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Emplacement and Millennial Expectations in an Era of Development and Globalization: Heaven and the Appeal of Christianity for the Ipili

ABSTRACT Non-Western Christianity engages with capitalist development and ideas of modernization from multiple and competing perspectives. In this article, I argue that as researchers we can weave together disparate theoretical strands attempting to explain the appeal of Christianity—particularly its Pentecostal and charismatic forms—by examining indigenous notions of “salvation” that have often been overlooked in the literature. To illustrate, I examine millennial Christianity among the Ipili of Papua New Guinea, demonstrating how their understandings of “heaven” and their desire for the Second Coming articulate with a concern regarding how social relations are spatialized through engagement with capitalist mining development, evangelical Christianity, and traditional spirits responsible for maintaining the world’s integrity. [Keywords: Christianity, development, globalization, place, Ipili]

IN THE LATE 1990s, news of the construction of the International Space Station reached the highlands of Papua New Guinea (PNG). In the Porgera valley (western Enga Province), where I was conducting research among Ipili, Huli, and Enga, people were puzzled as to what exactly the purpose was of building “the house in the sky,” as it was called locally. Being from the United States, and from the culture that was largely responsible for its development, I was frequently asked to describe the space station and its purpose. One evening, in early August, 1999, I sat around with a group of men and at their bidding launched into an elaborate description of the space station. After I finished, the eldest man in the group, Semai Kakopeya, began to speak. He said matter-of-factly, “That space station must be pretty close to Jerusalem.” Everyone sitting around the fire nodded their heads in agreement. Unfortunately, I understood Semai too literally; I thought he meant the Jerusalem in Israel, not the new Jerusalem of heaven as depicted in the last two chapters of the Book of Revelation. Puzzled, I asked how Jerusalem could possibly be anywhere near the space station, as Jerusalem was in Israel, on the ground and not in the sky. Semai replied, “Well, the church pastors all tell us that we’ll be going to heaven, to Jerusalem in the sky, is what they say. Since Jerusalem is in heaven and heaven is in the sky, the space station must be close to Jerusalem.”

Now angry, Semai got to his feet and launched into a speech to the other men sitting around in the house. He said that for years all the people here had been donating money to the church in the hope that after death they would go to live in the sky, in Jerusalem. And now, here I was informing them that Jerusalem was not in the sky, but on the ground. He urged everyone to stop giving money to the church, because it was obvious they were being lied to and that they would not be going to the sky as promised. The next morning, Semai came to me and said that he was not sure if he would ever go to church again and if he did go, he did not think he could continue to give donations. He said, “All along I thought I was giving money to assure my place in Jerusalem. Now, I found out I’ve just been sending my money to some white men who live on the ground.” I later told one of my research assistants, Ben Penale, about what had happened with Semai and the others, whereupon he indicated that he had a newspaper clipping that could support what Semai said. He left and returned sometime later with a battered and nearly unreadable photocopy of a news article. The article claimed that the Hubble Space Telescope had located heaven on the very edge of the universe and, in fact, showed a gleaming city floating in space. I had seen other photocopies like this circulating through the area previously, and on seeing the *Weekly World News* imprint along the margin, I immediately recognized it as the supermarket

tabloid that often ran outrageous headlines documenting alien abductions and biblical prophecies coming true. I told Ben that it was not a real newspaper and was only written to amuse people. Ben seemed both chagrined and wistful at the same time and commented, "I thought that we really knew where heaven was."

Semai and Ben's concerns about heaven highlight an important, yet often overlooked, component in the study of the adoption of Christianity in non-Western cultures—namely, what role do ideas of "heaven" and the rewards of salvation generate in the desire for conversion?¹ I think it is important to extend this question even further into studies of globalization and modernity, more generally, by arguing that anthropologists have been far more concerned with globalization's dystopias (e.g., Comaroff and Comaroff 1999, 2000) than they have its utopias (Karlström 2004). In this article, I intend to analyze the Ipili notion of "heaven" to shed light on the complex interplay of millennial Christianity, mining resource development, and new social relations that compose Ipili modernity. I will use the Ipili desire to go to heaven to engage with key debates in the study of the globalization of Christianity that address the tensions between globalization and localization, and rupture and continuity (Casanova 2001; Corten and Marshall-Fratani 2001; Howell 2003; Meyer 1999, 2004; Robbins 2003a, 2004b). I suggest that an attention to place and understanding how people emplace social relations in novel settings can show how these tensions are mediated.

