury items for herself, while her son was working abroad in Korea. Some women also privately expressed pity or sympathy for migrant women who have children out of wedlock, since they would have to raise children as single mothers.

Nevertheless, such expressions of sympathy rarely translated into providing emotional and social support for stigmatized women. This might be particularly during the crucial first few months upon return when women, their foreign-born children, and other family members need time to adapt to the women's presence and new circumstances. Although common, not all stories of migration-related failure result in negative moral judgments about migrants or their families, particularly if migrants appeared to fulfil gendered familial roles and duties. For example, in response to some cases where locally respectable prospective migrants were cheated of savings by recruitment agents, or where long-term migrants seemed to be endlessly funding elderly parents' medical fees, onlookers simply expressed sympathy for the burdens that migrants and their families have to bear.

3.3   MIGRANTS WHO DO NOT MIGRATE

Individuals who have never left the country may self-represent and be perceived by others as "failed" or "ex" migrants. Referring to them as "migrants who do not migrate," I describe the ambivalences they experience as "failed return migrants" who have never left the country. Looking at why such individuals are perceived as failures and as return migrants can further illuminate the extent of normative and gendered expectations of success that migrant-origin villagers expect from prospective migrants. These expectations begin from the time individuals take concrete action to leave the village to work abroad. The ambiguous situations of migrants who do not migrate also highlights their marginalization and exclusion from national, international, or non-governmental development programs that typically target either "victims of trafficking" or "former migrants" who are assumed to have returned to Indonesia with new skills and experiences (see Chapter 2). Their "in-between" positions thus complicate political and analytical categories of "migrant" and "non-migrant," and contribute to this dissertation's emphasis on how migration-related problems are also structurally linked to pre-departure processes and practices in villages and countries of origin. Fraud or exploitation occur to prospective migrants or migrant candidates prior to leaving the country as well, not simply in destination countries where they seek work.

3.3.1   When a Non-migrant is a Failed Migrant: Hazam and Desi

When I first went to Cilacap in 2012, I met Hazam, who had volunteered for a year in Jakarta with the national migrant labor union, *Serikat Buruh Migran Indonesia* (SBMI). He referred to himself as a "failed" (*gagal*) and "ex" (*mantan*) migrant although he had never left the country. Hazam said that initially, he had never really thought of going abroad to work because he

had some land, and felt he had enough to live on (*cukup*). His neighbor's son, however, wanted to work abroad in Taiwan. He had everything required for him to leave (passport, documents, health check-up requirements) except a letter of guarantee to serve as collateral for the loans he took out to finance his migration. Hazam had watched this boy grow up. Feeling sorry for him, Hazam took a risk and loaned the neighbor his own land certificate (which included his house). Before the boy left, Hazam told him to go and be successful, to make his parents proud, and most importantly, return to the village.

After several months in Taiwan, the boy called Hazam to thank him for his generosity. He also said he was happy in Taiwan, and that the money was good. To repay Hazam's kindness (*balas putih*), he encouraged Hazam to apply for the same job in Taiwan as there were vacancies. Hazam "didn't know what came over" him, and soon paid three million rupiah in cash to a recruitment agent, who claimed he could help Hazam get a job in Taiwan. When Hazam arrived in Jakarta, ready to leave for Taiwan, he was informed, along with a group of other men like him, that the recruitment agency had shut down. The owner had run away. He was outraged. Instead of returning immediately to the village, Hazam decided to stay in Jakarta with SBMI, who had a shelter for victims (*korban*) of migration-related problems.

Hazam's experience is representative of many similar stories and anecdotes I heard of "failed" migrant men. I was introduced to more than a dozen of "ex" or "failed" migrants who had never left the country. While men and women might share experiences such as failing medical checkups, or failing to produce convincing false identity documents, their experiences and accounts of failure were highly gendered. A vast majority of men were victims of fraud, and as a result, were heavily indebted to banks, loan sharks, relatives, or neighbors (up to forty million rupiah or USD 4,000). When I returned to Cilacap in 2014, Nurul told me that more recently, men

in neighboring villages had paid between USD 500 to 600 to fraudulent migrant brokers. Broke or heavily in debt to either banks, loan sharks, or relatives, some of these men were living on the streets because some were too ashamed to return home; while others had been forcefully thrown out of the house by their own parents and siblings. Most of these men never left Indonesia. Nevertheless, Nurul said, "We can call them failed migrants too, because they are also victims of migration."

In contrast, although one woman I met experienced similar fraud by a neighbor who was a recruitment agent, almost all women who failed to migrate had either run away from training centers, or paid locally exorbitant fees to leave these centers (between two and thirteen million rupiah). Desi, for example, had failed to migrate twice. Twenty-five years old and unmarried, Desi's presence in her Yogyakarta village was unusual. Like the other migrant-origin villages I visited, most women older than twenty three who were staying in the villages were married. They were also either pregnant, or mothers of one or more children. Unmarried women in their twenties or above were typically not found in the villages, but worked instead in urban Indonesian cities or overseas. When I first asked why Desi was not working abroad, her male friend who was with us teased her and answered, "Because she's not capable (*tidak mampu*), she failed her language exams!" Desi immediately shouted that he was a liar and that his story was not true. Laughing somewhat awkwardly, she said briefly and vaguely that she did not manage to go abroad because of her age, and I did not enquire further.

When later I interviewed Desi alone, she told me that she had first tried to work abroad when she was sixteen. Going to university was too expensive. Her sister was making a lot of money as a migrant in Taiwan at the time, and she was happy there (*senang*). Desi had agreed for the recruitment agent to falsely declare her age as twenty-two. However, when she was ready to depart

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from the airport in Jakarta, she was called out by a police who suspected she looked younger than her (falsely) documented age. She was sent home immediately, although her recruitment fee was refunded to her. After this experience, she did not give up, and less than a year later, Desi signed up with a different recruitment agency. She was at the training center for a few months but eventually ran away, because supervisors and recruitment agents had made sexual advances towards her. She saw that other women in the training center who agreed to these sexual propositions were more quickly sent abroad, where they could begin working, but Desi was unwilling to agree to these exchanges.

In desperation, Desi phoned her father one day from the training center and told him of the situation. Her father advised her to lie and say that her grandfather had just died, so that she would be allowed to return home immediately. With permission from the agency, Desi left behind all her belongings, promised to return the next day, and made her escape.

Why are people who fail in their attempts to migrate identified by themselves and others as "former" or "failed" migrants? I argue that this categorization makes sense because migrants experience the beginning of their journeys even before they leave the country. From both Hazam and Desi's accounts, migratory journeys are perceived and experienced as having, in some sense, already begun from the moment a person makes the decision to leave, including paying recruitment fees, preparing relevant documents for the journey, going to training centers, or even, like Desi, making it as far as the airport where she assumed she would leave the country for work abroad, only to have the journey prematurely thwarted. Typically, before prospective migrants leave for the training center or airport, they go to their neighbors and relatives' houses to say farewell (*pamit*). Villagers usually wish migrants safe journeys and expect them to return only after they have finished their overseas contracts. In this context, when Hazam or Desi returned to their home

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villages, they were received as persons who had already embarked on their journeys abroad, whether or not they actually managed to leave the country.

These migrants who do not migrate inhabit an ambiguous space that demonstrates that not all residents who have never left the country are simply "left behind," or perceived as non-migrants. Yet, in their locally legible status as failed or former migrants, they are different from others who have worked and lived in foreign countries. Migrants who do not migrate are not exactly non-migrants because they identify and are identified as persons who have embarked on migration journeys. These active (though failed) attempts to migrate *overseas* differentiate them from other residents or typical "non-migrants" who never left the village, domestic (internal) migrants, and others decided to stay, and never thought about migrating abroad.

3.3.2   When a Migrant is Also *Not* a Migrant

Although migrants who do not migrate may be perceived and evaluated by members of their village communities as failed migrants, such individuals like Hazam and Desi are largely not officially, legally, or administratively identified as eligible for national or international development programs targeted at former migrants. Depending on their specific circumstances and whether they made efforts to seek compensation or legal help from NGOs or state representatives, BNP2TKI may not recognize the cases of migrants who do not migrate as "migration issues," thus they do not fall within the realm of the institution's responsibility. Their role is to protect and assist migrants. For example, when migrants who do not migrate are victims of fraud, it is labeled a crime, not a migration issue. Such individuals are urged to file their complaints with the police headquarters in Jakarta. Cases that NGOs identify as "human trafficking" are also frequently referred by BNP2TKI to the police headquarters (see also Palmer 2012). These include situations

where prospective migrants report that pre-departure training programs do not seem to teach them skills relevant to their anticipated industry or job, situations where individuals are urged to leave the country on tourist visas or false passports rather than proper migration documents, such as the Migrant Worker Identity Card (KTKLN).[30]

Migration-development programs more commonly target former migrants who have experienced migration and presumably gained skills overseas (Edisi News 2014), or who are "victims of trafficking" (Ford and Lyons 2012; Palmer 2012; see Purbaya 2014). Due to the fact they have never left Indonesia, migrants who do not migrate like Hazam and Desi cannot claim to have contributed to the development of their villages or country with their newly acquired skills or experiences from abroad. Apart from technical or service skills that migrants acquire in restaurants and factories abroad, migrants may acquire foreign languages, learn to cook foreign cuisine, or are perceived to possess more intangible skills associated with "modernity" and "cosmopolitanism" (see Aguilar 1999: 116). The path to being identified as a "victim of trafficking" is also notoriously paved with paperwork and strict definitions, which neither Desi nor Hazam would qualify for, since the term is often reserved for persons who have already crossed borders under conditions of deceit, coercion, or illegality.

Furthermore, even individuals who fulfill the requirements to be considered a trafficked victim, may choose not to self-identify as such, due to gendered social stigma and shame associated with ideas about victims of trafficking, and, I would add, failure (Lai 2011; Choo 2013; Cheng 2012). In some migrant-origin contexts, such as Senegalese boat migrations (Maher, n.d), failed journeys may still gain the admiration of others, where migration attempts, regardless of their outcomes, are perceived as courageous and heroic. This chapter has outlined various harsh

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[30] Kartu Tenega Kerja Luar Negiri.

negative social and moral perceptions surrounding "failed migrants" in migrant-origin villages of Central Java. In this context, individuals may be more averse to claiming victimhood or identifying as "failed" migrants.

Hazam, for example, was financially broke and unemployed in a socio-cultural context where men are still expected to be primary breadwinners and heads of households. As such, he felt he could not immediately return home, and he aimed to gain skills as a volunteer and migrant activist in SBMI before he felt he could face his family and neighbors again. For Desi, taboos against speaking about personal sexual violence or sexual harassment, coupled with the fact that she had failed to migrate twice, deterred her from sharing her experiences. Partially because of her silence, she was sometimes the subject of gossip in the village. As I witnessed, even four years after her escape from the training center, Desi still faced half-serious joking or questioning about her inability to migrate. Half a dozen other women I met who had run away from training centers were variously perceived as lazy, mentally or emotionally weak, or insincere in their efforts to work abroad. On multiple occasions, these runaway women and male and female victims of fraud were openly called "failures" whether or not they were present to hear it, in the guise of joking and teasing among family and friends.

In short, the categories "non-migrant" and "migrant" sometimes overlap. Residents in migrant-origin villages distinguish between non-migrants who decide to stay, and those who attempt to leave and fail to do so, like Desi and Hazam. Despite sharing certain risks and experiences with migrants who have crossed borders, "migrants who do not migrate" are different from those who did not attempt migration. On the one hand, they struggle against gender-based stigma, shame, or negative social judgements as migrant "failures." Yet, they may also be perceived by fellow villagers as worse than failed migrants who crossed borders, in having failed

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so early on the migration process, and not deserving the sympathy given to those who might have suffered well-publicized abuses by employers abroad. On the other hand, they are also excluded from institutional support such as funding or skill-training programs that are available to other migrants who can claim new (foreign) cultural experiences or skills, or those who are identified as trafficked victims.

"Migrants who do not migrate" demonstrate how residents of migrant-origin locales all embody varying motilities—or propensities to migrate— due to the ever present option to migrate, and thus share in common with migrants the precariousness and promises associated with migration. This supports observations that clear distinctions between legal or illegal migration and trafficking, are untenable in many transnational regimes of migration, such as in Southeast-Asia. Instead, the responsibilities and interests of states and private recruitment agencies may collude to result in a situation where the Indonesian state may also be complicit in "trafficking-like" practices (Lyons and Ford 2012; Palmer 2012; similar to the Philippines, see Rodriguez 2010).

3.4   VALUING MIGRANTS AND MONEY

This chapter has focused on how residents of migrant-origin villages define and talk about migrant success or failure in moral and temporal terms. I showed that migrants and return migrants are often evaluated in gendered ways, where the financial contributions of migrants to their families are only one potential indicator of success. Instead, migrants' gendered performances and social positions give value and meaning to their money and gifts. Villagers' notions of migrant success and failure are linked to how migrants' money and debt can mean different things, depending on the gendered positionality of migrants, their relatives, and friends. The gendered and

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moral nature of such evaluations illuminate how local narratives and standards of migrant failure and success are mutually contrasting and complementary.

Migrant women face higher risks of being judged as immoral or migrant failures, whether or not they contribute financially to their families or return with little savings. Women typically faced suspicion about the "*halal*" or moral-religious nature of their income and expenditures, particularly those perceived to have transgressed local gendered and Islamic-influenced moral norms. However, migrant men's financial successes are usually taken for granted as the norm, while migrant men who return with little or no savings are more likely excused for "necessary" expenditures abroad. These harsh gendered assessments of migrant morality alongside high normative expectations for migrants to succeed financially, illuminate why residents may often say that most migrants are successful, yet others may also remark that of all migrants and return migrants, "Nobody is successful yet."

I briefly touched on the topic of how failed migrants experience shame in gendered and temporal ways. In the next chapter, I elaborate on how migrants and their kin experience and cope with gendered shame upon return to Indonesia or their home villages. Some such coping strategies have been highlighted through the examples of those I call "migrants who do not migrate." I described the experiences of failed return migrants who never left the country, yet who self-identify and are perceived by their peers, kin, and neighbors as "ex-migrants."[31] To avoid the teasing, shame, or stigma associated with failed migration, people like Hazam may choose not to return to the village immediately, and others like Desi may choose not to talk about their experiences. This can reinforce dominant perceptions that all migrants can succeed as long as they work hard and are religiously pious, honorable persons, and responsible family members. The

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[31] In Indonesian, "ex-migran," likely borrowed from the English language.

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example of migrants who do not migrate— who are always identified as failed migrants— further illuminates the normative and gendered expectations of success that are expected of all prospective migrants from the time they take concrete action towards leaving the village to work abroad.

"Migrants who do not migrate" also complicate an enduring distinction in migration scholarship and policy-making: between migrants and non-migrants, or those who "move" and others who are "left behind" (see Chapter 1.2.1). While a body of work on "mobilities" (Hannam et al 2006) acknowledges the ambiguity and fluidity in migratory decisions, processes, and identities, the dichotomy between migrants and non-migrants is an enduring one, perhaps due to its methodological, analytical, and political convenience. Currently, emerging studies on "non-migrants" have considered those who choose to stay (e.g. Fioratta 2015, Reese 2011) and those who are deciding or ambivalent about whether to migrate (e.g. Paul 2015). I have shown instead that migrant-origin villagers may also understand "moving" or "staying" in multiple ways beyond the common migrant-non-migrant dichotomy. The ambiguous positions of "migrants who do not migrate" also offers a new perspective on the agency and mobilities of "non-migrants," by showing how, among those who have never left the country, there are some who attempt to migrate but failed. In other words, I argue that not all non-migrants are "left behind," and not all who are "left behind" are non-migrants.

This chapter has shown how migrant-origin villagers negotiate the conditions structuring their relative social and geographical mobilities (Hannam et al 2006), partially through discourses of migrant success and failure, shame and duty. These discourses actively produce and *give value* to migrants and their money, beyond narrow definitions of what constitutes the economic realm. This challenges popular assumptions that most non-migrants are passively "left-behind" or less advantaged as compared to their migrant counterparts. These stereotypes contribute to socially and

structurally excluding and marginalizing many—whether migrants who do not migrate, "failed" former migrants, and current migrants— who do not conform to common and public perceptions of migrant success and failure, as heroes or victims. Despite substantial empirical evidence that some non-migrants do not attempt or desire to migrate, due to their relatively stable or secure socio-economic situations (e.g. Massey 2005 [1997]; Khoo et al 2014: 15-19; 27-29), labor migrants in general are still represented and perceived in international and national media in Indonesia as more ambitious, more resourceful, skilled or capable than their peers at home, and often returning wealthier than non-migrant peers. Despite the obvious fact that this is not always true, such perceptions persist. While some studies have emphasized how migrants are not necessarily the "poorest of the poor" due to the costs required to migrate, the cost of migration from Indonesia is increasingly perceived by residents in migrant-origin villages as less relevant. This is because many women, and progressively men, can migrate at "zero cost," by borrowing from recruiters, and repaying their debts through salary deductions. Thus in Indonesia, value judgments about migrants' inherently "better" characteristics might be stronger than other contexts.

Migrants who do not migrate challenge these assumptions both by showing that as "ex-migrants" they are not necessarily wealthier; as "non-migrant" individuals who attempted to migrate, they were not necessarily "less ambitious" than migrants who crossed borders. Instead, Hazam and Desi both failed to migrate due to the difficulties of regulating the commercialization and privatization of recruitment agencies, such as corruption and exploitation, not because of their comparative lack of skills or capability. Furthermore, this chapter has complicated the above mentioned value judgments of individuals in relation to migratory decisions, by focusing on the contradictions between apparently ubiquitous migrant success in migrant-origin villages, and

nearly impossible local standards of "success" for migrants. Local tendency towards suspicion of female migrants who are successful disrupts easy associations of migrants' financial remittances with success.

Seeing migration and mobility from the perspective of those considered "non-migrants" raises important questions about the entire practice of migration. Examining the mobilities and motilities of "non-migrants" shows how existing migrant categories dominant in scholarly and policy-oriented research are inadequate in recognizing other kinds of movement that are neither "transnational" nor simply "domestic/internal." Additionally, bodies, labor, and finance associated with migration may be valued differently by migrant-origin villagers, NGOs, and state representations, according to their positionalities. I have shown how the experiences of migrants who do not migrate point to the messiness of migration categories and relative motility in migrant-origin villages, where residents' capacity for movement and whether or not they decide and attempt to migrate, are linked to shifting gendered moral expectations and subjectivities. Institutional oversight of "migrants who do not migrate," coupled with pervasive blaming and shaming of "failed" migrants in migrant-origin villagers, reinforce the chapter's argument that self-responsibility emerges as a fundamental and limiting condition for migrant success or failure.

The next chapter will look at how "failed" migrants experience and negotiate gendered shame. I argue and show how the mobilization and cultivation of gendered shame is crucial to understanding how villagers negotiate the risks of migration and justify decisions to move or stay, and thus shape the transnational flows of migrants and money.

4.0   SHAME

Oh God, make all our matters end well, and save us from worldly shame and punishment in the afterlife. [*Ya Allah, jadikan semua perkara kami berakhir dengan baik, dan selamatkanlah kami dari menerima malu di dunia dan mendapat azab di akhirat.*]

> -Recommended Islamic prayer printed on a flyer passed out during a village's weekly women's communal prayer (*pengajian*)

Take care of yourself with faith and piety/ Maintain the dignity of the nation/ Above all be honest/ Remember you are a foreign exchange hero. [*Jagalah dirimu iman dan taqwa/ Jagalah martabat bangsa/ Jujur syarat yang utama/ Ingatlah engkau pahlawan devisa*]

> -Lyrics from a popular dandut song titled "TKW" (Tenaja Kerja Wanita, or Female Migrant Worker"

To become illegal/ Year after year/ Wishing to go home/ But I bring no money/ Return in shame/ [Or] don't return, [and] my heart yearns [*Jadi kaburan/ Jadi kaburan/ Bertahun tahun/ Inggin pulang kampong/ Tapi uang tidak bawa/ Pulang malu/ Tak pulang hati rindu*]

> -Song created by unnamed Indonesian migrants in Saudi Arabia, posted on Youtube and shared widely in Indonesian migrants' Facebook groups online, to the tune of popular Bollywood song "Bole Chudiyan" (Buruh Migran 2014, Aug 5)

Malu, an Indonesian word with Malay origins, is commonly translated into the English term shame. Like shame, *malu* refers to Indonesians' embodied reactions to instances when they transgress social rules or norms. This chapter argues that shame, or the threat of shame, strongly shapes the motility and mobility of villagers; it conditions their decisions to stay, migrate, or return. One example is that migrants who "fail" may not always choose to return to Indonesia. In cases of deportation or coerced return to their country, these labor migrants may choose not to return to their villages of origin. Instead, like Hazam in the previous chapter, Central Javanese return migrants may choose to work in other parts of Java or the archipelago. They may decide to migrate again, or they may stay in temporary shelters run by NGOs.

SBMI is one such NGO that provides temporary housing for migrants who return with various legal or personal problems. In an interview with then-president Bu Erna, she explained that some return migrants choose not to immediately re-join their families because:

> There will be stigma… when [migrants] return without money, and there will be *malu*. Even if it's not about money, it may be about family problems. I think families often don't want to understand the conditions abroad. People like to promote everything good [*bagus-bagus, apik-apik*], the successes [*berhasilan*], like advertisements... When migrants encounter problems and they return, they are too *malu* to talk about it anyway. It is also important for families to be ready [*kesiapan keluarga*]. Because they usually have little information about migration and processes, they cannot imagine the risks their family take. If they really knew, maybe they won't even allow people to migrate [*tidak boleh*]. Or migrants wouldn't even decide to go themselves if they knew… People who return [to Indonesia] can sometimes also not be ready to return [*belum siap pulang*], and be *malu*, so they migrate again to erase their footsteps [*menghilangkan jejak*].

During interviews with migrants, their kin and peers, activists, state bureaucrats, recruitment and associated insurance agents, many talked about the role of shame, fate, and destiny in shaping not just migratory experiences and outcomes, but also in motivating migration, re-migration, or return. In this chapter, I review the meanings and functions of *malu*. I consider how *malu* operates and is experienced by migrants and their families in gendered ways.

This focus on shame sheds light on how situated knowledge and risk contribute to discursive shifts or locations of moral responsibility and blame; in other words, how shame is always *relational*. Thus Bu Erna explains families' promotion of migration, or shaming of migrant failures, to a lack of information about risks. However, this perspective is symptomatic of how well-intentioned NGO workers or state officials tend to justify their interventions in migrant-origin communities. I argue that although migrants' kin and prospective migrants may not know the specific risks they may face, most of them have had first-hand experiences of migration-related loss. These may be either in terms of the loss of lives, relationships, reputations, or finance, linked to their migrant kin, friends, and neighbors. Therefore, instead of asking why Central Javanese risk

the things and relations they value, in order to migrate, or help another to migrate, this chapter explores how migration-related knowledge and risk are situationally and relationally constituted.

I trace how everyday gossip and acts of shaming or negotiating with the threat of shame, generate specific forms of knowledge about risk, particularly in villagers' self-awareness that their knowledge is always partial and incomplete (see Elyachar 2012). Furthermore, gossip, or the everyday production of knowledge about migration, also generate, shape, and renew social relationships among migrant-origin villagers. Gossip and stories about migrants and migration create moral and social boundaries, by establishing trust, respect, friendship, and kinship, or distributing mistrust and skepticism. This approach to knowledge and risk contrasts with dominant attitudes of well-intentioned NGO workers, policymakers, and scholars, in assuming that migrants' relatives and prospective migrants simply "lack" adequate information or knowledge to avoid apparently preventable phenomena such as fraud or illegal migrations (Aradou 2013). I agree with the observation that "training and awareness-raising campaigns assume that knowledge changes what people do. Yet, these campaigns do nothing to transform the material conditions in which people live. Without an understanding of the conditions of action, learning and educational practices will continue to fail" (ibid.: 3).

I attend to these issues by describing the gendered ways that migrant-origin residents participate in shaming others, respond to feelings of shame, or help others mitigate the threat of shame. While the production and mobilizations of shame—by shaming others such as through circulating gossip— is often a negative phenomenon, individuals are also encouraged to cultivate and possess appropriate *malu*, which also roughly translates to a gendered sense of dignity. Thus to cultivate appropriate shame, or in response to the threat of shame, return migrants may strategically employ more common everyday approaches such as silence, publicly conforming to

ideal gendered expectations, and spreading rumors about other migrants. They may also make "risky" decisions such as running away from employers or recruitment centers, embarking on illegal migratory journeys, enduring unreasonable and harsh working conditions overseas, or in extreme cases, murdering employers or attempting suicide. By attending carefully to these situations and practices from the perspectives of return migrants and migrants' kin and neighbors, we gain a different view of migration-related risk, knowledge, and morality.

This contrasts with how such cases of missing or runaway migrants have been presented by migration "experts" in terms of migrants' ignorance (Aradou 2013) or by the media in terms of greed and moral abandonment. While current and return migrants may employ these diverse and often risky practices to negotiate reputations and freedoms, prospective migrants and their families tend to employ limited strategies to respond to the possibility of migrant failure and *malu*. Some rely on informal information from returned migrants and neighbors, but the majority also rely on prayer, faith in themselves, and faith in God (Chapter 5). Contrasting the narratives of return migrants with those of non-migrant residents serves to highlight the diverse moral and discursive landscape of migrant-origin villages.

This chapter thus develops the dissertation's broader argument about how villagers' narratives of shame, fate, and destiny, are interlinked, and constitute gendered moral economies of migration, through shaping gendered migration patterns and strategies of Central Javanese. Villagers' stories about migration— such as the ones presented in the Chapter 3— may appear to harshly shame migrants and their kin. However, they do not simply reflect a lack of human sympathy for failed or unsuccessful migrants, or a lack of knowledge about the risks of migration, as Bu Erna suggested. Instead, I argue that they reflect and respond to migration-related socio-economic anxieties in migrant-sending communities.

4.1 MALU

In Indonesia, "to be accused of having no shame [*tak tahu malu*] is one of the worst insults" (Davis 2014: 32). As a lecturer in a University in Yogyakarta told me, "If one does wrong, but still feels *malu*, this is good enough [*cukup baik*]." In other words, *malu* is perceived as an appropriate response to wrongful behavior, in the acknowledgment of transgression. Conversely, to know shame or to have shame can be positively associated with those who successfully perform or fulfil "gendered and status-oriented expectations of behavior" (Munro 2015: 169; Boellstorff and Lindquist 2004). It is in this sense that *malu* is also closely related to a gendered sense of dignity and self-worth.

Malu is relational and implies a moral hierarchy between one who ought to feel shame and those affected by shameful actions of another. It distinguishes those who acted out of step, in failing the expectations of others who manage to achieve such standards. *Malu* thus links an individual's personal dignity to family or group honor. It is closely intertwined with the performance or transgression of gendered and sexual norms, in urban as well as rural Indonesia (Lindquist 2004; Bennett 2005; Nilan et al. 2013). *Malu* is thus a powerful regulator of gendered performance and sexuality, because it does not only affect people who "acted out of step, but also the entire extended family" (Davies 2014: 33). Sharyn Davies calls such extensive shaming "kinships of shame" (ibid.: 33), where for women, female chastity is equivalent to family honor and name. Extended families can act to repair or renew disrupted social ties, such as by forcing couples caught having illicit sex to marry (ibid.: 33-34), or forcing rapists to marry their victims.

Specific urban and rural contexts shape the local varieties and norms of femininities, masculinities, and sexualities. Nevertheless, I follow other scholars who adopt a generalized approach to "Indonesian" *malu* in relation to normative gender and sexuality, particularly because

I found that descriptions and understandings of *malu* did not vary much despite the wide variety of research locations such as Sumatra (Parker 2009; Collins and Bahar 2000), Java (Nilan et al 2013), Lombok (Bennett 2004), Batam (Lindquist 2004), Papua (Munro 2015), and parts of Malaysia (Peletz 1996). For example, *malu* is found to have the same self-regulatory effects on women in West and South Sumatra, and Java. This is despite Western and Southern Sumatran ethnic groups being typically matrilineal, where women are self-represented as strong and aggressive, in contrast to Javanese emphasis on feminine submissiveness (Parker 2009). Similarly, studies of *malu* and masculinities found commonalities across ethnicities and geographic location. Men expressed feeling *malu* when they are viewed as incapable (*tidak mampu*) of fulfilling gendered familial duties, particularly in terms of being breadwinners (Elmhirst 2007; Nilan et al 2013). Studies also found that men tended to explain male violence and aggression as a response to feelings of *malu* associated with lower socio-economic status (Nilan et al 2013; Wilson 2012).

Social class and status also influence experiences of *malu*. Daniel Fessler's (2004) comparative fieldwork and linguistic surveys in Southwest Sumatra and California found that the Malay-speaking Bengkulu in Sumatra linked *malu* to feelings of inadequacy, subordinate status, and social rejection. Many of Fessler's informants linked *malu* to being "reluctant to approach someone of higher status," "embarrassed by others' importance," "feeling inferior," and "feeling stained or dirty" (Fessler 2004: 232-233). In contrast, the culturally-diverse and urban respondents in California did not associate the English term shame to social status or shyness, but with "guilt", "remorse," "feel bad for," "sorrowful," and "apologetic" (228). While Californian English speakers tended to link shame to empathic feelings for other individuals, Bengkulu Malay and dialect speakers linked *malu* to shaming actions of others that cause feelings of *malu*, such as "sneer," "verbally abuse," "despised," "ridicule," and "swear in disapproval" (232-233). How

gender and class positions intersect to influence *malu* is evident in Ayu Saraswati's (2012) analysis of why skin-whitening products were popular amongst working-class and professional women in the cities of Jakarta and Balikbapan. Rather than using these products in order to be more attractive, she argued that women's skin-whitening routines were motivated by desires to avoid feelings of shame and embarrassment linked to a sense of inferiority to others in public (Saraswati 2012: 115-116). These women also linked *malu* to fear of mockery, anxiety, and feelings of inadequacy, including morally unacceptable gendered performances. In this context, women's skin-whitening practices can be understood as a way to deal with *malu*, which reflects their desires to be treated with dignity (ibid.: 119).

While Saraswati and others have argued that Indonesian women tended to be more passive or withdrawn in coping with shame, in order to avoid unwanted attention (Collins and Bahar 2000: 48), others emphasized the creative ways women manage their reputations while engaging in "illicit" affairs. For example, Lindquist (2004) argued that *malu* was a reason for (internal) migrant Muslim women in Batam to practice veiling. To ensure productivity in Batam's factories, employers tried to control female workers' sexuality through the rationale that women's work would be affected if they were having sex or "fun" during non-work hours. In order to manage women's sexuality, the company encouraged religious activities, and provided premarital counselling targeted at preventing premarital sex and pregnancy out of wedlock. Women who were caught having illicit sex could be fired and sent home, bringing shame to themselves and their families. Women had to work to manage their appearances and reputations as sexually pure and innocent women, or women who "know shame" or "have shame." One way to do so was through veiling, which both enabled women to control their desires, or enabled them to divert employers' attentions away from their sexually transgressive behaviors. Linda Bennett's (2005a) work among

young single women in Lombok also showed how women may perform *malu* and morality to hide clandestine relations with boyfriends.

However, the fear of *malu* also significantly deters many other women from engaging in such relations or premarital sex. *Malu* can act as a "'brake' on 'passion' and its expression or realization in social action" (Peletz 1996: 226). As Bennett put it, "A constant, embodied sense of personal shame is thought to be essential for a woman to behave in a socially appropriate manner" (2005a:25). In this sense, *malu* can be understood as "a necessary emotion that enables the self-regulation of female sexuality, yet is also threatening when it derives from public exposure of female sexual impropriety" (ibid.). [32]

In comparing the gendered ways shame informs individual behavior and motivations, Davies argued that "women may follow prescriptions about femininity in order to avoid causing shame, while men must follow prescriptions about masculinity to defend and restore shame violations relating to sexuality" (2014: 35). Nilan et al. argue that "compensatory aggressive behaviour" of Indonesian men is shaped historically by factors including the "residual effects of 300 years of Dutch colonization, resistance against the Japanese invasion, the subsequent war against the Dutch for independence, and the late twentieth-century struggle for democracy" (2013: 5). In other words, while *malu* or the threat of *malu* provokes women to preserve their honor and shame, these provoke men instead to perform in ways that restore their honor and sense of masculinity.

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[32] While most people typically use "*malu*" to describe all various forms of shame from feeling shy and embarrassed, to feeling ashamed in relation to causing dishonor to the family name, many Javanese-Indonesian speakers make the distinction between two kinds of shame: isin/malu and wirang/aib (cf Fessler 2004). Isin is typically used to refer to more usual and common forms of shame, such as being caught stealing, or being poor. I was told by a female former migrant that "wirang" or "aib" was rarely used, and only in severe cases. She cited examples such as if a woman returns pregnant from abroad, but she is already married in Indonesia. If one is caught having an affair (selingkuh), this also causes wirang/aib. More specifically, wirang/aib refers to a more public form of disgrace, dishonor, and humiliation, in relation to violating social taboos.

