DEVELOPMENT CONFLICTS AND CHANGING MORTUARY PRACTICES IN A NEW GUINEA MINING AREA

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In the Porgera Valley of highlands Papua New Guinea (PNG) in western Enga Province, mortuary practices have undergone rapid transformations with the coming of Christianity in the 1960s and large-scale mining development in the 1990s. Prior to these events, graves were unadorned and located in remote locations far from public spaces. With new ideas about what happens to the spirits of the deceased introduced by Christianity, Porgerans started to cover graves with simple thatched or metal roofed, open walled structures. Today, however, graves have become brightly painted, multi-tiered concrete edifices placed in highly visible and public spaces. Many of these graves house the remains of clan leaders killed in tribal fights over compensation issues related to mining development. I argue that these changes in mortuary practice are critical examples of new understandings of social space by Porgerans brought about by Christianity and capitalism. I use these examples to address central arguments in Henri Lefebvre's (1991) concept of the production of space. In the sections that follow, I first outline Lefebvre's main thesis about the capitalist production of space. Then, I examine changes in ideas about the *tandini* 'spirit' in Porgera through Christianity. Next, I discuss new ways that graves are being used in an era of resource development conflicts. Finally, I conclude by looking at how capitalist development produces new forms of social space that promise greater mobility, yet paradoxically, spatially incarcerates people through new mortuary practices and ideas about the spirit.

THE PRODUCTION OF SPACE

In *The Production of Space*, Henri Lefebvre (1991: 11) argues that space is not a milieu—"the passive locus of social relations"—but is instead produced by the social lives that unfold in that space. In this view, every society and its particular mode of production produces its own space. As a Marxist geographer, Lefebvre attempts to wed Marx's ideas of historical materialism—the changing relations that humans have with their natural environments through their mode of production—with geography's concern with spatiality. Thus, since "each mode of production has its own particular space, the shift from one mode to another must entail the production of a new space" (p. 46). This proposition provides fertile ground for examining the implications of capitalist intrusion into pre-capitalist settings around the

world. For example, Lefebvre makes a distinction between pre-capitalist forms of space ("absolute space") and the "abstract space" of capitalism in which the former is "smashed" (p. 49) and "homogenized" (p. 64) by the latter. Here he draws on Marx's (1973) distinction between concrete labour which produces use value and abstract labour which produces exchange value. In other words, in pre-capitalist (use value) societies, productive activity (labour put towards supplying the material needs of humans and biological reproduction) worked towards the singular goal of social reproduction (Lefebvre 1991: 32). In contrast to this, under capitalism, labour is abstracted from social reproduction in order to create exchange value. Abstract labour produced an "abstract space" which could encompass the novel social relationships that no longer were solely concerned with the interlinking aspects of socioeconomic production and biological reproduction (p. 49).

In the pre-capitalist context of Porgera, people pursued a subsistence-based lifestyle centred upon the production of sweet potato (*Ipomoea batatas*) with surpluses going towards pig rearing. Pigs were (and are) the social currency and used by leaders (bigmen) to further their prestige and renown. The absolute space of this time was produced by the movements of men and women from their homesteads to the gardens, and by the interactions of exchange spheres as men, women and pigs circulated from group to group as society reproduced itself from generation to generation. Despite the movement of people from clan territory to clan territory through marriage, many in Porgera talk about the absolute space of this time as "living in a fence" owing to restricted social mobility arising from inter-group conflict. The production of capitalist space (hereafter called "abstract space") did not so much "smash" or "homogenize" pre-capitalist absolute space in Porgera, rather it gradually reworked social and spatial relations over a couple of generations. Porgera was first contacted by expatriate prospectors and colonial patrol officers in the 1930s (Gammage 1998). Between the Second World War and Independence in 1975, people in Porgera were increasingly incorporated into larger networks of spatial interaction as Christian missionaries, colonial agents and various mining companies brought pockets of social change and economic development to the region. The greatest impact on economic opportunities and social mobility occurred with the 1990 opening of the Porgera Gold Mine. Today, Porgera is a magnet for people across the province (and the highlands) who come to seek jobs and partake in the wealth from royalty payments and business contracts given to local landowners.