It should be obvious, however, that the process of resolving and mediating these tensions is somewhat fragile. Semai and Ben were willing to believe me, to a certain degree, over what they had been taught in church. Other researchers in PNG, such as Ira Bashkow (2000a) and Joel Robbins (2004a), have, respectively, referred to similar skepticisms about aspects of Christianity as "soft beliefs" and "everyday millenarianism" (see also Foster's [2002] "bargains with modernity" and Knauff's [2002] "recessive agency"). I argue that it is precisely because I questioned notions of heaven as an actual place that ultimately Ben and Semai's beliefs about Christianity were challenged. The fact that I had been to more "places," and the idea that Christianity came from the "place of the white man," validated my claims over that of the indigenous pastors. Ben and Semai were both concerned with heaven as being locatable, or in other words, with heaven as a place. For the Ipili, places have the distinctive feature of verifying and historicizing personal and collective experiences. Frequently, after relating an event to me, one that was either historical or so-called mythical, the storyteller would take me to the place where the event occurred to prove that it really happened.² Heaven, as a place, therefore, legitimates Christianity for Ipili people. As an introduced and foreign institution, Ipili receive the promises of Christianity rather tentatively; but, if there is a place (i.e., heaven) that can ground the abstract notions of Christianity, then conversion and acceptance of Christianity by the Ipili becomes more understandable generally.

The literature on conversion (Asad 1993; Geertz 1973; Hefner 1993; Horton 1971, 1975; Weber 1956) has been strangely silent on the notion of "heaven." Ideas of salvation in anthropological analysis have focused more on the need of people to make breaks with the past from perceived demonic, occult, and Satanic elements of their culture that prevent them from being successful Christians (Cox 1995; Geschiere 1998; Martin 1990; Meyer 1996, 1999; van Dijk 2001; see Taussig 1980 for a groundbreaking study of diabolization). Rupture, therefore, becomes a metanarrative (Englund and Leach 2000) for understanding the desire to convert (Robbins 2003a, 2004b). Robbins (2004b; see also Hefner 1993) refers to these processes as "world breaking" and "world making," as people break from their traditional cultures and remake themselves as global Christian citizens who share values and worldviews with the rest of their Christian brethren. I do not deny that rupture is an important process of conversion, yet I argue that as researchers we also need to seek continuities between the past and present that make conversion legible. Heaven, for the Ipili, provides notions of "continuity" as it mirrors notions of a sky world that figures prominently in myths and precolonial ritual activities.

In writing about globalization, many scholars have argued that a globalized world produces new identities associated with modernity that inherently encapsulate such terms as *disruption*, *dislocation*, and *detrterritorialization*. In a recent article on religion and globalization, José Casanova (2001) argues that the global spread of Pentecostal Christianity (see also Droogers 2001; Meyer 2004; Robbins 2004b) has been so successful because it is deterritorialized. Unlike Catholicism with its universal traditions and place-based center (i.e., the Vatican), Pentecostalism succeeds globally through "not being tied down to any one place by virtue of having localized traditions or place-based centers" (Robbins 2003a:222). Scholars of Pentecostal movements worldwide have argued these same points, along with the notion that the nonhierarchical aspects of these movements are appealing to local people (Austin-Broos 1997; Brodwin 2003; Corten and Marshall-Fratani 2001; Cox 1995; Howell 2003; Martin 1990; Meyer 1999; Robbins 2004a). The concept of a deterritorialized Christianity also has the capacity to produce a global citizenry in remote places like PNG, the members of which feel that, through their practice, they are engaging with the developed outside world (Gewertz and Errington 1999; Knauff 2002; LiPuma 2000; Robbins 2004a). These points are valid for understanding Ipili Christianity; however, it is the fact that Christianity is place based, as heaven territorializes Christianity, that Ipili find appealing.³ Thus, millennialism is what unites Ipili believers as they strive to gain admission to heaven.

But why millennialism? In a recent article, Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff (2000:292) argue for a connection between capitalism and millennialism in which "millennial capitalism" is "a gospel of salvation; a capitalism that, if rightly harnessed, is invested with the capacity wholly to transform the universe of the marginalized and disempowered" (see also Comaroff and Comaroff 1999). In

writing of the new religious movements of the late 20th century, Comaroff and Comaroff claim that “the Second Coming evokes not a Jesus who saves, but one who pays dividends. Or, more accurately, one who promises a miraculous return on a limited spiritual investment” (2000:315). This is true in certain places to a certain extent (see the discussion on the “doctrine of prosperity” [Corten and Marshall-Fratani 2001:1–21]), but it fails to fully capture the Ipili desire for the Second Coming. Ipili certainly desire economic improvements, but it is critical to recognize that their millennial Christianity came to fruition in the presence of gold-mining developments. Since 1990, the Porgera gold mine has been located on their homelands, making them some of the wealthiest people in the PNG state (see Filer 1999; Imbun and McGavin 2001). Marginalization from capitalist development fails to explain their eschatological concerns (cf. Escobar 2001b). Thus, we need to explore indigenous ideas of the world’s end to fully understand Ipili Christianity (see Ballard 2000; Jebens 2000).

