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August 2008

FIJIAN MASCULINITY AND ALCOHOL USE:
AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF MALE DRINKERS LIVING IN QAUIA SETTLEMENT

by

Edwin C.F. Jones

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

School of Social Sciences
Faculty of Arts & Law
The University of the South Pacific

2009

DECLARATION

Statement by Author

I, Edwin Jones, declared that this thesis is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published, or substantially overlapping with material submitted for the award of any other degree at any institution, except where due acknowledgement is made in the text.

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ABSTRACT

Alcohol use is relatively new to Fiji but is held responsible for a variety of social problems. In this deeply religious multiethnic society, current Fijian discourse about alcohol emphasises the negative impact of drinking – particularly on working-class Fijian men – and its opposition to the 'way of the land'. This thesis discusses Fijian masculinity and alcohol use by male drinkers from a social anthropological perspective, using ethnographic research conducted in the peri-urban settlement of Qauia and the nightclubs of Suva.

In Qauia, hierarchically structured social relations are most notably reiterated during the ritualised drinking of *yaqona* (kava), where differences in relative status are materialised in the sequence of drinking and spatial orientation of those present. Masculinity must be understood within the context of the power relations constituting this gendered hierarchy. Unlike *yaqona*, alcohol use occupies a marginal place in Qauia and is largely confined to episodic male drinking sessions. The purchase of alcohol for a group potentially subverts existing hierarchies through the sequence of drinking, emphasising a masculine power based on wealth and provision rather than ascribed birth status or age.

Drinking alcohol also signals a 'time-out' from normal rules and provides an excuse for culturally inappropriate behaviours linked to the assertion of male power. Masculinity continues to be informed by hegemonic gender relations in Fijian nightclubs, where alcohol intoxication and hypermasculine performances of interpersonal power are normalised. Drawing on recent developments within the sociology of masculinity I suggest that alcohol use and forms of alcohol-related behaviour potentially serve as compensatory masculine performances for young working-class men in Qauia, who are structurally subordinated in their home lives and in waged employment, and therefore limited in their ability to demonstrate an interpersonal power that is central to traditional definitions of Fijian masculinity.

CONTENTS

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

Fijians did not discover alcohol until European contact at the turn of the nineteenth century, with the arrival of explorers and traders followed by Christian missionaries and the country's cessation to Great Britain in 1874. Instead, Fijians had their own drink, *yaqona* (kava), prepared using the pounded sun-dried roots of a plant by the same name. The ritualised use of *yaqona* continues to be of major cultural importance and epitomises Fijian tradition in popular discourse. While the imported belief system of Christianity has displaced cannibalism, tribal warfare and indigenous religion, becoming smoothly incorporated with *yaqona* and chiefly structures into the 'way of the land' (*vakavanua*), alcohol remains on the periphery of cultural life and is held responsible for a range of social problems. The news media, police force and health services consistently highlight the threat alcohol poses to Fijian society, as do chiefs, religious leaders and figures of authority.

Considering that humans have been drinking alcohol for at least twelve thousand years (Patrick 1970: 12-13), its use is very new to Fiji and has been tempered by a number of factors. These include the entrenched place of *yaqona* in local culture, the cost of alcohol in relation to average income, and the influence of various Christian churches staking claim to religious authenticity among the indigenous population. Under colonial rule, furthermore, Fijians required a permit to purchase bottled alcohol. Restrictions on beer were lifted in 1958, and adult Fijian men were granted access to any alcoholic drink four years later (Casswell 1986: 25), prior to the nation gaining independence from Great Britain in 1970. Recently the legal drinking age was reduced from twenty-one to eighteen, a policy change welcomed by the tourism industry[1] but criticised by senior figures in the public health sector and various non-governmental organisations[2].

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[1] 'Amendments to Liquor Act hailed', *Fiji Sun*, May 21, 2009.
[2] 'Time will tell, Health says of new liquor law', *Fiji Times* newspaper, May 31, 2009.

Fiji's global reputation as a friendly island paradise belies the growing fear of alcohol-fuelled violence and crime in its urban areas. In this multicultural society of increasing economic inequality and political instability, young working-class Fijian men are portrayed as aggressors and threats to social cohesion, potentially corrupted by the *yaqona ni vavalagi* (lit. 'foreign *yaqona*', meaning alcohol) that is a feature of urban life. The sight of intoxicated, poorly-dressed youths swearing and fighting in the streets and nightclubs of Suva is a stark contrast to the picture in Christian churches across the country, where orderly men clad in ironed shirts and formal sulus[3] sing songs of righteousness and redemption with Bibles in hand. For the political and religious establishment, these images represent two distinctly opposed examples of Fijian masculinity in the twenty-first century. However, while alcohol is held in conceptual and ideological opposition to *yaqona*, Christianity and the 'way of the land' (*vakavanua*), the situation is complicated by the fact that some men can be found at drinking parties or nightclubs on Saturday night and then in church the following morning.

Why do some Fijian men drink excessively and then engage in behaviours that flagrantly violate cultural norms and the 'way of the land'? This thesis draws on ethnographic research conducted in the peri-urban settlement of Qauia and the nightclubs of Suva City to discuss the relationship between Fijian masculinity and alcohol use from a social anthropological perspective. It represents the first detailed effort to examine drinking in Fiji through the related lenses of gender and power, starting from the premise that alcohol use and forms of alcohol-related behaviour must be understood in their wider social and cultural context.

Chapter Two theorises gender and masculinity from a largely sociological perspective, providing a synthesis of approaches to serve as a basic model. This draws upon theories of embodiment developed by Pierre Bourdieu as well as the notions of gender performance and hegemonic masculinity, which has gained considerable academic currency in the past twenty years. Chapter Three then provides a brief description of

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[3] A sulu is a wrap-around male garment that has become a prominent symbol of hegemonic Christian masculinity in Fiji (Jolly 2008: 16).

Qauia, outlines the methodology used, and also briefly considers some ethical issues and limitations of the research.

Chapter Four describes social relations in Qauia, which are hierarchically structured through age and sex. This hierarchy is most notably expressed, constituted and reiterated during the ritualised drinking of *yaqona* (kava), where differences in status within domestic groups and beyond are made explicit in the sequence of drinking and spatial orientation of those present. As configurations of embodied practice, masculinities in Qauia are informed by hegemonic ideals concerning male power vis-à-vis women and other men, participation in gendered activities (e.g., *yaqona*-drinking, rugby and military service) and a range of principles or belief systems (e.g., male provision for kin, Christianity and heterosexuality).

In Chapter Five I give an account of the patterns, format and behavioural effects of alcohol use among male drinkers living in Qauia, while drawing comparisons with the ritualistic drinking of *yaqona*. While the system used to distribute and consume beer or spirits is modelled on the *yaqona* session, the purchase of alcohol potentially subverts existing hierarchies through the sequence of drinking, temporarily emphasising a masculine power that is based on financial wealth and provision rather than ascribed birth status or age. Alcohol use also signals a 'time-out' from normal rules for drinkers in Qauia, providing a suitable excuse for men to engage in gendered performances that are linked to the assertion or attempted assertion of male power (e.g., airing grievances, demonstrating heterosexual desire or fighting). Although these types of behaviours are culturally inappropriate, they are contextualised to drunkenness and implicitly reference hegemonic definitions of masculinity.

Unlike in Qauia, alcohol intoxication is normalised in Fijian nightclubs, and with it a range of hypermasculine performances of interpersonal power (including the use of violence or sexual aggression) that are designed primarily with other men as the intended audience. Chapter Six continues to discuss alcohol use by men living in Qauia, focusing specifically on drinking in nightclubs in Suva. These public urban spaces are

male-dominated environments characterised by a general tension between male homosociality and homophobia, where masculinity is defined more in terms of physical size, strength and appearance but continues to be informed by hegemonic gender relations.

In Chapter Seven I summarise the findings of the research through the model of masculinity outlined in Chapter Two. I then suggest that alcohol use and forms of alcohol-related behaviour potentially serve as compensatory masculine performances for young working-class men living in Qauia. I therefore start by providing a theoretical synthesis of approaches to gender and masculinity in the following chapter.

Chapter Two

THEORISING GENDER & MASCULINITY

> The fact that there are many masculinities and femininities, operating in different societies and in subcultures within the same society, as well as in different historical periods, appears to invalidate determinist notions of gender and to lend support to socially constructed notions of gender (Green 2004: 41).

> Masculinity is necessarily a social construction….Masculinities are configurations of practice within gender relations [which include] large-scale institutions and economic relations as well as face-to-face relationships and sexuality. Masculinity is institutionalized in this structure, as well as being an aspect of individual character and personality (Connell 2000: 29).

Ethnographic data continue to highlight a diversity of gender constructions cross-culturally; definitions of the categories man and woman, masculine and feminine, differ both from one cultural context to another and within specific contexts through time (Cornwall & Lindisfarne 1994; Connell 1995; Whitehead 2002). The present chapter does not provide an overview of research and theory related to gender and masculinity, but instead discusses key developments within this growing body of work in order to outline the theoretical model used to analyse the ethnographic data subsequently presented in later chapters.

Gender is theorised here as a multidimensional system of social practices, institutions and symbolic meaning that governs social relations, constructed through cultural and historical forces. Beyond their biological referents, masculinities and femininities – which are configurations of practice within this gender system – are shaped discursively by beliefs, ideals and values, and defined in part by relations of power. As feminism has shown, masculinity and manhood across cultural contexts are often equated with the drive for power and domination (Kimmel 1994).

While race and class are social markers that have long been understood as creating inequalities between groups, it required feminist theory to fully demonstrate the extent to which society is structured through gender. This is despite the fact that gender represents the most basic distinctions of social life. Structural-functionalism and earlier theoretical frameworks within the social sciences betray an androcentric bias by conceptualising essentialist masculinities and femininities as identical to biological sex categorisation. Such models do not adequately account for the relationship between gender and power, failing to describe the political and ideological dimensions of the gender system (Whitehead 2002; Nurse 2004; Wharton 2005). Feminism has revealed the systemic bases of power inherent in the structure of gender, and shown how gender is to a large extent constructed *through* practices of power. A central aim of the feminist project has been to "refute the conflation of the universality and the biological necessity of gender asymmetry" (Morris 1995: 568).

Simone de Beauvoir's (1953) seminal contribution to feminist thought provided an important starting point for key developments in the study of gender, with anthropological approaches influenced by 1970s Marxist feminism largely explaining gendered imbalances of power in symbolic (e.g., Ortner 1974) or materialist terms (e.g., Leacock 1981). Feminist theorists have generally worked within the conceptual framework of the 'sex/gender system', described by Rubin (1975: 165) as a "set of arrangements by which the biological raw material of human sex and procreation is shaped by human, social intervention". In this model, gender is related to human biology and its effect on male/female social relations but is not a *direct* product of sex; gender is grounded in perceived biological differences but is socially constructed. The sex/gender system cannot be theorised without reference to men and masculinity, and masculinity itself must be understood within the context of this multi-dimensional system.

Masculinity and femininity are positioned within the gender system as conceptual opposites. As Connell (1995: 68) argues, unless men and women are assumed to carry particular, polarised characteristic traits, the concepts of masculinity and femininity are without meaning: that which is masculine, by definition, cannot be feminine. The

categories of male and female, masculinity and femininity, are shaped through everyday interaction at the micro-level, and through the institutional control and regulation of gender at the macro-level (e.g., through family, school, religion). This level involves the allocation or distribution of resources – which are often structured in such a way as to reproduce male supremacy – as well as deeply held cultural beliefs (Ridgeway & Correll 2004: 510-511). These conscious and unconscious beliefs about the essential natures of men and women are "molded by existing macrostructural power relations" so that "the culturally appropriate ways of producing gender favor men's interests over those of women", and gendered power relations are reproduced through time (Pyke 1996: 530).

Masculinities can be understood at the level of the individual as those "ways of being that validate the masculine subject's sense of itself as male/boy/man" (Whitehead 2002: 4). This entails concepts such as 'masculine identity' and 'male sex-role'. Individual gender identity is often viewed as a product of socialisation, a concept used to explain the enculturating processes aiding children's growing competence as members of society. Wharton (2005: 31-40) delineates three broad frameworks associated with gender socialisation: social learning theory (emphasising gender identity as a result of positive/negative reinforcement, observation and modelling), cognitive approaches (focusing on the child's internalisation of gender meanings and schemas, often through Piagetian stages of cognitive development) and psychoanalytic perspectives (stressing Freudian notions of unconscious processes and early attachments with the mother in the formation of gender identity). These frameworks need not be mutually exclusive; indeed social learning and cognitive theories could be considered complementary in the sense that the former concentrate on the ways parents and others respond to children, whilst the latter are concerned with how children interpret the social environment. Freudian perspectives clearly diverge most from the other two by stressing the role of unconscious processes in the formation of gender identities, and also by conceptualising sexuality as the central problem of personality development.

Theories of gender socialisation describe the processes by which people *become* gendered; they consequently posit the distinction between masculine and feminine as

expressed in the individual (Wharton 2005: 40). As an internal part of the person, gender is portrayed as relatively stable and unchangeable. Femininity and masculinity, viewed in this way, are cultural values derived from gender roles (Mead 1949). This is the type of model used most notably in structural-functionalist frameworks (e.g., Parsons & Bales 1955) as well as various essentialist perspectives used within both popular and academic discourse, which ultimately posit gender as identical with biological sex. From a Parsonian perspective,

> Social roles are associated with particular positions in the social division of labour and provide scripts of femininity and masculinity that are learnt through the process of socialisation (Charles 2006: 72).

Whereas theories of gender socialisation seek to describe how individuals 'learn' what it is to be a man or woman through adopting social roles, approaches deriving from the tenets of symbolic interactionism primarily demonstrate that gender distinctions and oppositions are created and maintained through interaction between social actors, who are involved in a constant process of 'doing gender' (West & Zimmerman 1987) in the course of everyday life. This approach shifts the focus onto how gender is accomplished through the activities of individual actors, suggesting gender must be enacted or *performed* in some way (Garfinkel 1967; Kessler & McKenna 1978, West & Zimmerman 1987).

For Erving Goffman (1979) gender is primarily a type of display that is exhibited through interaction. Employing a theatrical metaphor, Goffman's (1959, 1979) dramaturgical perspective envisages 'actors' on a social 'stage' performing particular roles for the benefit of both themselves and the 'audience'. Gender displays align the actor with a particular subject position, conveying how he or she wishes to be identified by others. Actors are thus seen to be in a constant process of presenting the self, which cannot exist outside of social processes – it is not transcendental – but, in the symbolic interactionist tradition, is perceived as a reflexive form of accounting for both one's internal states and external relationships (Brickell 2005: 29-30).

A key term within Goffman's lexicon is 'impression-management', describing the conscious efforts of actors to present themselves – or their individual *selves* – to other participants in the interaction. The actor thus seeks to maintain the impression he or she wishes to be conveyed to others in any given situation (Goffman 1959: 17). From this perspective, masculinities represent a range of socially specific dramaturgical performances exhibited through face-to-face interaction (Goffman 1959, 1977). Masculinities are thus performed social identities rather than states of being:

> The masculine self can be understood as reflexively constructed within performances; that is, performances can construct masculinity rather than reflect its pre-existence, and socially constituted masculine selves act in the social world and are acted on simultaneously (Brickell 2005: 32).

Goffman (1977) also goes beyond the interaction order in his theoretical framework, for example by describing organised sports as an institutionalised means of expressing masculinity (see also, e.g., Messner 1992; Schacht 1996). Likewise, he argues that while toilet segregation is presented as a natural consequence of the difference between sexes, in fact it is seen to produce this difference (Goffman 1977: 316). As well as providing scripts for gendered performances, gender is therefore institutionalised as a principle of social organisation within various areas of social life. Furthermore, when people 'do gender', the "gender-based distribution of resources and rewards that privilege men is maintained" (Thompson & Cracco 2008: 84).

Several theorists (e.g., Dunn 1997; Campbell 2000; Brickell 2005) have noted the resemblances between Goffman's approach and the work of Judith Butler, who, in further deconstructing the sex/gender system, draws upon wider developments within both feminist and Foucauldian theory. Butler reworks the idea of gender as consciously performed or displayed through interaction in the concept of a reiterated gender 'performativity' that gives the illusion of a stable gender identity. Following Foucault (1978), Butler (1988, 1990) argues that distinctions between male and female, homosexuality and heterosexuality, are symbolic constructions contained within

regulatory discourses. Butler (e.g., 1988: 528) conceives of the self as constituted entirely within discourse, and theorises gender as an effect of discourse.

For Butler, gender and identity are elements of the discourse of sexuality. Performativity has thus been described as "the process by which difference and identity are constructed in and through the discourses of sexuality" (Morris 1995: 571). As the discursively gendered (and sexualised) body is seen as performative, it has "no ontological status apart from the various acts which constitute its reality" (Dunn 1997: 692). In extending the anti-essentialist logic of social constructionism, performativity theory thus implies that gender identity is dynamic rather than natural and fixed. Butler has accordingly proved highly influential within the emerging field of queer theory, by claiming that sexuality is socially constructed. Indeed Butler (e.g., 1990: 18) argues that the invocation of heterosexuality is crucial to the gender distinction. Both Butler and Goffman, in common with interactionist theorists of the ethnomethodological mould (e.g., Garfinkel 1967; Kessler & McKenna 1978, West & Zimmerman 1987) therefore demonstrate that the performance of discourses can be as constitutive as their content. Masculinities, viewed in this way, are purely social constructions.

A number of writers have recently contributed to a growing body of work on the performative qualities of masculinity in various contexts (e.g., Quinn 2002; Brickell 2005; Edwards 2006; Grazian 2007). In addition to developing some of the ideas proposed by Goffman and Butler, this has been related to the idea that masculinity is frequently tied to personal achievement. Gilmore (1990), in a review of cross-cultural definitions of masculinity, claims a nearly universal feature of manhood is that it must be achieved. This requires certain ways of behaving and acting in front of the social group; attaining adult male status is in effect evaluated or judged by other men and women. Gilmore suggests that, across cultures, masculinity is linked to the three pillars of reproduction, provision and protection, all of which require personal autonomy (Gilmore 1990: 49).

In common with Margaret Mead (1949) – who commented on the seemingly universal requirement for men to prove achievement, with women's activities devalued as a result – Gilmore argues that the popular belief that manhood is 'earned' devalues womanhood. This contributes to the control of men over women in many societies (Gilmore 1990: 221). Anthropological literature on masculinity has therefore often focused on "how men in different cultural contexts perform their own and others' manhood" (Gutmann 1997: 386). For example, it is often the case that young men need to 'prove' themselves through being successful at rituals or initiation rites, or by demonstrating acts of bravery (see, e.g., Marshall 1979; Herdt 1984; Gilmore 1990).