In addition to the distinction between pre-capitalist absolute space and capitalist abstract space, Lefebvre (1991: 33) also proposed a conceptual triad of material ("spatial practices"), conceptual ("spaces of representation") and

lived ("representational spaces") spaces to provide a set of analytical tools for understanding the relationships between the natural and built environment, ideas of space and cosmology, and people's daily life patterns, respectively (see also Harvey 2006: Chapter 3). By material space, I am referring to the natural and built environment of Porgera—forests, mountains, rivers, hamlets, houses, gardens, paths, the mine and so forth. Conceptual space is the world as conceived by Porgerans—how they conceptualise heaven, a pre-Christian spiritual underworld, the national capital of Port Moresby, the place of PNG in the global order, Australia, etc. Lived space refers to the various spaces that people traverse in their daily lives—the interiors of their houses, their gardens, the market, the church, the mining site, etc. The crucial point is that, while Porgerans may have mostly shared perceptions (seeing material space) and conceptions of space (an aspect of a shared culture), the lived spaces that Porgerans, as individuals, produce are vastly different. Men, women, children, elderly, elites all have varying opportunities and constraints concerning the material and conceptual spaces available to them. The constraints on individuals' lived spaces undergirds contemporary tensions as I illustrate in the following vignette.

A Chain of Events
Beginning in the early 1980s, there were indications that a large gold mine would be developed in the Porgera valley. The road (today called the Enga Highway), which would eventually serve the mine, was located in a mostly uninhabited section of the valley, in high elevation rain forest at the base of 1000-metre high cliffs where maintaining subsistence gardens was difficult owing to the altitude and climate. At that time, many Porgerans figured that land along the highway would someday prove to be lucrative, reasoning that there would be an increase in traffic and an influx of people when the mine was operating, so some people started moving near the road. Around 1985, Leapen, an Ipili-speaking Porgeran man, invited some paternal Engan kin to come live with him along land that his mother's clan held adjacent to the road. They cleared forest, built houses and trade stores, and started raising chickens. In 1990, the Porgera Gold Mine opened and thousands of outsiders poured into the area. Leapen and his Engan kin soon realised vast profits from their business ventures. Leapen's brother's son, Carter, built the largest trade store in the area on Leapen's land, as well. While Leapen himself had no businesses, his kin kept him well supplied with money and other goods in return for allowing them access to the highway land.

   After a few years, Leapen's cousin (*aini*—his mother's brother's son), Tundu, came to Leapen and demanded that he purchase the land. Land tenure rules in Porgera are open and flexible, especially in regards to children of

either men or women, so theoretically Tundu had no right to ask Leapen to pay him for the land. Tundu was claiming that, as he was descended through a male (a *tene* of the clan), he had greater rights to the land than Leapen, who was descended through a female (a *wanaini* of the clan). Leapen told me, "Tundu was wrong to ask me to pay for the land as it was unoccupied forest. But, I didn't want any trouble, so I gave him 42 pigs." Tundu's own reputation as a killer obviously helped strengthen his demand for payment. Over the years, Tundu repeatedly asked for *pikmani* (Tok Pisin for pigs and money, the standard payment for compensation in the highlands) and, every time, Leapen and his Engan kin paid pigs and money to him to prevent trouble.

By 1999, Leapen's son, Koa, was working as a machine operator at the Porgera mine—a job he was lucky to get with his Grade 8 education, according to many people. In October 1999, Koa began building a house on Leapen's land along the highway. Tundu told Koa that he needed to pay him K2000 (at that time about USD 700) before he could continue. This was a serious breach of Ipili land tenure rules as the children of resident *wanaini* (which Leapen was) are considered *tene* with full land rights in the group. The men began to argue and then fight. In a few short minutes, Leapen and Koa had beaten Tundu to death. The two rushed back to Leapen's father's clan (the Piango) to enlist the support of their paternal kin. Leapen's brother, Joe, urged other members of the Piango not to support Leapen. Nevertheless, several men joined the two and armed with homemade guns and bows and arrows they went into the forest to *singsing* 'perform a group song' and celebrate the killing.

Meanwhile, back on Leapen's land, the Wapena (Tundu's paternal clan) burned down Leapen's house and looted and destroyed Carter's trade store. During all of this Leapen's Engan kin left, fearing for their lives, and the Wapena burned down their houses and trade stores and killed all their chickens. The next day, Leapen heard a rumour that the Wapena were planning to bury Tundu in the middle of the disputed property. Leapen was distraught for if this happened neither he nor Koa would ever be able to live on the land again for fear of *akali nono*, a term that literally means 'eating the man' and refers to the belief that the *tandini* 'spirit' of a deceased man can attack his killer if he consumes any food or drink near the deceased man's grave.