These gendered associations of *malu* as positive and necessary are significant in maintaining social and political hierarchies in Indonesia, in relation to class and national identity (Collins and Bahar 2000; Wieringa 2003; van Wichelen 2010). Recent analyses of *malu* describe how individuals may experience it in relation to particular gendered national values and expectations, or threats to perceived national values (Munro 2015: 169). For example, the *malu* that men experience in relation to their failures to live up to breadwinner roles can be related to late New Order state discourses for Indonesian men to be "'strong males' as an expression of national character" (Nilan et al. 2013: 6; see also Sunardi 2009). Similarly, the New Order state explicitly built on Islamic discourses of *kodrat* to articulate women, nationalism and development in terms of women's role as mothers and wives. This idealized notion of femininity that naturalized women as "devoted to the maintenance of a stable, nurturing, domestic environment were central to the state's vision of an orderly and morally controlled nation" (Silvey 2004: 252; van Wichelen 2010). These ideologies were produced and reinforced in institutions established by the New Order state for women such as *Dharma Wanita* (Women's Duty) and the PKK (Family Welfare Guidance). These institutions still exist today—many of my Central Javanese female informants were members of the latter organization. In addition, family metaphors were invoked to "not only construct ideas about gender roles or shape values in gender relations, but were inextricably linked to imaginations of the Indonesian nation/state." (van Wichelen 2010: 111). In the post New Order era, "these imaginations were deployed by nationalist and [liberal] feminist, as well as Muslim and Islamist groups" for their own respective political ends (ibid.).

In other words, Indonesian citizenship is communitarian and explicitly gendered and heteronormative; women are articulated as citizens through their roles as mothers and wives, "not only as a mother of the family, but also as a mother of the whole community and nation" (Martyn

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2005: 206). Women's personal and civic responsibilities are linked intimately to the "national family" and its larger goal of economic development and stability (van Wichelen 2010: 111; Silvey 2004: 253). By contrast, the role of men (*kodrat pria*) is to be a husband, father, and provider (Nilan et al 2009). Thus scholars have linked gendered experiences of *malu* to evaluations of the self or dangerous others against the state's gendered ideals. For example, Boellstorff (2004) argued that male perpetrators of public violence against gay men typically act upon strong feelings of *malu*. As Munro (2015) puts it, "*Malu* in this case arises because a particular kind of nationalised masculinity is at stake, and the nation is perceived to be in imminent danger of being represented by non-normative men" (170). Similarly, Davies shows how the controversial conviction of a male celebrity found distributing pornography in 2011 caused feelings of *malu* among the general public for the nation: "People expressed feeling 'ashamed of Indonesia and no longer wanted to call themselves Indonesian'" (2014: 40). Thus she argues that kinships of shame "align people throughout the archipelago in feelings of shame against the state" (ibid.; see also Tadiar 2004: 127). Such feelings of shame may also lead to situations where religious leaders or vocal individuals publicly attack or disparage "sources" of shame, such as transgressive persons or the state, in order to influence politicians' decisions on other issues on gender and sexuality, such as pornography (Hoestery 2013; Weintraub 2008).

While state policies and discourses may have practical and affective impact on the everyday and structural organization of gender and sexuality in Indonesia, I build on the work of these scholars who argue that *malu* works "through subaltern networks of village biopower, effectively regulating behaviour" (Davies 2014: 47). As this section has shown, shame may pressure or coerce individuals into conforming to gendered and social norms, but it may also inspire creative or violent responses to such gendered surveillance and expectations. The following

sections elaborate on the ways migrants, their relatives, friends, and neighbors, may negotiate mobilities and reputations by regulating, responding to, or managing *malu*.

4.2   MOBILIZING AND GENDERING SHAME

In migrant-origin villages of Central Java, *malu* or shame is often closely linked to failing or aspiring to fulfil familial duties and obligations in gendered ways. This applies to migrants' obligations to their families, and vice versa, where families may feel ashamed that a member has to migrate due to parental or spousal failure to provide financial security. As discussed above, despite the fall of the New Order or Suharto regime (1996-1998), many of the older discourses drawing on Islamic ideas are still salient in Indonesian politics and everyday life. These gendered and familial expectations and duties are often referred to and semi-codified in terms of local customary law, or *adat*. *Adat* can be defined as informal sets of moral regulations governing a community (Parker 2009; Platt 2012). It draws on Islamic discourses, which are based on the Qur'an (Parker 2009: 67). An example of *adat* in Central Java is that unmarried couples must not cohabit. If they are found to be doing so, they face strong pressures to marry each other. *Adat* also includes *kodrat pria* and *kodrat wanita* as the New Order state described familial duties for men and women. In this section I will describe various contexts where migrants or their families may experience *malu* towards their kin or fellow villagers, and I illustrate how these situations contribute to structuring gendered experiences and social consequences of *malu*.

4.2.1   Gender and Work

Migrants typically perform gendered work while abroad, according to immigration laws and labor industry demands in destination countries. Women tend to do domestic labor or care for elderly and children in households of Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf Cooperation Countries (GCC). Women may also work in clothes and electronics factories in Malaysia, Taiwan, and Korea. Men often do construction, agricultural, or factory work in Malaysia, Taiwan, Korea, or Japan. They are also employed as chauffeurs for companies or households in Saudi Arabia and the Middle East. An increasing number work as seamen, either with U.S.-owned cruise liners as service staff, or they do illegal fishing in international waters with Taiwanese-owned ships.

In the Central Javanese villages where I worked, expectations and evaluations of migrants' labor abroad differ according to the gendered nature of work, as well as countries associated with such work. These are primarily linked to local gendered assumptions that although men may migrate to seek experience and knowledge, the majority migrate in order to fulfil their duties as breadwinners and provide financially for their families. In contrast to such "necessary" migrations, women are assumed to migrate to "supplement" her husband or father's income, or to provide for her children, particularly in cases of divorce, and single motherhood (see Platt 2016: Chapter 4).

Although migratory work is often considered dangerous, dirty, and demeaning and lowly-paid by citizens of destination countries, such jobs were not always perceived as "bad" jobs by migrants or their kin at home. Being drivers and factory workers were perceived as "modern" and comfortable jobs, compared to laboring in the fields under the hot sun in Indonesia or Malaysia. Similarly, when women worked in Taiwan under specific visas to care for the elderly, this was perceived as "light" work, and not degrading. Construction work was usually perceived as neutral

work. It was neither degrading nor prestigious, but respectable work, possibly due to the fact that the vast majority of non-migrant men do similar work in other parts of Indonesia. In contrast, certain forms of domestic work can be perceived as potentially shameful, partially due to media representations of domestic workers as "slaves" (*budak*) and victims (Chapter 2). A young unmarried woman in Yogyakarta who failed to migrate said of a return migrant neighbor she thought was arrogant, "Who does she think she is? She is only a domestic helper [PRT or *pembantu rumah tangga*]." Similarly, a non-migrant middle-aged woman in Cilacap said of a return migrant neighbor, "This woman came back with blonde hair, short skirts, flaunting her new lifestyle and attitude. But over there, she is only a domestic helper."

While some domestic workers take pride in the type of work they do, others experience *malu* too. Once, an unmarried female migrant domestic worker in her mid-thirties from Cilacap asked me, "If you ask TKWs' children, 'Would you wish for your mother to work overseas or stay?' There will be two kinds of responses. Some will say, 'I don't care what she's doing as long as there is money.' Others— who still have hearts— will say, 'I'd rather she is home, at least she has *malu*…'" When I returned to Cilacap, this woman's friend remarked, "I think she is not as close to other TKWs in Singapore. People say she is ashamed to be a maid. She thinks she is too good for this job."

Thus explicitly feminized migrant labor may be experienced and perceived as a source of shame, such as domestic and sex work. This is unsurprising, due to the ways that seclusion in foreign households and "uncontrolled" female mobility are often viewed as potentially dangerous sites for women as independent sexual subjects, across cultural contexts (Abu-Lughod 2008; Dannecker 2009; Dreby 2009; Lai 2010; Yeoh and Huang 2010). As the quotes above suggest, domestic work and sex work were also linked to lower economic social status, and might provoke

shame in contexts where middle-class aspirations or performances of middle-class lifestyles and sensibilities dominate both in the villages and migrants' destination countries. Despite the obviously higher wages for migrant domestic laborers, women in these Central Javanese sites viewed factory work in Indonesia as respectable compared to paid domestic work for foreign or Indonesian households. However, I observed that when discussions focused on duties associated with feminine care and duty, such as taking care of elderly or young children locally or abroad, domestic work was typically represented in neutral or positive terms, implying that it is "light" or "easy" work since women were naturally nurturing.[33]

Work was thus evaluated in terms of stereotypical gender traits. During my fieldwork, men's work was never associated with *malu*, although the lack of work or employment for them often potentially caused *malu*. In a group discussion with recently returned female migrants in Yogyakarta, women said explicitly that though *malu* was often associated with women's social transgressions, men suffered "*malu besar*" (great shame) if they did not financially support their families according to Javanese *adat*. Thus men who were unemployed were potentially a source of embarrassment for their siblings, parents, or wives, in being seen as "failed" men. Male unemployment was frequently attributed to drinking, gambling, or sheer laziness. One local non-migrant youth in Cilacap could never hold a job for long, and was unemployed for long periods. His mother frequently complained about her son's laziness to the neighbors, and her relatives would refer to him harshly as "that bastard." Everyone knew that he slept till noon, and never helped with domestic or manual labor at home. Although he was married to a woman in Cilacap city, his father-in-law refused to let him visit his wife and child unless he found a job and

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[33] This is as opposed to household chores associated with cleaning, cooking, and performing errands or tasks for employers.

contributed to household expenses. To my surprise, neighbors found this forced and conditional separation reasonable, despite the legality of their marriage. After more than a year without stable job, this man's wife formally filed for a divorce. She could legally do so, since her husband had not fulfilled his end of the marriage contract as a "breadwinner."

However, male unemployment and its associated vices did not always have such real consequences for men. Many parents and wives continued to support and house unemployed husbands and sons, out of a sense of parental obligation, or due to the stigma associated with divorce. In contrast, gossip about women's undignified work or as neglectful family members nearly always affected her social standing, and relationships with her immediate family and in-laws. As mentioned in Chapter 3, male vices were not condoned, but generally tacitly tolerated, while women's transgressions were seldom allowed such room for negotiation (also see 4.2.4).

4.2.2   Debt, Fraud, and Conspicuous Consumption

Debt or *hutang* in Indonesian, typically referring to financial debt, is often used as a dirty, negative, and shameful word. This remains true despite the long history of micro-credit institutions in rural Central Java, beginning from 1895 (Steinwand 2013: 95). The majority of migrants from Central Java embark on their journeys with large financial debts. Significantly, the uncertainties surrounding migration journeys and consequences are at odds with the predictability and pressures of their loan repayments. Female domestic workers are usually indebted to migrant brokers who pay for their journeys upfront, before docking their pay for seven months to a year (Constable 2007; Lindquist 2012; Rudnyckyj 2004; Platt et al. 2013; Silvey 2004). This practice has also been applied to an increasing number of male migrants heading for Korea. In other cases where migrants take on factory, hospitality, construction, or fishing work, they have to pay recruitment agents and

agencies prior to leaving the country. Such fees include inflated costs of travel, food and accommodation in migrant training centers, medical fees, and unspecified administrative fees for multiple actors and institutions involved. In these cases, prospective migrants may borrow money from "reliable" sources, including extensive kinship networks, neighbors, banks, or informal loan-sharks to finance their journeys (Lindquist 2012; Spaan 1994).

Financial debt in my field-sites were thus often intricately linked to forms of social and moral indebtedness (Han 2012; Hung 2014), even when financial loans were given by banks and recruitment agents. This was clear when considering how migrants may use the property of neighbors and relatives—such as land and vehicles—as collateral for bank loans. As scholars have noted in cases of labor migration from Indonesia (Killias 2010; Lindquist 2012; Spaan 1994) as well as trafficking-like practices elsewhere (Brennan 2014), migrants' financial debts obligate them to their brokers, thus creating complex ties of obligation and reciprocity. Prospective migrants may also take on financial loans and embark on journeys in order to repay moral, social, and financial debts to their parents, grandparents, or neighbors. As Bu Erna mentioned, some migrants move in order to "erase their footsteps" or "sins." These can be seen as moral-religious debts that other current and return migrants alluded to during my fieldwork.

Sometimes things go wrong for migrants before they are able to repay their debts and loans, such as the case of Hazam, whose case of fraud I described in Chapter 3. Many returned migrants also told me about how they ran away from employers due to dissatisfaction with co-workers or bosses, or "overstayed" their visas. Such incidents happened in every destination country without exception (e.g. Constable 2014; Killias 2010; Mahdavi 2013). Often, overstaying was seen as less risky than returning home with financial debt, unless the migrant got caught and deported. I asked a former male migrant to Korea what he thought of such deportations from Korea. He replied, "We

must first ask, does he have money? If he doesn't have money, *malu pulang* [he is ashamed to return]. If he has enough money for a big house, then it's okay, [he can] just return." Thus the social-moral ties and obligations that enable migrants' financial debts shed light on the material and practical motivations for harsh judgements against migrant failures. Migrants who returned without money might remain indebted to kin, friends, and neighbors, reinforcing their mutual social and economic vulnerability, rather than alleviating these uncertainties through migration.

A staff at a Yogyakarta-based migrant labor NGO also recounted her experiences staying at a migrant shelter in Jakarta. There, she met many men from West Nusa Tenggara who were formerly working as seamen (ABK- *anak buah kapal*) on Taiwanese-owned ships docked in South Africa. Many of them were reluctantly repatriated to Indonesia with the aid of International Organization of Migration (IOM). They usually arrived in Jakarta without money because they had not been paid, and were unfairly dismissed before their contracts were completed (see Buruh Migran 2014, Apr 4). Upon their arrival in the port of Jakarta, many told this NGO staff that they were too *malu* to return without money, and feared the mocking that they anticipated from friends and neighbors. When I visited and stayed at this migrant shelter for a week in early 2015, I met returned migrant seafarers from Central Java and West Java who echoed these sentiments. Rather than returning to their villages and families empty-handed, where chances of finding a decent-paying job were slim, these men preferred to stay in the shelter. There, they spent months assisting and waiting for SBMI to file their cases with BNP2TKI or the National Police Headquarters. Delaying their return home meant working towards the hope for financial compensation and a sense of justice.

Women also experienced *malu* if they returned from abroad before their contracts were completed. Like their male counterparts, this often meant they had not repaid their debts, or had

not worked long enough for savings to matter. During an interview, a male non-migrant community organizer in Cilacap offered an anecdote. In 2013, about ten migrants from the local area filed complaints about their migration experiences. He summarized migrants' issues as primarily caused by recruitment brokers, who inflated migration fees, and did not guarantee job security or physical safety. He had helped these return migrants file their complaints to BNP2TKI. However, of these return migrants he helped, only one migrant returned to her home village, while the others returned to various recruitment agencies and training centers. "Why?" I asked. "*Malu pulang ke rumah*," he said. They were *malu* to return home. He continued, "It is Cilacap culture. Once a woman has left the country [*sudah terbang*], there is *sukuran*, where everyone prays together. If after only nine months, she returns [to the village]… *Kok pulang?* [Why are you back?]" His response implied that in cases of such premature migrant return, the migrant would be constantly asked what went wrong, thus repeatedly reminding her of her failures to meet intersecting financial, moral, and social obligations associated with her migratory journey.

While migrant men or migrants' male relatives may be accused of borrowing money to drink or gamble, migrant women or migrants' female relatives may be accused of borrowing money for conspicuous consumption such as nice clothes or make-up. While both gendered consumption practices are generally frowned upon, women's appearances and consumption practices tend to be more closely inspected in relation to their moral character and religiosity (Smith-Hefner 2007; Jones 2010). Women might be blamed for male relatives' inappropriate or excessive spending, while men were rarely blamed for women's consumption practices. Importantly, while men commonly acknowledged that drinking and gambling were vices, women did not always recognize and agree with judgements of inappropriate or excessive "feminized" consumption. Thus as Carla Jones (2010) argues, women are often caught in the middle of such

public censure and pressures to perform gendered propriety and religiosity. An act such as wearing the veil (*hijab*) may thus be deemed appropriate or excessive.

Nevertheless, in two cases where non-migrant men were in debt, I found that this severely strained their relationships with their spouses and parents-in-law, whereas I did not encounter any cases where a woman's debt affected her relationships with kin. For example, a married young man, Rizal, worked many casual jobs in Cilacap, and was recognized by neighbors as a hardworking man and caring father. He lived with his son and his wife's parents and siblings, since his wife worked in a factory during the weekdays and only returned on weekends. However, he fell into depression for a few months when his wife complained that he was not giving her money, buying her gifts, or giving her mother a monthly allowance. He explained to her that he was still repaying the family's loans on their new motorbike. However, his wife and mother-in-law rejected this explanation, since they saw that debt as his personal responsibility, one that should not interfere with his breadwinning duties. Rizal gradually grew quiet and withdrawn. His feelings of *malu* and male inadequacy were known only when he finally broke down at a neighbor's house one *Idul Fitri*. He complained that his wife and mother-in-law were actively ignoring him. He found it unfair that they derided him for not financially contributing to the family, despite Rizal's view that the motorbike loans were a family investment, not an individual luxury. In another example, Rizal's uncle-in-law had committed suicide by hanging himself by a rope on a tree. Although there was speculation as to whether his suicide was due to spirit possession or his own will (see Chapter 5: 5.6.3), his family agreed that it was likely due to financial distress over his seven million rupiah loan. Financial anxieties were also perceived to be the cause of his marital conflict, which was public knowledge and a source of *malu* for him and his family.

Other forms of *malu* are not necessarily gendered, but still linked to the struggles of individuals and their kin to live up to social expectations. For example, in Puspito's (2014) research on suicide among farmers in Yogyakarta, he argued that people needed and borrowed money not only for food and basic amenities, but also for necessary social expenses. During auspicious months, villagers may be invited to up ten weddings, which may cost in total between 200,000 to 500,000 rupiah— the equivalent of an average resident's monthly or half a month's income. Those who do not have enough money to attend these important social events may feel extremely *malu*, and villagers often talked about how migration has inflated the value of land as well as increased expectations of monetary and non-monetary gifting for weddings. As Han (2012) argued in her ethnography among the urban poor in Chile, people living under precarious socio-economic conditions increasingly tend to accumulate financial debt in order to renew and maintain social relations. They do so not only to meet social obligations, but also to create mutual social indebtedness necessary for social membership into support networks. Such pressures to be able to participate in expensive social events, including births, circumcisions, and funerals, contribute to people's experiences of social and economic anxiety, while re-affirming these necessary ties of inter-dependence. Although Rizal viewed his motorbike loans as a means to reinvigorate familial ties, such as taking his wife and son out on weekends and trips, this financial debt also strained the very ties he sought to strengthen.

Yet, as Han points out, "the possibility of denial or disconnection is already within relations themselves," including indebtedness (2012: 234). The fact that Central Javanese villagers persist, despite increasing difficulty, to renew their social relationships (Das 2007: 217; Schuster 2015), highlights the ways in which transnational labor migration can be seen as providing new obstacles or opportunities for residents to meet, fail, or exceed these obligations. In other words, migration

is always a specter and possibility haunting non-migrants or return migrants' struggles to meet everyday obligations. Thus transnational labor migration contributes to shaping residents' internalized and imposed expectations and abilities to meet these social obligations in unequal and frustrating ways.

4.2.3   Marital Conflict and Divorce

Several married women in Cilacap and Yogyakarta told me that "in Islam, women are not allowed to divorce men," or that "Islam does not permit divorce, and people who divorce are just less pious Muslims." These statements often refer to local interpretations of the Qur'an's position on divorce: that it is sinful, wrong, and a source of personal and familial *malu* (see Chapter 6.4). Nevertheless, divorce or marital conflict was not uncommon regardless of a family's migration history or status. However, migration was often perceived as the cause of divorces locally, and migrants whose marriages were at risk of dissolution were highlighted over other similar non-migrant cases (see Syah 2013). This was possibly due to the heightened anxieties villagers had regarding spousal and parental separation in migrants' families (see Parreñas 2005; Pratt 2012).

During my fieldwork in migrant-origin villages, marital or household arguments often became public knowledge. Houses were typically built close to one another: extended families built houses on a large shared plot of inherited ancestral land. Windows or doors were also usually open due to the tropical heat, such that neighbors were often within hearing distance of the next household as long as voices were raised. Such public fights were sources of shame and disgrace for families, particularly in a context where Central Javanese villagers placed symbolic importance on maintaining "appearances" (*tampak*) of order. In contrast, a "quiet house" was referred to as a "peaceful" house, where neighbors assumed that no marital or familial conflict occurred.

These villages were also often full of gossip about adultery between villagers or with residents of neighboring villages, particularly when a spouse was a current migrant, or recently returned migrant. When Nurul in Cilacap recounted tales of adultery in the village, I asked, "If locals disapprove, why don't people say anything? They could tell the spouse [about the other's infidelity], or stop the cheating spouse?" Nurul lowered her voice and replied that people often felt it was not their place to interfere, that it is "not their business… They don't want to open a closed box. The important thing is that the marriage appears okay and fine and normal." I asked if Nurul thought that the adulterers would feel ashamed, and she replied hesitantly, "Of course, of course they feel *malu*, there must still be that [feeling]…" (*pasti mereka rasa malu, pasti masih ada*).

Nevertheless, female migrants were often blamed for divorce or the breakdown of their marriages, regardless of whether villagers perceive financial conflict or infidelity to be the cause (see Syah 2013). When women were rumored to have affairs abroad, they were condemned for sinning, either in having sex outside of marriage (*zina*), or adultery (*selingkuh*). Husbands of female migrants who stayed in the village, however, were often jokingly referred to, or might self-identify as bachelors and "single" men. Such ubiquitous joking was directly related to the double standards applied to men in relation to monogamy and adultery, while migrant wives were blamed for not fulfilling their husband's sexual desires, so that he had to look for satisfaction elsewhere (see Bennett 2005: 153; Brenner 1998; Rinaldo 2008).[34] As I mentioned in the previous chapter, married migrant men's infidelities locally or abroad might be tacitly tolerated and excused due to male "biological needs." Conversely, faithful wives whose husbands were found cheating were seldom explicitly praised for their fidelity, while "good husband" narratives were a popular genre

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[34] A wife's duties to fulfil her husband's sexual needs are explicitly part of the Indonesian Presidential Instruction 1/1991, on the Compilation of Islamic Laws specifically referring to the Marriage Law 1/1974, Part 6, Article 84.

that accompanied stories of cheating wives. These husbands might be praised and pitied for how they had been good men and perfect husbands, in providing for the family as migrants overseas, or even caring for children in the village while their mother was away. The relative absence of such praise for dutiful wives and mothers further highlights how women's fidelity and piety were naturalized and taken for granted.

When women cheat on their husbands, men may experience this shame to different degrees. Instances of male suicide, where official rates are much higher than female suicide, are usually linked either to financial debt or being cuckholded, both phenomena that challenge normative masculinity in Java and Indonesia more broadly. In Puspito's research (2014), a rural-urban migrant from Yogyakarta committed suicide after learning that his wife had a lover while he was away. Close friends said he felt very *malu* because his neighbors no longer respected him, such that it was unbearable for him to go on. It is important to note that in cases of adultery, villagers often attributed male infidelity to a wife's lack of beauty or her inability to sexually satisfy her husband. Female infidelity, by contrast, was often attributed to deviant female hyper-sexuality. Sometimes, female infidelity was also attributed to a husband's inability to financially support his wife. In two conversations with two women in their late thirties— a non-migrant and a former migrant from Cilacap— these women expressed sympathy and a suspension of moral judgement on married women who were suspected of adultery. For example, one woman highlighted that a neighbor had to have an affair *because* her husband was not financially supporting her (compare Hannaford and Foley 2015). The other explained, "Sometimes these relationships are not just for love, but for economic issues (*persoaloan eckonomi*)." In relation to extra-marital relationships, she added, "You know, people can get something extra to get by in these cases." She explained

that the finances flow both ways: extra-marital relationships can be a source of extra financial support for both women and men.

In short, some cuckholded spouses could also be blamed for failing their gendered marital duties. Gossip or knowledge about adulterous relationships did not only cause shame for the adulterer. However, with the exception of these few private expressions of sympathy for adulterous women, women were typically blamed for marital conflict or failure, whether as adulterers or wives of adulterous husbands.

4.2.4 Sex and Sexuality

The sexualities of women in general and of unmarried young women in particular were considered taboo topics in the context of Central Javanese idealized femininity as dutiful mothers and wives. In contrast, men of all ages and marital status were treated as persons with "biological needs," a euphemism for sexual desires, which were almost never publicly associated with women's needs. As in my earlier example of "married-but-single" men whose wives worked abroad, returned migrants from Korea or Taiwan often gathered to show off the photos they took abroad with fair-skinned foreign women. Former migrants to these countries would show me (and their peers) photos taken on their mobile phones, where they pose with female secretaries of their factories, or female friends of their foreign male colleagues. During one such photo-sharing incident, a male former migrant to Korea joked to another, "Is that your girlfriend?" The returned migrant who was sharing his photo only smiled slightly, while his friend said to me, "Ah, he had many girlfriends there." These public exchanges often hint at returned single male migrants' romantic or sexual encounters with foreign women abroad, regardless of migrants' actual experiences. Nevertheless, these conversations serve as public performances of migrants'

masculinities, suggesting that they were able to attract fair-skinned women, who are associated with beauty, higher class, education, and status in Indonesia (Saraswati 2012).

Such public displays of men's sexual encounters abroad contrast starkly with how villagers, including returned migrants, talk about female migrants' sexualities abroad. Earlier, I showed how villagers and returned migrants may attribute failed female migration to their immoral sexual relationships with foreign men. In many group discussions and individual interviews, Javanese or Indonesian female migrants who are assumed to have romantic relationships abroad are linked to foreign men from countries such as Bangladesh, Nepal, or Pakistan. These men are usually also precarious laborers in construction or hospitality sectors in places such as Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, and Saudi Arabia. Villagers and returned migrants refer to female migrants' foreign boyfriends in racialized terms such as "dark" or "black" people (*orang hitam*), usually in a derogatory way. Such stereotypes and representations serve to publicly shame or frame female migrants' sexual encounters abroad as laughable, or shameful, in comparison to the admirable "conquest" of foreign beauties by migrant men. Notably, although migrant women have romantic relations with and even marry "light skinned" foreign men from Saudi Arabia, Britain, Australia, or the United States, these relationships are rarely mentioned either positively or negatively in public stereotypes.[35] On Indonesian migrants' Facebook groups, online members and participants explicitly and sometimes cruelly mock such female migrants, such as images which reference Indonesian women and suggest they are "fools" to like Bangladeshi men (Fig 1).

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[35] However, in everyday conversations, examples of women marrying men from Britain, Australia, or Taiwan, were seen as a good thing, particularly because in the cases I encountered, the foreign men appeared to be able to support the migrant and her family economically.

Figure 1.TKW internet meme[36] 1. This was circulated via Facebook in September 2015.
This meme uses a template featuring a smiling and presumably Indonesian woman, with the caption, "*Hanya Perempuang Tolol Yg Suka Sama Banggali*" (Only Foolish Women Like Bengalis). Found on the public Facebook group, Buruh Migran Indonesia Saudi Arabia (BMI-SA).

Figure 2. TKW internet meme 2. This was circulated via Facebook in 2014, in response to news that the Indonesian state would end the moratorium against migration to the Middle East. This meme uses the same template as Fig 1, with the caption "*Asik/ PT Buka Lagi/ mau ke Jeddah mau kabur ke kamar Supir*" (Great/ Recruitment

[36] Internet memes, broadly defined, are ideas, activities, phrases, often in the form of visual media such as photographs or videos, that spread among individuals via the Internet. As the term suggests, memes typically involve forms of mimicry and creative re-interpretation of what it mimics or references. For a discussion of how Internet memes can provide social commentary or responses to journalistic reportage on critical issues of the day, see Rintel (2013).

agencies open again/ Going to Jeddah/ Going to run to the driver's room). Found on the public Facebook group, "Buruh Migran Indonesia Saudi Arabia (BMI-SA)

In online Indonesian migrant-based Facebook groups, as well as during fieldwork, the stereotype of the hyper-sexual, morally "loose" female migrant who goes abroad *in order to* engage in adultery, sex work, or non-marital sexual relations were pervasive. For example, Fig 2. is an example of stereotypes of Indonesian women who migrate to Jeddah only so they can "run to the driver's room"— a reference to the prospect of intimate relations with a man. It was a common assumption that domestic workers in the Middle East worked for rich families who also hired male chauffeurs from Indonesia or similar "developing" countries. Some of these representations of sexually promiscuous TKWs accuse these women of bringing great shame to their families or children, or the Indonesian nation. In contrast, despite public displays of migrant men's sexual encounters abroad, including visiting brothels, there were no references or suggestions either online or during my fieldwork to the idea that men migrate to fulfil their sexual needs and to embark on sexual adventures abroad.

Thus while female sexuality was only deemed legitimate within the context of a marriage, male sexuality was recognized independent of marriage, and indeed, intrinsic to a sense of Indonesian masculinity. However, such standards of hyper-sexual masculinity stood alongside expectations for men to be good and responsible husbands, fathers, and breadwinners. In Farjado's (2011) study of Filipino male migrant seafarers, he also found similar tensions in expectations of masculinity (99; cf Gamburd 2000; Margold 1995). On such an occasion where villagers jokingly referred to an elderly man as a "bachelor" because his wife and adult daughters were working in Taiwan, I observed that the man in question seemed uncomfortable. This was not uncommon, and when I remarked on this to a female villager, she said, "People are just joking and they mean no harm. But sometimes I think also they should not do that… Those jokes about men being single…

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Makes them feel even lonelier [*sepi*]. It is pitiful for them [*kasihan*]." While such jokes about male sexual needs may seem to encourage and condone male adultery in the absence of his migrant wife, such adultery is only tacitly accepted but not condoned. An effect of such jokes is that such husbands of migrants may feel embarrassed or ashamed about being alone (and presumably not sexually active) for long periods of time despite being married. In some cases, as I discuss in the next section, husbands might demand their migrant wives to return home immediately, sometimes against her will.

Nevertheless, such shame or embarrassment for men seldom results in or amounts to stigma. Stigma, in comparison to shame, can be understood as irreversible social markers (Peter 2010: 231), attached to individuals' perceived and unchanging moral character. Sexual transgressions for women in these Central Javanese villages almost certainly risk their stigmatization or familial dishonor, such as in cases of adultery, non-marital sexual relations including rape, pregnancy out of wedlock, and homosexuality. The public shaming of or immoral representations of sexually transgressive Indonesian migrant women in national media has arguably contributed to the predominance of a generally unforgiving and unsympathetic attitude towards women who return to Indonesia as single mothers or victims of rape or sexual abuse.

Biased representations of "immoral" or "shameless" Indonesian migrant women by official state and media reports typically provoke similarly judgmental comments on Facebook. For example, there was an official report by the Indonesian Embassy in Riyadh about a female migrant who left her newborn child at a local hospital. This report unforgivingly represented the migrant as "without a sense of guilt," but "maybe a sense of fear." The report further included the fact that the child was the result of an illicit relationship with an Indian citizen (Kemlu 2014, Sep 24). This report was shared on a migrant-based Facebook group. It elicited harsh comments where the

migrant was referred to as a prostitute (*pelacur*), "with morals no less than that of an animal, a person without humanity," and "faithless" (*gak punya imanan*). Online commenters further made generalizations about all female Indonesian migrants in general: "That's the ugliness of our TKW… Their hearts are closed and they only know their desires." Several male commenters were quick to add that "most inhabitants in hell are women," or that "Not all TKW are like this, just 90% of them." Other commenters were less explicit, but added moralizing lines such as "Remember that worldly life is temporary, and there will be reckoning in your afterlife." One commentator remarked that not all Indonesian female migrants are to blame, but not all employers are morally "depraved" (*bejat*) too. This same commenter linked potentially morally "cheap" Indonesian women to their low cost as labor commodities: "Don't be so cheap. Foreigners already value Indonesians like the price of mobile phone credit. It really brings shame to our nation."

While female migrants' sexuality was commonly framed as a matter of national shame, male migrants' sexuality was instead linked to racial and nation-based superiority and pride in migrants' ability to "get" fair-skinned foreign women, or in opposition to less desirable dark-skinned foreign men.

4.3 NEGOTIATING AND CULTIVATING SHAME

The previous section discussed different ways that migrant-origin villagers may shame current or returned migrants and their spouses or kin, and how these persons or kin may experience shame, or its risk, in gendered ways. In this section, I describe and discuss various ways that return migrants or their kin may negotiate or cope with migration-related shame,

such as in cases where shame, stigma, or harsh negative judgements as (gendered) failures are anticipated, feared, or experienced.