Following Freudian notions of the development of gender identity, it has been argued (e.g., Gilmore 1990; Conway-Long 1994) that, in various cultural settings, girls tend be integrated into domestic work through links with female kin, whilst boys need to show psychological and emotional separation from the mother. Whereas girls' status is more closely linked to age, boys' status is usually defined by achievement. In contrast with women, who "naturally embody their own femininities", men "need to 'do' something to become masculine" (Conway-Long 1994: 70). Across various social contexts, furthermore, women are often valued for their appearance whilst,

> [M]en are expected to demonstrate bodily skill in terms of their competence to operate on space, or the objects in it, and to be a bodily force in terms of their ability to occupy space. This competence is developed through cults of physicality, sport (formal and informal), drinking, fighting, work and so on… [C]ertain forms of manual labour like lifting digging, carrying are closely linked to some sense of bodily force in masculinity (Valentine 2001: 43).

In Western societies paid work has historically been an important part of adult masculine identity, especially within modern industrial capitalism (Tolson 1977; Nurse 2004; Edwards 2006). Manual work ties in with ideas about the embodiment of a *physical* masculinity, which is also implicated in institutions such as the military. Tosh (2004) suggests some of the 'traditional' characteristics of masculinities in many areas of the world – such as emotional control, heterosexual desire, homophobia, the development of musculature, aggression and physical violence, and risk-taking behaviours – are core

features of 'militarised masculinities'. Military service is also often seen as an honourable method to gain masculine reputation and social status.

Another activity closely related to cross-cultural definitions of masculinity (and a potential source of male status and prestige) is organised sport, which "socializes boys to be men" (Messner 1992: 62) by teaching cultural values and behaviours such as competitiveness and toughness. Rugby, for instance, both reflects and supports the subordination of women and a hierarchical ideology of masculinity (Schacht 1996). As with manual work and military service, sport emphasises male physicality (Connell 1983: 18-20). In addition to often excluding females and thereby aiding the homosocial enactment of 'male bonding' (Tiger 1984: 208), activities such as sport and military service stress bodily performance as a defining component of masculinities.

While, for girls, bodily appearance is often pivotal to producing a heterosexual feminine identity, bodily performance is seen as central to a boy's ability to maintain a hegemonic masculine identity (Connell 1987; Mac an Ghaill 1996; Valentine 2001). This key difference can perhaps also be linked to the cross-cultural pattern of gendered double standards regarding sexual activity. Female chastity or virginity before marriage is idealised in many cultural settings, whilst boys are usually permitted a greater level of freedom in this respect (see, e.g., Davis & Davis 1994: 227-228). It is thus often the case that a girl or woman is able to have her reputation tarnished by way of sexual behaviour, or even through, for example, choice of clothing.

For men on the other hand, a high level of (hetero)sexual activity is often seen as an indicator of masculinity. Indeed showing one's manhood through sexual encounters has been theorised as an important aspect of masculinity in various contexts (e.g., Gilmore, 1990; Gutmann, 1997). Masculinity often requires proof of heterosexuality as a type of gender performance (see, e.g. Quinn 2004; Grazian 2007), whilst femininity is usually not conceived in the same way. Goffman (1963: 128, 153) describes heterosexuality as a central pre-requisite for masculinity in the United States and other areas; masculinity

and male heterosexuality[4] are virtually synonymous in many parts of the world (Gilmore 2005).

R.W. Connell (e.g. 1987, 1995, 2000), among other theorists using the hegemonic masculinity framework, has consistently "stressed the way in which 'being a man', and being a 'proper man', is intimately grounded in the male body and sexuality, with privileged corporeal styles extruding those that are adjudged improper, feminized, or deviant" (Jolly 2008: 25). Some of the masculine themes described previously – such as bodily performance and heterosexuality – are common features of hegemonic masculinities across various cultural contexts.

Describing hegemonic masculinity, Connell (1995: 77) argues that, in any situation and at any time, "one form of masculinity rather than others is culturally exalted". It is important to bear in mind that hegemonic masculinity is a discursive practice, not a dominant stereotype or normative behaviour. Various forms and definitions of masculinity exist in any given context, along with various configurations of masculine practices and identities, which are hierarchically structured around hegemonic understandings (van Hoven & Horschelmann 2005: 8). Rejecting what is constructed as feminine is essential for performing hegemonic masculinity in a patriarchal and gender-dichotomous society. Connell (1995: 79–82) suggests that most men are complicit in supporting hegemonic masculinity, despite being subordinated or marginalised by it, because they derive a 'patriarchal dividend' as a result. This is seen to ensure men's collective power and privilege over women.

While hegemonic masculinity is seen as the ultimate guarantor of collective male dominance within patriarchal societies, it also creates power imbalances between men. Indeed hegemonic definitions of masculinity "receive their legitimacy from the marginalization of other forms of masculinity" (van Hoven & Horschelmann 2005: 8). These may include those of different ethnicities, social classes, ages and sexualities.

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[4] Although see, for example, Herdt's (1984) discussion of ritualised homosexuality in Melanesia and the implications for Western models of gender and sexuality.

Hegemonic masculinities define successful ways of 'being a man', and define other masculine styles as inadequate, inferior or feminized (Cornwall & Lindisfarne 1994; Connell 1995). Interpretations of maleness and masculinity therefore have political implications, privileging some men (and women) in patriarchal societies.

Walby (1990: 20) describes patriarchy as a "system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women". In many societies, Walby suggests, there is the expectation that men will participate in and support structures creating inequality. Patriarchy includes the rule of the father, the rule of older men over younger men, of fathers over daughters, and of husbands over wives (Nurse 2004: 23). In capitalist political economies, furthermore, this principle extends to relations of production. Theorists have therefore demonstrated that patriarchy creates inequalities both within and between genders, principally on the basis of class, but also through ethnicity and other factors (see, e.g., Pleck 1995; Pyke 1996; Nurse 2004).

Tolson (1977) provides an early attempt to account for the links between masculinity and social class, describing the English working-class' relationship to waged employment as one of both alienation and dependence. He argues that losing a sense of subjectivity and control through workplace relations leads subordinated men to emphasise different aspects of masculinity in order to discursively maintain a position of dominance. These *compensatory* or *protest* masculinities are a result of gendered identities standing in opposition to capitalist relations of production (Mac an Ghaill 1996: 31). Similarly, Messerschmidt (1993: 83) suggests that men who are unable to prove their masculinity through the normal channels must find alternative "masculine-validating resources". For example, in social contexts where it is difficult to achieve status, violence can be viewed as functional and of benefit in some way to those taking part in fights (see, e.g., Fagan & Wilkinson 1998).

Pyke (1996: 538) describes a hypermasculinity among men in the United Status that compensates for their subordinated status in the hierarchy of their everyday work worlds. This includes violent behaviour, the use of alcohol or drugs and ostentatious

sexual carousing, all of which demonstrate masculine strength and power. Pyke (1996: 531) argues that men "with their masculine identity and self-esteem undermined by their subordinate order-taking position in relation to higher-status males" often use other resources to "reconstruct their position as embodying true masculinity". Researchers in Western nations have described various forms of hypermasculinity – positioned in relation to hegemonic masculinity – that compensate for a lack of power in particular areas of men's lives. Hypermasculine performances often include the use of alcohol and forms of alcohol-related behaviour (e.g., Tomsen 1990, 1997; Peralta & Cruz 2006; Peralta 2007).

The concept of hypermasculinity is utilised as part of a hegemonic masculinity framework. Although not without its limitations[5], this framework is useful because it incorporates the theorising of power relations in the construction of masculinity, which is often defined by male dominance over women (Leach 1994: 37). Theorists need to be aware of the mechanisms of power that inform both men's relations with women and men's relations with other men, and the concept of hegemonic masculinity attempts to illuminate some of these. The notion of hegemony (e.g., Gramsci 1971) from which the hegemonic masculinity framework is partly derived has particular theoretical use insomuch as "the understanding of hegemony as an ongoing form of negotiation represents an advance on conceptions of power which see it as the static possession of a particular social group" (Jones 2006: 55). While hegemony is in constant negotiation, however, it also gains its status through particular ideologies becoming naturalised, so that certain elements of the gender system go unquestioned.

In accounting for the naturalisation processes contained within social practice, Pierre Bourdieu (e.g., 1977) developed a range of conceptual tools, including habitus, fields, doxa and capital. Following Marcel Mauss' use of the term, *habitus* is conceptualised as a set of dispositions for thought and behaviour, varying from "forms of bodily deportment, speech, gesture, dress and social manners, through ranges of motor and

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[5] For example, despite the aim to bridge the structure/agency dichotomy, the hegemonic masculinity framework ultimately takes a structuralist position by using the idea of hegemony in a way that emphasises struggles for power between polarised, competing groups (see, e.g., Whitehead 2002: 92-94).

practical skills, to specific kinds of mutual knowledge and collective memory" (Stones 2006: 79). Habitus is where social and bodily practices intersect, mediating between the levels of social structure and individual agency. Social structure is viewed in this way as both the medium within which the practices of individual actors are realised and as the outcome of those practices (Turner 1992: 293; see also, e.g., Giddens 1984).

As routinised schemes of thought and behaviour, habitus "perpetuates itself into the future by making itself present in practices structured according to its principles" (Bourdieu 1977: 82). Habitus is reproduced through time in the repetitive, everyday enactment of gendered social practice:

> [A] gendered habitus is reproduced through daily social practices such as sharing food and learning how to sit, move, dress and talk; gender is thereby conceptualised as embodied practice (Charles 2006: 75).

Gendered habitus entails the naturalised embodiment of socially constructed sex-based gender arrangements (Conway-Long 1994: 72-73). Masculinities and femininities are in part defined by gendered forms of habitus and the distinctions these create between men and women. For Bourdieu (1998: 53), "[m]anliness is an eminently relational notion, constructed in front of and for other men and against femininity". Gendered habitus nevertheless operates at a less conscious level of awareness than suggested by Goffman's (1959) idea of gendered performances and the presentation of self. As an internalised grammar of practice developed through lived experiences, furthermore, habitus inscribes meanings onto both the body and psyche of the individual:

> While behavioural routines are grounded in a conceptual framework (e.g., opposed categories such as 'male' and 'female'), through repetition they become embodied and can be activated without conscious reference to cognitive categories (Turner 1992: 294).

Bourdieu (e.g., 1977) argues that within the realm of social practice exist a number of *fields* shaped by organising forces and principles. These fields are conceptualised as social domains where there are struggles for power and position. Actors' relative

positions within fields are determined by the value of *capital* (e.g., economic, social, cultural or physical capital) that they own and their ability to use this 'effective power' through *habitus*. Symbolic capital is the form other capitals take when they are perceived and recognised as legitimate; indeed it is the ability of these forms of capital to be converted into symbolic capital that makes them effective in any given field.

Within Bourdieu's theoretical framework the relative values attached to forms of capital used to negotiate positions – as well as the definitions of these forms of capital – differ between particular fields. For example, physical capital (defined as a specific type of bodily skill in this instance) is of most worth in the social field of sport, and the most easily converted into symbolic capital. Similarly, economic capital (monetary wealth) exerts power in the form of symbolic capital in other fields. Particular social fields require different dispositions in order to negotiate capital; aspects of habitus drawn upon in social practice must be appropriate to the relevant field in order to be effective (Bourdieu 1993: 73). From Bourdieu's perspective, individuals are thus differentially positioned by their ability to develop types of habitus that are suited to a field and then use forms of capital that are of value in that field.

Bourdieu's use of *doxa* – as those acquired beliefs and values shaping individual action and cognition in a particular field – shares similarities with Gramsci's (1971) description of the processes by which ideologies attain hegemonic status in societies. As with hegemony, doxa is theorised as privileging those in dominant positions by achieving a level of unconscious acceptance. When forms of habitus correlate with the organisation of a field, a doxic relationship emerges and social structures, such as gender, are reproduced. Doxa contains the unconscious political or ideological dimensions of gendered social practice. In this way, arbitrary cultural arrangements implicated in the distribution of power appear as natural and fixed. Bourdieu (1998) explored some of these ideas in his discussion of masculine domination, which like other hegemonic formations within the gender system, is rooted in doxa, giving "the social order of genderedness the quality of self-evidence" and "the appearance of the natural order of things" (Uhlmann 2000: 142).

A Theoretical Synthesis

Both conscious gender displays or performances and unconscious embodiments of gender arrangements are located within the parameters of social practice, which is seen to "produce the gendered person" (Wharton 2005: 53). Masculinities are configurations of practice that are positioned in relation to other masculinities and femininities within the multidimensional gender system. In addition to offering a form of identity, masculinities incorporate political and ideological dimensions by defining appropriate roles, values and expectations for and of men (Leach 1994: 36). Largely due to the influence of feminism, gender is now conceived as a central category for analysing power relations, with contemporary approaches increasingly viewing gender "as an *effect* of dominant discourses and matrices of power" (Valentine 2001: 22, see also Butler 1988, 1990).

The concepts of gender performance and hegemonic masculinity can be incorporated into a Bourdieusian theoretical framework in the following way: in particular social fields, it can be said that men are relatively positioned by their ability to use specific forms of capital allowing them to perform specific elements of hegemonic masculinity. Masculinities are deployed strategically within various social fields in order to negotiate one's position, requiring different styles of habitus in order to effectively use different forms of capital within these fields. Hegemonic masculinity is linked to the distribution of power in various cultural contexts. Definitions of masculinity and masculine performances are structured around hegemonic ideals, privileging some me while maintaining men's collective[6] power vis-à-vis women across social fields. Male domination, like hegemonic masculinity, is naturalised in the doxa of gender and therefore beyond the scope of ordinary discourse:

> Masculinity becomes a performance of dominance…The ways in which men speak, move, express desire, and construct symbols become dramatic performances that, due to the process of naturalization described by Bourdieu

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[6] It must be stressed that this *collective* power cannot be equated to the distribution of *individual* power, as women occupy positions of authority and power in a range of situations.

and feminist analyses of gender, are often outside the realm of social and political discourse (Conway-Long 1994: 71).

This synthesis of approaches provides a basic theoretical model through which to explore masculinity in Qauia, a peri-urban settlement in Fiji, using ethnographic research carried out in this location and in the nightclubs of nearby Suva City. Chapter Five and Chapter Six discuss alcohol use and alcohol-related behaviour by male drinkers in Qauia and in Fijian nightclubs, respectively. Prior to this, in Chapter Four, I give an account of social relations, *yaqona*-drinking and hegemonic masculinity in Qauia. However I start by providing a description of Qauia and the methodology used to collect data in the following chapter, where I also address a few ethical considerations.

Chapter Three

RESEARCH SETTING & METHODOLOGY

The twenty-acre area of land known as Qauia – also sometimes referred to as Qauia Village or Qauia settlement – is approximately seven kilometres west of Suva, the capital of Fiji. Qauia is located at the end of a suburban quiet residential road (Qauia Street) leading from the centre of Lami Town, a small urban centre that includes facilities such as a supermarket, bank, police station and petrol station. From Lami Town it is a ten or fifteen minute walk to Qauia, a journey costing fifty cents on the bus or FJ$2 in a taxi. At the end of Qauia Street, on the corner of the road as it turns up a hill, is a makeshift bus shelter and an *ad hoc* taxi base There is also a small shop, run by a Chinese family, which sells bread, packaged food and similar goods, but no alcohol or *yaqona* (kava).

Past the bus shelter is the Lami River, which is crossed into Qauia either on a concrete bridge wide enough for one car to pass over at a time, or on a narrow wooden bridge higher above the water. On rare occasions when the river floods above the level of the concrete bridge, this wooden bridge, which was built some time before, is the only option into the settlement. On the other side of the river, the road – which is poorly constructed and maintained – continues for about a twenty-minute walk straight up towards another bend in the Lami River. There are houses on both sides of the road virtually all the way up to this part of the river, and outwards from the road in either direction.

There are small gardens of taro, cassava and similar crops on the edges of the settlement and within some parts of it, whilst in other sections the houses are too densely packed for any remaining land to be of much use. In many areas of Qauia the houses are connected by a series of concrete footpaths leading from the main road on both sides; these have been constructed in a rather vague fashion and are littered with cracks and potholes. The houses themselves are of various levels of permanence and have been

built using a range of construction materials, mainly wood and corrugated iron. A few structures remain unfinished or have been abandoned. Some houses have radios, televisions and DVD players, and many – though by no means all – have electricity, running water and flush toilets. The general infrastructure, however, is rather disorganised and reflects the way in which the area has developed over the last fifty years.

As a result of the increasing population, lack of space and substandard facilities (such as inadequate drainage and access to waste disposal), there is overcrowding and a growing pressure on the surrounding environment, especially in certain areas. Pollution is a major problem in Qauia, which as an informal housing settlement does not enjoy the same council facilities offered to residents in other urbanised areas. There is often an infrequent supply of piped water. Despite being visibly polluted, people bathe and wash clothes in the part of the river that is bridged twice at the entrance to Qauia. In July 2008 a homemade sign was erected on the riverbed reading *Sa Tabu Na Benu I Wai* ('dumping rubbish in the water is forbidden'), but this has since been removed. The part of the river *i cake* ('above', i.e. beyond where the road finishes the road at the end of the settlement) is much cleaner than *i ra* ('below', i.e. at the entrance).

Qauia receives a significant amount of rainfall, especially during the warmer summer period from November to April, when cyclones and flooding are more prevalent. The climate throughout the year is warm and tropical, and the vegetation around Qauia is fairly dense. Other than domesticated pigs and chickens, there are also roaming dogs, cats, birds, rats and mongooses, and plenty of mosquitoes. Although Fiji is considered free of malaria, dengue fever is fairly common in Qauia, as elsewhere in the country.

Qauia is often referred to by others living outside its boundaries, and also in academic literature (e.g., Bedford 1978: 64), as a 'squatter settlement'. According to a recent study,

> It is currently estimated that roughly 12.5% of Fiji's population is living in over 182 settlements around the country. Most of these settlements are to be found in

and around the major urban centres...It is estimated that at least 16.4% of the population of greater Suva are now "squatters" (Barr 2007: 3-4).

However, as Bryant notes,

> The term 'squatter' is used loosely in Fiji to include all spontaneous or informal settlements which have substandard and unauthorized structures and a lack of basic services. It does not apply solely to those who have occupied land illegally (Bryant 1990: 178-179).

In Fiji, inalienable indigenous land accounts for 87.9% of the country, freehold land covers 7.9%, state land 3.9% and the remaining 0.3% is Rotuman[7] (Fiji Islands Bureau of Statistics 2007a). Qauia settlement is on native land owned by the Nasevou *mataqali* (lineage) of nearby Lami village, which has a much smaller population of 634 spread across 113 households (Fiji Islands Bureau of Statistics 2007b). The landowners have given verbal consent to many of those staying in Qauia, often following traditional Fijian *vakavanua* ('in the manner of the land', or 'the way of the land') requests involving the tributary presentation of symbolically valued items such as *ibe* (Fijian mats), *yaqona* (kava) roots and, the most highly valued of all, *tabua* (whale's teeth). In addition to these tributes, some residents pay a small fee to the landowners to stay, usually in the region of FJ$20 per plot per year.

The rights of extended families to build new houses on particular tracts of land in Qauia, and of existing occupiers of land to sublet space and property, have become increasingly contentious issues (for further discussion, see Rutz 1987: 546-548). Such practices have contributed to a rapid increase in population during recent years and various problems associated with overcrowding. The Native Land Trust Board (NLTB), which is responsible for administering the use of indigenous land in Fiji, recognises these informal *vakavanua* ('the way of the land') arrangements but does not offer any legally binding agreement (Barr 2007: 17).