Leapen asked one of his Wapena uncles to mediate on his behalf. This uncle arrived at Tundu's funeral where he met stiff opposition to Tundu being buried anywhere other than in the centre of Leapen's land. In a moment of foolish bravado, Leapen's uncle claimed that Leapen would come and dig up Tundu's body and dump it in an outhouse unless the Wapena relented and buried the body elsewhere. Obviously, this set back any reconciliation attempts and the Wapena buried Tundu on Leapen's land (Fig. 1). Leapen

Figure 1. Tundu's grave. The axes and red cordyline plants indicate the intentions of Tundu's clan to revenge his death. The ashes behind the grave in the right of the picture are the remains of Leapen's house.

was so enraged by this that he burned his uncle's house down and killed his pig and dog. For the next few months, the Piango and Wapena fought sporadically. Koa had to quit his job at the mine, and both he and his father were confined to Leapen's paternal clan's lands to prevent revenge killings from both Tundu's *tandini* and his kin.

Tundu's grave marked a pivotal moment in Ipili burial practices in Porgera. People were stunned by the monumental aspects of the grave memorial with its bright colours and revenge imagery. This was 2000 and was the first time that such a grave had been built in the eastern Porgera valley. Moreover, its location in a prominent locale adjacent to the highway symbolised a new kind of mourning in Porgera, one that was public and addressed the new forms of inequality and desire that mining development had brought to the region. It was also a new way to think about space, land rights and the actions of deceased people's spirits, which I explore in more detail in the remainder of this article.

TANDINI, DEATH, AND WARFARE

To understand the changes in mortuary practices over the last 60 years in Porgera, it is necessary to first comprehend what happens to a person's life force upon death. All people have a spiritual form that Ipili speakers call a *tandini*. Today, they often translate this into English as soul or spirit (*devil bilong man* in Tok Pisin), yet the English terms do not fully capture the richer notion of *tandini* in Ipili. Upon death a person's *tandini* leaves their body and becomes a *talepa* 'ghost'.

For several years, a *talepa* roams around within the boundaries of the clan's land, although often staying near their grave. Eventually, the *talepa* joins the collective of deceased ancestors known as *yama* 'spirit'. Every clan has a sacred pool in the high-altitude rainforest above the hamlets where the *yama* live after death. The pools are called *ipa ne*, literally 'the water that eats'. In the past these deceased clan ancestors caused (and sometimes still cause) illnesses. Various rituals were performed to "feed" the ancestors as a means of placating them. Feeding was done either by offering them "food" in the form of aromas of cooked meat, the blood of pigs poured into the ground, or the actual delivery of meat to the clan pool.

Both *talepa* and *yama* generally cause misfortune. Mervyn Meggitt, the first ethnographer to work in western and central Enga, wrote the following (1956: 114-15) about spirits of the recently dead and the clan ancestors:

> Like ghosts of the recently dead, clan ancestors are generally regarded as being neutrally disposed towards their descendants until the latter antagonize them. Then they become downright malicious, punishing the clan with crop failures (e.g., of sweet potatoes or pandanus), high mortality among children and pigs, and/or defeats and deaths in fights. I gather they are never benevolent or positively helpful, nor do there seem to be strong moral overtones in the punishments.

Since conversion to Christianity, most Porgerans are less concerned that the *tandini* of their ancestors are attacking them, as they believe that the *tandini* stay in the ground at the location where they were buried. When people are killed in warfare, though, it is a different matter.

As I have already said, after Leapen and Koa killed Tundu they were unable to leave their own clan's land and come near Tundu's clan's land because killers fear for the rest of their lives that their victim's *tandini* can attack them. There are several ways this happens. The first is from *wapu*. *Wapu* is brought on by the killer, or even his kinsmen, sharing food, water or cigarettes with the victim's clan. The ingestion of these substances will call the *tandini* and cause it to attack the killer. Another way *tandini* attacks occur is if the

victim's clan sees the killer and collectively begin to think about their dead kinsman. Their thoughts can awaken the *tandini* of the victim and send him to attack his killer. Both of these situations rule out any sort of fraternising between a killer and his victim's clan. For a killer, speaking or even hearing the name of his victim can cause the *tandini* to come and attack. As a result, many people change their names based on who their kinsmen kill, because if they share the victim's name, their kinsmen will never be able to speak their name or hear someone else say it. Porgerans say that if the killer were to swallow food, saliva or water, or inhale smoke after hearing his victim's name, then the killer would get *akali nono*, literally 'eating the man', and be subject to *tandini* attack. Finally, *akali nono* also occurs when a killer eats or drinks food or water from near where the killer is buried.