Critical perspectives on place (Biersack 1999; Dirlik 2001; Escobar 2001a; Feld and Basso 1996; Gupta and Ferguson 1997; Massey 1994) have provided an important framework for encompassing theories of globalization (Appadurai 1996; Giddens 1990) and localization (Englund 2002; Tsing 2000) in social scientific analysis. As Harri Englund argues, place (or emplacement) “builds on earlier insights into flows and circulations in a global space, and it recognizes specific sites and terrains as the conditions of their existence and transformation” (2002:268). Place thus dissipates distinctions between the local and the global by recognizing places as material and imaginative constructions engendered by global forces and indigenous agents (Biersack 1999). Place also allows us to weave together capitalist and noncapitalist approaches in the study of globalization (Yang 2000; see also Gibson-Graham 1996; Guyer 2004; Roitman 2004).

The emphasis on dislocation, disembedding, deterritorialization, and so forth is but one side of the coin. What we need also to consider, however, is how reembedding, reterritorialization, relocation, and so forth are themselves sociohistorical processes (cf. Foster 2002). We need to ground globalization through the documentation of its spatial effects by capturing what K. Sivaramakrishnan and Arun Agrawal (2003:21) call “the regional production of the experience of globalization,” in which we describe the “networks, struggles, and differentiated place-making that people recreate in everyday contexts” (see also “the production of locality” [Appadurai 1996]; Dirlik 2001; Escobar 2001a). My own contribution to this literature is to utilize the concept of “emplacement” as a means through which people create their own version of modernity as they traverse the uneven terrains of Christianity, development, and globalization. Emplacement is a process in which people reembed social relations that have been “distaniciated” and “disembedded” (Giddens 1990; see also Foster 2002) by the disruptions, dislocations, and deterritorializations of capitalist development, globalization, and Christianity.⁴ Anthony Giddens, for example, argues that globalization has pro-

duced a “time-space distanciation” in that “local contexts of interaction” are characterized by the “disembedding” of social relations across indefinite spans (1990:14, 21). Emplacement is a means to ground these processes by understanding how people comprehend, create, and manipulate social relations through time and space. It is, thus, a means of place making through which we can examine the relations between history and culture (see Ohnuki-Tierney 2005; Sahlins 2005).

World making and *world breaking* are useful terms with which to consider Ipili negotiations of mining development, Christianity, and globalization, which I consider in the remainder of this article. In the next section, I briefly describe world making and world breaking in a precolonial regional ritual that the Ipili last performed in the 1960s. I intend to use the terms in a more literal sense in this section, though, in that Ipili concerns with the world breaking apart drove much of their ritual action. In Ipili belief, powerful spirits held the “plates” of the earth together. In return for ritual offerings, these spirits increased the productivity of people, plants, and pigs (cf. Rappaport 1968). Movement and intermingling of ethnic groups threatened the existence of the world as the spirits would let go of the plates and destroy the world. Therefore, people remained rooted and territorialized, trusted that others would do so as well, and performed the necessary rituals that kept the world-destroying powers in check.

In the second part of the article, I address the development of gold mining on Ipili lands. By luring Australian mining agents, missionaries, and other outsiders to the area, this act disrupted regional social relations and has continued to threaten the existence of the world as ethnic groups intermingle and migrate to the region. In the mining era, attempts to forge global, national, and translocal social relations have created new forms of flow and closure (Meyer and Geschiere 1998) and precipitated novel alliances that, although seemingly random to most Ipili, constrain and yet provide opportunities to partake in development initiatives and benefits. Ethnic politics engendered by mining have also resurrected and resignified the precolonial regional ritual network to substantiate claims to share in the mining wealth. The section following mining examines the millennial focus in Ipili Christianity. Ipili millennialism—with its central desire to go to heaven—integrates traditional beliefs, capitalist yearnings, and even the transcendence of these, challenging our presuppositions about the rapid spread of Christianity in the developing world. I conclude by arguing that we need to put Christianity and globalization in their “place” (cf. Appadurai 1988; Yang 2000) by paying attention to the mechanisms and concerns that people place on reterritorializing social relations.

WORLD MAKING AND WORLD BREAKING IN THE PRECOLONIAL PAST

Undeniably, Ipili millennialism was on the rise in the 1990s—partially fueled by talk of the Second Coming, global Y2K fears, and the environmental destruction

wrought by the Porgera mine—but it also has roots in indigenous worldviews. Ipili use the phrase *yu koyo peya* (“the ground is ending” [lit. “finishing”])—or, in Tok Pisin,⁵ *graun bai pinis* (same translation)—both to discuss the notion that the end of the world is imminent in terms of the Second Coming and to comment on the fact that the *yu ipane* (“grease”) in the ground is drying up and decreasing the fertility of plants, animals, and people.⁶ Until the late 1960s, the Ipili engaged in a ritual to renew the grease in the ground. Similar rituals were conducted by a number of ethnic groups in the area and the ritual sites were envisioned as being linked together, which integrated ritual activity in a regional network. Because the idea of the ground ending is central to both the regional ritual networks and the Second Coming, I argue that it is essential to explore the basic principles on which the ritual efficacy was based to better understand contemporary Ipili millennialism. It is not my intention to describe in any great detail the actual ritual; it has already been covered extensively by Philip Gibbs (1975) and Aletta Biersack (1996, 1998). However, I do want to examine how social relations were a feature of emplacement in the ritual network, and the implications for the displacement of these relations in terms of threatening the existence of the world.