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[7] Rotuma is a Fijian Dependency 465 kilometres to the north of Fiji. It is fully incorporated but has a local government and a more autonomous status than other parts of the country. This small percentage of land accounts for the island of Rotuma and nearby islets.

Baba (1975; as cited by Bedford 1978: 64) notes that insecurity of land tenure contributes to a feeling of uncertainty amongst at least some of Qauia's residents. Despite this, the settlement has a more permanent feel to it than might be expected; indeed the house I was living in during the time of the research was built some time around 1958, making it the oldest structure in that area of the settlement. As Qauia became larger, it was divided into twelve sections, which were originally based on tenants' ancestral place of origin within Fiji. This has changed somewhat over the years, as land was progressively allocated on the basis of where it was available. The previous distinctions of twenty or thirty years ago have thus been abandoned to a certain extent, although congregations of people from a particular province or even village are still the norm.

Although Bryant (1992: 95) refers to Qauia as an 'urban village', there is no recognised chiefly or traditional village structure as found elsewhere in Fiji (see, e.g, Sahlins 1962; Ravuvu 1987; Toren 1999). This has perhaps been responsible for an absence of co-operation between different groups in the area (Bedford 1978: 64). Due to its geographical location and other factors outlined above, Qauia is best described as *peri-urban*. It is clearly distinguishable from both more developed urban areas and the 'village setting', which for comparative purposes I am using here in an extremely broad sense to apply to rural villages throughout Fiji.

Storey (2003: 275) claims that the peri-urban interface in the Pacific region "is characterized by a contest for space, changing social structures and fragmented institutions". Accordingly, there is occasional conflict or violence in Qauia in addition to a range of social problems, yet there is also a sense of community. This is evidenced by, for instance, youth groups and occasional *bose ni koro* (village meetings). Informants generally felt that the area is a safe place to live, despite the negative reputation it has gained in the past. Bedford (1978: 65), for example, wrote some time ago that "Qauia is a haven for one of Suva's more destructive street gangs", a possible reference to the now-defunct QMB ('Qauia Mob Boys' or 'Qauia Mafia Boys'), whose graffiti still adorns various parts of the settlement.

Qauia is a predominantly ethnic Fijian settlement with a population of 2,371 spread over 387 households (Fiji Islands Bureau of Statistics 2007b). This represents a 31% increase in population and a 41% increase in the number of houses since 1996, reflecting the general rural-urban shift characterising migratory patterns in Fiji and the rising cost of accommodation in the Suva region. As Barr (2007) suggests, the basic causes of 'squatting' in Fiji are migration, poverty and the high cost of public housing in urban areas. The Fiji Islands Bureau of Statistics (2007b) gives the following statistics for the number of households and total population in Qauia by ethnicity:

Number of Households in Qauia

Total	Fijian	Indian	Rotuman	Others
387	383	1	1	2

Population of Qauia

Total	Fijian	Indian	Rotuman	Others
2,371	2,324	3	2	42

Source: Fiji Islands Bureau of Statistics (2007b)

These numbers are complicated by the considerable flow of people between Qauia and rural areas. Some schoolchildren – who stay with relatives during the school calendar, and whose parents reside elsewhere – will go home for various holidays throughout the year. Many parents in rural areas in Fiji are keen to send their children to the city for an education, often simply due to a lack of a local alternative, especially at high school level. Approximately 50% of Fiji's population is under the age of 25 (Fiji Islands Bureau

of Statistics 2007a), and there are children living in virtually every occupied house in Qauia, many of whom have left villages in rural areas to stay with family members. On average there are more than six people living in one house, but at times there may be ten or twelve sleeping under the same roof.

There are other young people who have left school and who come to Qauia in an attempt to find employment in the Suva area. Whether initially successful or not, many end up staying permanently, whilst a smaller number will eventually return to their village. Some older people not in paid employment may also travel back and forth from their home village, spending perhaps several weeks at a time in either location. Then there are others still who, as is usual in Fiji, are simply visiting relatives, often for extended periods of time. The population is therefore more mobile and transient than in many other localities within the Suva region.

Residents of Qauia originate from different provinces in Fiji and usually retain a strong connection to their ancestral place of origin, as is normal for many Fijians living in and around urban areas. It should be noted that when I use the terms 'home village', 'place of ancestral origin' or similar phrases, I do so to reflect Fijians' own conceptualisation of their localised identities within the country. As Norton (1993: 746) notes, most urban dwellers "maintain strong involvement in the life of traditional clans, villages and chiefdoms". Those living in Qauia invariably consider themselves as originating from other places; none would say that he or she is 'from' the settlement. Instead people refer to themselves as, for example, *Kai Lau* or *Kai Ra*, with the prefix *kai* meaning 'native of' and the second part proclaiming their Fijian province of origin. Following the standard Fijian system of patrilineal descent, this would normally indicate one's father's ancestral place of origin. These connections to rural areas are of great significance for many living in the settlement. The obligation to provide for relatives in the village was a major concern of interviewees and informants. Nonetheless, some – especially the young – have spent their entire lives in Qauia and may have never visited their ancestral village or island.

As Monsell-Davis (1986: 133) suggested over twenty years ago, there has been the development and consolidation of a new working-class in urban and peri-urban areas throughout Fiji, many of who are currently living in relative poverty. Most people in Qauia generally live a 'hand-to-mouth' existence, where cash in earned and spent almost immediately. They have below average incomes, but are heavily involved in informal activities (see also Rutz 1987: 547; Bryant 1992: 95). Within the settlement these include running small makeshift vegetable and sweet stands, selling pounded *yaqona*, sewing and cutting grass. A minority also participate in some illegal activities; there are thriving 'black markets' (i.e. houses) in Qauia selling alcohol, cigarettes or marijuana, often operating on a twenty-four hour basis.

Common forms of employment for men include carpentry, security, the automotive industry, and various types of manual and semi-skilled labour. Nonetheless, there are significant levels of unemployment and underemployment in Qauia, especially amongst the youth. One method used to counteract poverty in this context – as elsewhere in Fiji – is the custom of *kerekere*, which enables individuals to request money and goods from relatives and others by drawing upon and extending features of traditional kinship structures (see, e.g., Sahlins 1962; Thomas 1992; Monsell-Davis 1993). The custom is held to represent a (traditional) socio-economic system based on principles quite different from those of Western capitalist economies, with the former stressing collectivism over personal wealth and financial independence.

On weekdays in Qauia, from around six to nine a.m., there is a steady flow of people down various footpaths and then along the road, in a one-way direction towards the bus stop. These include schoolchildren, adults going to work, or perhaps some shopping in Suva City or Lami Town. Taxis and buses, many of which are designated for schoolchildren, generally head towards Suva, approximately fifteen to twenty minutes by bus. During the average weekday, most of the children, many of the men and a smaller percentage of women are away from the settlement. Nevertheless, it is not uncommon to see a number of children of school age during the daytime, perhaps helping with small domestic tasks.

Men not in paid employment are sometimes seen attending to crops or feeding pigs, whilst women carry out domestic activities such as cleaning, gardening, washing clothes, shopping for food or attending to small children. At about 3pm on weekdays, children start drifting back from various schools in the area, followed by those with daytime jobs. In the late afternoons and evenings people are in their houses and outdoor areas, watching TV, attending prayer sessions, swimming in the river, visiting others and drinking *yaqona* (kava).

Fridays and Saturdays are generally the busiest days within the settlement, with religious and family functions, youth groups, singing groups and various other activities taking place. Sporting activities – including rugby, volleyball and netball – are especially popular amongst the youth at the weekend. Sunday is observed by most as the Sabbath and many attend local churches, although there is a significant minority of Seventh Day Adventists (SDA) who designate Saturday as their Sabbath. Within Qauia there is a Methodist church a short walk up the main road from the river, and a smaller SDA church nearer the start of the entrance to the settlement. There are also Catholic, Mormon, Assembly of God and other churches all within walking distance or a short taxi ride. Like the vast majority of ethnic Fijians, virtually everyone in Qauia belongs to these Christian denominations, although differ greatly in their church participation.

The section of Qauia I lived in during the time of the research is home to a large number of people from Ra province, and many of those from the same village. This reflects the fact that many people in the settlement – although not all – live in close proximity to relatives, in a manner not dissimilar to extended family formations typically found in rural parts of Fiji. As Walsh (1979: 5) suggests, "squatter settlements and informal housing arrangements" of this kind can provide "a good 'social mix' whereby kinship support and social networks remain intact". The house in which I slept and took most of my meals is therefore 'connected' with many other houses inhabited by *Kai Ra* (people claiming ancestry from Ra province) in the immediate vicinity, either by virtue of blood relation or ancestral place of origin. Much of the data used in the following chapter to discuss domestic life within Qauia were obtained in this section of settlement.

One of the fourteen provinces of Fiji, Ra occupies a land area of 1,341 square kilometres in the northern part of Viti Levu, the largest island in the country. The 2007 census counts the population of the province as 29,464, with less than 5,000 residing in urban areas (Fiji Bureau of Statistics 2007b). Ra contains the Nakauvadra mountain range, which many consider to be the spiritual home of many of the country's *kalou-vu* (ancestral gods), and the shrine of the mythical serpent god Degei (Brewster 1922: 80-82). Perhaps the most famous *Kai Ra* was a man known as Navosavakadua, who is regarded by many in Fiji as a prophet or seer (Kaplan 1990). Navosavakadua was the most prominent figure in the politico-religious *Tuka* movement, his *mana* ('power') allegedly so strong that attempts by the colonial administration to execute him were unsuccessful (see, e.g., Brewster 1922: 236-248; Kaplan 1990).

As with other variations of the Fijian language, the Ra dialect – of which there are local variations – consists of some words unique to the region. It is also distinctive in that the consonant /t/ is pronounced as a glottal stop. In Ra, there are four district chiefs, unlike in other provinces where a single paramount chief typically governs. Various writers have suggested that social organisation in Ra was less hierarchical than in other areas prior to British colonialism (Gordon 1879; Brewster 1922; France 1969; Kaplan 1989; Brison 2007). Under the colonial administration the *Kai Ra* also acquired a reputation for both exceptional skills in battle and for witchcraft. Indeed Fiji's first Governor under the colonial government, Sir Arthur Gordon (1879), refers more broadly to the highlands of Viti Levu – which includes a large section of Ra – as the 'Devil Country'.

These perceptions were arguably due in part to early resistance to Christianisation in the highland areas of Ra province and other inland areas (Kaplan 1989). In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the newly Christianised part of the population stigmatised those residing in the highlands – often referred to as *Kai Colo* (lit. 'inhabitants of the inland') – as cannibals who attended upon traditional gods (Brewster 1922; Kaplan 1990). The phrase *Kai Colo* is sometimes now used in a pejorative sense to suggest ignorance or a lack of sophistication on the part of those from highland areas (Ravuvu 1988: 4-6) Such beliefs perhaps reflect the continuing "tendency of the urban

south-easterners to view the rural people from the north and west as inferior 'country bumpkins'" (Brison 2007: 36). Today the *Kai Ra* are still commented on within Fiji for their historical connections with witchcraft, as well as for their strength and physical attributes. As one young male *Kai Ra* interviewee suggested,

> In Fiji, if you ask people from Lau, Nadroga, Vanua Levu, they gonna tell you that they know people from Ra very well…because the colour of their skin. They're black, they're big build people (extract from interview, 17/6/08).

Some *Kai Ra* in Qauia are Seventh Day Adventists or members of Christian denominations which prohibit the use of alcohol, tobacco and kava (although not everyone sticks to these prohibitions). The majority, however, are Methodists and Catholics, and most of these are keen *yaqona* (kava) drinkers who like to boast about the noted ability of *Kai Ra* to drink vast amounts. Women from Ra are said to drink more than women in other parts of the country. *Kai Ra* interviewees also mentioned the format they use to drink *yaqona* as a distinctive feature of their provincial identity:

> The *yaqona sevusevu*, it's a different way to present from the other provinces, like Rewa, Kadavu. Ours is very different. In Ra, for the chief, he gets three *cobo*. Then after the chief, for his *matanivanua* ['spokesman'], two. Same as you, you get three, I'll get the two. Everybody that drinks a bowl, one will get three, one will get two. This is how we perform the kava ritual in Ra (extract from interview, 1/7/08).

Having now described the research setting and provided some background information on the *Kai Ra* living in Qauia, I shall discuss the methodology used to collect data.

Methodology: Ethnography, Limitations and Ethics

I lived in Qauia from February to November 2007 – while studying for my Postgraduate Diploma in Sociology at the University of the South Pacific – prior to starting work on this thesis. During this time I began to learn the Fijian language, worked as a volunteer teacher for two days each week at a primary school within walking distance of Qauia,

and kept a journal of my thoughts and observations. After three months back in the United Kingdom over the Christmas and New Year period, I returned to conduct research in Qauia by using an ethnographic perspective that incorporated the systematic documentation of events, conversations and observations in the form of extensive field notes, together with the use of semi-structured interviews. From February to September 2008 I intensified and broadened my note-taking, and conducted interviews (largely in English) as I developed the thesis topic. I attended a local Catholic church, family events, youth group meetings and *yaqona* (kava) sessions occurring in various parts of Qauia, continued working in a local school, and began to record observations made in more frequent visits to nightclubs in Suva. I moved to Laucala Bay (close to the university) in September 2008, although I continued to return to Qauia on occasions.

None of the six group interviews I conducted was recorded on to tape, so instead I wrote shorthand notes and documented specific quotes *ad verbatim*. Four individual interviews were taped but I found it easier to obtain information in such situations without the use of recording equipment. Another six individual interviews were documented in note form. I obtained consent to use information for the purpose of this thesis prior to carrying out all interviews. The vast majority of other informal discussions informing the ethnography took place around a *tanoa* (bowl used for serving kava) whilst drinking *yaqona* (kava) somewhere in Qauia. Both those I lived with and many others in Qauia were aware that I was conducting research in the settlement as part of a postgraduate course at the University of the South Pacific. Observations made in nightclubs took place in public areas where individuals would not expect to retain any sense of privacy, and I have avoided mentioning particular places, events or people in Chapter Six (Fijian Nightclubs).

I aimed to develop a holistic understanding of the social environment around me before deciding to focus on masculinity and alcohol use as the central areas of study; this was of course partially achieved during my initial nine-month stay in Qauia during 2007. The advantage of such a methodology is being able to collect a wide range of data and consider various angles for theoretical exploration prior to developing an analytical

framework or research topic. The analysis given in the thesis emerged from the data I obtained during fieldwork, rather than theory shaping the specific type of research I conducted. This is important, as the use of alcohol (or kava) cannot be divorced from its wider social and cultural context.

My initial proposal to conduct research for this thesis did not include a specific focus on masculinity and alcohol use, but was instead more broadly concerned with masculinity and male identity in Qauia. One of the reasons for deciding to study masculinity was the simple fact that much of my time in Qauia was spent with men, for instance during countless drinking sessions involving *yaqona* (kava) or alcohol. The longer I spent in the settlement, and with further trips to nightclubs with young men, the better positioned I became to further investigate the intricate links between *yaqona*, alcohol use and masculinity.

I inevitably brought to the research a set of ideas and beliefs concerning gender, masculinity and alcohol use which was influenced by my experiences living and growing up within a very different cultural context in the United Kingdom. As an outsider to Fijian society and the Pacific region in general, however, I had to learn the most basic elements of Fijian social life, which meant that I could – and *needed* to – consider the most basic aspects of the gender system and the use of *yaqona* and alcohol, and question people about particular ideas and behaviours. Residing amongst the studied community for a relatively long period of time allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of life in Qauia. Living with a large extended family, as well as becoming close friends with several other young men who lived in the area, also helped combat the usual difficulties facing a researcher in foreign cultural and linguistic surroundings.

Nonetheless there are inevitable limitations to the present study. As mentioned previously, for example, much of the data on domestic life in Qauia referred to in Chapter Four and Chapter Five were obtained in a section of the settlement populated by a large proportion of *Kai Ra* (natives of Ra province), where I was living at the time. Although there is "considerable uniformity of cultural value and practice" among ethnic

Fijians, as Norton (1993: 749) suggests, the findings need to be interpreted with this in mind. The fact that I am a white, heterosexual, European man poses additional difficulties for investigating masculinity within this cultural context. My experiences in Qauia are as someone who, as a British visitor in Fiji, is invariably afforded a privileged position and status. In such situations, people's attention is usually directed towards the outsider. I therefore attempted to 'take a back seat' during various activities, which was, admittedly, often a difficult task. My physical appearance as a white European – usually the only one – in an ethnic Fijian nightclub must also be noted, with regards to the analysis given in Chapter Six.

The common perception of Europeans as wealthy in comparison with the average Fijian potentially sets up an uneasy power relation between others and myself as a researcher, especially when drinking alcohol or kava as part of a group. If I joined a *yaqona* (kava) session already in progress in Qauia I would therefore, in accordance with Fijian custom, usually try to purchase a few dollar bags to present as a *sevusevu* (tribute of kava). As far as alcohol is concerned, I found the best policy was simply not to carry much cash – especially in nightclubs – and to make similar sized small donations when others were doing so, both inside and outside Qauia.

An ethical consideration to be made by the ethnographer when research focuses on the use of substances like kava and alcohol is the decision whether or not to partake in these activities and to what extent, as the use of these substance may hinder his or her ability to understand the intricate workings of the studied community. At the same time, not engaging in activities carried out by informants seems antithetical to the central aims of participant observation and ethnography. Schacht (1996: 552) claims, quite rightly, that actual participation in some settings is the only way certain issues can be adequately explored. This is related to both gaining the respect of participants and to attempting to understand activities from their perspective.

Although I regularly drank *yaqona* and (to a much lesser extent) alcohol with various groups of people in Qauia and in the nightclubs of Suva, I refrained from either initiating

or prolonging drinking sessions. As Adler and Adler (1987: 35) argue, ideally the part of ethnographers within the social life of a community entails an "active membership role, where researchers participate in the core activities in much the same way as members, yet they hold back from committing themselves to the goals and values of the members". At this stage I have not made any plans to share my findings with people in Qauia, partly because the issues raised are of a sensitive nature and potentially confrontational to Fijian men.

The previous chapter outlined a theoretical model for masculinity, serving as a starting point for the discussion that now follows. The following chapter examines domestic life and social hierarchy in Qauia, focusing on *yaqona*-drinking and providing a template for hegemonic masculinity in this setting.

Chapter Four

SOCIAL HIERARCHY & MASCULINITY IN QAUIA

Hierarchical social relations across various contexts in Fiji have been written about in great detail (e.g., Nayacakalou 1957; Sahlins 1962; Ravuvu 1987). In this chapter I describe hierarchy within domestic groups in Qauia as both producing and constructed by patterns of differential power relations, which are habitualised through embodied practice and most notably reiterated during the ritualised drinking of *yaqona* (kava). *Yaqona*-drinking sessions at once express and constitute Fijian social relations as hierarchically structured (Toren 1999), but are not the only source of ritualised interactions in Qauia: general etiquette, meal times, seating positions and awareness of above/below (*i cake/i ra*) spatial distinctions within houses all reveal relations of power to be structured through sex and relative age. Masculinity must be understood within the context of the everyday practices and power relations that constitute this hierarchy, as well as being associated with corporeal styles, individual characteristics, and the gendered division of activities taking place both within and outside of the settlement.