Clearly, concern about the abilities of deceased ancestors to harm the living shapes Porgeran understandings of death. Before missionisation, people were buried far from the houses, gardens, water sources and public spaces that the living inhabited. With the exception of senior male members of the clan, people were buried in shallow, unmarked graves in old secondary forest. Important men were buried in covered pits so that their bodies could decompose and their skulls could later be removed and used in healing and curing rituals to placate the *yama* in the *ipa ne*.

Following conversion to Christianity in the 1960s, Porgerans started to re-evaluate the role of *tandini* and *yama* in their lives, subsequently burial practices changed as well.

CHRISTIANITY AND DEATH

When missionaries arrived in Porgera in 1961 (after the western Enga Province was opened to outsiders by the Australian colonial government), one of the first tasks they undertook was reshaping Porgeran concepts of the afterlife. Missionaries stressed that *yama* were not a collective body of deceased ancestors who could harm the living, but merely "Satan tricking us" as many Porgerans attested. Moreover, the *tandini* were the equivalent of Christian souls and did not have the power to visit dead kinsmen, nor could a *yama* "pull" or "hold" a living person's *tandini* thereby killing them. Porgerans were instructed in the "proper" manner of burial with the deceased lying stretched, face-up in a casket, instead of the flexed, side burials that Porgerans used to practice.

One question that many Porgerans had though was: What did the *tandini* of the deceased do if they did not roam around the clan's land at night, or if they did not go to live in the *ipa ne* as a *yama*? The missionaries responded that they just lay peacefully in their graves waiting for Judgment Day. A group of elder men shared with me their thoughts about this new knowledge:

> We really started to worry about people's *tandini* that we buried. The missionaries said they just stayed there doing nothing. But Porgera is a rainy place [average of 3700+ mm of rain annually]. All we could think about was our ancestors' *tandini* just lying there in the wet, muddy ground. We started to worry that they would get uncomfortable and start to attack us and make our children or pigs sick.

As a response to this concern, Porgerans started to build roofed structures over graves to ensure that the *tandini* would not have to endure the long years of lying in the cold, wet mud until Jesus returned (see Figs 2 and 3).

With the *tandini* of the deceased now lying comfortably in the ground under their roofed grave enclosures, fear of attack also started to lesson. People still refused to go near graves at night, but gardens started to be planted closer to gravesites (Fig. 3). Graves were mostly unadorned. There might be a few cordyline plants or flowers planted next to them, but for the most part a person still could not see a grave from someone's house and certainly not from any public areas. Deceased powerful male leaders received the same burial treatment as everyone else, and their powers in the afterlife were believed to be non-existent. The *tandini* of men killed in conflict were still believed to affect the living and their role has taken on new importance in the mining development era in Porgera. Before I turn to this matter, however, I want to examine the new forms of spatiality that Christianity and colonialism brought to Porgera.

Pre-contact and Post-contact Space
Porgerans divide their landscape into three zones based on altitude. The lowest zone, *wapi*, is found below about 1700 metres above sea level (asl). The middle zone, *andakama*, extends from about 1700 m to 2200 m asl. The highest zone, *aiyandaka*, is above 2200 m. Before the Enga Highway was built, people lived exclusively in the *andakama*, a word that is composed of *andaka* 'at the houses' and *ama* 'cleared spaces'. It was the main zone of production and reproduction before contact. The *wapi* and *aiyandaka* by contrast were areas where resource harvesting was common but, because various spirits inhabited these zones, they were not areas where one settled (see Jacka 2015 for more detail). The absolute space of pre-capitalism kept people confined to living within the *andakama*.

With the coming of colonial agents, mining prospectors and missionaries, though, the upper zone, the *aiyandaka*, became dis-enchanted because the spirits no longer had the power to impact people in this zone. When a jeep track was built in the *aiyandaka* with local labour during the colonial era in 1971, many men mentioned their severe trepidation about initially cutting

Figure 2. Graves with bush material roofs and fencing to keep pigs out.