4.3.1   Joking

I was first introduced to Diah in Yogyakarta village by a mutual friend, Minah, a female non-migrant whom I was living with. Diah was referred to as someone who used to work in Malaysia, and "failed." At first, Diah denied being a TKW. She laughed and said that she was "only a tourist" (*hanya turis*), and that she did "*jalan-jalan*" in Malaysia. *Jalan-jalan* literally means to walk or to take a walk, but many use it to refer to unplanned and casual leisure activities. This may include going on a short trip, or sight-seeing. For example, both going to the market or to a beach can be *jalan-jalan*, as long as it connotes that the speaker is not doing work or chores, but doing something for leisure or pleasure, usually to relax or see something new. When Diah first said she was a "tourist," I was confused. To clarify, I asked if she worked in Malaysia. Diah replied that she worked in a factory in Malaysia for almost two years. Yet, she called herself a "tourist" because she returned with no money to show for it. After working for a year to pay off the debts to her recruitment agency, Diah's father was diagnosed with a severe illness, and her wages went to pay his medical bills, and her younger brothers' education fees. Before her contract was up, the company Diah worked for went bankrupt. She recalled having to borrow money from friends to buy an airplane ticket home.

During the course of my fieldwork, many other self-identified "failed migrants" were quick to jokingly introduce themselves or refer to their time abroad as "tourists" or in terms of "*jalan-jalan*." By representing their negative experiences of failure in such positive terms associated with pleasure and leisure, such individuals divert attention from the explicitly negative label of being

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"failures," and draw others' attention to the fact that despite failing to be successful migrants, they had at least seen other countries and places. Such everyday joking and laughing can be seen as a way to cope with a potentially shameful or embarrassing situation, memory, or encounter (Giles and Oxford 1970, in Ladegaard 2013: 3-4). By calling themselves tourists, they create situations in which they and others laugh about their failure to conform to expectations of successful migrants. They introduce feelings of relief or humor rather than anxiety, nervousness, or embarrassment, and set the tone of the ensuing conversation and encounter. In Hans Ladegaard's (2013) analysis of Indonesian and Filipina foreign domestic workers' narratives of trauma with their employers and jobs in Hong Kong, he argues that these women's laughter in addition to their tears were crucial to understanding how they cope with traumatic experiences. By introducing laughter or creating situations where laughter is present in their narratives, Ladegaard argued that these women "use laughter to create and reify their own superiority in relation to their adversities. Thus, laughter becomes a survival mechanism; like crying, it becomes a very human response to dehumanizing experiences" (2013: 16).

By reframing labor migration in terms of tourism, these jokes also build on the unequal but stark contrast between the leisure and privilege associated with tourism, and these migrants' positions of "comparative *dis*advantage" (Constable 2009: 152-153), which enable their transnational movement as low-wage laborers. In other words, by unexpectedly and ironically referring to themselves as tourists, they highlight to potentially judgmental and gossiping neighbors that their failed journeys were not selfish or "for fun" (as *jalan-jalan* implies), but instead carried financial, gendered, and moral expectations that they were well aware of. On another level, a few of these former migrants did literally mean that they traveled abroad on a tourist visa, i.e. to work illegally. However, I found it interesting that among those I met who did

travel illegally on tourist visas for work, only those who identified as "failures" tended to refer to themselves jokingly as "tourists" in the sense described here. This thus draws attention to the fact that they worked illegally, as well as "failed" to achieve the ideal migratory stereotype of one who worked hard and returned wealthy.

While such jokes served to diffuse tension in these encounters between former migrants and their non-migrant neighbors, they also unintentionally reinforced stereotypes and perceptions that some migrants fail because of their own selfish, sometimes immoral, pursuits of pleasure and leisure. When Diah joked that all she did in Malaysia was "*jalan-jalan*," our mutual friend Minah shot me a look and said aloud, "You see, like what I said." With that, Minah was reminding me of our conversation earlier that morning where Minah explained to me why many migrants fail. To Minah, this was because migrants spent their wages on new clothes, make-up, or going out and partying. All these leisurely activities could fall under the category of "*jalan-jalan.*" In this case, although Diah may have used the term ironically, Minah clearly took it literally as Diah's confession that she did indeed spent time and money having fun in Malaysia instead of working and sending money home to her family. Although Diah quickly elaborated that she returned in debt because her earnings went toward paying her recruitment agents, her father's medical bills, and her brothers' school fees, Minah seemed not to take those expenditures into consideration. This was clear when Minah shifted the conversation to ask Diah where she went in Malaysia to "*jalan-jalan*" during her free time.

Nevertheless, when former migrants got together and shared their experiences, I noticed that some easily introduced one another to me in terms of who were "tourists" or "workers" in which countries. In one such informal gathering in the Yogyakarta village, one female former migrant told me that another woman present had been to Saudi Arabia. "Oh, really?" I asked the

woman, surprised, since until then I had only known that she did domestic work in Taiwan. Her friend replied on her behalf, "Yeah, she was a tourist there." Everyone present— mainly female former migrant workers— laughed. The woman in question then elaborated that on arrival at the airport in Saudi Arabia, she was told by the recruitment agency there that her employer had changed her mind and rejected her, so she was sent back to Indonesia the very same day. In this scenario, however, everyone present arguably understood that "tourism" was used ironically. The term partially served as a collective form of consolation that even if one's migratory journey did not go as planned, "at least" they stepped foot in a foreign, far-away land, and returned to tell the tale, albeit as short-lived "tourists." This palpable consensus contrasted with my conversation with Minah and Diah, where Minah understood "tourism" and "*jalan-jalan*" in mainly literal terms, which confirmed her suspicions about TKWs who lead selfish lives of indulgence abroad.

4.3.2   Managing Gendered Reputations

When it became clear to Diah that Minah was fixated on the details of how Diah spent her free time outside of factory work hours, Diah carefully and very specifically described the circumstances of her nights out in the city where she worked in Malaysia. She had noticed how Minah's perceptions of failed migrants was confirmed by her statements about "*jalan-jalan*," and started what I felt was defensive narrating. Diah spoke about eating new foods like ramen and going to karaoke bars with her colleagues from the factory who were also from Indonesia. However, she insisted that her friends would often treat her so she never spent too much money on going out. She emphasized that she would not have otherwise indulged in such leisurely activities if her colleagues and peers had not offered to pay for her. Regardless of whether Diah was telling the truth, it became clear to me that Diah knew which aspects of her life and activities

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overseas were central to managing her gendered moral reputation. Significantly, Diah also reminded Minah and me that her migration was mainly for her family, through describing how she tried to fulfil those familial obligations.

How female migrants spent their earnings and free time was often the subject of close inspection and gossip by migrants' peers and kin in the villages. Ideally, women should be perceived to have suffered at least a little, or sacrificed for their families. Recounting fun and pleasurable experiences might risk being judged as immoral and less dedicated to their families' needs at home.[37] These informal forms of surveillance of female migrants' behavior abroad meant that women faced constant pressures to carefully manage their reputations as moral women who suffered for their families, enough to be viewed as diligent and filial, but not too much as to be victims or failures. They could also be seen as women with new experiences and insights into foreign cultures, but only in legitimate social or work-related scenarios.

However, since Minah expressed doubt about Diah's self-representation, Diah began to share "scandalous" gossip and stories of what other female migrants would do, thus creating a contrast and distance between those "immoral" migrants and herself. She spoke about how some migrant women, especially those from East Java, would have foreign boyfriends in order to receive expensive gifts like branded watches, from them. She said that some also did sex work outside of official factory work hours. There were also many undocumented migrants from Indonesia and the Philippines who did such sex work, she added, and suggested that a neighbor and fellow villager was one such migrant whose earnings came from these "*non-halal*" sources. Through the telling of these scandalous stories, Diah not only diverted Minah's questions and attention away from

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[37] Such attitudes contrast with ethnographies of Filipina labor migrants, who tended to represent their lives abroad to families in terms of entertainment and pleasure (McKay 2012; Platt 2012).

Diah's own experiences, but also discursively distanced herself from other women who did work and had relationships that Diah herself would never engage in. These immoral migrant others were also perceived as financially successful, unlike Diah who returned with debt and as a self-identified failure. Thus Diah's stories also served to produce an image of Diah who, though failed in financial terms, maintained her honor, in comparison to successful migrants who sinned by doing *non-halal* work.

Ming-Yan Lai's analysis of representations of "sexy maid" stereotypes by migrant activists in Hong Kong is useful to think about how returned migrants manage their own gendered reputations at home. Lai looked at public dances and performances by Indonesian migrant domestic workers, some of whom are labor activists, and observed that the "sexy maid" emerged as an immoral stereotype (2010: 27-28). The image of the sexy maid, who in some cases were also portrayed as eventually becoming pregnant bodies, served to condemn affairs of migrant domestic workers with fellow Indonesian migrants, as well as "illicit sex with other marginalized local ethnic minorities" (29). Analyzing these performances and audience reception to these dances, Lai argued that these stereotypes produced and reinforced conservative gendered attitudes that denied migrant domestic workers legitimacy as "desiring" and sexual subjects (29). In other words, performances of sexy maid stereotypes elicited audience laughter through producing the sexy maid and pregnant migrant as an immoral "other." The sexy maid is always deviant and subject to public humiliation. Although Lai recognizes that the migrant organizations intended for these stereotypical representations to "caution [women] against sexual indulgence and to encourage them to join organizations as an alternative way to fulfilling their desires for companionship" (29), she argued that such representations reveal "a contradictory othering in the discourse of union

activism" (30), where only specific kinds of female subjects were desirable or targeted for membership.

Such a strategy of producing an immoral other is similar to Diah's management of her own reputation as a migrant female domestic worker. As a single and unmarried woman at the time of her migration, Diah also produced and reinforced stereotypes of sexual and desiring TKWs who were interchangeable with "non-halal" or immoral activities. This effectively reproduced standards of the ideal female migrant as one who primarily worked to fulfil her family's needs, where her family's needs were ideally the same and interchangeable with her own proper desires as a woman. Such gossip can be read as "domesticating" sexualities out of place, by rendering such deviant behavior intelligible in particular ways (see Rafael 1997).

In more severe threats and experiences of shame, such as marital conflict, infidelity, divorce, sexual abuse, or pregnancy out of wedlock, marriage, or the appearance of a harmonious marriage was crucial to coping with or mediating the impact of shame on a migrant or migrant relatives' reputation and honor. For example, a Yogyakarta woman who returned from Hong Kong pregnant with a mixed child eventually married a man from a neighboring village. During group conversations about her situation, a few women commented that the fact that she got married reduced the element of shame in the eyes of others. She was no longer a single mother, and her child had a father figure. To my knowledge, many divorced migrants or their spouses often typically re-married within six months of their divorce, especially if the migrant returned to live in the village, or if the migrant's spouse intended to stay in the village. While divorce was largely frowned upon and sometimes perceived as "un-Islamic," it was nonetheless relatively common. However, re-marriage was usually encouraged. As a few villagers explained to me, although

marriage in Islam is not compulsory (*wajib*), it is highly recommended in the Qur'an (*Sunnah*). Being married would gain an individual favor and merit with God.

Because of this, many individuals took pains to resolve their marital conflicts or stay with abusive partners to avoid divorce and the shame associated with it. One former migrant woman stayed with and repeatedly forgave her cheating, gambling, and abusive husband. When I asked her why she did not just ask for a divorce, she said honestly, "You know I was divorced twice before. I had already failed twice and I did not want to fail again. No matter what, I just had to try to make it work."

That man eventually left her and found another woman, and at the time I met this woman, she was trying to marry again. The stigma she carried of being thrice-divorced would never leave her, but it could likely be reduced if she married again. Her divorced and single status was not just a matter of her own reputation. It also affected her son's marriage prospects, as her son's potential parents-in-law forbade their daughter to marry him unless his mother got re-married. According to these parents, they did not want their daughter to marry into an "incomplete" family. This example illustrates the points I have made that some forms of shame are life-long, extending to one's kin, and that marriage is often perceived as an important solution to the restoration of a disrupted heteronormative order.

Similarly, men had to manage their reputations as breadwinners or responsible fathers and husbands, particularly in cases where their wives were working abroad. In these scenarios, men were vulnerable to accusations that their wives had to work abroad because they were lazy, incapable of financially supporting the family, or that in addition to leeching off their wives' hard labor, they were having illicit affairs and might be financing these mistresses or second wives with their migrant wives' remittances. Although some of these cases did happen, some men might not

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pay much attention to what neighbors thought, since such behavior seldom resulted in violent confrontation between the men and their family or neighbors. However, other men might experience such gossip as shameful and hurtful to their sense of pride, dignity, and masculinity. Consequently, there were many stories of migrants' husbands in the villages who cooked and cared for their children (Graham et al. 2012; Hoang et al. 2012; Yeoh and Lam 2013), did the laundry in public for all to see, and worked hard every day. It was important for neighbors and kin to witness these domestic and caring activities performed by men, or the fact that they were working in the fields, or selling their home-made products such as palm sugar. This warded off any gossip that a man may just be sitting at home doing nothing, smoking, drinking, or gambling his days and pennies away.

4.3.3   Regulating Women's Mobility

Men whose wives or daughters are migrants may experience *malu* as described in the previous section, for failing to conform to gendered norms of masculinity, and financially depending on women. They may also experience or face *malu* by association, such as if a female member of their family is publically shamed or known to be "loose" or immoral. In several interviews with male activists and male local leaders, men expressed potentially feeling more ashamed if a female relative were to commit adultery or have non-marital sexual relations. This contrasts with the situation of a male member of their family being found guilty of the same social transgressions. This was evident in my interview with Hari, a non-migrant, married, Cilacap-based NGO staff in his mid-20s, who facilitated local development programs.

> Carol: When TKI have problems with their family, is it more common in cases of male or female migration? Or there is no difference?

Hari: There is no difference. Both have the potential [for problems], but the cases I usually encounter are women.

C: You mean when women go abroad?

H: But it's the same, whoever contributes to break up the family. For example, when a woman goes overseas, and the husband here is doing whatever pleases him. Or the reverse, when the husband is at home, and the woman is doing something else overseas. But it is the same, whether or not the woman is the one abroad, or the man… But the cases I deal with are usually female migrants.

C: When men go overseas, there are less problems?

H: There is a tendency yes, [that the problem is] more muted. Because [in male migration], men are the ones obliged to be breadwinners for their families. And when women stay behind, when they are at home, they can be guarded and taken care [*dijaga*] of by the family. But if the man stays behind, it is difficult for the family to intervene [in his affairs]… In the case of women who stay at home, in houses there are norms that bind her. There are norms among the people that can control [*kontrol*]… The family can watch [*jaga*] her.

C: [Comparing men and women who commit adultery], are consequences harsher for men or women? Maybe in terms of *malu*?

H: Yes. For me, as part of a family, I will definitely feel more ashamed. I will be more ashamed if my older sister commits adultery with another man, while her husband is working overseas looking for ways to support the family.

C: Oh. But what if it is the reverse? If the husband cheats, will you feel less shame?

H: If it's the reverse…yes… Not as ashamed as if the wife cheats. In my opinion, if the man leaves to work abroad, or even in another city, indeed it is his obligation to do so. And it is the woman's obligation to take care of the family, and whatever has been left behind by the husband. So many things are wrong now. Women are all going overseas, and husbands are staying at home. In my opinion, this is also wrong. It is wrong because men are obliged to be breadwinners, but why are women leaving instead?

As this discussion shows, familial shame and honor is closely associated with women's reputation and morality. One way that migrants' relatives attempt to mediate the effects or potentiality of such shame is to increase regulation of women's mobility in their families, or in the village. One example is through the enforcement of local norms and familial surveillance, as pointed out by Hari.

During a nation-wide conference for the Indonesian national migrant labor union that took place in Wonosobo in January 2015, there was a question and answer section after a participatory activity where all members made a list of potential problems with migrants' recruitment and return processes. Two men raised similar questions. They highlighted the "problem" of women who migrated without permissions from their husbands or fathers, and asked what action or regulations could help prevent such cases. I highlight the men's questions to illustrate that women's unchecked or "free" mobility was sometimes perceived as a problem by villagers and community leaders. It was also a source of potential embarrassment for their families, which needed urgent remedy. While the organizer in charge of that session did not dismiss the men's concerns, he reframed the issue as one not of deviant women but of recruitment agents who were violating or bypassing bureaucratic guidelines for labor migrants. The 2004 Presidential Regulation on the Placement and Protection of Migrant Workers stipulates that a migrant applicant has to have formal written permission (*izin*) of a husband or wife (*suami atau istri*), parent (*orang tua*), or kin representative (*wali*) (Article 51, Paragraph 5). Significantly, whenever the issue of kinship permission was raised during the course of my fieldwork, this article was mainly associated with how women required the permission of a male kin in order to migrate.[38] Nobody ever mentioned that men required their wives or parents' permissions in order to leave.

These regulations, however, appeared to be non-standardized and arbitrarily enforced by local government officials as well as district level officials. For example, in Yogyakarta, there

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[38] These perceptions of gendered roles that are articulated and enshrined in the Indonesian state's marriage and religious laws apply across Indonesia. However, they influence the mobility of women to different degrees. For example, in Nusa Tenggara Barat, Sulawesi, and Sumatra, significantly fewer women than men migrate abroad. However, in Java, this is not the case, and despite the fact many women single-handedly financially support nuclear or extended families, their status is seldom, if ever, recognized as the "breadwinner" or "head of household." Instead, they are seen to merely supplement the family's finances.

were no official records of migrants leaving or returning to the village. Residents told me that migrants typically only reported their migration or residential statuses to the district level in the nearest city. In contrast, Sita's village in Cilacap kept poor records. According to their official books, only 20 people migrated in the year 2014, and 15 in 2015 by the month of May. These numbers clearly did not reflect villagers' anecdotal reports and knowledge of who left in the last year, or even in recent months. Everyone in Cilacap whom I consulted agreed that many more than 20 people migrated in 2014. The village secretary in Cilacap told me they kept records because recruitment agencies required a letter from the village head to "permit" and acknowledge that a local resident was applying to migrate. In fact, this was not strictly the case since many migrants did leave through formal and informal methods, without ever informing the village government in Cilacap and in Yogyakarta. There was also no stipulation in the 2004 Regulation that required a letter from the local government, although it did require that the applicant possess an identity card that can be processed at the village office. In any case, I asked this secretary if he typically signed and agreed to every request, or if there were situations in which he would withhold permission as a local government official. The village secretary said in some cases he has not "dared to consent" (*tidak berani setuju*), if a migrant's husband's signature was missing from the document. Such a statement reflects many villagers' patriarchal attitudes, where fathers and husbands are seen to be in charge of the movements and decisions of daughters and wives.

4.3.4   Silence

One morning in Cilacap, while visiting an acquaintance, Bu Heru, I met several middle-aged men who had dropped by her house to chat. I asked them what they thought of labor migration in general. An older man responded, "Everyone has their own individual fate, migrants or non-

migrants" (*Nasib-nasiban sendiri-sendiri, TKI atau orang sini juga*). One man said that his sister had been working in Singapore for two years. I asked him how she was doing, and he said that he did not know. At first I wondered if he really did not know, or that he just did not want to tell me— a stranger— about it, or that he did not want to share such information with his peers who were present. I asked if the men or Bu Heru had stories of female migrant neighbors and kin. Bu Heru's husband, Pak Heru, explained that people did not usually ask about other migrants, and that migrants themselves or their families usually did not want to talk about it either. When I asked why this was the case, Pak Heru replied, "Because of shame. [Migrants are] usually just maids overseas. But if they work in factories, yes, they will share stories…"

As I noted earlier, gendered jobs such as domestic work can be viewed as degrading or shameful. Thus migrants and their kin may be less inclined to talk publicly about their experiences abroad performing such work, particularly if it involved harsh working and living conditions or negative treatment by their employers. Such silence has the effect of reinforcing local perceptions that migrant domestic workers are indeed ashamed of the work they do, thus maintaining existing perceptions and stereotypes of them. Migrant domestic workers' silence might include not disputing gossip about the immoral activities of other migrant women abroad. However, as we shall see in Chapter 6, migrant women who had more positive experiences in domestic work, or who formed close relationships with their employers, were more inclined to openly share their experiences to counter stereotypes of domestic work as undignified. Nevertheless, such positive accounts were less common, and had limited impact on challenging local perceptions of domestic work as potentially shameful and lowly.

In more severe cases, such as migrants who experienced physical and sexual violence by their employers, acquaintances, or partners abroad, migrants and kin may also remain silent in

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order to cope with the threat of shame and stigma. A female returned migrant in Cilacap told me of how a relative's wife had returned from Saudi Arabia after finishing a three-year contract there. On return, this woman always stayed at home, and was very withdrawn and quiet. Her husband observed that it often seemed as if she wanted to say something, yet did not want to talk about it. He did not know what was wrong with their marriage. After three months, she finally confessed to her family, including her husband, that she had been repeatedly raped by her employer, and physically abused. Even though this treatment began early on when she started work with this employer, she decided to stay on, because she knew that if she asked to go back to Indonesia, she would receive harsher treatment. When she returned, she tried her best to pretend things were okay. She was too ashamed to face her husband in particular because she did not know how he would react to the news. As she told this to her family, everyone present broke down and cried to think of how she suffered abroad. They appreciated how difficult it was for her to confess what had happened. In this scenario, even though the returned migrant gathered courage to confess to her family, it was very likely that neighbors would not find out if the family chose not to publicize it, due to the stigma surrounding rape.

Serious public discussion of rape or sexual abuse is still largely taboo in these Central Javanese villages, particularly because it is associated with long-term shame. Although villagers acknowledged that migrant neighbors and peers may have had these experiences, very few talked about it in detail except to euphemistically refer to these incidents as accidents (*kecelakaan*), sickness (*sakit*), or sometimes, broadly as violence (*kekerasan*). This applied to other "shameful" cases such as pregnancy out of wedlock. A few local leaders attributed this taboo to the "Javanese mindset," which considered such issues to be sources of familial dishonour. One described sexual abuse as "something to just keep inside, don't publicise it, don't talk about it." Sustained discussion

might, however, take place among women as close confidantes, who were reflexively aware that their views run counter to dominant public perceptions. For example, two former female migrants told me they felt sympathy for some women who returned pregnant from Saudi Arabia. Without suggesting reasons for these pregnancies, the women simply said that they found these women pitiful, especially if they were unmarried and had to care for children as single mothers. These moments of silent empathy provide significant though narrow glimpses of how some residents may "witness" and testify to unspeakable violence or justice (Marsland and Prince 2012: 463). Although rare, such silent witnessing points to future possibilities for social transformation. Remaining silent could be a way that migrants and kin cope with shame or the threat of shame, or a way to allow others to endure shame rather than bear explicit stigma and gossip (Brown 2005: 86).

Tragically, however, migrants in these cases were more often blamed for their own plight, and suspected of immoral behaviour. This occurred even in the rare cases where migrants make the brave decision to speak out about their ordeals overseas. As one former male migrant dismissively remarked,

> Many migrants, when abroad, do things they would never do here because there is so much freedom, especially in Hong Kong and Taiwan. Some women who return pregnant may say they have been raped… They say, 'I was raped…' [*Aku diperkosa*] Sometimes by their employers… but we can never know the truth. Maybe and most likely it was a mutual relationship [*saling suka*]. But of course when things go wrong, they can say anything they want about what happened, but who knows [*siapa tahu*]?

His harsh judgment was most likely influenced by his own experiences in Korea, where he recounted how many Indonesian migrant men visited the red light district regularly, and engaged in extra-marital relationships with other Indonesian migrant women in Korea too.

Such a culture of silence and shame arguably makes it difficult for those who have similar negative experiences to exchange information or seek emotional and moral support. One example

made it clear to me that some people may even want to talk about their "shameful" experiences, but their peers or kin may not want to hear about it or confront these issues. In one village, neighbors and relatives of a woman I stayed with often asked me if I knew anything about her marital situation. They assumed I would be in a good position to know, since I regularly stayed with her for long periods. She was said to be divorced or at least separated from her husband, since they did not live together anymore. I was surprised that even friends whom I considered to be close with this woman did not dare to ask her about her husband and marriage. When I asked her close friend why she did not ever try to talk to this woman about her apparent divorce, her friend said, "I'm ashamed to ask. It could hurt her feelings. Anyway, I don't think I can help her or give good advice. In these situations, it is best not to talk about it. Sometimes I felt strongly that she wanted to tell me what happened. She really wanted to talk, and gave me many hints. But I quickly changed the topic."

In other words, silence can also be a way for friends and relatives of persons who are the target of shame to cope with "shame by association," or what Davies (2014) referred to as kinships of shame. By not directly confronting the experiences of issues behind or provoking *malu*, villagers diffuse the potential of such shame by remaining silent, or silencing the experiences of others. How silence can diffuse the threat of shame is also evident in Han's (2012) fieldwork among urban poor Chilean women. In remaining silent about rumors of their own transgressive behavior such as abortion or adultery, Han suggests that women's silence can be seen as a need to keep their worlds "intact" (2012: 161). This view contrasts with others who might be tempted to read silence as resistance or acquiescence to male dominance. Similarly, although migrant domestic workers may experience abuses, harassment, and hardship abroad, their desires not to speak about these experiences upon return may be a response to their heightened awareness of the precariousness of

their reputations, and "relations that [their] existence [are] staked upon" (ibid.). As Wendy Brown provocatively asks, "What if to speak incessantly of one's suffering is to silence the possibility of overcoming it, living beyond it, and of identifying with something other than it?" (2005: 92).

4.3.5 Emotional Support of Kin and Peers

While there were countless cases where family members and neighbors appeared or were said to be very judgmental and conservative regarding migrant failures, there were also a few cases where familial acceptance and neighborly support were crucial in helping individuals endure and negotiate threats of social stigma and judgment.

Minah, as an active community organizer in Yogyakarta, was also a member of a local state-run micro-credit union. For a month I regularly attended their meetings, which took place once or twice a week in offices in the nearest town, or in neighboring villages, or at the facilitators' homes. Staff members, including Minah, served as fieldworkers for their own villages. They did surveys, follow-ups, and collected loan repayments from their fellow villagers. I was allowed to sit in on these meetings, and afterwards, I often asked Minah or other members from nearby villages about who usually borrows money, as well as the rate and nature of loan repayment. One staff member told me that most people repaid their loans. In the case of those who could not repay, due to extreme poverty, the micro-credit union waived their loans. This was possible because the organization was guided by Islamic principles, above formal and impersonal economic ones (Prawiranta 2013: 134). However, she noted that in many cases, it was unnecessary to waive the loans, since the borrower's family nearly always tried to repay such loans. Because the organization functioned as a community-based lending system, those who cannot return their loans face the threat of being ashamed or shamed by their fellow community members (typically

neighbors). In a few cases, neighbors may even help to repay others' loans anonymously, to save borrowers from embarrassment. A staff member explained that this kind of behavior of helping another in need is encouraged in "Javanese culture," often referred to as "*musyawara*" (mutual obligation/ assistance).

Migrants' spouses or siblings might also take the initiative to seek justice or redress for their kin. While this was not very common, I observed that husbands or sisters who actively seek help or information from NGOs or BNP2TKI usually knew about these NGOs since they were also prospective or return migrants themselves. For example, upon her premature return from Singapore to Jakarta, Ayu managed to find and stay at a migrant shelter only with her sister's help. Her older sister had actively and aggressively sought help and information by calling the police, recruitment agencies, BNP2TKI, and NGO staff. Ayu's sister was a former migrant, who had strongly advised Ayu against migrating. However, she felt that their father was pressuring Ayu to do so, and had in fact signed the paperwork. This was despite the fact he knew that Ayu was legally underage to work in Singapore, since her documents were falsified to say that she was twenty-three instead of twenty. Ayu's case illustrates how multiple family members can have conflicting interests or attitudes toward a return migrant who "failed." On the one hand, Ayu's sister sought to seek legal and economic justice for Ayu, in terms of filing criminal reports against the recruitment agency, and refusing to pay the loans she felt was exploitative. On the other hand, upon learning that Ayu had returned and that the recruitment agency demanded money for her "release," Ayu's father told her on the phone that she was "no longer his daughter." The night Ayu received this phone call, I found her crying alone in our shared room in the migrant shelter. I could only remind her that she still had a sister who was doing everything she could to help. On hearing this, Ayu said, "Yes, I'm still lucky to have her. Since we were little, she was there for me."

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Another example shows the difference a family's emotional, moral, and financial support can make for a migrant who is ashamed and who faces potential shaming from her neighbors. Lestari was a former migrant who was raped and impregnated by her boyfriend while she was working in Hong Kong. Despite thoughts and attempts of suicide, she eventually kept the child and returned to Yogyakarta. These were both radical decisions in light of harsh local views against rape, premarital sex and pregnancy, especially with foreign dark-skinned men. Yet, Lestari was able to make these radical decisions because of her mother's fierce support. Her mother was a practical and vocal woman who persuaded her that they would, as a family, find alternatives to suicide and abortion, both of which are generally considered sinful in Islam.

During the time of my fieldwork, Lestari had given birth to her daughter, and married a man from the next village. According to Minah and other villagers, this marriage significantly alleviated Lestari's stigmatized status since she was at least no longer seen as a single mother, and was now part of a legal marital union. She also participated in a state-funded program teaching cooking, sewing, and entrepreneurial skills to human trafficking victims, and started a small food stall. This was all possible partly because Minah, who took it upon herself to look out for disadvantaged women in the village, had helped to enroll Lestari in the program. Minah told me that Lestari was only able to attend the skill-training programs because her mother had encouraged her to, and organized for childcare and work replacement such that Lestari was able to leave the baby without worries. However, Lestari's situation was unique because she was able to raise her foreign-looking child, and remain in the country. This was the exception to other stories of migrant pregnancy abroad. Women were rumored to have had abortions, put their babies up for adoption abroad, or leave children behind in order to migrate again. Many others also tried to pass these children off as legitimately fathered by migrants' husbands in Indonesia (see also Constable 2014).

4.3.6   Perseverance or Running away

Pak Gunadi was a fisherman in Yogyakarta, who also owned a small shrimp farm. Minah had introduced us, because Pak Gunadi's wife was currently working in Taiwan. Resting by the river with a cigarette, he told me that his wife's remittances helped them to buy land and establish the shrimp farm. She had been in Taiwan for eight years, and it had been difficult for her. Her employers were not kind, but she told herself to endure (*tahan*) the hard work and her employers' behavior, so that she could finish her work contract. I asked Pak Gunadi why she repeatedly renewed her contract in Taiwan, and why she did not consider returning after her first three-year-contract ended. He explained that if she came back with "nothing," they would be ashamed in front of their neighbors (*malu sama tertangga*). Only recently, after eight years of working and saving, Pak Gunadi said his wife had just started to feel secure (*enak*), specifically because they now had the shrimp farm to show for her years of working abroad. This narrative of enduring and persevering through harsh working and living conditions abroad was common for many return and current migrants that I spoke to. Many former migrants recounted how familial obligations and expectations for them to return successful helped them to endure homesickness, physical discomfort and ailments, and long working hours. In other words, for many migrants, returning as failures was not a viable option, even though the threat of failure was real, particularly for these migrants who could choose to run away, return in debt, or return without finishing their contracts. In his ethnography on the Vietnamese diaspora in the United States, Hung Thai (2014) similarly found that Vietnamese migrants may take up degrading jobs or endure poverty in the U.S. in order to fund and fulfil their families' middle-class aspirations in Vietnam.

While some Javanese migrants may cope with the threat of shame associated with failure by persevering in undesirable working and living conditions abroad, other migrants or potential

migrants may instead run away from training centers in Indonesia, or recruitment agencies, employers' houses, factories and plantations overseas. The Indonesian term for the act of running away and those who run away is "*kabur*," which literally refers to a sense of ambiguity or blurred boundaries. Such blurred lines point to the mainly legal transgressions of the act of running away, and mainstream media, NGO workers, and villagers referred to these migrants abroad as those who "*kabur*"— who overstay visas and work illegally by running away from their employer or recruitment agents. Closely associated with these run away or illegal migrants are those who are considered missing, lost, or disappeared. These terms refer to the fact that they have lost contact with their family, and no fellow villager in the migrants' destination country, recruitment agent, or government data can trace his or her whereabouts (see Kelley and Thompson 2015). According to official data from BNP2TKI, such "missing" and uncontactable migrants were the third most commonly reported problem between the years 2011 and 2013.[39]

As mentioned previously, missing or illegal migrants were typically perceived as failures, in not being able to keep their jobs, in having bad luck with finding good employers, or in presumably trading their familial obligations for a life of decadence and hedonism abroad. National migrant NGO Seruni (2014) published a list of "reasons why [female] migrants run away," and the list included "unhealthy" relationships with men (*pergaulan "tidak sehat" dengan laki-laki lain*). Other reasons included escaping from physical and sexual abuse at their places of work, and Seruni emphasized that not all runaway stories are negative or for illegitimate reasons. Migrants may also perceive "illegal" journeys or forms of work as more desirable in increasing their chances of economic success (Killias 2010). Certainly, many returned migrants

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[39] 2,320 migrants were officially reported as having lost communication with their families (putus hubungan komunikasi). See BNP2TKI 2013. Placement and Protection of Migrant Workers Indonesia 2013, Table "10 Largest Types of Problems" (10 Jenis Masalah Terbesar), page 49.

acknowledged that becoming illegal typically guaranteed a worker higher wages, fewer restrictions on mobility, and safety from physical and sexual abuse within the household-workplace for domestic workers (see also Mahdavi 2013).