Here I shall briefly summarise the key features of social structure in Fiji as it is commonly described, leaving aside the modern system of democratic governance that is now superimposed on this structure. This model is a standardisation largely developed by the colonial government to assign indigenous land rights, and which then became enshrined in law (see, e.g., France 1969; Walter 1978; Kaplan 1990; Halapua 2003). In Fiji the smallest social unit is generally considered to be the *tokatoka*, an extended family often spread over a few households. As descent is patrilineal and post-marriage residence commonly virilocal in the village setting, this would include, for example, a group of adult brothers and their nuclear families. A group of *tokatoka* form an exogamous lineage or *mataqali* (Nayacakalou 1978). These *mataqali* groups – the land-owning corporative units in Fiji – are ranked hierarchically within a *yavusa*, so that one *mataqali* will head the *yavusa*. Similarly, one *tokatoka* will head a *mataqali*. In theory

the members of a *yavusa* are able to trace descent to a single common male ancestor (Ravuvu 1983: 123). The most senior male figure at each division of this structure is afforded the greatest authority at that division; this pattern is extended to further levels, culminating in chiefly titles linked to villages, provinces and regional areas. As Norton explains,

> All Fijians belong to corporate descent groups (*mataqali*) that bind urban dwellers of every occupation with village folk. Unity within these clans is expressed in shared rights to village land, and in respect for the rank and authority of the most senior line in the context of regular customary activities. The *mataqali* are organised into larger communities: villages and *vanua* headed by chiefs drawn from particular clans. *Vanua* are in turn grouped in provinces, each with its governing council, and the provinces are allied in political confederacies (Norton 1993: 748-749).

Following Dumont (1970: 66), hierarchy can be defined as the principle by which the elements of a whole are ranked in relation to the whole. In Fiji this principle shapes social relations at various levels, from those between individuals in the extended family, to those between groups on a much wider scale. Ranking at each level is tied to an individual's or group's status *in relation* to others at that level – that particular division which, in Dumont's terms, may be considered a 'whole' in its own right, and yet also finds itself relatively positioned within a greater 'whole'. Fijian identity is characterised to a large extent by inclusion in groups at these various levels (Norton 1993). One's status in the village setting is in relation to others at particular levels, for example between family members or between the ranked *mataqali* that constitute the chiefly system.

The apex of the hierarchy within the village is the *turaga ni koro* (village chief), who in some cases also holds other titles (e.g., *turaga levu*, meaning 'paramount chief' of a larger region). In addition to creating levels of authority and deference, the hierarchical structure creates interdependence, which is expressed and produced through various processes of social exchange. Thus tributes are presented to the chief, who is responsible for the redistribution of valuable resources. The chief embodies the link between the

people, ancestors, supernatural world and the *vanua* (the 'land', including all creatures, plants, rivers etc.), as related aspects of the same conceptual system.

Halapua (2003: 76) argues that the "presence of the ancestors in the person of the *turaga* provides the continuity of the *mana* of the *vanua*". This concept of *mana* – which, for chiefs, is consolidated through installation rituals involving *yaqona* (kava) – is a force, power or efficacy residing in both living things and inanimate objects. The chief and his *mana* are paramount in the village setting; when kava is drunk the chief will have his own *bilo* (coconut-shell cup) from which to drink, for it would "harm people of lesser power to drink from the same vessel as a potent chief" (Tomlinson 2006: 15).

Participation in chiefly structures is incorporated with a range of other principles and values – including those of Christianity – in the Fijian concept of *vakavanua* ('in the manner of the land' or 'the way of the land'). This is effectively held to represent 'Fijian tradition' in popular discourse, and is contrasted with the competitive individualism of Western society and economy supposedly practised by other ethnic groups in Fiji[8], such as Indians, Chinese and Europeans (see Jolly 1992; Thomas 1992; Toren 1999; Brison 2007). Just as the *turaga* (chief) is discursively bound with the *vanua* (land), so too is *vakaturaga* ('chiefly') to *vakavanua* ('the way of the land'). Ravuvu (1987: 18) suggests *vakaturaga* is a core cultural value in Fijian society, embodying "respect and deference, compliance and humility, loyalty and honesty". *Vakaturaga* behaviour is in accordance with, and a necessary part of, that which is *vakavanua*. Ravuvu (1987: 319) therefore argues that "with its underlying elements of respect, love, kindness, care and concern for others, and conformity with established norms, *vakaturaga* behaviour is also recognition of structured legitimate power".

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[8] In 1879 the colonial government implemented a policy of bringing indentured labourers (*girmitiyas*) from India, mainly to work on the newly created sugar-cane plantations (see, e.g., Lal 1992). Indian immigration to Fiji continued when the indenture system ended in 1920, and Indians outnumbered Fijians by 1946. Fijians are now once again the largest group in the country, largely due to two ethnically driven political coups in 1987 and the resulting Indian emigration. Out of a population of just under 850,000, Fijians currently account for about 57% and Indians 38%, while the remaining 5% is made up of Chinese, Europeans, other Pacific islanders and people of mixed heritage (Fiji Islands Bureau of Statistics 2007a).

Within Fijian province there are a range of traditional relationships linking – and shaping social interaction between – localised groups. These are often based on links between ancestral figures or events in the distant past, and generally characterised by a competitive yet friendly rivalry. For example, Tomlinson makes the following observation of two neighbouring villages in Kadavu:

> Tavuki and Yawe have a relationship known as *vitabani*, which literally means "sides". It derives from the fact that Tavuki and Yawe, though neighbors on the island of Kadavu and sharing many ties of intermarriage, have a fractious history of warfare. In other words, they used to be enemies, and although no one clubs each other over the head anymore, Tavukians and Yaweans still like to "fight" around the kava bowl by trying to out-drink each other while joking exuberantly at each other's expense (Tomlinson 2006: 13).

There are also various relationships between groups from *different* provinces and regions in Fiji that shape patterns of social interaction. One example is the relationship of *tauvu*. Those who stand as *tau* to each other, such as people from Ra and Kadavu provinces, ideally enjoy a form of 'joking' relationship whereby they tease and swear at each other, or perhaps take each other's belongings without permission. This type of relationship – which is one of several linking people from various areas – in some ways echoes that normally present in Fiji between those who are cross-cousins (*veitavaleni*). Indeed Hocart (1919: 47) claims *tauvu* is a form of tribal cross-cousinship, while Basil Thomson (1908: 113) suggests that groups in Fiji who are *tauvu* originated from a common ancestor. Space does not permit further discussion of the associations between groups claiming ancestry from different areas in Fiji. Crucially, however, relationships such as *tauvu* stress the ethos that all Fijians are ideally 'related' in some way, while retaining different levels of 'relatedness' and maintaining distinctions and an element of competitive rivalry between groups.

Fijians invariably describe residing in villages and in urbanised areas – including peri-urban settlements such as Qauia – as two quite opposite ways of living. In comparing the two settings, interviewees and informants in Qauia stressed the importance of attaining money as the central feature of urban life. The idea that 'everything costs money' in the

city is juxtaposed with the image of self-subsistence, co-operation and general lack of need for cash within villages. Toren (1999: 27-44) shows how this conceptual opposition in Fiji centres on the distinction between gift and commodity exchanges, which are seen to represent two quite different ideological systems.

The modern-day reality is that all Fijians are to some extent involved in the cash economy. Thomas (1992: 81) thus describes the false antithesis created by Fijians in contrasting modern, 'Westernised' urban life with the supposed timelessness of a traditional lifestyle and social organisation encompassed by *vakavanua* ('the way of the land'). Nonetheless, most Fijians in rural areas have a very different lifestyle from those in cities and towns. Money in the village setting is largely earned through activities such as farming or fishing; in contrast, a much larger percentage of adults in Qauia are involved in, or seeking, waged employment on a full or part-time basis in the Suva region, or participating in the urban informal sector (see Rutz 1987; Bryant 1990). This is the most fundamental, although by no means the only, difference between life in Qauia and in rural village throughout Fiji, to which many in the settlement maintain close links (for example by giving money to family members on visits, or perhaps receiving crops from them).

As discussed in the previous chapter, Qauia is a peri-urban settlement populated by Fijians originating from different parts of the country who moved to the settlement over the last fifty years or so; it is by no means a traditional village. However, groups of people claiming ancestry from the same province – or even the same village – tend to live in close proximity, due to the way that Qauia developed. Like in rural areas, extended families living together are the norm in Qauia. As throughout Fiji, both kinship (*veiwekani*) and general sociality are idealised in terms of *veilomani*, a mutual compassion, caring and love for each other (Ravuvu 1987; Toren 1999; Brison 2007). This is foremost contained in the patterns of social relations within domestic groups, which promote both interdependence and hierarchy.

Everyday life in Qauia is characterised by regular face-to-face interaction between family members, close friends and acquaintances. Meals are usually cooked for the entire household and activities involving a relatively large group are typical of communal living in the settlement. In this context, as elsewhere in Fiji, great cultural importance is placed on sociable conviviality, with group solidarity and harmony taking precedence over the idea and practice of individualism (Ravuvu 1988: 21). This is expressed by individuals' adherence to the system of hierarchical relations structured primarily through age and sex, which determines general etiquette between family members and others, as well as seating, eating and sleeping positions within the house (see also Sahlins 1962).

Seniority is the first principle of domestic hierarchy in Fiji, giving the elder brother a level of formal authority over his juniors. This is also the same for a woman who is the eldest of a set of siblings. However, post-marriage residence is usually virilocal, so that a woman moves away from the domestic group and area in which she was raised, thereby diminishing her authority. In terms of language a woman is generally expected to conform to the dialect of the group she marries into (Geraghty 1984: 33), which again has the effect of emphasising her status as an 'outsider' (for instance, in Qauia, women who have married men from Ra province often use their husbands' dialect). It is men who are afforded the greatest respect in Fijian society, occupying positions of greatest authority and chiefly rank. The system of patriliny and associated land rights means that women both young and old sit on the periphery of social hierarchies by 'marrying out', and by their very potential to do so. Toren (1999: 89) thus notes that male status "varies as a function of age and rank" whereas female status is "always ambiguous".

In addition to sex and relative seniority amongst siblings, social distance is a factor structuring hierarchies in Qauia. This refers first to how much time individuals – related or otherwise – spend together, so that visitors are invariably treated with the greatest respect. This also refers to relative age in general, with distinctions between generations the most pronounced. Children are taught from an early age to respect and, crucially, to *obey* their elders, both from within and outside the family. Young children can be

reprimanded for invading an adult's space or walking too close to the *tanoa* (bowl used for serving kava). Parents and other caregivers will encourage older children and other adults to hit or pinch younger children if they have misbehaved, while older children are also beaten for serious misconduct. Children are taught in this way that they cannot impose their will on their elders, whom are to be respected and, moreover, obeyed at all times. Although children develop a progressive level of autonomy, this deference to elders is acted out across a variety of situations throughout one's life.

Power relations within the hierarchically structured family – for example, between generations – are thus *practiced* from an early age. In their repetitiveness these behaviours of deference and authority become habitualised and require little, if any, conscious thought. Here I am drawing upon the concept of habitus, where cultural patterns of thought and action are incorporated bodily by individuals and groups through social practice (Bourdieu 1977). The meaning or conceptual basis of hierarchy, moreover, cannot be divorced from its practice. In describing the social hierarchy that both informs and is produced by the 'Fijian habitus', Turner (1992: 298) claims categories of thought and bodily experience develop together, and thus "meaning and practice are inseparably intertwined". Habitus is where social and bodily practices intersect, thereby materialising the gendered hierarchy.

As discussed in Chapter Two, the habitus of gender entails the naturalised embodiment of socially constructed sex-based gender arrangements, for example through the spatial separations that shape gendered patterns of behaviour in houses (Bourdieu 1977; Conway-Long 1994). In Fiji, social hierarchy is at once expressed and partially constituted in the use of space within houses and other areas (see, e.g., Turner 1992; Toren 1999). Rooms are conceptualised as having an 'above'/'below' (*i cake/i ra*) divide. This divide is relative, not absolute, so there is no explicit marker between 'above' and 'below'. At meal times in Qauia where the family is gathered together, whether at a table or, more likely, on an *ibe* (mat) on the floor, higher status men are invariably positioned at the 'above' (*i cake*) end, whilst women and children are seated

'below' (*i ra*). Higher status persons will also generally be offered the best food available.

These distinctions reflect the seniority system based on age and sex, and are in accordance with embodied practice across a range of contexts in Qauia, practice that is necessarily enacted in social space. Individuals of high status will often take the more comfortable places to sleep, whilst seating positions when watching television may follow a similar pattern. Domestic hierarchies therefore provide the opportunity for 'preferential treatment' for some over others in various everyday situations. Space within a Fijian room is gendered because the part labelled 'above' (*i cake*) is, for the most part, assigned to adult men, while 'below' (*i ra*) is usually occupied by women and children, or younger men. Toren (1999: 51) thus points out that "the hierarchical relation that places a man quite plainly 'above' his wife is inscribed in the space of the house".

Within a house in Qauia, furthermore, to be literally above another adult – for example, standing over someone sitting down – is considered rude. This results in people taking a slightly bowed position (of various levels of exaggeration) when walking past others sitting. Indeed, if a large number of adult men are gathered, it is polite (especially for women and children) to crawl inside a Fijian house, rather than walk upright. In Qauia, as elsewhere in Fiji, the word *jilou* (also *tilou* or *tulou*) is said when invading someone's space, which includes walking past those sitting down, reaching across or above someone, or perhaps throwing some small object across the room. Often the word is uttered several times when moving past, and apologising to, a number of people. The selective use of *jilou* reflects differences in relative status: higher status individuals are less likely to use the word when passing younger people, and women more likely than men.

Fijians therefore embody the gendered social hierarchy through their etiquette, general comportment, and awareness of spatial distinctions. These routinised and ritualised behaviours do not necessarily require any conscious thought on behalf of the actors involved, but instead are incorporated bodily through daily practice. It is in everyday

practices and exchanges that power relations and inequalities are continually reinforced in Qauia. Differences in relative levels of status, framed in terms of deference, authority, respect and obedience, are implicated in small-scale face-to-face interactions occurring on a daily basis.

In Qauia, the most highly ritualised activity – and the most explicitly linked to social hierarchy – is y*aqona* (kava) drinking. The use of *yaqona* in Fiji, from formal ceremonies installing chiefs to casual drinking sessions with friends and family, has been written about in great detail (e.g., Geddes 1945; Turner 1986; Ravuvu 1987; Toren 1999; Tomlinson 2006). In the village setting *yaqona* is routinely presented as *sevusevu* (tributes) towards chiefs and others across a range of situations. Geddes (1945: 24) notes that "nothing is more important to the cultural life of Fiji than *yaqona* drinking", and indeed any important event or social occasion in Qauia involves the ritualised use of *yaqona*.

Ritualised *yaqona* sessions emphasise the fact that individuals are "embedded in communities" and reveal the "hierarchical structure of the community through drinking order" (Brison 2007: xi). They are primarily social events, and to consume the substance alone suggests witchcraft (see, e.g., Turner 1986; Kaplan 1990; Toren 1999; Tomlinson 2006). While the *mana* ('power') of *yaqona* is harnessed for social purposes in the context of public ritual (Turner 1986: 206), it therefore has a potentially darker side. The *mana* of *yaqona* is a power tied to the ancestors and the realm of the supernatural, and the *mana* within an individual can be nurtured or enhanced by drinking *yaqona* because it is itself *mana* (Turner 1986: 209). In presenting itself as a timeless custom linked to chiefly hierarchies and various neo-traditional practices associated with *vakavanua* ('the way of the land'), the use of *yaqona* asserts a cultural continuity with the past:

> [K]ava-drinking stresses a hierarchy whose politico-economic and spiritual bases have been subject to radical historical change and at the same time effectively subverts the awareness that change has occurred (Toren 1999: 54).

As well as marking significant events or occasions, groups of individuals drink *yaqona* (kava) in both urban and rural areas throughout Fiji as a way of relaxing and socialising. The quantity of *yaqona* drunk has supposedly increased in recent decades, and some of the previous cultural restrictions abandoned; Trimble (1994: 81) thus claims its use is an emerging drug problem in Fiji and some other Pacific island countries, especially amongst men. However, other writers suggest that Fijians have been complaining about an increasing frequency of excessive *yaqona*-drinking for at least a century (see, e.g., Tomlinson 2004).

Yaqona-drinking regularly takes place throughout Qauia amongst groups both small and large, who tell stories, jokes, play guitar and sing songs, or maybe watch DVDs or television. The inevitable consequence of drinking *yaqona* – as a soporific – is that participants in a lengthy session become less energetic and animated, without necessarily experiencing any mood changes or noticeably different states of mind. The physiological and psychological effects are of calmness and relaxation, leading to tiredness and exhaustion. Some men (both married and unmarried) drink every day, and excessive consumption is associated with an affliction called *kanikani*, which results in flaky skin on the legs and arms of heavy drinkers.

The pounded root of the *yaqona* plant is sold in $1 bags at various houses in Qauia, and in larger amounts in nearby Lami Town and throughout the greater Suva region. Relatives from rural areas also bring the roots of the plant on frequent visits to Qauia; equally, residents of the settlement will return from trips to villages with bags of roots (in addition to the lack of space, the climate in Qauia is essentially unsuitable for growing the plant). Within the settlement there is the common sound of the *tabili* (large iron pestle and mortar) being used to pound kava roots into a fine powder suitable for preparing the drink. During a session this powder is strained with water through a thin cloth into a *tanoa* (large bowl), producing a muddy-brown liquid with a bitter taste. The strength of this taste, and the potency of the substance as a mild narcotic and soporific, is dependent on the volume of water used in relation to the amount of powder. People in Qauia use the word *soko* (or *sosoko*, meaning 'thick') to describe particularly potent

mixes, which some young men in particular enjoy creating in order to maximise the physiological effects.

During *yaqona* sessions in Qauia, like at mealtimes, seating positions reflect the relative status of those taking part, so that higher status persons are seated 'above' (*i cake*) and lower status persons 'below' (*i ra*). Drinkers usually form an approximate circle formation with the *tanoa* (the bowl from which *yaqona* is served) directly facing the chief or highest status man or men present, who are furthest from the *tanoa*, in the 'above' (*i cake*) part of the room. Other men will then be seated progressively 'below' (*i ra*) in approximate order of relative status, with women – unless perhaps they are of particular seniority – and younger males occupying space behind the individual serving the *yaqona*. The drink is consumed in a sequential fashion, with each person drinking from a *bilo* (a polished half-coconut shell cup used for serving kava) in any given round. The indication to start a round, if the server does not initiate it, is given by a high status individual saying *'talo'* or *'taki'* (both meaning 'serve again').