The Ipili world is depicted as a series of plates that are held together at their margins by *yu kimbuni* (lit., “earth joints”). At each of the earth joints are one or two guardian spirits that “sit” on top of the joint and hold the world together. Renewal rituals were held at each of these earth joint sites to keep the spirits in their locations and, thus, to prevent the world from breaking apart. The sites were envisioned as being linked together into a regional network, but the center of each network shifted so that each site was also the center of its own network. Therefore, for the Ipili, the network included the Enga to the north and the Huli to the south, but for the Huli, their network only extended to the Ipili to the north and extended further south to groups on the Papuan Plateau (see Ballard 1995; Frankel 1986; Goldman 1983; Stewart and Strathern 2002; Wiessner and Tumu 1998). These ritual networks also map out spheres of intercultural interaction for each of these groups. For instance, in the precolonial era, Ipili did not travel beyond the Enga to their north or the Huli to their south. Likewise, Huli did not travel beyond the Ipili ritual site into Enga territory. In fact, to travel beyond the extension of one’s ritual network risked causing the end of the world. Muyu Yakati, an Ipili elder, told me,

In the past all of the people used to stay in their own areas. Our ancestors told us that when the end of the world was near, Huli people would come to Porgera and mingle with Enga people. When this happens, the spirits that sit on the earth joints will also come and converge in the mountains above Porgera. The spirits will beat their drums and dance so powerfully that the earth joints will be torn apart and the world will end. To keep the world from ending, we stayed in our own places. [Field notes, May 22, 1999]

When discussing the precolonial era, most elder Ipili refer to it as “the time that we lived in a fence (*ende*).” The fence was broken down, they say, by the white men who built roads and airstrips and opened the highlands to the outside world (see Jacka 2002, in press).

The emplacement of social relations was, thus, critical for maintaining the integrity of the world. The “discovery” of the highlands of PNG in the 1930s by whites brought an end to the emplacement of social relations in the multiethnic universe as the Ipili knew it. In the 1940s, closely following first contact with whites, the Ipili participated in a series of religious movements out of fear regarding the intermingling of ethnic groups and the deterritorialization of social relations (see Jacka 2002; see also Biersack 1996, 1998; Gibbs 1977; Meggitt 1973). In brief, these movements were oriented toward ascending to a *tawe toko* (sky world) where the *tawe wandakali* (immortal sky people) dwelled. The sky world is consistently described as clean and disease free, the people are always young, and food is abundant. Missionaries in the 1960s recognized the similarities between the Ipili sky world and heaven, and the sky people and angels, and used *tawe toko* to refer to heaven and *tawe wandakali* to refer to angels. Many older Ipili still use these terms, although younger people have incorporated the Tok Pisin terms *heven* and *ensel* into Ipili.

Beginning in the late 1940s, prospectors and colonial government officials—and, in the 1960s, missionaries and mining developers—started a process that brought new institutions, ideas, and desires from over the horizon. Yet even with the arrival of these new social forms, Ipili continued to accommodate many of them within indigenous frames of understanding. In 1939, gold was discovered in the Porgera valley, and even while the Ipili started mining gold themselves, the mineral became subsumed within their understanding of the regional ritual network. From the Huli perspective, the ritual network was linked together by a giant python wrapped in rattan and the various ritual sites were places where the snake’s body rose to the surface of the ground (Ballard 1995; Biersack 1999; Frankel 1986; Goldman 1983). The source of Porgera’s gold in Mt. Waruwari was located along one of the ritual tracks and was also the home of a spirit snake named Kupiane. The Ipili understood that Kupiane was responsible for the gold as it came from his shed skin, and because Kupiane’s site was part of the regional ritual network, gold was the product of a multiethnic and collective ritual effort.⁷ With the development of the Porgera gold mine in 1990, however, the Ipili, Huli, and Enga involved in collective ritual efforts discovered that gold mining would generate new social networks that failed to traverse the ritual networks of old.

MINING DEVELOPMENT AND THE DETERRITORIALIZATION OF SOCIAL RELATIONS

Under PNG law, customary social groups own land and any development that occurs must compensate the affected social groups for the loss of crops, houses, trees, and land (Toft

1997). Because of social and environmental disruptions at two other mining projects in PNG—the Panguna mine in Bougainville (May and Spriggs 1990) and the Ok Tedi mine (Hyndman 1994; Kirsch 2001)—the Porgera mining agreement included a number of benefits for the people who would be disrupted by the mining process. Not only was compensation offered for the loss of land, houses, and gardens, but the development package also offered royalties, infrastructural developments, and preferential treatment to Porgerans in regard to hiring and contracting. The mine is owned by a joint venture (Porgera Joint Venture, or PJV), in which three mining companies and the PNG state have equal shares.⁸