These examples of either enduring or running away from harsh working environments support more recent emphasis by scholars that migrants' economic objectives can be subordinate to or are intimately linked to migrants' desires to become socially legitimate and respected individuals within their communities. In his work among Congolese migrants, Peter (2010) argues that many migrants may deprive themselves of basic necessities, or delay their own individual and initial migration aims (such as saving to start a business), not only in order to fulfil familial obligations. In Peter's analysis, such obligations are nearly mandatory if migrants wish to someday return to their communities of origin, since transgressing socio-cultural norms by not sending enough money home would lead to individuals' social exclusion and marginalization from the community upon return. His point is that migrants are not only remitting for their families out of altruism or the pursuit of prestige, but also to maintain their own social membership and prevent shameful social categorizations as incapable persons. Similarly, in Susanna Fioratta's research in Fouta Djallon, she found that transnational labor migration, as well as small business start-ups remain popular, despite the fact that both rarely result in economic success. Fioratta highlights how such risky and seemingly irrational decisions should be understood as attempts and labor "to achieve a semblance of respectful personhood" (2015: 306) under hostile structural conditions. Locals perceived that alternatives to migration and businesses as mainly unproductive, lazy activities such as sitting and drinking tea. In this context, the act of striving for success, rather than achieving success itself, helps to "prevent—or at least postpone—not only economic failure but also a future of being considered an incapable, useless person" (306).

These analyses are useful to understand seemingly irrational acts by Central Javanese who apparently try to avoid or cope with shame and stigma (or its threat), by making decisions or engaging in activities that are commonly associated with failure or shame, such as running away, or working in sex and entertainment industries. In situations where migrants already face the threat of harm, unpaid wages, more debt, or unwanted deportation, many may perceive that certain decisions may in the short-term be degrading or extremely risky, but at least offer the possibility for eventual moral redemption, economic success, and social respect.

The case of Bu Sumi illustrates this sense of desperation and radical faith in future redemption. Bu Sumi was a domestic worker in Taiwan, who after a year and a half, had changed employers twice. Due to complex visa issues concerning a falling out with her first employer, she found herself faced with the threat of deportation and explicit rape threats by her recruitment agent. When she was taken one night, by force, to the recruitment agency, ready to be sent back to Indonesia, Bu Sumi decided to steal her passport and run away. For five years, she had overstayed her visa and was working illegally in Taiwan. During this time, she had not contacted her family even once. To them, she was another story of a "missing" or "disappeared" migrant, who had either abandoned her family, or worse, had died abroad. When I asked Bu Sumi why she had not tried to contact her family, she said that she felt too ashamed to let them know she had run away, and that she had not made any money in Taiwan. Instead, she was simply surviving from day to day, trying to repay her debts. Going home was not an option for Bu Sumi— her endurance was fueled simply by the hope that she would eventually make enough money to return and explain everything to her family.

Migrants who were deported against their will sometimes turn to SBMI and seek shelter. There, the staff train them as migrant activists and build their confidence in themselves in the hope

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that they will not feel too ashamed or afraid to return home. Others, instead of returning to their families and home villages, may choose to migrate again, whether through legal or illegal processes. Nicole Constable (2014) termed this the "migratory cycle of atonement," referring to processes where migrants choose to migrate again and again, in order to escape the shame and stigma of being a single mother at home, and to make up for their past failures by sending money home to support their children, parents and other kin. Constable's ethnography of Filipina and Indonesian migrant mothers in Hong Kong included cases where women had committed adultery or engaged in premarital or non-marital sexual relations, sometimes resulting in pregnancy, babies, or abortions. "Migratory cycles of atonement" draw attention to the fact that many women migrate to escape shame and stigma at home, but as Platt (2016: Chapter 4) shows, their decisions to migrate may also generate more gossip and judgment. A former male migrant in Yogyakarta even went so far as to suggest that all women who migrate do so out of shame; since if they had a sense of shame, they would not need to migrate in the first place. A commonly given example of those who migrate out of shame is divorced women. They often endure double judgments not only as failed wives but also bad mothers, when they leave their children to work overseas (Parreñas 2005; Pratt 2012; Rodriguez 2010). While their independent migrations may temporarily contribute to judgements against them, they still embark on such journeys in the hopes of eventual redemption, if they are able to give their children better lives that single women's incomes cannot provide in Indonesia.

While some may cope with shame and endure harsh conditions in the hopes of eventually finding success, others deliberately cut off ties with their family in order to escape or reject normative standards of success and failure at home. These can be seen as acts of creating alternative futures for themselves. A female staff with the migration division of women's NGO

Solidaritas Perempuan told me of a case in early 2014, where a migrant's older brother came to their office to report that his younger sister had been missing in Malaysia for many years. The organization eventually located the woman migrant in Malaysia, through migrants' social networks. She appeared to be happy and fine (*baik baik saja*), and was planning to get married (although it was unclear to whom). Although she was "found," she told the NGO staff that she did not want to be contacted by her family. She explained that she had deliberately cut off ties with her family because she was disappointed in them. When she had first arrived in Malaysia, she regularly sent her parents money, but her older brother spent it all and demanded more. Over time, she felt "traumatized" by the experience, and exploited by her family, since her parents did little to protest her older brother's behavior. Such stories of voluntarily "missing" migrants were not uncommon, and in fact, make up a genre of stories among many NGO activists in Singapore and Indonesia about migrants who did not want to be found, and who did not plan on ever reconciling with their families.

Thus while migrants may engage in short-term moral or gendered transgressions in the hope of eventual moral redemption or economic success, others may choose to reject such normative moral standards altogether. Both, however, are ways that migrants cope with the threat or experience of stigma or shame, and suggest some ways that migrants try to articulate alternative moralities (Lai 2011), in risking short-term moral judgment for long-term socio-economic security.

4.3.7   Acts of Violence

National and international news reports on informal labor migrants from Southeast Asia sometimes include portrayals of women as "murderous maids" and men as aggressive, violent, and potential "rapists." Through my interviews with migrant and women NGO staff and former

migrants, I found that many former migrants and migrant labor activists interpret most of such acts of violence in terms of migrants' desperation or extreme attempts to restore their sense of dignity. In a widely publicized case in February 2014, a male Indonesian worker on board a cruise ship was arrested for the alleged rape and attempted murder of a female U.S. citizen in her room (McMahon 2015). The Balinese worker, Ketut Pujayasa, claimed that he attacked her to defend him and his mother's honor, after the U.S. citizen insulted him and his mother by calling him a "son of a bitch" (ibid.). During the trial, his defense counsel argued that his violent act was provoked by a deep sense of humiliation and anger (Liputan6 2014, Feb 26). During his sentence, he was deeply apologetic and framed his act as only "human." He begged for forgiveness, saying "I'm fully aware that whatever punishment goes to me will not ever pay for the mistake that I made." (McMahon 2015). This example supports scholarship on how a man might respond to *malu* with acts of violence, in an attempt to defend his honor and sense of masculinity (Nilan et al. 2013).

In another tragic case of male violence in response to feelings of humiliation, a migrant woman from Central Java was murdered by her husband in their home ten days after her return from working in Taiwan (Sudibyo 2015). The husband, Musriyani, claimed that he attacked her because she had offended him (*tersinggung*) with her "crude words and refusal" (*berkata-kata kasar dan menolak*) when he asked her for sex. Marital rape in Indonesia is an impossible category, given legal interpretation of a wife's duties, which includes fulfilling her husband's sexual needs. Islamic scholars who support this legal definition typically quote a hadith which states that it is a sin for women to reject their husbands' desires (Van Doorn-harder 2008:1036). A former female minister for women's empowerment went further to consider "raising the issue to go against Indonesian culture" (Blackburn 2004: 203). Such hegemonic understandings of women's wifely duties and men's entitlements as husbands provide a context for how, in this example, Musriyani

may have felt humiliated and dishonored enough to turn violent when his wife rejected his advances and even insulted him.

Such impulsive acts of violence by men contrast with those of women. The majority of cases of female migrants guilty of murder involve the murder of their employers or employers' family members. In most of these cases, migrants are diagnosed with depression and mental instability linked to physical or verbal abuse, or overwork, over a long period. For example, in 2004, Sunardi Supriyanto was found guilty of murdering her Singaporean employer, Angie Ng and Ng's three-year-old daughter in 2002 (AFP 2004, Sep 24). She was accused of stabbing them to death, before setting them on fire. Although the judge presiding over the case, found her guilty, he rejected accusations that she was a "cold-blooded" and "mindless" killer. Instead, he emphasized that her actions were likely motivated by long-term ill-treatment Sunardi had suffered from Angie Ng. Such ill-treatment included depriving her of proper food, feeding her with three-day-old stale noodles, and asking her to "eat [the] child's shit" (Susilo 2004). The judge added, "In my view, the cord of reason suddenly snapped when the accused could no longer control her emotions of feeling and despair" (AFP 2004, Sep 24). Despite her extreme response, Sunardi's case– in a broader sense of her experiences– is not rare in the world of migrant domestic workers and employers. These stories of murder frequently reveal a pattern of women from rural backgrounds with little education or experience outside their hometowns, who endured mistreatment and degradation over long periods of time by wealthier, privileged employers. These typically precede migrants' sudden violent acts of homicide, sometimes in self-defense. One former female migrant who worked in Saudi Arabia defended "migrant murderers" to me, and explained,

> Murder is wrong, of course… But sometimes you just can't imagine how employers can
> be so fussy, so insulting, so demanding, that one day you just can't take it (*tidak boleh*

tahan) anymore. I have seen how it drives people crazy. Not everyone can be so patient or tolerant. You have to be very, very strong *(kuat)*.

For others, suicide can be a desperate means to restore one's honor in such cases of failures or perceived wrong. In the Yogyakarta village where I worked, a former female migrant's husband committed suicide days after she accused him of not spending her remittances wisely. After his death, his close male friend disclosed to neighbors that the husband had been feeling depressed that his wife did not trust him with the family's finances, and he had been accused of mishandling her money, which he claimed was untrue.

Yet others may also attempt or commit suicide as a desperate measure to escape the threat of failure, shame, or stigma. Lestari, who was raped and left pregnant by her foreign boyfriend in Hong Kong, contemplated suicide as an escape from her difficult dilemmas of either raising her child alone in Hong Kong, aborting her child and thus committing a grave sin, or returning pregnant and bring dishonor to herself and her family (see Constable 2014; Ladegaard 2013). During my stay at a migrant shelter in Jakarta, a former migrant threatened to jump out of BNP2TKI's office building when it seemed like he was unlikely to receive justice and compensation for his specific case of unfair dismissal and non-payment. In 2012, a migrant worker in Singapore hung herself after having failed the mandatory English language test thrice (Singh 2012). The news report suggested that she did so because she faced substantial debt upon her likely return to Indonesia. Given that she had "reportedly borrowed seven million rupiah from relatives to work" in Singapore, it was likely her return would disappoint many in her home village (ibid.).

In short, these acts of violence to self or others are responses to extreme distress, when individuals experience the limits of their abilities to respond to their multiple obligations and circumstances. These acts expose individuals' inabilities to imagine possible futures, and ways to live in dignity.

4.4   SHAME SHAPING MOBILITIES

This chapter has discussed the gender specific ways that migrants and their close kin experience shame or may contribute to shaming and blaming others. In previous chapters, I argued that migrant individuals are often blamed for their own failures; this chapter shows how migrants' kin and neighbors can also be blamed or associated with migrant shame. My argument builds on studies of extended kinship networks that morally regulate migrants' activities transnationally (Dreby 2009; Peter 2010; Velayutham and Wise 2005) and migrants' spouses at home (Hannaford 2015). However, I depart from these scholars' methodological and analytical distinctions of mobility/immobility, migrant/non-migrant. Instead, following Fioratta (2015), I argue that interlinked circulations of shame and migrant labor show how the ubiquity of migration shapes residents' ideas and desires about moving, staying, returning, or re-migrating. I also argue that shame is a fundamental moral condition that organizes and shapes Central Javanese villagers' mobility and motility. This chapter has shown how shame is gendered, intimately linked to, and produced by socio-economic precarity and opportunity in the context of normalized transnational labor migration.

Investigation of the diverse ways migrant-origin villagers respond to and cope with shame shifts the focus from an "objective" moral standard that villagers use to blame and shame one another in cases of migratory failures. Instead, looking at the production, mobilization, and negotiation of shame provides alternative viewpoints to how return migrants and others perceive, evaluate, and respond to migration-associated risks. Attention to the various ways migrants, neighbors, and relatives negotiate shame and its risk sheds light on seemingly "irrational" or "ignorant" migrant decisions and practices, such as overstaying visas abroad to work illegally, agreeing to disproportionately large amounts of debt, cutting off contact with family in Indonesia,

or committing extreme acts of violence. I argue that these seemingly irrational acts make sense when considering migrants' temporal orientation to the future, in relation to the precariousness of the present. Tracing the mobilization and cultivation of shame in migrant-origin villages illuminate villagers' everyday practices of "getting by" and "moving on," amidst these "pulls" of transnationalized futures, or in response to lost futures and plans. Individuals may consider risky or knowingly "immoral" acts as short-term sacrifices that will hopefully result in their future moral and social redemption (see Constable 2014). Yet others may consider breaking or risking existing social ties in the village, in order stake their faith in creating alternative moralities, lives, and subjectivities in Indonesia and abroad. In these ways, villagers' mobilizations and cultivations of shame play a key role in shaping how, where, and when individuals produce and circulate their labor and money.

Exploring shame, this chapter has highlighted the multiple sources of anxieties and uncertainties that migrant-origin villagers share, whether or not they choose to migrate, return, or stay. It calls attention to the precarity of their lives both in Indonesia, abroad, or somewhere in between. Such social and economic precarity necessitates acts and leaps of faith for many to live from day to day, or imagine routes to better futures for themselves, their families, and the villages as a whole. In the next chapter, I turn to migrant-origin villagers' strategies of fate and faith in response to these migration-related and everyday anxieties.

5.0   FAITH

Carol: What does *nasib* [fate] depend on [*tergantung apa*]?

Bu Musliah: [It depends on] God, but also our own selves [*kita sendiri*].

C: Can we change our *nasib*?

Nurul: Yes, if we make an effort [*berusaha*], we can change what God has given to us. For example, God gives us our destiny [*takdir*]. This is the first level. But we can, with effort, get to higher levels… have better lives than what we are given.

C: But what is the difference between *takdir* and *nasib*?

N: Actually, sometimes they can be the same…

C: Bu Musliah, do you think we can change our *nasib*?

Bu M: *Nasib* depends on God too, and what he wants for us. But if we are in a bad situation… of course we can work hard to change it. If we are lazy, then we won't be able to change our fate.

-From an interview in Cilacap, with Nurul and Bu Musliah, two former female migrants. Nurul had worked in Singapore and Malaysia, and Bu Musliah in Taiwan.

During my first visit to Cilacap in 2012, I noticed that almost every return migrant or non-migrant resident explained migrant tragedies or success in terms of "*nasib*" or fate. The refrain is nearly standard, "*Kalau orang baik, nasib baik*" (A good person gets a good fate). Other common responses include statements that migrant success or failure depends on fate, or that everyone has their own fate (*nasib-nasiban*). Since then, I began paying attention to how and when *nasib* was used. It was salient not only among prospective migrants, return migrants, and their families, but also among migrant activists, mainstream journalists writing in Indonesian and in English (fate), as well as state authorities. A prominent national news agency, Tribunnews, archives all news

regarding Indonesia's migrant workers under the subject (*topik*), "Nasib TKI." State authorities, such as former BNP2TKI chief Jumhur Hidayat, have publically framed victims of human trafficking as "those who are less lucky" (*kurang beruntung*)—a term sometimes related to *nasib* (Republika 2012, Nov 30).

This chapter's ethnographic focus on fate and faith in Central Javanese villages engages with anthropological scholarship on Islam, religion and economics, and risk. I attend to how people develop, mobilize, and practice faith in order to negotiate uncertainties, risks, and shame associated with migration, return, and staying behind. For the Central Javanese I met, practicing one's faith was intimately tied to caring for kin and community in gender-specific ways (compare Maher n.d.). By focusing on when and how discourses of fate and destiny are invoked, this chapter shows how migrants and their families can sometimes be absolved of blame and responsibility for their "shameful" actions. Moving on from the focus on individual-centered or family-oriented responsibility in Chapters 3 and 4, this chapter argues that migrant-origin villagers' use of *nasib* shows how human responsibility can also be displaced and reconfigured, through acknowledging the role of divine agency in human strivings (Liebelt 2008; Pingol 2008). I argue that villagers' *nasib* discourses enable a view of faith as a form of labor central to their decisions to migrate, stay, or return.

Various former migrants and residents often echoed the women I quoted in the beginning of this chapter, in explaining that human effort (*usaha*) was central to changing and shaping one's fate. I asked a former female migrant in Cilacap why she thought some people were successful while others failed, and why people still migrate despite horror stories in the news. She said,

> They migrate… for economic reasons. But mostly it is *nasib*. Your nasib can change, but it is something personal [*pribadi*]. It depends on people themselves… If you get a bad employer, you can find out how to change your situation. If not, for those who are lazy or ignorant, they will get stuck in their situation. But *nasib* to some extent is determined

by God, of course. Or how do we explain why some people land in much worse situations than others? It is a bit like luck… Good people can have bad *nasib* and the reverse is also true. *It depends on how you handle your given life situation* [emphasis mine].

However, *nasib* is not only an abstract or theoretical concept used to refer to or evaluate others' efforts or circumstances. *Nasib* is also invoked to reflect and act on the present, based on an understanding of how one's past actions and hopes show promise or not. For example, a young mother from Cilacap framed her own failure to migrate in terms of *nasib.* She said, "People here believe in *nasib*… If your *nasib* is good, and you make an effort, it will be ok, but you must make an effort." She compared it to *takdir* (destiny), saying, "It is similar… but [unlike *takdir*] you can change your fate, and make your fate [*meruba/ mengadu nasib*], if you try." She was taking care of some plantations and agriculture (*tanaman*) at the time. Her circumstances may be modest now, she said, gesturing to her small and cramped house with bare cement floors. "But hopefully I can change my *nasib* slowly. Maybe my *nasib* wasn't to be a TKW [migrant worker]…but hopefully with the *tanaman*, it will get better. I can only make an effort." By reframing past experiences, *nasib* discourses were also self-evaluations of one's present circumstances. They thus served to re-orient persons' hopes and actions to different futures. In other words, not all who had failed to migrate see themselves as "bad" people who deserved their bad fates, simply that being a migrant was not their fate, and the solution was to work harder or differently at achieving better futures.

By attending to how residents frame *nasib* and destiny in order to act on the uncertain present to secure their future, my methodological approach is informed by Hirokazu Mizayaki's criticism of scholars who view faith as "beyond… analytic scope" (2000: 44). Indeed, scholars of Islam in Indonesia have framed their focus on material or ritual practices, symbols or discourse, in relation to how "true" piety is difficult to prove and ascertain empirically (Blackburn 2004; Jones 2010). Following Miyazaki (2000, 2004), I take the "character of faith" as "ethnographically

accessible," through a focus on how individuals generate, through discourse *and* practices, "the capacity to place one's agency in abeyance" (Miyazaki 2000: 44). My focus on how and when Cilacap and Yogyakarta residents suspend, displace, or reconfigure their agency in relation to non-human actors, offers a balance to dominant migrant research centered on structural processes and regulation, human agency, and social networks.

Mainstream media, other scholars, and government officials often cast villagers' narratives of fate and destiny in terms of their ignorance of and resignation to broader structural and supernatural forces. Instead, I argue that narratives of fate and destiny are grounded in villagers' awareness of the complicities and dispersed responsibilities of employers, recruitment agents, and state institutions when things go wrong for migrants. In other words, responsibility, human intentions, and decisions are always intersubjective and fundamentally socially constituted (Duranti 2015; Keane 2014). Narratives of fate and faith serve to shape transnational migration flows by continually re-configuring villagers' agency in relation to what they are willing to risk (e.g. debt, sickness, loneliness, adultery, death), and what they are not willing to forsake (e.g. social interdependency, patron relations to government officials, and hope in long-term success). Rather than political resignation or inaction, I argue that villagers' talk about fate, destiny, and spirit possession are partial yet ultimately ineffective responses to the state's inability to guarantee villagers' transnational security or livelihoods. This chapter thus traces the ways villagers have come to *depend on* the ambiguities and ambivalences in unevenly implemented state regulations of migration, even as these very ambivalences contribute to increasing the risks in their endeavors.

It is important to note that fate and faith discourse and practices in these field-sites are influenced by Islamic ideas and discourse. While anthropological and theological approaches to Islam have been the subject of much debate among anthropologists (Asad 1999; Varisco 2005), I

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align with ethnographers who focus on how and to what extent Indonesians negotiate their beliefs and practices with reference to ideas about Islam (Bowen 1993; Varisco 2005; Woodward 1989; Kim 2007). Interpretations of the Qur'an and Islam in people's lives are diverse and often conflicting, as evident in enduring public debates over the nature of "Indonesian Islam" and the presence of "radical" Islamic groups (Munjid 2012).[40]

As the following sections will show, migrant-origin villagers and NGO workers have diverse and contested interpretations of *nasib* and destiny in their everyday interactions. Nevertheless, these discourses are salient and important to their discussions, evaluations, and reflections of their own actions and those of others. These debates over morality and the role of human agency, based on a shared orientation to God, other supernatural agents, and the afterlife, illuminate how Islamic subjectivities are explicitly and intimately negotiated in the context of transnational labor migration. Furthermore, I argue that such *labors of faith* are not strategies to escape or ignore reality. Instead, they constitute villagers' recognitions of and responses to the possibilities for and limits to human agency in relation to the dispersed moral-legal responsibility of migrants.

5.1   FAITH AS LABOR

Perceptions and use of the term *nasib* (fate) among villagers as well as activists were not always consistent or compatible, in terms of how human agency and effort was emphasized in

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[40] During the New Order government and currently, Muslim feminists and women's organizations have also been divided by their diverging interests to do with class, sexuality, ethnicity and religious affiliations and ideologies (Martyn 2005; Wieringa 2006).

relation to God's will. I became aware of this during an informal discussion about trafficking and illegal migration facilitated by a women's NGO in Yogyakarta. Participants were mostly female return migrants, who were sharing negative migration experiences such as forced confinement and food deprivation. A few described how Singapore-based recruitment companies marketed and treated them like commodities to be "bought and sold" (*jual-beli*). In response, the oldest woman in the group, who had migrated in the 1980s and returned in late 1990s, dismissed these bad experiences as due to individual *nasib*. She challenged the forum's framing of these experiences as related to "trafficking," and said that she doubted that stories about trafficking were that common. To support her claim, she said she had personally never experienced anything bad. She always had good *nasib*: she described her generous employers and agents, and how she could rely on the kindness of strangers in foreign countries.

The NGO staff facilitating the discussion disagreed with what they saw as a fatalistic interpretation of *nasib*. Addressing all participants present, a young Javanese female NGO staff said,

> *Nasib* can be changed, especially with effort. Don't mix up fate with destiny. How can we change our fate? With learning [*belajar*] about employment contracts, being skilled and informed [*pintar dulu*], so that you won't become a victim of trafficking. Bargain and negotiate [*nilai tawar*], learn… about laws, and the processes of making a passport, and so on. *Allah* doesn't just give you bad fate. That alone doesn't explain why your fate is bad. Your fate is not bad because you are supposed to have bad fate. That is wrong.

Despite such disagreements on the extent to which people can change their life circumstances, both approaches towards *nasib* as primarily influenced by God or human effort recognize the limits of human agency (cf Miyazaki 2000) in ensuring success, safety, and health. As the vocal NGO staff's remarks reveal, participants' should learn to change their "fate" in relation to very specific risks, including a wide range of deceptive practices by employers and migration intermediaries. However, in informal conversations after the workshop, many women

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subtly criticized the workshop facilitators for "misunderstanding" trafficking. A young mother who recently returned from Taiwan said that she disagreed with the elder villager's deterministic view of *nasib*, but she also disagreed with the facilitators' view that many return migrants' experiences were similar to "trafficking." This was likely due to the fact that the term "trafficking" was popularly associated with victimhood, abduction, and sex work (Brennan 2014; Choo 2013; Ford and Lyons 2012). During the workshop, it was clear that women emphasized their everyday and "hidden" strategies to mitigate the risks of going abroad. Common examples included hiding food or important phone numbers of NGOs and the Indonesian Consulates inside their pens or bras. In taking these subtle precautionary measures, the women "allowed" employers to keep their passports and "allowed" recruitment agents to falsify their documents. Women's awareness of and justification of their strategies contrasted with NGO workers' view that women were either "forced" to do things, or "accepted" these exploitative and illegal practices.

These contested meanings and definitions of "trafficking" or "trafficking victims" have been discussed extensively in the current literature (Brennan 2014; Ford and Lyons 2012; Kempadoo 2012; Palmer 2012). My main point is to highlight how *nasib* discussions both for the elderly woman as well as other return migrants who disagreed with her, commonly focus on the role and limits of migrants' agency, within broader structural limitations articulated by power hierarchies across socio-economic, racial, and gendered lines. In the case of the elderly migrant, she was also arguably aware of these structural limits, in highlighting that the "kindness" of others was necessary for her safety and relative success as a female migrant navigating a foreign land and culture.

Gendered moral assumptions, as well as a theoretical-legal understanding of migration processes, prevented workshop facilitators from grasping the women's apparent resignation and

complicity in "trafficking"-like practices. This was evident in a young staff's moralizing tone, where she admonished the women for "not thinking" before choosing to go abroad and leaving their "poor children" behind.[41] She pleaded with them to think of the social and not only economic consequences of their movements, thus limiting her from perceiving how social and economic obligations were intimately linked for many prospective and current migrants (Constable 2014; Gamburd 2000; Parreñas 2005; Pratt 2012). Even the "trafficking expert" and invited speaker, who had apparently written many acclaimed books on the issue, asked very basic questions about the situations women found themselves in. Female former migrants patiently explained the many ways in which they could not simply demand their passports from recruiters or employers: that might mean being fired and sent back to Indonesia in great debt. Most women were able to point to specific laws in destination countries such as Singapore, where these common practices by employers and recruiters were technically illegal. However, they were also well aware of the limitations, biases, and failures of foreign states to actively enforce laws and monitor the behavior and practices of citizen-employers.

The situated knowledges and experiences of return migrants thus contextualize and explain why most Yogyakarta and Cilacap villagers' approach to *nasib*, and associated notions of human choice and risk, departed significantly from many NGO workers, government officials, and trafficking "experts." Central to their expressions of how people can change their fate, was that God was the final judge of the consequences of human strivings and efforts (see *Qur'an, Surah* 095.006). For example, in a discussion with Rina in Cilacap about whether or not local shamanistic

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[41] Despite the differences in age (this NGO staff was in her early thirties while workshop participants were women largely between thirty and fifty), the NGO staff was arguably able to adopt an authoritative position vis-à-vis the participants due to her educated and urban background, as well as her role in the workshop to "educate" the mainly rural women participants who receive little or no formal education.

healers [*dhukun*] had real power [*sakti*], she reframed my question to imply that the source of shamanistic power can also be God. She said, "Yes, this power is from God. For us, we just make an effort. When we are sick, we look for who and where can heal us. Maybe it will be a *dhukun* or someone else. If it's suitable, yes of course you can [recover]. We only make an effort. God is the one who decides." [42]

This emphasis on role and limit of human effort in influencing *nasib* also opens the possibility for thinking about residents' labor in terms of faith, and faith as a form of labor. Villagers' labors of faith and faithful labor critically contribute to morally sustaining and shaping the transnational circulation of human bodies, labor, and finance. Attending to the culturally specific notion of human effort and agency in relation to non-human agency can clarify particular tensions in migration research on migrants' individual and relational subjectivities. For example, extensive migration scholarship has explored the ways migrants experience and negotiate ambivalence between individual desires and gendered social obligations. Broadly, scholars have emphasized how migrants sustain emotional and transnational connections through remittances and other communicative practices (Kwon 2015; Madianou 2012; McKay 2007; Huang and Yeoh 2000). Yet scholars have also highlighted the sense of adventure and dreams of self-actualization that form the "hidden motivations" of many migrants (Parennas 2001; Madianou 2012). As Ming-Yan Lai observes in her work on how migrant domestic workers in Hong Kong may temporarily "forget" homelands and their families: "while some... may willingly perform the gendered sacrifices expected of female migrant workers, others may have mixed feelings and even

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[42] Along a similar vein, another former male migrant also said on a different occasion, "When we get disease… If it is God's will, God will show us the way to go to the dhukun to make us healthy again and continue living. But [sometimes] God has another plan."

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resentment towards the demands on them from home even though they maintain the diasporic connections for various reasons" (Lai 2011: 571).

My focus on how Cilacap and Yogyakarta villagers' agency is mediated explicitly through notions of faith and religious-ethical practice further contributes to layering understanding of migrants' and residents' subjectivities. The focus in Islam on the interconnectedness of human deeds and faith [*iman*] differs in nuanced ways from Christian conceptions of love, sociality, and responsibility. The ways that *nasib* discourse reinscribe Islamic subjectivities in Cilacap and Yogyakarta becomes clear when contrasted to Christian conceptions of love. Christian love is often discussed with reference to the "golden rule" to "love thy neighbor as thyself." This exhortation reinforces an idea of the self in relation to the other, even as it encourages an attitude to treat the other *as* self. This contrasts with the focus in Islamic approaches to sociality and virtue, where the quest for human perfection (unity with God) lies in cultivating *adab*. *Adab* delineates a proper gendered order of beings and associated obligations, as opposed to an ethical disposition equating self and other, captured in other often quoted imperatives such as "turning the other cheek".

As Islamic scholar William Chittick describes,

> The [Arabic] word *adab*, for which we have no adequate English equivalent, refers to proper and beautiful deportment and correct behavior, both physical and verbal. It denotes a broad domain that includes all the courtesies and politeness, observance of propriety and good manners, elegant handling of social situations… care to observe one's social and professional duties, and perfect harmony between outward behavior and inward attitude (2001: 31).

The importance of *adab* or the "courtesy" of every situation in Sufi-related schools and practices of Islam (Chittick 2001: 31), such as in Central Java, is closely linked to the idea that every

individual or thing has a specific God-given "*haqq*"— a property that determines what is properly demanded and due from other individuals.[43]

These observations resonate with contemporary tendencies in Cilacap and Yogyakarta to emphasize ideas about appropriate behavior and obligations towards others. These emphases shed light on how Nurul, Bu Musliah, Rina, and other residents have invoked *nasib*, including the elder former female migrant in the forum. Human effort or *usaha*, in a bid to change one's fate, is often intimately linked to questions about *how* to direct effort to fulfil one's proper obligations to others. It is this practical orientation that arguably underlies Nurul and Bu Musliah's reference to how "effort" can change one's given life circumstances. The elder former female migrant at the trafficking workshop also justified her good fate, with reference to how she had treated others according to what they are "properly and rightfully due" (Chittick 2000: 583). I highlight these subtle meanings of effort and *nasib* to show that Cilacap and Yogyakarta residents' experiences of shame and agency as morally intersubjective. These are related to material practices and ideas about appropriate behavior, and influenced by historical and contemporary Islamic-based teachings and discourses. Importantly, the standardization of Islamic discourses in Central Java are due to mediations by local religious leaders, linked to national organizations such as Nahdahtul Ulama. Cilacap and Yogyakarta villagers' faith practices and "human efforts" can be understood

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[43] Influential Islamic thinker Ibn al-'Arabi has also emphasized "haqq" as key to realizing truth and God-determined nature of all things, including human nature. It is "a verb, a noun, and an adjective carrying out the meanings of reality, truth, rightness, properness, appropriateness, and justness. Haqq is a name of God, and it is also applied to created things. … It also designates the just and proper demands that creatures make upon human beings. When someone has perceived the haqq of a thing, he has perceived not only the truth of the thing, but also what is properly and rightfully due to the thing. Hence, he has understood this appropriate and just response… Haqq… designates the subjective obligation and internal responsibility of those who encounter it." (Chittick 2000: 582-583). A well-known hadith which comes in many versions typically reads like this: "Your soul has a haqq agaiznt you, your Lord has a haqq against you, your guest has a haqq against you, and your wife has a haqq against you. So, give to each that has a haqq its haqq" (Chittick 2000: 583).

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as a specific form of self-governance linked to negotiated notions of gendered moral-social obligations.

5.2   MANAGING FEARS

During informal conversations with migrant-origin villagers, as well as interviews with activists and authorities, I found that *nasib* did not only explain why some migrants succeeded while others failed. Instead, some respondents also reflexively viewed villagers' faith in individual fate as part of the *problem* behind migrant failures. Indeed, in an informal report and conference presentation that Minah in Yogyakarta wrote for *Koalisi Perempuan*, the largest women's organization in Indonesia, she noted that "belief in *nasib*" was a reason why people made seemingly irrational and risky decisions to migrate.