The sequence of drinking is related to the spatial orientation of participants, so that those seated 'above' are generally served before those 'below'. Depending on the formality of the situation – determined by the occasion (if any) and the people present (if there are visitors, for example) – a senior man (traditionally the *matanivanua*, or chief's spokesman) or another man of high status will give a short speech of thanks in honour of the *yaqona* that will be drunk, and then again if others join the session and bring more bags of the pre-pounded powder. Both the rhythmic clapping of hands in unison and the use of ritualistic speech whilst preparing and serving the drink remind participants that *yaqona*-drinking is primarily a social activity, rooted in a longstanding tradition (Turner 1987; Brison 2007).

There is some variation in the procedure followed during *yaqona* sessions in Qauia, which is due to the social make-up and the different groups who live there. The format I know best is that followed by *Kai Ra* (natives of Ra province), at least during more formal occasions or when there are more than a few people present. In this regional

variation, one person drinks at a time, giving a single *cobo* (a hand-clap use to show appreciation) before gulping the contents of the *bilo* (cup) in one go and then performing a few more *cobo* after drinking. The rest of the group, meanwhile, will give either two or three claps as the drinker receives his cup, depending on the drinker's place in the sequence, and a few more after the drinker has finished. Thus the chief or highest status person present will drink first in any round, and receive three claps from the rest of the group as he takes the *bilo* in his hand. Traditionally he is followed by his *matanivanua* (spokesman), who will be afforded two claps from the other members of the kava session as he is served. This format will continue, with the approximate second highest-ranking individual drinking next and receiving three claps from the group before he drinks, whilst the following person to drink will be given two claps. This continues until the last person has drunk.

Whilst participants in this regional variety of a typical Fijian kava session do not attempt to 'claim' the *bilo* (cup) for which three *cobo* (claps) will be granted, an individual may insist on drinking the *bilo* for which two *cobo* will be performed, perhaps with a cry of *"mai na bilo"* ("give the cup here"). This action directly aligns the drinker with the person who has drunk immediately before in a hierarchical yet mutually interdependent relationship, following the chief-spokesman (*turaga-matanivanua*) structure.

The above format is used during formal and casual *yaqona* sessions taking place in and around houses belonging to *Kai Ra* (natives of Ra province) in Qauia, especially when there are mostly other *Kai Ra* present. During each round there can be a constant offering back and forth of the *bilo* designated for another person. Thus a man will sometimes attempt to get another man of similar status – especially his cross-cousin (*tavale*) – to drink first, a goal that often proves unsuccessful, despite fervent insistence. In other situations some of the drinkers may stand in certain relationships to each other based on ancestry from particular provinces, including the relationship of *tauvu* as discussed previously. On these occasions too there is often a great deal of offering of one's *bilo* to another person based on membership of particular groups, and an element of friendly but potentially competitive rivalry within the drinking.

The exact way in which a *yaqona* session is carried out therefore differs between particular instances. The actual seating arrangement of drinkers and sequence of drinking are dependent on the size of the group, the significance (if any) of the occasion, the relative status of those present and the patterns of social relations between them. For major events *yaqona* sessions are always held in Qauia. During particular *oga* ('family commitments', in this context) such as various funeral rites or other heavily ritualised and culturally significant occasions where a large number of adult men are present, the importance of seating positions and sequence whilst drinking *yaqona* is more keenly felt than during other, more casual sessions involving young men or close family members. Nevertheless, the procedure followed is always indicative of hierarchy.

The exception to the rule is the occasion of a fund-raising *gunu sede* (lit. 'drinking cash'), an often boisterous affair where individuals publicly 'pledge' bowls to other drinkers by way of a small monetary donation towards a specific cause. In Qauia these are fairly frequent occurrences for various reasons, including raising money for family events, youth groups and sports clubs. During a *gunu sede*, the normal 'rules' concerning seating positions and the order of drinking do not apply, thereby subverting or removing altogether the expression and constitution of hierarchy that is realised through the use of *yaqona*. There is also usually a wider range of people present than during most *yaqona* sessions, including women both young and old.

The gathering of a variety of people from the community and beyond, the abandonment of the normal protocol concerning seating arrangement and sequence of drinking, and the recognition that the occasion has a different purpose from typical ceremonies and formal gatherings involving *yaqona,* combine to ensure that a variety of behaviours are permitted. For example, flirtatious behaviour and suggestions of romance between young men and women (often carried out in a comical way) are typical of a *gunu sede* but far less common during more formal situations involving *yaqona*. Interactions both between and within genders during a *gunu sede* are characterised by joking, teasing and a general competitive rivalry, much of which is between cross-cousins (*tavale*) or those standing as *tauvu*.

Many women living in Qauia drink *yaqona* – not only during the occasion of a fund-raising *gunu sede* – and quite probably more often than women in most non-urbanised areas throughout the rest of the country (see, e.g., Sahlins 1962; Turner 1986; Ravuvu 1987). Indeed a woman or women is sometimes served before other men in Qauia, for example if a nun or esteemed female visitor is drinking casually with a small group. The situation may be similar if an eldest sister is the most senior person present among a small family group drinking together. However women are also expected to carry out a range of domestic activities that usually prevent them from being able to drink for hours on end to the same extent as men. A married woman might join men in a small *yaqona* session involving mainly family members, but she will also be expected to provide food for when her husband has finished drinking, as well as look after any young infants if necessary. A man on the other hand is quite permitted to, and often does, sit and drink over a considerable length of time, becoming increasingly incapacitated as the night wears on. It is extremely rare to see a woman of any age 'grogged out' by *yaqona.*

Women do not drink *yaqona* together in Qauia without any men present. Moreover, when female drinkers join in a session where there are a number of men present, they are invariably sitting 'below' (*i ra*) the *tanoa*. Older males sitting 'above' (*i cake*) make small speeches over the *yaqona*, and younger males prepare and serve the drink *for* the older men. The attention of the group is invariably directed towards the senior male figures sitting 'above' (*i cake*), as it is the presence of senior men at a formal *yaqona* session that signifies its importance. Generally speaking the more heavily ritualised the format of a *yaqona* session – and the symbolic value invested in it – the less likely women are to be found drinking. Women, especially younger women, are more likely to drink *yaqona* in smaller gatherings, for instance on a casual Friday night with close friends or family.

It is men who initiate a *yaqona* session in Qauia, and then perhaps prolong the drinking by handing over a few dollars for a younger man or child to purchase some more bags of the pounded root from a nearby house. At large family events or social occasions, women will prepare food for those drinking *yaqona* and others present. Often one or two

of a group of men drinking will excuse themselves at a time in order to take their meal. Others will insist on drinking, and at least some drinkers must remain around the *tanoa* to finish the *yaqona* available, for it can never be wasted (and indeed to tip out *yaqona* is associated with witchcraft). During lengthy *yaqona* sessions when a man looks like he has had enough – sitting wearily, eyes barely open or even shut altogether, quiet as a mouse – the rest of the group will often encourage him to eat or go lie down. When a man does retire before others, saying he is going to eat or sleep, it usually sounds like a regretful admission of defeat.

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Brison (2007: 17) claims that participants in a *yaqona* session "express their willingness to put aside personal comfort and other activities in order to demonstrate their commitment to the group" through the shared activity that has been has undertaken. This is especially evident in some of the lengthier sessions taking place in Qauia. Many men who drink regularly in the settlement complain so often about the amount they have drunk on a particular night (or the regularity of their drinking in general) that, at times, it seems like drinking *yaqona* is more of a necessary chore than a pleasurable way of relaxing. Although a man does not need to drink *yaqona*, for instance to 'prove' his masculinity, an adult male in Qauia is typically expected to be able to consume large amounts whether he enjoys it or not.

Yaqona is strongly associated with men as a fundamentally homosocial pastime. The relative frequency and amount that the sexes drink, the seating arrangement, and the associated sequence of drinking, all emphasise the position of adult men in relation to women, while at the same time creating distinctions between these men based on age and other factors. As Brison (2007) suggests, sitting and consuming *yaqona* for a long period displays a willingness to socialise with, and demonstrate a commitment to, the other members of a group. This kind of collectivist orientation is considered a desired quality in an adult Fijian man.

Drinking *yaqona* in Qauia perhaps also contains a competitive element at times, providing men with a chance to demonstrate their respective tolerance to the drink.

Indeed Tomlinson (2006: 14) describes the kava 'champion' as a 'masculine paradigm' within Fiji. Being able to continuously drink large bowls of *yaqona* during particular events is seen as a desirable or even required trait in an adult male, and withstanding the soporific effects of *yaqona* in such as often seen as indicative of a form of masculine strength. As a gendered activity, therefore, engaging in *yaqona*-drinking in Qauia can be viewed as a type of 'masculine performance' in a number of ways.

In Qauia, the formats of ritualised activities such as *yaqona*-drinking and mealtimes reflect a wider delineation within the parameters of social practice between behaviours and pursuits designated as male or female. Women and girls cook, clean, wash clothes and feed infants, for example, whilst boys and young men find, husk and scrape coconuts, make fires or cut grass. Both Fijian men and women are said to achieve adulthood at the age of twenty-one. Men in Qauia are expected to be working in the wage economy, or perhaps in some form of vocational training or further education if not the main earner of a household. Otherwise, men carry out tasks in the settlement such as feeding pigs, planting and attending to crops, or cutting grass. Many youths belong to various local youth and church groups; in the section of Qauia where I lived during my fieldwork, there is a group of about twenty-five youths (led by a few slightly older men) who get together to undertake collective work. This has included, for example, removing rubbish and excessive vegetation in the area.

Informants invariably suggested that a boy becomes a man 'when he has money in his pocket' and that a Fijian man is expected to fulfil his financial obligations to kin, both in Qauia and in rural areas. Earning money is seen as a key requirement for achieving adult male status, and paid work an important feature of male identity. Typical forms of employment for men living in Qauia include carpentry, engineering, automotive repair, fish exportation and security. As discussed in Chapter Two, manual work and other common forms of male work can be viewed as embodiments of *physical* masculinity, emphasising bodily skill or performance (Connell 1983; Valentine 2001).

Outside the world of paid work, one accessible route to masculine status for young men is through the male-dominated national sport of rugby, which is as popular in Qauia as it is throughout Fiji. Rugby emphasises adult male physicality in relation to boys and to women and girls (among whom the most played sport is netball). Qauia is home to a few well-known local rugby clubs, such as Red Rock and Veiyasana; indeed the area has produced several players who have represented Fiji at international level. Through lucrative contracts with overseas clubs, professional rugby potentially represents a significant source of income for young men, as well as a means to develop a positive reputation and male status.

In Fiji, employment in the police force or armed forces also offers a form of status for men, with the latter in particular seen in both historical and contemporary settings as a source of social prestige and 'bastion' of indigenous masculine identity (Teaiwa 2005; George 2008). Military service is held in high regard by most, with service in both national and foreign forces idealised as a noble form of earning money and serving a greater cause. It is common in houses in Qauia to see photographs of relatives currently serving abroad proudly displayed on the walls. In describing the "social value placed on militarized and masculinized discipline in Fiji", Teaiwa (2005: 206) suggests that as a "culture of masculinity", militarism entails both a "disciplining of bodies and a disciplining of social relations".

An institution like military emphasises male bodily performance, bravery and fearlessness, while its hierarchical structure echoes the pattern of social relations within village settings and domestic groups across Fiji. Historically, Fijian masculinity has always been associated with themes of bodily skill: warfare was a "highly valued component of the male role" and a "potential source of prestige for non-chiefly men" (Turner 1992: 297), for example, and sport in pre-colonial Fiji helped to train young warriors (Williams 1858).

Rugby, the police and the military all explicitly incorporate Christianity at times. For example, rugby teams sing religious songs before and after matches. Meanwhile the

head of the Fijian police force – also a former naval officer – has recently faced criticism for spending public money on various 'crusades' and attempting to evangelicise his officers through enforced prayer sessions[9], much to the dismay of, among others, non-Christian ethnic Indians in the police.. Like the structure of the police and military, furthermore, Christian (especially Methodist) values in Fiji have been "selectively stressed in support of hierarchically-organized communal life" (Norton 1993: 747; see also Toren 1999: 57-66).

Halapua (2003) discusses the historical links between the indigenous ideologies of *lotu* (Christianity/Methodism), *'turagaism'* (a belief in chiefly rights to leadership) and militarism, which for many Fijians are incorporated smoothly into the 'way of the land' (*vakavanua*) and hegemonic understandings of masculinity. In recent times these connections have been somewhat complicated by rifts within the Methodist Church in Fiji, as well as the Methodist Church hierarchy's vocal disapproval for the military-led interim government in the wake of the 2006 coup (see, e.g., Newland 2009). However, these ideologies all subordinate the masculinities of other ethnic groups, such as Indians, who are excluded from indigenous social structures, are few and far between in the military and for the most part are either Hindu or Muslim. Rugby also remains dominated by Fijians. Fijian men use these ethnic differences to posit themselves at the top of the masculine hierarchy (Teaiwa 2005; George 2007).

In addition to participation in gendered activities, masculinities and femininities – as configurations of practice within the gender system – are implicated in individual micro-level gender displays, including speech patterns, bodily comportment and other non-verbal social cues. As such, the gender system encompasses the *way* things are done in addition to *what* is done by men and women in Qauia. For example, virtually all people sit on the floor for a range of activities, yet only women are permitted to sit with legs

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[9] 'Police to spread the gospel', *Fiji Sun*, December 13, 2008;
   'Compulsory attendance at police crusades', *Fiji Times*, April 11, 2009.

crossed to one side underneath them[10]; a man sits cross-legged or perhaps on some occasions with legs outstretched in front of him, space permitting. This is just one example among various patterns of behaviours that are embodied by individual actors through the generative principle of *habitus*, thereby appearing as essential, oppositional characteristics of men and women. Corporeal style is thus an important feature of Fijian masculinity.

A young man in Qauia is sometimes teased or derided by relatives and others for the way he sits, talks, walk and so on, perhaps with the comment that his behaviour is "*me vaka dua na yalewa*" ("like a girl"). Masculinities in Qauia are therefore first positioned in direct relation to what, by definition, they cannot be: that which is considered feminine. Heterosexual masculinities discursively subordinate both women and homosexual men, so that for a male to be 'like a girl' implies homosexuality, and thereby inferiority or a 'lack' of masculinity. Homosexual men – or men who might appear homosexual due to their 'unmanly' behaviour and practice – are feminised in Fijian discourse. Christian churches in Fiji, meanwhile, display a general intolerance to homosexuality that is echoed by state authorities (George 2007).

A Fijian man is expected to at some point marry, and the metaphorical language associated with sex often invokes imagery of male consumption of women. A young woman with whom one has had enjoyable sex, for example, is sometimes described by men in Qauia as *kana vinaka* ('tasty') or *maleka* ('delicious'). The husband-wife relationship in Fiji is explicitly one of dominance and subordination; a young woman goes from being under the control and supervision of elder family members to deferring to her husband in marriage. This makes a man chief in his own house (Toren 1999). A married man in Qauia is expected to exert some control over his wife and children, and thus hegemonic understandings of masculinity in Qauia incorporate cultural beliefs and values pertaining to male dominance within patriarchal kinship structures. In this way, masculinities and femininities are as much associated with patterns of male/female

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[10] Women often sit in the same way as men, depending on the situation, space available and attire worn; this ties in with issues of female modesty. When in Qauia, women and older girls tend to wear sulus to cover their legs, although it is not as imperative to do so as in rural villages.

relations and the distribution of power, as they are with individual characteristics. Being an adult Fijian male entails occupying a position of authority within the domestic hierarchy, vis-à-vis women, girls and younger males. That men are the appropriate leaders of Fiji more broadly is enshrined in, for example, the Fijian-language version of the national anthem, a line of which reads *"me ra turaga vinaka ko ira na i liuliu"* ("may our leaders be honourable men").

Hegemonic masculinity defines the correct, required and desired ways to 'be a man' in any cultural context, marginalising or feminising other forms of masculinity as inadequate or inferior while maintaining men's collective power over women (Cornwall & Lindisfarne 1994; Connell 1995; van Hoven & Horschelmann 2005). In accordance with the 'way of the land', practices such as *yaqona*-drinking, Christianity and heterosexuality are hegemonic masculine ideals in Qauia. The format of ritualised *yaqona* (kava) drinking, which continues to be a principally male activity, confirms and reiterates for its participants the differences in relative status that are implicated in embodied practice across a variety of situations in Qauia. Drinking *yaqona* is a type of masculine performance in several ways; just as a man is expected to show bodily competence in terms of work (perhaps through waged labour in the city, or carrying out tasks within the settlement), being able to drink large quantities indicates strength of mind and body and demonstrates commitment to the group, both of which are idealised as typical masculine qualities.

Fijian masculinity, furthermore, is necessarily framed by the hierarchical system of social relations, and must be understood within the context of the everyday interactions and power relations that constitute this gendered hierarchy. As configurations of embodied practice, masculinities in Qauia entail specific relations of power, in addition to being implicated in gender displays, corporeal styles or bodily comportment, and participation in activities deemed culturally appropriate for men. Adult men hold a legitimate authority (in the form of a clearly defined symbolic capital, from a Bourdieusian perspective) by virtue of their positions in domestic hierarchies. Having now provided an account of social hierarchy and *yaqona* use in Qauia, and established a

basic template for a hegemonic Fijian masculinity, the following chapter introduces the subjects of alcohol use and alcohol-related behaviour.

Chapter Five

ALCOHOL USE IN QAUIA

> Socio-cultural variants are at least as important as physiological and psychological variants when we are trying to understand the interrelations of alcohol and human behavior. Ways of drinking and of thinking about drinking are learned by individuals within the context in which they learn ways of doing other things and of thinking about them (Heath 1982: 438).

> Alcohol as a drug can be viewed as an *enabler* or a *facilitator* of certain culturally given inebriate states, but it cannot be seen as producing a specific response pattern among all human beings who ingest it (Marshall 1983: 200).

Forms of alcohol use and alcohol-related behaviour vary across cultural and historical contexts (Mandelbaum 1965; MacAndrew & Edgerton 1969; Marshall 1979; Heath 1982; Plange 1998). In Fiji, the use and abuse of alcohol continues to be a predominantly male activity taking place in and around urban centres. This chapter gives an account of alcohol use in Qauia – drawing comparisons with the ritualised use of *yaqona* (kava) – and discusses its relationship to Fijian masculinity.

The purchase of alcohol for a group potentially subverts existing hierarchies and temporarily emphasises a masculine power based on wealth and provision, rather than ascribed birth status or age. Alcohol also promotes a 'time-out' from normal rules for drinkers, and provides a suitable excuse for a range of culturally inappropriate behaviours. These include airing personal grievances, publicly demonstrating heterosexuality or the use of aggression and violence, behaviours that are blamed on the alcohol and contextualised to male drunkenness, but which implicitly reference hegemonic ideals of masculinity through the assertion of interpersonal power.