Figure 3. Graves built with metal roofs. Note their proximity to a garden.

down trees and working in this zone. The resources in the *aiyandaka* are "owned" by spirits called *tawe wanda* 'sky women'. Wanton destruction of plants and trees are believed to upset the *tawe wanda* who send mists and rain down to cause the perpetrators to lose their way and potentially fall off cliffs or into ravines. When these punishments did not ensue, a number of men said they lost their fear of this area.

The demise of the bachelor ritual called *omatisia* also led to less concern about the roles of *tawe wanda*. Before the mid-1960s, young men would engage in a series of male purification rites in which they ritually married a *tawe wanda* (Biersack 1982, 1998). The *tawe wanda* helped to "grow" the young men into marriageable adults. The *omatisia* rituals were held in the *aiyandaka* but once airplanes started to fly over the ritual houses built for the *omatisia* interest in the rituals declined. I asked one elder man why airplanes would cause the demise of a ritual, he noted that the houses had been defiled (*kalo*) in the same sense that weapons and tools become defiled by stepping over them. Flying over the houses was the equivalent of stepping over them to many men. At this time, too, people were turning to Christianity and abandoning their former rituals. Finally, *tawe wanda* were re-signified in Christian belief as angels. Consequently, their abode shifted from the *aiyandaka* to heaven. As such, both the material and conceptual spaces associated with the *aiyandaka* were transformed in the 1970s. Materially, men had cut trees and built a jeep track in this space. Conceptually, the space was dis-enchanted as rituals directed towards and concerns about *tawe wanda* lessened with their movement from the *aiyandaka* to heaven. With the development of the mine starting in 1987, the lived space of the *aiyandaka* started to transform as people moved up into the *aiyandaka* to be near the highway and to open the kinds of businesses that Leapen and his kin did. The new modes of production that were associated with mining development thus created new forms of space in Porgera—shifting from the absolute space of life in the *andakama* to abstract space in which new forms of spatiality also initiated new conflicts over space in the mining era.

Mining and Development Conflicts
The mining development process in Porgera has generated severe inequalities between the haves and have-nots; the vast majority of Porgerans do not share in mining benefit streams. As a consequence, many young men who feel left out of the socio-economic benefits that mining was supposed to bring to this region engage in conflict with clans who have recently received pay-outs from mining development. Their logic is that by attacking a wealthy clan, some of them may die, but their deaths will have to be compensated by the clan they attacked thus bringing wealth to their own clan.

There is a long-standing association between warfare and economics in Porgera expressed in the Ipili phrase *yanda takame*, which means 'war is wealth'. Marilyn Strathern's research among the Melpa supports this; she wrote that "either exchange or warfare can indeed turn into its alternative" (1985: 124). Fighting today, though, is not about generating the long-term benefits of exchange and alliance captured in a concept like "war is wealth", since much of the fighting is generated from dissatisfaction with uneven development and oriented towards short-term monetary gains. For many young men, exchange is no longer an opportunity; instead capturing benefit streams from mining is the new means to become a bigman. For them, war is their only option. In discussing traditional venues of male accomplishment in Hagen, Strathern wrote that the intertwining of war and exchange "can be attributed to men's desire to be seen as effective in a public arena" (1985: 124). Excluded from regular mining benefit streams, instead of working in the gardens like their parents, occasionally selling some surplus produce at the local market, these young men offer their bodies in a new market based on monetary demands from clans who have recently received mining royalties and compensation payments.

In 2006, one of these conflicts took the life of the councillor of a local-level government ward in Kairik, a village in eastern Porgera on the Enga Highway. Two clans were arguing over compensation that the mining company paid out over a landslide. In the midst of one heated exchange, the councillor was chopped with an axe and died on the spot. Instead of burying the body in a non-prominent location, his clan built a multi-tiered brightly painted grave structure with a metal roof, electrical porch lights, a flagpole flying the PNG flag, and a metal bird of paradise launching into flight from the roof peak, directly adjacent to the Enga Highway (Fig. 4). By placing the grave in such a location, the councillor's clan was making a visible marker of their intention to revenge his killing, plus they intended to prevent his killers from travelling along the highway.