In Cilacap, I asked Hazam, a self-perceived "failed" migrant (see Chapter 3), if he saw migration as a problem. This was in context of our discussion of promises by state officials to solve the "problem" of migration, by preventing women from migrating as domestic workers. He replied,

> I don't think migrating is a big problem, only the process is problematic. Many people, myself included, believe in *nasib* [fate]. People here are simple minded, narrow minded. Regardless of the news reports they read about Saudi, or what their neighbors have experienced over there, they believe they might have better luck because everyone has their own destiny.

He elaborated that this belief in fate meant that people did not try very hard to understand the proper migratory procedures, or the working and living conditions abroad, prior to leaving their villages. As he experienced for himself, this meant that when some become victims of fraud by

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recruitment agents, sympathetic fellow villagers may simply see this as "bad luck", while others may blame a migrant for not being cautious, or trusting the wrong agent.

However, the options for prospective migrants to take such precautions are often limited by available resources and information. Since it is relatively expensive and time-consuming for many rural residents to travel to the nearest town where there is a formal government agency for migration or migrant workers, prospective migrants often turn to local and informal recruitment brokers or return migrants for advice. Such informal recommendation and information by brokers, friends, or family, can be unreliable, inaccurate, or simply not that useful. Indah, a prospective migrant in Cilacap who failed to migrate, told me that there were few options in the village, regarding which recruitment agents to trust. She eventually chose an agent whom she did not trust completely, but whom she perceived as the "lesser evil" (*yang kurang jahat*). Whatever fears or limited alternatives migrants or prospective migrants may have regarding the uncertainties of migration, are mitigated by the belief that they may have good fates or destinies.

In several interviews with former migrants who went abroad on falsified passports or documents, informants sometimes said that they were not sure if they would come back alive or dead. This statement always shocked me, and I would ask, "Weren't you afraid? If you knew there was a possibility you might not return alive, why would you leave in the first place?" The response would be either that they believed that they would have good fates, an acknowledgment that they were reckless (*nekad*), or that there was no room for fear, especially in circumstances where women were divorced and had to find a way to support their children and/or ageing parents.

Not everyone believed that migrating would lead to good fates for them, however. I asked Hazam in the same conversation, "If so many people believe in fate, why do other people stay, and not migrate?" He cited three reasons that many NGO workers often gave. The first was that other

people feel they have enough (*cukup*) to live on, and were not greedy for more. The second was fear- people do not migrate because they're afraid of what would happen overseas, and they lack self-confidence and courage to leave. The third was that some have tried to migrate, but did not pass health requirements and medical tests, and thus could not leave. I suggest that these three reasons for "not migrating" contribute to understanding how shame conditions decisions to migrate or stay in gendered ways.

First, the perception that some choose to stay because they are content and "not greedy" implies judgment on a category of migrants who are perceived to leave out of selfish desires and greed. Second, others who stay out of fear are often contrasted with capable, skillful, adventurous, and self-sacrificial migrants have faith in their good fates. Yet, this fear also reflects how they have "shame" and self-knowledge that being migrants is not their *nasib,* or that they are not suited for migration. Third, as I have elaborated in Chapter 3, others who tried and failed to migrate, due to perceived "deficiencies", contribute to the subtle ways that bodies are valued in these villages, in relation to the potential capacity and eligibility to migrate. Such implicit value judgments and categories fuel desires for some to achieve success and social respectability through migration, or other efforts to earn a living in Indonesia in dignified ways.

These categories, perpetuated by state and media discourses, are also internalized and self-identified by migrants, return migrants, and villagers themselves. A migrant's chances are also understood to rely on their personality, specifically their confidence, capability, and wit. Several residents explained that their children or siblings did not migrate because they were stupid, ignorant, or lazy. Non-migrants who told me they did not migrate—due to fear— spoke of themselves as "not mentally strong" (*kurang kuat mental*), and susceptible to temptations (*takut digoda*) or being addicted to life overseas (*takut kecanduan*). They also included fears of sickness,

being missing, or never returning (often a euphemism for returning dead). These lists of fears share in common fear of the lack of self-discipline (in not being mentally strong enough to survive hard work, abuse, or temptations of life overseas), and fear of unknown, powerful, negative forces that would cause migrants to become sick, go missing, or return as corpses.

In these fears there is little room for the recognition that migrants do not labor alone in these foreign lands, and that they often will have a broader community of migrant laborers, Indonesians, or migrant labor organizations to turn to for help. Notably, prospective migrants and their kin seldom viewed local recruitment agents or the Indonesian Consulate abroad as potential sources of help should anything go wrong during a migrant's stay in other countries. Cilacap residents, in particular, seldom knew that families were entitled to insurance in the event of a migrant who returned from overseas sick, depressed, or dead. Even for those who were aware that migrants were typically insured by recruitment companies, they rarely knew how to go about seeking compensation. In contrast, Yogyakarta villagers' many links to NGO groups and direct ties to BP3TKI substantially contributed to their awareness of medical insurance for migrants' families, alongside infrastructural help (via NGOs and responsible recruitment agents) to formally file for these claims.

Nevertheless, in both Cilacap and Yogyakarta, a migrant's chances of success or failure abroad are perceived to largely rely on religious piety and individual morality, so that God will provide the migrant with good agents, employers, fortune, and solutions out of their problems. In short, *nasib* discourse is linked to broader Islamic discourses on responsibility, morality, and God's will. *Nasib* tends to individualize the circumstances of every migrant failure or success, and promotes the view that most pious, honorable, and skillful individuals will likely succeed (Chittick 2011: 8-10). The focus on moral human agency and effort contributes to mobilizing either faith in

or fear of migration according to villagers' sense of their self-discipline, or capacity for self-discipline.

5.3   SHAPING FATE(S) AT HOME AND ABROAD

Uncertainty and risk characterized the lives of many villagers in Cilacap and Yogyakarta; residents strived to change or determine their uncertain fates in diverse ways. Apart from the risky journeys that migrants embark on, others who stay may also participate in risky business ventures. Interdependence among kin and neighbors, however, meant that there would always be something to eat, especially since many households had their own rice fields, or grew cassava and other edible plants and fruit on their land. While many villagers usually said they had enough to eat and live on from day to day, their main sense of insecurity was in terms of the future, in anxieties about funding children's education, medical expenses, or affording important social events such as births, circumcisions, weddings, and funerals.

In 2014 when I conducted the majority of my fieldwork, shrimp farms, selling distilled water, and selling coconut cakes, were burgeoning and apparently profitable businesses in Yogyakarta. In Cilacap, many return migrants had were starting small restaurants, selling Taiwanese, Korean, Singaporean, Malaysian, and Middle Eastern cuisine. Remittances were seldom enough for these businesses, and many return migrants still relied on kin, neighbors, moneylenders, banks, or local micro-credit systems for funding. These businesses were uncommon and virtually non-existent in 2012. However, by early 2015, even as more agricultural land was being cleared to establish more shrimp farms, villagers began to realize that shrimp farms were susceptible to epidemics. Many farmers lost a lot of shrimp, time, and money, while waiting

to purify the waters from disease. In Cilacap, even as new food businesses were starting up, villagers told me that such shops were not so profitable, since locals seldom had the spending power to eat out, and were not used to foreign cuisine. Despite efforts by BNP2TKI to encourage entrepreneurship as a solution to unemployment and increasing rate of migration in such rural areas like Cilacap and Yogyakarta, villagers said that starting businesses was risky and largely unprofitable. Yet, in the same sentence or conversation, villagers expressed hopes that one day they would be able to open their own shops.

The question of why villagers participate in risky migration journeys and seemingly unprofitable business ventures was the focus of Fioratta's (2015) research in the highlands of New Guinea. She argued that striving for success itself was more important than the whether or not these efforts and ventures paid off. By looking at locals' criticisms of "uselessness" or "useless" persons, Fioratta argued that the highlanders' seemingly irrational decisions and economic activities makes sense in the context of achieving respectable social personhood that emerges *precisely in the striving itself*. Fioratta's observations are partially applicable to these migrant-origin villages of Yogyakarta and Cilacap. In contrast to current migrants, or those who have small businesses, or factory jobs, unemployed individuals or return migrants who do not appear to work are criticized as simply "sitting at home" (*duduk di rumah*), being lazy, or not contributing to the family's needs. However, striving, or making an effort (*usaha*) in these Central Javanese contexts, is also closely related to Islamic morality and maintaining one's sense of shame.

To illustrate the role of faith and morality in villagers' business or economic endeavors, profit or money that one earned was tellingly referred to as "*untung*" (the same word as luck), and "*rejeki*" (fortune). Minah, as a respected non-migrant community leader in Yogyakarta, often gave pep talks to return migrants about business practices or attitudes. She explained to me money was

"good fortune" from God (a common refrain), but she also emphasized how in order to be wealthy, one should not look for money, but instead look for God, have good relations with neighbors and community members. People who "look for money" (*cari uang*) directly and purposefully end up worshipping money.[44]

Others strived to maintain faith in migration and "make" better fates through everyday acts of waiting and patience (Kwon 2015). Another element of how human effort can change one's fate includes the idea that one should endure, be patient (*sabar*), and not act impulsively. If one is patient, God could provide an opportunity or a sign. Cultivating patience allows for a recognition that circumstances and social relationships can change (Han 2012). For example, a Yogyakarta woman who returned from Taiwan told me that her patience and faith in God as well as her husband, enabled their marriage to survive his adultery. Despite her anger at the time, she knew that he had sinned only because his faith was not yet strong enough (*belum yakin*). But her belief in the possibility that he could change, over time, enabled them to mutually work on renewing their trust and marriage. Faith thus mediates patience and villagers' labor of waiting, in allowing for an open-ness towards a future that can be different from the limiting present. One example of such faith in the possibility of change is when stigmatized individuals cope with gossip and public shaming by acknowledging that "This will pass… soon people will forget," or "Soon someone else will be the target of gossip." Many returned migrants also told me that they endured homesickness

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[44] Indeed, Iwan Prawiranta, in his dissertation on micro-finance among rural villagers, argued that an Islamic moral framework was central to the ethical business ethics of rural Central Javanese and Sundanese. He found that many Muslim respondents spoke about faith, intention, and effort, in approaching their business practice. He describes, "As Muslims, they believe that what they do is dependent on intention [niat]. It is a faith that niat needs effort and after a strong effort they said 'we'll get what we are intended to get'" (Prawiranta 2013: 134). Thus work or business in contemporary Indonesia's entrepreneurial economy is reconfigured as an act of devotion (ibadah), where faith, through practicing the right intention and effort, will hopefully result in God's blessings and profit (ibid.:137; also see Rudnyckyj 2010).

and very difficult working conditions abroad by telling themselves to just be patient, and know that things will be better in the future, their hard work will pay off in the end.

Others strived to change their fates by migrating, or migrating again, despite past negative experiences or failures. As Nicole Constable (2014) argued in her ethnography of Indonesian and Filipina migrant mothers in Hong Kong, many women may migrate to "atone" or financially compensate for the ways they are judged to have failed as mothers, daughters, and wives. Such migrations or decisions to migrate can be seen acts of faith, in women's hopes that migration will lead to their moral redemption and social acceptance. These individual acts of faith draw on a broader collective faith in migration, to negotiate better futures and fates for themselves and/or their families. Significantly, as Fig. 3 illustrates, these acts of faith should not be misinterpreted as due to romantic illusions of a good life overseas ("to become a migrant was not our dream"). Instead, I have argued that they are strategies that recognize the limited opportunities in Indonesia for such women and men to "change [their] fate."

Figure 3. Migrant slogan. This was a temporary cover page on a migrant organization's Facebook group. It reads "For one heart for our fellow migrant workers." The slogan reads "To become a migrant was not our dream/ (but) because of coercive circumstances/ because it is difficult to change our fate/ in our own country."

5.4   DEATH AS DESTINY AND CERTAIN RISK

Bu Isti, a former female migrant from Yogyakarta, once told me that her niece had died mysteriously in Saudi Arabia. Her niece was working as a domestic worker. The employer had hidden her body and the death, and had forbidden other employees to tell anyone about it. Her family only found out a year later.[45] When I suggested to Bu Isti that this could be a case of abuse and violence, she disagreed. She said, "If it is abuse or torture, this is usually done by the employer… But with death, that is God's doing. This is destiny (*takdir*)."

A significant number of Indonesian labor migrants die abroad every year. As noted in Chapters 2 and 3, evaluations of death in general and migration-related death in particular are often linked, within Indonesia, to Islamic discourses about one's destiny. In Chapter 2, I highlighted how not all migrant deaths are equal, where some deaths (and abuses against migrants) are seen as deserved or destined, while a minority of deaths are viewed as unjustified. This is evident in public discussions of migrant women who were sentenced to death in Saudi Arabia. While some villagers may perceive this as due to destiny, and divine punishment for adulterous women, others may view such death sentences as unfair, and linked to corrupt, discriminatory, and overly strict legal interpretation of Islam in Saudi Arabia. In contrast to *nasib* discourses, stories about deaths of migrants, migrant kin, recruitment agents, and employers, can also more strongly provoke a sense of divine justice or human injustice. These evaluations of deaths by state representatives, media, NGOs, or the villagers I spoke to, were thus related to ideas about destiny or the unjust thwarting of one's due destiny.

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[45] The case came to light when the employer's Indonesian chauffeur finally decided to report the migrant's death to the Indonesian Embassy. He claimed to have been haunted daily by the deceased's spirit.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, statistical data on deaths and problems faced by Indonesian migrants is often unclear and debated (Sijabat 2013). Additionally, as of 2014, there were no official national statistics collected on the rate of suicide in Indonesia (Jong 2014). These inconsistent and absent statistics on migrant deaths and local suicides, combined with local emphasis on deaths as destined, influence how Cilacap and Yogyakarta villagers cope with local deaths by suicide or accidents, or migrants who return as dead bodies. Indonesian sociologists, anthropologists, and Health Ministry officials have criticized "cultural" explanations of suicide in Java, which generally represent death as inevitable and unpreventable (Darmaningtyas 2002; Tribun News 2011, Jan 16; Puspito 2014). These scholars argue that such representations normalize preventable deaths, such as suicides, accidents, and murder.

Seeing death in terms of destiny appears to evoke a sense of resignation and acceptance. As a Yogyakarta villager whose kin died overseas said, "It's Javanese *adat* [customary law or mindset]. When death happens, we should just resign ourselves [accept]. Don't ask too many questions. Talking about insurance, or autopsy… It will only bring more pain to the [deceased's] family." Such apparent resignation is often expressed in the rhetorical question many villagers gave in brief references to migrants who died or fell sick overseas, or upon return: "Who knows?" (*Siapa tahu*?) Although I repeatedly heard such a refrain, no villagers I knew demanded autopsies of dead relatives, or for official explanations for why some bodies took too long to be repatriated (in one case, three months; in another, over a year). Although scholars have emphasized that Indonesian recruitment agents often depend on their social and moral reputations for business (Lindquist 2010; Rudnyckyj 2004; Spaan 1994), I found that operating recruiters in Cilacap and Yogyakarta typically had terrible moral reputations—as liars and thieves— based on their track

records with fellow villagers who migrated. Despite that, many residents still approached these recruitment agents for help to migrate.

What accounts for the apparent collective political inaction of villagers, in the context of evident mortal, social, and economic costs of migration on families and villagers? This situation is in stark opposition to widespread labor activism particularly in Java, in the 1980s and 1990s, where workers generally organized along the lines of occupation and gender (Silvey 2003; Tjandraningsih 2000). I depart from the main view cited above, that villagers' beliefs in destiny point to their passive resignation to or a normalization of existing socio-economic and political disorders. Instead, as I have argued in previous chapters, villagers' discourses of destiny and fate should be contextualized on the one hand, in terms of how and *when* responsibility for migration has been institutionally and discursively dispersed and refracted. A partial explanation for collective inaction is that unlike factory uprisings, there is no longer a single or "external" actor to blame (Dang et al. 2013) for migrant fatalities, sickness, or debts—particularly from the viewpoint of migrant-origin villages. Even in the example of migrants sentenced to death in Saudi Arabia, or cases that might formally qualify as "trafficking", villagers, migrant activists, and state representatives, are aware that the Indonesian state, local recruitment agents, and extended family relations are implicated, to varying degrees, in women's migratory journeys (Ford and Lyons 2012; Palmer 2012).

This is evident in stories of death that are simply recounted to remind others that even the best laid plans fail. Such tragic stories of sickness and death partly serve to remind migrant-origin villagers and migrants that they have limited control over outcomes of their efforts, and ultimately God is in control of a migrant worker's destiny to succeed or fail, live or die. One such story with

no clear "moral lesson" was the following, told to me by a Yogyakarta non-migrant, about her migrant neighbor.

This female migrant was a domestic worker in Saudi Arabia, who sent money home for her only child, a son, to get a good education. Her son graduated from high school with above average grades. Pleased, his migrant mother sent even more money for him to buy a motor-bicycle when he turned eighteen. However, a few days before she returned for *Idul Fitri* holidays, her son got into a road accident and died instantly. To this resident, this migrant had failed because she had lost her son—the reason for which she migrated in the first place. The story was made more tragic by the fact that this migrant had bought the motor-bicycle for her son with her remittances, which ultimately led him to his death.

It may be that most villagers accepted deaths because they believed that no action can bring the dead back to life. Yet, attributing death to destiny may also be a way that villagers negotiate the risks and uncertainties of migration, through emphasizing individual strategies of self-discipline through morality, and the limits of human effort to cope with and avoid risks. Of course, some residents do acknowledge the responsibility and blame of the Indonesian and foreign states in perpetuating these precarious labor migrations, particularly former migrants, failed migrants, and individuals involved previously or currently with the political and social activism of NGOs. However, as noted in Chapter 3, former migrants who have had sustained interactions and experiences with NGOs are also often those who qualify as "failed" migrants who encountered NGOs due to circumstances where they needed assistance regarding their (un)documented status or working conditions. As such, such persons may withdraw from explicitly defending other "failed" migrants in political terms— such as attributing blame to states and recruitment or labor laws— so as not to draw attention to or publicly recall their own less than ideal migratory

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experiences. As noted in Chapter 5, such politicized discourses also co-exist alongside villagers'

discourses of fate and destiny, where villagers' vague acknowledgment of state complicity and

inefficacy regarding migration's problems ground their discourses of fate and destiny. Talk of fate

and destiny are thus also productive of faith in alternative and better futures. Through refrains of

nasib and *takdir*, residents learn to live with and negotiate the social and mortal costs of migration,

while maintaining hope in its promises in a socio-economic context where alternative pathways

are limited and political action is experienced as ineffective.

5.5   LOCATING RESPONSIBILITY, AGENCY, AND HOPE

This section explores how Cilacap and Yogyakarta residents locate responsibility, agency,

and hope in relation to migration, through tracing the ways they explained migration-related

sicknesses. This will ground my discussion of how shame and fate differentially mobilize faith in

and manage fears of migration. As I will argue, these explanations of sickness—sickness

etiologies— often involve moral rationales, which imply that migrants and their families can insure

against physical, financial, and moral risks of migration, by practicing religious faith, through

performing gendered moral expectations. The example of sickness etiologies substantiates this

chapter's argument, that villagers' focus on individual and divine agency reflects villagers'

awareness of and responses to the multiple and powerful political, economic, and social constraints

that produce their structural vulnerability.

Narratives of migration-related sickness do not only serve to blame, shame, or cast

judgment on migrants and their kin. Some of these narratives may not target individuals, but

criticize circumstances where migration is perceived to disrupt normative familial structures or

deprive individuals of social support from or companionship of their migrant kin. A local "cautionary tale" involved a neighbor whose wife and daughter were both working in Taiwan. He was a bit "stressed" (an Indonesian term borrowed from the English language, usually used as a euphemism for someone who is mentally unstable), due to loneliness and being left behind (Klein 1988; Good and Brodwin 1994). Whenever his wife returned, however, he appeared well again and the house was often peaceful and quiet, with no domestic arguments. While such tales also contain or imply moral cautions against adultery, divorce, negligent parents, or unfilial, ungrateful children, they mainly highlight ways migration can disrupt social and familial harmony and order. The moral aspect of these sickness diagnoses is evident in how suggested "cure" (*obat*) is for people to be religiously pious (*taqwa*), be good people, fulfil familial obligations, or formally ask others for forgiveness (*minta maaf*). This tale in particular criticizes the necessity of the wife and daughter to migrate for work, though the tale leaves ambiguous whether structural conditions or individual agency is to blame for their migrations. Regardless, the tale expresses the "evidence" as well as hope that when migration objectives are accomplished, and the man's wife and daughter finally returns home for good, he, and individuals like him, will be healthy and whole again.

Narratives of migration-related sickness are also narratives of and responses to uncertainty and risk in a context where migration and recruitment processes are experienced as uneven and unstandardized. Villagers' perceptions and evaluations of migration-related sickness should be understood and contextualized in relation to medical tests that migrants are subjected to prior to migration. When migrants return to Indonesia physically or psychologically unwell, neighbors and kin reasonably attribute the sickness directly to conditions abroad or the processes of migration, due to the common acknowledgment that only physically and psychologically "fit" and healthy individuals were allowed to leave the country to work in the first place.

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According to the Presidential Regulation of the Placement and Protection of Migrant Workers 2004, migrant candidates should undergo certified physical and psychological medical check-ups in order to be formally placed with an employer overseas (Articles 31, 50, and 51). However, as many return migrants, migrant activists, and migrant ethnographers in Indonesia have noted, such medical examinations are not formally regulated or standardized. Medical certificates can be and often are falsified by doctors and clinics, since recruitment agencies can select which medical practitioners to affiliate with. Due to the lack of formal standardization or elaboration on what such medical tests entail, some of these check-ups are simply "cursory visual health inspection[s]" (Rudnyckyj 2004: 416), or based on recruiters' subjective observations that female migrant candidates have the "mental capacity" to be domestic workers (ibid.). Indeed, a female former migrant worker from Wonosobo who often assisted her neighbors through migration processes told me that some of these medical check-ups were as rudimentary as "Open your eyes, open your mouth, and you pass."

The lack of monitoring or regulation of such medical examinations mean that women in the early days of pregnancy may be allowed to migrate despite national regulations forbidding pregnant women to do so (Article 35, U/U 39/2004). In these cases, women may realize they are pregnant only months after arriving in the country of destination, and husbands and kin in Indonesia may doubt that the child is fathered by her husband. Such a situation can only happen in countries where medical examinations are also not standardized in migrants' destination countries, such as Malaysia, or Saudi Arabia. However, in Singapore and Hong Kong, prospective migrants are also subjected to medical examinations before they can start work. These tests are mainly to detect cases of pregnancy or sexual and other contagious diseases. A migrant from Wonosobo had "passed" the lax medical tests in Indonesia, but her early pregnancy was detected

by medical practitioners in Singapore. As a result, she was deported immediately to Indonesia, without a day's work or pay, and deeply indebted to her recruitment agents.

For prospective migrants, such lack of standardization was perceived as both a bane and boon. For those who had known medical conditions such as asthma (*paru paru*), the inability to pass a more stringent medical test in Yogyakarta only meant that they could try their luck in other cities or recruitment agencies known for their lax or corrupt medical examination processes. The lack of standardization thus offered them hope and opportunity that despite their health problems, there might be alternative ways to migrate "legally." Yet other prospective migrants may find such medical examinations unfair and corrupt, since medical practitioners may label all candidates "unfit" to migrate, so that only those able to bribe them can obtain their medical certificates.

The unevenness of how medical certificates are issued— where certain agencies and institutions may be stringent, while others are corrupt— contributes to an Indonesian migration landscape where prospective migrants navigate a great deal of ambivalence and uncertainty. Even upon receiving news from clinics that they are physically or psychologically "unfit," migrant applicants often do not have the means to determine (and thus file complaints) whether or not the report is reliable or simply based on routine and corrupt procedures aimed at extorting more money from them. Importantly, the medical certificate is only one of many documents that prospective migrants require in order to legally migrate via state-recognized recruitment agencies.

Although return migrants, kin, neighbors, and migrant activists might explain mental or physical illnesses due to individual biology, vices, or moral weaknesses, sickness narratives also often explicitly comment on the broader structural landscape of migration and illness. These include references to financial anxieties due to familial conflict, the lack of stable employment opportunities locally, and an awareness that the types of work migrants do is largely confined to

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"undesirable" labor that is dirty, difficult, and dangerous. Understanding migration-related suffering as intimate and shared is important to highlight how migrants and their kin can experience a heightened sense of loneliness in their physical and mental ailments, and moral and financial pressures (Duncan 2015). Yet their conditions are also intersubjective, due to the importance of social circumstances and obligations influencing whether or not they experience hardship as exploitation or self-sacrifice, and whether or not they experience hallucinations as due to mental illness, or as a result of spirit possession and black magic. Most Central Javanese villagers I spoke to were aware of that the risks of "stress" in relation to migration that is related to their national and global structural positioning as lowly educated, low-wage earners, and "unskilled" laborers. Nevertheless, villagers tended to emphasize and circulate rumors about supernatural, divine, or individual-moral causes behind such sickness.

In several forums organized by former migrants' associations to exchange information about migration practices as well as entrepreneurial opportunities for return migrants, former migrants highlighted that migration requires great patience and mental strength in the face of temptations and harsh working conditions. Prospective migrants acknowledge that the spiritual and emotional support of neighbors and kin, as well as divine or supernatural protection are essential to safe migratory journeys and their path towards seeking good employment and wages abroad. Thus a farewell ritual for most Central Javanese is to go from door to door in the village to informally ask for "permission" and blessings for their journey (*pamit*). Sometimes, especially if it is an individual's first time, his or her family might organizing ritual feasting (*slametan*) to ensure a safe migration journey, to bring the migrant fortune, as well as to prevent spirit possession. Some migrants might also bring charms with them as a form of protection against bad spirits.

In such conditions of risk and uncertainty, prospective migrants, return migrants, and their kin tend to focus on what they perceive is within their control—cultivating individual mental strength and moral discipline, as well as faith in divine agency and divine justice. Expressions of faith in supernatural and divine agency can be viewed as suspensions, displacements, and reconfigurations of human agency, in shaping and renewing hope for their futures whether overseas or in Indonesia.

5.5.1 Divine interventions

Many villagers gave me examples of "mysterious" and spiritual healings that supported their perceptions that religious piety and practice can and often does ensure physical health. One story involved a former female migrant from Cilacap who worked in Singapore and was diagnosed with HIV. The former female migrant who told me the story defended her friend's honor, and said it was not her fault—her boyfriend was sleeping around and the girl had caught it from him. Since her diagnosis, she escaped to Batam, where she now worked in a hotel. Though she has kept her illness a secret from her family, her close friends know about it. Fellow Indonesian migrants had visited her in Batam and claimed that she looked "too well" and healthy for someone diagnosed with HIV.[46] She seemed happy, and the salary she earned was enough for her to support her family and her disabled brother. The mystery or miracle of how this "sick" girl could appear so healthy was explained in terms of her favor with God, and that she must have received God's blessing.

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[46] It is likely she was taking antiretroviral drugs, but I was unable to confirm this. Current medical research acknowledges that not all persons diagnosed with HIV exhibit symptoms. See: "Rare case explains why some infected with HIV remain symptom free without antiretroviral drugs." *AIDS Vaccine Week* 8 Sept. 2008: 2. *Academic OneFile*. Web. 6 Oct. 2015

Conversely, there were numerous stories of ill-intentioned or deceptive recruitment agents and employers who mysteriously fell ill. Their sickness was often framed in terms of "divine moral retribution" for their sins and wrongs against others. Rendra from Yogyakarta had tried to migrate to Korea twice, and Japan once, but all his attempts failed. The second time he tried to go to Korea, he lost 38 million rupiah (approx. USD 3,800) that he had paid the recruitment agent. Upon realizing he had been conned and was not likely to go to Korea, he went to the agent's house to demand compensation. However, the agent was not home, and her family informed Rendra that she was hospitalized. At first, Rendra thought the family was simply lying, so he went to the hospital. To his surprise, it was true— he saw the agent herself lying in the hospital ward of Yogyakarta city. She had just had a heart transplant. Her husband, who worked with her, was also very ill around the same time. He had suffered a sudden stroke, and was also hospitalized. Rendra left the hospital surprised by how God had punished the scheming couple who stole his hard-earned savings. Ultimately, he was resigned and disappointed, since it was unlikely that he would ever get his money back.

These narratives of sickness and healing commonly point to idea that divine or social justice prevailed, despite irreversible circumstances. For example, the woman with HIV cannot be cured, but she found a way to continue fulfilling her familial duties without causing them great shame. While Rendra's narrative of the deceptive agent's sickness was one of divine punishment, he simultaneously expressed resignation, as it would now be unlikely that he would recover his financial losses. These narratives of sickness and healing suggest villagers' recognition of the limits of addressing the gendered and structural circumstances of their shame or failures. Yet, they also provide discursive ways for individuals to negotiate some measure of agency and justice.

5.5.2 Self-discipline, madness, and spirit possessions

Stories about prospective, current, and former migrants who experienced spirit possession and mental illness were commonly circulated among migrant-origin villagers. I met May when she wandered into Nurul's home one day in her dressing gown. May was a woman in her early forties from Cilacap, and she had worked in Taiwan for eight years. Speaking in an incoherent mix of Mandarin and Indonesian, she told Nurul and me that she loved us very much. She said her daughter was getting married, and that she herself was going to be a grandmother soon. As May grabbed a pillow and mimed breastfeeding a baby, Nurul told me that this was all part of May's active imagination— none of that was true. Nurul gave her some fruit to take home, explaining to me that May's husband seemed to deprive her of food; May often asked her neighbors for food. It was public knowledge that when May returned from Taiwan, she was largely "normal," but went "crazy" (*gila*) after she found out that her husband had spent all her remittances. May's husband had engaged a local *dhukun* to cast black magic on her, making her blind and mad. Some of May's relatives had sent her to a traditional healer, but the healer only managed to partially salvage her eyesight, not her mental faculties. Additionally, May's neighbors reported witnessing her husband physically hit or throw plates at her. May was usually locked up at home, but sometimes managed to wander outside.

"Why didn't other family members help? Why does May still live with her husband? What about her parents or siblings?" I asked. Nurul replied, "Her family blames her for her own downfall, since she was foolish enough to trust her husband. You see, May sent him all her money from Taiwan, while her family did not get a single cent. They were angry and jealous. For them, her madness is a kind of punishment or retribution." The rejection and moral condemnation of May by her own family was harsh, but not so uncommon among those who experience mental

health issues. Her circumstances exemplified the abuse and isolation that mentally unstable migrants may face upon return.[47]

May's situation within the village points to how migrants' sickness can be attributed to multiple causes, whether by the state, traditional medical practitioners, or villagers in Yogyakarta and Cilacap. Discussions of sickness often provoke informal evaluations about the sick person's daily habits and regular activities, sometimes including relationships at home, at work, with other neighbors, with spirits, God, or Satan (Lee 2001). Mental illness provokes and highlights multiple and sometimes competing understandings of the causes of illness, and methods of healing. Looking at perceptions of mental illness in Central Java throws into relief what the stakes are for villagers who choose or prioritize one explanation over another, especially when possible explanations for sickness seem incompatible. One example may be that a person's hysteria is caused by severe guilt due to sin, genetic predisposition, or overwork and abuse abroad. In contrast, other forms of predictable and preventable physical sickness such as diabetes and high blood pressure may be attributed to both bad diet, as well as individuals' moral character such as laziness or over-dependence and exploitation of a migrant kin. These reasons are in fact complementary, regardless of whether villagers emphasize one or another, or disagree about which factors "came first."

However, discussions of "ordinary" sickness also share much in common with those of mental illness. Both kinds of sickness are commonly attributed to familial shame and an individual's structural circumstances, such as poverty, debt, forms of overwork in menial or domestic labor industries where low wages and long hours are the norm. Apparently incurable (physical) diseases, untimely or unexpected sickness or death, may also invite explanations

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[47] Among Oaxaca return migrant health patients, migrants' kin may prioritize substance abuse as a cause of mental illness (Duncan 2015). This served to blame individuals for their own conditions, while downplaying the physical and emotional hardships they endured abroad.

regarding spirit or magical attacks, or divine justice and punishment. While there is more social stigma attached to mental illness, the causes of illness have implications for effective methods of healing and treatment. Perceived causes affect their strategies in dealing with not only the sickness, but also sick individuals. Sickness etiologies must be contextualized in relation to the biomedical and traditional medical industries in Indonesia, social stigma associated with mental illness and suicide, and the reality of government actions regarding migration. Importantly, attributions of spirit and magical attacks were not only speculative, diagnostic, or discursive. They were also productive of fear and faith, in deterring ambivalent villagers from deciding to leave, while mobilizing faith in others who are determined or pressurized to migrate, whether in search of success, freedom, adventure, or social respectability.