To determine which people should receive the compensation and development benefits, the joint venture engaged in what James C. Scott (1998) refers to as “simplification”: a process by which complex social and natural systems are administratively simplified, hence making them legible and easier to manipulate. When PJV gathered census and genealogical data, they determined that the Ipili lived in clans whose membership was based on patrilineal descent rules, despite the fact that Ipili are cognatic (Biersack 1995). The creation of clans in the late 1980s, thus, became an exercise in “social taxidermy” to paraphrase Scott (1998; see also Ernst 1999; Jorgensen 1997). Moreover, PJV determined that only seven of these “clans” in the valley were eligible for benefits from the mining development. In a further process of simplification—rather than dealing with the numerous individuals from these seven clans, all of whom were landowners—PJV divided the seven clans into 23 subclans and had the landowners designate one agent per subclan to negotiate the agreements for compensation and benefits (Jackson and Banks 2002). These superagents (the Landowner Negotiating Committee) are not the customary elder leaders in the area but younger men who speak English and Tok Pisin and who have had some schooling.

In the early 1990s, millions of dollars per year were flowing into the Porgera valley. In attempting to support the simplification procedures for monetary distribution, PJV argued that because the Ipili were a kin-based society all of this money would flow to the proper beneficiaries. However, this by and large has not happened, most of the money remains in the hands of the landowners, the bulk of which is controlled by the superagents. In an analysis of this concentration of wealth and power into the hands of a few individuals, the PNG scholar Albert Nita argues that a class of “super big men” has been created. These super big men and their families engage in a “spending culture” in which there is “arrogant spending behaviour on consumer goods with little regard for long term investment” (Nita 2001:167). Expensive cars, new clothes, luxury food items, and partying trips to Mt. Hagen and the capital, Port Moresby, constitute the bulk of landowners’ purchases (cf. Vail 1995 for Mt. Kare—related consumerism). Many of these super big men spend their days driving around the government station at Porgera in newer-model Toyota Land Cruisers with tinted windows; nearly all are polygynists, some with as many as

11 and 12 wives scattered throughout PNG. A Tok Pisin neologism is actually in use to refer to these men—*dakglas man* (lit., dark glass man), in reference to the tinted windows of their SUVs.

Part of the Porgera development package also included the creation of Paiam, a township that would be used to house the white mine workers. A number of institutions were to be constructed in Paiam such as a high school, grocery store, hospital, international school, a market, and a rugby arena. Paved roads, electricity, and telecommunications were also to be developed. Because of concerns about law and order in the valley, PJV has been slow to develop Paiam. By the time I left in early 2000, ten years after the mine opened, only the high school, hospital, international school, and grocery store had been completed. Since then, most of the development has been finished, except that the white mine workers have not moved in as many Ipili have hoped they would (see Jacka 2001a, in press). Thus, for the vast majority of landowners and nonlandowners (those people not lucky enough to be in one of the seven clans), the linkages that they have expected to make with the outside world via the whites in Paiam have not been forthcoming.

Not only were social relations with whites failing to materialize but also landowners were seeking to make connections outside the valley, bypassing their Ipili kin. Birgit Meyer and Peter Geschiere argue that the restriction of social relations is an overlooked component of globalization. They claim that “it is important to develop an understanding of globalization that not only takes into account the rapid increase in the mobility of people, goods, and images, but also the fact that in many places, flow goes hand-in-hand with a closure of identities which often used to be more fuzzy and permeable” (Meyer and Geschiere 1998:602). In the past, there was far more flow between the Ipili presently associated with the mine and the rest of the Ipili. Currently, social relations are becoming disembedded and delocalized in the Porgera valley. Most of the nonlandowners feel that their Ipili landowning brethren should continue to maintain close social relations with them and that mining wealth should encompass the entire valley. The Porgeran *dakglas* men, however, have sought ties with other powerful businessmen and government leaders across the highlands and in the coastal cities. Many of these *dakglas* men have made alliances with powerful Engan big men along the highlands highway so that they can have access through regions where the highway is often blocked by unemployed and discontented Engan youths keen on hijacking supplies bound for the Porgera mine (Jacka 2001b).

Ethnic tensions have also intensified between the Huli and Ipili for reasons tied to the ritual networks. As mentioned, from the Huli viewpoint, the cosmological power of the ritual networks was generated by the giant snake that linked the ritual sites together. According to the Huli I interviewed, the snake’s head was located in their homelands, and its body traced out the various networks across the landscape. The shed skin of this snake became gold, and its urine and feces became oil and gas that is currently

being developed in Southern Highlands Province (cf. Biersack 1999; Clark 1993, 1995). In fact, the power for the Porgera mine is generated from the Hides Gas Project located among the Huli, and in 2002, the Huli shut down the Porgera mine for several months by destroying 14 electrical pylons that transmit electricity to the mine (*PNG Post-Courier* 2002: 17). Their rationale for destroying the pylons was that they were not receiving enough proceeds from the mine, even though they had long-term ritual and social links with the Ipili. As several Huli men expressed to me in 2000, the Huli were at the center of the ritual network because the head of the snake was in their area. It was their ritual activities—their pigs and vegetable products—which kept the snake alive so that its skin, urine, and feces could become the valuable resources of gold, gas, and oil.