Due to religious, economic and cultural factors, alcohol remains on the periphery of social life in Fiji. Alcohol is currently not sold at sports matches, town festivals or other large social events. Unlike *yaqona* (kava), alcohol has no ritualistic use and is never

presented as *sevusevu* (offering or tribute). Despite ranking a lowly 132 out of 191 listed nations in terms of per capita consumption[11] (World Health Organization 2004), alcohol has been consistently linked with a range of social problems in Fiji (see, e.g., Kippax 1986; Adrinkrah 1995). Alcohol use is involved in one third of hospital admissions and three-quarters of all injury presentations, whilst approximately 80% of all crimes in the country are said to be committed under the influence of alcohol (World Health Organization 2004).

Nevertheless, alcohol abstinence rates in Fiji are high, at an estimated 74% for adult men and 98% for adult women, whilst the percentage of the population classified as daily drinkers is very low, at approximately 1.4% among males and 0.8% among females. There are, therefore, high levels of alcohol abuse amongst some groups in Fiji but a general lack of alcoholism, following the distinction made between abuse as "socially disruptive behaviours" associated with drinking, and alcoholism as "physiological or psychological dependency on ethanol which may or may not be accompanied by socially disruptive behaviours" (Marshall 1979: viii).

Alcohol is frowned upon or even prohibited in rural Fijian villages, due to the social disruption caused by excessive consumption[12], the influence of Christianity and the entrenched place of *yaqona* in local culture. Nonetheless drinking does take place in these areas (see, e.g., Toren 1994; Plange 1998), although much of the time the use of alcohol in these settings may be confined to secretive group sessions involving illegal 'home-brew', an often highly potent beverage created by mixing together and fermenting yeast, sugar, water or coconut milk, and sometimes fruit. Due to its low cost, home-brew has also become increasingly popular in urban areas, leading to recent

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[11] It should be noted that such statistics are further complicated by tourism, which contributes significantly to the total volume of alcohol consumed in a country as small as Fiji.

[12] 'Village bans home-brew, *Fiji Sun*, May 28, 2009;
  'Village imposes one-year alcohol ban', *Fiji Times*, June 7, 2009.

efforts by the police to identify and prosecute those producing and selling large quantities[13].

While commercially produced alcohol is not available in rural areas, bottled alcohol is readily accessible in Fijian towns and cities. In common with many other Pacific societies, drinking trends in Fiji are best described as episodic, often involving a high level of intake, and with drunkenness as a primary aim (see Marshall 1979, 1982; Walter 1982; Casswell 1986; Rokosawa 1986; Plange 1998). Among groups of young men especially, a collectivist ethos combines with the "chauvinism, machismo and peer pressure inherent in Fijian culture" (Plange 1998: 95) to lead to patterns of excessive alcohol consumption.

Walter (1982: 435) suggests alcohol offers an "escape not simply from ennui but from social anonymity" for young Fijian men in rural areas who have little power in their everyday lives, providing drinkers with a "temporary promotion to a new identity and status of significance and importance". Various writers have argued that the situation is similar in Fijian towns and cities (e.g., Kippax 1986; Plange 1998). Discussing both rural and urban settings, Gounis and Rutz (1986: 83-84) describe how Fijian men buy beer for each other when they have sufficient money to do so, knowing that others will do the same for them when the situation is reversed. Therefore, like in many other countries (Heath 1995: 328-347), drinking in Fiji is primarily a social act, and the solitary Fijian drinker is a rare sight.

Alcohol advertising in Fiji associates the consumption of beer and other alcoholic drinks with machismo by linking certain brands with, for example, particular sporting events or sports in general (Adinkrah 1995: 42-43). Indeed the most popular drink among Fijian men, Fiji Bitter, is marketed under the slogan of "The Sportsman's Beer". This is brewed locally by an Australian-owned company. The same brewery – the only one in Fiji – also produces Fiji Gold (which has fewer carbohydrates than Fiji Bitter), Fiji

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[13] In Suva: 'Police seize 900 litres of home-brew', *Fiji Sun*, June 15, 2008.
   In Nadi: 'Police uncover more home-brew cases', *Fiji Sun*, June 17, 2008.

Premium (a recent introduction aimed at the higher end of the market) and a range of spirits and mixed drinks. More expensive imported beers and other alcoholic drinks are available in supermarkets, hotels and some bars.

In Qauia, alcohol is easily accessible. First, there is a supermarket in nearby Lami Town, although this closes at 8pm on most days. In nearby Suva City there are also numerous places selling bottled alcohol, in addition to nightclubs and other drinking establishments, as discussed in the following chapter. Much of the alcohol consumed *within* Qauia, in fact, is purchased in the settlement itself in the form of bottled beer, specifically Fiji Bitter 750ml 'long necks'. These are usually available from 'black-markets' operating from houses on a seemingly twenty-four hour basis.

As previously noted though, alcohol occupies a somewhat marginal place in Fijian society due to both economic conditions and socio-cultural factors. For instance, several Christian denominations that explicitly prohibit the use of alcohol (as well as tobacco and kava) are becoming increasingly popular among those living in Qauia, as in other areas of Fiji (see, e.g., Newland 2004). These include Seventh Day Adventism and the Assembly of God. Most young men between the ages of about eighteen and thirty do drink alcohol at some time, but not necessarily within the settlement itself. Particular houses are places where alcohol is drunk on an irregular basis, and from others it is sold, yet alcohol is never brought into many residences in Qauia.

The cost of alcohol in relation to the average income of people living in Qauia, coupled with religious and cultural discourses, means that drinking is a far from everyday activity in the settlement. Alcohol is not served at family functions or at dinnertime, for example, nor, generally speaking, drunk in the presence of children. Despite the prevalence of abstinence and conservative values, nevertheless, the attitudes of many in Qauia towards alcohol use and drunkenness amongst young men remain somewhat ambivalent. A youth who is clearly drunk may be viewed by others going about their everyday business as both a source of entertainment and annoyance. For example, towards the end of my fieldwork, a woman in her later forties or early fifties – who does

not drink alcohol – remarked about a drunken young man passing her house, *"lo'ulevu, vakaraubuka…wara na moce"* ("Thursday, Friday, no sleep"). She rolled her eyes and mumbled to herself disapprovingly, whilst at the same time clearly amused by his antics.

This type of 'boys will be boys' attitude is common in Qauia. Both young and adult men are permitted to sit and drink *yaqona* (kava) for hours; likewise, to a lesser extent, many men are free to get drunk when the chance presents itself. Although much of the alcohol consumed by young men in Qauia is done so late at night and outside of houses (under trees, on footpaths or in cassava patches), beer or spirits are sometimes drunk inside houses owned by adult men. Occasionally, groups of young men drink in more public areas of the settlement by younger men, for example on the wooden bridge into the settlement, or even simply on the road (although this was a rare sight during my fieldwork).

In contrast with rural Fijian villages, where women and older men rarely or never consume alcohol (see, e.g., Walter 1982; Toren 1994), various men and women – both young and old – sometimes join drinking sessions in Qauia. However, women certainly do not to drink to the same extent as men. Married women plainly state that, even if they wanted to, it is simply not possible for them to get excessively drunk. Unlike men, women would be unable to sleep all day following a lengthy drinking session because they are busy with necessary domestic activities (such as preparing food or cleaning), and are principally responsible for looking after and preparing children for school. Thus, 'women's work' cannot be ignored for long, unlike some male-orientated tasks taking place within the settlement, such as climbing for coconuts, attending to small vegetable gardens, or building outdoor kitchens, none of which is of the same urgency as key domestic activities typically performed by girls and women (see also Marshall 1979: 88).

In Qauia, men sometimes drink beer or other alcoholic beverages after several or many bowls of *yaqona* (kava) have been finished, a behaviour commonly known throughout Fiji as 'wash-down', where the alcohol is thought to cleanse the body of the kava.

Indeed men in Qauia often claim that the only way to avoid being 'grogged out' the day after a heavy kava session is to 'wash-down' with beer. On other occasions, lengthy drinking sessions will occur sporadically, involving large amounts of beer or spirits, a favourite being Fijian-produced Bounty rum. Clearly the most important factor determining these events is access to money, and for this reason drinking alcohol most often occurs at the weekend when men in regular employment may have their week's wages to spend and are less likely to be working. This differs from *yaqona* sessions, which, for many, are an almost daily pastime for many men, both young and old.

Particularly long and boisterous drinking sessions involving alcohol occurred in various locations in Qauia on many occasions during my fieldwork; examples of causes of which included a fisherman's return from a lengthy period at sea (when the young man had plenty of money to spend on alcohol) and when a soldier was soon to be deployed to Iraq. These lasted from one evening through into the next, producing a mountain of Fiji Bitter bottles and a number of young men rendered unconscious in the process. Other lengthy sessions occasionally emerged in Qauia after groups returned home from nightclubs and purchased more beer at 'black-market' houses in the settlement.

The overwhelming tendency for male drinkers in Qauia – both unmarried and married, young and old – is to attempt to consume as much alcohol as possible, and the sight of an individual or group having a 'casual' one or two beers is extremely rare. The expectation for drinking alcohol, like kava, is that it will be drunk until *maca* (dry), so that it is extremely unusual to find anyone stockpiling large amounts of alcohol for future consumption in Qauia. It is generally the case that the amount of alcohol bought in one session is an indicator of the enjoyment had by those taking part and the significance of the event; people will talk of a previous night's escapades in terms of the number of bottles or cartons consumed. If there is enough money available and a collective will to drink more, carton after carton will be purchased by a group and potential newcomers, perhaps involving repeat trips to 'black-market' houses selling alcohol.

Drinking enough to make oneself sick or unconscious – described by Fijians using the English term 'knock-out' – is not seen as unusual behaviour for a youth from Qauia, especially if he is participating with others in a lengthy session. Generally speaking, reaching this state also does not entail any sense of shame or embarrassment on behalf of the individual, recalling Marshall's (1982) claim that being inebriated to the extent that one loses consciousness carries no stigma or negative moral evaluation among male drinkers in Papua New Guinea. Nonetheless I am unaware of any deaths or serious injuries occurring in Qauia as a result of excessive drinking. Informants spoke only of well-publicised deaths and injuries in other parts of Fiji which had occurred from drinking liquids such as methylated spirits.

A small minority of people – mostly young men – occasionally drink 'meths' or 'spirits' (methylated or otherwise) by mixing them with other forms of alcohol or non-alcoholic liquid. However it is certainly a clandestine activity that is most likely carried out when a group is drinking other forms of commercial bottled alcohol at the same time. The attitude of this minority is summed up by a group of young men – a few of them married – who spoke favourably of 'spirits' in interviews and discussions, using the phrase "less money, more drunk". Some people in Qauia also consume home-brew, although most agree that bottled alcohol is preferable.

The '*taki*' ('serve') system used to distribute and consume alcohol in Qauia is modelled on the format of the *yaqona* (kava) session, so that one person takes it upon himself (or, more rarely, herself) to serve others with a *bilo* (small glass) of beer or other alcoholic drink in a sequential fashion. This is gulped in one go and returned to whoever is 'spinning' the glass (i.e. serving the alcohol), ready for the next drinker to take his turn, until the person serving has the final drink of any round. Unlike when *yaqona* is drunk, however, it is frequently the case that when an individual purchases an amount of alcohol with his own money – or perhaps provides by far the largest proportion of the collective fund – he will be continually afforded the first cup in every round. In this way, the provision of beer or spirits can lift a young man's status, if only for a limited period. Buying alcohol for others in Qauia therefore often means a man 'buys' himself the

temporarily achieved position of 'chief'. This is not so when drinking *yaqona*; the purchase of *yaqona* can never lift the buyer's place in the sequence of drinking.

Of Fiji more broadly, Rokosawa (1986: 18) suggests men often spend their money unwisely on alcohol in order to become 'chief'. This may be true at times in Qauia, but also reflects the tendency for some men to buy drinks when they receive their weekly pay, for example. In other words, men buy alcohol for a group not because they want to achieve a level of status, but instead because they have money and want to get drunk, which, like most activities in Qauia, is a collective endeavour. The effect of alcohol provision on the sequence of drinking, furthermore, is mediated by age, so that a member of an elder generation will be served before others. Thus, during my fieldwork when a young man returned from a couple of months working as a builder in Lautoka and bought a carton of beer for a small group of men, he was served directly after a paternal uncle, who was first to drink in every round by virtue of his seniority.

The exact sequence of drinking is determined by a combination of the principles of traditional hierarchy and individual provision, and by the group's orientation in space. As much of the alcohol consumed in Qauia is done so in outside areas, the spatial arrangement of the drinkers varies, and the *i cake/i ra* ('above'/'below') distinction of *yaqona* sessions has been removed. People are free to move around, stand up, change positions and so on, which often changes the sequence of drinking. To an extent there is also often some movement of drinkers during alcohol sessions inside houses and other structures, where individuals are, furthermore, less likely to apologise when walking past or reaching across others, as is normal in Fijian custom. Alcohol sessions lack the same ritualised elements and specific behavioural requirements of the *yaqona* session, in which differences in status are explicitly realised through the spatial arrangement of those present and the sequence of drinking.

Like *yaqona* sessions, a group of men drinking alcohol together demonstrates sociability. However it also – sometimes very publicly – shows that they have enough money to do so. The price of bottled alcohol, in relation to both average income and to

bags of *yaqona*, is very high. Finau (1982: 39) argues that a Western lifestyle is generally sought after in developing Pacific nations (especially by young people), and that expensive items such as alcohol represent a certain status or level of prestige. Alcohol can be viewed as a "symbol of modernisation" (Casswell 1986: 3) and change in Fiji, both economically and culturally. Beer and spirits symbolise participation and success in the monetary economy and, by extension, wealth and prestige[14]. Whereas *yaqona* is representative of Fijian tradition and discursively bound with those practices and ways of behaving encompassed by the concept of *vakavanua* ('the way of the land'), alcohol use is associated with urban modernity.

Drinking alcohol is certainly viewed as more exciting than *yaqona* by many men in Qauia, especially youths. The day before I left Fiji to return home for the Christmas holiday of 2007, for instance, one young man asked me to purchase some more beer to extend a small session coming to an end under a large breadfruit tree. I declined, suggesting that he drank *yaqona* at a nearby house instead. His response was "*e vucesa, kei'ou somi yaqona e na veisiga*" ("it's boring, we drink kava everyday"), a fairly typical view for youths living in Qauia.

While *yaqona* is very much a necessary part of rituals and social events occurring in domestic settings and the wider community of Qauia, as well as being consumed casually on a regular basis, the fun to be had from drinking alcohol is partly derived from its place outside of domestic life. The rowdiness that accompanies drinking provides repeated points of conversation, primarily among young men but also others living in the area. Drinking stories among peers provide narratives of individual gender accomplishment (see also Schacht 1996; Peralta 2007); tales of drunken events are often condensed into a single word or catchphrase, while alcohol use figures prominently in the conjuring of male nicknames.

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[14] Wine is viewed more as a female drink and does not have the same symbolic value as beer or spirits. This is perhaps due to wine's unsuitability for drinking in the same way as these other forms of alcohol, which are easier to consume quickly and in greater amounts.

As with all psychoactive substances, the subjective experience of alcohol is structured by cultural variables, so that "the behavioral consequences of drinking…depend as much on a people's idea of what alcohol does to a person as they do on the physiological processes that take place" (Mandelbaum 1965: 282). Marshall (1979: 116-117) thus describes the dramaturgical quality of alcohol-related behaviour, suggesting that drunken comportment is necessarily contextualised to particular settings as well as being shaped by gender, age and social class or status. Accordingly, the physiological, psychological and behavioural effects of alcohol vary between people and situations in Qauia. Like in other parts of the world, however, being drunk in Qauia seemingly "provides a socially accepted excuse" (Marshall 1982: 12; see also Marshall 1979; Plange 1998) for unusual or even antisocial behaviour in certain contexts. Alcohol use leads to a 'time-out' from normal rules and allows drinkers to subvert normal patterns of interaction everyday practice in various ways.

One evening only several weeks into my stay in Qauia, I came across a small but extremely boisterous beer-drinking session in the house of a married man in his forties. The drinking had started after the group watched televised coverage of an international rugby 7s tournament (held in Wellington, New Zealand), an important occasion for many throughout the country. Fiji had been beaten in the quarter-final, but spirits were high nonetheless. The drinkers were sitting in an approximate circle, although some were occasionally getting up to dance and generally moving positions inside the house. After a while, the owner of the house and a woman of similar age started dancing together, energetically and fairly suggestively, driving the rest of the group into wild laughter. One of the youths sitting next to me explained the reason for such amusement was that the dancers were siblings, a clear transgression of the traditional brother-sister taboo or avoidance relationship in Fiji (see, e.g., Geddes 1945: 70).

In Qauia and throughout Fiji, inebriation through either *yaqona* (kava) or alcohol is referred to as *mateni*[15] ('drunk'). The physical and behavioural effects of the two substances, however, are very different. As Turner explains,

> *Mate* refers to diminished vitality, whether partial or total, and the term *mateni* is also applied to alcoholic intoxication. Fijians are explicit about the parallels between *yaqona* and alcohol but if they recognize similarities, they also recognize differences. They point out that alcohol can lead to raucous or even violent behavior but when drinking *yaqona* a person becomes peaceful (Turner 1986: 204).

Thus, in Qauia, a casual *yaqona* session involving a small group of young men on a Friday night might start energetically, with guitar-playing, singing and joking, but will become increasingly quiet as the night progresses. When alcohol is consumed, by contrast, the drinkers often become louder with each bottle drunk, more raucous in their laughter and audacious in their teasing of one another, and potentially more assertive in their language or aggressive in their general demeanour. The *mana* ('power') of *yaqona* is connected to the ancestors and realm of the supernatural, leading only to peacefulness, mental clarity and sleep. Excessive consumption of alcohol, on the other hand, can lead to the state of *mateni lialia* ('stupid/crazy drunk'), where the individual is prone to spontaneous changes in mood and unpredictable behaviour.

While, as the above story illustrates, alcohol lowers the inhibitions and leads to unusual yet not necessarily antisocial behaviour in Qauia, it can also result in conflict. Grievances are more readily aired between drinkers, especially young men. Both male and female informants also agreed that alcohol is a potential source of domestic quarrels and general violence. Cases of spousal abuse were rare during my fieldwork, but alcohol was usually given as a main cause. Qauia as a community recognises the relationship between alcohol and violence, and has attempted to curb heavy drinking in the

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[15] People under the influence of cannabis are also sometimes referred to as *mateni*, although the English word 'stoned' is used as well. I once overheard a young man telling a story about another's behaviour after smoking *tavako qase* ('wise tobacco', meaning cannabis), where he was described as *"stoned sara ga me vaka dua na yalewa"* ("as stoned as a girl"). The implication here is that, like drinking alcohol, being able to withstand the effects of smoking cannabis without losing sense of control is evident of a masculine strength that is not assigned to women.

settlement. In early August 2008 an informal *bose ni koro* (settlement meeting) was held following a brawl that had erupted a week earlier. This fight involved many young men from the area, including some interviewed for my research and other informants. It was agreed in the meeting that the use of alcohol would be prohibited within Qauia. This ban was limited in its effectiveness, which is not surprising, considering the difficulties in actually implementing such a decision due to the lack of a chiefly hierarchy or legitimate chain of authority. One young unmarried man, when imploring me to join him for a drink a few days after the settlement meeting, claimed that *"sa wara ni 'abu na somi bia...'abu na kaikaila"* ("drinking beer isn't forbidden, but [drunken] shouting is").