The predominant understanding of mental illness in Central Java, and arguably throughout the Indonesian archipelago, was that these were caused by spirit attacks or black magic. Such explanations were often accompanied by the recognition that these individuals were probably already susceptible to such attacks, in either having offended someone through their own attitudes, words, or actions, or in being mentally and spiritually vulnerable to attacks by feeling stressed, confused, dreamy, or at a loss (*bingung*) (Lee 2001: 118). Villagers, however, distinguish between temporary spirit attacks, where spirits may enter and leave a human body within minutes or within an hour, and spirit possession, where spirits tend to stay for a much longer time. It is the latter phenomenon that villagers associated with a more damaging problem for the individual and community— that of mental illness (*mental tidak sehat*, or simply, *punya mental*) or "brain damage" (*otaknya rusak*). The majority of villagers and urban migrant activists I spoke to were skeptical that mentally ill persons can ever fully recover from their conditions, though they

acknowledged that biomedicine or traditional healers may reduce the symptoms or temporarily cure the patient (see also Good et al. 2010: 66-67).

An associated issue is that mental illness is often stigmatized across Indonesia. Fear of spirit possession associated with mental illness and suicide was arguably driven by social stigma of mental illness, particularly outside of the nation's capital city, Jakarta. *Sakit jiwa* or crazy people (*orang gila*) were associated with violent outbursts, hysteria, talking to themselves, talking to others about improbable past, present, or future events, and general incoherence. Across the archipelago, persons with serious mental disorders typically also experience domestic violence, such as physical or verbal abuse by their kin (Jakarta Post 2010, Oct 08; Faizal 2012). In a press interview, Irmansyah, a scholar and Health Ministry mental health chief in 2012, explained that "Some families restrain their ill family members to prevent harm to others and the sufferer… This is done because the patient is usually an embarrassment to the family" (Faizal 2012). In my field sites, while most mentally unstable and depressed individuals were non-violent, I observed that they were largely avoided and associated with fearful supernatural phenomena such as "talking to themselves and spirits" or "hearing spirits' whispers." Although the state, national media, and international health and development organizations have recently increased efforts to educate citizens on biomedical models of mental illness (Faizal 2012), many sufferers, such as May, still have very limited or no access to medical treatment.

Not all spirit attacks are considered mental illness. In nearly all stories that take place in domestic workers' pre-departure training centers (*penampungan*), women either witnessed or personally experienced spirit attacks. In these episodes, the attacked person may suddenly faint, scream, cry hysterically, or tremble visibly, before "acting like a completely different person." Women who were tired, stressed, hungry, dreamy, or worried, were the target of these spirit

attacks, since they were perceived as vulnerable and weak. Spirits often spoke "through" these women, conveying messages such as tidying up the place, or obeying certain instructions in order to prevent the spirits from harassing them again (cf Ong 2010). I suggested to former migrants that maybe some these women were experiencing psychological problems (*sakit jiwa*), and might already be susceptible to hallucinations prior to entering the training centers. One former migrant categorically rejected my suggestion, explaining, "It cannot be due to *sakit jiwa*. Everyone who is in there passed their medical tests, right? They are all *fit*."

The effects and consequences of spirit attacks in women's pre-departure training centers followed a standard pattern. Spirits were often chased away by reciting Islamic prayers either by an individual or by the women as a group. As a result of the spirit attacks, victims and other women were mutually accountable and responsible for one another, supporting the need to focus on their tasks, not think too much about their families or financial worries, to be mentally resilient, and also to follow rules and maintain order in their rooms and the center in general. In these stories, spirits were always women, and the majority of these spirits were women rumored to have died in these compounds as a result of either overwork or suicide. Female former migrants typically mentioned an "eerie" and "unclean" atmosphere about the training centers, including details about illegal graveyards in the garden where the staff and owners of these recruitment and training agencies presumably hid the deaths of prospective migrants from their families (see Probo 2014).[48]

These stories provide some context to understand that even though these spirit attacks were nearly always temporary, the perceived presence of spirits in training centers meant that women lived in fear of actual more damaging and permanent spirit possession, which can lead to untimely

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[48] These stories were supported by news reports about police recovering corpses and human remains in some pre-departure training camps (see Probo 2014, Republika 2014, Sep 17, Gunawan 2015).

death or suicide. This fear of being permanently possessed or influenced by spirits shaped women's attitudes and actions in the training center in many ways. It not only helped them build solidarity against these attacks, it also often resulted in practical strategies to cope with homesickness, endure the long hours and poor living conditions of the training centers, by being more attentive and meticulous workers and trainees. While there are sometimes cases of women who run away with or without the help of fellow candidates or their family members, the vast majority of women responded to spirit attacks and conditions in these centers by focusing on collectively produced discipline through mutual care (cf Ong 2010).

I argue that such strategies of self-discipline to ward off spirits and avoid possession, reflect women's awareness of broader structural disorders within the Indonesian migration industry and state. This includes awareness about their limited options to change their minds about migrating, to change recruitment agents, or to inform relevant authorities and neighbors about things their narratives often involved: mistreatment, lack of food and access to communications, unhygienic living conditions, and the "illegal" graveyards. Police reports were viewed as ineffective since police often worked to "protect" illegal or blacklisted recruitment agencies (Gunawan 2015). There were few consistent or thorough efforts by the state to monitor or standardize training processes or living conditions in such centers, and these women were effectively indentured laborers. Running away from the centers risked great financial debt and social stigma as failed migrants (see Chapter 3 and 4).

Return migrants perceived as having severe mental health issues are sometimes identified by immigration officers at ports or airports upon return. They are then referred to BNP2TKI officials, or prominent migrant NGOs. These organizations may direct the return migrant to the nearest mental health hospital, usually RPTC in Jakarta (*Rumah Perlindungan Trauma Center*).

According to the chief or Ministry of Social Protection and Social Security (*Perlindungan dan Jaminan Sosial Kemensos*), all illegal migrants, upon return, must undergo a medical check-up in RPTC before returning to their hometowns. Return migrants typically stay at the center for two weeks at most, and longer stays are accommodated to suit patients' specific "physical and mental conditions" (Detik News 2014, Dec 26). However, resources and training for healthcare staff at RPTC seem woefully inadequate to address long-term effects and possibility of reintegration for these return migrants upon leaving the center and into society. Such necessary re-integration processes of traumatized return migrants, which includes informing and educating migrants' kin on mental health issues, or working conditions abroad, were sometimes voluntarily facilitated by staff from women's or migrant welfare organizations.

The figure of the dangerous and "crazy" return migrant, and the ever-present threat of spirit attacks on migrants in training centers, overseas workplaces, and also upon return home, produce ways to manage migration-related fears for some Yogyakarta and Cilacap residents. Explanations of why and how spirit attacks or mental illness occur served to fuel as well as domesticate fears associated with psychological and spiritual costs of migration. May, for example, served as a local moral precautionary tale that married migrants—especially women— are still obliged to send remittances to their parents and siblings. Her social abandonment reminded neighbors that although marriage and motherhood are important social identity markers for women, the long-term emotional and social support of parents and siblings are also fundamental to ensuring one's social recognition in the community, particularly in a context where migration is seen as a risk to marital stability. Similarly, stories of spirit attacks and possessions always implied other practical and pious strategies to avoid becoming a target of such attacks.

5.5.3   Downplaying individual, collective, and state responsibility

Amidst such harsh judgements and treatment of those with mental health problems, narratives of suicides offer insights into more sympathetic attitudes towards mental instability and spirit possession. In all stories of suicide I encountered, suicide was partially attributed to spirit possession or satanic influence. When Nurul's brother-in-law hung himself from a tree in the back garden, his suicide was understood to be related to his financial debt, and marital conflict. However, Nurul and her neighbor also suggested that the suicide was not entirely of his volition, since he was said to be "not like himself" or "not normal" immediately prior to the incident.

When the deceased's family pieced together the events leading to his suicide, they noted that he had seemed confused, restless, and unaware of his own surroundings. A relative heard him talking to himself or to an unseen presence, and he was unsure of how he got to his brother-in-law's house in the first place. He spent the days prior to his death sleeping, unmoved, on a couch. Villagers also noticed that when his body was hanging from the tree, his eyes were wide open, suggesting a spirit attack. Nurul suggested that he was able to hang himself without being noticed by others only because of supernatural influence. Sometimes spirits were able to make bodies invisible, or to alter others' perceptions, in such a way that explained why neighbors only noticed the dead body an hour after it happened. Such collective participation in reconstructing the man's suicide suggested efforts to partially exonerate him for the act of suicide, which constitutes a grave sin to most Muslims (El-Najjar 2013). This explanation of his suicide which focuses more on spirit possession than human agency, importantly shifts blame away from individual shame and cowardice. Instead, he emerged as a sympathetic character who was concerned about his family's financial future, but was momentarily confused and vulnerable to a malicious spirit attack.

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In the end, Nurul was convinced that her brother-in-law had died primarily because he was possessed by a spirit. This meant that for months after the incident, she and some neighbors lived in fear of nearby spirits and ghosts. For a while they prayed more fervently to keep the spirits away, and asked for God's protection. My main point here is that stories of illness or death caused by spirit or magical attacks mobilize concerned others to perform acts of faith. This pertains to not just faith in God (and the preventive, healing properties of individual and communal prayer), but also to faith in spirit ancestors and the power of local traditional healers or sorcerers.

However, as this example shows, such collective interpretation and reconstructions of suicide can also undermine the potential of such desperate acts to serve for communities and families, as a critical commentary on the effects of shame and stigma in relation to debt and failed masculine roles, and financial and marital conflict. Such stories obviate the potential benefits of social support for the mentally ill or spirit possessed. Although emphases on supernatural agency behind acts of suicide can help to reduce the shame faced by the individual and his or her kin, such narratives can also serve to normalize suicide (Darmaningtyas 2002) as an act that "makes sense" in the context of the man's worries, and the nature of certain spirits (Republika 2011, Dec 26). Narratives and discussions of spirit attack and spirit possession thus often appear contradictory, with paradoxical effects on how villagers seek preventative or healing measures.

Significantly, however, the state was seldom cited as a factor in explaining forms of sickness (cf Hamdy 2008). With the exception of cases where mass media and NGOs intervened, state institutions were seldom considered responsible for problem resolution and social change. In other words, the absence of the state in these sickness narratives and healing strategies suggest a lack of faith in the state's ability to address the everyday medical, financial, spiritual, or social

concerns of villagers of Yogyakarta and Cilacap. The state was rarely seen as part of the problem nor the solution to migration.

In place of the state's unreliability, social networks provide a critical safety net when dealing with uncertain futures (Dang et al. 2013: 65). In his study of rural poverty, Geof Wood argued that "risk management in the present involves loyalty to institutions and organizations that presently work and deliver livelihoods, whatever the long term cost" (in ibid.: 665). Many rural poor, including Cilacap and Yogyakarta villagers, enter into a "Faustian bargain" with commercial recruitment agencies and informal migrant brokers, who may be a kin, friend, or neighbor (Dang et al. 2013). In sum, faith discourses and practices enable villagers to negotiate and live with the financial, social, moral and mortal costs and risks of migration, while remaining acquiescent to and less critical of social and migratory institutions that offer access to livelihoods and promises of socio-economic mobility.

5.6   DEVELOPING FAITH IN MIGRATION

A significant body of scholarly work has examined the role and power of religion in framing the migratory experiences, trajectories, and subjectivities of migrants in destination countries (Aguilar 1999; Liebelt 2008; Johnson 2010; Pingol 2010). This chapter has built on such work on how migrants draw on faith narratives or religious communities in host countries to endure and sometimes justify harsh working and living environments abroad. I do so by elaborating on the role of such narratives of faith from the perspective of return migrants, prospective migrants, their kin, neighbors, and activists. As seen above, Cilacap and Yogyakarta residents develop, mobilize, and practice faith as a strategy to negotiate risks and shame associated with migration,

return, and staying behind. NGOs, state officials, and some scholars tend to explain migrants' "risky" or irrational migratory decisions in terms of their ignorance, lack of relevant information, extreme poverty, greed, or "gamblers'" agency (Aguilar 1994; Cohen and Sirecki 2011; Suzuki 2003: 116; Stoll 2013; Massey et al 2005). Instead of reflecting ignorance or superstition, I argue that villagers' fate and faith narratives enable them to act in pragmatic and strategic ways. Moral-religious discourses mobilize faith in migrating for some, and provoke fears of migrating in others who may view staying as their proper "fate" and thus negotiate social pressures to migrate. In other words, through fate and faith discourses, villagers collectively shape attitudes about what kinds of money, bodies, and subjects should (or should not) circulate transnationally.

Fate often implies human effort in relation to divine agency; while destiny emphasizes the ultimate authority of God in human life and strivings. The multiple and context-specific uses of faith narratives can serve to over-emphasize, suspend, or displace the role of individual's agency in their present life circumstances, with reference to non-human actors. On the one hand, acknowledging supernatural and divine agency encourages a sense of resignation and fatality, particularly when individuals have already been possessed or are already very ill. On the other hand, such recognition of the limits of human agency also mobilizes faith in the preventive or redemptive power of Islamic and Javanese prayers, chants, and rituals. Local discussions of suicide and mental illness illustrate how resignation and faithful human efforts, blame and empathy, are not contradictory but constitutive of one another.

Despite the lack of explicit criticism of the state and labor regimes, villagers' discussions of fate and destiny are grounded in awareness and acknowledgment of the complicity and partial responsibility of employers, recruitment agents, and state institutions when things go wrong for migrants. Instead of fully articulated critiques of exploitation in class or feminist terms, such talk

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about fate, destiny, and spirit possession are partial yet ultimately ineffective responses to the state's failure to guarantee villagers' transnational security or livelihoods (cf Ong 2010). In the absence of alternative access to livelihoods, fate and faith discourses are tactics to assert and defend one's moral status when migrants confront an exploitative and risky migration landscape (ibid.). The example of spirit possession, however, is a clear example of how discourses of religiously inflected moral discipline and faith can produce collective action and solidarity through communal prayer and mutual care and attentiveness. In such scenarios, a focus on the limits of individual responsibility vis-à-vis other unpredictable human and non-human actors highlights the ways that all Central Javanese residents share precarious lives, and suggests that mutual care and solidarity is an effective way to confront vulnerability.

In this chapter we see that attention to how and when Cilacap and Yogyakarta residents suspend, displace, or reconfigure their agency in relation to divine or spirit actors, offers a counter-balance to an over-emphasis on structural processes and regulation, human agency, and social networks. I argue that their narratives of fate and destiny serve to continually re-configure villagers' agency in relation to what they are willing to risk (and at what cost). Thus villagers' labors of faith and faithful labor morally sustain and shape the transnational circulation of human bodies, labor, and finance. Instead of focusing on how migrants and kin make individual or household-based decisions and arrangements (Hoang et al. 2013; Massey et al. 2005 [1997]; Paul 2015), I highlighted the importance of villagers' collective discursive processes of "making live and letting die" or "making move and letting stop" (Salter 2013). Narratives of fate, destiny, and faith, are selective and context-specific in attributing blame and responsibility to individuals, families, or spirits. On the one hand, they serve as attempts by villagers to collectively explain and reduce migration's "collateral damages," in deterring some to go while managing fears and

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producing discipline in others. On the other hand, these narratives also serve to maintain faith in the "Faustian bargain" with migration-related agents and institutions, for the promises of migration.

6.0   RE-THINKING GENDERED MOBILITIES AND TRANSNATIONAL KINSHIPS

I just want to see the world… I think I'm just really bored here, there's nothing to do…

-Indah, a female "migrant who did not migrate," mid 20s, Cilacap.

I worked hard for this family, for the children… I've never asked for anything else. All I want is a divorce.

-Overheard, Anisa, a recently returned female migrant in her late 30s, shouting at her husband, Cilacap.

She has been over there in Saudi more than ten years… I think she's already at home there. [Her employers are] probably like family.

-A female non-migrant in her late 40s speaking about her migrant sister-in-law, Cilacap.

Before I left, we [my employers and I] cried and cried. They understood I had to leave because I have family too in Indonesia… Why did it have to be like this? It was like we were fated to be, you know, *yuan fen*, and it was so sad that we had to part… I was really at home there. They took me as part of the family.

-Titin, a recently returned female migrant in her late 30s who used to work in Taiwan, Yogyakarta.

Feminist scholars of migration have long argued that transnational migration has created "even greater possibilities for the reinforcement of prevailing gender ideologies and norms," and has "provide[d] openings for women and men, girls and boys, to entertain competing understandings of gendered lives" (Mahler and Pessar 2006: 42). In her 1992 study of women's rural-urban migration, Diane Wolf observed that "young women in Central Java are less circumscribed by patriarchy or Islam than counterparts in West Java" (1992: 256). Wolf found that due to increasing opportunities for women's mobilities, and partially due to their financial contributions to families, women could now delay or postpone marriage. However, their ability to

negotiate freedoms were limited: though women could now choose who to marry, they could not choose *not* to marry (235).

More than two decades on, Wolf's findings are still relevant to understanding gendered norms in Central Java. This chapter broadens the scope of Wolf's assertions to point to new ways that contemporary gendered transnational labor migration has created discursive spaces for migrant-origin villagers to rethink what constitutes locally legitimate heterosexual coupling or gendered selves. Through villagers' idioms of restlessness (*bosan, tidak betah*), desires for elsewhere (*ingin pergi/ merantau*), and feeling "at home" (*betah, kerasan*), this chapter points to how migration to other Islamic and non-Islamic countries may present subtle but significant challenges to local gendered expectations, moralities, and kinship. I show how return migrant and non-migrant residents' discussions of foreign gender and sexual norms may challenge, reaffirm, or destabilize ideas about what kinds of gendered relations are locally acceptable, such as divorce and premarital cohabitation. However, these discussions and experiences of foreign gender and sexual norms do not ultimately question the heteronormativity associated with Javanese-Indonesian Muslim selves and families.

Building on previous chapters' discussions of migrant success and failure, this chapter examines how migration may create new differences and exacerbate existing ones, not only in terms of material wealth, but also diverging moral behavior and related moral-religious perspectives. In the preceding chapters, I suggested many ways that migrant-origin villagers were aware—to varying degrees— of the working and living conditions of migrants abroad. This chapter explores migrant-origin villagers' views of foreign places and the threats they pose. Migrant-origin villagers do not only attribute blame or responsibility for migrants' successes or failures to divine agency, recruitment agencies, or migrants themselves. Villagers also locate such

blame or responsible in foreign employers and foreign countries. Specifically, this chapter considers the ways that migrant-origin villagers represent "foreign" gender and sexual practices. These representations often encode knowledge about different immigration and labor regulations abroad, which villagers often attribute to foreign "cultural" norms. Since stories about foreign (destination) countries are fundamentally comparative in nature, they can reinforce and challenge local gendered norms and identities of villagers as Javanese, Indonesian, and Muslim.

Migration may present wider alternative venues and possibilities—liberating, dangerous, and ambivalent—to how villagers experience and understand gendered identity and relations, the world, and their place in it. Feminist and queer migration scholarship has looked how migration has enabled women and gender-queers to achieve, contest, or escape heteronormative expectations in their places of origin (Mahler and Pessar 2006; Lubheid 2004; Padilla 2007; Manalansan 2007). Ethnographers have looked at the ambivalence migrants feel prior to returning to their home countries and families (Constable 1999; Cheng 2010; Lai 2011; Margold 1995), and diasporic processes of "making home" elsewhere (Fortier et al. 2003; Schiller et al 1995). While some migrants may return with pride and prestige (Hung 2014), however, others may feel a sense of cultural alienation upon return. By contrast, their rural villages may seem shamefully underdeveloped (McKay 2005). Building on this idea, I look at how the mobility of some villagers in Cilacap and Yogyakarta has not only shaped the subjectivities of migrants in relation to home and family, but also the subjectivities and anxieties of their kin and neighbors who have never left the country.

Narratives of "home" and "belonging" in terms of identity—Javanese, Indonesian, Muslim—are often attempts to challenge or domesticate the boundaries of ethnicity, citizenship, kinship, gender, and moral communities (Ahmed 2013). Studies of female labor migration have

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highlighted that what constitutes households and families is never given, nor are they necessarily harmonious, but that being "part of the family"— whether at "home" or "away"— is typically fraught with power hierarchies and tensions (Ehrenreich and Hoschschild 2004; Bapat 2014; Lai 2010; Lai 2011; Paul 2015; Wolf 1992). Pointing to migrants who struggle between competing desires to migrate or to return home, to escape or conform to gendered expectations, Sealing Cheng asks, "What happens to the excess affects that refuse to be domesticated?" (2010: 169). Building on this provocative question, this chapter highlights experiences of "restlessness" and feeling "at home" in Central Javanese migrant-origin villages, to show and discuss residents' dynamic processes of domesticating, resisting, and exceeding the gendered and moral boundaries of "home" and "elsewhere."

6.1 RESTLESS IN CENTRAL JAVA

Indah's situation exemplifies the restlessness and ambivalence that I refer to. Despite her repeated decisions not to migrate, Indah's desires for transnational mobility sit in tension with her attempts to contain these desires. When I first met her in Cilacap in 2012, she told me that she had never considered migrating abroad like many other women in her village, because she was afraid. Although many migrant women could send money home to build concrete houses, and wear fashionable clothes, many others returned sick, in debt or worse. By 2014, Indah had successfully applied to work in a factory in Taiwan. As per Indonesian state regulations, Indah was living in a privately owned pre-departure training center in the nearest city, where she began learning Mandarin. However, after ten days, she began to feel uneasy and sick. After much pleading, she was allowed to return home for a few days. Indah cried when she saw her two young sons. "How

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could I have ever thought of leaving them?" she said. "At that moment I regretted my decision so much." Her husband eventually convinced Indah to stay. For months, the recruitment agents harassed Indah, urging her to return to the training center. By then she owed them one million rupiah.

Yet, four months after this upsetting experience, Indah began telling me and close friends that she was very bored. She applied to work abroad again, despite her husband and sons' reluctance, and the disapproval of her family, in-laws, and neighbors. She admired the modern fashion of return migrants, and followed her migrant friends' glamorous lives abroad via Facebook. "I just want to see the world," she told me,

> I think I'm just really bored here, there's nothing to do… But where would I go? What would I do? Of course… there are the children. But I also know what people think of me here. That I'm lazy, the worst mother, the worst daughter-in-law, and my house is in such a mess. They don't lead my life. I've learnt not to care what they say. It's okay.

Later, Indah changed her mind about migrating. However, whenever we met ostensibly successful female migrants who returned from working overseas, Indah still asked them, "Do you have a job for me? Take me with you!" On one such occasion, out of confusion, I asked Indah if she really intended to go abroad, or if she was still resolute about staying. She replied that she was only joking about leaving. During one such conversation, a non-migrant neighbor joked, "Yes, Indah, even when you're near you don't feel at home (*betah*), what more if you go somewhere far away." Indah then asked herself aloud, "Why, Indah? Before you went to the [recruitment] agency, why didn't you think of that?"

This sense of ambivalence and restlessness "at home," and suggestion that some persons might be "at home" elsewhere, powerfully illustrate how feminized labor migration from Central Java has troubled and unsettled gender and kinship in embodied ways, even for those who do not leave Indonesia. Indah's restlessness highlights how gendered migrations from Central Javanese

villages have also shaped the subjectivities and motilities of residents who have not (yet) moved. Attention to residents' varying potential and desire to migrate shifts analyses of migration away from indicators of "accessibility" to material and financial resources to embark on journeys. My analysis of motility and mobility at the level of the village or neighborhood thus moves away from discussions that insist on the "household" or family as a decision-making or economic unit. These typically link migrants' movements to the relative immobility of their non-migrant kin who finance others' journeys (Reeves 2011; Stoll 2013). Instead, this chapter builds on my discussions on shame and faith (Chapters 4 and 5) to argue that residents' potential to migrate encompasses and shapes gender-specific anxieties and desires, where questions of social belonging and displacement are intimately linked to transnational movement (Fortier et al. 2003; Manalasan 2012). In other words, we need to go beyond an analysis of mobility versus immobility, migrant versus non-migrant, to examine also those "who are stopped before they start" (Salter 2013: 10; Kellerman 2012), including those ambivalent about migrating, or in the process of making decisions about moving or staying.

By highlighting villagers' discussions and conversations about the restlessness, ambivalence, and explicitly transgressive actions of prospective migrants, migrants, and return migrants, this chapter examines how some residents attempt to domesticate such restlessness and put ambivalence "in place." I also explore what happens when certain affects exceed or "refuse" to be domesticated. This focus on the "loose ends" of residents' attitudes towards home and away balances previous chapters' emphasis on how villagers contain the effects or threats of shame, stigma, and migratory risks. Another example of such undomesticated, "loose" affects is Titin's opening quote about her reluctance to leave her employer-as-kin in Taiwan. Such kinship is based on mutual care and affinity that transcends and comments on biological, ethnic, or national

boundaries of kinship. Significantly, Titin's longing for her fictive kin in Taiwan is intimately linked to her obligations to stay in Central Java as a wife and mother.

It is important to recognize that factors contributing to migrants' feeling "at home" elsewhere are enmeshed in broader socio-economic inequalities (Constable 1999), such as when imaginations of the ideal "home" and "family" are built on experiences with wealthier households overseas. Yet, feeling "at home" in other cultures and places can also offer critiques of local gendered and moral norms, and suggest that alternative moralities and gendered subjectivities are possible, not just elsewhere, but also "here".

6.2   RE-AFFIRMING "LOCAL" GENDERED MORALITY

6.2.1   Reproducing Javanese Islam or *"adat"*

Central Javanese *adat*, or local moral customary law based on Islam, often emerged in discussions of gender and sexual relations in Cilacap and Yogyakarta. It was typically used to justify particular judgments or community actions in terms of "traditional" or "normal" gender and sexual practices. In these sites, where transnational migration was pervasive, *adat* was sometimes idealized and often implicitly contrasted with perceived foreign heterosexual norms. By describing and analyzing the following example of Adi and his Taiwanese partner, I argue that *adat* cannot merely be understood as a description or an informal code of actual "normal" or "traditional" gendered practices. Instead, *adat* often served to re-affirm particular heteronormative ideologies of proper "Javanese" and "Islamic" gendered relations, even as it enabled potentially subversive practices.

I first met Adi when he returned from working in Taiwan. He had dropped by Indah's aunt-in-law's house to visit her son, who was a close friend. This aunt, with whom I had spent many afternoons and evenings chatting, urged us to speak to each other in Mandarin, and told me that "Adi's fiancé [*calon istri*] is from Taiwan." Adi had left at a young age (after high school) to work in a Taiwanese automobile factory, against his parents' wishes. There, he met a Taiwanese girl who worked in a nearby restaurant. After his three-year work contract was up, Adi returned to Cilacap. According to him, his Taiwanese girlfriend insisted on "following" (*ikut*) him back to his rural village of Cilacap, because she wanted to see where he was from, and meet his family. When I met Adi, his "fiancée" had already returned to Taiwan. I asked him if he intended to return to Taiwan and settle there, or if he preferred to stay in Cilacap with his future wife. He said that he would "of course" prefer to live in Cilacap, to be close to his parents. The work that he did in Taiwan—smelting metal— was difficult and dangerous. However, he said, he wasn't sure if his "girlfriend" (*pacar*) could ever adapt to village life, such as learning the Javanese or Indonesian language, and eating Javanese-Indonesian food.

Later that day, I was chatting with Indah, who lived across the street. Her husband, sister-in-law, teenage niece, and young sons were present. I told them about my meeting with Adi, and that he had surprised me with how fluent his Mandarin was. The group immediately talked about Adi's Taiwanese partner. Indah asked, "Did you meet Adi's wife?" I replied that she had returned to Taiwan, and that I had the impression the couple were not yet married. Indah's husband corrected me, and said that they were already married (*sudah nikah*). The group collectively confirmed that Adi had undergone religious marriage rites (*nikah siri*) the day his Taiwanese girlfriend arrived. Indah explained that it was *adat*. The couple had to marry, or else they would

be considered as guilty of *zina* (forbidden sexual relations). Adi's parents had invited a *kyai* (local Islamic religious leader) to perform a ceremony, and insisted that the couple went through the rites.

When I met Adi again, he confirmed this, saying that they had to get married, since the girl was afraid of sleeping alone. Being "married" would allow them to share the same bed and sleep in the same room. Despite this "marriage," Adi referred to his Taiwanese partner as his girlfriend, while his friend's mother clearly referred to her as his "fiancée". This example illustrates the ways that *adat* and associated rituals maintain and preserve the appearance of social gendered norms, in order to domesticate gossip about sin or transgressive behavior. Thus, *adat* and the informal marriage rite prevented potential accusations that the couple were engaged in non-marital sexual relations, despite the fact that to some villagers, they were only engaged and not-yet married.

On several occasions, I witnessed district officials giving advice or speeches addressed specifically to female prospective and former migrants, to discipline themselves (*jaga diri*), reject temptations, work hard, and not be too "free," and not return pregnant (thus cautioning against sexual freedoms).[49] At a village-level Islamic gathering (*pengajian*), the district chief police officer explicitly addressed the rise of rape cases in the district, saying that "Sometimes when rape occurs, not only the rapist is to blame." He then warned parents to monitor their daughters' movements, and asked women not to dress provocatively. Such speeches and formal advice by state representatives built on and re-enforced local gender attitudes that women are responsible for disciplining their own as well as men's sexual desires (see Chapter 3 and 4; Brenner 1998; Bennett 2005: 152). Furthermore, local narratives of migration tend to overwhelmingly focus on women's transgressive sexual behavior as opposed to men's, suggesting unease, especially among local

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[49] Such moralizing to female migrants has also been noted by other scholars of Indonesian and Filipina migrants (Blackburn 2004; Constable 2014; Guevarra 2006: 525-532; Robinson 2000; Rodriguez 2010; Silvey 2007).

male leaders, that female labor migration threatens heteronormative Islamic gender roles; such gender roles are enshrined in the Marriage Law of 1974. Men should fulfil duties as primarily breadwinners, and women are mainly obliged to care for her husband, children, and the household (Katz and Katz 1975).

Such repeated references to *adat*, or exhortations to preserve "local" gendered moral practices, reveal a gap between villagers' perceived ideal gender norms and the diversity of actual gender practices. For example, while many residents frowned upon adultery and divorce, I encountered many such cases among migrants and non-migrants. It was also common public knowledge that young people dated, although not always with the approval of their parents. In Cilacap, one woman in her early twenties who had dated once before getting engaged to her second partner, told me that "actually, Islam forbids dating" (*tidak boleh pacaran*).

Homosexuality was also viewed as deviant and uncommon, but not unheard of among older residents in both Cilacap and Yogyakarta. In other words, these discussions of appropriate gendered behavior and sexual relations were both targeted at instilling moral self-discipline in migrant women and at domesticating the desires of young women who do not move.

6.2.2. Constructing immoral foreign cultures

Two broad categorizations of "foreign cultures" emerged in Central Javanese representations of migrant-destination countries: non-Islamic countries of East and Southeast Asia (Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea, Singapore), and Islamic countries (Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Dubai). Locally circulated stories and stereotypes about these foreign cultures and peoples often provoked local discussions about race, religion, and "freedoms" regarding gender, sexual, and family relations. This includes restrictive or progressive labor laws overseas, different moral and

religious beliefs, and cultural norms. These informal evaluations about non-Indonesian Asians and Muslims also produced and reaffirmed what constituted "Javanese" or "Indonesian" cultural-religious norms.

Despite the fact that all residents I spoke to in Cilacap and Yogyakarta were Muslim, where the pilgrimage to the Islamic holy land of Mecca in Saudi Arabia was religiously important and socially prestigious, local perceptions of Saudi Arabia (and its Muslim neighboring countries) were largely negative. One former migrant I spoke to, Sumi, could speak four languages and had worked over twenty years in Singapore, Hong Kong, and Macau. When her friend misremembered that Sumi had also worked in Saudi, Sumi recoiled and cried, "No! Never Saudi." "Why not Saudi?" I asked. She echoed many other former migrant women's responses and said that she was scared (*takut*) of not being able to leave the house (*gak bisa keluar*), and the uncertainty of even returning to Indonesia alive.

In general, representations of Saudi Arabia focused on its strict interpretation of the Qur'an and the "extreme Islam" that people practice there, and the high rate of executions and death sentences for adultery, witchcraft, and murder. Stories emphasized restrictive labor laws based on the *kafala* system of employer-sponsored work visas (Osman 2014), and how women cannot leave houses without veiling their entire bodies, or without male companions. Due to these regulations on women's mobility, villagers perceived Saudi Arabia as a dangerous place for women to work. Anecdotal evidence in these villages suggested that the majority of cases of women who died overseas, or returned home pregnant, had worked in Saudi. One former male migrant to Korea linked strict laws to the perceived high levels of sexual violence against women there: "In Korea, everything is free. Whether or not people are married, Koreans have affairs. There is always a

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phone number for a sex worker around. That's why in Korea there is no rape or violence. Unlike in Saudi, [where] men resort to desperate actions because there is no other outlet."

Men and women made negative observations that polygyny in Saudi Arabia was still the norm, with one return migrant reporting that his employer had up to fourteen wives. Even though Saudi employers and families were represented as being incredibly rich, with big houses where extended families lived, they were largely depicted as being religious, but immoral in their treatment of women and workers. Islam as practiced in Saudi Arabia was often presented by villagers as being "very different" from the "moderate" Islam that they associated with Indonesia. Villagers commonly explained this difference in terms of "culture" that also shaped laws and law enforcement in Saudi Arabia. Significantly, these discourses focusing on "cultural" differences and variations of Islam echo dominant public, media, and state discourses on Indonesian Islam (Halim 2015; see Hefner 2000; Woodward 1996), and the often reported abuses and death sentences facing Indonesian migrant workers in Saudi Arabia (Jong 2015).