From the Ipili perspective, the spirit snake Kupiane is responsible for the gold. The Ipili landowners' association is called *Kupiane Yuu Anduane* (the Kupiane Landowners' Association). There is some debate whether Kupiane is the same snake that traced out the ritual network that ran through the Porgera valley. Most Ipili told me that Kupiane travels through underground tunnels, depositing gold, gas, and oil wherever he leaves his skin, urine, and feces. The constant mining exploration activities that occur in the valley are, as one elder told me, "all the white men trying to figure out where Kupiane is so that they don't have to dig for the gold in the ground and can just get it at the source" (Field notes, March 16, 1999).

Kupiane's journeys through the underworld hold promise to some people in Porgera that gold may yet be found on their lands so that they, too, can enjoy wealth and a lifestyle similar to those of the Porgera landowners. At the same time, though, many Ipili never expect the social relations that existed prior to mining development to reembed themselves in the Porgera landscape. Perceiving their valley as underdeveloped, they expected that social relations they could form with white Australians would give them access to such global enticements as commodities, mobility, and jobs (cf. Bashkow 2000a, 2000b; Englund and Leach 2000; Leavitt 2000; Robbins 1997, 1998; Wardlow 2002a, 2002b). Many are keen to blame the state and the mining company for their inability to make social connections outside of the Porgera valley. Discourses about Paiam are frequently at the center of Ipili frustration with the lack of development and the truncation of social relations. Many Ipili refer to Paiam as "the landowners' town" as the landowners are the only Ipili with enough money to patronize the businesses and services that have been built there. Paiam, as such, provides a template for understanding how Ipili conceptualize "heaven" and why they desire to go there. Yet heaven framed through Paiam is not just about desiring material improvements. At the same time, though, we should not abandon the idea that heaven also encapsulates frustrations with development (see Escobar 2001b). In this manner, millennial Christianity centered on the idea of heaven is simultaneously grounded in local ideas of the end of the world as much as it is about making global linkages with other

Christians; likewise, it combines desires for capitalist development as much as it rejects them (cf. Biersack 1999). Millennial Christianity is, thus, a project that Ipili perceive will complete their transition to the modern, developed society that they so desire.

"HEAVEN IS A GOOD PLACE"

Earlier in this article, I address the notion that there were strong continuities between the Ipili understanding of their indigenous sky world ("tawe toko")⁹ and Christian concept of "heaven." Elsewhere (Jacka 2002), I use the term *cults* to describe the 1940s religious movements that the Ipili were involved in to access the sky world while also recognizing that older Ipili refer to these movements as their "first" baptism. I prefer the term *religious movements* now, as it captures the sense of continuity between what the Ipili were hoping to achieve through their precolonial regional rituals, the religious movements of the 1940s, and their contemporary engagement with Christianity. Regarding the shift from the regional rituals to Christianity, most Ipili just say, "before we worshiped the ground, now we worship the sky."¹⁰ Although there are continuities between previous forms of Ipili religiosity and later forms, there are also discontinuities regarding ideas of race, geography, commodities, and development. In this section, I explore some of these discontinuities and the discourses about heaven that Ipili deploy to negotiate them.

Despite the fact that there are four main denominations in the Porgera valley—Catholic, Lutheran, Apostolic, and Seventh Day Adventist—millennial influences permeate all of the different denominations. There are several reasons for this. Missionaries only entered the Porgera valley in the early 1960s, and participation in Christianity was slow to develop. Even in 1999, only about 70 percent of the adults in my study area in the eastern Porgera valley were practicing Christians (cf. Robbins 2004a). Most of the Christians are today either Apostolics or Seventh Day Adventists;¹¹ however, most of them were previously Catholics or Lutherans, but these latter two denominations are not considered to be demanding enough in terms of what restrictions they put on traditional behaviors (for similar notions among other PNG societies, see Knauff 2002; LiPuma 2000; Robbins 2004a). Because both Adventists and Apostolics are millenarianist in Porgera, their influence on theological doctrine has permeated Lutheran and Catholic ideas. Apostolics and Adventists have also been localized in terms of church leadership. Some lay pastors may travel to a regional center for training, but primarily church doctrine is interpreted by local lay pastors who already have an indigenously influenced millenarian outlook. In any event, there is not a lot of focus on theological doctrine, as most Ipili have converted rather recently and rates of literacy are extremely low.

Ipili attitudes regarding colonialism and missionization differ substantially from how much of the rest of the non-Western world perceives these things. In many respects, the Ipili experience of colonization was generally benign.