Between 2006 and 2013, fighting raged between several clans over mining compensation payments in the Porgera Valley. In the eastern part of Porgera, nearly every structure was burned to the ground at this time—houses, trade stores, schools and aid posts, and even churches. Dozens of men were killed in the fighting. When I returned to Porgera in early 2016, neither of the two graves in Figure 4 were still there. People noted that members of the killer's clan had sledge-hammered the graves apart in the midst of the conflicts. Their goal in doing so was to re-open the road so that the killer and members of his clan could travel freely without the spatial constraint that the graves posed to their mobility. When I asked why the *tandini* had not attacked the men wielding the sledge hammers, one man just shrugged and commented in

Figure 4. Grave of councillor. Note just to the left of this grave, is another multi-tiered grave of a young man who was killed while fighting. An orange tarp covers the current grave as the concrete is still curing.

Figure 5. John Pewaipi's grave with the two guns of the Olomo clan painted on the side.

Tok Pisin that *olgeta samting i senis* 'everything has changed' with the new abstract space of capitalist mining development in Porgera.

Many things have indeed changed in Porgera with the changes brought by modernisation and development. Guns were introduced into conflicts around 2005 which helped to intensify the conflicts that have dominated the last decade of social life in the valley. Figure 5 shows the grave of John Pewaipi, who was killed by the Olomo clan in eastern Porgera. The Olomo owned two guns—an M16 and a pump-action shotgun—shown here on the side of John's grave. Similar to the axes on Tundu's grave in Figure 1, the guns on John's grave indicate his clan's intention to revenge his death at some time in the future. This grave, too, is in a highly visible spot along the Enga Highway, reminding people of the violence that shaped people's experiences during the time of fighting.

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In this article, I have demonstrated how transformations in the mode of production—from a pre-colonial subsistence-based livelihood to a mixed capitalist-subsistence mode undergirded by large-scale mining development—produced a new kind of space. Consequently, new mortuary customs occupy these new spaces. Social life in Porgera revolves around the Enga Highway (see Jacka 2015: Chapter 7), tying Porgerans into mining development at one end of the road, and to the rest of Papua New Guinea at the other end. The road symbolises more than just modern socioeconomic development, though. It is also a visual reminder to many Porgerans of all that they do not have, despite the presence of a large-scale mine in their midst. The Highway, Christianity and contemporary social life in PNG have greatly expanded the conceptual spaces of Porgerans. Yet few are able to realise these conceptual spaces and most live a subsistence-based lifestyle. The material spaces of Porgera for many are not much different than before colonial and Christian contact. There are a few more metal buildings, but most Porgerans still live in bush material houses (Fig. 6). Lived spaces too are nearly as constrained as before contact. Many Porgerans speak of pre-colonial space as being restricted, as living surrounded by a fence, but that colonialism "opened the roads" and "broke the fence" allowing for greater spatial mobility. The absolute space of pre-capitalist social life in Enga was restricted owing to a confluence of factors, such as inter-group conflicts and the spirits of deceased enemies creating concerns about leaving one's own clan's land. Colonialism, Christianity and Capitalism produced a new abstract space that allowed people to move about the landscape with greater freedom, but others, while aware of the new spaces, are constrained in exploring them.

Figure 6. Bush material houses and prominent grave structures in the eastern
            Porgera valley.

However, with the rise in conflicts and killings in the last decade, and the burial of men killed in conflicts in public spaces, the *tandini* of these deceased warriors now serve as obstacles along the Enga Highway, preventing members of enemy clans from partaking in the new spaces that development was supposed to open up for Porgerans. Many men talk now of a new form of spatial incarceration that comes from development conflict. The tensions between material, conceptual and lived spaces in Porgera thus provide a compelling case study highlighting the ways that new spaces are produced, yet paradoxically, has also resulted in the shrinking of lived space for many Porgerans.

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ABSTRACT

In the Porgera valley of highlands Papua New Guinea, burial practices have undergone rapid transformations with the coming of Christianity in the 1960s and large-scale mining development in the 1990s. In this article, I examine the changes in mortuary practices and situate these novel practices in theories about the production of space to explore conflicts over land in an era of resource development. Graves, which shifted from remote rain forest lands to the edges of roads and public spaces, now serve as visual public reminders of past conflicts and killings in the development context. The promises of development were supposed to increase social mobility in Porgera, but conflicts constrain mobility in complex ways highlighting the tensions between development, social space and conflict in Porgera.

Keywords: Papua New Guinea, Porgera, space, death, development

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