In contrast to the lack of freedoms in Saudi Arabia, respondents represented other migrant-destination countries in Southeast Asia and East Asia as having "too much freedom" and "no religion." On the one hand, villagers tended to stereotype former female migrants who have worked in Hong Kong and Taiwan as having "forgotten" Javanese-Indonesian cultural norms, when they return wearing "inappropriate" (*tidak cocok*) attire such as mini-skirts, high-heels, tight clothing, and lipstick. Gossip about such women include stories of them smoking and drinking in bars and cafes, and doing sex work in addition to domestic or factory work. Many women and men expressed their initial surprise at how in Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan, couples could apparently live together prior to marriage without social stigma or judgement. Women reported how their employers' families accepted such living arrangements. One former female migrant to

Taiwan said, "People in Taiwan don't think about tomorrow, there is only today for them. They have relationships outside of marriage, and don't think of the consequences of their sins… I mean there is too much freedom [*maksudnya kebebasan*]."

Former migrants were also critical of how religious worship and rituals in Hong Kong, Singapore, and Korea, appeared to be explicitly directed towards material pursuits. As one former migrant to Korea put it, "I was shocked [*heran*]… People pray everywhere to gods, for cars, business, money… Their prayers are for themselves [*sendiri*], and to idols. They pray to anyone or anything that will give them success and the things they want. Unlike Islam."

In comparison to ethnic-Malay or Saudi employers, female Chinese employers in general were considered extremely fussy, strict, paranoid, vain, and jealous. Stories of female Chinese employers in Singapore and Hong Kong tended to focus on how they were beautiful, fair, and had expensive clothes, but also on how much they controlled domestic workers' movements and salaries. Such female employers in Saudi Arabia were not as homogenous or widespread. Many former migrant women with ethnic Chinese female employers recounted that they were forbidden to talk to anyone outside the household or to step outside the house on their own. Migrant women with Chinese employers, as compared to Saudi ones, were often not allowed to pray or wear a veil in their employers' homes, and many were required to cook pork.

Additionally, Hong Kong was singled out in terms of seeming to promote a "culture" (*budaya*) or "tradition" (*tradisi*) of lesbianism (Republika 2015; Kompasiana 2015). Some Indonesian women were said to be influenced by lesbianism, and stories told of how a few local women turned "sick" (*sakit*) or encountered "problems" (*khasus*) when they were transformed into "men" there, despite being engaged or married prior to migration.

Negative stereotypes of other Asian or Islamic countries and people implicitly and explicitly create and reaffirm ideas about Javanese or Indonesians as being honorable and religiously pious. They claim moral superiority over Chinese and Koreans by rejecting "free sex," showing respect for marriage and family institutions, and by treating others with greater human dignity. They also claim moral superiority than their Muslim counterparts in Saudi Arabia and the Middle East, citing Indonesia's "moderation" in regulating women's mobility and sexuality. For example, Muslim women in Indonesia can walk or drive alone outside the home, but they must informally seek permission from their husbands. Proper Muslim women had to wear the hijab (veil), but not only in black, and *burqas* (full-body veils) are not compulsory. Significantly, these affirmations of Javanese-Indonesian identity also reinforced intra-national stereotypes of "bad" Islam in terms of "bad" Indonesian-Muslims, such as in Aceh, who are perceived to be influenced by "radical" Islam from the Middle-East. Stereotypes of ethnic Chinese abroad also build on and reinforce intra-national perceptions that Chinese-Indonesians are all wealthy, arrogant, and vain. Furthermore, narratives of immoral migrant behavior tended to focus on female adultery, and what were seen as "loose" sexual or "sick" homosexual identities and behavior associated with wealthier Asian cultures. Together, these produced their implied opposite: an "ideal" Islamic and normative Javanese femininity in relation to normative Javanese masculinity.

6.2.3. Returning migrant wives "home"

When the absence of migrant wives and mothers proved challenging or threatening for some men who stayed in Cilacap and Yogyakarta, women were "asked" or told to return. In several cases, men demanded that their wives returned to Indonesia, despite women's reluctance. These former migrants often framed their return to Indonesia specifically in terms of "being asked to

return" (*disuruh pulang*), as opposed to simply "return," "asking to return" (*minta pulang*), or "wanting to return" (*mau pulang*). Despite this, most framed their acquiescence to husbands' requests in terms of the proper obligations of a Javanese-Muslim wife.

Titin's story stands out for her direct honesty about her reluctance to leave Taiwan, where she worked for five years. In the presence of her husband, she told me that she was "forced to leave [Taiwan])" (*maksa pergi*) before her contract ended. He had asked her to return, because he could not handle their three teenage children anymore. She returned specifically to take over the household chores and childcare. When her husband first asked her to return, he was reluctant, because she already felt "at home" with her employer's family in Taiwan. The elderly man she was caring for was a "soul-mate," and the family also felt that she was the perfect "match." Notably, Titin's narrative suggested that she had no choice about returning to Indonesia. Instead, she emphasized her reluctance, her husband's decision and pressure, and that when she returned, she simply "took heart" in the fact that she needed to fulfill her duties as a wife and mother.

Like Titin, many women deferred to their husbands' decisions, even if they expressed their reluctance to comply. Women also told me that they wanted to migrate, or to migrate for a second time, but did not, because their husbands did not permit it. Some women suggested that their husbands did not approve of their desires to migrate because of fears that women will be unfaithful, or will be sexually abused by other migrants or foreign employers. Titin's framing of her return in terms of her gendered familial duties echoes Anju Paul's (2015) observations that some Filipina female migrants tended to reinforce normative gendered expectations through their narratives of migration, rather than transforming gender roles through independent labor migration.

6.3 TRANSGRESSING GENDERED NORMS

In contrast to women who reluctantly returned to their husbands and child-caring duties, there were also migrant women who responded to these local heterosexist attitudes by explicitly rejecting or transgressing *adat*. However, explicitly transgressive acts, such as cohabitation out of wedlock, or migrating without a male kin's formal permission, can provoke or result in harassment, discrimination, or even expulsion from communities by local leaders, family members, and fellow villagers.

One female migrant I knew, Geno, brought her Singaporean boyfriend back to her village for *Idul Fitri* to meet her family. The couple was formally engaged, and Geno explained that she could not marry him in Indonesia, since she heard that it might hurt chances for their marriage to be legalized abroad. Legal marriage documents from Singapore would help her and her children obtain future citizenship. Although villagers received Geno's boyfriend warmly at first, the couple began to felt pressured to undergo the religious marriage rites. Villagers began to mutter offensive names behind their backs, and spread word that they were living in sin, or "*kumpul kebo*," literally "getting together like animals". A local village leader called Geno a "dirty woman," and the couple received anonymous threats to their physical safety and the house, if the couple did not marry soon, or if Geno's boyfriend did not leave the village immediately. Feeling threatened, Geno and her boyfriend packed their bags and left the next day.

In cases of explicit transgression, as Linda Bennett observed in Eastern Indonesia, it is not "enough to ignore or tacitly disapprove of cohabitation but publicly condemn, stigmatize, and harass" (2005: 108). These responses point to the ways patriarchal norms are reinforced, and upheld through fear and shame, despite women's attempts to disrupt them. Very few neighbors were sympathetic to Geno's position and plight. The explicit and damaging name-calling and

threats cautioned other women of the ugly consequences of trying to introduce—reasonably, or not—"foreign" heterosexual practices locally.

Not all residents may fear stigma and gossip, particularly when the desire for other worlds and experiences prove greater than desires to belong or return to Central Java. Anisa had worked in Taiwan for three years, and in that time sent back enough money to build a modern, concrete house for her husband and three children. Despite her evident financial success, gossip circulated about Anisa's infidelity and sexual promiscuity. There was talk that she boasted about how foreign men in Taiwan propositioned her, and that she openly flirted with men on her mobile phone.

I met Anisa upon her return from Taiwan, while she was waiting to migrate again. The first time we met, she was dressed in a sleeveless top that defied what was considered "appropriate" dress for women in rural Cilacap. That evening, she sat outside her new house with an electronic tablet device. Addressing me and a group of female neighbors who had gathered at her home, Anisa spoke about the cool winters in Taiwan, and showed us a flirtatious Facebook conversation she was having with a Bangladeshi man. She reasoned, "I just want to learn about the world, and make new friends." I empathized with Anisa's desire for travel, knowledge, and new experiences. At the same time, I sympathized with her children, the youngest of whom clung to her the entire time, another of whom was very quiet and withdrawn. I also sympathized with her husband, whom I saw every day, without fail, climbing trees to collect material to produce coconut palm sugar for sale. Through my own shifting sympathies and judgements, I realized that villagers' perceptions of such situations were also complex and situational, linked to their own temporal restlessness and varying attachments to the village.

The same evening, many neighbors witnessed Anisa's public fight with her husband. Sitting with Indah and her sons after dinner, we heard Anisa shouting angrily, "What have I ever

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done to deserve this? I worked hard for this family, for the children… I've never asked for anything else. All I want is a divorce." She called her husband a "bastard," much to neighbors' shock and mirth. Villagers close to Anisa's husband told me that the fight was over two things. One was that her husband had had enough of her openly flirtatious phone calls to other men. Second, he pleaded with her not to go to Taiwan again, since he could earn enough so that she could stay and take care of the children.

A few days later, Anisa left for a pre-migration training center, despite the fact that her husband had not signed the required documents granting her permission to migrate. Neighbors blamed the recruitment agent who was notorious for "playing" such games with migrants and their families. Anisa's unauthorized departure shocked no-one; she had a reputation. Months later, she asked for a divorce, and informed her husband that she was religiously married to someone else in Taiwan.

Unlike Geno, who carefully tried to reason with villagers about her delay in marrying her foreign boyfriend, Anisa defied many rules and resisted attempts to govern her movement and behavior as a woman, wife, and mother. Unlike Geno who was threatened with explicit violence, Anisa was discussed and gossiped about by families and neighbors in terms of an emerging "normal". This meant that her migration without her husband's permission, her apparent infidelity abroad, her inappropriate dress, and her demand for a divorce, arguably all conformed to villagers' stereotypes and perceptions of "collateral damage" that migration inflicted on families and the broader community. Few spoke about Anisa with anger or bitterness, but mostly ambiguity and pity for her husband and children. I heard very little talk that explicitly blamed or shamed Anisa. This could be because Anisa's financial contributions were physically evident and undeniable. Her remittances had funded a house built on her husband's land, and according to existing marriage

and property laws, the land (and the house) would still solely belong to her husband after divorce. In contrast, after more than two decades of working abroad, Geno could finally begin to tile the concrete floor in her modest house. Neighbors also gossiped that Geno was stingy and unfilial, that she did not send enough money to feed her elderly mother. As these cases suggest, women's autonomy is tied at least in part to their economic contributions to the family (Wolf 1992).

I highlight and contrast Anisa's and Geno's situations to show how some acts of gendered transgression are increasingly anticipated and met with ambiguity by villagers. Shortly after Anisa left the village, her eldest son dropped out of middle school, to his father's distress. I recalled how Anisa spoke of her hopes that she would send her son to college with the Taiwanese dollars she earned. Villagers expressed sympathy for Anisa's husband and children, but little criticism of her. Even accounting for Anisa's financial contributions to the family, residents' relative lack of moral blame targeted at Anisa is notable, due to her explicit disregard for her reputation as a "good" woman, wife, or mother, in her "inappropriate" dress and open flirtations.[50] Her departure produced instead many new and unanswered questions about the future of her children and husband, and other families in similar circumstances.

Deep ambivalence characterized the prevalent attitudes of villagers to those who opt to "exit" and reject local gendered norms linked to familial obligations. In a sense, Anisa's position— as an openly unfaithful wife and a reliable remittance-sending mother— seemed to exceed existing moral judgments discussed in Chapter 3 and 4. Unlike other women who might wish to dispel or avoid gossip that their remittances were based on "*non-halal*" sources, Anisa's fearless

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[50] Single mothers or divorced women were typically able to gain relative social acceptance if they conformed to these other gendered norms such as performing religious or filial piety, remaining frugal, maintaining a modest appearance (nothing glamorous, luxurious, "sexy", or "modern"), and conforming to other expectations of a good mother or daughter. Remittances and financial contributions were a factor in these moral evaluations, but not the only one, as discussed in Chapter 3.

indifference to being perceived as an unfaithful wife, alongside a self-confidence in her sacrificial contributions to the family ("I worked hard for this family, for the children…"), arguably destabilized villagers' ideas of moral subjectivities or potential moral righteousness. I contend that such ambivalence, in the form of open and unanswerable questions about the strength of kinship and broader community norms in fostering ties of belonging and obligation, are significant components shaping the mobility and restlessness of other onlookers and observers.

6.4   RE-THINKING KINSHIP AND BELONGING

6.4.1. Transnational Kinships

Despite having visited the Cilacap site thrice over three years, particularly during the religious holidays, I had never met Bu Henny, a friend's mother who was a domestic worker in Saudi Arabia. Every year, I was told that Bu Henny would retire and return to Cilacap soon. Her daughter eagerly awaited her return, so that she herself could embark on her own journey and leave her children in Bu Henny's care. Bu Henny had worked abroad for nearly ten years, and had not returned for five years. She keep extending her contract abroad, despite calls from her daughter to return. As her sister-in-law explained, "I think she's already at home there. [Her employers are] probably like family. What is there for her here? She's widowed; her children have their own families. But she's still sending money home regularly… "

Unlike female migrants in their twenties to forties who might be accused of promiscuity or infidelity if they stay abroad too long, older migrants (over 50) who are divorced or widowed experience less stigma if they do not return or send money home. This is because they are past

childbearing age, and hence typically associated with desexualized identity-positions of "grandmothers" (*nenek*) (Winarnita 2016). Older women's local absence and sustained presence abroad was often explained in terms of their "kinship" ties to foreign employers. Unlike patterns of emigration, where migrants typically settle and form families in countries of destination (Schiller et al 1995), migrants and their kin from Central Java often assume that transnational journeys will be temporary (see Chapter 2). Migrants who left for Malaysia in the 1980s or early 1990s, where some male and female migrants have married ethnic Malay citizens or fellow Indonesians who obtained residency there are an exception (see also Spaan 1994: 100-101). A small but increasing number of female migrants are also reported to formally or religiously marry and live abroad with men from Taiwan (Lu 2005; Tsay 2004), Hong Kong (Constable 2014), Singapore (Jones and Shen 2008), Australia, Britain, Germany, and the United States. Thus, a main reason villagers understand migrants' overly prolonged stay and work abroad is that they must feel "at home" there, and having or making "kin" there is an important part of feeling "at home." Simultaneously, villagers recognize that these "foreign" kinship ties—whether to employers or spouses— often financially benefit migrants' biological kin and neighbors at home too.

Alongside negative stereotypes of other Asian and Islamic countries and people discussed above, there were also stories of kinship and affection across borders, based on mutual care and concern. These bonds that are not necessarily based on religious values, ethnicity, or nationality. However common or compelling these stories of positive affinity were, they were still often perceived as exceptions rather than the norm. Nevertheless, Cilacap and Yogyakarta perceptions of migrants and their "foreign kin" exist alongside the pervasive idea that transnational labor migration is threatening Javanese marriage and parent-child relations, whether or not migrants are cast in the role of parents or children, or both. Together, they point to the multiple ways that

transnational migration is gradually reconfiguring and extending the geographic, ethnic, national, and religious boundaries of kinship and relatedness (McKinnon 2001; Carsten 2013) in Central Java.

Titin's story was representative of some women's ambivalent narratives about leaving their "foreign kin" abroad, to return to their biological families in Indonesia. Such affective narratives of employers as family contrast with studies of how employers of domestic workers extract and justify workers' extra-domestic work or delayed wages in terms of workers being "part of the family" (Bapat 2014; Romero 2002). As Titin's case illustrates, the pressure to return "home" can exist in tension with the bonds forged with their "soul-mates" and "other family" overseas. Several narratives included teary farewells and emotional pleas by migrants' employers to stay. Stories of Taiwanese employers, in particular, focused on positive affinity and good working conditions: many women spoke about how their Chinese-Taiwanese employers treated them like daughters and sisters, taking them out for family holidays and meals, and buying them gifts such as clothes, shoes, and other material luxuries. Narratives focusing on mutual care and concern between employers and female domestic workers were more common in cases where women lived alone with and took care of the sick and elderly in rural parts of Taiwan. Chinese employers in Singapore and Taiwan, as well as some Saudi employers, were also known to give large sums of money to workers in order to acquire new computing, hairdressing, or language skills, or to start businesses in their home-towns. These employers often went beyond their formal or legal obligations of care for domestic workers, by paying for medical bills and school fees for migrants' own families in Central Java. In a few cases, such ties were maintained over years even after the contractual labor relationship formally ended. Foreign employers from Singapore, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, sometimes paid for migrants to reunite with them overseas. A Singaporean Malay

family made annual trips to visit and stay with their former domestic worker, in the Yogyakarta village. They also helped to fund her wedding. Her parents saw them as fictive kin who took extremely good care of their daughter.

Significantly, such affective bonds and generosity sometimes contrasted vividly with women's experiences of financial and emotional pressure from their families in Indonesia to send more money, or to return home to perform domestic duties. Thus women's narratives of foreign kin sometimes served to implicitly criticize the social pressures they felt to fulfil narrowly-defined and doubly-burdened family roles as caregiving and breadwinning mothers, wives, and daughters. However, the generosity of foreign employers also highlights the unequal capacities of "family" members to perform or meet financial obligations, much less exceed these expectations.

6.4.2 Expressing Moral Relativism as Cultural Critique

In contrast to Geno and Anisa's explicit transgressions of local gendered norms, other men and women may choose to do so more carefully and subtly. Former migrants may contest local gender and sexual norms by talking about their observations and experiences of gendered and sexual identities and behavior that seem acceptable in the countries where they have worked and lived. This includes questioning local expectations of unmarried female chastity, stigma against divorce, and the illegitimacy of sex work. A few former migrants carefully offered explanations and justifications for same-sex intimate relationships such as lesbianism associated with female migrants to Hong Kong, or gay foreign employers. Significantly, however, homosexual identities

were almost always considered deviant or a "sickness", even as these discussions of gender and sexuality expanded and shifted the boundaries of appropriate heterosexual identity and relations.[51]

For example, instead of focusing on negative stereotypes of "too much freedom" in Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, and Malaysia, some male and female return migrants spoke appreciatively about the relative freedoms in these countries, in terms of having days off (for those who did) and for having employers who trusted them to be independent workers. A few female migrants spoke positively about how people can dress and talk "however they want," without fear of stigma or judgement by others, in contrast to the small rural villages they come from. As noted earlier, a former male migrant suggested that the availability of commercial sex workers reduced the rate of sexual abuse and violence in Korea relative to Saudi Arabia. However, these positive representations of sexual freedom, and freedom of dress and movement abroad, were often expressed only in the company of close friends, or in private conversations with me.

Former migrants to Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Korea, both men and women, sometimes say that the apparently more "liberal" sexual norms abroad can be understood as also being rational in the context of another culture, and not objectively immoral. I argue that these views contribute to publically cultivating a sense of cultural and moral relativism, as opposed to moral judgement. For example, some women stated that it is "okay," "not wrong" and "not a sin" in Hong Kong for unmarried couples to cohabit, in order to decide whether or not they want to marry. As a middle-

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[51] This observation coincides with the official "medical" view of Indonesian psychiatrists on homosexuality. With reference to Law No.18/2014 on Mental Health, Indonesian Psychiatrists Association (PDSKJI) "categorizes homosexuals and bisexuals as 'people with psychiatric problems', while transgender people have 'mental disorders'. According to this classification, a psychiatric problem is condition in which a person is at risk of developing a mental disorder." (See Yosephine 2016). Although there are prominent LGBT groups and LGBT activism in Indonesia, in early 2016, the influential MUI officially declared homosexuality-related activities "haram" or forbidden. See: The Jakarta Post 2016, Feb 17.

aged female former migrant to Taiwan said, "it may not be acceptable here due to *adat*, but there are no laws against it in Singapore." Another former female migrant rationalized premarital cohabitation as such: "If [the couple] don't like living together, they can break up. If not they can marry. In Indonesia, you find out only after marriage… and then if you don't like each other, you have to divorce!"

In making such statements, women were also aware that divorce in foreign contexts follow different laws from divorce for Muslims in Indonesia. Several women have said that, "In Islam, women are not allowed to divorce men," or that "Islam does not permit divorce, and people who divorce are just less pious Muslims." These local perceptions of divorce and marriage regulations in Indonesia are only partially true— women can request divorce, but only after three months of proven financial neglect, six months of physical neglect, or in cases of clear physical abuse by the husband. In contrast, men need not fulfil these conditions (Katz and Katz 1975; Grace 2004). Nevertheless, discussions of divorce and marital practices or norms overseas can be read as implicit criticisms of how Indonesia's marriage regulations unfairly disadvantage women.

Additionally, many return migrants pointed out how adultery, divorce, or premarital sexual relations are also common among Indonesians abroad and at home. This challenged the sometimes implicit idea that Javanese or Indonesians are more morally "good" than their foreign Asian counterparts, due to perceived differences in essentialized "cultural" attitudes towards sexuality. The generosity of non-religious Chinese employers, compared to stereotypes of abuse in Islamic Saudi Arabia, also disrupts any easy associations of religious identity and practice with honorable and desirable behavior.

6.5   CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown how transnational labor mobility contests and destabilizes powerful gendered moral norms in rural Central Java, including ideas about divorce, the illegitimacy of premarital sex, and appropriate duties of Muslim husbands and wives. Since gendered norms are often linked to family or kinship obligations, the contestations of gendered norms may also destabilize or broaden meanings of kinship within and beyond migrant-origin villages.

When low-wage Javanese-Muslim individuals work for wealthy Chinese, Malay, Korean, or Arab households or companies, they return to their villages of origin to share stories about foreign practices and identities, including those of gender, sexuality, and religion. While some former migrant women and men contest or transgress local customary gendered norms through divorce, marital infidelity, or premarital cohabitation, others are deterred by the threat of expulsion, shame, or violence against such transgressions. There are subtle ways for women and men to contest or criticize perceived strict regulations or laws on sexuality or women, but these narratives are often still ultimately subordinate to dominant discourses that stigmatize locally non-normative gendered and sexual practices. Furthermore, these subversive practices and criticisms do little to challenge heteronormativity itself. Nevertheless, this chapter has pointed to some moments of restlessness and ambivalence that enable residents and migrants to rethink the conditions and boundaries of gendered subjectivities, belonging, and kinship, as in the examples of Anisa, Indah, and Titin.

This chapter has also shown that the boundaries of gendered selves, morality, and kinship are intimately linked to meanings attached to being Javanese, Indonesian, Muslim, man, or woman. Migrants' destination countries, and associated cultural moralities were thus often framed in ethnic, national, gendered, or religious terms. Narratives of aversion to foreign gendered norms,

and affective ties of foreign kinship, contrast with international and national migration policies that often prioritize migrants' economic motivations and experiences. Instead, this chapter shows that migrants may view other-Asian or other-Islamic people and practices as culturally familiar, yet foreign; appealing, dangerous, or repulsive. "Freedom," associated with elsewhere, often embodies contradictory tensions. People weigh greater risks, freedoms, or restrictions, or various gendered and moral "trade-offs" between staying behind or migrating to "developed" Asian countries. These implicitly invite comparisons with local gendered and moral standards and expectations at home. They may reinforce or challenge local ideas, practices, and identities.

This chapter thus moves beyond questions of whether the benefits of migration have outweighed its costs for migrant-origin villagers, or whether transnational migration has led to more gendered freedoms or constraints. Instead, it shows that these are always open-ended questions, and the answers depend on who is speaking, for whom, and what moralities, identities, or sense of security or "home-ness," are at stake. Indeed, for many residents— like Indah who has never left the country, and Titin, a former migrant— the ubiquity of transnational gendered migration and the option to move, *as long as they are willing,* have resulted in their sense of restlessness and ambivalence in their migrant-origin villages. These feelings are accompanied by a questioning of their attachments to "home" and "family," in terms of their expected duties as mothers, wives, and primarily female members of the village. Although she has not migrated, Indah's ambivalence about staying or going may point to larger shifts within local gendered norms over time. Such growing restlessness and discontent may well inspire residents to make the village a kind of place where, barring extreme economic needs, people decide to stay, not one that they increasingly desire to escape.

7.0 CONCLUSION: GENDERED MORAL ECONOMIES OF MIGRATION

Departing from the extensive scholarly attention to migration processes and migrants' experiences in destination countries, this dissertation is an ethnography of gendered mobility, moral responsibility, and religious faith in migrant-origin villages. Transnational mobility, particularly precarious forms of migration, arguably marks the twenty first century. As I write this in 2015 and 2016, migrations from Syria, Sudan, Senegal, Palestine, and Myanmar, to Europe, North America, and Australia, headline the international news. Representations of these migrants in the news— as security threats or in need of humanitarian aid— typically draw on ideas of their desperation, poverty, fear, and an "all or nothing" approach to the future (Al-Saadi 2015; Malone 2015).[52] While Indonesian labor migrations take place under vastly different circumstances, I encountered colleagues, anonymous reviewers, and Indonesians in urban cities and migrant-origin villages, who echoed the above ideas: labor migration continues because people are either ignorant of the risks, or they are so desperate and wages abroad are so much higher that they will risk everything for the expected gains (Aris and Ananta 2004; Firdausy 2006; Hugo 2004; 2009). While these views are partially true, this ethnography of migrant-origin villages has aimed to complicate and challenge the impulse to foreground migrants' poverty and ignorance. Instead, I have argued that these transnational flows of migrants and money are best understood in terms of gendered moral economies. In Indonesia, these circulations of bodies, labor, and finance are shaped and

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[52] The terms "refugee" and "migrant" became fraught with moral meanings and assumptions that reporters and those seeking asylum variously rejected. On the one hand, news agency Al-Jazeera publicly declared it would not refer to a Mediterranean "migrant crisis," as the term migrant over-emphasized volition and economic motivations that Al-Jazeera did not deem accurate in describing the situation of "refugees" fleeing "unimaginable misery and danger" (Malone 2015). On the other hand, Syrian "refugees" themselves have been reported to reject the term, arguably due to the associations "with squalor, with victimhood, with weakness, and no agency" (Al-Saadi 2015).

constituted by gendered discourses and practices of shame and faith; these influence how migrant

success and failure are valued, through locating or shifting responsibility and blame for perceived

causes and consequences of migration.

7.1 GENDERED MORAL HIERARCHIES OF MIGRANTS

I have highlighted the importance of Islamic-based moral discourses about gender and

mobility in Indonesia to draw attention to the fact that despite higher wages abroad, female labor

migration cannot be taken for granted as something encouraged by migrant-origin countries,

migrants' families, or villages. I have also argued that approaches to "risk" are always situated in

relation to gendered responsibility and situated forms of knowledge. Since the late 1980s,

Indonesian state promotion of female labor migration in terms of its "development" potential has

always been intimately linked to gendered citizenship discourses; these linked women's roles in

national development to their roles as mothers and wives (Silvey 2007). In Chapter 2, I argued that

by applying an implicit gendered moral hierarchy to migrants, the Indonesian state, newsmakers,

and some activist groups unintentionally collude to distinguish between "illegitimate" and

"tolerable" violence against migrant bodies. Thus Indonesian women migrants perceived to be

pious Muslims, dutiful mothers, daughters, sisters, and wives, are praised by state representatives

as "foreign exchange heroes" for their hard work and ability to accept poor wages and working

conditions (Antara News 2012, Aug 9). Widely publicized cases of migrant abuse that gained

national support and state attention typically involve women "victims" represented as pious,

vulnerable, and sacrificial family members. Thus, I argue that representations of idealized

femininity in female heroes or victims further perpetuates and legitimizes particular gendered

moral expectations of women, which shape and constitute women's experiences and responses to migrating, staying, or return. Seeing migration in terms of gendered moral economies highlights these ways that such transnational movements are shaped and constituted by multi-scalar discourses that produce what counts as "morality:" where particular actions and practices—such as moving or staying— are deemed desirable or undesirable.

This observation builds on and supports the sizable existing scholarship cited in previous chapters on a female hero–victim dichotomy in migration discussions. I contribute to this body of work in two main ways. One, by focusing on the experiences of non-migrants and failed migrants, I highlight how gender clearly structures the flows of migration and money, not only by influencing who migrates, but also who stays, or are deterred from leaving. Two, I have also examined the less-studied categories of "guilty," "immoral" or "morally ambiguous" migrants, and female migrants who transgress or do not conform to gendered moral-religious expectations and are publically shamed or blamed for their own migrant injuries or failures. This gendered moral hierarchy of migrant victimhood—those who do not deserve their circumstances and those who do—means that in public discourses, migration-related risks or costs tend to be linked to migrants' *individual* moral failures or responsibility.

Institutionalized gendered discourses and representations of migrants as victims or heroes resonated with villagers in Cilacap and Yogyakarta in surprising ways. Villagers did not identify "victims" or "heroes," but instead talked about "successful" or "failed" migrants. In Chapter 3 and 4, I showed how villagers (former migrants and some non-migrants) ubiquitously expressed the view that migration will almost certainly lead to "success," as long as migrants remain pious and prayerful, remember that their earnings should be sent to their families, and avoid gendered vices, sins, and selfish luxuries such as gambling, drinking, partying, shopping, or having foreign

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boyfriends or lovers. This apparent *certainty* that migration will lead to success—where risks can be contained— complicates the views of scholars, NGOs, or state officials who tend to explain migrants' "risky" or irrational migratory decisions in terms of their ignorance, lack of relevant information, or "gamblers'" agency (e.g. Massey et al 2007). Cilacap and Yogyakarta migrant-origin villagers, including prospective migrants, were well aware of the "risks" of migration because stories of migrant fraud, injuries, disappearance, and death were common. Their optimism towards migration, I argue, was partially shaped by institutionalized discourses of migration that focused on migrants' individual responsibility, such that success is perceived as nearly guaranteed for pious individuals who work hard. Public representations by newsmakers and state representatives of the sacrificial migrant hero who preserves through hardship, and the ultimate victim worthy of compassion were tropes that migrant-origin villagers echoed, despite identifying no one in their own villages who fit these ideal types.

This ethnography has thus shown how national media discourses and representations on the consequences of migration, despite not being grounded in the realities of migrant-origin villages, significantly influence and mediate how Central Javanese residents perceive migration and return migrants. I have argued that these "empty" tropes render tolerable or less significant the everyday forms of exploitation and injury that migrants face, such as non-payment of wages, long hours, and inadequate food. As discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, migrant-origin villagers saw migrants' work-related injuries as "normal" (since they were not as extreme as the "victims" depicted in the media), migrant failures as due to migrants' own moral failures or laziness, and migrant deaths as due to destiny. The responsibility of state-related and migratory institutions for migrant safety, labor protection, and aspects of social welfare is thus downplayed in national and village-level discussions of labor migration, exploitation, and development.

7.2 VALUING MIGRATION AND MONEY

I have also argued that the gains and losses of migration for migrant-origin villagers are less clearcut than financial remittances, or migrants' debts and deaths. Instead, ways of valuing migrant money and debt were always situational and temporal. Value was dependent on judgements about whether money was earned, distributed, and spent appropriately.

Chapter 3 illustrated how, despite migrant-origin villagers' apparent optimism regarding the promises of migration, migrant "success" was also paradoxically nearly unattainable. While migrant remittances might enable migrants and kin or send children to school, pay for medical bills, build houses, buy land, and start businesses, migrant-origin villagers expressed deep ambivalence about these seemingly "objective" local indicators of success. From the perspectives of migrant-origin villagers, "successful" migration sometimes produced collateral damages or unwanted side effects, including familial separation, divorce, deep financial debt, and economic inequality (Chapters 3 and 4). Failed migration journeys resulted in more fearful or tragic outcomes, such as migrants who returned with mental illnesses or who were possessed by spirits, or other migration-related sickness, injuries, and deaths (Chapter 5). Villagers' ambivalence about the meaning of migratory success was evident in the examples of modern and concrete houses built by migrants, which were abandoned due to migration-related divorce and marital conflict. Migrant women who regularly sent money home, or women who returned with savings to start businesses, were not logically or naturally considered successful, even though theoretically (as in generalized discussions), sending money and starting businesses were appreciated as positive consequences of migration. Instead, local standards of migrant success are intimately linked to migrants' gendered moral reputations— whether migrants earned or spent their money in ways that demonstrated they were faithful spouses, filial children, caring parents, and pious Muslims. In

other words, how migrant money was used or produced was significant to its meaning and (moral) value within these villages.