Some violence surrounded first contact events, but Australian colonial officials largely allowed the Ipili to pursue their own agendas. When PNG received its independence in 1975, most Ipili lamented the departure of the Australians. In terms of missionization, many Ipili fail to see it as a process of individual missionaries traveling to remote locales and converting people; instead, they see it as something that happened on a global basis to nation-states. The majority of Ipili I interviewed understand Christ's crucifixion as an event that transformed the social landscape of whites and yet bypassed PNG, leaving it non-Christian and undeveloped. This is an attitude common to many Papua New Guineans who refer to PNG in Tok Pisin as *las ples* (lit., "the last place"; see Englund and Leach 2000:230; Kulick 1992). When Jesus died, which according to most Ipili occurred just before colonization, sin was wiped from the entire world except for those places where whites had not gone before; these sin-free countries became developed. In many PNG societies, whites are thought to not fight, steal, kill each other, and so forth (Bashkow 2000b; Clark 1997; Robbins 2004a). Because Ipili do suffer from these problems, they claim that they were uninfluenced by Jesus's death, which removed sin from most everywhere in the world except for PNG. Some Ipili explicitly say that as the *las ples*, PNG was left out of the world-transforming impact of Jesus's death; others say that *yama* (malevolent spirits) kept them from receiving God's word. In any case, Ipili consider their relationship with Jesus tenuous, because the power that came from his crucifixion bypassed PNG; millennialism, therefore, provides the avenue by which Ipili can forge social relations with Jesus.

It is in this context, then, that Ipili millennialism configures heaven as a "good place," and the desire to go there structures their own sense of their engagement with globalization and modernity. Heaven, as one man described it, "will be a flat place, not with all of these mountains like we have here in Papua New Guinea" (Field notes, December 10, 1999). Another man claimed, "In heaven there will be no distance. When someone talks in heaven, everyone hears. Whatever someone does, everyone in heaven sees them" (Field notes, January 4, 2000). One woman told me that in heaven there will be no whites, no blacks, but everyone will be one color ("probably white" in her estimation). Other people indicated that no one would labor, the streets would be paved in gold, and we all would eat from the tree of life and never have to plant gardens. The Ipili idea of "heaven," therefore, illustrates the strategy of emplacement for Ipili seeking to forge new social relations with Jesus and the rest of the Christian believers. There is no distancing or disembedding in any social relations. But, it is precisely the fact that heaven is territorialized—imagined as a place—that gives it such power in terms of explaining Ipili fascination with millennialism. Millennialism provides continuities with previous Ipili religious experience,¹² yet also engages with discontinuities in that Ipili can imagine themselves geographically connected with other Christian believers, they can transcend race through everyone

sharing one skin, and they can look forward to being free of the constraints of traditional life (labor, gardening, etc.) when everyone lives in the city of gold after the Second Coming. Heaven is, thus, emplacement *sine qua non*.

PUTTING GLOBALIZATION AND CHRISTIANITY IN THEIR PLACE

Several researchers have commented on the ways that development as an uneven process of globalization generates new identities and new projects of place making (Dirlik 2001; Escobar 1995, 2001a, 2001b; Ferguson 1999; Pigg 1992; Sivaramakrishnan and Agrawal 2003). Development, in both its social and economic guises, has been a foundational component of modernist narratives of progress associated with globalization (Karp 2002) and Christianity (Meyer 1999). Yet, as Englund and James Leach (2000) have claimed, most studies of globalization, modernity, and Christianity contain a metanarrative that takes for granted ruptures and dissonances between such terms as *local* and *global*, *tradition* and *modernity*, and *individual* and *dividual*. At the same time, we should be wary of emphasizing continuity at the expense of rupture (Robbins 2000:242). The Ipili idea of "heaven," as emplaced social relations, indicates that we need to weave together rupture with continuity, local with global, tradition with modernity. Furthermore, we can best do so by examining not only the dystopias of the global world order but also perhaps its utopias and the millennial thinking that these forces can engender.

In this instance, the demise of traditional religious rituals oriented toward propitiating world-renewing spirits and the intrusions of prospectors, colonial agents, and missionaries disrupted the emplaced social relations that the Ipili had cultivated through ritual and social means in their past. Their turn toward Christianity was predicated on a precolonial notion of a "sky world"; thus, the movement from "worshipping the ground" to "worshipping the sky" had a stamp of indigenous legitimacy to it. However, gold mining and Christianity without millennialism have been unable to enmesh the Ipili within the global social network that they so desire. Therefore, the Ipili have embraced millennialism and their version of "heaven" as a means to resolve the contradictions of social relations being disembedded and distanced in an era of globalization and development. It is precisely the idea that heaven, as the final place, will fulfill the goal of creating new identities and social relations that are currently being denied to the Ipili.