In addition to being cited in cases of interpersonal violence between drinkers, alcohol use also causes personal grievances with those not drinking to surface on occasion. One weeknight during my fieldwork, for example, I awoke to the sound of a young man – a friend of mine – shouting wildly on a nearby footpath. A couple of other youths managed to take him into a nearby house, where a small group of people soon gathered to see what was happening. It transpired that he had been drinking in town after discovering that a male cross-cousin (*tavale*) of a similar age (who was not present in Qauia at the time) was earning more money than the family had thought, and yet he (the cousin) continued to neglect his financial obligations to relatives. My friend was extremely aggressive in his demeanour, shouting and swearing, and even attempting to fight his elder brother. This carried on for a while until another male cross-cousin (*tavale*) intervened by punching him hard in the face, causing him to fall to the floor.

A case of beer was then purchased and consumed in the normal way by the men present (most of whom had been sleeping), with each drinker being served a small glass at a time. The drunken man, after showing initial reluctance, was practically forced to drink with the others present. Thus while alcohol was the catalyst for the youth's unruly behaviour, it was also used to smooth over existing tensions. This is the only time during my fieldwork that I ever witnessed my friend act in such a way, sober or drunk. I had seen him consume large amounts of alcohol on many occasions, and yet he was always restrained, never acting as the centre of attention or becoming aggressive towards others.

The incident was laughed about during the following days and his original grievance never mentioned again.

Toren (1999: 135) suggests Fijians view male sexual desire is "uncontrollable under the influence of alcohol", and indeed in Qauia a man who is *mateni lialia* ('crazy drunk') is said to be prone to sexual urges as well as confrontational or violent behaviour. On two separate occasions during my fieldwork in Qauia, I saw men approach the house where a teenage girl they desire was living and drunkenly call out to her. Both times the girl's mother or another female relative verbally reprimanded the youth, who was forced to apologise for his actions. Young men's advances or suggestive comments towards female drinkers are common whilst under the influence of alcohol, often becoming more insistent or aggressive as the night wears on. While both types of drinking session often involve a male-only group, men's talk becomes more sexually-orientated, explicit and potentially misogynistic, under the influence of alcohol, in comparison with during *yaqona* (kava) sessions and at most other times.

The risks associated with drinking, both in terms of the physical and behavioural effects, make consuming large amounts of alcohol an exemplary form of masculine performance or accomplishment in itself. While young men in Qauia may experience little shame or stigma among their peers for drunkenness, being able to drink heavily is seen as a sign of strength in a man (see also Adinkrah 1995; Plange 1998). The drinker who consumes a large amount without adverse consequences displays a level of control over his body despite his high blood alcohol content:

> In several ways, drinking, in itself, is a test of mastery. Because alcohol affects judgment and slows reaction time, it intensifies the risks inherent in movement and speed, and thereby increases the challenge they represent. And because it threatens self-control, drinking poses heightened opportunities for demonstrating self-mastery…[B]eer is itself an occasion for demonstrating mastery, and thus, masculinity (Strate 1992: 82).

Demonstrating a willingness to take risks, and then exhibiting mastery over the physical environment, is a core masculine quality in Qauia. Being able to drink large amounts is related to other forms of bodily strength and mental toughness emphasised in Fijian discourse, such as military service or excelling at rugby. While heavy alcohol use is antithetical to the goals of sport, military service and manual work – all of which require an individual to be in peak mental and physical condition – drinking vast amounts one day and then being able to achieve these goals the next is seen to demonstrate a masculine strength. Indeed on several occasions during my fieldwork both men and women commented favourably on the ability of certain youths to drink vast amounts of beer and then go to work the next day.

To retire early – although clearly intoxicated – from a drinking session still in progress in Qauia seems to indicate, in some senses, an admission of defeat; the individual is defeated by both the drink itself and the others drinking. Just as the weary *yaqona* drinker regretfully signals his inability or lack of desire to continue after six hours of being served endless bowls of 'grog', so too may the beer drinker sheepishly make an exit from a session. The competitive element of alcohol consumption is highlighted by young men's occasional taunting each other the day after a lengthy drinking session, using phrases such as *"o cei moce i liu?"* ("who slept first?"), in a sort of claim to victory.

Due to the physiological effects and the lack of cultural prescription for its use, alcohol emboldens young men to embark on a range of 'risky' behaviours. These include a propensity for violence, advances towards women or becoming embroiled in domestic disputes, which are masculine performances that are linked to the assertion of power. Crucially, in Fijian discourse, a propensity for violence and overpowering heterosexual desire are both associated with men as essentially male behaviours. These aspects of masculinity are usually 'hidden' in the course of everyday life in Qauia, but emphasised under the influence of alcohol. When alcohol is being consumed, men become performers of a context-specific hypermasculinity and are generally with male friends

who serve as the audience for their performance (see also Thompson & Cracco 2008: 83).

In terms of the social ramifications, furthermore, the 'risk' of alcohol-related behaviour is in some ways lessened by being intoxicated, which provides an adequate excuse or explanation. Thus a drunken man can receive a physical beating after picking a fight, or fail in his attempts to woo a young woman, and yet face little judgement from other men. A sober man, on the other hand, would be widely ridiculed for publicly declaring an interest in a female, only to be shunned. To a lesser extent, alcohol also provides a convenient excuse for personal grievances between family members or close acquaintances to be aired.

To summarise, the use of alcohol in Qauia is largely confined to episodic binges involving groups of young men. The *taki* system used to distribute and consume alcohol is modelled on the format of the *yaqona* (kava) session, and materialises hierarchy is a distinctly Fijian way. However the purchase of alcohol for a group potentially subverts the normal principles of hierarchy, stressing masculine power in terms of wealth and provision rather than ascribed birth status or age.

In signalling a 'time-out' from normal rules, drinking alcohol is a temporary rejection of some of the cultural values *yaqona*-drinking reinforces, providing a suitable excuse for men to engage in various gendered performances that are linked to the assertion or attempted assertion of male power (e.g., airing grievances, demonstrating heterosexual desire or fighting). Although these behaviours are culturally inappropriate, they are contextualised to drunkenness and implicitly reference hegemonic ideals of masculinity.

Alcohol thus provides a chance for men to use forms of capital (beyond symbolic capital) with different types of habitus to demonstrate specific elements of hegemonic masculinity, and thereby assert a position of power. This is highly significant because, as argued in the previous chapter, masculinities in Qauia are defined as much by relations of power as they are by individual behaviours, characteristics and participation in

gendered activities. In the next chapter I continue to discuss the relationship between Fijian masculinity and alcohol use by men living in Qauia, focusing specifically on drinking in Suva nightclubs.

Chapter Six

FIJIAN NIGHTCLUBS

> The [nightclub] setting is one where unapologetic hypermasculinity displays are particularly visible and largely normalized, whether it is drinking contests, alcohol-related fighting, 'elevator-eyes' and unsolicited sexualized interaction, misogynistic discourse…or sexual aggression…Men are freed to and often expected to engage in 'hetero-masculinity' performances that involve sexual assertiveness, if not aggressiveness and bravado (Thompson & Cracco 2008: 83).

The nightclubs of Suva are in many ways far removed from everyday life in Qauia. These male-dominated urban locations are characterised by heavy alcoholic intake, aggression or fighting, and lots of dancing and casual meetings with the opposite sex. Unlike in Qauia, alcohol intoxication is normalised in the nightclub, and with it a range of hypermasculine performances of interpersonal power that are arguably carried out with other men as the intended audience. These include the use of violence and displays of male heterosexuality or dominance over women, which are informed by hegemonic gender relations and understandings of masculinity. Such behaviours reveal a general tension between homosociality and homophobia in these public spaces.

In many regards Fijian nightclubs are similar in appearance to those found in other parts of the world, with DJs blasting out loud music, bar and dance spaces, disco lights, discounted alcohol 'happy hours' and perhaps pool tables and large screen televisions. As elsewhere, different ethnic and socio-economic groups in Fiji generally frequent different nightclubs. There are about ten venues in Suva catering almost exclusively to ethnic Fijians. There are also fewer than five nightclubs that are patronised by a more diverse crowd, including affluent Fijians, Indians, Europeans, Pacific Islanders and tourists. I have heard young men in Qauia describe such places, somewhat disparagingly, as '*Kailoma*' clubs. These socially and culturally diverse venues are more difficult to describe than the ethnic Fijian clubs, due to the various groups of people who go there. The word *Kailoma* (lit. 'mixed-race) is perhaps best translated as 'part-European', with the other part being Fijian, but it is often used in a broader sense to

include, for example, Chinese-Fijians. The *Kailoma* community of Fiji developed as a result of miscegenation and intermarriage between indigenous Fijians and European settlers in the early nineteenth century, and has gained considerable economic power and cultural influence in urban areas.

The music played in ethnic Fijian clubs – which from herein I shall refer to simply as 'Fijian' clubs, as that is what they are known as – is mostly Fijian pop, whilst Indian music is found at Indo-Fijian venues; Western music is becoming increasingly common at both. Western hip-hop, pop and dance music dominate at *Kailoma* clubs, where Indian and Fijian music are rarely heard. Alcohol is often significantly cheaper at Fijian clubs than at others throughout the city centre. All the nightclubs are located within a few minutes walking distance of each other, and usually start to attract customers after 8pm. An individual cover charge is applied at the entrance of some venues on particularly busy evenings, costing FJ\$2 or \$3 each, which is less than the average price of one drink.

The nightclubs in Suva – especially the Fijian venues – are not immune to some of the social problems associated with urbanisation, modernisation and global youth culture. Drunkenness, violence, theft, drugs (cannabis) and prostitution are present to varying degrees, and some of these clubs have acquired reputations as potentially dangerous for Fijians and non-Fijians alike. As there is no dress code at the Fijian clubs, men often wear T-shirts, shorts and flip-flops in such places. Women also adopt similar attire. The *Kailoma* clubs, on the other hand, are usually strict on the 'trousers and shirt' policy for men. Arguably, the dress code of *Kailoma* clubs and the fee sometimes charged at all clubs are designed to keep out large groups of young working-class Fijian men, who may not have much money to spend on drinks, and are generally considered more likely to be involved in pick-pocketing, fighting or the sexual harassment of young women.

On average weeknights the Fijian clubs are usually quite empty, and at such times the clientele in attendance is often overwhelmingly male. They become busy from Thursday to Saturday, with perhaps a few hundred people in attendance on some nights. While the

police attempt to clear the clubs of drinkers by about 1am, particular Fijian venues sometimes remain open, if unofficially, until the early hours of the morning or after daylight (although the *Kailoma* clubs always close on time). This was at least the case when I conducted my research in the first half of 2008. As a result of emergency state regulations initiated by the interim government, however, the situation changed somewhat during the first half of 2009, with the police enforcing closing times more keenly and taking a firmer line with clubs admitting underage drinkers[16]. Beyond the nightclubs and their limited hours of operation there are also a few 'hotels' in town serving alcohol, where groups of Fijians continue their drinking into the next day.

Masculinities are in part produced by particular productive regimes and are thus closely linked to forms of employment and to social class, which remains a complex issue in Fiji. The general consensus is that ethnic Fijians in urbanised areas are becoming increasingly separated into a more affluent middle-class and an effectively landless working-class (see, e.g., Plange 1985; Monsell-Davis 1986; Sutherland 1992; Rutz 1995; Barr 2007). The Fijian clubs tend to attract a clientele drawn mainly from the working-class; one club located directly next to the market, for example, is often visited by farmers from around the country who come to the city to sell produce, as well as various men working in the informal sector in and around the market. Middle-class Fijians are less likely to be found at this kind of venue, and are instead more inclined to visit the *Kailoma* clubs.

In the nightclubs, the clothes men wear and the drinks they consume are invested with a symbolism beyond the function these items serve at face value. Men in Fijian clubs are expected to drink Fiji Bitter and dress casually. A man who is 'overdressed' in a Fijian club – and, moreover, dressed in such as way as to be able to enter a *Kailoma* club – may be viewed with some suspicion, or even as effeminate or homosexual. Likewise, drinkers in Fijian clubs use the *taki* system to serve alcohol amongst a group, so that to drink one's own bottle of beer is highly unusual (but much more common in the more

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[16] 'Police crack down on nightclubs', *Fiji Sun*, January 8, 2009;
'Nightclubs to remain closed', *Fiji Sun*, January 21, 2009;
'Police warn bouncers, club securities', *Fiji Sun*, May 3, 2009.

expensive *Kailoma* clubs, where there is a greater range of alcohol to suit the tastes of a wide range of customers). Thus it is not only what one drinks but also how one drinks that acts as an indicator of class.

Fijian clubs are predominantly working-class environments that are dominated specifically by *Fijian* men. This is not to say that different ethnic groups are unable to enter such places, and of course my research in this area would have been impossible if this were the case. Nonetheless these clubs are visited mainly by Fijians, who are speaking Fijian and listening to Fijian music. Masculinities in Fiji are informed by a complex set of intersections between social class and ethnicity, with the latter being of much more direct significance in Suva nightclubs. In the context of urban nightlife especially, Fijian masculinities are defined in relation not only to Fijian femininities, but also to the masculinities and femininities of other ethnic groups. This is especially so in Suva and other increasingly heterogenous urbanised areas, where Fijian men live and work beside Indians, Chinese, 'Europeans'[17] and various Pacific islanders.

Urban modernity often defines masculinity in terms of achievement in the field of employment, measured by the acquisition of wealth. Due to a number of factors – including low wages and a collectivist orientation where money is usually shared among a relatively large group – this wealth is ultimately unattainable for many living in Qauia, who generally work for employers of different socio-economic classes and ethnicities. Despite being structurally subordinated through waged employment, working-class Fijian men discursively subordinate the masculinities of other groups, thereby maintaining a position of symbolic dominance.

Male drinkers in Qauia view the masculinities of Indians, for example, as stressing personal achievement at the expense of collective solidarity among the wider kin group. So although financial independence and personal wealth are hegemonic ideals for working-class Fijian men, these same men are able to position themselves at the top of

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[17] The majority of which in Fiji are Australians, New Zealanders, and some Americans, in addition to smaller numbers of mainland Europeans. Suva is a popular location in the South Pacific for various NGOs, regional bodies and the offices of trans-national corporations.

the masculine hierarchy, even though, collectively, they are in a less favourable economic position than other groups. The fact that Fijians dominate rugby and the military is also used to posit Indians and other groups as less physically capable and therefore as less masculine by Fijian standards. Similarly, patterns of male-female relations are shaped by ethnicity: during my fieldwork some young men in Qauia made fun of what they perceived as Indian men's overly enthusiastic pursuit of and public affection towards women in nightclubs, suggesting effeminacy of the part of these Indian men. The idealised pattern of relations within romantic heterosexual relationships between Fijians – who are less likely be seen kissing or holding hands – is seen as the right one, and thus the most masculine.

The Fijian clubs in Suva are the most popular with working-class ethnic Fijians, including both men and women living in Qauia. These are male-dominated areas: men dominate space physically and are more likely than women to be buying drinks. In comparison with women, men drink greater quantities of alcohol and make more noise. Youths in Qauia will usually visit the Fijian clubs in groups of a similar age, but are sometimes accompanied by older men, younger women and, very rarely, older women. A group often spends the entire evening at a particular venue, although will occasionally move from one to the next on a 'pub crawl'. It was fairly common during my fieldwork for some men to spend a Saturday afternoon drinking *yaqona* (kava) in the settlement or elsewhere, before heading to town to 'wash-down' with beer. At other times groups from Qauia went to specific 'dances' at nightclubs in town that acted as fund-raisers for specific sports clubs or other organisations.

In the same way as alcohol sessions conducted in Qauia, drinkers in Fijian nightclubs consume beer – or perhaps pre-mixed spirits with soft drinks – via the use of a small *'taki'* glass (which is available at the bar), from which each member of the group drinks in a sequential fashion. One fairly typical practice in certain clubs is to buy a jug of beer, which is often slightly more expensive that the equivalent amount in bottle form, and then proceed to fill it repeatedly with the contents of bottles. Sometimes repeat trips are made to the bar, while at other times a carton consisting of maybe twelve Fiji Bitter

'long necks' (750ml) or twenty-four 'stubbies' (375ml) is purchased, depending on the nightclub. In addition to removing the need to return to the bar for more drinks, this serves as a very public display of a group's intention to drink, as there is no discount given for buying greater amounts of alcohol.

If there is a large group of people drinking together, each member may contribute a few dollars towards each new purchase of alcohol, although at times one or two members of a group spend the most money (perhaps coinciding with the receipt of wage packets). For every round of drinking one person will assume the role of serving the beer, and he (or, more rarely, she) always drinks last. This person often continues to serve the beer throughout the night. Although he or she may decide when to serve the beer, another individual might say '*taki*' ('serve') as an instruction to start the next round (and is more likely to do so if the drinks were purchased exclusively or with the majority of his money). After the first person in the sequence has drunk, the glass will be filled and passed round in an approximate circle, although one has to bear in mind the various spatial permutations for a group within an often-crowded club. Like in the *yaqona* (kava) session, there is often some offering of the full glass back and forth, as drinkers insist on others drinking first.

As noted in the previous chapter, money spent on alcohol can 'buy' one a level of temporary status within a group of drinkers. This is most readily gauged by the sequence of drinking in a nightclub, and a man who 'shouts' beer for others is usually afforded the first cup in any given round. Like during alcohol sessions in Qauia, the sequence of drinking is also mediated by other factors, such as age. Therefore an uncle is typically served before a nephew, no matter who pays for the drink. What is important, essentially, is *who is first to drink* in the sequence, for there must be a recognised and acknowledged 'leader'. The group tends to be oriented towards this individual, mirroring the situation when drinking *yaqona,* where a group of men will literally be facing the chief or highest status person(s) present. Drinking first in the sequence symbolises a claim to power within the group, so that this individual also tends to make decisions such as moving the group to a different part of the club or another venue.

However, one way in which power within groups is contested and negotiated is through the use of space. Men stake subtle claims for positions in the hierarchy (and therefore in the sequence of drinking) by dominating space physically, and acting in and on this space, perhaps through being the centre of attention by talking loudly or dancing comically. As an embodiment of masculinity, being able to occupy a particular space is a particularly salient measure of power within a group:

> Embodiment is not simply filling one's own body but the struggle to occupy social space…One's measure of oneself as a man is to occupy one's allocation of space and, therefore, claim one's rightful place as best one can, and as judged appropriate by the apportionment hierarchy of masculinity. Space is not neutral or simply material; it is highly symbolic (Dowsett 2006: 9-10).

The negotiation of hierarchy within a group is given an added dimension in nightclubs, where there may be countless other groups competing for limited space. In this setting masculinity as bodily presence or size is emphasised, requiring forms of habitus aligned to narrowly defined forms of physical capital (wielded, for instance, by one's corporeal style). This is aided by the design of the club, which offers little seating room and results in groups of men standing side by side, struggling for favourable spatial positions within a confined area. Male interaction and behaviour in Fijian nightclubs is shaped to a large extent by various tensions between homosocial and homophobic tendencies. The clubs are places where men meet existing friends or make new acquaintances, but they are also areas where aggression and confrontation are normalised. Possibilities for homosociality are therefore tempered by an underlying threat of male violence. At the same time, homophobia[18] potentially strengthens group loyalties and solidarity.