Against the grain of ethnographies that typically either focus solely on male migration (Gardner 1995; Margold 1995; Mckenzie and Menjivar 2011; Farjado 2011; Peter 2010) or on female migration (Faier 2007; Parreñas 2011; Paul 2015; Pratt 2012), I have shown how migrant-origin villagers perceived and evaluated male and female migrant success and failure differently. Chapters 3 and 4 illustrate migrant-origin villagers' gendered double standards. While women faced incredibly high standards and pressures to succeed financially and maintain reputations as good Muslim daughters and wives, the source of their wealth, success, debt, or injuries could also cast doubt on their moral reputations. Financial successes of migrant men, however, were hardly questioned, and taken for granted. Their failures were sometimes excused or justified in terms of men needing to spend their wages on "necessities" such as cigarettes, lodging, alcohol, or commercial sex abroad. Villagers' attention to women migrants makes sense since the majority of migrants were women. However, this focus overshadows the gender-specific vulnerabilities confronting migrant men. Consequently, the latter remains largely ignored in national media and in migrant-origin villages. The absence of an acceptable "male victim" trope means that some migrant men may experience higher expectations to succeed financially, and I highlighted a few men who responded to failure in more extreme ways, such as suicide. In other words, both women and men, as migrants, return migrants, or non-migrants, face different gender-specific opportunities and challenges that are not simply "better" or "worse" than the other. Furthermore, the apparent ubiquity of migration—particularly of women— in Cilacap and Yogyakarta has not radically transformed gender relations, but instead created more discursive spaces for some to re-

assert "local" gendered patriarchal norms (*adat*), explicitly transgress them, or carefully negotiate new ways of expressing and valuing diverse sexual and gendered behavior.

7.3 SHAME SHAPING MOBILITIES

By weaving together stories and experiences of former migrants, prospective migrants, and those who have never left the country, this ethnography has presented new ways to think about the categories of "prospective," "current," "return" migrants and "non-migrants." Building on and moving beyond current analytical frameworks of "migrant/non-migrant" (Xiang 2007) and "mobility/immobility" (Hannam et al 2006; Conradson and McKay 2007; Toyota et al 2007), I discussed "migrants who do not migrate" (Chapter 3), along with others who were undecided about whether to migrate (Chapter 6). Instead of looking at how migrants negotiate and practice mobilities, I examined the mobilities and motilities of "non-migrants" and "return migrants." "Migrants who do not migrate" demonstrate that existing migrant categories dominant in scholarly and policy-oriented research prevent us from recognizing other kinds of movement that are neither "transnational" nor simply "domestic/internal."

Cases of "migrants who do not migrate" have been highlighted to show that the costs and consequences of migration are always mediated by what is *morally* at stake in villagers' decisions about whether to migrate, return, or stay. Migrant-origin villagers perceive "migration" to have already begun from the time a person plans or takes active steps to work overseas. Such individuals who eventually do not manage to cross borders are typically referred to as "former" or "failed migrants," even if they have not left to the country because of physical sickness, deception, or fraud by recruitment agents, or if they simply changed their minds. Hazam and Desi (Chapter 3)

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are examples of prospective migrants who neither faced pressures to migrate, nor felt that their families needed extra financial support. Nevertheless, both left due to the promises of adventure and higher wages. When they failed to migrate, however, Hazam's fears of being shamed shaped his decision to delay his return to Cilacap, and to stay at an NGO shelter in Jakarta. Desi faced gossip and feelings of shame about her first failed migration attempt, which motivated her second try. After a second failure, she decided to get a job in Yogyakarta city, since she could not risk a third failure. These examples illustrate how shame shapes migrant-origin villagers' relative mobilities and motilities. The experiences of migrants who do not migrate point to the messiness of migration categories and relative motility in migrant-origin villages, where residents' capacity to move and their decisions to move, stay, and return, are linked to shifting moral expectations and subjectivities.

My research shows how migrant-origin villagers are vital participants in transnational migration, shaping attitudes towards migration and its effects, migrant success and failure, and migratory risks. Despite more complex understandings of migrants' agency, mobility, and fluid identities (Hannam et al. 2006; Constable 2014; Paraskevopoulou 2011), the mobility and motility of non-migrants have not been given the same attention. Villagers complicate common assumptions that migrant money is the primary indicator of migrant success, and that poverty, greed, or debt motivates many to migrate. Instead, I argue that gendered and moral attitudes in Central Javanese villages shape how residents variously value those who move, stay, and return; and associated labor, presence or absence, and money (or its lack).

I have argued that shame is a fundamental moral condition that organizes and shapes Central Javanese villagers' mobility and motility. On the one hand, "knowing shame" and "having shame" is linked to one's gendered dignity and social self-worth. On the other hand, *malu—*

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through shaming practices or stigma— also distinguishes those who acted out of step, in failing the expectations of others. *Malu* is thus circulated and cultivated among migrant-origin villagers. In addition to blaming and shaming migrants for "failed" migration journeys, migrant-origin villagers may blame migrants' kin (Chapter 4), absolve migrants and their kin of blame by blaming recruitment agents, or point to the role of divine and non-human entities (Chapter 5). Migrant-origin villagers may also blame foreign employers, migration, labor, or religious laws in destination countries, or foreign "culture" (Chapter 6). In other words, migrant-origin villagers experience and share shame intersubjectively; shame mediates whether relatives and friends encourage an individual to migrate, stay, or return, and also how they evaluate migrants' journeys and economic situations. For example, a migrant's financial debt and failed journey typically imply moral and social debts to others. Conversely, migration provides a potential opportunity to fulfil moral obligations "at home."

This dissertation departs from current studies that examine the moral regulation of either "migrants" or "non-migrants," by focusing on how shame, as a gendered moral condition, variously shapes residents' ideas and desires about moving, staying, returning, or re-migrating. Although migrant failures are shamed in individual ways, I argued that villagers' harsh judgments are also linked to how such failures reinforce shared social and economic vulnerabilities, rather than alleviate these uncertainties through migration. For example, I showed that the shaming of some failed migrants cautions unprepared individuals against migrating, and cultivates gendered moral discipline in others to persevere and succeed while abroad. Discourses of shame and shaming practices related to self and others not only shape how individuals subjectively experience pressures regarding whether they should move, stay, or return. They also shape individuals' approaches to alternatives to moving, staying, and returning, through talking about and acting on

their fates and destinies. In these ways, I argued that migrant-origin villagers' mobilizations of shame can be read an ethical response to the "collateral damages" of migration, in attempts to explain and reduce its perceived negative consequences.

7.4 DEVELOPING FAITH IN MIGRATION

Migration scholars in diverse geographical contexts have often briefly noted the frequent use of "luck," "fate," and "destiny" in narratives of migration decisions (Aguilar 1999; Brennan 2014; Suzuki 2003; Stoll 2013). This dissertation has examined how migrant-origin villagers evoked fate and destiny to explain or justify risky migration decisions—taking on disproportionate amounts of debt, knowingly traveling with someone else's passport, overstaying visas abroad, or running away from pre-departure training centers. Little scholarly attention has been paid to the notion of luck, fate, or destiny in these narratives, beyond the recognition that prospective migrants and migrants acknowledge the precariousness and uncertainty of their journeys (for an exception, see Chu 2010). I have argued that villagers' emphases on divine agency serves to acknowledge and cope with the inherent risks, loose regulations, and arbitrary nature of the migration process with its variable fees, rules, and legal loopholes. Fate and destiny emphasize the role of and limits to human agency in ensuring migration safety or success, while maintaining faith in migration's promises. I argue that villagers' focus on divine and non-human agency is not an escape into magic or superstition (Stoll 2013: 157; Huwelmeier and Krause 2010), or a denial or misunderstanding of the real risks of migration. Instead, these are pragmatic strategies for villagers to negotiate the risks and uncertainties of migration through cultivating and applying proper "human effort" through developing faith in God's intentions and divine justice.

Scholars of Indonesia have highlighted the ways the banner of Islam appeals to various demographics for diverse reasons. In general, they agree that Islamic discourses and identities enable individuals to negotiate moral anxieties in the context of greater individual responsibility and liability that comes with more opportunities, mobility and choice (Brenner 1996; 1998). It is important to note that these meanings associated with Islam and capitalism is uniquely different to other countries with a Muslim majority, such as in the Middle East, which typically do not share Indonesia's history of secularism, democracy, and explicit state focus on women's rights and education.

Narratives about Islamic-inflected fate and destiny have shown that "non-migrants" are not passively "left behind," but that they actively negotiate the terms of migration, mobility, and motility. "Failed migrants" or those who did not migrate drew on fate and destiny narratives to justify reasons for staying (Chapter 5), in staking their faith in alternatives to migration such as local agriculture, opening small shops, selling homemade snacks, or working in urban Indonesian cities. Although longer term research is required to elucidate the fine and fragile social dynamics and bonds of villagers of Cilacap and Yogyakarta, I argue that migrant-origin villagers' (variously positioned) moral judgments of migrants and migration can also be read as *ethical* and practical responses to the moral and existential anxieties regarding the inherent risks and arbitrary nature of the migration process. Villagers' circulation of stories of failure and shame as cautionary tales to prospective and current migrants. Put simply, these cautionary tales give valid reasons for some to stay amidst social pressures to migrate, while exerting immense pressures for those who leave to put in the "proper effort" and faith to return with "good fates."

7.5 BEYOND DEVELOPMENT

Surprisingly, despite the fact that the Indonesian state strongly promotes and facilitates migration, partially through regulating and licensing commercial recruitment and insurance agents (Chapter 2), migrant-origin villagers seldom held the state accountable or responsible for migrants' risky journeys. With the exception of cases where mass media and NGOs intervened, state institutions were seldom considered by migrant-origin villagers as viable options for problem resolution, healing of illnesses, or structural and social change (Chapter 5). Apart from a few outstanding examples in Wonosobo and East Jawa, there is a notable paucity of village-level political action or grassroots organization around migration-related issues.[53] I argue that this does not point to a general political indifference in Cilacap and Yogyakata: there were organized protests against foreign corporations and their foreign workers in Cilacap city (Mayono 2015). During my main fieldwork period, farmers and villagers near my Yogyakarta field-site held widely publicized protests against state plans to build an international airport nearby (Jakarta Post 2015, Oct 27). A partial explanation for collective inaction is thus that unlike factory uprisings or protests over land rights, there is no longer a single or "external" actor to blame (Dang et al 2013) for migrant fatalities, sickness, or debts. Even in cases identified as "human trafficking" (Palmer 2012), villagers, migrant activists, and state representatives, are aware that the Indonesian state, local recruitment agents, and extended family relations are implicated, to varying degrees, in these women's migratory journeys. Thus, I have suggested that the apparent political inaction regarding

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[53] Certain migrant welfare grassroots organizations have been effective both in facilitating legal and economic redress for return migrants who experienced abuse or fraud, as well as in highlighting migrant labor issues at the national level. I argue however, that these are exceptional cases where individual former migrants "brought home" advocacy skills typically learnt in Jakarta or from migrant NGOs abroad in destination countries. The vast majority of migrant-origin villages, however, lack such access to local grassroots organizations and NGOs, and their discourses of migrant and labor rights.

migration issues is related to how moral responsibility and blame for migrant injuries has been institutionally and discursively dispersed and refracted.

I argue that the absence of the state in villagers' discourses, alongside the presence of fate narratives, demonstrates the inadequacy and neglect of state institutions in addressing the many ways migration has negatively affected the lives and economies of migrant-origin villages. Some glaring examples are: how victims of fraud seldom get compensation while errant recruitment agencies continue to operate, the lack of autopsy for dead migrants, inadequate or inappropriate medical attention or social support provision to migrants who return in states of trauma or mental illness, and bureaucratic and logistical obstacles for migrants and their families to claim insurance and financial compensation in the event of migrant injury or death. In other words, the notable absence of the state in villagers' narratives of migrant failure suggests a lack of faith in the state's ability to address the everyday medical, financial, spiritual, or social concerns of villagers of Yogyakarta and Cilacap. Yet, the lack of political criticism also demonstrates villagers' acquiescence or indifference to these state and migration institutions, in the absence of competitive alternative access to livelihoods. This was evident in Indah's (Chapter 5) multiple attempts to find a financially sustainable job as a high school drop-out, and her response that choosing the "less evil" local recruitment agent was a better option than going through non-local agents. Her ambivalence about migrating, and consideration of the ill-reputed recruiter demonstrates that her relatively risky decision was nonetheless an informed one, and not out of ignorance or desperation.

This dissertation could be criticized for focusing too much on the "collateral damages" of migration, while overlooking the ways that remittances have contributed to building concrete houses, increasing children's education, increasing consumption capacity, and paying medical expenses for migrants' families and neighbors. I do not wish to deny or under-emphasize how

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remittances have enabled migrant-origin villagers to better afford these opportunities and resources. However, this dissertation has argued for a need to challenge the impetus to justify these "gains" of migration, over arguments by migrants and migrant activists that these "gains" entailed unnecessary and preventable risks and costs to migrants and their families. Indeed, the Indonesian state and migrants' destination countries often emphasize the "positive" developmental potential of migration in order to shift discussions away from structural or legal changes, in favor of improving migrants' labor rights and migration safety. As Nicole Constable has observed, a form of humanitarian reason "clearly underpins attitudes toward the employment of migrant workers from regions of the world that are considered poor… by wealthier labor-importing regions" (2014:18). In this view, the low wages and lack of legal protection for labor migrants are justified through a discourse of employment as assistance or charity (ibid.), where workers are treated as unappreciative "recipients of 'gifts' that create an obligation in the form of obedience and gratitude to the benefactor, as opposed to the expectations of labor rights, fair wages for their work, and the right of abode" (ibid.).

Currently (as noted in Chapter 2), the Indonesian state's solutions to migration's "problems" are to encourage migrant entrepreneurship and banking, to ban female migration to the Middle East, to forcefully repatriate migrants working illegally in Malaysia, to "stop" all domestic work migration by 2017, to open more international markets for Indonesian labor in "skilled" industries (mainly manufacturing and nursing), and to increase regulation of prospective migrants, such as imposing stricter "psychological checks" (DetikNews 2015, Apr 30; Indosuara 2014, May 29). In short, the state's solutions to the problems of migration are often to encourage

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more migration and to improve the "quality" of migrant workers.[54] These are accompanied by inter-governmental agreements to increase Indonesia's expansion into more foreign labor markets, and redirecting, or re-naming migration flows.

I join other scholars and activists who argue that current "solutions" by the Indonesian state may have the opposite effect of placing greater risks and burdens on migrants. Banning migration may only expand the black market for clandestine movement, while "psychological checks" increase costs of migration and symbolically target migrants' own mental conditions as a root "problem" of migration. These programs and discourses reinforce popular perceptions that migrant success and failure are a matter of individual responsibility or luck.

Due to a complex set of historical and contemporary factors, Cilacap and Yogyakarta villagers, like the vast majority of Indonesian citizens, perceive and experience increasing pressures to identify with Islam, or find Islamic practices more relevant to their life worlds than before (Bennett 2005; Boellstorff 2005; Bowen 1993; Brenner 1996; 1998; Hefner 1987; Hefner 2000; Smith-Hefner 2007) . This dissertation has shown some ways these emerging Islamic subjectivities limit and enable critique of exploitative or unfair labor and migration laws, and local norms of gendered morality, through its focus on individual fate, divine punishment and divine justice, as opposed to (worldly) social justice. While some migrants and activists draw on and reinforce gendered moral expectations to draw sympathy for their causes, such as in representations of the ideal feminine "victim," there are hopeful exceptions.

I point to activists who employ ethical-moral rhetoric based on Islam and nationhood to advocate for and participate in programs involving migrant welfare and rights, while suspending

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[54] For example, in 2015, the Ministry of Foreign Labor helped to publish a book distributed to migrant-origin villagers titled "99 Tips to Become a Successful TKI". See: http://www.solopos.com/2015/03/18/info-buku-buku-ini-ulas-99-cara-jadi-tki-sukses-585905

moral judgement on individual actors. Several activists with migrant or women's NGOs have politicized *nasib* (fate) discourses, in expressing that migrants' *nasib* depends on employers (*majikan*), the law (*hukum*), and education (*pendikikan*). This effectively reworks dominant *nasib* discourses pointing to luck, and destiny in media and government officials' representations of migrants' problems (Republika 2012, Nov 30). I met many activists, whether based in cities like Yogyakarta or Jakarta, or local community leaders, who perceived their roles in migrant-origin villages as changing people's fatalistic attitudes towards migration in terms of *nasib*. Many, such as those attending the workshop I described in Chapter 5, aimed to change the discursive context of *nasib* by public talks on trafficking and legal migration procedures, and discussion forums for return and prospective migrants. Those who see *nasib* as grounded in national and foreign laws, such as SBMI, have also focused on para-legal training for village leaders and local volunteers, in addition to advocating to change current regulations.

In my view, the more effective NGO and activist efforts have resulted in important infrastructural changes in some migrant-origin villages, such as the building of BP3TKI or its subsidiary P4TKI closer to migrant-origin areas. As evident in the case of Yogyakarta, the presence of NGO actors facilitate insurance claims and access to skill-training programs for return migrants who may have experienced legal, financial, or medical issues abroad. The lack of access to these in Cilacap arguably contributes to more precarious forms of migration from Cilacap as compared to Yogyakarta, as well as higher levels of migration alongside failed attempts to migrate. Nevertheless, both structural and discursive interventions can be effective in addressing migrant-origin villagers' anxieties, only if they are sensitive to their situated knowledges and experiences of risk. For example, in the 2015 discussions over how to redraft the National Regulation of Placement and Protection for Migrant Workers, SBMI recommended that although recruitment

agencies can be commercial entities, they should not be solely responsible for setting up and running pre-departure training facilities as well as medical insurance. The current regulations put recruitment agents solely responsible for these processes, which activists argue increases the vulnerability of prospective migrants and migrants to these brokers. The flipside is also that recruitment agencies may be bearing too much responsibility in running training processes and facilitating migration paperwork, and are sometimes easily and unfairly targeted as criminals in discussions about precarious migration. This is due to those who overcharge prospective migrants, while not ensuring that migrants acquire appropriate training or knowledge about foreign labor laws and their labor rights in preparation for their jobs and lives abroad. Instead, currently highly commercialized training facilities should be run as public educational institutions, like schools. Simultaneously, migrants' associations in destination countries are also drawing attention to the negligence of particular Indonesian Consulates and Embassies abroad that are inadequately staffed or unprepared to deal with cases of migrant abuse and labor disagreements.

These effective actions focusing on changing or improving infrastructural and legal provisions for migrant workers and migrant-origin villagers often require discursive reframing of moral, legal, and financial responsibility within migration processes and the migration industry.

7.6 CONCLUSION

This dissertation has shown some ways that the precarious labor migration economy is *morally* sustained in migrant-origin villages, despite the high risks and costs to villagers, in terms of finance, mortality, and health. One woman claimed nearly all migrants were "successful." Yet simultaneously and paradoxically, she participated alongside fellow villagers to circulate

individualized stories of migrant injuries, debt, and failures. I argued that these stories of failure tended to mobilize fear and gendered shame in some residents against migrating, or from returning as migrant failures. At the same time, through discourses of fate and destiny to explain these failures, migrant-origin villagers actively develop and sustain faith in the promised "successes" of migration. This dissertation thus traced how villagers mutually shape and cultivate relative mobilities and motilities in relation to risk, by mobilizing and dispersing gendered responsibility and blame for migration's losses and gains.

However, villagers' moral narratives, including those about (deserved, desirable, or inevitable) fate and destiny, must be contextualized in how moral responsibility for migration has been institutionally and discursively refracted by state agencies, newsmakers, and activists—discussions over who ought to intervene and in what ways. In other words, villagers' discourses of fate and destiny and their apparent political inaction in Cilacap and Yogyakarta are not due to ignorance about migration risks or processes. Instead, their emphasis on divine agency is grounded in acknowledgement of state complicity in the inherent risks, loose regulations, and arbitrary nature of the migration process with its variable fees, rules, and legal loopholes. This dissertation examined the dynamic interactions between how state agencies, national newsmakers, migrant labor NGOs, recruitment agents, and migrant-origin villagers explained migrant successes and failures. I argue that these various discourses of migration in terms of development, exploitation, luck or destiny, collectively shape attitudes in the village and nation towards what kinds of bodies and subjects should (or should not) circulate transnationally. In other words, transnational migrations from and returns to Central Java are actively shaped and sustained by multi-scalar gendered and moral discourses about bodies, labor, and finance, constituting *gendered moral economies of migration.*

My attention to the multi-scalar moral representations of migration's risks and rewards offers a unique approach to current migration ethnographies. By weaving together the views and narratives of migrant-origin villagers— including return migrants, prospective migrants, current migrants who are back for short visits, and those who have never migrated— this study challenges and complicates categories or analyses associated with mobility/immobility, migrant/ non-migrant. Instead, through examples like "migrants who do not migrate," this dissertation disputes representations of non-migrants as less socially, economically, and geographically active or mobile (Toyota et al 2007), and naively optimistic or ignorant about migration's "real" costs (Stoll 2013). Instead, I argue that Cilacap and Yogyakarta residents develop, mobilize, and practice gendered faith as a strategy to negotiate the risks and potential shame associated with migration, return, and staying behind. Such assumptions about the agency, intentions, or knowledge of prospective migrants and their "villages" significantly impact how policymakers, development workers, migrant activists, recruitment agents, and state representatives approach migration as a "problem" or "solution" to issues of rural unemployment, education, poverty, health, and gender equality.

Specifically, this study argues against scholarship and discussions about migration or approaches to "moral economy" that examine or assume moral rationality behind human behavior. Instead, *gendered moral economies of migration* contributes to the anthropology of morality by examining how ideas about the "moral" is gendered, organized and mediated through situated forms of communication and exchange. In addition to the role of national and international media, I showed how gendered moral economies of migration are constituted and sustained through seemingly mundane everyday village talk about migrant success and failure: their money, houses, beauty, and sickness.

In migrant-origin villages of Cilacap and Yogyakarta, residents appear to remain both hopeful and fatalistic about the future. By circulating and developing faith and shame, villagers draw on gendered, moral, and religiously inflected discourses of fate and morality to frame and explain the past, in order to act strategically on the present, for better futures. Above, I have pointed towards some hopeful strategies by NGOs and activists to make migration processes less costly or precarious for prospective and current migrants, and their families. In future extensions of this project, it would be productive to focus more on comparative gendered experiences and perceptions of rural-urban migration in relation to transnational migrations. Migrant men have become increasingly vulnerable in recent years. More migrant seafarers are involved in illegal fishing industries without prior knowledge or consent to this work. Illicit forms of male migration and brokerage to Korea and Japan have also grown. Ironically, these migration corridors have been increasingly popular due to general perceptions of better wages and stricter labor protection laws, where the Indonesian state promoted all state-facilitated and predominantly male migration to Korea and Japan as "formal" (hence, not precarious) work. In this context, the Indonesian government has declared it an achievement that numbers of documented female domestic labor migrants seem to be decreasing, linking it to their effective ban against migration to the Middle East (BNP2TKI 2014).

Future research should pay attention to how such statistics disguise the fact that risks are not reduced for all migrants, but may be simply justified, hidden, or transferred to other gendered industries, and how migrant-origin villagers participate in sustaining or containing faith in these new and continuing forms of precarious mobilities.

Indonesian migration charts

These three simplified charts were drawn to represent various options and pathways for individuals who decide to stay in the country and not migrate overseas; for those who decide to migrate; and for those who have arrived overseas. It is important to note that at any point, those who decide to stay may decide to migrate, and vice versa.
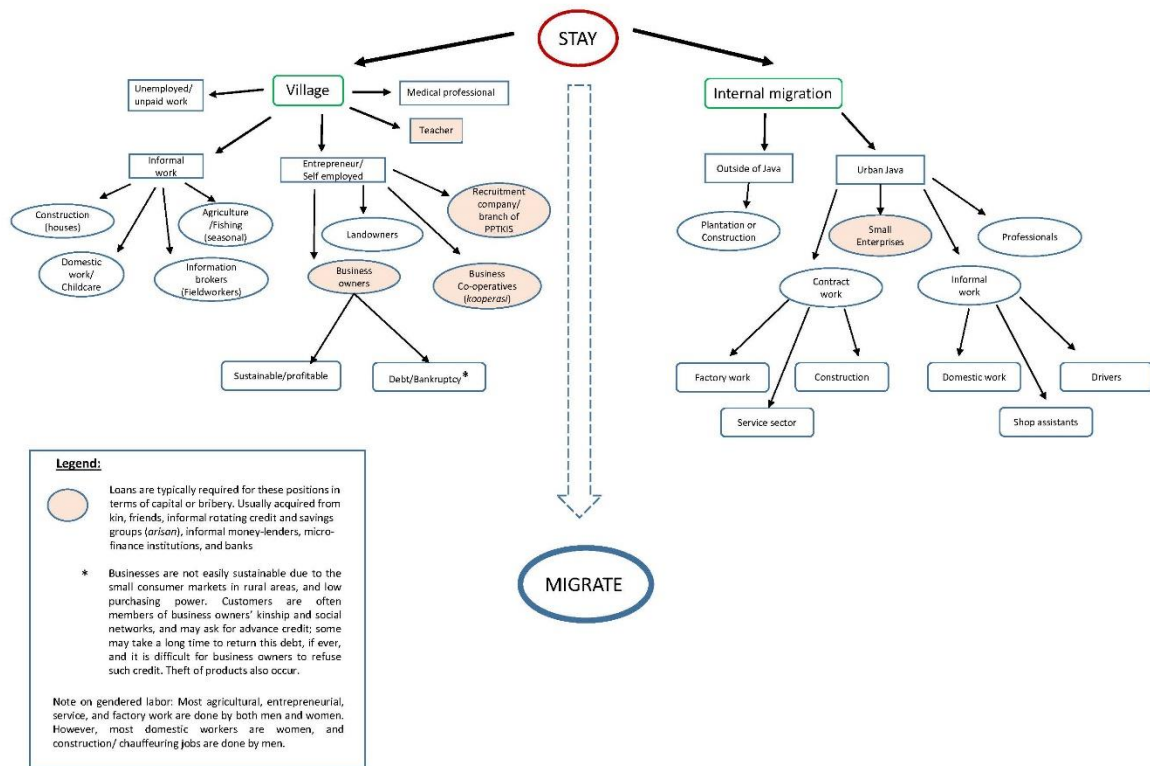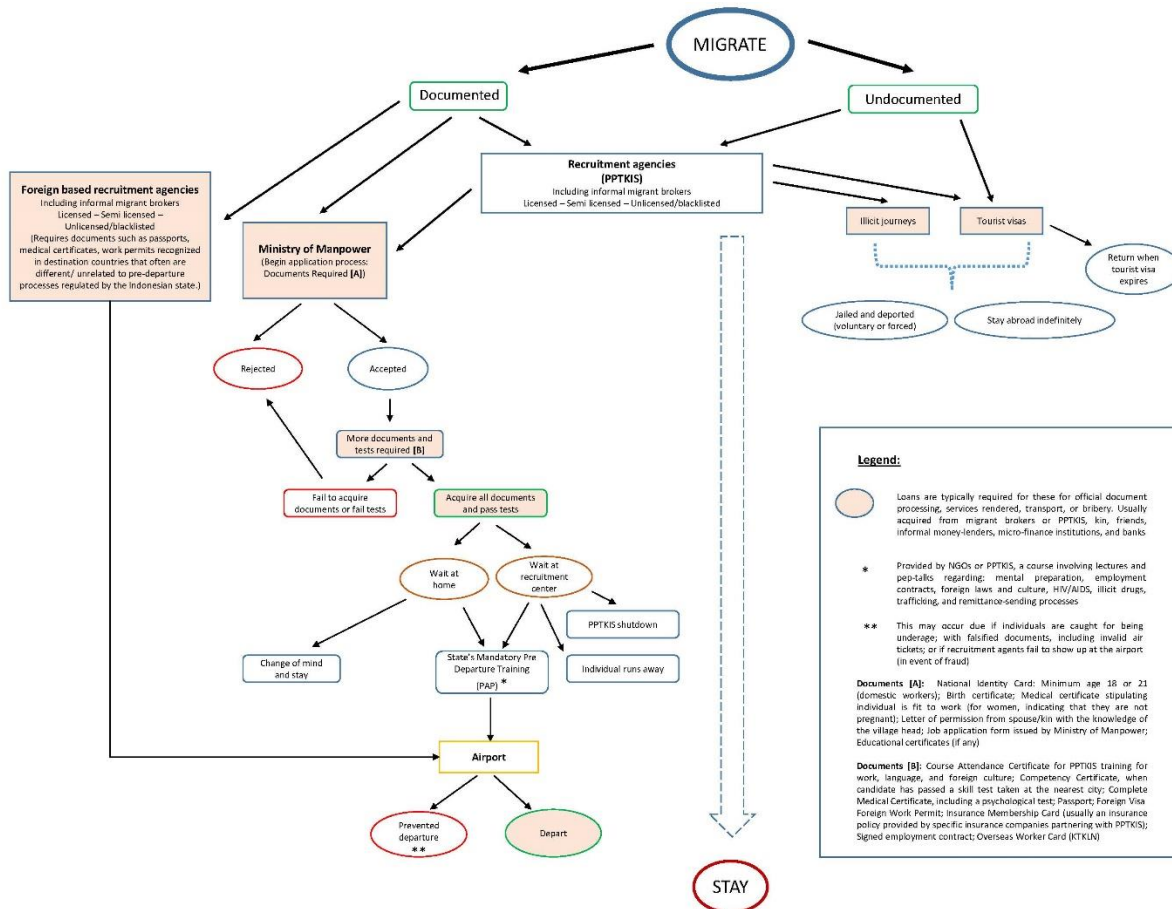

Figure 4. Migration chart 1: Stay

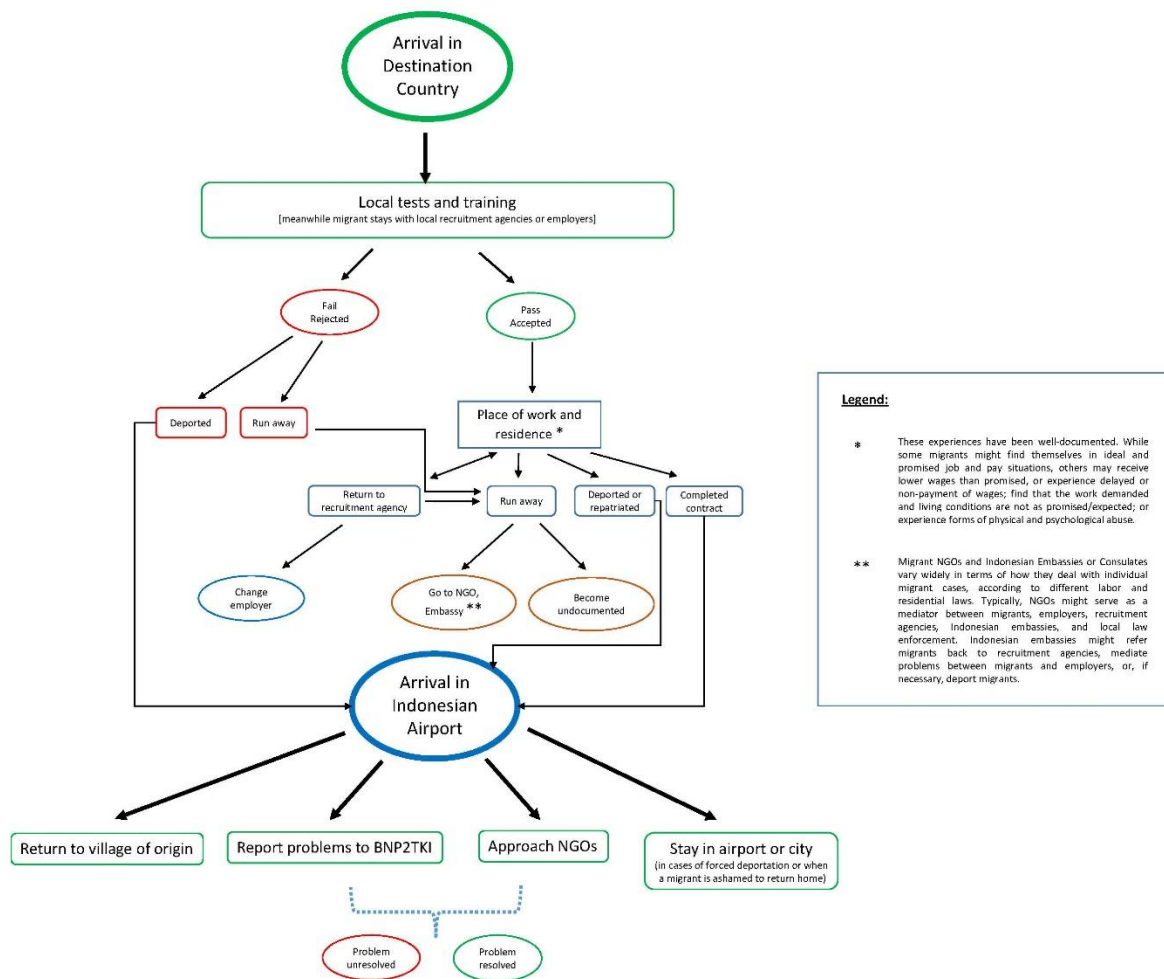**Figure 5. Migration chart 2: Migration Process**

Figure 6. Migration Chart 3: Arrival and Return

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