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NOTES

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1. Semai and Ben's concerns embroiled me in a serious moral and ethical quandary. On the continuum of religiousness, I fall somewhere between an atheist and an agnostic, and I felt like I needed to be honest with people regarding my doubt over their own beliefs. At the same time, I recognized that as a white person, an academic, and a foreigner my words carried a lot of weight—enough to introduce doubts, skepticism, and confusion (see Bashkow 2000a) into my friends' beliefs. With Semai, as I had been talking about the space station, I just was not prepared for his response about Jerusalem; it was only later that I realized what had happened regarding my confusion. With Ben, on the other hand, as my research assistant and close friend, I felt obligated to express serious doubt that the Hubble Space Telescope had actually seen heaven. I am not sure if Semai continued to go to church and give tithes as he left the Porgera valley shortly after this event occurred. Ben eventually left the Seventh Day Adventist church, which I know resulted largely from numerous conversations we had regarding Christianity and is a consequence that I do not think I will ever be comfortable with having promoted. As others have noted (see Douglas 2001; Robbins 2004a), studying Christianity can be a morally and ethically challenging exercise and will certainly constitute a critical concern in the maturation of an anthropology of Christianity (see Harding 1991; Robbins 2003b).

2. In discussing historical events, Ipili use the words *tindi* and *temane*. *Tindi* are stories that in English may be glossed as *myth*, whereas *temane* is *history*. However, *tindi* are not thought of as mythical in the sense of make-believe but, rather, in the sense that they occurred in the distant past and were not witnessed by anyone of which the speaker may have actual knowledge. *Temane*, on the other hand, either occurred during the speaker's lifetime or within a few generations prior. For a fuller discussion, see Jacka (2002).

3. Ipili Christianity, at least in areas that I worked, is not solely Pentecostal. I use the terms *millennial Christianity* and *Ipili Christianity* to distinguish between the two. What is particular about Ipili Christianity is the idea that a new world is just around the bend. Nearly all of the people I worked with were Pentecostals and Adventists. These are very different denominations, but they are united in the belief of the imminent return of Christ, at least in the Porgera valley. Even many of the Catholics were of the opinion that the Second Coming was near to hand. The PNG Catholic Church in 1999, in an attempt to dispel widespread fears regarding the Second Coming (Stewart and Strathern 1997; Schmid 1999), declared a Jubilee, which was a celebration of 2,000 years of Christianity. In the Porgera valley, many Ipili interpreted that as meaning that the Catholic Church was hiding the fact that Jesus was returning.

4. My use of the concept of "emplacement" is quite different from Englund (2002). Englund envisioned "emplacement" as phenomenological, a "focus on embodied and situated presence" (2002:261). "Emplacement" as I describe in the text is about reterritorializing social relations. Our uses of the term must necessarily differ as it is oxymoronic (perhaps premature?) to discuss the phenomenology of heaven.

5. Tok Pisin, or Melanesian Pidgin, is the lingua franca of PNG.

6. For similar ideas among a neighboring group, see Stewart and Strathern (2002).

7. Biersack (1999) describes a structurally similar ritual network, spirit python, and gold source in Mt. Kare, which lies about ten kilometers (about six miles) southwest of Porgera. The similarities in our descriptions should not be surprising as we both worked among Ipili speakers: she in the Paiela valley and I in the Porgera valley.

8. The three mining companies involved in PJV have varied over the years as companies have been bought and sold, with the exception of Placer, operated as Placer Pacific by the parent company Placer Dome, Inc. Initially, the PNG state only had a ten percent share in the mine, whereas each mining company had a 30 percent share. After the first full year of operation in 1991, the Porgera mine produced almost 1.5 million ounces of gold and the state accused the mining companies of bad faith bargaining in terms of distributing shares. After some legal wrangling, each company donated five percent of its shares to the PNG state, giving all partners a 25 percent share (for full details, see Jackson and Banks [2002]).

9. *Tawe toko* literally means "sky bridge." Ipili talk about going up to the sky world along this bridge, which was accessible from the tops of tall trees and mountain tops. There is no word or phrase that Ipili use to mean "sky world"; *tawe toko* seems to encapsulate both meanings—the bridge to get to the sky world and the sky world itself (see Biersack 1999:79).

10. In Tok Pisin: bipo, mipela save mekim lotu long graun, nau mipela mekim lotu long skai.

11. Of 241 adults, 112 (46.5 percent) were Adventists, 32 (13.3 percent) were Apostolic, 26 (10.8 percent) were Lutheran, and two (0.8 percent) were Catholic. The remaining 69 (28.6 percent) did not attend church.

12. Millennial thinking is so pervasive that non-Christians also frequently discuss the ground ending and mention the numerous signs that this is imminent: New kinds of grasses are growing that no one has seen before, birds from lower elevations are frequently seen where they normally do not go, species of bananas that formerly grew at lower elevations grow at higher ones, girls menstruate at a younger age, boys grow beards before they become men—to name but a few of the markers that the world was soon to end. The key difference between the Christians and the non-Christians (who share beliefs regarding these signs marking the end of the world) is that the former expect to go to heaven, whereas the latter are just not sure what will happen after the world ends. As Kipan Wuambo, a non-Christian, commented to me, "Mipela no save long wanem samting bai kamap. Mipela no kliā" (lit., "We don't know what will happen. We just aren't sure [clear].").

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