Within a group the format of drinking emphasises that it is a collective activity, as well as providing an avenue for the expression of differential power relations and the negotiation of hierarchy. This hierarchy – and the sequence of drinking through which it materialises – is further complicated when a group absorbs new members or when two

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[18] By this I mean a fear of the same sex, not an explicit fear of homosexuality (although these are related). Kimmel (1994), for instance, suggests masculinity is in part defined by male homophobia and the threat of emasculation by other men.

groups merge into one, both of which are common scenarios. It is in these situations where a tension between homosociality and homophobia is often particularly evident, due in part to the sequential drinking pattern that is a feature of alcohol use in Fiji. For example, while men are keen to socialise and enjoy themselves with other men, they also do not wish to have their status within the group symbolically reduced by newcomers joining a group and drinking before them. Similarly, although groups of men generally welcome those who bring alcohol (or appear that they may have money to spend), they are also very conscious of others who appear to be hanging around, looking for a free drink. While there is no explicit pressure on a drinker to contribute to the session by purchasing more drinks or by handing over money for the next round, individuals are described metaphorically as, for example, *kalavo* (rats) or *namu* (mosquitoes), especially if they join a group already drinking and fail to provide any alcohol. These usually include those who were previously unknown or not well known to the majority of the group, although in some cases such terms are applied to better acquaintances.

This situation contrasts markedly with that of *yaqona* (kava) drinking. Although contributions of the pounded root are always appreciated by those participating in a *yaqona* session (and even expected in some cases), an individual who does not provide a *sevusevu* (tribute) is never described as a *kalavo* for failure to do so. It is also in contrast to the general Fijian ethos of sharing resources and the 'way of the land' (*vakavanua*). The use of words like *kalavo* or *namu* in this sense perhaps reflect a particular attitude towards the purchase of alcohol and drinking in clubs, one that is more in line with a capitalist or consumer-based socio-economic system or ideology, as opposed to the communalist, subsistence lifestyle as idealised in rural villages.

During my fieldwork the perception of other men as *kalavo* or *namu* led to violence or the threat of violence on occasions, as men reasserted the group boundaries by excluding unwanted drinkers. Meanwhile, fights in nightclubs between those not drinking together emerged through people invading others' space or knocking into them, as a challenge to space is often seen as a challenge to one's masculinity in a setting where hegemonic

ideals of physical size and strength are emphasised. Other arguments and confrontations were over young women and allegations or incidences of theft. Although violence is seemingly legitimised to an extent in the nightclub, it is rarely of an entirely random nature. Nonetheless, men are often quick to respond with fists to perceived challenges to their masculinity. Participation in fights is viewed as a symbol of hegemonic masculinity in this public context. Ideally a Fijian man – especially one under the influence of alcohol – should not be afraid of other men, and yet he should also be able to stand up for himself and not be scared of physical confrontation. The Fijian philosophy of *tabu soro* ('never surrender') is alive and kicking in nightclubs.

Fights in nightclubs are often discussed at great length, as if a badge of honour for certain young men, and can be viewed as a type of gendered performance that is contextualised to the nightclub. Those who have previously 'proved' themselves in fights occurring in nightclubs and other locations also achieve a particular type of status amongst their peers. Fighting in clubs is partly a result of homophobia and yet serves homosocial functions, as men come to aid of others or proclaim each other's 'victories'. Selective use of contextualised violence thus strengthens group loyalty and solidarity while allowing individual men to demonstrate toughness, bravery and adherence to various other masculine ideals.

While Fijian nightclubs are male-dominated environments – often with more men present than women – they are also characterised by lots of dancing and casual meetings with the opposite sex. Neither male nor female informants living in Qauia suggested that they go to nightclubs with the intention of forming romantic relationships. Men explicitly state that they go to nightclubs to drink, whereas women say that they go to dance (if indeed they go at all, as women are less likely than men to do so). For many male drinkers living in Qauia, however, the clubs in Suva present a rare opportunity for sexual encounters not only to develop but also to be even publicly *implied*, unlike in most areas of conservative Fijian society. Beyond suggestive movements on the dance floor, public displays of affection (e.g., kissing or holding hands) are rare. Nevertheless, the nightclub allows men to perform a contextualised heterosexual masculinity. Despite

the relative lack of overt 'girl hunting' (where young men actively seek out young women) that takes place in clubs in, for example, the United States, (see Quinn 2002; Grazian 2007), male-female interaction in Fijian nightclubs maintains ritualistic and performative elements. These could be interpreted as largely for the benefit of other men.

At the Fijian clubs, loud sound systems usually play songs in their entirety, with a momentary pause between songs. Even on busy nights the dance floor is thus often completely empty for a few seconds prior to filling up with dancers, only to empty a few minutes later. Often it is women who request dances from the men present, and groups of two or three young women dancing together are also fairly common. Young women will refuse dances from men if they are visibly drunk or aggressive, but men never refuse dances from women, for to do so would suggest a fear of females that contradicts hegemonic masculine ideals. Both men and women in romantic relationships (or even married) usually feel free to dance with whoever asks them. As the next song starts, dancers move to the dance floor, and then generally leave before the song has come to a complete finish. A male and a female dancer sometimes dance together, leave the dance floor, and then go back when the next song begins. Many of these dances between strangers do not lead to any conversation.

Generally speaking, female dancing in Fijian clubs is relatively energetic in comparison with that of young men. Men's dancing tends to take a particular form, one that appears neither too interested nor disinterested. Men are by and large expected to maintain a certain amount of composure whilst dancing, at least until they are drunk. Writing of predominantly African-American nightclubs in the United States, Hutchinson (1999: 71) argues that women who have little power in other spheres of life are empowered to an extent in these 'sexual arenas'. Likewise, in Fijian nightclubs – which are, admittedly, much less sexualised environments than those described by Hutchinson – young women potentially hold a form of sexual power over men. This can lead to the enhancement of a man's status *amongst men* if, for example, he is seen as being asked to dance by many women, and especially if he appears to be receiving female attention that he does not

reciprocate. A suggestion of promiscuity serves as a performance of heterosexual masculinity.

Ideally a Fijian man should not overtly pursue young women in the nightclub; he should maintain a sexual interest in them, but not enough to reveal that individual females have power over him (see also Quinn 2002: 395). This is an extension of the hegemonic standard in Qauia and other parts of Fiji, which posits male/female romantic relationships as defined by dominance and subordination. The power dynamic inherent in this gender relation is materialised during the sequence of drinking, where young women will allow or make sure 'their man' drinks before them. Indeed, during my fieldwork, two young men on separate occasions were privately ridiculed for making sure their desired – but not yet confirmed – sweethearts drank before them.

A man's perceived power over a woman or women met in the club can serve to alter his status in a group, perhaps reflected in him moving up in the sequence of drinking as attention is directed his way. Women may therefore be said to remain the periphery of hierarchies (just as in the *yaqona* session) yet play an important part in their functioning in the public context of the nightclub. Beyond the gendered interaction of the dance floor, the male homophobia which prevails in Fijian nightclubs means that it is generally easier for women than men to latch onto groups of male drinkers, and to become incorporated into a sequence of drinking. Women are not seen as potential threats to a group or individual man, and male space in general.

At the same time, the homosocial element of these drinking groups potentially leads to the expression of misogynistic attitudes. Men associate prostitution with women who clearly enjoy drinking large amounts of alcohol, and speak frequently of some young women they meet as *kalavo* (rats) or *namu* (mosquitoes), as they do of other men. However judgements are often much faster made in the case of women, who are less likely than men to be spending money on alcohol. Recalling research conducted in similar settings elsewhere – for example, in the United States (Thompson & Cracco 2008: 84) – many young men in Qauia generally perceive young women in nightclubs as

more sexually available than in other areas, and as more prone to be *kalavo* (rats) or prostitutes (for whom the most common term is *saqamua*). Male informants and interviewees often suggested that young women met in nightclubs were only suitable for brief flings, and unsuitable for potential wives.

Men associate heavy alcohol intake by females with a loosening of morals and sexual inhibitions, and general irreligiousness. While men 'prove' their masculinity through interaction with females, young women can have their reputation denigrated and undermined by a perception of sexual availability or prostitution. Young men who drink alcohol are expected to be boisterous and confident, drink lots, not be afraid to dance with women, and to not shy away from physical confrontation with other men. Indeed a young man can enhance his reputation among his peers (both male and female) through such gendered behaviours, and have his masculinity socially validated by others. Women, on the other hand, may face judgement simply for entering a club. In Fiji, therefore, various double standards apply for the sexes concerning alcohol use in general, and spending time in nightclubs in particular.

These attitudes sometimes surface in Fijian nightclubs through the sexual harassment of young women, including both those who may or may not be drinking with the male perpetrators at the time. This can take the form of men touching or attempting to touch young women, especially those who are seemingly single or unaccompanied by men. Sexually aggressive masculine performances are informed by wider gender relations and are primarily carried out with men as the intended audience. Men use women's bodies not only to publicly demonstrate heterosexual masculinity (see also Hutchinson 1999: 71) but also to exhibit a form of masculine power over women, even those who are strangers. This is by no means to suggest that women are unable to challenge such behaviour, and indeed some women in nightclubs are confident enough to physically fight men (as well as other women). Nonetheless, despite the particular freedoms afforded to women as a result of a generalised homophobia in nightclubs, the existence of misogyny or male aggression in these settings is a reminder of the threat of sexual

violence and serves to maintain male supremacy in a homosocial context (see also Kimmel 1994; Thompson & Cracco 2008).

As is often the case with the lengthy *yaqona* (kava) and alcohol sessions that take place in Qauia, visiting nightclubs contains a significant homosocial element for groups of male drinkers. However the Fijian clubs are also characterised by a generalised homophobia, where masculinity as physical size and strength is emphasised in the struggle for social space. Hypermasculine performances of violence or sexual aggression are responses to the threat of powerlessness or *emasculation* in public settings, and contextualised to the nightclub. These behaviours display a power through the use of a physical capital that is informed by hegemonic understandings of masculinity. The gendered double standards of alcohol discourse in Fiji, meanwhile, are further illuminated in these urban locations.

The previous chapter focused on alcohol use in Qauia, while this one has focused on drinking in Fijian nightclubs. I have therefore provided accounts of the two general contexts in which men living in Qauia consume alcohol. The thesis concludes in the following chapter, where I summarise the findings of the research through the model of masculinity outlined in Chapter Two. I also suggest that alcohol use and forms of alcohol-related behaviour potentially serve as compensatory masculine performances for young men in Qauia. These youths are subordinated in both their home lives and in waged employment, and thus limited in their ability to demonstrate an interpersonal power that is central to traditional definitions of Fijian masculinity.

Chapter Seven

CONCLUSION

> Alcohol is a resonant symbol of powerlessness with multiple indexical links: to young men with relatively little social influence; to the inability of Fijian society to resist this foreign product; and to lack of control over one's actions, which leads to outrageous, rowdy behaviour, fighting, and uncontrolled sexuality (Tomlinson 2004: 661).

This thesis has used the related subjects of gender and power to discuss the relationship between Fijian masculinity and alcohol use by men living in Qauia from a social anthropological perspective. In the preceding chapters I have argued that, in a society where adult men occupy positions of authority and chiefly rank, Fijian masculinity is inextricably linked to relations of power. The dominant ideologies of gender in Fiji posit reaching male adulthood as becoming the leader of a household, whereas a woman progresses from being under her parents' authority to that of her husband.

In Chapter Two I theorised masculinities as configurations of embodied practice that are positioned in relation to other masculinities and femininities within a multi-dimensional gender system. Male domination is a hegemonic formation within this system, and tied to masculine ideals and values rooted in the habitus and doxa of gender. I then proposed that, in particular social fields, men hold specific forms of capital – aligned to various forms of habitus – that allow them to perform hegemonic masculinity. This results in differential power relations between men, who deploy masculinities strategically and use forms of capital at their disposal in order to negotiate subject positions within a field.

In domestic settings in Qauia, the principles of Fijian hierarchy limit this negotiation by structuring social relations largely through age and through sex, in accordance with the 'way of the land' (*vakavanua*). Adult men hold a legitimate authority, in the form of symbolic capital, by virtue of their positions in domestic hierarchies. An elder brother is therefore able to exert power over his younger siblings and a husband over his wife.

Indeed the hegemonic ideal for an adult man is to be in a demonstrable position of interpersonal power. Gendered power relations in Qauia are incorporated bodily through social practice in the 'Fijian habitus', reinforced by the spatial arrangements within a house, and materialised most vividly during the ritualised drinking of *yaqona* (kava). *Yaqona* sessions emphasise the hierarchical and gender-dichotomous nature of Fijian social relations, and serve as a source of masculine performance in various ways.

The *taki* system employed to distribute and consume alcohol is modelled on the format of *yaqona*-drinking, and power dynamics within a group are similarly expressed and partially constituted through the sequence of drinking. However, by providing a 'time-out' from normal rules for drinkers, alcohol use provides a chance for men to use various forms of capital (beyond symbolic capital) and different types of habitus in order to demonstrate particular elements of hegemonic masculinity and thereby negotiate a position of power. Of most significance is that the value of economic capital – relative to symbolic capital – increases when alcohol is introduced. Thus the man who buys a case of beer often becomes 'chief' by drinking first in the sequence, with definitions of masculinity stressing monetary wealth and generosity, and power linked more closely to the provision of alcohol for a group. In Fijian society "one should be seen to give and those of highest status to give the most" (Toren 1999: 31), so that he who buys beer for others are rewarded with a temporary position of status and power.

Drinking large quantities of beer or spirits is in itself a test of mental and bodily strength that correlates with other hegemonic masculine ideals concerning physical mastery over the environment. This is despite the fact that alcohol remains marginalised by prevailing discourses in Qauia and in Fiji more broadly. Unlike *yaqona*, alcohol has no ritualistic use or cultural purpose beyond getting drunk and is seen as a dangerous threat to social cohesion. Whereas the *mana* ('power') of *yaqona* is linked to the ancestors and realm of the supernatural, the temporary power of alcohol is contained in its unpredictable and erratic physiological effects on the individual. Alcohol is a suitable excuse for, without necessarily condoning, a range of culturally inappropriate behaviours in Qauia. These include airing grievances, fighting and making advances towards young women.

All of these are performances of masculinity and power that cannot normally be carried out without being drunk; in a sense, they demonstrate masculine ideals in a way that is only made possible by the presence of alcohol. Chances for the expression of heterosexual desire, for example, are extremely limited in most areas of Fijian social life. Likewise, in a cultural context that places great emphasis on collectivism and harmonious sociality, complaining or becoming aggressive about personal issues or familial disputes is a highly unusual behaviour and largely confined to male drunkenness. A man's conduct when drunk is always blamed on the alcohol itself, which is perceived as potentially disrupting the healthy balance within a family or community. In addition to participation in expected activities and common courtesies of respect and politeness, this balance entails specific power relations (with individuals 'knowing their places' within hierarchies).

For forms of capital to be of value in a field they must be used in conjunction with different forms of habitus, and so men's behaviour when drinking alcohol – especially in nightclubs – is often radically different from that of everyday life. Aggression and confrontation are more likely when alcohol is drunk, exercising a masculine power through the use of a narrowly defined physical capital (size, strength, appearance and demeanour). The habitus needed to wield this capital – including one's body language, corporeal style and general etiquette – differs from the 'Fijian habitus' of everyday life within Qauia but is largely normalised in Suva nightclubs. In these public urban spaces, the value of physical capital increases in relation to economic and symbolic capital. Physical capital can therefore be used more effectively to perform masculinity by demonstrating interpersonal power in settings that are characterised as much by homophobia as homosociality, and where hypermasculine performances of violence, male heterosexuality or dominance over women display a contextualised adherence to hegemonic ideals. It should be of no surprise that older men in Qauia drink less than younger men, and do not engage in hypermasculine performances involving violence or public heterosexuality, because older men are ascribed a high status on the basis of their age. They have no need to demonstrate power to validate their masculinity; instead they are bestowed with a masculine power due to their structural position.

Returning to the question posed in the introduction, then, why do some Fijian men (and youths in particular) drink excessively and then engage in behaviours that are so opposed to the 'way of the land'? In addition to the excitement associated with drinking alcohol and the temporary reprieve it provides from the troubles and poverty of everyday life, it should be noted that young men in Qauia have limited access to status and power. Increased participation in the waged economy and other societal changes mean that youths have had their traditional roles in the community reduced, and now seek identity and status from their peer group in a way that did not exist before (Griffin & Monsell-Davis 1986: xv; Adinkrah 1995: 14). The search for identity through the various role models and images presented to young people in Fiji takes place both within and outside the family or local community. Plange (2000: 67), for example, links current styles of dress among young Fijian men in urban areas to the influence of foreign television programmes and movies. These provide various portrayals of alcohol use and images of masculinity, and indeed themes connecting the two within popular globalised discourses. More research is needed into the effect of modernisation and new forms of media on Fijian masculinities and femininities[19], especially with regards to idealised relations of power.

Despite rapid changes within Fijian society during the last century, however, young men in Qauia remain subordinated to their elders. Many of these youths live under the authority of parents and other members of the extended family, while there are also some married men under thirty who, although living in their own houses with their respective wives and children, are required to pay relatives or others to stay in these houses. In interviews, some of these men emphasised their feelings of relative powerlessness with regards to their accommodation arrangements and future prospects in life. At work, meanwhile, they enter into unequal relations of power with their bosses and superiors.

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[19] See Becker (1995) for a discussion of the significant impact of foreign television programmes and movies on the body images of young Fijian women.

Fijian men are expected to demonstrate a level of power that is difficult for youths to obtain. Drinking alcohol asserts masculinity and interpersonal power in a number of ways, due to its physiological effects and cultural expectations associated with its use (see also Peralta 2007: 747). By paying for alcohol, by appearing to effortlessly attract young women, by fighting or by simply being the centre of attention, a young man displays a masculine power. Stories of drunken antics spread quickly, while drinking, fighting or demonstrating heterosexuality allow youths to gain level of status and respect among their peers. Earning a reputation through violent alcohol-fuelled confrontation or spending large amounts of money on alcohol is a means to 'prove' one's masculinity and ability to wield interpersonal power. Drunkenness and rowdy behaviour among young working-class Fijians may also be viewed as symbolic protests against social inequality and the power of ruling groups (see also Tomsen 1990), including elders, chiefly hierarchies and church leaders, as well as other ethnic and socio-economic groups in Fiji.

Alcohol use and forms of alcohol-related behaviour potentially serve as *compensatory* masculine performances for youths and, to a lesser degree, married men living in Qauia. For young men, who are subordinated both at home and at work, such performances validate masculinity and compensate for a lack of power in other areas of their lives. Therefore, despite its marginal place in Qauia and Fijian society, alcohol use provides opportunities for contextualised performances of interpersonal power that implicitly reference hegemonic definitions of masculinity.

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